

The conductor and composer Antal Doráti was one of the most distinguished musicians of the 20th century. He was born in Budapest on April 9 1906 and rose to become the youngest ever conductor of the Royal Opera House in his native city soon after graduating at age 18. In 1928 he went to Dresden as assistant to Fritz Busch and subsequently was engaged as conductor at the opera house in Münster/Westfalia, where he stayed until 1933. From 1934–1941 he was first second conductor, later music director of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and, subsequently, of the American Ballet Theater in New York. His American debut as a symphony conductor came in 1937, when he guest-conducted the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. He became an American citizen in 1947. From 1945–1949 Doráti directed and greatly revitalized the Dallas Symphony. He became music director of the Minneapolis Symphony in 1949, where he stayed for 11 years.

In 1963 he was appointed Chief conductor of the BBC Orchestra, a post he held for 4 years. This was followed by a similar position with the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra (from 1965–1972). Parallel to his European activities he became music director of the National Symphony in Washington in 1970, followed by the same position 1977 in Detroit. At the same time (since 1975) Antal Doráti accepted the Royal Philharmonic's invitation to become their chief conductor. From 1981 he became "Conductor Laureate" for life of 3 orchestras (RPO London, Stockholm Philharmonic and Detroit Symphony). Antal Doráti's recording activities commenced in 1936, his total number of recordings reached nearly 600. Many of them won international prizes, amongst others 32 "Grand Prix". His most important recording project was the complete recording of the 107 Haydn symphonies and 8 of the composer's operas.

Antal Doráti's influence in the musical world has been highly significant, not only as a conductor. He has an impressive number of compositions to his credit, which are performed worldwide more and more.

His teaching activities include regular masterclasses at the Royal College of music in London as well as at the Music Academy in Budapest. Both institutions made him their honorary member. Also masterclasses at the Salzburg Festival, Dartington and Bern – Basel are mentionable.

His autobiography "Notes of seven decades" was published in 1975. A second book "For inner and outer peace" – a subject which interested him greatly during his last years– was edited after his death in 1988. In this period he also returned to his other talents, which included drawing and painting.

His distinctions included the post of Honorary President of the Philharmonia Hungarica, four honorary doctor degrees, the rank of Chevalier of the order of Vasa of Sweden, the Cross of Honour, 1st class "Artibus et Litteris" of Austria, the order of "Chevalier des Arts et Lettres" de France and others. The Royal Academy of Music in London honoured Antal Doráti by appointing him an Hon.R.A.M. And in 1983 her Majesty the Queen appointed him an Hon. KBE(Knight of the British Empire) in recognition for his service to music in Britain.

Antal Doráti died in his Swiss home in Gerzensee on november 13, 1988.



ANTAL DORÁTI

conducts

ALBÉNIZ
KODALY
PROKOFIEV

As a piano series in four books, this suite is Albéniz's outstanding accomplishment, featuring complex playing techniques, bright modern harmonies, and imitations of instruments such as the guitar and castanets. In this transcription of five of the 12 "impressions" for orchestra by E. Fernández Arbós, many fascinating timbral elements are added to and amplified from the piano score.

"Evocación" (Evocation, 1906) opens with a bright Spanish chord consisting of a guitar-like string pizzicato, timbales, triangle, and high winds. Transposed to the key of A minor from the original A flat minor (intonation and certain figures are considerably easier for the orchestra in A minor), a plaintive English horn delivers the sad, haunting triple meter melody before it is passed on to other woodwind instruments. The expansive high strings are supported by pulsing horns and rich arpeggios which completely realizes something at which the pianist can only hint. Arbós adds new Debussy-inspired textures with tremolo strings and fast runs.

"La Fête Dieu à Séville" ("El Corpus en Sevilla"/Corpus Christi in Seville, 1906) is a celebratory minor-key tune that builds to fiery emotion. Arbós brilliantly accomplishes the difficult transfer of the unique piano figures to the orchestra (for example, quick two-hand alterations are reinterpreted by repeated pedal point on the open A string, or by tremolos in the violins). This makes for some exciting, brightly sparkling impressionist textures. Calmer and slower English horn and flute melodies are then accompanied by softly undulating muted Debussyian string timbres. The final Vivo section re-ignites the energy in triple meter. The ending has bell-like sounds bringing back a religious aspect following the celebration.

"Triana" (1906) is a dance with a graceful, spirited, lilting rhythm with daring harmonic modulations and combinations which calls for an expanded percussion section including timbales, triangle, Basque drum (Pandereta), cymbals, small tambour, tubular bells, and celesta, and like the typical Debussy orchestra, calls for two harps and an expanded wind section.

"El Puerto" (The Port, 1906), in a joyous 6/8 meter, contrasts brusque punctuations with a happy folk dance melody and with "subtle and caressing" sighing figures. Arbós adds many glissandi, quick trills and turns, and mid-range wind and brass sustains (replacing some of the sustaining pedal and resonance capabilities of the piano).

"El Albaicín" (1907), the name of a gypsy quarter in Granada, unfolds in a lively angular dance rhythm with a melancholy sweetness and bold harmonies.

Háry János is a Hungarian folk opera (that is, a spoken play with songs, in the manner of a Singspiel) in four acts by Zoltán Kodály to a Hungarian libretto by Béla Paulini (1881-1945) and Zsolt Harsányi, based on the comic epic *The Veteran* (Az obsitos) by János Garay. The first performance was at the Royal Hungarian Opera House, Budapest, 1926. The subtitle of the piece is Háry János kalandozásai Nagyabonytúl a Burgváráig – János Háry: his Adventures from Nagyabony (Great Abony) to the Vienna Burg.[1] The UK stage premiere was at the Buxton Festival in 1982 conducted by Anthony Hose with

Alan Opie in the title role.

The story is of a veteran hussar in the Austrian army in the first half of the 19th century who sits in the village inn regaling his listeners with fantastic tales of heroism (in the tradition of *Miles Gloriosus*[2]). His supposed exploits include winning the heart of the Empress Marie Louise, the wife of Napoleon, and then single-handedly defeating Napoleon and his armies. Nevertheless, he finally renounces all riches in order to go back to his village with his sweetheart.

Kodály wrote in his preface to the score: "Háry is a peasant, a veteran soldier who day after day sits at the tavern spinning yarns about his heroic exploits... the stories released by his imagination are an inextricable mixture of realism and naivety, of comic humour and pathos." He also comments that "though superficially he appears to be merely a braggart, essentially he is a natural visionary and poet. That his stories are not true is irrelevant, for they are the fruit of a lively imagination, seeking to create, for himself and for others, a beautiful dream world." [3] Háry János embodies the poetic power of folklore to go beyond political frustrations; Kodály intended to bring his national folk music to an operatic setting.

Both the opera and the suite begin with an orchestral 'musical sneeze', best explained in Kodály's own words: "According to Hungarian superstition, if a statement is followed by a sneeze of one of the hearers, it is regarded as confirmation of its truth. The Suite begins with a sneeze of this kind! One of Háry's group of faithful listeners ... sneezes at the wildest assertions of the old tale-spinner."

Sergei Prokofiev's comic opera *The Love for Three Oranges*, Op. 33 (1919) won a place in the repertoire only with great difficulty. First produced in 1921, the work was greeted with rather dismal reviews and an even worse public response. Prokofiev found a partial solution to this problem by extracting six numbers from the opera, revising them, and assembling them into a six-movement concert suite in 1924.

"The Ridiculous People," adapted from the opera's prologue, depicts the arguments between the various characters (represented by distinct instrumental ideas) and the ultimate subjugation of their ideas by the forceful Ridiculous People themselves. In "Scene from Hades," Prokofiev uses eerie instrumental effects to represent a card game played by Fata Morgana in Hell. The "March," made famous by dozens of arrangements (it was a staple of violinist Jascha Heifetz's recitals), finds the sick Prince being carried to a party contrived to make him smile. The movement's march rhythms are continually inflected by strident, "wrong-note" sonorities. The remainder of the suite is comprised of "Scherzo" (here reworked into an effective orchestral miniature), a romantic interlude ("The Prince and the Princess"), and "Flight," a comic romp in which the villains are finally routed.

Antal Dorati

conducts

Albeniz - Kodaly - Prokofiev

1 Albeniz (Arbos) Iberia 26:29

2 Kodaly Hary Janos Suite 22:09

3 Prokofiev Suite from the Love for Three Oranges 16:07

Total Time: 64:45

Recorded by Mercury Records

Albeniz Recorded April 21 1957 in the Northrop Memorial Auditorium, Minneapolis

Kodaly Recorded November 17, 1956 in the Northrop Memorial Auditorium, Minneapolis

Prokofiev Recorded July 4, 1957 at Watford Town Hall, London

Producer - Wilma Cozart Edited By - Harold Lawrence Engineer - C. R. Fine



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