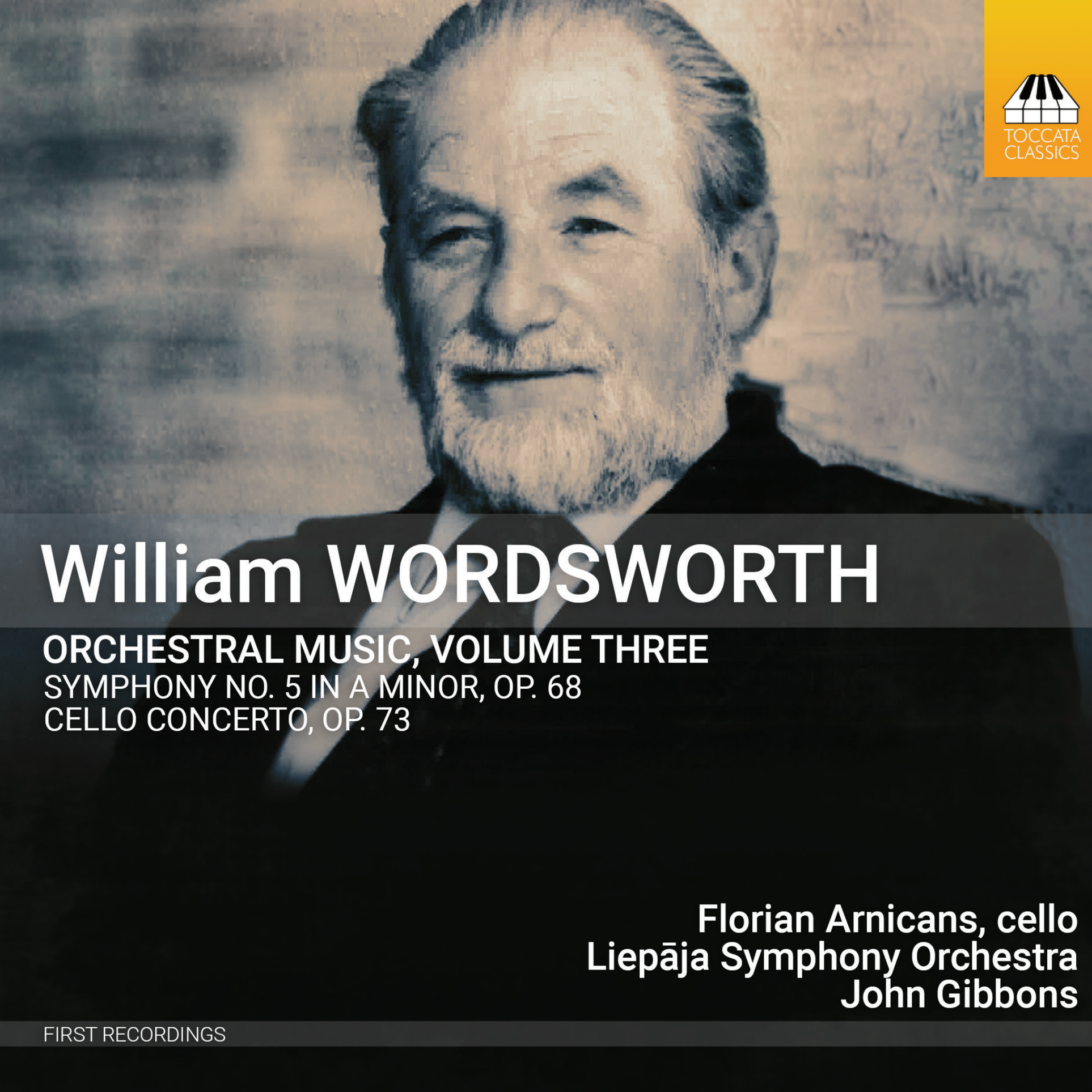

TOCCATA CLASSICS

William WORDSWORTH

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME THREE

SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN A MINOR, OP. 68
CELLO CONCERTO, OP. 73

Florian Arnicans, cello
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra
John Gibbons

FIRST RECORDINGS

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME THREE

by Paul Conway

In a personal tribute to William Wordsworth (1908–88), the Rev. Campbell M. Maclean, a close friend of the composer, offered this character portrait:

> Bill was a hard man to know. He was chronically shy, reticent and impenetrably private. His taciturnity was such as to inhibit conversation. The most he could contribute was a laconic phrase or, more likely, a curt adverb, the most characteristic of which was 'possibly'.[1]

The Rev. Maclean continues with a telling description of Wordsworth's reaction to the highly successful premiere in March 1973 of his *Symposium*, for violin and orchestra, Op. 94, in Edinburgh, after which he was invited to join the performers on the platform and receive a well-deserved ovation:

> If ever an event called for some additional celebration, say a jubilant carousal with a few select friends, here we had it. Conversation an hour later at my home:
> SELF: 'I thought Leonard Friedman played the solo part superbly.'
> W.W.: 'Did you?' in his dry, clipped tones.
> SELF: 'There must surely be additional performances after such a convincing first.'
> W.W.: 'Possibly' in his languid, posh accent.
> Now is the time, I said to myself, to uncork the champagne bottle and toasts all round.
> W.W. 'well, bed for me.'[2]

This lack of self-indulgence is reflected in Wordsworth's compositions. Much of their distinction lies in the absence of empty rhetoric. Ironically, for someone so reticent in speech, he gave many of his works titles which suggest a form of discourse,

[1] Rev. Campbell M. Maclean, 'William Wordsworth (1908–88)', *Music Current*, No. 1 (September 1988), p. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*

such as *Conversation*, for two cellos and piano, Op. 74 (1962), *Dialogue*, for horn and piano, Op. 77 (1965), *Conversation Piece*, for viola and guitar, Op. 113 (1982), and the aforementioned *Symposium*. The 'discussion' involved in these scores is obviously of a musical nature, and in this sort of interaction he was a master, as evidenced most authentically by his cycle of eight symphonies and series of six string quartets.

William Brocklesby[3] Wordsworth, a great-great-grandson of Christopher Wordsworth, brother of the great Romantic poet, was born in London on 17 December 1908. As he was considered too delicate a child to attend school, most of his non-musical education came from his father, a Church of England parson. His interest in music became all-consuming when he was about twelve years of age. At this time, he was receiving piano lessons from a Miss Sterry, a member of the Religious Arts Society, which used to meet at the Wordsworths' home in Hindhead, Surrey. She suggested he might enhance his musical training by studying with the composer George Oldroyd, who was choirmaster and organist at St Michael's, Croydon. Thus he became a chorister at St Michael's and, between 1921 and 1931, studied harmony, counterpoint, singing and three instruments (viola, piano and organ) with Oldroyd. At the end of this period, his first acknowledged piece, *Three Hymn Preludes* for organ, Op. 1 (1932), was published.

In 1934 he was invited to become a pupil of Sir Donald Tovey in Edinburgh. His three years of study with the eminent composer, teacher and musicologist were a result of sending his *Phantasy Sonata* for violin and piano, Op. 3 (1933), to this eminent figure, who, impressed by the talent displayed in the score by this young unknown, immediately consented to receive him as a pupil. From Tovey he acquired a respect for and command of traditional genres, though his approach to these forms was always deeply personal. Wordsworth wrote of his inspiring tutor: 'One felt one knew for the first time what words like "genius" and "greatness" really meant, when one had been in his company'.[4] Much later, with characteristic hesitation, he was to dedicate his Symphony No. 2 'To the memory of Donald Tovey, whose understanding love of music has been an abiding inspiration'.

[3] His mother's maiden name.

[4] W. B. Wordsworth, 'Tovey's Teaching', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 22, No. 1, p. 60.

After leaving Edinburgh without taking a degree, and being of independent means, he was able to follow his instincts and devote himself entirely to composition, producing his first large-scale works in the late 1930s. Pacifism was an essential part of his character, and for several years before the outbreak of the Second World War he was associated with the Peace Pledge Union and acted as secretary of the Hindhead Fellowship of Reconciliation Group. During this time he knew the pacifist writers Max Plowman (1883–1941) and John Middleton Murry (1889–1957) very well and also counted among his friends Nellie 'Kay' Gill, a professional violinist and musical patron who organised chamber concerts in her house next-door to the Wordsworths. He always maintained that his long friendship with her much strengthened his development both as a composer and as a pacifist, and she may also have been something of a surrogate mother figure to him, his own mother having died when he was sixteen. It was inevitable that he should take his stand as a conscientious objector, and when war came, he was consigned to work on the land, music giving way to agriculture as the primary claim on his time.

Nevertheless, after the day's farm work was done, he still took an opportunity to write music at night. In fact, the compositions dating from this period, such as the First and Second String Quartets, Opp. 16 and 20, and First Symphony, Op. 23, were the first to attract critical attention, his earliest breakthrough arising when his String Quartet No. 1 won the Clements Memorial Prize in 1941. His vocal music from this time met with less success: *The Houseless Dead*, Op. 14 (1939), a setting of D. H. Lawrence for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra, remains unperformed; and his largest work, the oratorio *Dies Domini*, Op. 18, for three soloists, chorus and large orchestra, written between 1942 and 1944 and praised by Vaughan Williams, is also still awaiting its first performance (it was rejected by the BBC for broadcast on the Third Programme and Home Service in 1960[5]). While working in Hampshire, he met Frieda Robson, also an ardent pacifist, and in 1945 they were married. After the war, he became even more

[5] In a letter dated 21 September 1960 from Harry Croft-Jackson, Chief Assistant, Music Programme Organisation, BBC, to William Wordsworth; ref. 38/M/HC-J (held in the Wordsworth archives at the Scottish Music Centre, Glasgow).

prolific, and many of his earlier works were published for the first time. The next fifteen years or so were his most productive in terms of performances and recognition.

He served on the Executive Committee of the Composers' Guild of Great Britain for five years, from 1955, and was elected Chairman four years later. Arising from his work with the Guild, in the spring of 1961, along with Thea Musgrave, he undertook a two-week tour of the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Union of Soviet Composers of Moscow, where he met, among other composers, Shostakovich and Khachaturian. He gave a speech during the tour, which began in a characteristically self-deprecating tone:

> I believe I share with your most famous composer, Shostakovich, one characteristic – an extreme distaste for speaking in public. For an occasion such as this, I could wish that the floor would open and I could disappear. I could wish also that the resemblance between me and Shostakovich did not end there, but I cannot be so arrogant as to pretend that my compositions are on a level with his!

In 1961 he moved, with his family, from Hindhead to the Scottish Highlands, to live at Kincraig in Inverness-shire. The view from his study window across the top of the pines to the mountains above Glen Feshie was a rich source of inspiration to him. In the course of a 'Composer's Portrait' broadcast by the BBC in July 1967, he confessed:

> I have always had joy in the grander aspects of Nature – mountains, storms, spacious views, and in the ever-changing colours of the Scottish Highlands. I cannot say if there has been any change in my style of writing since we came to live in Scotland, but I would like to think that it is becoming clearer and less complicated, more direct in its expression. In fact, all the things it should not be, if one wants to be successful in the present musical fashions.

In 1965 Wordsworth was appointed Regional Representative for Scotland of the Composers' Guild and (with Robert Crawford, his predecessor in that office) was largely responsible for the formation of a Scottish Branch of the Guild in 1966, of which he was Chairman until 1970. His social awkwardness did not extend to fellow composers, and he hosted weekends at his house for members of the Scottish Branch such as Robert Crawford, Shaun Dillon, David Dorward, John Maxwell Geddes and Thomas Wilson

(who became a good friend). As well as providing an opportunity for dealing with the business matters of the Guild, they were very social affairs, involving walking, sightseeing, fishing and wine-making, as well as offering a chance to listen enthusiastically to tapes of one another's music and discuss it constructively in a supportive environment.

Apart from music, which was the focus of his life, Wordsworth enjoyed reading, especially poetry, and among his works may be numbered many settings of poems, by such writers as Walter de la Mare, William Blake and Gerald Manley Hopkins. His hobbies included gardening, golf, beekeeping, fishing, chess and woodwork. He regarded himself as a 'handyman', making and putting up his own shelves and constructing a transistor radio with the aid of a soldering iron. He also made model steam-engines in his workshop, equipped with a lathe. Gadgets were a particular passion and one of his treasured possessions in later life was an electronic chess set.

Two deep sorrows darkened his last decades. In 1971, his elder son, Tim, was killed at the age of 23, in a motor accident near Pitlochry on his way back to London. Though the composer was devastated, he initially suffered in silence. His grief eventually found expression in two works. The first, *Adonais*, for mixed voices, Op. 97 (1974), is an imposing setting of words taken from Shelley's long poem written in memory of Keats and a moving evocation of the transience of life. The second, Symphony No. 6, *Elegiaca*, for mezzo-soprano, baritone, chorus and orchestra, Op. 102 (1977), is dedicated simply 'In memory, Tim'. This work also sets words from Shelley's 'Adonais', as well as John Donne's 'Meditation XVII' and Edna St Vincent Millais' 'Dirge without Music'; regrettably, it is still awaiting a first performance. The second blow came in 1982, when his wife died. According to the Rev. Maclean, 'Bill was lost. Lovely, fresh, engaging Frieda spoke for him, managed him, decided for him. Without her, he became a bundle of untidy clothes, a vagrant in search of dependency'.[6] In the same year as her death, Wordsworth wrote a work for string quartet, later rescored for string orchestra, which he called *Elegy for Frieda*, an eloquent love-song of enraptured, fond recollection and cherished intimacy. Ill health dogged his final years and his creativity all but dried up before his death in Kingussie on 10 March 1988, aged 79.

[6] Maclean, *loc. cit.*, p. 3.

William Wordsworth's large and varied output embraces many forms, including orchestral, chamber and instrumental music, songs and music for radio. His scores are consummately well crafted and draw their inspiration from the wellsprings of the mainstream rather than any shallow side-channels. Both in inspiration and content, his music displays a rugged individuality mirroring his physical environment, and an integrity that isolated him from the influence of the latest musical trends. He was, however, a man of his time, and if the music demanded it, he would unhesitatingly include quarter-tones and electronic tape, for example, in his works. There are no sensational tricks, no compromises to fashion, and his is generally a quieter, more contemplative voice than that of his contemporaries. Various influences, such as Sibelius, Bartók, Nielsen and, to a lesser extent, Bax and Vaughan Williams, may be detected fleetingly in some of his writing, but he went his own way and the best of his music, of which there is a significant amount, is passionate, tough, direct and sincere.

Wordsworth's **Symphony, No. 5 in A minor**, **Op. 68**, was written between 1957 and 1960 and first played in a concert by the BBC Northern Symphony under Sir Adrian Boult, broadcast on the BBC Third Programme on 5 October 1962; this album features the first recording of the work outside of a BBC studio. The orchestration is modest, with the exception of the percussion section, which demands four players. There are three flutes (third doubling piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion (consisting of side drum, tenor drum, bass drum, tambourine, cymbals, gong, xylophone and celesta), harp and strings.

Each of the three movements is dominated by one aspect – thematic, rhythmic or harmonic – of the elegiac, ascending 'motto theme' given on cellos and bassoons at the outset of the opening *Andante maestoso* 4. A piquant, gently rocking secondary theme is introduced by the cor anglais, and the keening expressivity of that instrument pervades this movement. A third element, a series of mystical, alternating chords underpinned by harp, completes the thematic material. The rest of the movement incorporates varied restatements of the two principal themes, presented in juxtaposition and often played by groups of instruments in *concertante* manner. In the extended closing *diminuendo*,

a solo violin laces vertiginous arabesques over a rich, meticulously scored background. Distant, late-night bird-call motifs from clarinet and then flute add to the dreamlike, nocturnal feeling of the music, which, after the solo violin has soared one last time, gradually fades from view.

The *Allegro* scherzo [5] begins hesitantly and disjointedly, with halting, spiky dissonances on harp, xylophone and divided violins. The component parts of the motto theme begin to coalesce from these erratic fragments and, before long, the melody appears in the guise of an elfin dance. A trio-like central section presents a sparkling idea on flute (another variant of the motto theme) in the manner of a shadowy tarantella vaulted over a gauze-like accompaniment from harp, celesta and divided violins. This will-o'-the-wisp character makes a fleeting reappearance in the closing pages. The composer lingers in these final moments, as if reluctant to bring the curtain down on his spectral pageant.

The finale [6] begins with a slow introduction, *Andante largamente*, based on the motto theme and initially scored for strings. With the arrival of woodwind, brass and percussion, the music gathers pace and shifts, without a break, into the driving main *Allegro* section. At this point, the motto theme is presented spaciously, its striving, intrepid quality given full rein. Imposing brass fanfares punctuate the material, which includes several rigorous fugal episodes and a couple of brief recollections of the fitful harmonic clashes of the scherzo. The symphony ends in triumph with a climactic conclusion that, thanks to its organic development, is both convincing and decisive.

Some of Wordsworth's orchestral music inhabits a world of sombre and sometimes greyish hues (his Second Symphony is an example), but the Fifth is a riot of colour and boundless invention, all stemming from the same protean source. Writing in *The Listener* on 4 July 1963, Deryck Cooke commented, 'it is a bold and fully-organised symphonic drama, whose whole structure arises naturally from its questing initial theme; and its use of familiar gestures […] carries complete conviction'. In the same journal, Michael Kennedy described the symphony as the composer's 'finest work to date'.[7]

[7] Michael Kennedy, 'William Wordsworth and his Contemporaries', *The Listener*, 20 June 1963, p. 1053.

The **Cello Concerto, Op. 73**, was composed in 1962–63 and first performed in a BBC broadcast on 20 January 1975, with Moray Welsh as soloist and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Christopher Adey; it makes its recorded debut here, In a programme note, the composer confirmed that, although he always enjoyed writing for the cello, his concerto was not written with any specific performer in mind. The orchestral forces required consist of two each of flute, oboes, clarinets and bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, modest percussion (bass drum, cymbals, gong, xylophone and celesta), harp and strings.

Of the three movements, the opening *Allegretto* 1 is the longest and most varied. Most of the material is derived from three short ideas and a more extended melody which comes later. The first idea is the fragment of scale in contrary motion on the strings with which the movement opens. The second is a leaping figure on the brass which immediately follows. The soloist then enters, and is joined by other instruments in a discussion of the two main ideas presented thus far. The third idea is an energetic, fugal figure on the strings, marked 'con brio', which, through further discussion of the first two key ideas, leads to a wide-ranging melody given out first by the clarinet, then taken up and extended by the soloist into an affecting, deeply expressive statement.

A short development of all these thematic elements leads to an orchestral climax and a substantial solo cadenza for the soloist, who reflects upon the principal material of the movement. The orchestra then creeps in, building up to a climax with repetitions and combinations of the third and fourth main subjects, followed by a similar exploration of the first two subjects. Out of the climax, the soloist emerges and leads the music to a quiet conclusion based upon the fourth and first main ideas.

The *Lento* second movement 2, entitled 'Nocturne', is in simple ABA form. The flutes recall the opening idea from the first movement, but the main theme here, when it is first presented by the soloist, is a long-limbed melody, lyrical and sonorous. An ominous flourish on clarinet hints at a storm, which eventually breaks in the short middle section. A return to the peaceful atmosphere of the opening section is confirmed by the 'calmo' marking of the soloist's melodic line and, after a couple of brief reminders

of the turbulence at the heart of the movement, the closing bars are soft, decorated by gong, celeste and harp.

The *Allegro vivace* third movement [3] is in rondo form, the main theme being derived from the first idea and part of the fourth idea from the opening movement. The general mood is light-hearted, though at times the orchestra becomes more pugnacious in tone. Laced with triplets, the ornate secondary theme is marked 'pomposo', though the writing is tongue-in-cheek and without malice. A fugal passage builds to an imposing central climax, followed by an eloquent and heterogeneous passage for the soloist, in effect a cadenza, though not designated as such in the score. After the two main themes have been restated in varied form, the movement comes to an emphatic conclusion. Wordsworth remarked that this work was 'intended to be enjoyable to play and to listen to – an unfashionable aim, perhaps, but one I should be well satisfied to have achieved'.[8]

Both works on this release date from a period when the composer was at the height of his creative powers, secure in his command of orchestral writing and long-term symphonic thinking, but also extending the expressive range of his musical voice, most strikingly in the quirky scherzo of the Fifth Symphony, but no less effectively in the fluently articulate solo part and variegated orchestral accompaniment of the Cello Concerto.

It is to be hoped that this series of releases will renew interest in the music of a composer whose body of work is still a largely untapped resource.[9] His scores must be performed to give them life. In his own words, 'Music is what you hear. It is not a set of dots and lines on a piece of paper; it does not exist until the written symbols are translated into an aural experience which matches that imagined by the composer in the first place'.[10]

Although Wordsworth was socially diffident, he had no false modesty regarding his compositions and was fully aware of what he perceived to be their lasting value. In

[8] Undated, typed manuscript held in the Wordsworth archives at the Scottish Music Centre, Glasgow.

[9] Released in 2018, Volume One (Toccata Classics TOCC 0480) contains the *Divertimento* in D (1954), *Variations on a Scottish Theme* (1962) and Symphonies Nos. 4 and 8, *Pax Hominibus* (1953 and 1986); Volume Two (Toccata Classics TOCC 0526), released in 2019, contains the Piano Concerto in D minor, *Three Pastoral Sketches* and the Violin Concerto in A major.

[10] William Wordsworth, 'Music in the Dark', *The Times*, 6 March 1961, p. 13.

a forthright letter to the Controller, Music at the BBC in 1957 about the decline in the number of broadcasts of his symphonic works, he wrote:

> I am quite convinced that I have something to say, and an individual way of saying it which the ordinary music-lover is capable of responding to if he is given sufficient opportunities. I would not go through the labour of creation were I not so convinced.[11]

In articles about Wordsworth and his music, commentators have occasionally quoted the following lines from his ancestral namesake: 'Enough, if something from our hands have power to live, and act, and serve the future hour'.[12] These words apply aptly enough to the composer William Wordsworth, dedicated, serious-minded and reserved in character, but profoundly expressive and directly communicative through his music.

Paul Conway is a freelance writer specialising in twentieth-century and contemporary British music. He has reviewed for The Independent, Tempo *and* Musical Opinion, *provided programme notes for The Proms and the Edinburgh, Spitalfields and Three Choirs Festivals and contributed chapters to books on John McCabe and Robert Simpson.*

Born in Germany, **Florian Arnicans** received his first cello lessons at the age of five and quickly discovered his passion and vocation for music. After receiving his first artistic training at the Belvedere Music School in Weimar, he was soon in a position to take up studies at the Franz Liszt University of Weimar for highly gifted talents, starting at a mere seventeen years of age. Brunhard Böhme, Johannes Goritzki, Patrick Demenga and Thomas Grossenbacher were among his most important instructors. He has always been inspired by other instrumentalists, too. He was influenced most by the pianist Homero Francesch and the violinist Pierre Amoyal, alongside whom he often performed as a soloist and chamber musician on the international stage.

[11] Letter to R. J. F. Howgill, Controller, Music, BBC, dated 4 December 1957.

[12] For example, Scott Goddard in his sleeve-note to Discurio Records DC 001, released in 1964 and reprinted in *The Music of William Wordsworth*, published by the composer himself in 1977. The quotation is from Wordsworth's 'Valedictory Sonnet to the River Duddon', published in 1820.

He feels particularly attached to the Romantic era, a sympathy well attested in in his numerous commercial and radio recordings, which have received positive reviews around the world.

In addition to his concert activities, he is an enthusiastic teacher, and is a frequent guest lecturer at master-classes in the Czech Republic, Switzerland and at the Latvian Academy of Music. He continues to be a sought-after soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, appearing at highly regarded international music festivals such as the Bodensee Festival (2013), Bregenz Festival (2013), the BBC Proms in London (2014), the Lucerne Festival (2016) and the Menuhin Festival Gstaadt (2018).

A major step in his musical and personal development was the founding of the Duo Arnicans with his wife, the pianist Arta Arnicane, in 2013. The Duo has since performed on numerous concert stages in Germany, Great Britain, Latvia and Switzerland, always to a warm and hearty response from the audience.

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).

John Gibbons has been Principal Conductor of the 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.

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 the Second World War 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 thirteenth of a series of recordings planned with 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 two of these William Wordsworth recordings, in programmes including the Fourth and Eighth Symphonies (TOCC 0480) and Violin and Piano Concertos (TOCC 0526), and then Maris Kupčs returned to the Orchestra to conduct an album featuring Fridrich Bruk's Symphonies

Nos. 19 and 21 (on TOCC 0543). Paul Mann's further work with the LSO has produced three 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) and a programme of orchestral music by Derek B. Scott (TOCC 0589).

TOCCATA CLASSICS

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH Orchestral Music, Volume Three

Cello Concerto, Op. 73 (1963)	**31:07**
1 I *Allegretto*	15:13
2 II Nocturne: *Lento*	6:54
3 III *Allegro vivace*	8:58
Symphony No. 5 in A minor, Op. 68 (1957–60)	**34:52**
4 I *Andante maestoso*	15:19
5 II *Allegro*	6:33
6 III *Andante largamente – Allegro*	13:00

TT **65:59**

Florian Arnicans, cello 1–3
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra
John Gibbons, conductor

FIRST RECORDINGS