

**Chandos**

**CHAN 8303**



*The Scottish National Orchestra photographed in the concert hall of their fine Glasgow headquarters.*

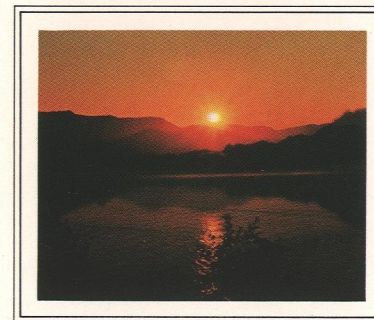
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CHANDOS RECORDS LTD, 41 CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON WC2H 0AR

**Chandos**

**DIGITAL**

*Jean Julius Christian Sibelius*  
**Symphony**  
**No.2**



*Scottish National Orchestra*  
*Sir Alexander Gibson*

**General  
Accident**

This recording is sponsored by General Accident

### THE COMPACT DISC DIGITAL AUDIO SYSTEM

offers the best possible sound reproduction — on a small, convenient sound-carrier unit. The Compact Disc's remarkable performance is the result of a unique combination of digital playback with laser optics. For the best results, you should apply the same care in storing and handling the Compact Disc as with conventional records.

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If you follow these suggestions, the Compact Disc will provide a lifetime of pure listening enjoyment.

### **General Accident**

In association with Chandos Records Limited, General Accident is pleased to bring to music lovers this production of Sibelius's Second Symphony by the Scottish National Orchestra. This is the first of Sibelius's seven symphonies to be digitally recorded by Sir Alexander Gibson and the Orchestra.

General Accident hopes that it will provide many hours of pleasure, and, at the same time, further enhance the SNO's reputation and distinctive contribution to the world of recorded music.

*Recording producer: Brian Couzens  
Sound engineer: Ralph Couzens  
Recorded in the SNO Centre, Glasgow 1982  
Cover design: General Accident Design Unit*

### CHANDOS DIGITAL RECORDING

This recording was mastered and edited on Chandos Complete PCM Digital System. This system is superior to conventional analog (tape recorder) recording in dynamic range, signal to noise and distortion.

#### Equipment used:

- Schoeps & Neumann microphones
- New classical mixing console—State of the Art specification designed and built by Chandos
- Sony PCM 1610 Digital processor
- DAE-1100 Digital electronic editor
- Digital information stored in BVU 200A recorders

Although analog tape recorders have been remarkably improved today, they are still limited by a number of drawbacks resulting in distortion and dynamic range limitations. These limits are inherent in the tape, heads, and other mechanical factors, and it is virtually impossible to eliminate them completely.

Digital recording, including PCM (Pulse Code Modulation) is a revolutionary technique to leave these limitations of present analog recorders behind. With digital systems, the sound signal is recorded and transmitted in the form of digital codes and this provides a whole host of features.

#### Outstanding among them are:

- Wide dynamic range ● Flat frequency response regardless of input level
- Extremely low distortion ● Superior transient characteristics
- No deterioration when repeatedly duplicated



## The Scottish National Orchestra

Founded in 1950, the Scottish National Orchestra grew out of the old Scottish Orchestra—a seasonal body of players which existed in Glasgow from 1891, performing under such conductors as Herschel, Sullivan, Barbirolli and Szell. During Walter Susskind's conductorship, from 1946 until 1952, the orchestra became a permanent organisation. Susskind's successors were Karl Rankl, Hans Swarowsky and, since 1959, Sir Alexander Gibson—the first Scot to hold the post of musical director.

Today the orchestra makes over one hundred and fifty appearances annually throughout Scotland and appears frequently at most of the major festivals as well as fulfilling an ever-increasing number of recording

engagements and London appearances. Three major European tours have been undertaken and, in 1975, the Scottish National Orchestra made its highly successful North American debut. In 1981, it made a twenty-city United Kingdom tour and in 1982 accepted a long-standing invitation to return to the United States and Canada for a sixteen-concert tour.

As well as playing a large part in the success of Scottish Opera, the Scottish National Orchestra has given many important world and British premières and, now acknowledged to be an orchestra of the highest international calibre, it was honoured, in 1978, with the grant of patronage by Her Majesty the Queen.

## Sir Alexander Gibson C.B.E.

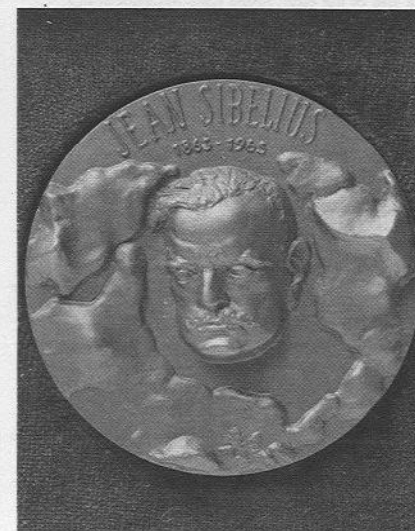
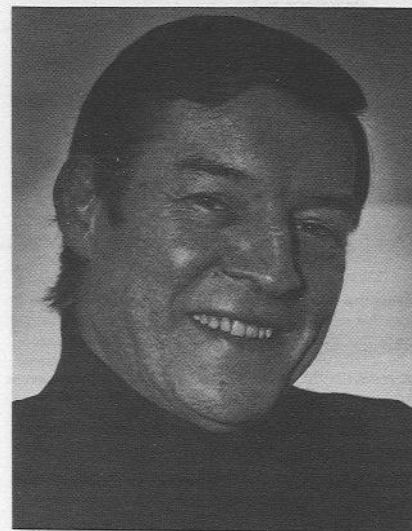
Sir Alexander Gibson was born in Motherwell. He was educated at Dalziel High School, Glasgow University, the Royal College of Music, the Mozarteum in Salzburg and the Accademia Chigiana in Siena. He spent two years as Assistant Conductor of the BBC Scottish Orchestra before going to Sadler's Wells in 1954 as a Staff Conductor. He was appointed Musical Director and Principal Conductor of the Scottish National Orchestra in 1959. Three years later he founded Scottish Opera and became its Artistic Director.

In establishing Musica Viva in 1960 and, more recently, Musica Nova, he demonstrated his commitment to the performance of contemporary music and

has conducted an impressive number of both world and British premières of works by many of today's major composers.

His recordings have won him two Prix de Disque awards and in 1978 he became one of the few recipients of the Sibelius Medal 'for his outstanding contribution to the appreciation of Sibelius's music throughout the world'. He is the first and only musician to be appointed an Honorary Member of the Royal Scottish Academy and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He was created CBE in 1967 and was made a Knight Bachelor in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List in 1977.

First movement : Allegretto (9:57)  
Second movement : Tempo andante ma rubato (12:32)  
Third movement : Vivacissimo; Lento e suave (5:42)  
Fourth movement : Finale: Allegro moderato (12:50)



*Sir Alexander Gibson. In 1978 Sir Alexander became one of the few recipients of the Sibelius Medal 'for his outstanding contribution to the appreciation of Sibelius's music throughout the world'.*



**O**F SIBELIUS'S seven symphonies the Second has probably had the most performances, its nearest rival in this respect being the Fifth. In one sense it is easy to see the reason for this, for the overall effect of No. 2 (like No. 5) is optimistic, despite the intensely dramatic, and even tragic, passages that occur in the slow movement, or the stormy outburst of the scherzo. The work was begun in the latter part of 1901 during a stay in Italy, and completed by about the end of the year. Some have detected in the Symphony the effect on the composer of the warmth of the Italian climate; but it is easy to be wise after the event.

In another respect the Symphony's popularity is less easy to explain, for its concise opening movement demands intense concentration, and does not give up its secret easily. The exposition is deliberately somewhat disjointed, themes and motives following each other in an apparently haphazard manner, often without any connecting link. True, the structure is firmly based on normal classical procedures, but this does not prevent analysts from disagreeing among themselves as to precisely what constitutes the first and second subject groups. From the listener's point of view this is something that hardly, if at all, matters. What is important is that he or she should remember the copious amount of material presented, and so be able to follow its adventures later. In view of this it is worth listing the ingredients in the order they appear in the exposition.

- I A throbbing chordal pattern on the strings with a rise of three notes up the scale. It is to serve as a kind of binding agent, reappearing and accompanying other ideas.
- II A theme for oboes and clarinets superimposed upon I.
- III A slow moving 'echo' for the last notes of II for horns.

- IV A fanfare-like idea, hinted at by the flutes after a silence, and then presented by the bassoons, the only accompaniment being a roll on the tympani.
- V A much more extended theme presented by all the violins in unison, and without any accompaniment until the last two bars, where the lower strings provide harmony.
- VI A shorter phrase, containing a downward leap for the strings, that initially has the effect of an appendage to V.
- VII A theme for oboe beginning a passage in which woodwind alternate with strings, and during which some of the previous material is briefly discussed.
- VIII Following a *pizzicato* passage for strings, taking II as its starting point, the woodwind present a motive consisting of a long note, a measured trill, and a falling fifth. The accompaniment is provided by I.
- IX A passage for the strings in the manner of a *perpetuum mobile*.
- X A phrase for the woodwind in octaves in which falling fifths are again prominent. It alternates with I, which brings the exposition to a close.

During the development section Sibelius proceeds to show the relationship that exists between these contrasted ideas, most of which have so far appeared to be totally unrelated. After an unaccompanied oboe has restated VIII, the violas begin IX, which now serves as the accompaniment to a variant of III on the bassoon. Then X appears on the scene, soon becoming the most important ingredient of the texture. A new section begins with nothing more than quiet drum taps, over which a clarinet superimposes VIII three bars later. This leads to I and then to II, which is extensively developed. What follows now is largely based on V and VIII, but gradually most of the ideas become incorporated into a passage that builds up to a climax, and reveals fully the relationship of the various

pieces of thematic material. It is at this point that the development merges into the recapitulation, during which the music is broken down into its elements once more, their order being slightly rearranged. The effect, however, is quite different from that of the exposition. Now that the relationships have been meaningfully displayed, the result appears less fragmentary than before.

In their design the remaining three movements are far more straightforward, and because of this some have regarded them as inferior; but surely some relaxation of this particular aspect is necessary after the concentration of the opening movement. On the other hand there is little relaxation of tension in the D minor second one. This sets out, after an introductory roll on the tympani, with a long succession of *pizzicato* quavers, shared between the double-basses and the cellos. Against it a lugubrious theme eventually appears on the bassoons in octaves. A variant of this is heard on the clarinets and an oboe, and it is only when the upper strings enter for the first time with a similar idea that the *pizzicato* quavers cease. The strings soon build up to an angry outburst that ends, like VIII in the first movement, with a falling fifth. Later there is another outburst, this time from the brass, after which the mood changes completely and the Italian sunshine, if it is present in the work at all, comes through. Yet the new theme is not as new as it appears to be, for it derives directly out of the outburst for the strings that ended with the falling fifth. The remainder of this movement, the longest of the four, is mainly concerned with alternating and contrasting the two moods, and to this end the warm, romantic second theme is built up to a big climax.

The outer sections of the scherzo that follows are stormy in the extreme. They consist almost entirely of rapid successions of triplet quavers on the strings and a slower moving idea for the woodwind, the one being superimposed upon the other. Suddenly the rush

ceases, and the fifteen bars that follow contain nothing more than five drum taps, the first quiet and those that follow still more so. The calm central section is based on a theme introduced by an oboe and beginning with no less than nine even repetitions of the same note; the first interval is again a falling fifth. If we regard the repetitions as the equivalent of one long note, there is an obvious connection with VIII of the first movement. The respite from the storm is brief, for the energetic rush of the first part is soon resumed. However, the oboe returns with its theme, this time without being preceded by the separating drum taps. New elements appear, the most important of them anticipating the first theme of the finale, which follows without a break. Its entry is majestic, even though for the moment the theme itself is restricted to its first seven notes. No less than nine bars separate this initial, incomplete statement from its continuation, and during that time a fanfare-like motive, a variant of which is to prove of major importance, is heard on the trumpets. Following the complete statement of the first subject a transition leads to the second, which is introduced tentatively before getting under way. It is presented by the woodwind against running quavers on the violas and cellos that to some extent recall IX of the first movement. Towards the end of the statement there are punctuations by a variant of the fanfare, which continues to play a major role in the development section. During the recapitulation the second subject is built up into a great climax by the full orchestra, after which the fanfare leads to a coda in slower tempo and crowning the whole work.

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**CHAN 8303**

*Jean Julius Christian Sibelius*  
**Symphony**  
**No. 2 in D major, Op. 43**

First movement : Allegretto (9:57)  
Second movement : Tempo andante ma rubato (12:32)  
Third movement : Vivacissimo; Lento e suave (5:42)  
Fourth movement : Finale: Allegro moderato (12:50)

*Scottish National Orchestra*

(leader: Edwin Paling)

conducted by

*Sir Alexander Gibson*

Recorded in association with General Accident



Formed in Perth, Scotland in 1885, General Accident is now one of  
Britain's largest insurance groups, operating in over 50 countries worldwide.  
The Corporation is very conscious of the importance of sponsorship  
of the Arts in the United Kingdom.

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