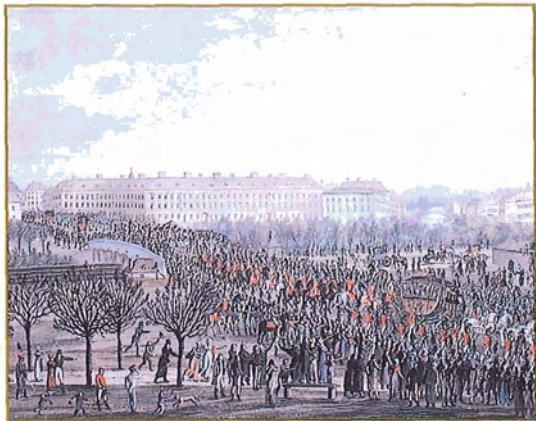# MAJESTIC MARCHES

Berühmte Märsche • Marches célèbres

Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra
Richard Hayman

Majestic Marches

The March has an inevitable part to play in human history. Marco Polo remarked on the use of music by the armies of China to terrify the enemy before a battle. Military music, however, has a more precise purpose, whatever alarm it may strike into the hearts of those who hear it. Drums and trumpets may serve as useful signals, to advance or retreat, to eat or to sleep. The same instruments and their near relations may serve to keep an army moving together, and may serve to inspire feelings of bravery and patriotism. At the same time a march can provide at suitable accompaniment to an occasion of solemnity, a wedding, a funeral or a state ceremony.

The Napoleonic Wars, with nations in arms to a greater extent than ever before in Europe, provided a stimulus for military music and injected a martial element into much of the music of the concert hall. Beethoven, after all, achieved one of his greatest popular successes with the appalling Wellington's Victory, his Battle Symphony. Since Napoleon the March has never looked back.

The present collection of Majestic Marches opens with Wagner's ceremonial march for the entry of the nobles at the singing contest of the Wartburg in his opera Tannhäuser. During the 1914-1918 War the French composer Ravel, representative of a younger generation, suggested that Saint-Saëns would have been better employed in a munitions factory than writing music. His French Military March marks an earlier patriotic occasion, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

The Russian composer Ippolitov-Ivanov was a product of the country's academic tradition, as it developed in the later 19th century. He spent some time in Georgia, where he re-organised the Tblisi Conservatory, and this is reflected to some extent in music such as the Procession of the Sardar, the commander's march from his first Suite of Caucasian Sketches, Opus 10.

Giacomo Meyerbeer, whose work dominated French grand opera in the middle of the 19th century, was born at Vogelsdorf, near Berlin, in 1791, the

son of a rich and cultured Jewish businessman, Jakob Herz Beer. Contracting his own name to Meyerbeer, and substituting Giacomo for Jakob, he established himself at first in Italy, where his operas enjoyed considerable success, following this with a series of works for Paris, culminating in the spectacular L'africaine, mounted in Paris after the composer's death in 1864. The Coronation March is taken from Meyerbeer's opera Le prophète, based on the curious Anabaptist attempt at primitive communism in Münster in the 16th century.   The opera ends with the Münster palace in flames, the Anabaptists opposing their leader blown to pieces by an exploding powder magazine, and a general conflagration that consumes the prophet of the title, John of Leyden.

Tchaikovsky's first ballet, completed in 1876, was Swan Lake, on a subject that had inspired him to amateur performance at home, on one occasion with the assistance of the French composer Saint-Saëns. The second of the three complete ballets. The Sleeping Beauty, scores was completed in 1889, to be followed in 1892 by Nutcracker, composed with greater reluctance. Sleeping Beauty opens with the March included here, for the King and nobility, at the christening of the princess, where the whole trouble arises.   Matters are later put to rights in the third act, with a Wedding March to celebrate the revival of the princess and her marriage to her rescuer. The act goes on to provide a rich series of divertissements, peopled by well known fairy-story characters, however inappropriate to the occassion. Majestic Marches includes a further example of Tchaikovsky's music in his Marche solennelle, originally known as the Serbo-Russian March and later as the Slavonic March, a patriotic work written in 1876. The occasion of the composition, which includes Serbian themes as well as snatches of the Russian national anthem, was the war against Turkey in the Balkans, when Russia came to the assistance of Serbia and Montenegro.

The Norwegian composer Johannes Hanssen is remembered nowadays chiefly for the Valdres March, followed here by Rimsky-Korsakov's Procession of the Nobles. Rimsky-Korsakov was a naval officer by original profession and later an Inspector of Bands in the Imperial Russian Navy. His Procession of

the Nobles from the opera Mlada, is a characteristic example of a kind of music with which the composer must have been very familiar. Mlada, set in pagan Russia, takes its title from the spectral bride, who returns, after being murdered by her rival, to take her proper revenge. The opera was first staged in 1892.

The Austrian composer Suppé might well be remembered for the extravagance of his full name, Francesco Ezechiele Ermenegildo Cavaliere Suppé Demelli. He was born in 1819 in Spalato (the modern Split) in Dalmatia, then under Austria, and moved to Vienna in 1835 after his father's death. There he established himself as a leading composer of operetta and director of music at the Theater an der Wien. In 1865 he moved to the Carltheater where his operetta Fatinitza was first staged in January, 1876.

The Merry Widow by Franz Lehár suggests the waltz rather than the march, although the complications of its plot have a patriotic basis in the laudable attempts of Baron Mirko Zeta to acquire the Merry Widow's fortune for the depleted coffers of his country, Pontevedria.

The music of Alfred Newman, a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg, enters another world, that of the cinema. In Hollywood he provided music for some 250 films, serving as conductor, composer and arranger. He is represented here by a triumphal march and a prelude from the film Captain from Castile, made in 1947. He is likely to be further remembered for his scores for Wuthering heights, The prisoner of Zenda, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and The Robe, from a career that started with music for Chaplin's City lights and ended with the score for Airport in 1969.

The Norwegian violinist and composer Johan Halvorsen was closely involved with the theatre, as director of music at the Bergen Theatre and subsequently at the Christiania National Theatre from 1899 until 1929. His march for the entry of the Boyars, the ancient Russian nobility, was written in 1895, during his tenure at the theatre in Bergen.

Léo Delibes sang as a boy in the first performance of Meyerbeer's opera Le prophète in Paris in 1849 and found his own early success as a composer in the field of operetta. In 1870 he won a new reputation for himself with his ballet

Coppélia. The even less probable ballet Sylvia, or The Nymph of Diana, was staged in Paris in 1876. The story is drawn from Ariosto and deals with the love of the shepherd Amyntas for Sylvia, dedicated to the chaste service of the huntress goddess Diana, hardly favoured by the god of wine Bacchus, whose procession is here celebrated. Love, with material assistance from Eros, finally triumphs.

Prokofiev's opera Love for Three Oranges was written in 1919 with a libretto by the composer based on the 18th century play by the Venetian dramatist Gozzi. The Prince, cured of his inability to laugh by the stumbling of the wicked Fata Morgana, is cursed and sent in search of three oranges guarded by a bass-singing giantess. Successful in his search, he opens each, to find a beautiful princess in each. The first two die, when the Prince cannot satisfy their thirst, but the third is revived with a bucket of water and the Prince would have married her at once, had she not been transformed into a rat. The march is included in the popular suite Prokofiev made from the opera.

Mendelssohn's Wedding March is too well known to need explanation. It was written in 1842 for performances of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream at Potsdam and Berlin and celebrates the final wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta, the noble human framework of a fairy play that gave the composer full scope for evocative music of translucent texture. The Wedding March brought the first night audience to its feet and even Wagner was induced to offer the composer his congratulations.

The Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra

The Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra has benefited considerably from the work of its distinguished conductors. These include Vaclav Talich (1949 - 1952), Ludovit Rajter, Ladislav Slovak and Libor Pešek. Zdeněk Košler has also had a long and distinguished association with the orchestra and has conducted many of its most successful recordings, among them the complete symphonies of Dvorák.

During the years of its professional existence the Slovak Philharmonic has worked under the direction of many of the most distinguished conductors from abroad, from Eugene Goossens and Malcolm Sargent to Claudio Abbado, Antal Dorati and Riccardo Muti. The orchestra has undertaken many tours abroad, including visits to Germany and Japan, and has made a large number of recordings for the Czech Opus label, for Supraphon, for Hungaroton and, in recent years, for the Marco Polo and Naxos labels. These recordings have brought the orchestra a growing international reputation and praise from the critics of leading international publications.

Richard Hayman

America's favourite "Pops" conductor, Richard Hayman is Principal "Pops" Conductor of the Saint Louis, Hartford and Grand Rapids symphony orchestras, of Orchestra London Canada and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and also held that post with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for many years.

For over 30 years, Mr. Hayman served as the chief arranger for the Boston Pops Orchestra during Arthur Fiedler's tenure, providing special arrangements for dozens of their hit albums and famous singles. Under John Williams' direction, the orchestra continues to program his award-winning arrangements and orchestrations.

Now residing in New York City, Mr. Hayman's work is in constant demand, in every medium of musical expression, from Boston to Hollywood. Though more involved with the symphony orchestra circuit, Mr. Hayman has served as musical director and/or master of ceremonies for the tour shows of many popular entertainers: Kenny Rogers, Johnny Cash, Olivia Newton-John, Tom Jones, Engelbert Humperdinck, The Carpenters, The Osmonds, Al Hirt, Andy Williams and many others.

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STEREO

MAJESTIC MARCHES

Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra
Richard Hayman

DDD

Playing
Time :
68'07"

1	WAGNER: Festive March from Tannhäuser	(6:32)
2	SAINT-SAËNS: Marche militaire	(4:54)
3	IPPOLITOV-IVANOV: Procession of the Sardar from Caucasian Sketches	(3:52)
4	MEYERBEER: Coronation March from The Prophet	(3:48)
5	TCHAIKOVSKY: March from Sleeping Beauty	(3:28)
6	HANSSEN: Valdres March	(3:36)
7	RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: Procession of the Nobles from Mlada	(4:41)
8	SUPPÉ: March from Fatinitza	(2:29)
9	TCHAIKOVSKY: Marche solennelle	(5:02)
10	LEHÁR: Merry Widow March	(3:37)
11	NEWMAN: Conquest (Triumphal March from Captain from Castile)	(3:33)
12	HALVORSEN: Entry of the Boyars	(4:44)
13	DELIBES: Cortège of Bacchus (from the ballet Sylvia)	(6:02)
14	PROKOFIEV: March from Love for Three Oranges	(1:47)
15	MENDELSSOHN: Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream	(6:22)
16	NEWMAN: Prelude (from Captain from Castile)	(3:40)

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