

SCOTTISH SINFONIA

Scottish Sinfonia was formed in 1970 by Neil Mantle. It was originally a chamber orchestra but was expanded to its present size of some 85 players six years later. Although the orchestra is basically amateur, it receives valuable stiffening from several professional and semi-professional players. Many large-scale works normally considered outwith the scope of non-professional orchestras have been successfully performed. Last season alone Sinfonia gave the Scottish premiere of Richard Strauss's Alpine Symphony during the Edinburgh Festival, when the orchestra was augmented to no fewer than 120 players; Mahler's problematic Seventh Symphony received only its third performance in Scotland. The orchestra recently performed Webern's Passacaglia and Debussy's La Mer. For several years the orchestra's joint performances with the Edinburgh Opera Company, also conducted by Neil Mantle, formed an important part of the orchestral schedule. The highlights of that association were the performances of Wagner's 'Flying Dutchman' (1979) and 'Tannhäuser' (1981), when the quality of the orchestral playing attracted unanimous critical acclaim. To renew the Sinfonia's links with opera a new company, Sinfonia Opera, was formed last year. Distinguished soloists who have appeared with Sinfonia include Jack Brymer, Roderick Brydon, Joan Dickson, Leonard Friedman, Yaltah Menuhin and John Tunnell.

Elgar First Symphony
'A dedicated performance with particularly fine playing from woodwind and cellos.'
Scotsman

'Neil Mantle paced the whole thing admirably, keeping it moving, yet never hustling it, and allowing it to make its points in big sweeping paragraphs. The playing, especially of the woodwind, was of a high order.'
Sunday Standard

Webern Passacaglia
'A lucid and assured performance.'
Scotsman

'I have heard professional orchestras tackle it with a good deal less conviction.'
Sunday Standard

Mozart 'Don Giovanni'
'With Neil Mantle conducting his own experienced orchestra and a consistently high level of vocal ability in the cast, this performance is a very considerable achievement.'
Scotsman

Mahler Seventh Symphony
'No section of the orchestra can shelter in obscurity in Mahler's Seventh Symphony, yet every challenge was met with complete confidence.'
Scotsman

'Neil Mantle appreciated how telling are Mahler's ritardandi in controlling form and clarity of texture. The relatively high degree of accuracy and the edge of fresh enthusiasm combined to make this an important event by any standards.'
Times Educational Supplement

Sibelius Fifth Symphony
'The calibre of performance achieved . . . by this almost entirely amateur orchestra was quite remarkable.'
Glasgow Herald

FREE CONCERT! — for season ticket holders

This season we are again offering substantial discounts to season ticket holders. The total cost of a season's concerts, including the Sinfonia Opera performances, is £13.50. If you buy a season ticket before 10 August you will pay only £10, thus saving £3.50. So one concert is entirely free, and you have enough left over for a drink in the bar!

Contact:
Scottish Sinfonia, 5 Merchiston Place,
Edinburgh EH10 4NP.

BOOKING DETAILS (single tickets only)

Concerts:
£2.20 (students £1.50, schoolchildren £1)

Opera:
£3.50 (students & senior citizens £2 Tuesday & Wednesday only; schoolchildren £1.50) and £2.50 (students & senior citizens £1.50 Tuesday & Wednesday only; schoolchildren £1)

Tickets available from:
The Usher Hall Box Office, Lothian Road
Tel: 228 1155

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'Real Refinement' *Evening News*
'On top of their form' *Scotsman*
'Thoughtful phrasing and vigorous commitment'
Glasgow Herald

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Welcome to our 1984/85 season and a series of concerts offering something for everyone, six programmes in which we travel over 200 years — from Bach to Bartok in fact!

Our season begins as usual with our annual all-Bach programme in St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral during the Edinburgh Festival. This event is one of the most popular in our series and always attracts a capacity audience; so book now to avoid disappointment! Alongside the ever popular Suite No. 3 and Sixth Brandenburg Concerto we are providing an opportunity to sample two less familiar but nonetheless masterly concertos. The following Sunday Scottish Sinfonia demonstrates its versatility by traversing with ease the vast stylistic gulf between Bach and Bruckner with a performance of the Austrian master's Seventh Symphony. This sublimely beautiful work was the first symphony to ensure Bruckner's reputation throughout the world in his lifetime and it remains his most popular. Bruckner, a deeply religious man and superb organist, conceived his lofty inspirations with a cathedral acoustic in mind; and so, by performing in the beautiful setting of the Cathedral, we can claim to offer an authentic sound picture, which is usually lost in the twentieth-century concert hall. Alone amongst non-professional orchestras in Britain Sinfonia has a strong Bruckner tradition, having performed most of his nine symphonies in the past few years. Also included is *Richard Strauss's* youthful First Horn Concerto, played by Christopher Griffiths, distinguished former principal horn of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

A mere week after this concert the Sinfonia, now reduced to eighteenth-century dimensions, begins preliminary rehearsals with Sinfonia Opera for a week of performances in October. Last year we inaugurated our company with a production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Such was the success of this venture with audience and press alike that we have chosen another Mozart opera, the equally well-loved *Magic Flute*, for this season. Unlike many contemporary performances ours will be in authentic proportions in a small theatre, as Mozart intended.

Three weeks later we go into rehearsal for our November concert. *Elgar's* opulent Second Symphony is the main work and forms part of our tribute to Britain's first internationally great composer since Purcell in this, the fiftieth anniversary of his death. This concert sees Margaret Murray McLeod's first appearance with Sinfonia in *Bartok's* Third Piano Concerto. For some reason the name of Bartok still induces feelings of panic in some music lovers; this is quite unjustified, especially in the case of the Third Piano Concerto, which is a brilliant and atmospheric work of immediate appeal. Last year we received a very warm and enthusiastic welcome in Glasgow for our performance of Mahler's Seventh Symphony. So this season we are expanding our activities in the west to two concerts, of which this is the first. Tell your friends in Glasgow the good news!

February will be a busy month for trumpet players in Edinburgh and Glasgow as we need no less than fourteen of them for our performance of *Janacek's* Sinfonietta. If you do not know this marvellous work, we can promise you a very exciting experience — and that is only the first work on the programme! We are delighted to welcome Richard Chester, the Scottish National Orchestra's

superb principal flute, who joins us for *Mozart's* ever popular Flute Concerto No. 1.

A suitable title for our final concert might be 'Romantic Russia'. In this we offer two of that country's most popular compositions rich in melody. Our many patrons who heard Bryn Turley's outstanding performances of Rachmaninov's Third Concerto and Tchaikovsky's First will certainly not want to miss this one. As if a *Rachmaninov* Piano Concerto and a *Tchaikovsky* Symphony were not enough, we offer a real rarity in the shape of *Erich Korngold's* Sursum Corda. This is a Scottish premiere and the first UK performance since 1924. Although Korngold is best known as a composer of film music, his formative years, at the turn of the century, were spent in Vienna, where his youthful compositions attracted the attention of Gustav Mahler, no less, who pronounced him a genius.

So, a varied programme indeed. Why not take full advantage of it and buy a subscription season ticket? On the back of this brochure you will see our generous discounts. We look forward to seeing our valued regular patrons and many new friends at our concerts.

Sunday 19 August 5.00pm

J. S. Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in Bb
Concerto for Violin and Oboe in C Minor
Triple Concerto in A Minor
Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D

Michael Rigg violin
Anne Evans flute
Neil Mantle conductor
Margot Cruft oboe
Philip Sawyer harpsichord

Sunday 26 August 5.00 pm

Wagner Prelude to 'Lohengrin'
Strauss Horn Concerto No. 1 in Eb
Bruckner Symphony No. 7 in E

Christopher Griffiths horn
Neil Mantle conductor

Cathedral Church of St Mary, Palmerston Place

Tuesday 9 - Saturday 13 October 7.30pm

Mozart 'The Magic Flute'
joint performances with Sinfonia Opera

Cast includes:

Francesca Greene, Tom Jamieson,
Rea Johnson, Ian Langdale-Brown,
Alan Lindsey, Ian McNab, Inga Mantle,
Valerie Nunn, Adele Paxton

Isobel Ewen producer
Neil Mantle conductor

Church Hill Theatre

Sunday 25 November 7.45pm

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh

Wednesday 28 November 8.00pm

Henry Wood Hall, Glasgow

Debussy Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune
Bartok Piano Concerto No. 3
Elgar Symphony No. 2 in Eb

Margaret Murray McLeod piano
Neil Mantle conductor

Sunday 17 February 7.45pm

Janacek Sinfonietta
Mozart Flute Concerto No. 1
Brahms Symphony No. 2 in D

Richard Chester flute
Neil Mantle conductor

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh

Sunday 12 May 7.45pm

Queen's Hall, Edinburgh

Thursday 16 May 8.00pm

Henry Wood Hall, Glasgow

Korngold Sursum Corda *Scottish premiere*
Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor
Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 in E Minor

Bryn Turley piano
Neil Mantle conductor