

Recordings of The Society for the Preservation
of the American Musical Heritage
The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Karl Krueger, conductor

Disc A (58:00)

Suite No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 42 (21:32)

Edward MacDowell
(1860-1908)

- 1** I In a Haunted Forest (5:46)
- 2** II Summer Idyll (1:56)
- 3** III In October (5:01)
- 4** IV The Shepherdess Song (3:36)
- 5** V Forest Spirits (5:13)

Suite No. 2 'Indian', Op. 48 (36:20)

Edward MacDowell

- 6** I Legend (8:02)
- 7** II Love Song (7:54)
- 8** III In War-Time (5:36)
- 9** IV Dirge (8:20)
- 10** V Village Festival (6:28)

Disc B (63:17)

1 Vathek—Symphonic Poem (1903) (14:54)

Horatio Parker
(1863-1919)

Hero and Leander—Symphonic Poem, Op. 33 (29:11)

Victor Herbert
(1859-1924)

- 2** Part One: Molto tranquillo (15:31)
- 3** Part Two: Love Scene, Andante espressivo (13:44)

The Gods of the Mountain—Suite, Op. 52 (19:04)

Arthur Farwell
(1877-1952)

- 4** I Beggars' Dreams (5:35)
- 5** II Maya of the Moon (5:26)
- 6** III Pinnacle of Pleasure (3:09)
- 7** IV The Stone Gods Come (4:54)

Disc C (76:35)

Symphony No. 2 in F Min., 'The Four Seasons', Op. 30 (45:15) Henry Hadley

- 1** I Winter: Maestoso moderato - piu allegro (13:22) (1871-1939)
- 2** II Spring: Allegretto con moto (9:10)
- 3** III Summer: Andante (12:48)
- 4** IV Autumn: Andante con moto - Allegro molto (9:55)

Salome, Op. 55—Symphonic Poem (31:18)

Henry Hadley

- 5** Cue One (4:51)
- 6** Cue Two (1:18)
- 7** Cue Three (2:22)
- 8** Cue Four (6:38)
- 9** Cue Five (4:23)
- 10** Cue Six (4:14)
- 11** Cue Seven (7:28)

(see liner notes for description of cues)

Orchestral Compositions by Farwell, Hadley, Herbert, MacDowell, and Parker

By Malcolm MacDonald

The composers on these discs represent a pioneer generation. Not so much in their actual musical language, which belongs largely to the European mainstream of their time. But Edward MacDowell, Arthur Farwell, Horatio Parker, Victor Herbert and Henry Hadley were among the first American-born composers (in Herbert's case, American-naturalized) to create substantial reputations both in the USA and internationally. Indeed, they made the concept of the 'American composer' natural and acceptable, in a musical world still dominated by the conservatoires of Europe. They were the forerunners, without whom more celebrated 20th-century Americans – Ives, Copland, Hanson, Harris, Piston, Sessions, Thomson – would have had a much harder struggle for recognition. They were also educators – of the American public, and of that coming generation of younger composers. And they were performers, energizers and campaigners who put the whole concept of serious music by Americans on the map.

What 'American music' meant to each of them obviously differed from composer to composer: Parker once famously declared there was no such thing as indigenous American music, while Farwell prospected deeply and seriously into the musical culture of the Native American peoples. But it is notable, at least in the works represented in this collection, that most of the composers sought to define themselves by some appeal to the exotic, often the oriental exotic, with which to leaven the solid Austro-German training which had made all of them such sound

musical technicians. We can hear in these works the beginning of a shift in orientation in the music that American composers were writing just before and after the end of the 19th century – a shift away from the conventional European musical language in which they had been educated, towards something more individual and 'American', which they sought first of all in non-European mythologies and folk musics, either real or invented.

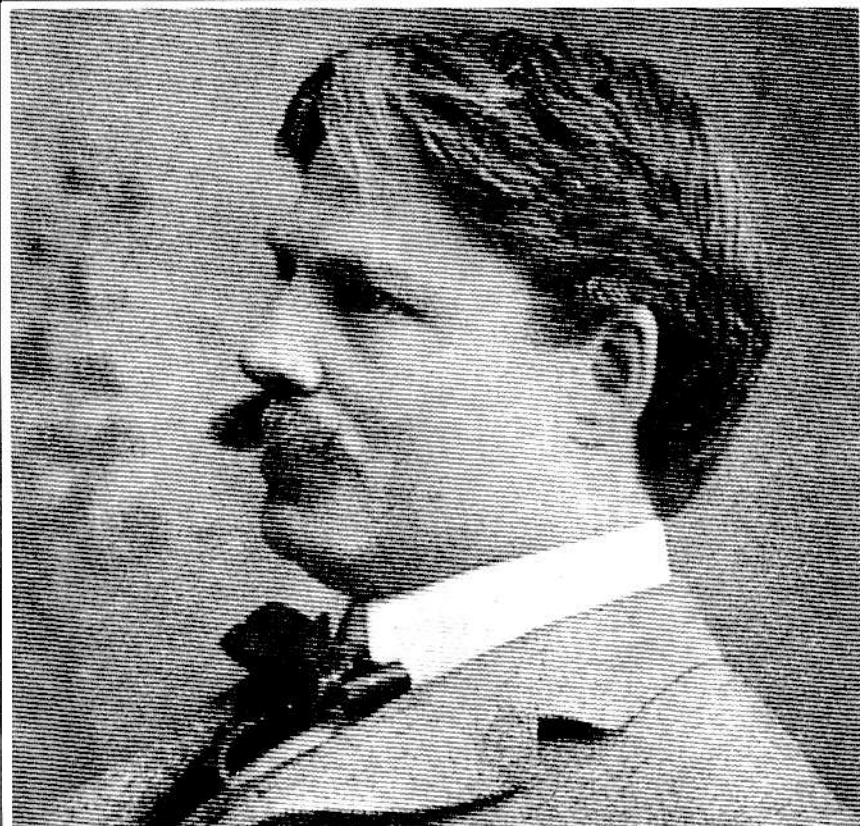
Edward MacDowell (1860-1908) was probably the first American composer to achieve an international reputation. A New Yorker - and as his works demonstrate, a pianist of virtuoso technique - he studied, like most American musicians of his time, in Europe: briefly at the Paris Conservatoire and then in Germany – first in Wiesbaden and then in Frankfurt under Joachim Raff. Raff brought him directly under the wing of the aged Franz Liszt, who arranged for MacDowell's music to be published and for the premiere of his *First Piano Concerto*. Returning to the USA in 1888, MacDowell worked in Boston for some years before becoming head of the Music Department of Columbia University in New York. However, he was unsuited to academic life and became increasingly depressed. After a serious street accident in the early 1900s he ceased to compose, succumbed to insanity, and died at the early age of 48. His country house in New Hampshire would become the nucleus of the MacDowell Colony, the famous retreat for American composers, artists and writers.

MacDowell's present-day reputation principally rests upon his works for piano. The suite *Woodland Sketches*, including the perennially popular 'To a Wild Rose', is still occasionally heard; he also wrote four important piano sonatas and two concertos, of which the Second is much the more frequently performed. But he also wrote some significant orchestral and vocal works, including tone-poems. The most substantial of his works for orchestra alone are undoubtedly the two orchestral Suites, which were composed more or less concurrently: *Suite No. 1*, begun in 1890,

was premiered in a provisional form on 24 September 1891 in Mechanics' Hall, Worcester, Mass. as part of the 34th Annual Festival of the Worcester County Musical Association. The conductor was Carl Zerrahn; on 24 October that year the Boston Symphony Orchestra played the work under the direction of Artur Nikisch. It was only in 1893, however, that MacDowell added the movement 'In October'. Meanwhile his *Suite No. 2* had been completed the previous year. MacDowell was not an American 'Nationalist' in outlook; indeed he affected to scorn those who proclaimed the necessity of writing a distinctively 'American' music. His own music owed varying debts to Mendelssohn, Liszt, Wagner and indeed (in its Romantic pictorialism) his teacher Raff. Among MacDowell's contemporaries he most nearly resembled Grieg in the forms and styles of expression that he cultivated. Nevertheless his works form an important stage in the development of a genuinely American musical identity.

Suite No. 1 in D minor received its first complete performance in Boston by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Emil Pauer, on 26 October 1895 and they repeated it at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York on 23 January 1896. In outline it resembles a collection of lyric pieces in the manner of MacDowell's *Woodland Sketches* and *New England Sketches*, the more so as the opening and closing movements locate the *mis-en-scène* of these mood-pictures in the forest. That forest would seem more likely to be situated somewhere in central Europe rather than New England, at least insofar as the *Suite* draws upon idioms made familiar by the great Romantic composers. The most ambitious movement is the first, 'In a Haunted Forest', which begins with a brooding slow introduction, with a pronounced Wagnerian tinge, before springing to life in a sinister Allegro whose whirlwind chromatics and snapping brass fanfares bespeak a keen student of the symphonic works of Liszt.

The ensuing 'Summer Idyll' is an elegant dance-movement, likely to re-



Edward MacDowell

mind British listeners, at least, of the contemporary light-music miniatures of Edward Elgar or even Sir Arthur Sullivan. The light-music character persists through the more virtuosic 'In October', a jaunty 'hunting' scherzo. Its outer sections are dominated by bold, cheerful horn writing and enclose a languorously tuneful trio, whose main theme blooms again on the horns before an atmospheric coda.

'The Shepherdess Song', the lyric heart of the Suite, shows MacDowell at his closest to Grieg, its gentle pastoral melody flowering into a brief climax with a dying chromatic fall. Finally, 'Forest Spirits' (MacDowell was much attracted to fairy stories) is a kind of elfin scherzo. Yet though its ultimate ancestors must be sought in the work of Mendelssohn, there is a pleasing rhythmic wit and melodic cheekiness to it that bespeaks an independent musical character. Eventually it works up to quite a dionysiac climax before the glistening chirrups of the final bars. In this movement – and indeed throughout the Suite – MacDowell's orchestration is deft, imaginative and assured, painting all his varied scenes in warm colours in textures that are never overloaded.

Although completed in 1892, *Suite No. 2* was not heard until 1896, when it was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, once again directed by Emil Pauer. This is an altogether more ambitious conception than *Suite No. 1*, to which it stands in strong expressive contrast. In fact it is MacDowell's most substantial orchestral work. Whereas the First Suite could easily be mistaken for a purely European work, No. 2 proclaims its American provenance through the fact that its main thematic material derives from the music of the North American Indians – a people MacDowell once characterized as 'stern but ... manly and free'. Each movement uses Indian themes first published by the musicologist Theodore Baker in his doctoral thesis for the University of Leipzig, later translated as *Music of the North American Wilderness*. This source was drawn to MacDowell's attention by his pupil Henry F. Gilbert, and he made resourceful use of it. Few of the 'Indian' themes are

used in their raw state, for MacDowell reshaped them to accommodate to late-Romantic form and harmony. The resulting plethora of pentatonic melodic ideas, and also MacDowell's richly-hued orchestration, may seem reminiscent of Dvorák's *Symphony From the New World* – but we must remember that MacDowell's Suite preceded the Czech master's work by at least a year.

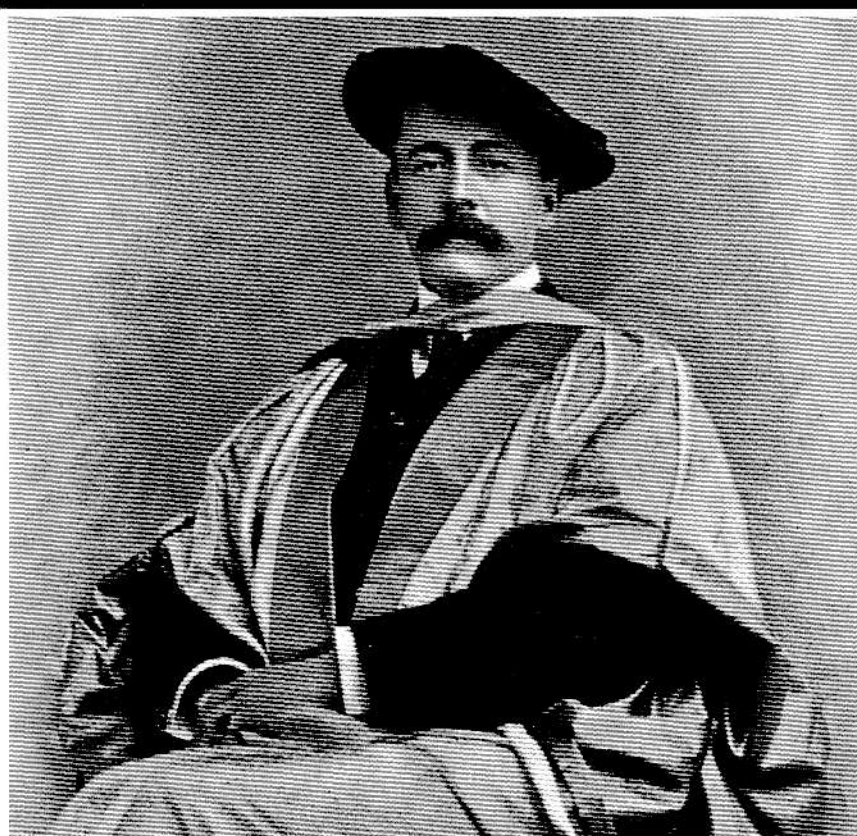
The first movement, 'Legend', is built from motifs which Baker attributes to the Iroquois and Chippewa nations, and opens very strikingly with proclamatory horn solos. The three-note phrase heard at the very beginning serves the Suite as a kind of 'motto'. A slow introduction, rather tragic in tone, develops, and then gives way to a stormy and martial Allegro, the equivalent of a symphonic first movement, with a suavely expressive second subject. The tender slow movement, 'Love Song' is based on an Iowa melody. The vivacious 'In War-Time', which serves the Suite as its central scherzo, derives from the melody of an Iroquois scalp-dance. That it sounds more high-spirited than war-like is, despite the vibrant orchestration, perhaps a limitation of MacDowell's expressive range.

Yet it contains a brief, mysterious, gloomy episode at the centre of the movement which proves a foreshadowing of the following movement. This, a 'Dirge' based on the song of a woman of the Kiowa people mourning her son, is one of the most remarkable pieces that MacDowell ever wrote, a deeply atmospheric elegy showing superb use of orchestral colour. The composer himself declared that, of all his music, this movement pleased him most, saying that the main melody seemed to him 'to express a world-sorrow'. Although it may contain some sublimated reminiscences of Siegfried's funeral march from *Götterdämmerung* it is essentially a personal vision, ending in a few plangent bars with off-stage trumpet. The gloom of this movement is dispelled by the 'Village Festival' finale, a lively rondo-like movement occasionally turned in the direction of seriousness by references to the tragic motifs of the first movement.

It is probably true to say that **Horatio William Parker** (1863-1919) is generally known today only as the less-than-fondly-remembered teacher of one of America's greatest musical geniuses, Charles Ives, who spent four years in Parker's classes when the latter was Professor at Yale. He also tends to be characterized as a tradition-bound academic, too steeped in the rules he imbibed from his German teachers to appreciate Ives's originality and vision. This is, to say the least, a somewhat slanted view. Ives described Parker in *Memos* as 'a bright man, a good technician, but apparently willing to be limited by what Rheinberger et al and the German tradition had taught him'. But in another part of these autobiographical writings from the 1930s he noted that Parker 'was seldom mean' and declared 'I had and have great respect and admiration for Parker and most of his music. (It was seldom trivial – his choral works have a dignity and depth that many of his contemporaries ... did not have. Parker had ideals that carried him higher than the popular.)' Nevertheless it is difficult to imagine now that for a short period at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries Parker was one of the most famous and highly-estimated composers in the USA.

The son of an architect, Parker was born in Auburnsdales, Massachusetts, not far from Boston, where he studied with George W. Chadwick. He then spent three years in Europe as a pupil – reputedly, the favourite pupil - of the great organist and composer-pedagogue Josef Rheinberger in Munich. Returning (with a German wife) to America in 1884, Parker soon became a sought-after organist and choirmaster in New York, later joining the staff of the National Conservatory directed by Dvorák. In 1893 he went on to become organist of Trinity Church, Boston and in the following year was appointed Battell Professor of Music Theory at Yale, vastly expanding the curriculum and developing the music faculty there to the first rank in the USA.

Generally speaking Parker occupied something of the pivotal position in his



Horatio William Parker

country's music that his elder contemporary Hubert Parry did in British music, both as a choral composer and a tireless educator. Considered a 'thorough Bostonian' and respected for his ethical idealism, as a teacher Parker was thought rather fierce and sparing with praise, though some of his pupils found his personality magnetic. Among these - apart from Ives - were several who also went on to play a significant role in 20th-century American music: such as Douglas Moore, Quincy Porter, and Roger Sessions. Parker advocated the cause of symphonic music, conducting a regular series of concerts with the student orchestra which he founded. This in time became the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, and Parker continued to conduct it until 1919, the year of his death. A workaholic despite a rather delicate constitution, he died worn out by his creative, educational and administrative labours at the early age of 56.

Parker was quite a prolific composer, and his output includes two operas (*Mona* was premiered at the Metropolitan Opera in 1912), a symphony, an organ concerto and a string quartet, but he was most celebrated for his numerous religious choral works, which include several oratorios more or less on the pattern of those then popular at the choral festivals in Victorian England. In fact, Parker visited England several times, where his music was well received and where his most famous oratorio, *Hora Novissima* (1893), received the signal honour of a performance at the 1899 Three Choirs Festival in Worcester and at the Chester Festival of 1900. In 1902 he also received an honorary Doctorate of Music from Cambridge University - an unusual mark of recognition for an American composer in that era.

Parker wrote two symphonic poems, *A Northern Ballad* and *Vathek*. A degree of mystery surrounds the latter. Parker's *Vathek* was completed in 1903, but has never been published, and he even omitted its existence from the list of works that he supplied to the standard reference work, *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. There is no record that he performed it with the New Haven Symphony,

or indeed of any other performance before the one recorded here for its 1967 release by The Society for the Preservation of the American Musical Heritage. One is bound to speculate that Parker felt the work may have been an indiscretion, a sensual indulgence too far for the upright, moral, God-fearing Bostonian and his audience. For, as if admitting to himself a very different side of his character to that which created *Hora Novissima* and the other oratorios, Parker based this orchestral work on a work of fabulous excess and immorality, the early Gothic picaresque, *The History of the Caliph Vathek* by the eccentric millionaire intellectual, novelist and travel writer William Beckford (1759-1844).

Beckford's novel (which also inspired a symphonic poem by the Portuguese composer Luis de Freitas Branco, a few years after Parker's) is an ironic fantasy on the theme of the barbarous, lustful and magical Orient. The megalomaniac young Caliph Vathek, grandson of Haroun Al-Raschid, is violent, cruel, gluttonous, obsessed with food, drink, luxury, and sex which are his for the taking in his gigantic five-fold palace. But he is also obsessed with gaining knowledge, and in order to decipher some mysterious inscriptions he makes a Faustian pact with the Devil, Eblis, who promises that if Vathek renounces his religion and his faith and God (which he does with alacrity) he will be allowed to enter the Palace of the Subterranean Fire beneath ancient Istakhar, where he will find the treasures of the pre-Adamite kings, and the talismans that control the world. On the journey to Istakhar Vathek breaks the command of Eblis, and takes the beautiful Nouronihar as a companion. Eblis also breaks his word: at the Palace of the Subterranean Fire they discover the souls of the dead writhing in eternal agony, and are condemned to share the same fate. In a sense it is a moral tale - Vathek is damned for his cruelty and impiety - but the immense gusto with which Beckford describes every violent act and sensual pleasure and flesh-creeping horror make it more of an ultra-sensationalist shocker.

It is an unexpected pleasure, therefore, to find that Parker's musical treatment of the story is such a spirited work – he was clearly 'letting his hair down' musically, and if his principal models seem to be the symphonic poems of Liszt and Tchaikovsky, Vathek is no unworthy successor in that vein. After a brief, dramatic introduction a narrative, chorale-like passage for woodwind sets the story-telling mood. Soon we are snatched into a hectic Allegro dominated by an angular four-note motif that surely stands for the action of fate. A swift succession of highly-coloured episodes ensue, all scored with considerable virtuosity and including a more voluptuous cantabile theme which presumably stands for the pleasures of the flesh. An extended violin solo develops this mood, and then a militaristic, warlike passage, with much effective use of percussion, drives to a grim and catastrophic climax. An epilogue begins in ghostly fashion, with Wagnerian overtones in the brass. The cantabile theme is heard in passionate apotheosis, mingled with the violin solo, which has the last word as the stern four-note motif fades away in the bass.

Victor Herbert (1859-1933) is generally regarded as an American composer, though he was born in Dublin, Ireland, studied in Germany, and did not arrive in the USA until he was 27. Grandson of a celebrated Irish polymath, Samuel Lover (who had been a composer, poet, painter and novelist), Herbert was something of an infant prodigy and was sent from Ireland to study music in Germany at the tender age of seven. His initial ambition was to be a cellist (he had heard Piatti play in his grandfather's home), and he studied for three years with Bernhard Cossmann before appearing as a concert soloist in several European countries. Herbert spent a year as first cellist of Eduard Strauss's orchestra in Vienna and then led the cellos of the court orchestra in Stuttgart, where he studied composition seriously for the first time (composing a *Cello Concerto* and a *Suite* for cello and orchestra in the process). He also became engaged to Therese Foerster, a soprano at the Stuttgart Opera. When she was booked to appear at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1886 in the first



Victor Herbert

US production of Verdi's *Aida*, Herbert crossed the Atlantic with her to take up the post of principal cellist of the Met.

While Therese retired from the stage within ten years, her husband went on to become one of the leading American musicians of his time. Herbert was nothing if not versatile: while still with the Metropolitan Opera he also played with Theodore Thomas's Orchestra and acted as assistant conductor to Anton Seidl at the Met. He also became associate conductor of the choral festival at Worcester, Massachusetts (for which he composed cantatas) and was bandmaster of the 22nd Regiment of the New York National Guard for four years. He conducted the Pittsburgh Orchestra from 1898 to 1904 and was eventually elected a Member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters in recognition for his services to music in America.

In 1894 Herbert had played the solo part in the premiere of his *Second Cello Concerto* with the New York Philharmonic. From that year onwards, however, he devoted himself increasingly to the composition of operettas, a commercially-profitable genre in which he was amazingly successful: his early exposure to the Viennese musical idiom he had experienced under the baton of the Strausses enabled him to write many scintillating waltz-songs. He composed over 35 operettas in all – among them *The Wizard of the Nile* (1895), *The Fortune Teller* (1898), *Mademoiselle Modiste* (1905) and his two most famous: *Babes in Toyland* and *Naughty Marietta* (1910) – as well as a serious three-act opera, *Natoma*, and a one-acter, *Madeleine*. Although orchestral music took second place to his works for the stage, he wrote several orchestral suites, an *Irish Rhapsody*, a *Spanish Rhapsody*, an *American Fantasy* and the symphonic poem *Hero and Leander*, Op.33, composed in 1900. This work was a fruit of Herbert's period as conductor of the Pittsburgh Orchestra, who premiered it under his baton in Pittsburgh on 18 January 1901. Subsequently programmed by the New York Philharmonic in 1904, this work –

probably Herbert's most ambitious composition for orchestra alone – was fated to remain unpublished during his lifetime.

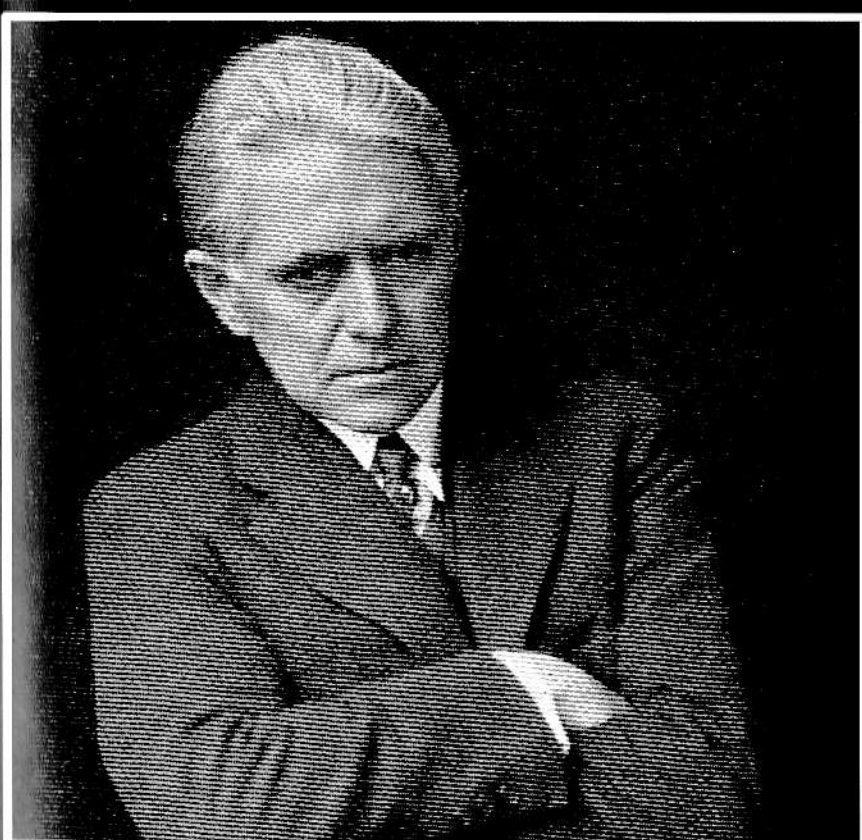
The legend of Hero and Leander was familiar during the 19th century from many widely-available popular anthologies of Greek myths, as well as the famous poem by the Elizabethans Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman, plus various representations in the other arts – such as the painting by Lord Leighton which inspired a (now lost) symphonic poem on the same subject by the English composer Havergal Brian in 1904-6. In brief, Hero, priestess of Aphrodite, lived in a tower on the European side of the Bosphorus. Her lover Leander dwelt on the Asiatic shore and each night would swim to her across the strait, guided by the beacon which Hero set for him. One night a great storm arose; Leander was drowned, his body cast up on the rocks below Hero's tower. Grief-stricken, she jumped to her death on the rocks beside him; in pity for their love and deaths, Poseidon restored them to life as a pair of birds.

Herbert's musical reading of the tale is almost operatic, the single movement of his symphonic poem divided into a sequence of highly-charged descriptive episodes. From the opening bars his extraordinary skill as an orchestrator is apparent: *Hero and Leander* is a lustrous and highly coloured score, comparable to the tone-poems of Herbert's English contemporary Granville Bantock. An extensive introduction seems to paint the gently heaving waters viewed from Hero's tower on a serene night: Hero herself is depicted in a lyrical oboe theme which is perhaps not without a hint of the composer's Irish origins. Fragments of a bolder theme, associated with Leander, provide a more vigorous movement evoking his nightly swim across the strait, and a further, more languorous theme on clarinet suggests Hero's longing for her lover. Their themes are eventually combined in a passionate outburst, along with a minatory descending motif that symbolizes implacable fate.

A 'Love Scene' (subtitled thus by the composer) is built upon a new theme

depicting the couple's mutual adoration, announced by oboe and cor anglais in octaves. The scene, clearly influenced by Act II of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, develops with increasing warmth and passion until at the height of ecstasy the fate theme bursts in; it persists as a sinister background presence as the love-music subsides to a codetta of exhausted contentment. In a remarkable piece of orchestral onomatopoeia, Herbert next depicts the storm that overwhelms Leander on his next crossing. As it subsides, Hero's theme of longing is heard in the minor, brightening to the major as she triumphs over death in her leap from the tower. The fate theme is recalled but falls silent, and the work concludes with the love theme as the centre of attention in a radiant apotheosis.

Edward MacDowell's use of Indian motifs in his *Suite No. 2* (and in subsequent piano pieces such as 'From an Indian Lodge') created an important precedent for several American composers, who sought to establish a 'national' idiom that drew on such indigenous material. A distinct group of 'Indianist' composers, including Henry F. Gilbert, Carlos Troyer, Blair Fairchild, Charles Wakefield Cadman, Charles Sanford Skilton and Harvey Worthington Loomis began publishing transcriptions of American Indian music for concert performance as well as original works incorporating themes and motifs from native sources. The basis from which they approached this material was still, in essence, late-Romantic; but it is probably true to say that, in the same measure as they sometimes 'distorted' Indian material for conventional effect, so the Indian material started to purify and modify the European idioms they had imbibed from their teachers. Many of these works were issued by the Wa-wan Press, a periodical active throughout the first decade of the 20th century, publishing the work of 'progressive' American composers who used indigenous materials (cowboy, black and especially Native American Indian). The Press was founded and managed by one of the leading 'Indianists', **Arthur Farwell** (1877-1952). Although Farwell was probably the most substantial creative person-



Arthur Farwell

ality of the group, he was by no means 'merely' an Indianist: in his long career he wrote an immense amount of music in many genres and idioms.

Farwell had trained as an engineer at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, graduating in 1893, but was turned towards a musical career by contact with the eccentric Boston-based composer Rudolf Gott. After study in Boston he became a pupil of Humperdinck in Berlin and Guilmant in Paris. Returning to the US, he lectured in music at Cornell University from 1899 to 1901, and founded the Wa-Wan Press. From 1910-13 Farwell directed municipal concerts in New York City, including massed performances of choral works, some of them his own, by up to 1,000 voices. He directed the Settlement Music School in NY from 1915-18 before moving to California, where his private pupils included the young Roy Harris. Acting Head of music department at the University of Berkeley, California in 1918-19, he founded the Santa Barbara Community Chorus, was first holder of the composer's fellowship of the Music & Art Association of Pasadena (1921-25), taught theory at Michigan State College (1927-39) and eventually settled in New York. Nicolas Slonimsky noted in Baker's Biographical Dictionary that 'Disillusioned about commercial opportunities for American music, including his own, he established in East Lansing, in April 1936, his own lithographic handpress, with which he printed his own music, handling the entire process of reproduction, including the cover designs, by himself.

Farwell wrote a copious amount of instrumental, chamber, choral and orchestral music as well as theatre scores, masques and music for community performance. Some of his works reflect his interest in a personal, esoteric form of spirituality, which is also displayed in his lectures and writings on the theme of Intuition. Among his principal compositions are a number of *Symbolistic Studies* for orchestra, a *Symphony* developed from a fragmentary opening left by his mentor Rudolph Gott, the large-scale 'symphonic song ceremony' *Mountain Song* for orchestra and

chorus, a string quartet and a piano quintet. A gradual but ceaseless developer as a composer, in his last couple of decades Farwell produced his most individual works - including a series of polytonal studies for piano, several concise instrumental sonatas, a large number of effective and penetrating settings of the poetry of Emily Dickinson and a satirical opera, *Cartoon*, which contains parodies of Stravinsky and Schoenberg.

The suite on this disc originates from the incidental music Farwell composed in 1916 for a performance, in winter 1916-17 at Carnegie Hall, of the play *The Gods of the Mountain* by Lord Dunsany. The Anglo-Irish nobleman Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Baron Dunsany, was a friend of W.B. Yeats and a fringe figure in the Irish Literary Renaissance of the turn of the 19th century. A prolific writer throughout a long life (1878-1957), he had remarkable success as a playwright around the period of the First World War, most of his plays being first staged at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. They enjoyed an extraordinary vogue in America - on one occasion there were five productions of Dunsany plays running simultaneously in New York alone. Nowadays he is best remembered for his brief tales, pithily memorable, written in the manner of folk tale, legend or fairy story, many of which he set in an invented mythological world something like ancient Persia.

Most of his plays inhabit this same idiosyncratic imaginative world. In *The Gods of the Mountain* (1911), a group of homeless beggars at the gates of the city of Kongros hatch a cunning plot to impersonate the stone gods who have been worshipped for centuries by the populace, and are believed to live upon a distant mountain. The beggars enter the city and succeed in convincing the people that they are, in fact, the gods returned, whereupon they are enthroned in splendour, plied with food and wine and entertained with dancing girls. The real gods, outraged at this blasphemy, descend from their mountain. Discovering the beggars, temporarily abandoned by the city people, cowering on their thrones, they turn them to stone and

depart. The people return, find their 'gods' now literally petrified, and take this as the ultimate proof that they were, in fact, the true gods.

When invited to write music for this drama Farwell had recently completed music for the New York Shakespeare Tercentenary Masque, *Caliban*, which had been performed by enormous forces. With the Dunsany play he went to the opposite extreme, employing a miniature ensemble of only three players: harp, violin and cello. (He also produced an alternative version for piano trio.) But in 1928 he returned to this music and re-worked it for full orchestra as a suite, *The Gods of the Mountain*, for concert performance. The first performance was given by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henri Verbrugghen in 1929. The New York premiere took place two years later with the Manhattan Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Henry Hadley.

As Farwell pointed out in a programme note, he had sought to match the exoticism of Dunsany's play by composing each movement in a scale or mode that was not the conventional major or minor. He claimed to have invented the 'Maya' scale used in the second movement, and that some movements were composed only in the pitches of their chosen scale, with little or no alteration. (This procedure closely resembles that of the English composer John Foulds, who was composing his *Essays in the Modes* in Paris just as Farwell was writing his Suite.) Although in his own programme note Farwell related the music of each movement quite closely to the events of the play, the Suite remains effective without any knowledge of the action. Echoes and presages of motifs from other parts of the work, introduced for narrative reasons, actually serve to bind the separate movements more tightly together into an organic unity. The impression is less of a collection of character pieces than of a short symphony, its ideas of quasi-oriental cast, with slow movement, scherzo and slow finale.

In the first movement, 'Beggars' Dreams', the principal theme – which

Farwell described as 'thin and wiry' – is developed to a hubristic climax. After this a mysterious, sinister pizzicato motif is heard (a premonition of the approach of the gods in the finale) and then a chromatic 'Fear motif', before a subdued ending.

'Maya of the Moon' alludes to the episode where the beggars play upon the popular superstitions about the gods, speaking in impressively obscure language and referring to the moon as 'their little sister'. This lush, exalted second movement begins with an introduction featuring prominent harp writing before the main theme unfolds as a cantilena on cellos. Later in the movement this is taken up by the violins and worked to an ecstatic climax before a ghostly coda for horns and muted strings.

'Pinnacle of Pleasure' depicts the triumph and feasting of the beggars. Farwell, who described it as 'an Oriental dance of somewhat orgiastic character', cast it in the Ancient Greek Phrygian mode. It is a scherzo-like invention recalling the music of the Russian nationalist composers, with skilful use of percussion and a momentary reappearance of the 'Fear' motif.

The finale, 'The Stone Gods Come', is the most remarkable movement. Low strings, pizzicato, give out the motif of the approaching gods: their ominous tread, each note standing for a footfall and separated from the next by silence. Farwell once wrote that it was difficult to get this movement played slowly enough: 'It must be taken fearfully slowly to produce the proper effect, the effect of suspense, each time, before the next stone tread falls'. The slow tread, interwoven with the 'Fear' motif, becomes ever louder, more massively scored and harmonized, until it consists of huge chords, still jagged and abrupt, spanning the entire gamut of the orchestra. After the catastrophe these rapidly diminish, and the work ends as if with a mere distant echo of the footfalls of the gods.

Like Horatio Parker, **Henry Kimball Hadley** (1871-1939) was born in Massachusetts and studied with Chadwick in Boston before completing his training in Europe: but like Victor Herbert, Hadley went to Vienna. Here he was a pupil of Brahms's friend and protégé Eusebius Mandyczewski, and perhaps as a result his music often has a sunnier tinge than Parker's. Hadley was celebrated as much as a conductor as a composer (in fact he was the first American-born and trained conductor to achieve an international reputation), though he was very active in both fields. While Parker was an important influence on the East Coast, Hadley had a more nationwide, and indeed international impact as a force in the dissemination of American music. Even before he went to Vienna in 1894 he toured the US as an opera conductor. After a period in New York and New England he spent several years in Germany, conducting the premiere of one of his operas in Mainz. Returning to the US in 1909, became conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, then of the San Francisco Symphony in 1911; he conducted it until 1915. In 1920 Hadley settled in New York as associate conductor of the New York Philharmonic. During the 1920s he also conducted the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Worcester Music Festival, appeared at the Hollywood Bowl, and in 1927, after leaving the New York Philharmonic, toured Argentina, becoming the first North American to conduct concerts there. He was also one of the first conductors to grasp the possibilities of radio, and gave many studio concerts for various stations as early as the 1920s. From 1929 to 1932 he was conductor of the Manhattan Symphony Orchestra, his policy being to include works by American composers in every programme, many of them world or US premieres (for example, Farwell's *The Gods of the Mountain*). Still active in his sixties, in 1933 he founded the National Association for American Composers and Conductors and, the following year, the Berkshire Music Festival, serving as its conductor for its first two seasons.



Henry Kimball Hadley

Hadley was a fluent and prolific composer, influenced as much by the colourful invention of the Russian nationalist composers as by the formal richness of the Austro-German tradition. He wrote six operas (*Cleopatra's Night*, after the novel by Théophile Gautier, was mounted at the Metropolitan Opera under the composer's baton in 1920), four symphonies, overtures, symphonic poems, choral works, substantial chamber scores, as well as many smaller pieces including nearly 200 songs and what is believed to be the first specially-composed, fully-synchronized film score.

Hadley's *Symphony No. 2 in F minor, 'The Four Seasons'*, Op.30 was composed in 1901 and was winner of two prizes awarded that year: the Paderewski Prize and the prize of the New England Conservatory of Music. Published in 1902, it may justly be called one of the first successful American symphonies (Charles Ives had begun, but not finished, his own *Second Symphony* by the time Hadley completed his). Hadley evidently liked to use symphonic form to depict things that came in fours: his *Fourth Symphony* is subtitled *North, South, East and West*. To embody the passage of the seasons he chose to begin with Winter and follow the growth and decline of the year through to Autumn.

'Winter' makes an imposing sonata-form first movement, beginning *Moderato maestoso* with a stern, tempestuous first subject contrasted in time with a more elegiac, almost Elgarian second subject. Gusts of chromatic winds and storms blow through the graphic extensive development section, which also includes a vigorous fugue that builds up a near-irresistible momentum before a very dramatic-rhetorical return to the opening material. In the recapitulation the first subject, though intensified, soon subsides to make way for its more lyrical competitors, but in the coda a final blizzard arises, only to blow itself out in the final quiet bars, ending with a flute solo. Altogether this movement has a kinship to Hadley's great English contemporaries, Parry and Elgar, and shows how he could have been an influence on works by the next generation of American composers, such as Howard Hanson's early *Nordic*

Symphony.

'Spring' is less a scherzo than a delightful dance-intermezzo in the manner of Elgar or Massenet, with felicitous orchestration that provides plenty of bravura work for solo woodwind. A slowed-down variant of its main motif introduces a broad and elegant trio in the style of a slow concert waltz, rising to an impressive climax before the return of the main dance-section, enlivened by the bright tones of glockenspiel and triangle. Opening with serene wind chords (alluding perhaps to Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*), 'Summer' is a tranced and lyrical Andante slow movement which may well put listeners in mind of Grieg. The hymn-like main theme unfolds in rhapsodic and slumberous solos for French and English horns and soon builds to a shimmering climax. A series of informal variations on it takes the movement through a number of different moods, but it closes, as it opened, in a mood of deep contentment.

The finale, 'Autumn', begins by maintaining the Andante tempo, with dancing violin rhythms like fluttering leaves around a big elegiac, deeply lyrical melody in horns and cellos. Horns and trumpets in joyous hunting mode then announce the main *Allegro molto*, and what seems likely to be a rollicking finale is under way. But after a few minutes the elegiac tones of the opening return, as if bidding light and warmth goodbye. The tempo slows, the harmony darkens; the hunting-horns are heard again, but briefly and in the distance, as the music winds down to a sombre close – the most unconventional and affecting touch in this fine symphony.

The symphonic poem *Salome*, Op.55 was one of Hadley's favourites among his own compositions. It was written after he had seen a production of Oscar Wilde's sensational and 'decadent' play, though the date of composition is disputed by different sources, some saying that it dates from 1903, others from 1905-6: the opus number would favour the later date. The musicologist Wayne Shirley (who holds to the 1905-6 date for Hadley's *Salome*) has opined that Hadley 'would not have known'

Richard Strauss's opera on Wilde's *Salome* while he was writing his symphonic poem. I am not so sure of this: Hadley was working in Germany at the time and Strauss's opera was premiered (with enormous publicity both preceding and following the production) in Dresden in December 1905. All we can say with certainty is that Strauss's *Salome* was performed after Hadley had begun his symphonic poem, and clearly had no direct musical influence on it (though some of Strauss's earlier music could well have done). The two composers approached their common theme from very different angles, but still recognizably as adepts of the same general musical language and a similar late-Romantic aesthetic.

Hadley precedes the score of his tone poem with a summary of the plot of Wilde's drama, which remains useful for following the course of the musical action. As follows:

[Cue One - Track 5] Oscar Wilde's tragedy 'Salome' presents first a moon-light scene of oriental beauty. Without the Palace the soldiers are keeping guard; **[Cue Two - Track 6]** within, a feast is in progress. **[Cue Three - Track 7]:** the voice of the prophet Jochanaan.

[Cue Four - Track 8] Salome leaves Herod's banquet and seeks the grateful cool of the lovely night, John the Baptist (Jochanaan) has been made prisoner by Herod in an old well.

On hearing his voice proclaiming the Christ, Salome is deeply moved and determines to see him. She prevails upon the captain Narraboath, who is in love with her, to have Jochanaan brought forth.

When Salome beholds him, Salome the Willful and Haughty, who has always triumphed in her loves, finally herself falls a victim to a consuming passion for Jochanaan.

Notwithstanding her pleadings, he repulses and condemns her as the daughter of a wicked woman, while the soldiers reconduct him to his imprisonment. The music and revelry of Herod's banqueters are heard. **[Cue Five - Track 9]** Missing Salome at the feast, Herod leaves the Palace and seeks her. Upon finding her cold and silent to his advances he asks her

to partake of fruits and wine with him. This she refuses to do. Finally he begs her to dance, promising her anything her heart desires if she will but consent.

[Cue Six - Track 10] At last Salome is persuaded and dances the dance of the seven veils for Herod.

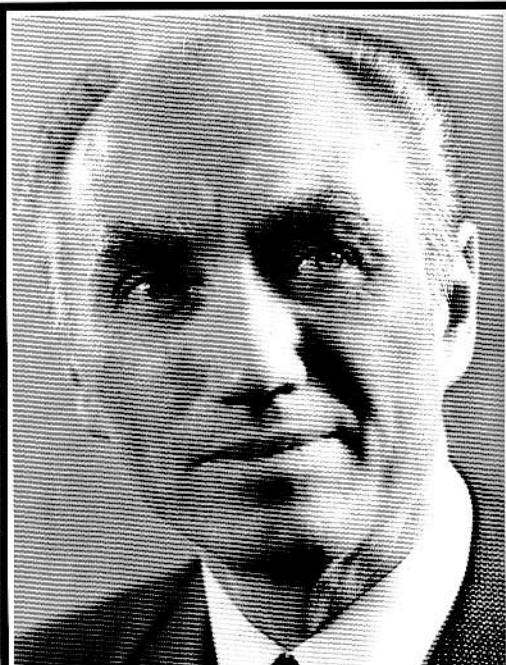
[Cue Seven - Track 11] Delighted and enchanted with Salome's charms and maddening dance, he lays half his kingdom at her feet. She will have none of it, but, reminding him of his promise, demands the head of Jochanaan on a silver plate.

Herod, superstitious, and now thoroughly alarmed at so extraordinary a request, pleads with Salome. It is of no avail. She will have only what she demanded. At last, to the utter collapse of Herod, he is bound to keep his promise. Salome on being presented with the head of Jochanaan fondles and caresses it, breathing words of passion into its deaf ears. Herod in fright of what he has done and in rage and disgust with Salome, orders her instant death. The soldiers rush upon her with their spears and put her to death.

On this basis listeners need have no difficulty in following Hadley's symphonic poem, which is a very clear musical narrative and highly effective in evoking its varied episodes and atmospheres, using a larger orchestra than the *Second Symphony*. The action is enclosed by his depiction of the sultry Judaeen night, arising from a deep, calm pedal on bassoons in thirds, until Herod's feast is announced by hectic trumpet fanfares. The stentorian voice of the prophet in his drain is heard on minatory trombones with timpani-roll accompaniment, and Salome's sudden passion for him is painted in colours deriving clearly enough from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. The suspicious Herod is clearly delineated with a slithering motif on bass clarinet. The Dance of the Seven Veils, if less suggestive than in Richard Strauss, is none the less an effective climax to the work, building up in oriental style after the manner of the Russian Nationalist composers. In the work-up to the final catastrophe, most of the leading motifs are developed and passed in review; Salome's words to the head of Jochanaan take the form of plangent woodwind solos. After the brief, brutal chords of her demise, the night envelops all once again.

Karl Krueger (1894-1979) was born in Atchison, Kansas. In 1920, after touring Brazil as an organist, Krueger went to Vienna to continue his studies with Robert Fuchs and Franz Schalk. Krueger's conducting career included positions as assistant conductor at the Vienna Staatsoper (1920-22) and Music Director of the Seattle Symphony (1925-32); the Kansas City Philharmonic (1933-43); and the Detroit Symphony (1943-49). In 1958 he founded the Society for the Preservation of the American Musical Heritage.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was founded in 1946 by Thomas Beecham. Beecham controlled the affairs and policy of the orchestra until his death in 1961. From 1948 until 1963 the orchestra was the resident orchestra for Glyndebourne company performances at both the Glyndebourne Festival and the Edinburgh Festival. In 1950 Beecham took the orchestra on an American tour, becoming the first English orchestra to tour the USA since 1912. The grueling schedule included 51 concerts in 45 cities in 64 days, performing a repertory of 50 works.



Karl Krueger

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Photo of Karl Krueger courtesy of The Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

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