

The Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra is an independent association of local musicians. They perform regularly throughout the year in Birmingham Town Hall, the University of Aston in Birmingham, other public halls, schools and cathedrals in the Midlands, often with world-famous soloists. Although many of its members are engaged in the musical profession, everyone gives his services to the orchestra. All share a wish to play large-scale orchestral music and to bring it especially to places and people who might otherwise miss the opportunity of hearing it in a live performance.

The enthusiasm of the orchestra is largely due to Kenneth Page, who has been its conductor for the past fifteen years. His training and guidance have inspired them to undertake more and more ambitious programmes with increasing success. Since 1968, for instance, each season has included works by Delius—"Paris," "Appalachia," "Sea Drift," and in particular "Brigg Fair," which forms part of the orchestra's L.P. stereo record.

Despite a desperately busy life, Kenneth Page has maintained his resolve to learn all his scores by heart. He is convinced that his sort of conducting cannot be accomplished with a desk and score standing between him and the orchestra. His other activities include his position as leader and frequent conductor of Orchestra da Camera and as an eminent violinist in the world of chamber music, particularly in the Archduke Trio, which he founded in 1961.

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Conductor: KENNETH PAGE

<i>First Violins</i>	<i>Violas</i>	<i>Double Bass</i>	<i>Horns</i>
Leslie Bowron (Leader)	Howard Bonsor (Principal)	John Goodborn (Principal)	Michael Wild (Principal)
Marguerite Guise	Leslie Collier	Joanna Creed	David Cheshire
Patricia Hazel	Christine Dunning	Horace Copley	Wayne Jeffries
Brian Holdsworth	Sylvia Foulkes	Charlotte Horrel	Kay Morrice
Eric Leonard	Philip Hodgson	Dr. C. Ross	Peter Rushton
Cynthia Muir	Anne Garland	Diana Smith	Paul Sawbridge
Margaret Newton	Dorothy Ludlow		
Margaret Osborne	Joan Maddocks	<i>Flutes</i>	<i>Trumpets</i>
Ceinwen Penny	Barbara Sanders	John Franklin (Principal)	John Ruddick (Principal)
Charles Preston	Olga Tomlinson	David Whatley	Colin Butterworth
Ronald Tendler	Valerie Matthews	Rosalind Ludlow	Andrew Thorne
Jennifer Webb			Jeff Williams
Stanley Webb	<i>Cellos</i>		
Rosalind Whatley	Monica Hernrolle (Principal)	<i>Oboes</i>	<i>Trombones</i>
	Margaret Alison	Patricia Lees (Principal)	Peter Smith (Principal)
<i>Second Violins</i>	Jane Bowen	Alison Lancaster	David Straughan
Thomas Hogg (Principal)	Margaret Dance	Ivor Merry	Gordon Sill
John Edwards	Simon Davison		
Rosemary Edwards	Nora Fuery	<i>Clarinets</i>	
Ernest Jones	Veronica Gates	Jeff Schofield (Principal)	<i>Tuba</i>
Stephen Muth	Rosalind Gentry	Rachel Herbert	James Henderson
Anthony J. Smith	Olive Goodborn	Roy Lancaster	
Tony Smith	Mary Mantle		<i>Timpani and</i>
Elsie Tann	Doris Meek		<i>Percussion</i>
Stella Tinley	Dr. R. Schonsëe	<i>Bassoons</i>	Malcolm Peters (Principal)
Kevin Vaughan		Michael Syrett (Principal)	Stephen Maddox
Douglas Walker		Christine Predota	Kate Wishart
Cynthia Bird			Malcolm Peake
David Arrowsmith			Roy Billings

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Conductor: KENNETH PAGE

Leader: LESLIE BOWRON

with

DENIS MATTHEWS (piano)

on

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9th, 1974, at 7.30 p.m.

in

BIRMINGHAM TOWN HALL

Programme 6p

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Patron: SIR ADRIAN BOULT

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B.P.O. Office: 28-32 Thorp Street, Birmingham 5. *Telephone:* 643 4671

Beethoven

PIANO CONCERTO No. 4 in G MAJOR, Op. 58

Allegro moderato—Andante con moto—Rondo vivace

Playing the solo part himself in the first performance of his fourth piano concerto in 1807, Beethoven must have surprised his audience at the beginning. Mozart before him had only once contravened classical tradition by introducing the piano first in a concerto, instead of prefacing the solo instrument's entry with a long orchestral tutti. Here the piano plays the first theme completely alone before the orchestra answers in a remote key—a highly original way of opening a classical concerto.

The second movement is a scene of conflict. The piano plays in quiet, serene tones but meets repeated violent interruptions from the orchestral strings: once they even overlap the cadence of a piano phrase. Starting as completely separate, contrasting elements, piano and orchestra gradually seem to connect with each other, as if holding conversation, until they fuse together and resolve the movement in joint harmony. The piano's mood has triumphed over the orchestral turbulence.

From this harmony springs the final rondo. After the frowning conflict of the previous movement, the outward gaiety of the rondo brings release, but yet, as often with Beethoven, the happiness has a hollow ring: it is a fragile, brittle thing.

INTERVAL

Mahler

SYMPHONY No. 5

Part I	1st movement—Funeral March
	2nd movement—Stormy, with utmost vehemence
Part II	3rd movement—Scherzo.
Part III	4th movement—Adagietto
	5th movement—Rondo-Finale

Although his fifth symphony first appeared in 1904, Mahler went on revising it assiduously until 1909. He complained that it was "accursed—nobody understands it. I wish I could conduct the first performance 50 years after my death!" To his closest friends, this symphony afforded a striking portrait of the composer at a particularly happy period of his life: while he was planning the work, he met and married Alma Schindler, then with her help as copyist he completed it on holiday in the summer of 1902 and during the winter of the same year in Vienna.

While Mahler's first four symphonies all use music from his songs, the fifth is the first of a different group, which embraces also the sixth and seventh symphonies, using purely instrumental language. Its division into three parts but five movements is unusual but rational. The first and second movements are linked by their thematic material, the finale takes some of its subordinate themes from the Adagietto, while at the core of the work the Scherzo stands alone—the longest, most substantial section of the whole.

The two movements of Part I form a prologue to the rest, setting out and arguing a series of pessimistic ideas: a trumpet fanfare begins the funeral march and alternates with a long, melancholy tune which changes shape at each appearance until the march fades into the distance and dies in a whisper on the flute. But from the first trio section of the march develops the second movement's stormy theme, interspersed with sad interludes and interrupted by brass fanfares until gradually the brooding atmosphere evaporates.

Part II has a concertante part for the principal horn as a soloist with the whole orchestra and as leader of his own section. The mood is cheerful and the basic pulse is waltz-time. The third part is in effect a vigorous rondo prefaced by the serene adagietto, providing an interlude of repose, before a long-held note on the horn begins the rondo, which seems to be searching for a theme until it settles on a rustic tune for two horns over bassoons and cellos. Impetus and vitality increase in a fugal exposition and towards the end the brass take up a chorale into which the rondo theme is worked.

Born in Coventry in 1919, Denis Matthews spent his childhood in Leamington Spa. At the Royal Academy of Music, where he won many special awards, he studied piano with Harold Crasdon and composition with William Alwyn, having several works published and broadcast. The war interrupted his studies, but during his six years in the R.A.F. he played at hundreds of service concerts. Also during the war he made his first recordings and appeared frequently at the National Gallery concerts.

Since 1945 he has been a regular soloist with leading orchestras, appearing in twenty seasons of Proms and playing three times for the Royal Philharmonic Society. In chamber music Denis Matthews has appeared with Dennis Brain, Leon Goossens, William Primrose, Isaac Stern and the Amadeus String Quartet. In 1964 he formed a regular partnership with the violinist Ralph Holmes, and he plays piano duets with his wife, Brenda McDermott.

He is well known for his lecture-recitals, his broadcast talks and for the cadenzas he composed for Dame Myra Hess's series of Mozart concertos. His autobiography, "In Pursuit of Music," was published in 1966, and in 1971 he was appointed Professor of Music at the University of Newcastle-on-Tyne.