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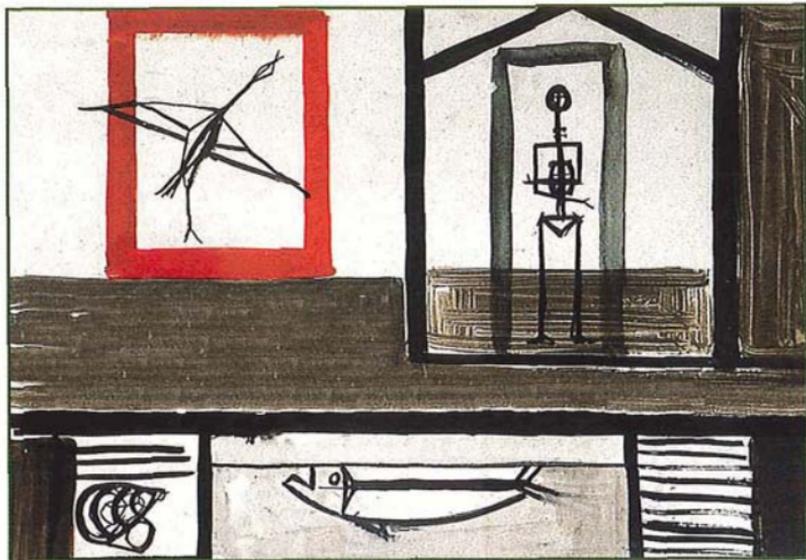
Alan  
**RAWSTHORNE**

**Concerto for String Orchestra**  
**Divertimento for Chamber Orchestra**

**John Turner, Recorder**

**Conrad Marshall, Flute • Rebecca Goldberg, Horn**

**Northern Chamber Orchestra • David Lloyd-Jones, Conductor**



**Alan Rawsthorne (1905-1971)**  
**Concerto for String Orchestra**  
**Concertante pastorale for Flute, Horn and Strings**  
**Light Music for Strings (based on Catalan Tunes)**  
**Suite for Recorder and String Orchestra**  
**Elegiac Rhapsody for String Orchestra**  
**Divertimento for Chamber Orchestra**

Alan Rawsthorne was born on 2nd May 1905 in the Lancashire town of Haslingden and reached his early twenties before deciding to take up music as his chosen career. Fortunately he abandoned early study of dentistry in favour of architecture, but failure in the preliminary stages of these disciplines provided a passport to the Royal Manchester College of Music, to study the piano and the cello. On leaving college in 1930 he continued his studies abroad, notably of the piano with Egon Petri. From 1932 to 1934 he taught at Dartington Hall and was composer-in-residence for the School of Dance and Mime. He won his first notable success at the London Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1938 with a performance of his *Theme and Variations for Two Violins*. A further success came at the Warsaw Festival of the same organization in 1939 with his *Symphonic Studies*, a first and highly accomplished orchestral score, which was to win an established place in orchestral repertoire. Following the war, in which he served in the Army, he devoted himself to composition and between then and his death in 1971, though not prolific, he produced a number of substantial works in most of the established

forms, many of these in response to commissions, including a very distinguished contribution to music for films. Between 1937 and 1964 he wrote scores for 26 films, including *The Cruel Sea*, *The Captive Heart*, *Where No Vultures Fly*, *Saraband for Dead Lovers*, *West of Zanzibar* and *Pandora and the Flying Dutchman*.

Rawsthorne demonstrated his own distinctive voice from the very earliest of his published compositions. His works are marked by clarity of expression and form, craftsmanship and concision. The characteristics of the rejected disciplines of dentistry and architecture are to be found in his music, the precision of the former and the shapeliness and form of the latter. His personality shows through in a degree of understatement, refusal to compromise or follow fashion and, where fitting, dry wit. He published some seventy works, including valuable additions to the piano repertoire, a distinguished body of chamber music, three symphonies, eight concertos, fifteen orchestral works, a ballet score and a handful of choral works and songs.

Rawsthorne's *Concerto for String Orchestra* received its first performance on Radio Hilversum in June 1949, with a performance at a

London Promenade Concert the following August. It is in three movements. The main subject of the first movement is stated in the two opening bars, before launching into a turbulent *molto allegro*, establishing the restlessness, felt even in its quieter moments, which pervades the whole movement. The second subject is identifiable by its broken and resolute rhythm, in the process of development becoming a fertile source for new material. A lyrical point of sad repose, provided by solo violin over *tremolando* strings, is curtailed by a return to the predominant turbulence, and leads to an abrupt conclusion. The second movement has three main sections. The principal theme, reminiscent of the baroque sequence of *La folia*, is given to the violas and later developed by the upper strings. The theme of the second section is solemn, with stormy undercurrents, and distinguished by irregular bar lengths. Characteristic of Rawsthorne is the shortened version of the opening melody which forms the coda. The third movement follows without a break. Here the open intervals bring a change of mood, now optimistic and sunny. It proceeds by a number of episodes, some introducing new material, giving it the feel of a rondo. A *fugato* derived from the main theme of the first movement combines with the principal melody of the present movement, which comes to dominate. An emphatic coda brings the work to a close.

Rawsthorne's *Concertante pastorale*, a piece for a summer evening, is written for solo flute and horn with strings, and was composed for the Hampton Court Orangery Concerts, where it was

performed in the year of its composition, 1951. The mood of the whole work is prefigured in the instruction that the principal theme, played on the horn at the outset, should be sweet and lyrical. This theme is developed in a series of episodes in some of which contrast is provided by using the flute in characteristically florid passage-work. Elsewhere the solo instruments enter into cheerful dialogue and alternate in accompanying one another's statement of the principal theme. A solo violin heralds the closing pages, in which the flute plays the principal theme in its lowest register, accompanied by the muted horn in a haunting passage of outstanding aural imagination. A succession of chords, played *pianissimo* on divided strings, resolve to bring a hushed close.

The *Light Music for Strings*, a short work for string orchestra, is based on Catalan tunes. It was written for the Workers' Music Association and first performed in 1938. It is in three sections, the first an amiable *Allegro poco maestoso*, followed by an *Andante drammatico* interlude which leads into a jovial *Allegro vivace* final section. The provenance and date of the piece portray the composer's sympathies in the Spanish Civil War, an event which drew responses from many contemporary artists. Elsewhere Rawsthorne incorporated a snatch of the revolutionary song *Bandiera rossa* in the climax of the last movement of his *First Piano Concerto*, which also received its first performance in 1938.

A copy of the manuscript of the *Suite for Recorder and String Orchestra*, later orchestrated by John McCabe, came into the possession of the

Alan Rawsthorne Society in 1992, as a *Suite for Viola d'amore and Piano*. It dates from the 1940s and examination of the manuscript disclosed that this had almost certainly been adapted from a version for recorder. Mention of such a work had been made in an article in the musical press in 1940 in which it was stated that publication would have to be delayed 'owing to the present emergency'. The antique forms of the movements are congruent with an instrument readily associated with early music. Rawsthorne's very distinctive voice dispels any hint of pastiche. A short opening *Sarabande* is characteristically majestic, and nods in the direction of *La folia*. The *Fantasia* is composed on the English ballad *Woody-Cock*, to be found in the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. The *Air* is a graceful melody which is inverted in the middle section, and the work ends with a lively and unbuttoned *Jig*. The arrangement of the piano accompaniment for strings was undertaken by John McCabe for the Rawsthorne Trust.

The score of Rawsthorne's *Elegiac Rhapsody* bears the superscription *In Memoriam Louis MacNeice*. The poet, a friend of the composer, died in September 1963 and the first performance of this tribute was in January 1964. The *Rhapsody* consists of two elegiac elements stated at the outset, the first expressing sorrow and resignation, the second vehement protest. What follows is an exploration of their contrasting relationships and gives the work its rondo-like structure of alternating slow and quick sections,

with the slow sections becoming shorter as the work progresses, patterning the ebb and flow of grief. The first, sorrowful idea is spun out in Bartók-like threads on the high strings. The clamorous protest section, a deploration at *the dying of the light*, is marked *violento*. The emotional heart of the work comes in a sobbing, chordal episode, in which the composer displays his deepest feelings. This is a spontaneous, eloquent and solemn tribute from one artist to another.

Rawsthorne composed his *Divertimento for Chamber Orchestra* in 1961-2 for Harry Blech, who gave its first performance with the London Mozart Players in the latter year. The *Divertimento* has three movements, *Rondo*, *Lullaby* and *Jig* and is written for flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns and strings. The opening bars of the *Rondo* demonstrate characteristics found throughout Rawsthorne's music, limpid clarity, economy of expression and use of the basic materials and brevity of expression. Affectionate writing shows an innate understanding of the qualities of individual instruments. Rawsthorne was ever anxious to avoid false sentimentality, always eschewing anything remotely bogus. Even so the *Lullaby* is an unadorned expression of tenderness. The *Presto* final movement is a dynamic and very unwhimsical *Jig* which conveys something of the composer's wry wit and joviality.

John M. Belcher

## John Turner

After pursuing a distinguished legal career for many years, John Turner now devotes his attention to his earlier parallel career in music as a writer, reviewer, publisher and composer and, in particular, as a recorder-player, a field in which he has won a considerable reputation. From early experience with David Munrow's Early Music Consort of London, he has continued his activities as a performer in collaboration with leading English chamber orchestras and, in recent years, in concert tours in Europe and America and in appearances as a soloist with the Hallé and Royal Liverpool

## Rebecca Goldberg

Rebecca Goldberg studied the French horn with Michael Purton at the Royal Northern College of Music, thereafter pursuing a career as a free-lance player with major orchestras throughout the United Kingdom from her base in Manchester. She has held a position with the Northern Chamber Orchestra since 1987. Her interest in early music has taken her abroad,

## Conrad Marshall

Conrad Marshall graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music, winning the Hiles medal for orchestral playing. He has since pursued a varied career as a soloist, in chamber music and in orchestral work. For ten years he has served as principal flautist with the Northern Chamber Orchestra and has appeared as a soloist in a varied repertoire and in a number of recordings. He plays frequently with major

Philharmonic Orchestras. His interest in contemporary music is reflected in the concertos written for him and in some three hundred first performances, while his own compositions and editions have an essential place in present recorder repertoire. John Turner has taught at a number of universities and has taken an active part in other duties, notably as a trustee of various musical trusts, including the Alwyn Foundation and the Ida Carroll, Kenneth Leighton, Golland and Rawsthorne Trusts.

recording and touring with period ensembles, and she has returned to the Royal Northern College as tutor in natural horn. Her busy career has brought a variety of recitals and concerts, with a recent recording for the BBC of Ligeti's *Horn Trio*.

regional orchestras in the North West of England, including the Hallé, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and English National Opera North Orchestras and serves as visiting teacher at Sheffield University and the University College of St Martin in Lancaster, in addition to his busy activity as a private teacher. He plays a Brannen-Cooper flute.

## Northern Chamber Orchestra

Formed in 1967, the Northern Chamber Orchestra, based in Manchester, has established itself as one of England's finest chamber ensembles. Though often augmented to meet the requirements of the concert programme, the orchestra normally contains 24 musicians and performs both in concert and on disc without a conductor. With a repertoire ranging from the Baroque era to music of our time, the orchestra has gained a reputation for imaginative

programme planning. Concerts take the orchestra throughout the North of England and it has received four major European bursaries for its achievements in the community. For Naxos the orchestra has recorded among others Telemann's *Orchestral Suites* (Naxos 8.553791), the *Sinfonias* of Franz Ignaz Beck (Naxos 8.553790) and Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* (Naxos 8.553662).

## David Lloyd-Jones

David Lloyd-Jones began his professional career in 1959 on the music staff of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and soon became much in demand as a free-lance conductor. In 1972 he was appointed Assistant Music Director at the English National Opera and during his time in that position conducted an extensive repertory which included the first British performance of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*. In 1978, at the invitation of the Arts Council of Great Britain, he founded a new full-time opera company, Opera North, of which he became

Artistic Director, with its new orchestra, the English Northern Philharmonia. During his twelve seasons with the company he conducted fifty different new productions and numerous orchestral concerts, including festival appearances in France and Germany. He has made a number of very successful recordings of British and Russian music and has a busy career as a conductor in the concert-hall and the opera-house that has taken him to leading musical centres throughout Europe and the Americas.

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NAXOS RAWSTHORNE: Concerto for String Orchestra

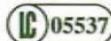
NAXOS

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STEREO

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# Alan RAWSTHORNE

(1905-1971)

## Orchestral Works

John Turner, Recorder

Conrad Marshall, Flute • Rebecca Goldberg, Horn

Northern Chamber Orchestra • David Lloyd-Jones, Conductor

DDD

Playing  
Time  
63:36

- |  |       |   |       |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| <b>Concerto for<br/>String Orchestra</b>                                   | 21:27 | <b>Suite for Recorder and<br/>String Orchestra*</b>         |       |
| <b>1</b> Largo maestoso –<br>Molto allegro                                 | 7:08  | <b>6</b> Sarabande: Maestoso                                | 6:34  |
| <b>2</b> Lento e mesto   | 7:41  | <b>7</b> Fantasia: Andante con moto                         | 1:29  |
| <b>3</b> Allegro piacevole   | 6:38  | <b>8</b> Air: Andante grazioso                              | 2:28  |
| <b>4</b> <b>Concertante pastorale<br/>for Flute, Horn<br/>and Strings*</b> | 10:01 | <b>9</b> Jig: Allegro                                       | 1:27  |
| <b>5</b> <b>Light Music for Strings<br/>(based on Catalan tunes)</b>       | 3:58  | <b>10</b> <b>Elegiac Rhapsody for<br/>String Orchestra*</b> | 10:14 |
|  |       | <b>Divertimento for<br/>Chamber Orchestra</b>               | 11:23 |
|  |       | <b>11</b> Rondo: Allegro moderato                           | 5:09  |
|  |       | <b>12</b> Lullaby: Allegretto                               | 2:41  |
|  |       | <b>13</b> Jig: Presto                                       | 3:33  |

\*denotes world première recording

*This compact disc was produced with kind support from the Rawsthorne Trust*

Recorded at Victoria Hall, Bolton, from 24th to 26th September, 1996.

Producer and Engineer: John Taylor

Music Notes: John Belcher


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NAXOS

RAWSTHORNE: Concerto for String Orchestra

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