



CHAN 6576



Rubbra
Symphony No. 5

Bliss
Five Dances from
'Checkmate'

Tippett
Little Music for
String Orchestra

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
West Australian Symphony Orchestra
Hans-Hubert Schönzeler
Soloists of Australia
Ronald Thomas

Edmund Rubbra (1901–1986)

Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 63*

1	I	Adagio – Allegro energico	28:56
2	II	Allegro moderato	10:05
3	III	Grave –	6:00
4	IV	Allegro vivo	8:21
			4:19

Sir Arthur Bliss (1891–1975)

Five Dances from 'Checkmate'†

5	I	Dance of the Four Knights	20:31
6	II	Entry of the Black Queen	4:07
7	III	The Red Knight's Mazurka	5:37
8	IV	Ceremony of the Red Bishops	3:15
9	V	Finale. Checkmate	3:00
			4:16

Sir Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

Little Music for String Orchestra‡

10	I	Prelude	10:09
11	II	Fugue	1:23
12	III	Air	3:04
13	IV	Finale	3:37
			2:01

TT 59:38

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra*
West Australian Symphony Orchestra†
Hans-Hubert Schönzeler*†
Soloists of Australia‡
Ronald Thomas‡

Rubbra/Bliss/Tippett: Orchestral Works

Rubbra: Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 63

Edmund Rubbra was born in Northampton and became one of England's most prolific composers. He published more than 150 works for concert and church performance, as well as teaching at Oxford University and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. Among his works are eleven symphonies, embracing the years 1937 to 1979, of which the Fifth Symphony recorded here marked his return to major composition after wartime service. It was begun in 1947 and first performed on 26 January 1949, when it signalled a freer and more lyrical manner of expression than formerly in its range of tone colour and dramatic use of tonality.

Rubbra once said that he felt 'closest to the English tradition in my orientation to line expressive in itself', and that principle is the basis of most of his musical thought. In the Fifth Symphony it is the germinating source whereby each of the first three movements grows organically from virtually a single theme, although developing, as the work progresses, into a conflict between keys of D natural and D flat. These act both as means to the major and minor forms of B flat, the work's home key, and as tonalities in their own

right, to intensify the outward expression of an inward experience, which Rubbra believed was the only valid purpose for serious composition.

Broadly considered, the symphony's four movements make a tripartite form in structure (like that in some of his other symphonies). The scherzo-like second movement is its centre, in which a solo horn starts an almost nursery-rhyme tune that runs from one instrument to another through twelve assorted keys in various counterpoints with itself. Enclosing this is a powerful, deeply felt opening movement, moving from *Adagio* to *Allegro energico* and growing from a noble source theme of four notes, balanced by the *Grave* and *Allegro vivo* of the two last movements. These are linked without a break as well as being thematically related, and reach an ending that recalls, in calm resolution, the four-note motif of the symphony's beginning.

Bliss: Five Dances from 'Checkmate'

Sir Arthur Bliss composed *Checkmate* as the first of his four original scores for ballet, to which he was first attracted by the visits of Sergey Diaghilev's Ballets russes to London;

he was also impressed when Ninette de Valois made one of her early ballets to a concert work of his. He was therefore delighted to be asked by her to compose something new for what was then still the Vic-Wells Ballet to stage for its first visit to Paris in 1937, flying the cultural flag at an international exhibition, and Bliss himself proposed the idea of a game of chess as the basis for an allegorical ballet, which de Valois choreographed.

The stage represents a giant chessboard, and in the Five Dances recorded here the first accompanies the pairs of Red and Black Knights in chivalric feats of prowess. The Black Queen, the most dangerous piece on the board, combines seductiveness with cruelty in her entry dance. The first Red Knight, to whom she has tossed a rose, dances his joyful Mazurka in the misguided hope that he has won her love. The Ceremony of the Red Bishops is a ritual blessing before battle, at the end of which the enfeebled Red King succumbs to the Black Queen's sword in the final Checkmate.

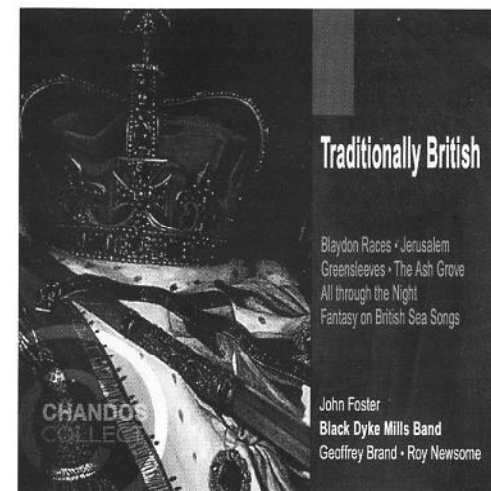
Tippett: Little Suite for String Orchestra
Sir Michael Tippett's *Little Music for String*

Orchestra was composed in 1946 for the tenth anniversary of the Jacques Orchestra conducted by Reginald Jacques. It was to be the last new work from the composer for six years, during which he was engaged on his first opera, *The Midsummer Marriage*, and worked as Director of Music at London's Morley College, the adult-education centre. The suite's contrapuntal character illustrates a significant aspect of Tippett's musical personality: his affinity with English music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The slow, dignified Prelude is decorated with baroque-style ornamentation and leads to a spirited Fugue, clearly as well as intricately woven. The Air combines several strands of florid melody in violins and violas over eight repetitions of a ground bass, and the Finale is again briskly fugal and sustained on the strong yet subtle rhythms that characterise so much music of both this century and the sixteenth. Tippett, like Stravinsky, has been concerned to 're-use the past' in terms of his own time and here expresses his personal delight in instrumental song and dance.

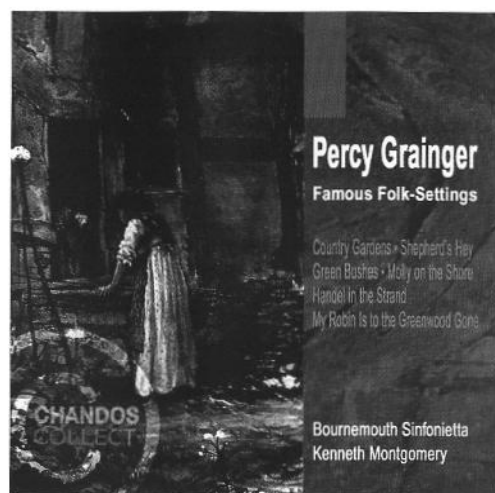
© Noël Goodwin

Also available



Traditionally British
CHAN 6515

Also available



Percy Grainger
Famous Folk-Settings
CHAN 6542

You can now purchase Chandos CDs directly from us. For further details please telephone +44 (0) 1206 225225 for Chandos Direct. Fax: +44 (0) 1206 225201. Chandos Records Ltd, Chandos House, Commerce Way, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HQ, UK. E-mail: chandosdirect@chandos.net Website: www.chandos.net

Any requests to license tracks from this or any other Chandos disc should be made directly to the Copyright Administrator, Chandos Records Ltd, at the above address.

Produced by the Australian Broadcasting Commission (Rubbra/Bliss).

The recording of *Little Music for String Orchestra* (Tippett) is sponsored by the following organisations:

FESTIVAL OF PERTH

UTAH FOUNDATION

FRIENDS OF THE FESTIVAL

Recording producers David Harvey (Rubbra/Bliss); Ralph Couzens (Tippett)

Sound engineers Gerald McKechnie & Walter Bourke (Rubbra/Bliss); Ralph Couzens (Tippett)

Recording venues Perth Music Studios, 1978 (Rubbra) & Melbourne Town Hall, 1978 (Bliss) by ABC; Perth Concert Hall, 1986 (Tippett) by Chandos Records Ltd

Digitally remastered by Ralph Couzens (Rubbra/Bliss)

Front cover Detail from *The Game of Chess* by Arturo Ricci (1880)

Design Michael White-Robinson

Booklet typeset by Michael White-Robinson

Copyright Alfred Lengnick & Co. (Rubbra), Novello & Co. (Bliss), Schott & Co. Ltd (Tippett)

© 1978, 1987 Chandos Records Ltd

© 2001 Chandos Records Ltd

Chandos Records Ltd, Colchester, Essex, England

Printed in the EU

RUBBRA/BLISS/TIPPETT: Orchestral Works - Various Artists

CHANDOS
CHAN 6576



CHANDOS DIGITAL

CHAN 6576

Edmund Rubbra (1901–1986)

Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 63* 28:56

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---------------------------|-------|
| 1 | I | Adagio – Allegro energico | 10:05 |
| 2 | II | Allegro moderato | 6:00 |
| 3 | III | Grave – | 8:21 |
| 4 | IV | Allegro vivo | 4:19 |

Sir Arthur Bliss (1891–1975)

Five Dances from 'Checkmate'† 20:31

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----------------------------|------|
| 5 | I | Dance of the Four Knights | 4:07 |
| 6 | II | Entry of the Black Queen | 5:37 |
| 7 | III | The Red Knight's Mazurka | 3:15 |
| 8 | IV | Ceremony of the Red Bishops | 3:00 |
| 9 | V | Finale, Checkmate | 4:16 |

Sir Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

Little Music for String Orchestra‡ 10:09

- | | | | |
|----|-----|---------|------|
| 10 | I | Prelude | 1:23 |
| 11 | II | Fugue | 3:04 |
| 12 | III | Air | 3:37 |
| 13 | IV | Finale | 2:01 |

TT 59:38



Melbourne Symphony Orchestra*
West Australian Symphony
Orchestra†
Hans-Hubert Schönzeler*†
Soloists of Australia‡
Ronald Thomas‡

(ADD)*† (DDD)‡

CHANDOS RECORDS LTD
Colchester . Essex . England

(L) 7038

© 1978, 1987 Chandos Records Ltd
© 2001 Chandos Records Ltd
Printed in the EU

RUBBRA/BLISS/TIPPETT: Orchestral Works - Various Artists

CHANDOS
CHAN 6576