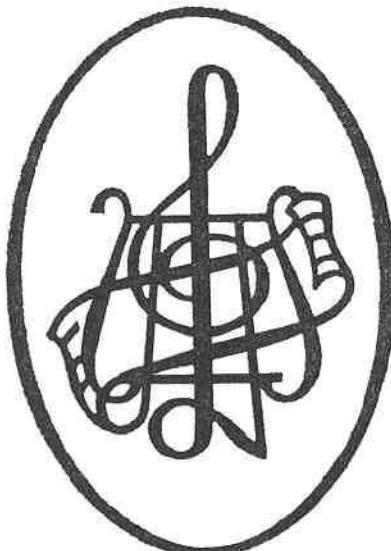


Background information about the
Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra
to accompany the
Klassic Haus Restorations
release of the
Tippett/Ridout/Mathias/Arold
Pye recording



Leicestershire
County School of Music

COUNTY SCHOOL ORCHESTRA TO MAKE A RECORD

THE senior orchestra of Leicestershire County School of Music, on the advice of Sir Michael Tippett, is to make a commercial record.

The recording session will take place at Leicester De Montfort Hall on July 5, when the conductors will be Sir Michael Tippett, William Mathias, Alan Ridout and Eric Pinket, Music Adviser for Leicestershire.

The record will be a natural sequel to the high standard of performance which the orchestra has attained and which was enthusiastically acclaimed by London music critics at the recent Schools Music Festival. Two of the works played during the Festival will appear on the disc — Mathias's "Sinfonietta" (commissioned for the event) and Tippett's Suite for the Birthday of Prince Charles. The third work will be "Divertimento" by Malcolm Arnold who has conducted the orchestra both in this country and abroad.

The fourth work has all the excitement of a Stop Press rush.

Idea Discarded

Ten minutes of playing-time remained to be filled and, after discarding the idea of isolating a movement from a larger work or padding out with a "pot-boiler", it was decided to find a composer who possessed the speed and the flair for dashing off a piece capable of displaying the special qualities of the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra.

The result is Alan Ridout's "Concertante Music", written in less than two weeks and which will have the remarkable distinction of proceeding from conception, writing, copying, rehearsing to recording in exactly four weeks.

Ridout says it is one of the most exciting compositions he has produced.

He was responsible for the music to the successful ballet-mime "Funeral Games for a Greek Warrior," which received its first performance at the festival. His newest work has been commissioned by Dr. H. L. Haslegrave, Vice-Chancellor of Loughborough University.

Both the recording session and the previous all-day rehearsal in the De Montfort Hall will be "watched" by television film cameras. Later, "The Making of a Disc" will be included in an Associated Rediffusion programme directed at young people.

Young Musicians Cut First Record

A SURPRISE visitor at yesterday's recording session at Leicester De Montfort Hall, where the Leicestershire Schools' Symphony Orchestra made a twelve-inch commercial disc was the distinguished Norwegian conductor, Oivin Fjeldstad.

The story of his presence there is quite romantic.

The County School of Music had been trying for some time to get in touch with Mr. Fjeldstad, who is music director and chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. Their purpose was to coax him to agree to conduct the school's orchestra during their two-weeks visit to Denmark next September.

Eventually, a telegram was received from Mr. Fjeldstad in which he displayed interest. It was addressed from—Uppingham.

Just over a year ago his actress daughter, Lisa, married Mr. Gordon Braddy, housemaster at Uppingham School. He was visiting them for the first time.

"And so," he said, yesterday, "in order to listen to the Leicestershire orchestra I had to travel only 18 miles."

He was given the opportunity, also to direct them in a short work by the Danish composer Nielsen—"Masquerade".

Apart from the fine quality of their playing, he was impressed by the fact that it had been possible to produce sufficient young musicians of so high a standard from so relatively small area to form a full size symphony orchestra of such excellence.

He extended his hands in an encompassing gesture. "What if this were done throughout the country?" he asked.

His initial reservations about conducting a schools orchestra had been dispelled, he said, and he was in the process of amending his plans in order to be able to conduct them at least once or twice during their visit to Denmark.

Treble Time

Yesterday's recording session began at two o'clock after a morning of rehearsal and sound balancing. Television equipment added to the technical array confronting the young members of the orchestra and, amid the flowers in the gardens facing the De Montfort Hall entrance, were lights, cameras and microphones where interviews were filmed and recorded for insertion into a half-hour documentary programme about the making of a disc.

The feature will be for eventual network broadcast by Associated Rediffusion who, because of their enthusiasm for the occasion, decided to treble the viewing time they had originally planned for it.

Three composers were present to conduct their own works, including Sir Michael Tippett whose suggestion it was that the orchestra's standard justified the making of a commercial record. The record will comprise Sir Michael's "Prince Charles" suite, William Mathias's Sinfonietta, Alan Ridout's Concertante Music and Divertimento by Malcolm Arnold, which will be conducted by Eric Pinkett, music adviser for Leicestershire.

The Ridout work was the result of a telephone call four weeks ago from Mr. Pinkett to the composer with a request for an orchestral piece to fill up ten-minutes of recording time.

"I had an idea before I put the phone down", said Mr. Ridout, yesterday. "The work was composed within 24 hours—that included sleep—and there remained the job of preparing a full score. That's navvies' work and it took four days."

The result of his labours—and of the tough and exacting schedule undergone with cheerfulness and professional calm by the hard working young musicians of the orchestra, will soon be available for all to hear.



A conductor and two composers who are also conductors watch Sir Michael Tippett rehearsing his "Prince Charles" suite with the Leicestershire Schools' Symphony Orchestra at yesterday's recording session at the De Montfort Hall. Left to right: William Mathias, Oivin Fjeldstad (music director and chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra), and Alan Ridout.

LEICESTER MERCURY

JULY 67



Edition Eulenburg

No. 1342

TIPPETT

SUITE

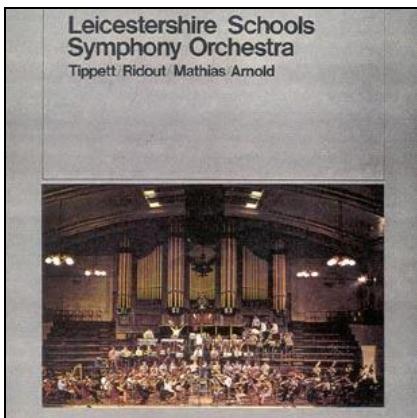
for the Birthday of Prince Charles
(Suite in D)
for Orchestra

Michael Tippett



Eulenburg

PYE GOLDEN GUINEA LP



Tippett *Suite in D*

Ridout *Concertante Music*

Mathias *Sinfonietta*

Arnold *Divertimento*

LSSO conducted by Tippett, Ridout, Mathias and Pinkett

PYE GSGC 14103 (Stereo)

1) Sir Michael Tippett - Suite in D

Tippett's *Suite in D* (for the birthday of Prince Charles) was one of the key works in the orchestra's repertoire during 1967. Sir Michael conducted it at the De Montfort Hall during the Leicestershire Schools Music Festival and again at the Fairfield Hall, Croydon. It was also included in the LSSO tour programme for Denmark and Germany later in the year. The orchestra made the first commercial recording of the Suite in D for the Pye label under the direction of the composer.

2) Alan Ridout - Concertante Music

Alan Ridout's *Three Pictures of Picasso*, originally written for the National Youth Orchestra, was performed by the LSSO at a De Montfort Hall concert in 1964 in the presence of the composer. A pupil of Sir Michael Tippett, Ridout composed his second symphony for the LSSO and dedicated it to Sir Michael to mark his 60th birthday. The symphony was first performed in 1965 and also featured in the television programme *Overture with Beginners*, a copy of which is kept in the LSSO archives. The 1967 Leicestershire Schools Festival included a number of LSSO commissions and in May that year Ridout's dance drama *Funeral Games for a Greek Warrior* made its debut at De Montfort Hall. The orchestra made its first commercial disc for the Pye Golden Guinea label and Ridout responded to Eric Pinkett's request for a short work for inclusion on the disc by composing a lively *Concertante Music*. The work's debut took place on a record rather than at a public concert which is unusual to say the least. *Concertante Music* was then taken on the LSSO tour of Denmark and Germany in September 1967.

3) William Mathias - Sinfonietta

The Welsh composer William Mathias wrote his *Sinfonietta* – initially called *Dance Suite* – for the orchestra in late 1966 and it received its first performance at De Montfort Hall during the 1967 Schools Festival. It was also included in the tour programme for Denmark and Germany later in the year. The LSSO made the first commercial recording of *Sinfonietta* for the Pye label under the direction of the composer.

4) Malcolm Arnold - Divertimento

The orchestra always had a soft spot for the attractive, tuneful music of Malcolm Arnold and for many years a number of his works appeared on its concert programmes including such pieces as the *English Dances*, *Scottish Dances* and the overture *Tam O'Shanter*. A lively *Divertimento*, originally written for the National Youth Orchestra, found its way onto the music stands of the County School of Music in the early 1960's and remained there for many years. Malcolm Arnold also conducted the orchestra in a 1963 De Montfort Hall concert which included Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Tam O'Shanter* and a selection of his *English Dances*. The LSSO made the first commercial recording of *Divertimento* for the Pye label under the direction of the Eric Pinkett.

The Pye sessions took place at De Montfort Hall, Leicester on July 5th 1967. The LP was released in 1968.

ARNOLD: Divertimento* / **MATHIAS:** Sinfonietta** / **RIDOUT:** Concertante music for orchestra*** / **TIPPETT:** Suite in D for the birthday of Prince Charles****
Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra / *Eric Pinkett / **William Mathias / ***Alan Ridout / ****Michael Tippett
Pye 'Golden Guinea Collector Series' GGC4103,
GSGC14103 (21/4)

We are hearing much just now about the low standard and bad conditions of music education in England, and I think it is true, especially in so far as financial support is concerned; yet hearing this record it is clear that despite all difficulties and official backslidings there are certainly bright spots in the result, and may be taken as evidence of heartening progress. This would hardly have been thinkable thirty, or even twenty, years ago. In fact, Leicestershire appointed its first Music Adviser in 1948, but since then developments have been swift and positive. There are three orchestras of the County School of Music—Junior, Intermediate, and Senior. This of course is the Senior, comprising around 100 members between the ages of 14 and 18. I haven't heard them before, and I am considerably impressed. Other counties have their music activities, too; but Leicestershire has made a particularly thorough job of it.

Of the works here recorded, Tippett's Suite was written for the birthday of Prince Charles in 1948; Malcolm Arnold's *Divertimento* was written for the National Youth Orchestra in 1959; William Mathias's *Sinfonietta* dates from late 1966, and Alan Ridout's *Concertante Music* was specially composed for this recording, to a commission from the Loughborough University of Technology, in July 1967. They make a well varied group, style and orchestral requirement aptly contrasted. Though all the music is technically resourceful, demanding resource from its players, nothing is wildly or wilfully complex in the abstruse sense. Sir Michael Tippett's Suite uses a number of traditional tunes, including *Crimond* and *Early one morning* and a French one in the Berceuse, for a work that is at once simple yet full of original and imaginative elements. Ridout's *Concertante Music* and Mathias's *Sinfonietta* are excellent vehicles for young orchestral players in their different ways, and so predictably is Arnold's *Divertimento*. The Ridout has some intriguing rhythmic juxtapositions, and the Mathias is said on the sleeve to make use of popular rhythms of our time, though I see but little direct evidence of that, or else the note writer does not mean by popular rhythms what I mean by it, and if the slow movement has the character of a 'blues', then again the connection escapes me. But that says nothing against the music itself, which is, like the rest, attractive to listen to and I've no doubt interesting to play.

The orchestral playing has in general the natural exuberance and technical caution characteristic of very young musicians. Brass, woodwind and percussion are especially enthusiastic, and if the strings sound rather less so, and slightly less assured, that is to be expected, especially in England. The recording is generally good, but I hardly know how to give a performance rating in the context. What is the relevant standard of reference? The crack national and international orchestras, or something vaguely described as 'youth' or 'schools'? The former is obviously absurd, but the latter may seem patronizing or indulgent. What is not in question is that this is a useful and enterprising issue for which all concerned deserve praise, for content and execution as well as its basic idea. [P40: R40]

BURNETT JAMES

TIPPETT: Suite in D for the Birthday of Prince Charles'. **RIDOUT:** Concertante Music for Orchestra'. **MATHIAS:** Sinfonietta'. **ARNOLD:** Divertimento'. Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra ('Michael Tippett, 'Alan Ridout, 'William Mathias, 'Eric Pinkett). Pye Golden Guinea GGC 4103; GSGC 14103. 12in. 21s. 4d.

PERHAPS IT'S UNFORTUNATE that the words 'Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra' in big bold type dominate the cover of this record: too many browsers will smile indulgently — and pass on. They don't need to; this record needs no indulgence. Though the scores are by no means easy to play, these young people achieve a remarkably high standard of performance which compares favourably with many professional orchestras. Predictably the woodwind are very good, less predictably, the brass are first-rate with some thrilling playing from the horns. Only in the stratosphere of string writing (as in Tippett's *Carol* and *Finale*) is there any suspicion of insecurity.

But this record offers something more than a preview of tomorrow's orchestral players; it brings forward four works by contemporary composers which are tuneful, exciting and musically rewarding. Though 'modern' in idiom they are pleasantly so, indeed this record might well be called 'Modernism without Tears'. The *Inrada* of Tippett's Suite irritates me because it keeps dragging in the first line of 'Crimond' for no very obvious reason, but never gives us the rest of the tune. Otherwise the Suite is delightful, gracious music. *Berceuse* is, appropriately, built round a charming old French air. Then a stately fanfare for winds introduces and rounds off a lively jig which admirably demonstrates the virtuosity of the strings. The fourth movement *Carol* is based on *Angelus ad Virginum* and the *Finale* mischievously combines a Cornish dance with *Early one morning*!

Ridout's *Concertante Music*, specially written for this recording, is more astringent but generates a good deal of motor excitement. Though written in one movement it has a clearly defined A-B-A-coda structure, the middle section acting as a brief slow movement.

The other two works also have three movements, lively-slow-lively. Mathias adds a piano to his orchestra, not soloistically but as an orchestral instrument used to produce evocative tone colours. The slow movement has a strong spice of the Orient, not the genuine Orient but the Orient of Rimsky-Korsakov, Puccini and Strauss; so much so that I was irreverently reminded of Ketelby's *Persian Market*! The finale is a sizzler.

Arnold's *Divertimento* is, as one would expect, tremendous fun. It is also an exciting challenge to the youngsters' skill. The *Nocturne* takes a naughty side-swipe at Bartók at his most nocturnal while the hilarious finale is constructed, of all things, on a solemn ground bass. Pray silence, ladies and gentlemen, while we listen to Purcell spinning in his grave!

The recording is excellent in both stereo and mono and all four works deserve to become popular. On cheap label a prize not to be missed.

K.L.

FEELING LIKE A TONIC?

IF you feel like being cheered up, go out and buy Pye Golden Guinea **GGC 4103** mono, **GSGC 14103** stereo.

Lower your pick-up on to side one and listen to some orchestral playing of a quality which might be representative of any professional orchestra north of London.

But this is not a professional orchestra. It's the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra

schools music director Eric Pinkett.

WHY NOT HERE?

If this can be done in Leicestershire, it can be done in Hertfordshire, or in any other county. There is no reason to suppose that Leicestershire has a monopoly of musical talent in its schoolchildren, and this record suggests pretty clearly that there is a tremendous number of musically gifted children in this country whose ability is never even recognised.

The quality of the Leicestershire orchestra is extremely good and one or two young musicians make it clear that music is going to be their career. Certainly the timpanist is a boy with outstanding ability.

... OTHER COUNTIES PLEASE COPY

which draws its players not from the whole nation but just a single county.

They play four pieces, all by contemporary British composers. There is Sir Michael Tippett's Suite for the birthday of Prince Charles, Alan Ridout's *Concertante Music*, William Mathias' *Sinfonietta* and the *Divertimento* by Malcolm Arnold.

Conducting honours are divided between Tippett, Ridout and Mathias and the Leicestershire

TIPPETT Suite for the birthday of Prince Charles.
RIDOUT Concertante Music. **MATHIAS** Sinfonietta. **ARNOLD** Divertimento. Leicestershire Schools SO/Tippett, Ridout, Mathias, Pinkett

PYE M GGC 4103 S GSGC 14103 (24s)

The finest playing I have ever heard from a school orchestra—roughly in the class of a good municipal band, the only real weakness being a lack of power and decisiveness in the strings. The music is also worth listening to, although the personalities of the composers are a little subdued—except that of Michael Tippett, who is recognizable from the first half-dozen notes. Tippett's piece, however, was not written for the Leicestershire people, as the others were, but for the BBC as far back as 1948. Brass and percussion sound best in both recording and performance; there is a timpanist who would have delighted the heart of Beecham! The recording is very good on percussion, and the brass sounds lively and crisp, but the strings are subdued and a little thin; the general sound is exciting, but hardens just a little at climaxes. This should deter no one, it is quite acceptable, and the record is worth acquiring at this cheap rate for the Tippett alone.

PETER J. PIRIE

The Musical Times

May 1968

Nothing psychedelic about these musicians

MEMBERS of the Leicestershire Schools Orchestra have every reason to be thoroughly pleased and proud of themselves today after the admirable way they acquitted themselves on television last night.

In an early evening programme on ITV called **Come Here Often** viewers were given a fascinating glimpse of the county's young orchestra preparing to make a record in the De Montfort Hall, Leicester.

The youngsters absolutely brimmed over with a contagious enthusiasm for their music, much of which has been specially written for them.

What a change it was to see and hear teenagers talking

about the satisfaction and fulfilment they get from music, to hear how hard they are prepared to work and practise to make their orchestra one of the most highly regarded youth groups in the country.

These young people needed no stimulants like drugs and psychedelic trappings to help them enjoy their music, which to some will quite obviously become their lives.

REFRESHING

There was such a refreshing modesty and eagerness about these musicians, who spoke frankly of their aspirations to Cliff Morgan, that it was a great pity the feature didn't last a good deal longer, and that we didn't hear a lot more of their playing.

Alan Ridout summed up the

orchestra when he said how happy it was and how gay the youngsters made everything. It was a tribute to them that he also thought they took more readily to playing complex irregular rhythms than adults.

Sir Michael Tippett, the composer and conductor, who has written for the Leicestershire orchestra did not stint his praise of our young people either. He said they were making the record because they wanted to show everybody what it is possible to do with young people in one musical society. The young people had a tremendous instinct for music.

The record, a long player, which the orchestra recorded last July, is due out in November and on the basis of the orchestra's performance—short though it was—last night, it ought to sell exceedingly well in the circles at which it is aimed.

Only one thing was blatantly wrong with the programme—it was its timing. One would hardly have thought that those most interested in it—parents, friends, teachers, etc.—would have been in a position to watch it at 5.25 p.m. It seemed to me it was of sufficient interest to be televised at a more popular time.

Even though it was a youth orchestra it certainly wasn't kids' stuff.—M.R.W.

Golden Guinea Collector Series

Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra

Tippett/Ridout/Mathias/Arnold



Original sleeve - front

Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra

Tippett/Ridout/Mathias/Arnold

MICHAEL TIPPETT

*SUITE FOR THE BIRTHDAY OF PRINCE CHARLES
(SUITE IN D)*

Intrada
Berceuse
Procession and Dance
Carol
Finale
Conducted by the composer

ALAN RIDOUT
Cocertante Music for Orchestra
Conducted by the composer

WILLIAM MATHIAS

SINFONIETTA

Allegro non troppo
Lento con moto
Allegro con slancio
Conducted by the Composer

MALCOLM ARNOLD

DIVERTIMENTO

Fanfare
Nocturne
Chaconne
Conducted by Eric Pinkett (Music Adviser for Leicestershire)

Leicestershire appointed its first Music Adviser in 1948, since when music has developed rapidly in the area and now plays a major part in County Education. From the many children at present learning to play orchestral instruments, about 400 of the best young musicians are drawn together to form the three orchestras of the County School of Music, which meets each Saturday morning during term time. The Junior group has a full orchestral complement of about 150 instruments and the age range of members is from 9 to 12 years. The Intermediate is of similar proportions and has an age range of 12 to 15. In addition to normal Saturday rehearsals, both orchestras have annual residential courses, the Junior in a local school during the summer term and the Intermediate at the seaside in the summer holidays.

The Senior Orchestra, otherwise known as the Leicestershire School's Symphony Orchestra, has about 100 members, aged roughly between 14 and 18 years. In the Easter holidays it has a rehearsal course in a school lens by another Education Authority, often on the coast.

Each year the orchestra travels abroad for a concert tour and has, up to present, visited many European countries. It has broadcast on radio and television a number of times both at home and abroad. At least one concert is given each year in the De Montfort Hall, Leicester, and on these occasions the orchestra has been directed by well-known conductors such as Sir Adrian Boult, Rudolf Schwarz and Norman Del Mar and by composers like Sir Michael Tippett and Malcolm Arnold. Every two years, following its inauguration in 1965, the Leicestershire Schools Festival of Music is held, under the patronage of Sir Michael Tippett. For the 1967 event, new works were specially commissioned from five British composers, who conducted the Festival performances.

*SUITE FOR THE BIRTHDAY
OF
PRINCE CHARLES (Suite in D)*
Sir Michael Tippett.
Intrada Berceuse Procession and
Dance Carol Finale

Leicestershire has been extremely fortunate to have the enthusiastic support of Sir Michael Tippett in

its Schools' Orchestra activities over the last two years. The happy association began in connection with the 1965 Schools' Festival of Music, and has continued in a number of enterprises since then, including his direction of concerts in Leicester and Belgium. This suite, commissioned by the BBC and first broadcast late in 1948, makes use of a number of traditional tunes. 'Crimond', chosen by the then Princess Elizabeth for her wedding, appears in the predominantly (but not obviously) scalic first movement; a French tune played by solo oboe forms the basis of the second. A glittering procession follows, the brightness of which perhaps suggests something greater than mere ceremony. Clarinets start a lively jig (in which the strings are also busy); the procession returns. 'Angelus ad Virginum', a mediaeval English tune, is heard against a background of chimes in the Carol. A Cornish dance and 'Early one morning' are skilfully woven into the lively finale.

CONCERTANTE MUSIC
Alan Ridout

This work, commissioned by the

Loughborough University of Technology, was written specifically for this gramophone recording in July 1967. Its first public performances were not given until the orchestra visited Denmark shortly afterwards. It is fully-scored, as are the symphony and dance-drama previously written for these players. Alternating groups of instruments make one form of contrast; the simple A-B-A-coda construction another. Two notable features of the first section are the sequences of 9/8, 11/8 and 12/8 bars, and the gay duet for two trombones. A break precedes the slow 'B' section where strings and wind both relax the intensity, until a solo violin, later joined by a cello works an arched, lyrical phrase not dissimilar to the trombones'. After a straight repeat of 'A', the coda is brief and exciting.

SINFONIETTA OP. 34
William Mathias.
Allegro non troppo—Vivace Lento
con moto Allegro conslant cito

This work was completed towards the end of 1966. It is scored for normal orchestra with the addition of piano, and with prominent

parts for percussion.

The music is direct in expression, and its strong dance element is reflected in the use of popular rhythms of our time. The opening movement falls into two parts, the introductory first section presenting the basic material of the work in terms of contrasting ideas and sonorities. The slow movement, elegiac in mood has the character of a languorous 'blues'. The finale is a vigorous dance movement—its two main themes are first played separately, and later, simultaneously.

DIVERTIMENTO
Malcolm Arnold
Fanfare Nocturne Chaconne

Malcolm Arnold came to conduct the Leicestershire orchestra in 1962 and since then one or another of his works has been in their repertoire. Written for the National Youth Orchestra in 1959 the work is brief, requires six trumpets and uses the brass in his characteristic style. The slow movement has a very broad sweeping main tune in unison strings, and the chaconne a gaiety and brilliance not normally associated with the form.