

Nantwich and District Choral Society

presents a

BEETHOVEN CONCERT



with

The Manchester Mozart Orchestra
Leader: Fay Campey
Robin Leighton-Boyce (piano)

MASS in C
CHORAL FANTASIA
PIANO CONCERTO No.1

at

THE OAKLEY CENTRE, CREWE

on

Sunday, 14th March, 1982 at 8.00 p.m.

Ticket prices: £2.50, Students & O.A.P.'s £1.00, Family £5.00

PIANO CONCERTO No.1 in C Major

Allegro con brio
Largo
Rondo: allegro scherzando

BEETHOVEN

CHORAL FANTASIA

BEETHOVEN

INTERVAL

MASS in C

BEETHOVEN

Kyrie eleison
Gloria in excelsis
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

By one of those quirks of music history, the first piano concerto by Beethoven was actually written after the one we know as his second, over which it shows a considerable advance in many respects. In particular, it is written for a larger orchestra, including clarinets, trumpets and timpani, the role of the orchestra is expanded, and some indefinable likeness to the later Emperor concerto is evident. Written at the very end of the 18th century, this work more than any other paves the way for the development of the concerto in the following century.

Beethoven himself played the solo part at the first performance of both this concerto and the Choral Fantasia, and during the decade or so separating these two works his increasing reputation as a composer was matched by his fame as a virtuoso pianist. Sadly, the first performance of the Choral Fantasia was to be his last public appearance as a soloist, since his worsening deafness made further appearances impossible.

The Choral Fantasia is a unique work both in its structure and in the forces employed. Its single movement takes the form of an extended introduction for piano solo, followed by a set of variations for soloist and orchestra on the tune of an earlier song by Beethoven. The final variations introduce vocal soloists and then the choir, bringing the work to a triumphant conclusion. The words of the choral section are in praise of music, rather like Schiller's words in praise of freedom used later by Beethoven in his Choral Symphony. The melody too is similar to that later work, and also the device of a choral culmination to an orchestral work.

If the first piano concerto and the Choral Fantasia can both be seen as precursors of later works by Beethoven, so too can the Mass in C, written in 1807 and followed fifteen years later by the Missa Solemnis. This earlier work is remarkable for its lyricism, and though on a smaller scale than its successor shows considerable advances over masses in similar style by earlier composers in its key schemes and in the role of the chorus. Beethoven felt that he had set the text with a new insight; one immediately apparent feature is the return at the very end of the work of the lyrical tune of the opening, evoking so effectively the peace referred to in the words – dona nobis pacem.

SOLOISTS:

Robin Leighton Boyce (piano)
Marian Greensil (soprano)
Margaret Lindsay (mezzo-soprano)
Brian Greensill (tenor)
Nigel Waugh (bass)

Manchester Mozart Orchestra (leader Fay Campey)
Nantwich and District Choral Society

CONDUCTOR: Michael Bridger