Symphony No 8

Catalogue Number: TROY230

Short Description

Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by George Lloyd
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The origins of the Eighth Symphony:

The three movements of Lloyd's Seventh Symphony, (considered by many to be his best, and by the composer himself as his most profound) show three faces of Proserpine, the Goddess of death. Lloyd became pre-occupied with the relationship between humans and the 'other world' , between life and death; writing the Symphony had a profound psychological effect on him, and it took him some considerable time to recover and clear his thoughts. When he did, he said ' Oh to hell with all this - I just want to write something cheerful and bright, and just think of the notes, and no particular programme. I just wanted to enjoy myself.'

Composed mostly in 1961, the symphony was not Orchestrated until several years later. "When I started this work I wanted to write something vivacious, with brilliant colouring and no particular program; this would be in contrast to my previous occupation with the Proserpine legend that had turned into my Seventh Symphony and had become one of my most deeply felt."

In 1977 Lloyd's Eighth Symphony was broadcast by the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra. The broadcast of Lloyd's Eighth Symphony was to prove a major turning point. It brought Lloyd a huge and enthusiastic mailbag of support from all quarters. It brought the first public performance of the Eighth, in 1978, and Lloyd's first Festival Hall performance in 1980. Suddenly, after 20 years without his music being heard, the ball was rolling again.

Reviews:

The Eighth Symphony is highly characteristic of Lloyd's traditional tonal style. The long line and real tunes in their brilliant orchestral colourings are typically his. This is music that may displease the *avant gardists,* but is sure to reach a wide audience given half a chance. Lewis Foreman George Lloyd's Eighth Symphony, given its premiere by the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra under Sir Edward Downes, came as a welcome reminder that music can still be a medium of communication between human beings. The work is ambitious in scale, without sounding at all inflated; and its strength of character allows it to make its point directly, even tunefully, and still be indisputably modern music. One such demonstration is worth any number of manifestos, besides being a marvellous tonic. It might well spark off a new British musical renaissance. Arthur Peacock. ***The Listener***

... This Symphony is a heart moving work. Its idiom is simple and direct. Classically tonal, coloured, sometimes substantially, by twists of twentieth century practice. The idiom is used expressively in an elegiac central movement; vivaciously in a dancing finale. Before these movements there is a sunlit allegro, that is indubitably in place emotionally. The whole is beautifully scored, Lloyd displaying a mastery that is more often the result of regular hearings by a composer of his own music than of the scattered ones which have been the rule for Lloyd until now. That there are human reasons for welcoming this issue with open arms goes without saying. But quite independently, there are also very strong musical reasons for the same welcome. **Gramophone**

Passionately English...like Strauss translated. ***Edward Greenfield, Penguin Guide to Compact Discs***

... It takes courage and no end of faith in one's own creative instincts to battle on into old age (Lloyd was 82 last June, and is still putting in a punishing schedule of work at his scores) when the fates have seemingly conspired against you, and for periods of up to 20 years at a stretch have passed without a single bar of your work actually surfacing in public. The music has thumping good tunes, more often than not dressed up in brilliant orchestral finery, scores which abound in strong rhythmic impulses, (he wields a mean percussion section) and vigorous counterpoints. Talk to Lloyd for even one hour, as I did, and words like 'fiery', 'dynamic', 'bright', 'breezy', light', and 'frothy' will crop up time and time again in his musical vocabulary.' ***Edward Seckerson, The Listener***

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