

*Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra*

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra** Leader Maria Balhetchet

**John Michael East** Conductor

**Saint George's Day Concert**

HANDEL

Music for the Royal Fireworks

TCHAIKOVSKY

Fantasy Overture - Romeo and Juliet

WILLIAMSON

Symphony 5 - Aquero (First performance)

ELGAR

Wand of Youth Suite 1

**Brent Town Hall**

**23 April 1980**

**Programme 25 pence**

**THE NATIONAL ANTHEM** arranged by Malcolm Williamson

George Frederick Handel 1685 - 1759      The Music for the Royal Fireworks

*Ouverture*  
*Bourrée*  
*La Paix*  
*La Réjouissance*  
*Minuet & Trio*

In 1749, by command of King George I, Handel was commissioned to write music for the occasion of a firework display to celebrate the Treaty of Aix la Chapelle (Aachen) ending the seven years war. And so on 27 April one hundred cannons were ready to go off 'singly with music'. A print in the exhibition 'The Green Park' currently at the Westminster Library in Buckingham Palace Road shows the 'Magnificent Structure (opposite the corner of Buckingham House) erected in The Green Park for the Royal Fireworks on account of the General Peace'. In the event, however, the burst of cannons caused part of the temple and many of the fireworks to ignite injuring several spectators. Handel was not un-prepared: 24 Oboes, 12 Bassoons, Contrabassoons, possibly a Serpent or two, definitely 3 Horns, 3 Trumpets and 3 sets of Timpani were able to play together with cannons and without injury to anyone keeping a sensible distance.

For celebrating Saint George's Day and the Orchestra's Tenth Anniversary tonight, the performance is based on an edition of Handel's music made by Anthony Baines and Charles Mackerras. The contrasted speeds of the sectional Overture are followed by two dances common to instrumental music of the period - duple-time Bourrée with triple-time Minuet. But in this case, between the two dances Handel places two other movements suitable to the occasion: The Peace (which is in fact a gentle *Largo alla Sicilliana*) and The Rejoicing.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky 1840 - 93

Fantasy Overture : Romeo and Juliet

Today is not only the Feast of England's Patron Saint but by happy coincidence Shakespeare's birthday. Tchaikovsky's music is 'based on Shakespeare' but is not an illustration of, or incidental music to, the plot. Rather it concentrates on the flowering of love and life between two young people, and the annihilating effect on them of the tension between their parental houses. Apart from the two themes expressed and developed in 'battle-music' and 'love-music' it may be better to regard the slow introduction, transition sections and coda as also concentrating towards this idea. The music is short relative to the play and so must concentrate. The idea for the Fantasy Overture was suggested to Tchaikovsky by Balakirev to whom it is dedicated. It was composed in 1869, extensively re-written in 1870 and revised in 1880. In one hundred years since then the music has established for itself universal popularity. Repeated listening to standard performances and standard recordings result in a challenge for both listener and player - how to rediscover and relive the initial freshness, the hopefulness, the youthfulness in fact, of what Tchaikovsky has expressed.

## I N T E R V A L

Malcolm Williamson born 1931

Symphony 5 - Aquero (First performance)

Commissioned for the Brent Youth Symphony  
Orchestra with funds provided by the Kilburn  
Grammar School Old Boys Association  
(Old Creightonians)

Malcolm Williamson has submitted the following note:

Two deep impulses prompted the writing of my fifth symphony - one, my increasing involvement with Youth Orchestras, the other, my annual visit to the Grotto at Lourdes. The story of Saint



Bernadette and the Apparitions in the Pyreneean village of Lourdes is well known. I have written three works based on my personal experiences of that place. What is less known is that at the time of the Apparitions Saint Bernadette was an almost illiterate peasant girl, and that as a result of her extraordinary accounts of the events (at once spiritual and actual) she was intensively educated. She was discovered to have a fine intellect and a great ability to absorb education, so that by the time of her death in her early twenties she was a learned woman who could write stylish French. Her native tongue had been a local patois of the Languedoc group, and she described the Apparition in that patois as AQUERO, meaning respectfully "that thing" roughly the French CELA.

Youth Orchestras, especially those in Great Britain, are a recent development; and their versatility and expertise have impressed audiences and stimulated composers. While writing my symphony I have been aware of the challenge of education as in the example of Saint Bernadette, and as in the heart-warming achievements of music education in today's world. The symphony is conceived orchestrally to fit varying degrees of skill for young players, and at the same time to challenge them with certain problems whose solutions require the advice of their tutors. From Summer 1979 until the work was completed I was in constant touch with John Michael East, the conductor of the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra, and have followed each stage of rehearsals for practical adjustments of the sort that inevitably precede the premiere of a new work.

The symphony was conceived as two movements - the first a Credo, a statement of commitment, the second a meditation on the Apparitions. As the first sketches came to me I realized that the ideas of commitment and meditation were implicit, each in the other; I therefore moulded the work in one large movement like my second symphony. The time signature of 5/8 never changes, but rhythmic patterns of some complexity negate it as a pulse. It is rather a point of reference which allowed me polyrhythmic flexibility while encouraging conductor and orchestra to exercise a feeling of elasticity. The modal and serial aspects of the music are too detailed and not relevant in this introduction. Suffice it to say that the note F sharp is, by its presence at the beginning and ending, and by its intrusions, and absences, the central note of the work, although not as a functional tonic.

As a symphonic entity, the work is a broadly developing drama of ideas. At the outset, soft high strings suggest sunrise in the Pyrenees, and soon the horns are heard playing a long chant-like melody. Above these forward moving elements is a circular figure for flutes and glockenspiel, and another for clarinets and vibraphone, characterizing the eternal and celestial revolving above the earthly dynamic. Two further elements constitute the entire material of the symphony: a sequence of rich, slow chords suggesting the Apparition, and a long wide-ranging melody which refuses to fall conveniently into an harmonic cradle.

The string section is constantly divided with parts of varying difficulty, and every section of the orchestra is highlighted at one time or another. If the symphony does not demand individual virtuosity it does call for a more than usually precise sense of community from the players.

I owe much to the generous encouragement of Muriel Blackwell and to the Old Creightonians who commissioned the work.

'Aquerò' is dedicated to John Michael East, one of the few colleagues to whom I have ever shown first sketches, and who advised me with wisdom and, I suspect, restraint during its creation.

Edward Elgar 1857 - 1934

The Wand of Youth Suite 1

*Overture*  
*Serenade*  
*Minuet*  
*Sun Dance*  
*Fairy Pipers*  
*Slumber Scene*  
*Fairies and Giants*

Edward Elgar was appointed Master of the King's Music in May 1924 and so was a predecessor

## MALCOLM WILLIAMSON

Malcolm Williamson was born in Sydney in 1931 and studied piano, violin and french horn at the Conservatorium there. He studied composition with Sir Eugene Goossens, Erwin Stein and Elisabeth Lutyens. Since the age of 18 he has lived in Britain with frequent visits to America and European countries. His compositions range from full scale operas, through symphonic, choral, vocal, chamber and keyboard works to church music and music for children. In his early 20s it was the help of Sir Adrian Boult and Benjamin Britten that enabled his first works to be published, since when there has been a steady flow of commissions. In 1975 he was appointed 19th Master of the Queen's Music succeeding Sir Arthur Bliss, and in 1976 he was created CBE. He has received academic honours in U.S.A. and Australia.

When the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra performs Malcolm Williamson's Symphony No. 5 - Aquerð in Sweden this year they will be strengthening bonds between the composer and that country that have existed over many years. Two operas, *The Growing Castle* (1968) and *Lucky-Peter's Journey* (1969) are based on plays by Strindberg. Two symphonic song cycles, *Hammarskjöld Portrait* and *Les Olympiques* were first performed by their distinguished Swedish dedicatees, Elizabeth Söderstrom and Kerstin Meyer. *Sonata for Two Pianos* has a Swedish superscription. A choral work, *In Place of Belief - I Stället för Tro* (1971), and a chamber work with solo soprano, *Pietá* (1973), both set poems by Per Lagerqvist.



## **JOHN MICHAEL EAST**

John Michael East was born in London and after study at the Royal Academy of Music went to South Africa for five years. He was conductor of the Johannesburg Philharmonic Society and founded a choir for the performance of early music, and was engaged in teaching and in broadcasting reviews of music. On his return to England he was appointed Director of Music at Stonyhurst College, and is now a lecturer in music for the Extra-Mural Departments of the Universities of London and of Surrey. He has been specially concerned for the education of musically gifted children and (through his work directing the Church Music Association and the British Music Information Centre) the encouragement of young composers. He is Musical Director of the John Paul Foundation.

## **BRENT YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Tonight's Concert marks the tenth anniversary of the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra. Muriel Blackwell, its first Conductor and the Borough's Music Adviser founded the Orchestra in 1970 from a nucleus of young Brent musicians who were holders of Saturday morning Junior Music Awards at one of the five London Music Colleges. Since then the Orchestra's Conductors have been Sheila Pelzer (1971), Robert Secret (1973), and John Michael East (1977).



At the time of the Orchestra's foundation orchestral instruments were taught in one primary and twelve secondary Schools but due to the foresight of the Brent Education Committee there has been a steady growth in the weekly tuition provided by a team of visiting instrumental teachers and this is now available in all the eighteen secondary and in forty-eight of the primary Schools in Brent.

The Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra recruits its members, who are between the ages of thirteen and nineteen, from pupils learning in Brent Schools, Brent pupils holding Saturday morning Junior Music Awards, those resident in Brent who learn privately or attend Schools outside Brent, and Brent pupils holding assisted Music places at the Purcell School which is one of the country's four specialist Music Schools and is situated in Harrow.

There is also a structure of Evening Centre Orchestral training from the primary stage giving players ensemble experience leading to the Brent Schools' Symphony Orchestra and it is the more advanced players who are eligible for audition each year for the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra.

In 1977 a team of instrumental coaches was appointed, covering each section of the Orchestra. They include Lionel Bentley, Dietrich Bethge, Norman Burgess, Harry Danks, Denis East, Peter Graeme, Deirdre Dundas-Grant, John Iveson, Patricia Morris, Maurice Neal, Keith Puddy and Derek Taylor. Huw Marchant is responsible for the management of the Orchestra and the work of the percussion section. Andrew Fowler is the Librarian and Concert Manager.

The second performance of Malcolm Williamson's Symphony No. 5 will also be given by the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra on Monday next, 28th April at 8.00 pm, when the programme will include the Symphony 93 by Haydn and the Royal Fireworks Music. This concert will be at Saint John's Church, Duncan Terrace, Islington.

The Orchestra's next Concert at Brent Town Hall is on Tuesday 25 November when Fiona Vanderspar will be the soloist in the Violin Concerto of Benjamin Britten.

### **KILBURN GRAMMAR SCHOOL OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION**

The Brent Education Committee, members of the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra, and all those associated with the Orchestra wish to express their gratitude to the Kilburn Grammar School Old Boys' Association (Old Creightonians) for their generosity in providing the funds to commission for the Orchestra the new work which is receiving its first performance tonight. It is hoped that other organisations and associations will be inspired by this idea and so help to provide not only more opportunities for composers to create works which young people can perform, but also more funds for new compositions to receive further performances.

### **BRENT YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA VISIT TO SWEDEN - AUGUST 1980**

In April last year the Alingsås Youth Symphony Orchestra spent a week as guests in the homes of young musicians in Brent, giving performances both in the Borough and in Central London. This year the Brent Youth Symphony Orchestra is making a return visit giving concerts in Alingsås and the surrounding neighbourhood, including Gothenburg.

## BRENT YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

### 1st VIOLIN

Maria Balhetchet  
Miriam Hakim  
Jill Davis  
Caron Connolly  
Enrico Alvares  
Anne-Marie Twomey  
Helene Galperin  
Lynda Garrett  
Catherine King  
Lynnette Godfrey  
Robert Douglas

### 2nd VIOLIN

Henry Gibson  
Wendy Clark  
Richard Nelson  
Timothy King  
Adrienne Olby  
Samuel West  
Elaine Mycroft  
Helen Edwards  
Stephen Head

### VIOLA

Debbie Williamson  
Rachel Harrison  
Elizabeth Maskey  
Graham Nash  
Andrew Toovey  
Kathryn Edwards

### CELLO

Marisa Pepper  
Linda Miller  
Jean Brixey  
Verity Meacher  
Katherine Hill  
Elaine Kaye  
Walija Kani

### DOUBLE BASS

Michael Allnatt  
Robert Cahill  
Elaine Shepherd

### FLUTE

Gregory Metchell  
Karen Tickner  
Stephanie Danziger

### OBOE

Julia Dickins  
Elise Akseralian

### COR ANGLAIS

Julia Dickins

### CLARINET

Martin Bellia  
Louise Gold

### BASSOON

Gerard Geneen  
Yvonne Salmon

### FRENCH HORN

David Atcheler  
Jonathan Davies  
Nicholas Cunningham  
Gideon Hirsh

### TRUMPET

David Williams  
David Gibson  
Horace Clarke

### TROMBONE

Jonathan Cox  
Andrew Nolan  
Graham Harris  
David Bye

### TUBA

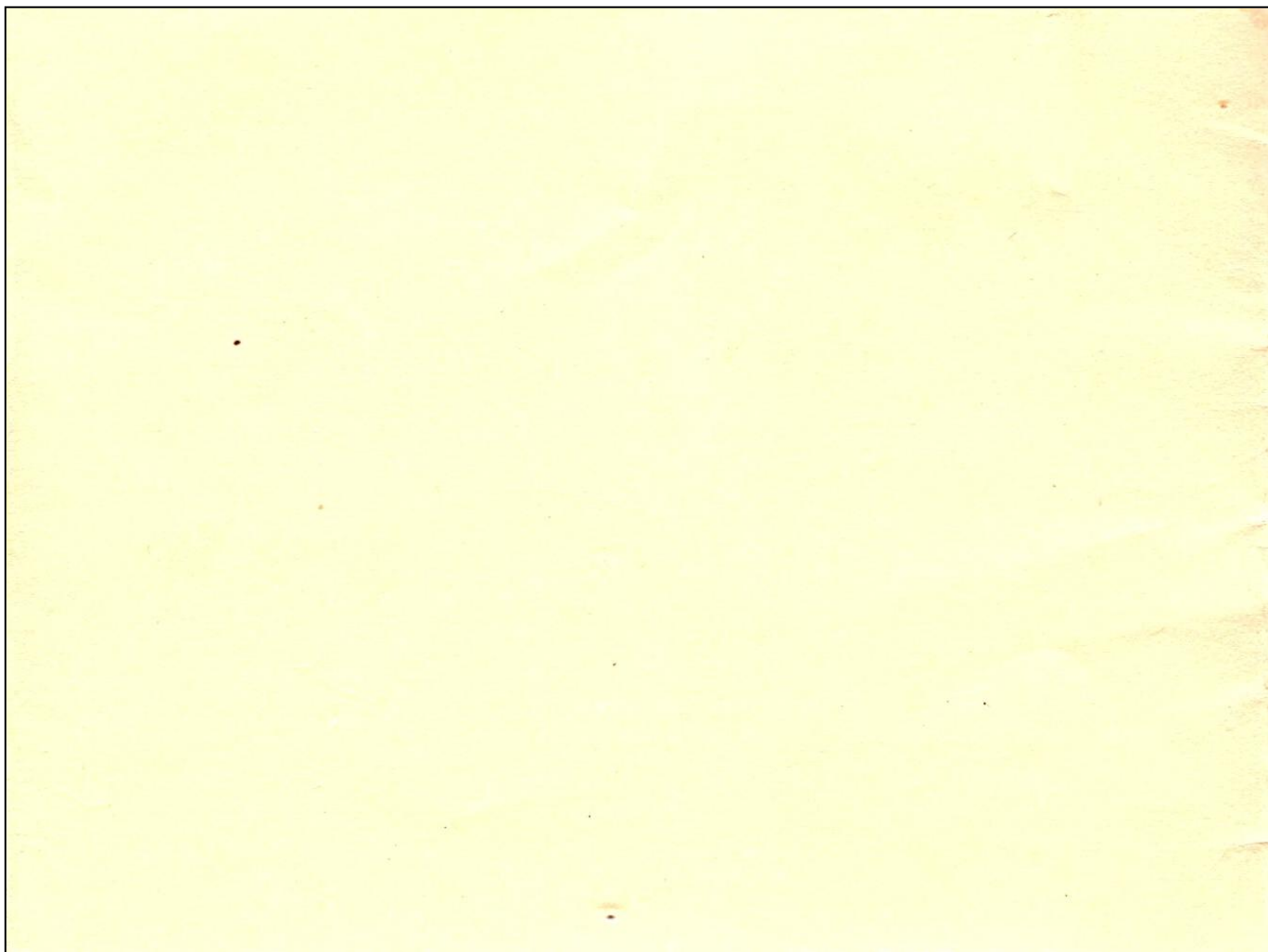
Brian Lewin

### PERCUSSION

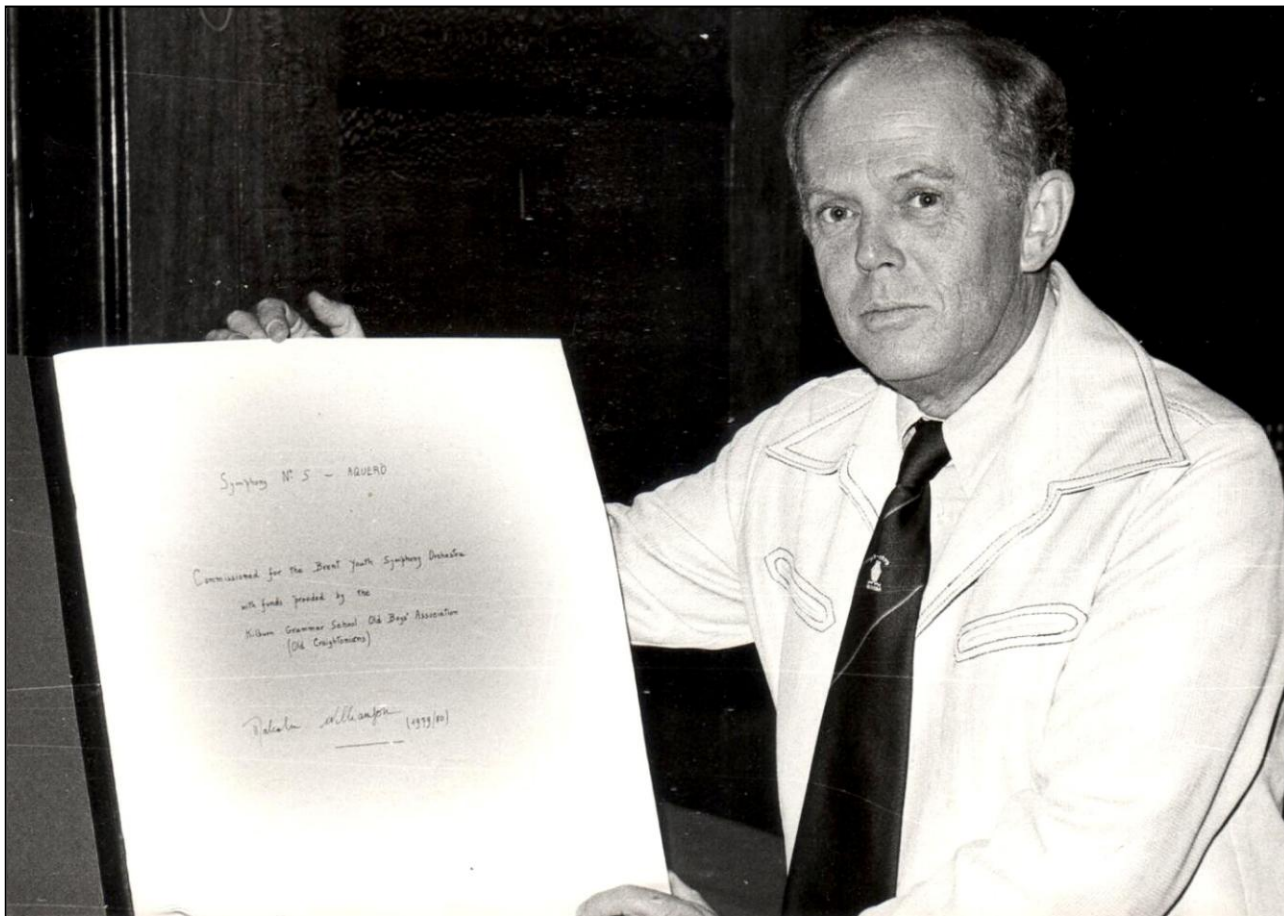
Adam Collins  
Chrish Fernando  
Robin Goodwin  
Jacqueline Coleman  
Charles Brereton

### HARP

Aline Brewer







**The composer – Malcolm Williamson**