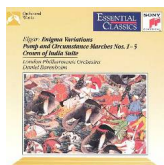


Elgar - Enigma Variations/Military Marches/The Crown of India (1992)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 02 February 2010 17:11 - Last Updated Tuesday, 05 November 2013 16:01

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Variations On An Original Theme, Op. 36 'Enigma' 1. *Enigma, Andante* 2. *Var. I (C.A.E.) L'istesso Tempo* 3. *Var. II (H.D.S.-P.) Allegro* 4. *Var. III (R.B.T.) Allegretto* 5. *Var. IV (W.M.B.) Allegro Di Molto* 6. *Var. V (R.P.A.) Moderato* 7. *Var. VI (Ysobel) Andantino* 8. *Var. VII (Troyte) Presto* 9. *Var. VIII (W.N.) Allegretto* 10. *Var. IX (Nimrod) Adagio* 11. *Var. X Intermezzo (Dorabella) Allegretto* 12. *Var. XI (G.R.S.) Allegro Di Molto* 13. *Var. XII (B.G.N.) Andante* 14. *Var. XIII Romanza (***) Moderato* 15. *Var. XIV Finale (E.D.U.) Allegro-Presto*
Pomp And Circumstance - 5 Military Marches, Op. 39
16..1 *In D Major* 17. *No.2 In A Minor* 18. *No.3 In C Minor* 19. *No.4 In G Major* 20. *No.5 In C Major*

The Crown Of India - Suite, Op. 66

21. *I. Introduction - Dance Of Nautch Girls* 22. *II. Menuetto* 23. *III. Warriors' Dance* 24. *IV. Intermezzo* 25. *V. March Of The Mogul Emperors*

London Philharmonic Orchestra Daniel Barenboim – conductor

At the end of an overlong day laden with teaching and other duties, Edward Elgar lit a cigar, sat at his piano and began idling over the keys. To amuse his wife, the composer began to improvise a tune and played it several times, turning each reprise into a caricature of the way one of their friends might have played it or of their personal characteristics. "I believe that you are doing something which has never been done before," exclaimed Mrs. Elgar. Thus was born one of music's great works of original conception, and Elgar's greatest large-scale "hit": the Enigma Variations. The enigma is twofold: each of the 14 variations refers to a friend of Elgar's, who is depicted by the nature of the music, or by sonic imitation of laughs, vocal inflections, or quirks, or by more abstract allusions. The other enigma is the presence of a larger "unheard" theme which is never stated but which according to the composer is very well known. The identity of the phantom tune left the world with the composer, and guesses have ranged from "God Save the King" to a simple major scale. --- Wayne Reisig, Rovi

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Elgar's first five Pomp and Circumstance Marches make a wonderfully diverse set of pieces, yet the name, and the shared structure of alternating scherzo and trio sections, identify these five marches as a single work. Their publication dates from different times in the composer's career, ranging from 1901 to 1930, but these dates are somewhat deceptive. Elgar produced no completely original work after Alice's death in 1920, and the fifth march is based on ideas Elgar had jotted down many years earlier, making the five marches far more contemporary in conception (and the note on the 6th March shows this to be far earlier than its numbering suggests). Elgar was concerned to treat the quick march in a symphonic style, much as the minuet, waltz or polka had been used by earlier composers. Sir John Hawkins, in his eighteenth-century "History of Music" wrote "It seems that the Old English March was formerly in high estimation, as well abroad as with us its characteristic is dignity and gravity." Certainly no one knew better than Elgar how to retain the essential dignity of the March: his is a superb set full of masterly orchestration, and he was rightly proud of them. --- elgar.org

In 1911, King George V and Queen Mary were crowned in India. To commemorate the event, a huge masque was commissioned and staged at the Coliseum Theatre in London in March 1912. As composer of the Coronation Ode, written for King Edward VII's planned coronation in 1902 and revived in 1911 for King George's coronation, it was natural that Elgar should be approached to write the incidental music to accompany the masque. Elgar composed twelve pieces for the masque, around sixty minutes of music in total, for contralto, bass, chorus and orchestra. He subsequently extracted five of these and added an intermezzo for solo violin to form a suite, first performed at the Three Choirs Festival in Hereford in September 1912. It is in this form that the work is normally heard today. --- elgar.org

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