

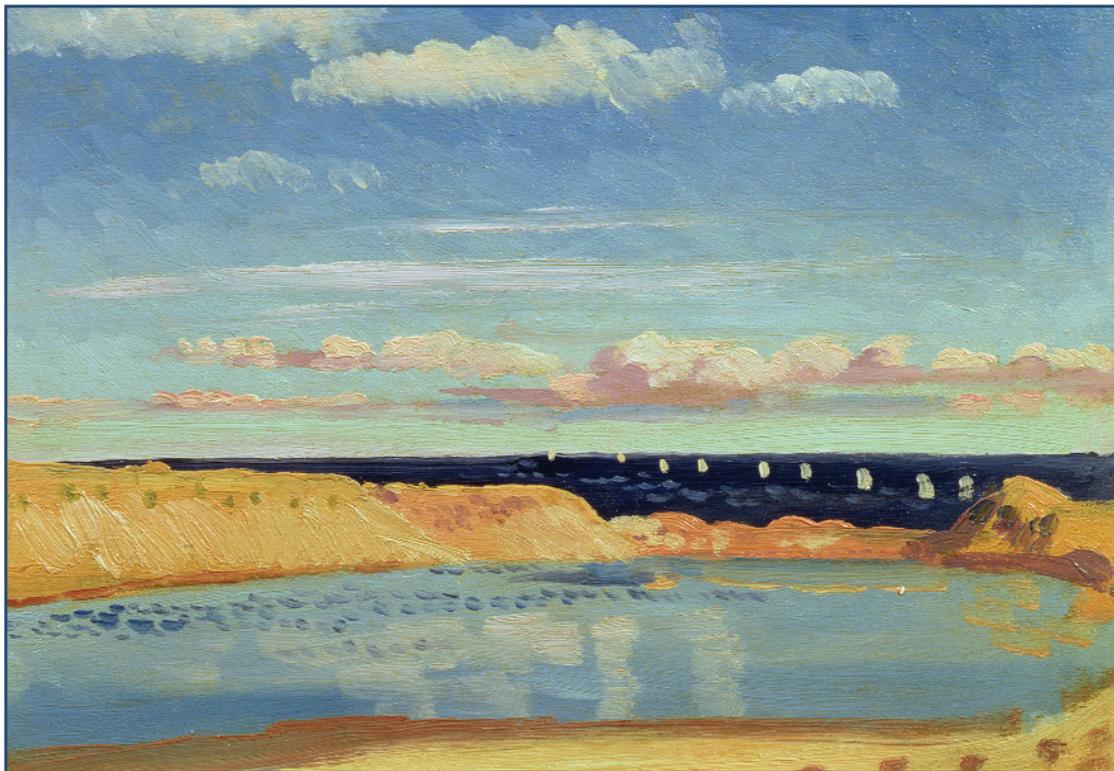
NAXOS

William  
**ALWYN**

**Symphony No. 4 • Sinfonietta**

**Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**

**David Lloyd-Jones**



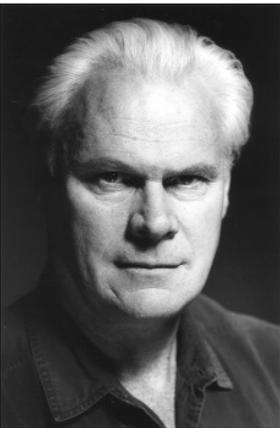
## Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra



The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra gives over sixty concerts from September to June in Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall and presents concerts throughout the United Kingdom, in addition to tours abroad. Members of the orchestra are involved in a number of innovative community education projects. One of the oldest concert-giving organizations in the world, the RLPO dates back to 1840. In 1957 it acquired the title 'Royal', and in 1991 it was the first organization to be granted the freedom of the City of Liverpool. The first professional conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic, in 1844, was Jakob Zeugheer, followed by Alfred Mellon, Max Bruch, Charles Hallé, Frederic Hymen Cowen, and Thomas Beecham. In 1942 Malcolm Sargent

became resident conductor, followed in 1948 by Hugo Rignold as music director. Subsequent incumbents have included Efrem Kurtz and John Pritchard, Walter Weller, David Atherton, Marek Janowski and Libor Pešek, the last appointment bringing a continuing connection with the Czech Republic. He was followed by Petr Altrichter, and Gerard Schwarz was appointed music director in 2001.

## 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 freelance conductor for orchestral and choral concerts, opera, BBC broadcasts and TV studio opera productions. He has appeared at the Royal Opera House (*Boris Godunov* with both Christoff and Ghaiurov), Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera and the Wexford, Cheltenham, Edinburgh and Leeds Festivals, and with the major British orchestras. In 1972 he was appointed Assistant Music Director at English National Opera, and during his time there conducted an extensive repertoire which included, in addition to all the standard operas, *Die Meistersinger*, *Katya Kabanova*, and the British stage première 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, with its own orchestra, the English Northern Philharmonia, of which he became Artistic Director and Principal Conductor. During his twelve seasons with the company he conducted fifty different new productions, including *The Trojans*, *Prince Igor*, *The Midsummer Marriage* (Tippett), and the British stage première of Strauss's *Daphne*. He also conducted numerous orchestral concerts, including festival appearances in France and

Germany. He has made many successful recordings of British and Russian music, and has an extensive career in the concert-hall and opera-house that takes him to leading musical centres throughout Central Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Israel, Australia, Japan, Canada and the Americas. His highly acclaimed cycle of Bax's symphonies and tone poems for Naxos (*Gramophone Award*) was completed in the autumn of 2003.

repetition on the strings. Gradually the tempo quickens with the bass subject stated chordally on the horns followed by the D major subject on trombones and cellos. This builds with ever quickening pace to the first orchestral climax at the Allegro. Now the lower strings and drum maintain a throbbing rhythm while a new melodic theme is heard on violins and oboe. Heralded by muted trumpet fanfares this builds to a bigger climax, then, after a *misterioso* passage for divided strings the music again hurries on to a return of the *maestoso* tempo – the brass blazing out a fortissimo motive against a long expressive melody on the high strings and woodwind. The movement slowly ebbs away with the drum persistent to the end.

“The second movement is an extended *Scherzo*. It plunges at once into a basic re-iterated rhythm on the note D, then strings and woodwind clothe the rhythm with a repeated D major scale passage while the trumpet insist on the four-note B flat counter-subject. Scale, rhythm and counter-subject continue to dominate the movement until a further modification of the scale passage is played as a lilting *giocoso* tune by the oboe against a strumming pizzicato accompaniment and soft staccato chords on the trombones. After further transformations a climax is reached then the music subsides on the rhythm now repeated on the note E flat. A pause introduces the *Trio* section – a variant of the Symphony’s opening motives quietly stated on the violins and then on two bassoons and developed until a direct re-statement of the opening bars of the Symphony leads back to a vigorous re-capitulation of the *Scherzo*. The movement closes with the rhythm – *furioso* and fortissimo.

“After the relentless energy of the *Scherzo*, the last movement forms a calm epilogue. The violins sing a serene melody derived from the preceding ideas which are now resolved into a theme and series of variations building to a climax when the basses pound out the *Scherzo* rhythm. This dies again to the long-drawn melody *molto tranquillo* on clarinet, horn and high violins. The final climax is reached *maestoso*, and the Symphony ends with horns, trombones and drums

triumphantly proclaiming the four-note subject in B flat.”

William Alwyn’s *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra*, completed in February 1970, resulted as a commission from the Arts Council of Great Britain, and had been originally intended for the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra which was due to give the first performance during its British tour the same year. The tour, however, never happened, so the first performance took place at that year’s Cheltenham Festival on 4th July given by the English Chamber Orchestra. At the time of the commission Alwyn was at work on his four-act opera *Juan, or the Libertine*, and saw the *Sinfonietta* as welcome relief from that undertaking. Of the *Sinfonietta* the composer says the following:

“The *Sinfonietta* centres round a quotation from Act I of Alban Berg’s opera *Lulu*, a phrase which has haunted me since I heard it and studied the score. But this is not a ‘twelve tone’ piece, nor is it intended as a tribute to Berg, though any composer who is honest acknowledges the debt he owes to genius. The reason for its inclusion is a personal one – a common bond of admiration for Berg shared with my friend, Dr Mosco Carner, who was much in my mind while I composed the work, and to whom it is dedicated.

The first movement is alternately vigorous and lyric; the second is simplicity itself – muted and reflective (the bars from *Lulu* follow a short canonic passage for solo violin, viola and cello); and the last movement, after a brief impetuous opening, develops into a complex fugue in varying *tempi*. All the fugal subjects derive from material heard in the previous movements and the interval of a major 7th is a characteristic feature. The *Sinfonietta*, culminating in a final passionate outburst, ends peacefully and diatonically.”

**Note compiled by Andrew Knowles  
with extracts by William Alwyn**

*Reprinted/reproduced with permission of  
the William Alwyn Foundation and  
the Syndics of the Cambridge University Library.*

## William Alwyn (1905–1985)

### Symphony No. 4 • Sinfonietta for String Orchestra

William Alwyn was born in Northampton on the 7th November 1905. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where, at the age of 21, he was appointed Professor of Composition, a position which he held for nearly thirty years. Amongst his works are five symphonies, concertos for flute, oboe, violin, and harp and two piano concertos, various descriptive orchestral pieces, four operas and much chamber, instrumental and vocal music. In addition to this Alwyn contributed nearly two hundred scores for the cinema. He began his career in this medium in 1936, writing music for documentaries. In 1941 he wrote his first feature length score for *Penn of Pennsylvania*. Other notable film scores include the following: *Desert Victory*, *The Way Ahead*, *The True Glory*, *Odd Man Out*, *The History Of Mr Polly*, *The Fallen Idol*, *The Rocking Horse Winner*, *The Crimson Pirate*, *The Million Pound Note*, *The Winslow Boy*, *The Card*, and *A Night To Remember*. In recognition of his services to the film medium he was made a Fellow of the British Film Academy, the only composer ever to have received this honour. His other appointments include serving as chairman for the Composers' Guild of Great Britain, which he had been instrumental in forming, in 1949, 1950 and 1954. He was a Director of the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society, a Vice-President of the Society for the Promotion of New Music (S.P.N.M.) and Director of the Performing Rights Society. For many years he was one of the panel reading new scores for the BBC. The conductor, Sir John Barbirolli, championed his first four symphonies and the *First Symphony* is dedicated to him.

Alwyn spent the last 25 years of his life in Blythbough, Suffolk, where, in those tranquil surroundings, he concentrated on two operas, *Juan*, or the *Libertine* and *Miss Julie*. In addition to chamber and vocal music, he composed his last major orchestral works there, the *Concerto Grosso No. 3*, commissioned as a tribute to Sir Henry Wood on the centenary of his birth in 1964 and

first performed at the London Promenade Concerts that year by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer, the *Sinfonietta for String Orchestra* in 1970 and the *Symphony No. 5 'Hydriotaphia'* during 1972-73. In 1978 he was awarded a CBE in recognition of his services to music. When not writing music he spent his time painting and writing poetry and an autobiography entitled *Winged Chariot*. He died on the 11th September 1985 just two months before his eightieth birthday.

*Symphony No. 4*, completed in 1959, forms the epilogue to Alwyn's projected cycle of four symphonies which he had begun in 1948, and had taken him a decade to complete. Another symphony (*No. 5, Hydriotaphia*) was to follow in 1973, but is not connected in anyway with the earlier works in this medium. A 'motto-theme' with the leaping interval of a seventh, which is first introduced at the beginning of the *First Symphony* and appears in various guises in all four works, reaches its apotheosis in the final section of the *Fourth*. The composer says the following of this work:

"Scored for a normal classic orchestra, the *Fourth Symphony* is cyclic in form; the thematic material exposed in the first movement is subjected to constant transformations and utilized in all three movements. An unusual feature is that the *Scherzo* is the central and most substantial movement. The work was first performed by Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra at a Sir Henry Wood Promenade concert in 1959.

"It begins pianissimo with the simultaneous statement of the two principal ideas, using the twelve semitones divided into two groups – a woodwind three-note ascending figure founded on a D major scale with and added G sharp, while the basses and pizzicato cellos play a slow counter-subject (F natural, B flat, C natural and E flat) thus giving an impression of dual tonality – D major and B flat major – the two key centers of the whole Symphony. The music slowly rises to a new lyrical subject sung by the whole orchestra which sinks to a quiet



8.557649

DDD

Playing Time  
55:04

© & © 2006 Naxos Rights International Ltd.  
Booklet notes in English  
Made in USA  
[www.naxos.com](http://www.naxos.com)

The works of the British composer William Alwyn include five symphonies, concertos, operas and more than two hundred film scores. Alwyn was an unashamed Romantic who preferred his music to appeal to the heart rather than to the head. His *Fourth Symphony*, considered by many to be his finest, is a work of great dynamism and excitement, with a number of thrilling brass-led fanfares. In contrast, the *Sinfonietta* is altogether more minimal and introvert, centred around a haunting phrase from the opera *Lulu* by Alban Berg, whom Alwyn greatly admired.



William  
**ALWYN**  
(1905–1985)

**Symphony No. 4 (1959)**

32:13

- |   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
| ① | <b>Maestoso ma con moto – Allegro – A tempo primo</b>                               | <b>10:16</b> |
| ② | <b>Molto vivace – Meno mosso, ma con moto – A tempo primo</b>                       | <b>10:28</b> |
| ③ | <b>Adagio e molto calmato – Poco più mosso – Allegro – A tempo primo – Maestoso</b> | <b>11:29</b> |

**Sinfonietta for String Orchestra (1970)**

22:51

- |   |  |             |
|---|--|-------------|
| ④ | <b>Moderato e molto ritmico</b>                              | <b>8:18</b> |
| ⑤ | <b>Adagio e poco rubato</b>                                  | <b>5:42</b> |
| ⑥ | <b>Allegro – Lento – Andante con moto – Allegro moderato</b> | <b>8:51</b> |

**Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**  
**David Lloyd-Jones**

**This recording was made with financial assistance from The William Alwyn Foundation**

Recorded in the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, UK from 2nd to 4th August, 2004 (Tracks 1-3) and on 4th January 2005 (Tracks 4-6) • Producers: Andrew Walton (K&A Productions Ltd.) (Tracks 1-3) & Tim Handley (Tracks 4-6) • Engineers: Mike Clements (Tracks 1-3) and Phil Rowlands (Tracks 4-6)

This recording was recorded and edited at 24bit resolution

Booklet Notes: Andrew Knowles • Publishers: Alfred Lengnick & Co., Ltd.

Cover Picture: *The Rock-Pool* by James Dickson Innes (1887-1914)

(Private Collection / Bridgeman Art Library)