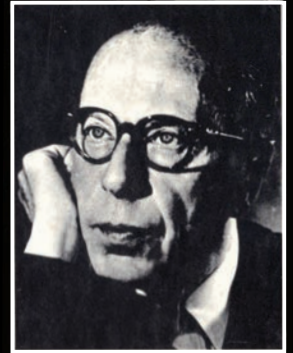


George Szell (born June 7, 1897, Budapest, Hung., Austria-Hungary died July 30, 1970, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.) Hungarian-born U.S. conductor. He made his debut as a pianist at age 11, and before his 20th birthday he had appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic as pianist, conductor, and composer. He established himself as an opera conductor in various German cities, including Berlin and Prague. When World War II broke out, he settled in the U.S., conducting at the Metropolitan Opera and then serving as musical director of the Cleveland Orchestra. There he imposed stern discipline but won his players' devotion by his own fierce dedication. Under his direction the orchestra became known for its precision in playing and was considered one of the world's finest.



THE WATER MUSIC

THE ROYAL FIREWORKS



GEORGE SZELL

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Water Music, suite of short pieces for small orchestra by German-born English composer George Frideric Handel, known particularly for its highly spirited movements in dance form. Most of the pieces were originally intended for outdoor performance, and the work premiered on a barge on the River Thames, where it provided entertainment for a royal cruise hosted by King George I of England on July 17, 1717. Selections from the suite were published during Handel's lifetime, but the entire collection did not come into print until 1788, nearly three decades after the composer's death.

When George I planned his barge party, he asked Handel to provide music in the form of an orchestral composition for about 50 musicians. Handel responded with Water Music, which, according to one eyewitness, engaged an ensemble of flutes, recorders, oboes, bassoons, trumpets, horns, violins, and basses. (The observer made no mention of the timpani that are customarily included in contemporary performances, but percussion may have been added after the limiting factor of a barge-borne performance was eliminated.) The king was so delighted with the new work that he asked to hear it over and over—for a total of four performances, lasting about an hour apiece.

Because Water Music was assembled and published posthumously as a complete collection, the order in which the composer wished the various movements to be played remains uncertain. It is customary, however, to group the movements according to their keys and instrumentations, creating three shorter suites—in F major, in D major, and in G major. The groupings contain 5 to 10 movements of varying musical character, and, in some cases, distinct national provenance and social association. For example, the lilting waltz-time minuet and the lively duple-time bourrée were historically French dances; the minuet, however, was an aristocratic form, while the bourrée was known in both folk and courtly circles. The bouncy duple-time hornpipe, with its intricate, often syncopated rhythms, was a dance of the British Isles. Other dance movements featured in Water Music include the sarabande, the gigue, and the rigaudon. Each of the three subsuites opens with a

stately overture and concludes with a festive movement that, indeed, is reminiscent of the original performance context. theme rendered by the solo violin. The passage from the second part is made without the usual break. An element of novelty in this part is the fact that the composer does not write the cadence for violin, but allows the violinist to improvise, thus showing his technical and interpretational qualities.

After its premiere on December 23rd, 1806, the work was, for the longest of time, not actually recognized for its beauties and neither as one of the most challenging works of this genre. It would take another "Wunderkind" of the 19th century, namely the composer Felix Mendelssohn, to re-introduce this work to the public during the mid-1800's, after which time it continued to remain in the concert repertoires in its rightful place which it, along with its never-diminishing popularity, still holds today.

Music for the Royal Fireworks, orchestral suite in five movements by George Frideric Handel that premiered in London on April 27, 1749. The work was composed for performance at an outdoor festival celebrating the end of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48). Its first performance preceded a fireworks display.

When England's King George II commissioned Handel to write music celebrating the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), he specified that the piece should be played by a military band without stringed instruments. Handel complied with the king's request, scoring the music for 9 trumpets, 9 horns, 24 oboes, 12 bassoons, 1 contrabassoon, 1 serpent, 6 kettledrums, and 2 side drums, but he later added strings for the first indoor performance.

Acknowledging the occasion for which the piece was composed, Handel attached descriptive titles to the two central movements: the third movement is called "La Paix" ("The Peace") in honour of the treaty itself, and the fourth is called "La Réjouissance" ("The Rejoicing") to commemorate the mood of elation that followed

Handel Water Music

Music For The Royal Fireworks

The Faithful Shepherd - Minuet • Xerxes - Largo

London Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell

Water Music - Suite

1 Allegro 2:37

2 Air 6:30

3 Bourrée; Hornpipe 1:44

4 Andante Espresso

Allegro Diciso 7:46

Music For The Royal Fireworks - Suite

5 Overture 7:08

6 Alla Siciliana 2:50

7 Bourrée; Minuet 4:21

8 The Faithful Shepherd

Minuet (Arr. Beecham) 3:23

9 Xerxes - Largo (Arr. Reinhard) 5:32

Total Time 41:51

Producer: John Culshaw Engineer: Kenneth Wilkinson

Recorded by Decca 27-29 Aug 1961 Watford Town Hall



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www.highdeftapetransfers.com