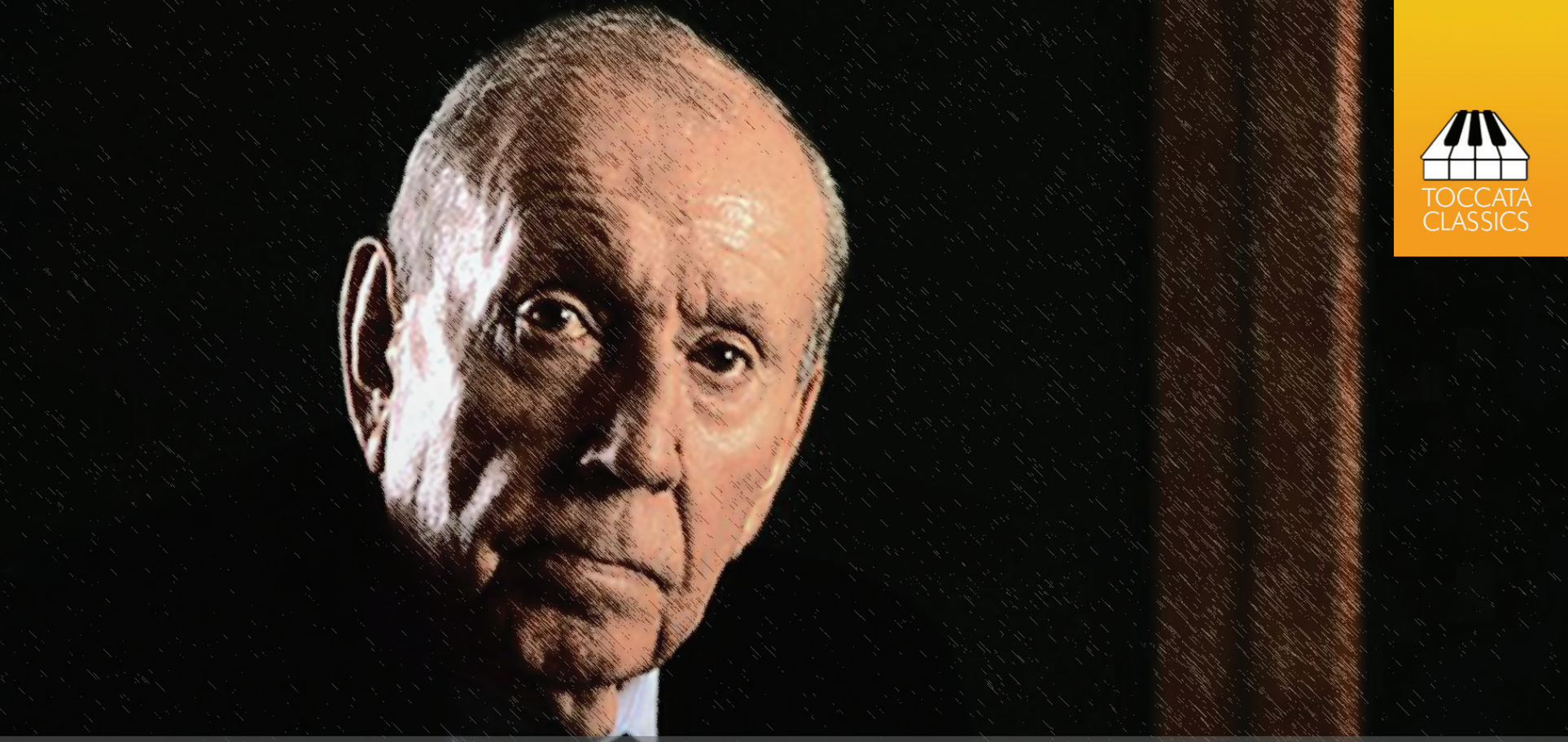


TOCCATA CLASSICS

Malcolm ARNOLD

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC

GRAND CONCERTO GASTRONOMIQUE, OP. 76
SYMPHONY NO. 9, OP. 128

Anna Gorbachyova-Ogilvie, soprano
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra
John Gibbons, conductor

INCLUDES FIRST RECORDING

MALCOLM ARNOLD – LAUGHTER AND TEARS

by Timothy Bowers

The two works on this disc could hardly be more different. The *Grand Concerto Gastronomique for Eater, Waiter, Food and Large Orchestra*, Op. 76, came from a very productive period in the composer's life and is hugely entertaining. Symphony No. 9, Op. 128 (1986), dates from the final period in Arnold's compositional career – a sudden resurgence of creativity after a fallow period. In spite of its seemingly simple themes and textures, it is an emotionally complex and deeply moving work.

Grand Concerto Gastronomique
***for Eater, Waiter, Food and Large Orchestra*, Op. 76 (1961)**

Arnold's Op. 76 is a concerto that is unlike any other in his considerable output. The work has received very few performances, and this recording is its first. The *Grand Concerto Gastronomique for Eater, Waiter, Food and Large Orchestra*, to give it its full title, dates from 1961, the year of Arnold's Fifth Symphony. The connection between the two works is the musician, cartoonist and comic genius Gerard Hoffnung (1925–59), whose untimely death had a profound impact on Arnold, as did the loss of three other friends who are also commemorated in the Fifth Symphony. Malcolm Arnold was a key player in the launch of the Hoffnung Festival concerts. He composed *A Grand Grand Overture*, Op. 57, for the first Festival in 1956, *United Nations for Military Bands, Organ and Orchestra* for the Hoffnung Interplanetary Festival in 1958, *Carnival of Animals*, Op. 72, for a Hoffnung Memorial Concert in 1960, and two works for the final UK Hoffnung Festival – the Astronautical Music Festival of 1961. In addition to the *Grand Concerto Gastronomique*, Arnold rewrote Beethoven by creating the overture *Leonora No. 4 (Beethoven-Strasse)*. Perhaps the designation of an opus number to the *Grand Concerto Gastronomique* and to the *Carnival of*

Animals is an indication that they are more than merely *pièces d'occasion*. Compared to the parody-based *Leonora No. 4*, the *Grand Concerto* is an altogether more interesting piece. There is a small amount of quotation and parody in it, but plenty of original Arnold in humorous vein. Even though the staging is important to the humour of the piece, this recording demonstrates that it is possible to enjoy the work for its musical pleasures alone.

The 'Large Orchestra' is in fact the standard Arnold full orchestra: double woodwind plus piccolo; four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba; timpani; percussion (two players); harp and strings, with the addition of an off-stage soprano in the fifth movement. The inclusion of 'food' amongst the list of soloists is something that listeners may find hard to swallow. Surely it is the off-stage chef who deserves the credit, not least because the brief third movement – roast beef – must be (according to the score) 'repeated and repeated slower and slower until all is finished' and the plate of food must be 'enormous'. These requirements mean that the approximate timing of fifteen minutes cannot be relied upon. The name of the chef at the first performance is unknown. The eater and waiter were the actors Henry Sherek and Tutte Lemkow. Morley College provided the orchestra and the composer conducted. The date of the premiere, which took place at the Royal Festival Hall, was 28 November 1961, less than a month after the score was completed.

Purely formally, the work bears no relation to any of Arnold's other *concertante* works. The music is, to some extent, descriptive, and so the structures used are self-contained or episodic.

The first movement, entitled 'Prologue' 1, opens with wind fanfares and a series of comic gestures that announce that something is about to happen. It does. The Eater and Waiter arrive and enact a 'ceremonial napkin display'[1] to the accompaniment of a little march. Oysters are served. The metre changes to $\frac{12}{8}$. The sea is evoked by gently undulating pentatonic string chords and woodwind cascades overlaid by rapid harp *glissandi*. Mock-heroic horn calls are echoed by trombones and trumpets. The

[1] The wording is taken from the score.

music rises to a stormy climax. Then the waiter performs a brief $\frac{3}{8}$ dance in Spanish style, using the oyster shells as castanets. The music is reminiscent of Don Diego's aria and the finale of Arnold's one-act opera *The Dancing Master*, Op. 34 (1952).

The second movement is entitled 'Soup (Brown Windsor[2])' 2. The introductory fanfares of the first movement are heard again, this time quietly. The main movement is very brief; a fast waltz that is thickly scored and unappealing (both presumably in homage to the soup). The joke is that the waiter stands over the eater 'ready to whip away plate and dash out'.[3]

Arnold's 'Roast Beef' movement 3 is a simple march over a walking bass. It is interesting to compare this march with the march in the finale of the *Concerto for 28 Players*, Op. 105 (1970). The gestures are very similar – the diatonic bass-line and unison string melody above, both redolent of Elgar's marches – and yet the effect could hardly be more different; here Arnold writes a warmly effective portrait of 'Englishness', but in Op. 105 the march is a desolate comment on human conflict. The number of repetitions of this march is in the hands of the Eater, who is free to choose between scoffing the food as quickly as possible for the sake of the players and the audience, or savouring every morsel at the risk of emulating Satie's notorious piano piece *Vexations*.

The fourth movement, 'Cheese' 4, begins with fanfares in the winds and brass, with syncopated notes in the lower strings. Eventually the upper strings join in with an ascending tremolando scale accompanied by trills in the upper winds. The direction asks for the waiter to uncover the cheese, at which point it explodes!

The fifth movement, 'Peach Melba' 5, features a wordless vocalist singing the melody of Gounod's *Ave Maria*, that saccharine obbligato pasted over Bach's first Prelude from *Das wohltemperierte Klavier*, Book 1. The quotation is a homage to the singer Dame Nellie Melba (1861–1931). The dish – Peach Melba – was created by a French chef, Auguste Escoffier, in 1892 or 1893 at the Savoy Hotel, London, in honour of the Australian diva. Arnold's humour lies in the orchestration. The harp plays Bach's broken chords. A solo vibraphone outdoes the celestial quality of the voice by doubling the

[2] A thick meat-and-onion soup thought to have been a favourite of Queen Victoria.

[3] Wording from the score.

melody an octave above. Thickly scored string chords sustain the harmony and slide back and forth, in a suggestion of queasiness that is reinforced by sliding woodwind figures and even a timpani roll. The effect is crowned by a swelling brass chord in the final bar.

The finale is headed 'Coffee, Brandy. Epilogue' 6. To the sound of muffled timpani, bongos, tambourine, harp *près de la table*[4] and low strings, all playing a rhythmic ostinato, a solo oboe declaims an exotic melody. It is interrupted by the opening fanfares as the waiter presents the brandy 'in an enormous balloon glass'. The little march from the first movement is treated to a gentle variation in $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Then, as the eater takes his leave, the tune is once more martial, this time combined with the swirling arpeggios of the sea-music. All musical issues are now resolved, but not – it would seem – the financial ones. The waiter searches for his tip, finds that there isn't one, kicks the table over and leaves. All of this action is portrayed in quick-fire quasi-cinematic writing, though Arnold takes the trouble to sign-off where he began – in the key of A major.

Symphony No. 9 in D major, Op. 128 (1986)

If there is such a thing as music written 'beyond the grave', we obviously cannot hear it, though anyone listening to Deryck Cooke's reconstruction of Mahler's Tenth Symphony might be forgiven for imagining that they can. But there are cases – Arnold's Ninth Symphony and Alfred Schnittke's Ninth, for example – of works written by composers who had suffered a lifetime of debilitating illness, whose final symphonic testament was written against all odds, resulting in works that are pared down to the barest essentials. Schnittke's infirmity was mainly physical, after a series of disabling strokes. Arnold's mental state of heath affected his compositional process, especially the ability to write anything beyond two-part counterpoint, block chords, complex non-diatonic harmony and repetitions without development.

The circumstances of the composition of the work are complex: a commission that lapsed after a catastrophic breakdown following a suicide attempt and a long period of recuperation. But eventually Arnold felt able to resume composition after this long silence, and a workshop performance paved the way for the first performance. That took place on 20 January 1992, in Studio 5 of BBC Manchester; the BBC Philharmonic

[4] Close to the soundboard – giving the sound a guitar-like quality.

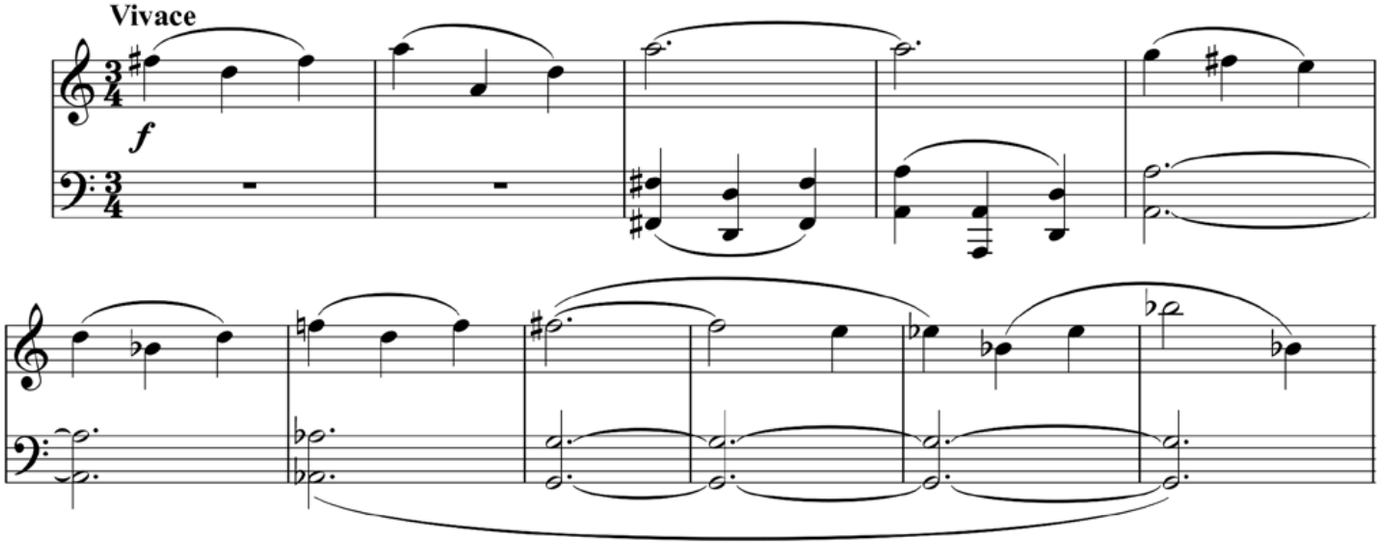
Orchestra was conducted by Sir Charles Groves, a long-standing champion of Arnold's music, and a personal friend.

Was Arnold, like Bruckner and Mahler before him, haunted by the prospect of reaching the magic number nine to complete his cycle? There are parallels between Arnold's symphonic cycle and Beethoven's: a boldly original first symphony; a more expansive third; an epic fifth and seventh; a shorter, seemingly relaxed eighth. The composition of a Ninth Symphony, on a larger scale than its predecessors, one that breaks new ground and is more searching and profound than anything that had preceded it, would therefore meet the highest expectations. Arnold's Ninth in many ways fits that description, but it is built on simple ideas presented with atypical austerity. The expressive power of the work therefore lies in Arnold's most potent musical gifts; the power of simple, instantly memorable themes; their placement within the framework of the symphony and the ways in which different orchestral colourings lend meaning to their many reprises; and effective contrapuntal writing. The manner is therefore simpler and more direct than before, taking up an approach to symphonic thinking that is already evident in the finale of the Eighth Symphony. Had Arnold composed the Ninth immediately after the Eighth (as he was due to do) before his breakdown, the work would surely have turned out differently. Without hearing a note of the Ninth, one can be moved by the very fact that it exists at all. Hearing it, many (myself included) may understand it as a work in which Arnold achieves a purity and directness of expression that is sufficient to carry a depth of meaning well beyond the seemingly illusive content on the page.

Symphonies that end with a slow movement are rare. Some of the greatest can be found in Haydn's middle-period symphonies (little known until recently), but it was Tchaikovsky's Sixth (the 'Pathétique') and Mahler's Ninth that influenced twentieth-century composers. It was the first time in his symphonic cycle that Arnold ended with a slow movement. It is the heart of the work and lasts roughly as long as the preceding three movements put together.

Arnold's Symphony No. 9 is in the key of D major. The first movement, marked *Vivace* 7, opens with an airy triple-time theme (the time-signature for the whole movement) that glitters with the colouring of harp and glockenspiel added to violins and upper woodwind (Ex. 1).

Ex. 1



The simple triadic harmony and expressive turns of the opening bars prove deceptive. A degree of tonal/harmonic ambiguity sets in as the music veers towards E minor. The texture is almost entirely two-part counterpoint (there is just one passage of three-part writing). The dynamic remains at *forte,* though the scoring is light. The triadic motif is not developed. Arnold picks up one figure after another in a chain formation leading to a syncopated passage that is taken over by high trumpets and tuba in four-part harmony. The opening section lasts for 53 bars and ends in B minor. The whole section is heard again at the end of the movement, starting at bar 449 and extended by a coda that forces the music to a tonic resolution. The reprise is played *fortissimo*, at half-speed, and is more fully scored. It might therefore be reasonably termed a *ritornello*, though the listener cannot perceive this relationship until the end of the movement. The reference to concerto form is apt because the central 395 bars of the movement are a series of soloistic episodes – never rising to more than two rhythmically independent parts and very thinly scored – which follow on from the syncopated passage and explore the material of the opening in many directions. There is some cross-reference between these 'panels' but no obvious sense of formal structure. In spite of the lack of rhythmic drive inherent in the material (except perhaps for the widespread use of syncopation),

the music is playful, its breeziness only occasionally disturbed by dissonance and tonal non-sequiturs. Much use is made of the harmonic tension created by lines moving by step in contrary motion. Indeed, the reprise of Ex. 1 is heralded by nothing more than twenty bars of dotted-minim flute dyads, which slow down the pace, paving the way for a four-bar crescendo on the tonic note scored for brass and timpani. Yet, in defiance of anything that can be explained or justified through musical analysis, the reprise seems inevitable at that point. It rounds off a movement that is unlike anything in Arnold's (or any other composer's) symphonic *œuvre*, and far removed from the momentous opening movements of the Ninths of Beethoven, Bruckner, Mahler and any other of the 'greats' of symphonic literature.

The second movement, marked *Allegretto*, is in $\frac{9}{8}$ time $\boxed{8}$. It is in the key of E minor, an unusual key-relationship with the home key (D major) of the work, but one that has already been explored towards the opening of the first movement. Written almost entirely in two-part counterpoint, the movement is based on a theme given to a solo bassoon (Ex. 2) – among Arnold's most haunting. Its simplicity is reliant on the octave descent and resolution of modal ambiguity via the F sharp used at the cadence point. The Table outlines the form of the movement.

Ex. 2

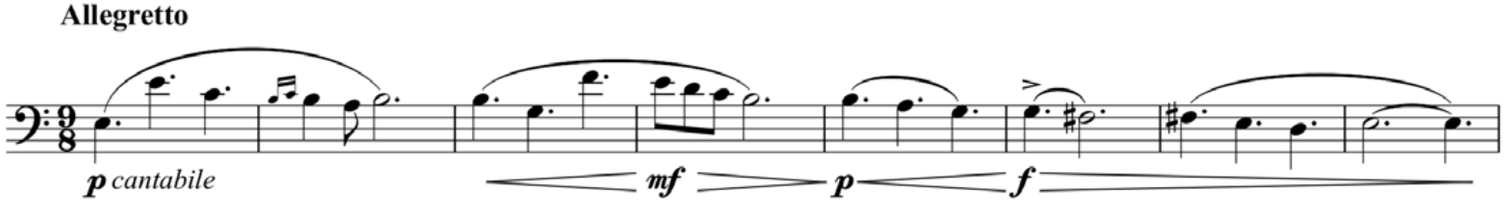


Table
Arnold: Symphony No. 9, second movement – form

Bar	*Musical material*	*Scoring (Theme)*	*Scoring (Countermelodies)*
1	Theme	bassoon	–
9	Theme + four-bar codetta First countermelody	bassoon	flute
21	Theme Second countermelody	piccolo	cellos/basses
29	Theme in canon	strings (lower strings lead)	–
38	Theme + third countermelody	oboe	lower strings
46	First variation	strings (two-part for four bars, then unison, with brass taking over counterpoint)	–
54	Theme + fourth countermelody	flute	bassoon
62	Second variation (based on fourth countermelody)	flute/bassoon in octaves	–

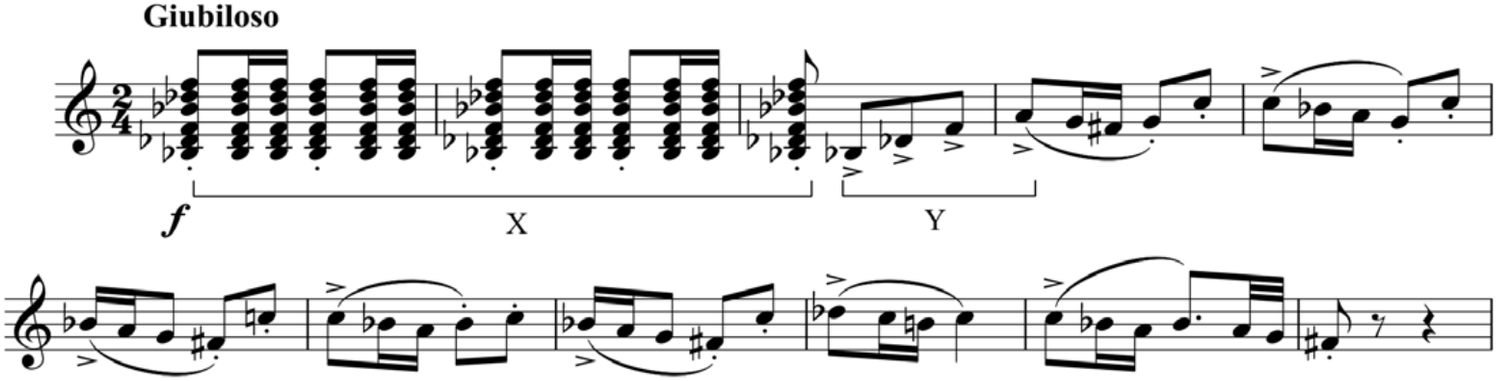
70	Theme + four-bar codetta First countermelody	cellos/violas	violins
83	Theme Second countermelody	violins	lower strings
90	Third variation + four-bar codetta	clarinet/horn	–
102	Fourth variation (twelve bars)	flute/bassoon	–
114	Fifth variation (eleven bars)	trumpet/tuba + harp	–
125	Theme + three-bar codetta Second countermelody	violins	lower strings
136	Fifth variation (eleven bars) (repeats bars 114–24)	trumpet/tuba + harp	–
147	Sixth variation	piccolo/cellos and basses	–
158	Theme	clarinets/bassoons/ horns/ violas/cellos	–
166	Theme + four-bar codetta First countermelody (bars 9–20 repeated)	bassoon	flute

178	Theme Second countermelody (bars 21–28 repeated with different scoring)	oboe	cellos/basses
186	Theme in canon (bars 29–37 repeated)	strings (lower strings lead)	–
195	Second variation (bars 62–69 repeated)	flute/bassoon in octaves	–
203	Theme Second countermelody (bars 83–89 repeated)	violins	lower strings
211	First variation (bars 46–53 repeated)	strings (two-part for four bars, then unison, with brass taking over counterpoint)	–
219	Theme Second countermelody (bars 21–28 repeated)	piccolo	cellos/basses
227	Third variation + four-bar codetta (bars 90–101 repeated)	clarinet/horn	–
239–47	Theme (bars 1–8 repeated; final note held for an extra bar)	Bassoon (harp colours first note)	–

This movement bears comparison with the slow movement of Arnold's Third Symphony, which is in the same key. Both movements fall somewhere between the categories of passacaglia and variation form. The recurring final cadence on E creates a sense of something claustrophobic. In the Third Symphony the accumulation of E minor cadences becomes increasingly harrowing. Here they serve to emphasise the sense of solitude, an effect enhanced by the use of exact repetition (something that Arnold avoided in the preceding symphonies) and the severity of the modal idiom, which is rarely inflected by chromaticism, and only then in the context of a non-modulating tonal scheme. In this movement Arnold makes many repetitions of a short theme viable by displacing the eight-bar 'loop' with short extensions at strategic points. In the Third Symphony there are many *forte* passages, though they do not occur in a pattern that suggests a formal narrative. Here the only *forte* passages are in the fifth variation, which frames the most richly scored statement of the theme, creating some sort of centre to the movement. The repetitions which follow therefore suggest a loose ternary structure, though it is not comparable to the subtle palindromic schemes of the earlier symphonies.

The start of the third movement, *Giubiloso* 9, is perhaps the only echo of anything from earlier in the symphonic cycle:[5] a brisk rhythmic fanfare in B flat minor (Ex. 3) for trumpets and trombones (X), which launches an invigorating theme with a head-motif (Y) that provides a motivic link to other themes in the movement.

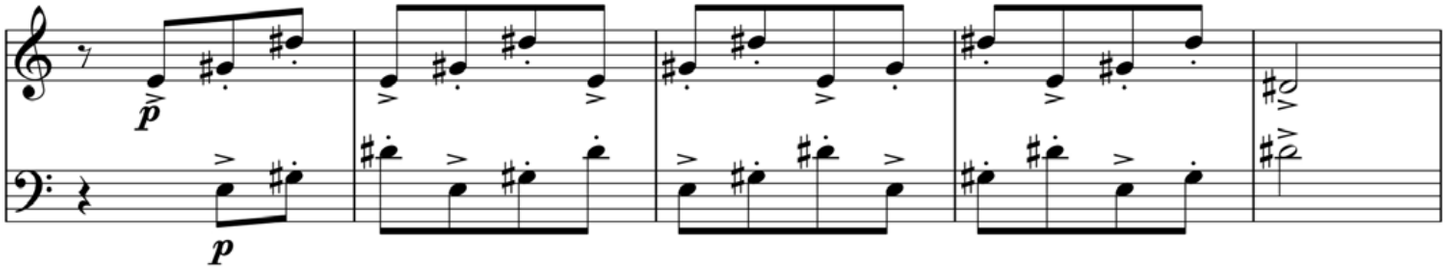
Ex. 3



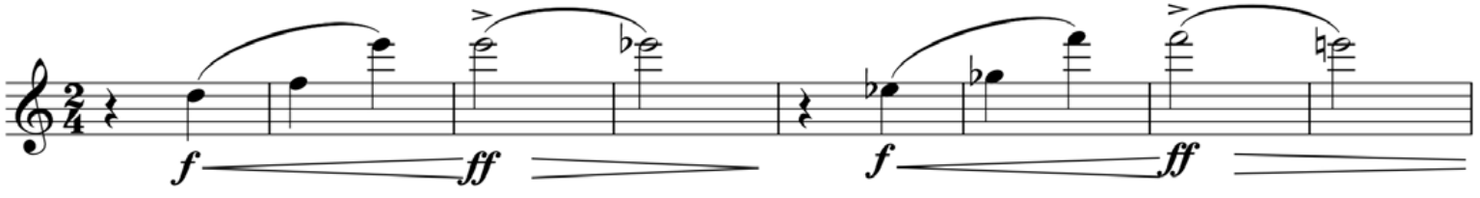
[5] For instance, the opening of the finales of Nos. 4 and 6.

Arnold had a unique gift of creating the impression of a full-orchestral sound-world from very simple textures through brilliantly incisive scoring. Was the tempo marking and opening figure perhaps a distant memory of the final dance of the second set of *English Dances*? As elsewhere, the writing is mainly in two parts, with some rhythmically simple chordal passages and instrumental solos. Such minimal compositional resources notwithstanding, it is powerful and vigorous, and sustains attention. The marking *Giubiloso* also suggests a possible parallel with Tchaikovsky's exultant third movement in the 'Pathétique' Symphony, and yet it is hard to hear this music as anything other than a menacing interlude at odds with the rest of the symphony – and a perfect foil for the austere finale. There are a number of variants and small developments, such as those shown in Exx. 4 and 5.

Ex. 4

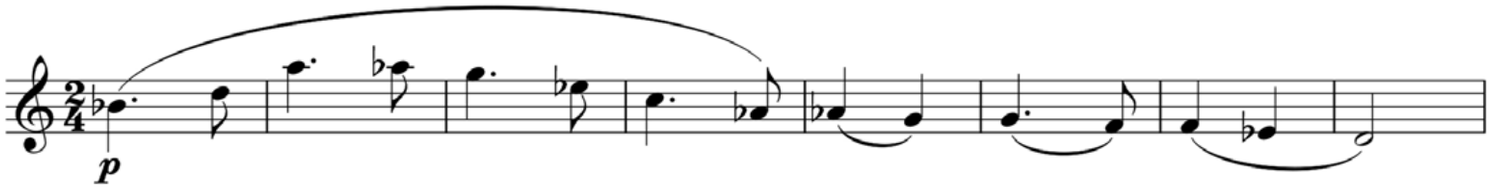


Ex. 5



Finally, a new theme appears, which occurs near the mid-point of the movement and loosely corresponds to a trio section (Ex. 6).

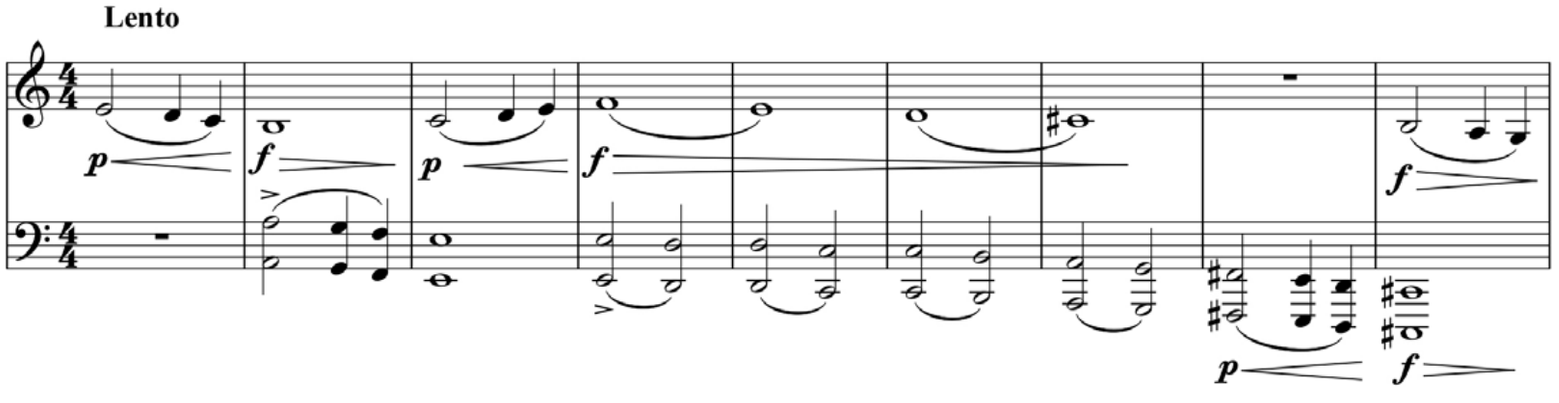
Ex. 6



If the scheme is indeed scherzo–trio–scherzo, then one may not reasonably baulk at the long stretches of music repeated exactly or with small changes from the opening section just as an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century composer would simply have done using the marking *da capo*.

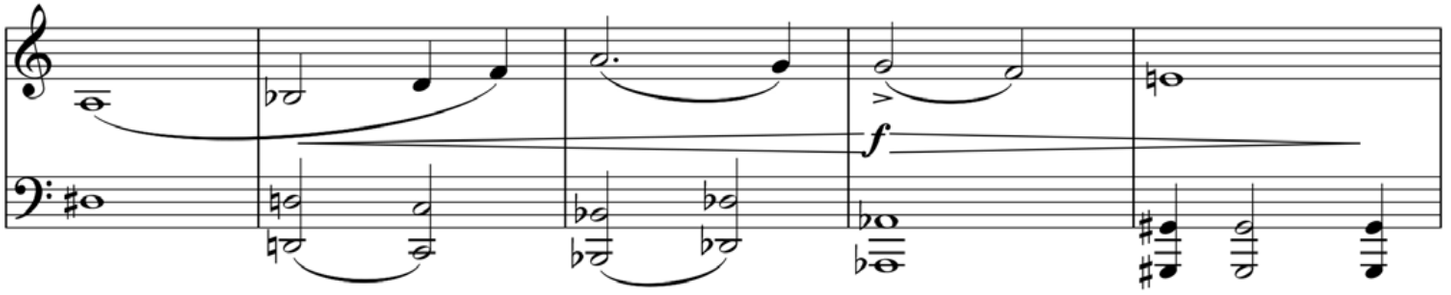
With a short coda Arnold clears the stage for the expansive *Lento* 10, a barren landscape punctuated with a *ritornello* theme that speaks, in a universal tonal language, of inescapable loneliness and despair (Ex. 7). The wide dynamic range and rich orchestral doublings bring to mind late Bruckner (though this echo may be coincidental). The sighing fall of the main phrase is rich in historical references. The implied E minor tonality at the start is important. The home key of the movement (D major) will not be defined until the closing bars of the movement, and when it is, it is as unexpected as is the E minor dénouement of the Fifth.

Ex. 7

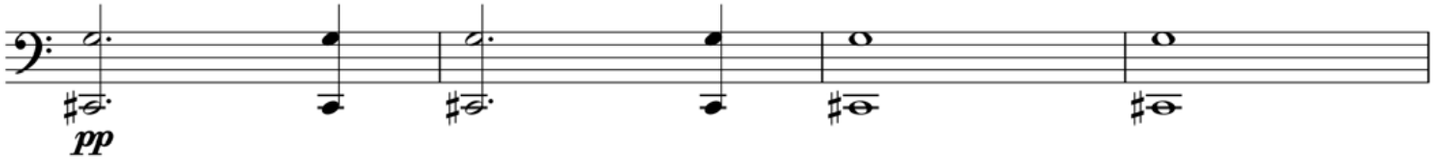


The music comes to rest on a low C sharp – a point of total inertia that precedes the reprise of Ex. 7. The second main phrase opens on an equally potent rising major-seventh chord, undermined almost at once by the harmonic shift in the bass (Ex. 8). Just before it, the first of many exposed tritones is reached, and with it a bleak, funereal rhythm (Ex. 9).

Ex. 8



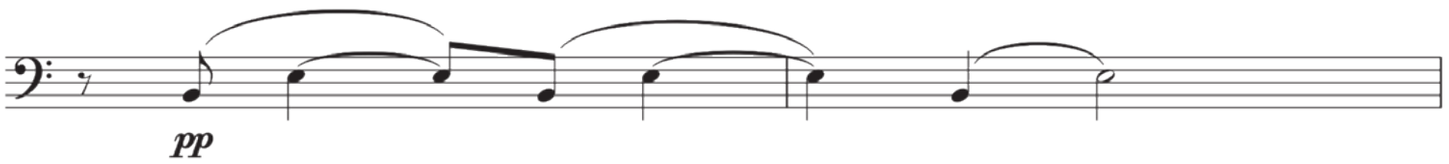
Ex. 9



The rhythmic counterpoint in the movement never goes beyond two parts, though the enrichment of the lower part by two- and three-part harmony brings some respite from the barrenness of the musical landscape. A tiny speck of new figuration at bar 104, faintly reminiscent of Shostakovich,[6] provides a false trail towards a different musical character (Ex. 10).

[6] Specifically, the accompaniment to the second subject of the first movement of Symphony No. 5.

Ex. 10



A brief exchange between trumpet and horn against sustained strings, which has a 'last post' connotation, frames the second statement of the *ritornello*, replicating the first 51 bars of the movement but without the richly grained sound of woodwind and horn doublings. After a variant of the second phrase, a long, virtually athematic passage unfolds towards the climax of the movement. Scored only for brass and lower strings, it reaches a *fortissimo* climax, passing through many tonal centres before settling on a bright E major seventh chord. A quiet 'duo' for violas and cellos settles on a low octave E, reinforcing the feeling that the key-centre of the movement has been reached. The final statement of the *ritornello* ensues at bar 303, further reduced in scoring and halted after eighteen bars on the low C sharp, which acts as a leading note to the final D major chord, marked *pianissimo* and scored across six octaves for almost the whole orchestra. A radiant ending then – the chord a symbol of a distant paradise?

Arnold described the Ninth as 'an amalgam of all my knowledge of humanity'.[7] The listener must judge whether or not he realised his aim. Nevertheless, it is arguably the most moving symphony of the whole cycle. One hears Arnold's voice in the simplest terms. It is, despite its austerity, the work of a master craftsman who, throughout his life, wrote music that is far more than the sum of its parts.

Timothy Bowers is a composer. He studied composition with Alan Bush at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), where he won the major prizes for composition. He went on to study privately with David Blake (funded by a scholarship from the Munster Trust) and with David Kershaw at the University of York. His substantial output includes instrumental, orchestral, chamber and choral

[7] Interview with Andrew Penny, recorded for Naxos CD 8.553526.

*works as well as sonatas for all of the standard orchestral wind instruments. Writing for guitar (solo and chamber works, song-cycles and a concerto) is a specialism. He won the Domecq 'Search for New Music' prize in 1979, and the Tokyo Guitar Competition composer's prize the following year. He has worked with the orchestra of the Bartók Institute in Hungary, and with the Finnish choir Campanella. He has written and lectured on twentieth-century British music, especially the music of Malcolm Arnold. His in-depth study of Arnold's Symphonies was published in a symposium (*Composers on the Nine*, Queen's Temple Publications, Buckingham). It was followed by a monograph on the Concertos (*Strings, Winds, Pipes, Pianos and Food – The Concertos of Malcolm Arnold*, also from Queen's Temple Publications). He taught 'academic studies' at the RAM for 35 years, was appointed Fellow of the RAM in 2010 and was made Alan Bush Lecturer in Academic Studies in 2015.*

REVISITING MALCOLM ARNOLD

by John Gibbons

In November 2006 the Ealing Symphony Orchestra and I began a ten-year concert cycle of all nine symphonies by Malcolm Arnold. The Ninth lay dauntingly at the end of the journey (2015), but the 2011 Malcolm Arnold Festival in Northampton, the brainchild of Paul Harris, celebrated Malcolm's 90th birthday with performances of all nine symphonies. I was entrusted with Nos. 6 and 9, the latter with the Worthing Symphony Orchestra – the professional orchestra of West Sussex. In all these ventures, the support of Arnold's daughter, Katherine, was of immense value.

It is time to share my convictions about this misunderstood visionary work, a compelling conclusion to one of the great symphonic cycles of the twentieth century. To do so in front of a hall full of passionate Arnold supporters made it a daunting prospect. Fortunately, the performance was deemed 'revelatory' by many Arnold cognoscenti, with this recording a direct result.

Malcolm's own recordings show he was never enslaved by his own metronome markings (as in, for example, the *Commonwealth Festival Overture*), and so I followed a pinch-of-salt approach to the metronome mark of the last movement, feeling the pulse as a tactus rather than a crotchet beat, which allows the music to flow inexorably towards the sublime D major resolution at the end of the work.

Many have seen Arnold's Ninth Symphony as the angst-ridden work of a dying man, with much Mahlerian anxiety implied in the score. This view contradicted my own understanding of the work, a standpoint enhanced by two other late symphonies I was working on during this period: Anthony Payne's masterly realisation of Elgar's Third and Nors Josephson's completion of Bruckner's Ninth, which I recorded in 2014 with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra.[1] In all three works there are dark moments of considerable intensity and pain but, for me, these are counter-balanced by over-riding feelings of peace and serenity, in lives that have seen and experienced the full gamut of human emotions, and are now nearing their ends, with all the trials and tribulations of musical acceptance in the past: it is now for posterity to decide the value of their music.

We revived Arnold's *Grand Concerto Gastronomique for Eater, Waiter, Food and Orchestra* – completed on 12 November 1961 – fifty years later, for the 2011 Malcolm Arnold Festival; the forces involved were Richard Brooman (eater), Martha Shrimpton (waitress), the Ealing Symphony Orchestra and myself as conductor. A subsequent performance took place as part of the concert season of the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, with Richard Brooman (eater) and Judd Launder (waiter). Some elements of the score are clearly best realised in live performance and we took the decision to record the work with a view to repeated listening rather than following the stage directions to the letter. For instance, the eating of a large plate of roast beef, in reality, led to the music being repeated, and slowing down, almost a dozen times but here we repeat the music three times only.

[1] Released on Danacord DACOCD 754.

The Siberian-born soprano **Anna Gorbachyova-Ogilvie** graduated with distinction from the Royal Academy Opera of the Royal Academy of Music in London. She studied also at the Royal College of Music in London and before that gained a BA in International Relations from the Faculty of International Relations of the Ural State University in Yekaterinburg.

Her engagements over the past decade have encompassed a variety of roles: Alcina in Handel's *Alcina* at the Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow; the title role in Cavalli's *La Calisto* at the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music; Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* in the Teatr Wielki Stanisława Moniuszki Opera, Poznań; the First Nymph in Dvořák's *Rusalka* at Teatro dell'Opera di Roma; Francesca in Rachmaninov's *Francesca da Rimini* at the Ealing Festival of Music and Film; the title role in Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta* with the Theater Orchester Biel Solothurn in Switzerland and in the Opéra de Tours in France; Katya in Weinberg's *The Passenger* at the Michigan Opera Theatre and Florida Grand Opera; Madeline in the Debussy/Allende-Blin *La chute de la Maison Usher* at the Welsh National Opera; Musetta in Puccini's *La bohème* at the Hungarian State Opera and at the Theater an der Wien; Nymph in Lera Auerbach's *Gogol* in the Theatre an der Wien; Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* in the Yekaterinburg State Opera House; the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*; the title role in Stravinsky's *Le rossignol* at the Opéra National de Lyon; and Zhou in *Kommilitonen!* by Peter Maxwell Davies with the Royal Academy Opera.

She has performed as a soloist in a wide range of repertoire at such international venues and festivals as the Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona, the Bath International Music Festival, Herne International Festival of Early Music, London Handel Festival, Tchaikovsky Concert Hall and the Kremlin in Moscow, the 9th International Chamber Music Festival in Nuremberg, the Ulverstone International Music Festival, the Varaždin International Baroque Evenings Festival and the Yekaterinburg State Philharmonic. She has sung with such orchestras as the Royal Philharmonic in London, the American Bach Soloists in San Francisco, Pratum Integrum in Moscow and Moderntimes_1800 in the Tyrol.

Her numerous awards include the First Prize and the Audience Prize at the First International Singing Competition for Baroque Opera Pietro Antonio Cesti in Innsbruck in 2010 and the First Prize at the 42nd International Antonín Dvořák Vocal Competition in the Czech Republic in 2007.

John Gibbons has conducted most of the major British orchestras, including the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, City of Birmingham, Bournemouth, BBC Concert, Ulster and, most regularly, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He has recorded Skalkottas with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the string concertos of Arthur Benjamin with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (Dutton Epoch), Mozart piano concertos with Idil Biret and the London Mozart Players, and Bruckner's Ninth Symphony, including a completion of the Finale by Nors Josephson, with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra (on Danacord). For Toccata Classics he has recorded three volumes of the orchestral music of the Scottish composer William Wordsworth, with the Fourth and Eighth Symphonies on TOCC 0480, the Violin and Piano Concertos on TOCC 0526 and the Cello Concerto and Fifth Symphony on TOCC 0600; a fourth volume, with the Seventh Symphony, is in preparation and will be released on TOCC 0618.

John Gibbons has been Principal Conductor of Worthing Symphony Orchestra – the professional orchestra of West Sussex – for over twenty years and, in addition to their regular concert season, they have appeared at the annual Malcolm Arnold Festival in Northampton. Renowned for his adventurous programming, he has given many world premieres of neglected works, among them the *Third Orchestral Set* by Charles Ives, the Violin Concerto by Robert Still and both the Second Piano Concerto and Violin Concerto by William Alwyn. He recorded Laura Rossi's film score *The Battle of Ancre* (Pinewood Studios) and conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra in her score to *The Battle of the Somme* at the live screening in the Royal Festival Hall to commemorate the centenary of the ending of this battle.

Overseas work includes Walton's First Symphony with the George Enescu Philharmonic in Romania, concerts with the Macedonian Philharmonic, the Çukurova Symphony in Turkey, the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra, and performances of Malcolm Arnold's Fourth Symphony in Latvia and Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* in Worms, Germany.

He studied music at Queens' College, Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, winning numerous awards as conductor, pianist and accompanist. He assisted John Eliot Gardiner on the 'Leonore' project – semi-staged concert performances with the Monteverdi Choir of Beethoven's *Leonore*, the first version of *Fidelio*, in Europe and New York, including the BBC Proms – and the Monteverdi Choir recording of music by Percy Grainger on Philips; he was also Leonard Slatkin's second conductor for a performance of Ives' Fourth Symphony with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

He has conducted numerous opera productions at Opera Holland Park, with particular emphasis on Verdi, Puccini and the *verismo* composers, including Mascagni's *Iris* and Cilèa's *Adriana Lecouvreur.* He conducted *La bohème* for the Spier Festival in South Africa, toured *Hansel and Gretel* around Ireland with Opera Northern Ireland and Opera Theatre Company and conducted a number of productions for English Touring Opera. His orchestral reductions include Walton's *Troilus and Cressida* for Opera St Louis, Missouri, and Karl Jenkins' *Stabat Mater*.

A renowned communicator with audiences, John Gibbons is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, vice-chairman of the British Music Society, and choral director at Clifton Cathedral. His own music has been performed in various abbeys and cathedrals, as well as on the South Bank, London. In June 2019 he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to music in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

The **Liepāja Symphony Orchestra** – formerly also known as The Amber Sound Orchestra – is the oldest symphonic ensemble in the Baltic states: it was founded in 1881 by Hanss Hohapfel, who also served as its conductor. The orchestral strength in those early days was 37 musicians, joined in the summers by guest players from Germany and Poland. With time, both the structure and professionalism of the Orchestra grew, as did its standing in the eyes of the general public.

After World War II the LSO recommenced its activities in 1947, under the wings of the Liepāja Music School, and was conducted for the next forty years by the director of the School, Valdis Vikmanis. A new chapter in the life of the Orchestra began at the end of 1986, when it was granted the status of a professional symphony orchestra, becoming only the second in

Latvia. That formal recognition was made possible by the efforts of two conductors, Laimonis Trubs (who worked with the LSO from 1986 to 1996) and Jekabs Ozolins (active with the LSO from 1987 to 2008).

The first artistic director of the LSO, as well as its first chief conductor, was the Leningrad-born Mikhail Orehov, who took the ensemble to a higher standard of professionalism during his years there (1988–91). Another important period for the LSO was 1992 to 2009, when Imants Resnis was artistic director and chief conductor. He expanded the range of activities considerably: in addition to regular concerts in Riga, Liepāja and other Latvian cities, the Orchestra also went on frequent tours abroad, playing in Germany, Great Britain, Malaysia, Spain, Sweden and elsewhere. During this period a number of important recordings were made, some of them during live appearances on Latvian radio and television.

In the early days of the LSO Valdis Vikmanis began a series of summer concerts which always sold out, and so, in 2010, the festival 'Liepāja Summer' was launched, to renew that tradition of a century before. As well as orchestral performances (some of them in the open air), the festival includes sacred and chamber music.

The Liepāja Symphony Orchestra holds a special place in the cultural life of Latvia. It received the highest national music award, the 'Great Music Award', in 2006, as well as the Latvian Recordings Award in the years 1998, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2008. In 2010 the Liepāja Symphony Amber Sound Orchestra was granted the status of national orchestra. The current chief conductor, the Lithuanian Gintaras Rinkevičius, made his debut with the LSO in 2017.

This is the fifteenth of a series of recordings for Toccata Classics. The first featured Paul Mann conducting the orchestral music of the Norwegian composer Leif Solberg (TOCC 0260) and the next three brought Volumes One, Two and Three of the complete orchestral music of the Scottish Romantic Charles O'Brien (TOCC 0262, 0263 and 0299). The fifth release featured music by the German composer Josef Schelb (TOCC 0426), conducted again by Paul Mann, and the sixth presented the Symphonies Nos. 17 and 18 of the Finnish composer Fridrich Bruk (TOCC 0455), conducted by Maris Kupčs. John Gibbons then conducted the LSO in the first three of a series of William Wordsworth recordings, in programmes including the Fourth and Eighth Symphonies (TOCC 0480), Violin and Piano Concertos (TOCC 0526) and the Cello Concerto and Fifth Symphony (TOCC 0600), and then Maris Kupčs returned to the orchestra to conduct an album featuring Fridrich Bruk's Symphonies Nos. 19 and 21 (TOCC 0453). Paul Mann's further work with the LSO has produced four more albums: tone poems and the Symphony No. 15 – itself inspired by the Liepāja coast – by the English

composer David Hackbridge Johnson (TOCC 0456), the Violin and Trumpet Concertos, *Dances under the Northern Sky* and the *Concerto Grosso* by Arnold Griller (TOCC 0590), a programme of music by Derek B. Scott (TOCC 0589) and another of works by the late-Romantic Swiss composer Richard Flury (TOCC 0601).

TOCCATA CLASSICS

Recorded on 14–16 June 2021 in the Great Amber Concert Hall, Liepāja, Latvia; soprano recorded on 29 July 2021 at St Mary's, Perivale, Middlesex, UK
Producer-engineer: Normunds Slāva
Assistant: Jānis Straume

Recording supported by The Malcolm Arnold Trust

Booklet text: Timothy Bowers
Cover design: David M. Baker (david@notneverknow.com), based on an image by Fin Costello
Typesetting and lay-out: Kerrypress, St Albans

Executive Producer: Martin Anderson

MALCOLM ARNOLD Orchestral Music

***Grand Concerto Gastronomique for Eater, Waiter, Food and Large Orchestra*, Op. 76** (1961)*	**15:06**
1 I Prologue	4:47
2 II Soup (Brown Windsor)	0:56
3 III Roast Beef	2:25
4 IV Cheese	0:33
5 V Peach Melba	3:03
6 VI Coffee, Brandy. Epilogue	3:22
Symphony No. 9 in D major, Op. 128 (1986)	**42:31**
7 I *Vivace*	8:55
8 II *Allegretto*	8:25
9 III *Giubiloso*	7:14
10 IV *Lento*	17:57

Anna Gorbachyova-Ogilvie, soprano 5
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra
John Gibbons, conductor

TT **57:40**

* FIRST RECORDING