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BATTLE MUSIC

Schlachtenmusik • Musique de bataille

Wellington's Victory • Battle of the Huns • Georgian War March
Hungarian Attack March • King Dodon on the Battlefield
Battle at Poltava • Richard III • Massacre at Kerzhentz

CSR Symphony Orchestra
(Bratislava)
Ondrej Lenard

1989 Recording | Playing Time : 72'36"

BATTLE MUSIC

Battle Symphony Opus 91
(Wellingtons Sieg oder Die Schlacht bei Vittoria) — Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Two Marches for Military Band

Hungarian Attack March
Battle of the Huns — Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Georgian War March
(from Iveria....) — Mikhail Mikhaylovich Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859 - 1935)

King Dodon on the Battlefield
(from The Golden Cockerel) — Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 - 1908)

Massacre at Kerzhentz
(from Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh) — Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 - 1908)

(Overture) Richard III — Robert Volkmann (1815 - 1883)

Battle of Poltava
(from Mazeppa) — Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893)

Music has a long and close association with warfare, whether in imitation, celebration or, as in Marco Polo's China, to strike fear into the heart of the enemy, a function apparently echoed by some orchestras today. Beethoven's much maligned Battle Symphony, Wellington's Victory or the Battle of Vittoria, is a piece of programme music, topical at the time of its composition in 1813, the year of the victory of the Duke of Wellington over the forces of Napoleon at Vittoria, and designed for a newly invented machine, the Panharmonicon.

The inventor Mälzel, Vienna court mechanician and later developer of the new pendulum metronome, had designed his machine on the lines of the traditional music-box, and planned Beethoven's addition to its repertoire as a further patriotic attraction. Circumstances led to a change of plan, and Beethoven was asked to orchestrate the work, free of the technical restrictions imposed by the Panharmonicon, for use in a charity concert in aid of those wounded at the battle of Hanau. The first performance of a work that won immediate popularity with the public was on 12th November in a programme that included, for the connoisseurs, the first performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, followed by Mälzel's Mechanical Trumpeter, with accompaniment by Dussek and by Pleyel. The event, intended to raise money also for the expenses of Mälzel and Beethoven in a planned journey to London, was important in drawing public attention to Beethoven and, at the second performance in December, raising more money. Beethoven quarrelled with Mälzel over the attribution of the piece, and the latter drew little advantage from the affair, and no credit for his part in planning the outline of the Battle Symphony, which Beethoven used for his sole profit in a third concert in January 1814. The work includes trumpet signals for battle from the English and French armies, Rule Britannia, Marlborough s'en va-t-en guerre, (otherwise known as For he's a jolly good fellow), gun-fire and a fugue based on God Save the King, and was dedicated to the Prince Regent, later George IV of England, in an effort by Beethoven to anticipate Mälzel's arrival in London and deprive him of any possible credit in the matter, which became a matter of litigation. The two Beethoven marches, characteristic of the mood and idiom of the time, were written in 1809 and 1810 for Archduke Anton.

Liszt's Second Hungarian march, the so-called Ungarischer Sturmmarsch, was originally written for the piano in 1843 and arranged for orchestra in 1875, making use of the Hungarian cimbalom in an emotively patriotic Hungarian context. The symphonic poem Die Hunnenschlacht, the Battle of the Huns, was written in 1857, one of the series of orchestral works in which Liszt, settled in Weimar as Director of Music Extraordinary to the Grand Duchy, sought to

translate into musical terms what one hostile critic described as the greatest productions of the human mind, a process that the same critic, Eduard Hanslick, found both impertinent and objectionable. The origin of Die Hunnenschlacht was a mural by Wilhelm von Kaulbach representing the great fifth century battle between Attila and his Huns and the Roman Emperor Theodoric, the chorale Crux fidelis representing the Christian victory.

The Russian composer Ippolitov-Ivanov, a graduate of Moscow Conservatory, spent a number of years in Georgia, an area the music of which he drew on in later life, after his return to Moscow, where he died in 1935. His preoccupation with the relatively exotic music of remoter republics in the Soviet Union and her neighbours continued an earlier tradition followed by nationalist composers such as Rimsky-Korsakov, whose exotic opera The Golden Cockerel, a controversial satire on the conduct of the Russo-Japanese war that earned him official displeasure, was completed in 1907, published in 1908 and only performed in Moscow in 1909, after the composer's death. Based on Pushkin, the plot concerns old King Dodon and the Astrologer's gift of a Golden Cockerel that crows at a hint of danger. When his sons are defeated in battle, the King goes to war himself, but is deterred from his projected attack by the appearance of a mysterious Queen, of whom he had dreamed, and who becomes his wife. She and the Golden Cockerel disappear, after the latter has killed the King, payment for his harsh treatment of the Astrologer, whom he has killed.

Rimsky-Korsakovs' Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya was completed in 1905 and first staged in Moscow in 1907. The battle of Kherzenetz, from the third act of the opera, represents the conflict between the soldiers of Kitezh, a city granted invisibility through the prayers of Fevroniya, and the Tartars, who had taken Fevroniya, wife of Prince Vsevolod, prisoner.

The plays of Shakespeare have provided composers and librettists with a ready source for opera and incidental music. Richard III has proved a less

popular subject than many, with only two later 19th century full operatic settings by minor composers. The Dresden composer Robert Volkmann, who died in Budapest in 1883 after spending some 35 years in the city, wrote incidental music for the play and a concert overture. Shakespeare's play ends with the battle of Bosworth at which Richard was defeated by Henry Tudor, the future Henry VII. The musical content of the overture makes its own surprising suggestion as to the national origin of some of the soldiery involved described by Shakespeare's hunchback King as "these bastard Bretons'.

Tchaikovsky based his opera Mazeppa, completed in 1883, on Pushkin's Poltava. The old hetman Mazeppa marries his goddaughter Mariya, the match opposed by the girl's father, who denounces Mazeppa to the Tsar as a traitor, but is not believed and handed back, a prisoner, to his son-in-law, to be put to death. The third act is introduced by music representing the battle of Poltava, in which Mazeppa, who has sided with Sweden against the Tsar, in the hope of establishing the independence of the Ukraine, has been defeated, later to meet again his young wife Mariya, who has heard of her father's cruel death and is now out of her mind. The battle symphonic tableau includes the hymn of the victorious army of Peter the Great, and the rout of the forces of Charles XII.

Czechoslovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava)

The Czechoslovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava), the oldest symphonic ensemble in Slovakia, was founded in 1929 at the instance of Milos Ruppeldt and Oskar Nedbal, prominent personalities in the sphere of music. The orchestra was first conducted by the Prague conductor František Dyk and in the course of the past fifty years of its existence has worked under the batons of several prominent Czech and Slovak conductors. Ondrej Lenard was appointed its conductor in 1970 and in 1977 its conductor-in-chief. The orchestra has given many successful concerts both at home and abroad, in West and East Germany, Russia, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Spain, Italy, and Great Britain. It records extensively for the Naxos and Marco Polo labels.

Ondrej Lenard

Ondrej Lenard was born in 1942 and had his early training in Bratislava, where, at the age of 17, he entered the Academy of Music and Drama, to study under Ludovit Rajter. His graduation concert in 1964 was given with the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra and during his two years of military service he conducted the Army Orchestral Ensemble, later renewing an earlier connection with the Slovak National Opera, where he has continued to direct performances.

Lenard's work with the Czechoslovak Radio Symphony Orchestra in Bratislava began in 1970 and in 1977 he was appointed Principal Conductor. At the same time he has travelled widely abroad in Europe, the Americas, the Soviet Union and elsewhere as a guest conductor, and during his two years, from 1984 to 1986, as General Music Director of the Slovak National Opera recorded for Opus operas by Puccini, Gounod, Suchon and Bellini.

For Naxos Lenard has recorded symphonies by Tchaikovsky and works by Glazunov, Johann Strauss II, Verdi and Rimsky-Korsakov.

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Playing Time : 72'36"

BEETHOVEN: Wellington's Victory Op. 91

1. The Battle (8:11)
2. Victory Symphony (6:35)

BEETHOVEN: Two Marches for Military Band

3. No. 1 (1:25)
4. No. 2 (1:43)
5. LISZT: Hungarian Attack March (4:44)
6. LISZT: Battle of the Huns (16:03)
7. IPPOLITOV-IVANOV: Georgian War March (from Iveria Op. 42) (6:21)
8. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: King Dodon on the Battlefield (from Le Coq d'Or) (4:21)
9. RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Massacre at Kerzhentz (from The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh) (3:35)
10. VOLKMANN: Richard III Overture (14:53)
11. TCHAIKOVSKY: The Battle at Poltava (from Mazeppa) (5:53)

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Recorded at the Concert Hall of the Czechoslovak Radio (Bratislava) from 14th to 15th Feb. and 31st March to 3rd April, 1989.
Producer: Günter Appenheimer
Music Notes: Keith Anderson

Cover: Scotland for Ever
(Painting by Lady Elizabeth Butler)

℗ 9158

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