



ELGAR

DDD

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**The Wand of Youth
Nursery Suite**

**New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
James Judd**



Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Wand of Youth Suites • Dream Children • Nursery Suite

Sir Edward Elgar occupies a strange position in his own country. For many he is associated with British, or, more specifically, English Imperialism, epitomized in *Land of Hope and Glory*, a patriotic anthem now sung with gusto and tongue in cheek on the last night of the London Promenade Concerts each year. The image of an Edwardian country gentleman, with his dogs and horses is misleading. Elgar was the son of a shopkeeper, in the days when to be in trade marked a man for life and escape from this background earned a man the name of counter-jumper. He married the daughter of a retired Indian Army general, a pupil of his, nine years his senior, and it was she who gave him the necessary support, morally and socially, that finally helped him to make his way in Edwardian society. Nevertheless, musically Elgar was far nearer to the German romantic composers of his time than to the developing vein of English music, with its pastoral reliance on newly collected folk-song.

Edward Elgar was born near Worcester, in the West of England, in 1857. His father was a piano-tuner, organist, violinist and eventually a shopkeeper, and it was from him that Elgar acquired much of his musical training. He at first made his living as a free-lance musician, teaching, playing the violin and organ, and conducting local amateur orchestras and choirs. His first success away from his own West Country, after earlier abortive attempts, was in 1897 with his *Imperial March*, written for the royal jubilee celebrating sixty glorious years of Queen Victoria. His reputation was further enhanced by the so-called *Enigma Variations* of 1899. The oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius*, which followed in 1900, was less successful at its first performance in Birmingham, but later became a staple element in British choral repertoire. His publishers Novello had not always been particularly generous in their treatment of him, but he came to rely on the encouragement of the German-born Augustus Johannes Jaeger, a reader for

the firm, who found in Elgar's music something much more akin to the music of his native country.

Public recognition brought Elgar many honours, his position sealed by the composition of music for the coronation of King Edward VII. He was awarded honorary doctorates by universities old and new and in 1904 received the accolade of a knighthood. Later official honours included the Order of Merit in the coronation honours of 1911 and finally, in 1931, a baronetcy. Acceptance, as represented by the musical establishment of the country, was confirmed by the award of the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1925, after an earlier award to Delius.

Elgar's work had undergone significant changes in the later years of the 1914-18 war, a development evident in his *Cello Concerto* of 1919. His wife's death in 1920 removed a support on which he had long relied, and the last fourteen years of his life brought a diminishing inspiration and energy in his work as a composer, although he continued to meet demands for his appearance as a conductor in both the concert-hall and recording studio. He died in 1934.

It was in 1907 that Elgar turned his attention to compositions on which he had worked in childhood, notably music for a children's play to be performed in the family with his brothers and sisters. The play contrasted age and youth, with the latter trying to persuade the two adults that fairyland offered more than the conventional world in which they lived. From this early material he drew two suites. The first of these had its première at the Queen's Hall in London under Sir Henry Wood in December that year and the second suite was first given at the Worcester Festival in September 1908, conducted by the composer. *The Wand of Youth* provided a source in 1915 for some of the music that accompanied Violet Pearn's play *Starlight Express*, based on a novel by Algernon Blackwood.

Suite No.1 starts with a lively *Overture* in the

unmistakable musical language of the adult Elgar. The *Serenade* opens with an attractive clarinet melody. The E minor *Minuet*, in the old style, marks the entrance of the two old people, the adults of the original play. The mood changes at once with the spirited *Sun Dance*. *Fairy Pipers* has the stage direction 'Two fairy pipers pass in a boat, and charm them to sleep'. Here there is a gently lilting melody for two clarinets, framing two passages for strings. This proves effectively somniferous and is followed by *Slumber Scene*, scored for muted strings, two bassoons and French horn. *Fairies and Giants*, derived from a *Humoreske* dated 1867, was of later use in *Starlight Express*. The illustrative nature of the music is clear.

The solemn G minor *March* that starts *Suite No.2* had formed the ending of the children's play. It is followed by *The Little Bells*, a little scherzo, with appropriate tintinnabulation from the glockenspiel and an E flat bell. The dance *Moths and Butterflies* has a charm of its own and was described by the composer as the oldest of the movements. It leads to *Fountain Dance*, with its muted strings, the first violins *divisi*. *The Tamed Bear*, with its traditional dance pattern, is contrasted with the final *Wild Bears*, in which the animals are allowed their freedom.

The two movements of *Dream Children* were written in 1902, again suggesting a certain nostalgia for childhood. The score is headed by a quotation from Charles Lamb's *Dream-Children, a Reverie*: 'And while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed on me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all.*** We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been."' *Dream Children* seems to have

been a re-working of earlier material, written, as Elgar explained, 'long ago and sketched a few years back'.

The first of the idylls, originally with the title *Sorrowful Child's Suite*, starts with the gentle sound of two clarinets in thirds, the opening key of G minor leading to a brighter E flat major, before the return of the initial reverie with pairs of flutes, clarinets and bassoons. The strings are again muted in the second of the two pieces, in which a clarinet takes the initial lead. There is contrast in slightly slower passages in a deeply felt work that often seems akin to Grieg or Tchaikovsky in elegiac mood.

In his *Nursery Suite* of 1930 Elgar returns for the last time to childhood. Dedicated to the Duke and Duchess of York and their children, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose, it was first performed at a recording session in May 1931, conducted by the composer. The opening *Aubade* provides a gentle awakening and includes a quotation of the children's hymn *Hear Thy children, gentle Jesus*. *The Serious Doll* brings a flute solo, returning in increasingly elaborate form after the brief melodic intervention of the oboe. *Busy-ness* lives up to its name, even more so with the rapidly repeated notes of its secondary theme, and *The Sad Doll* is a melancholy waltz, opening with muted strings and leading to a brief passage for solo violin. *The Wagon (Passes)* marks the slow approach of the lumbering wagon, drawing near and then moving away into the distance. The ebullient *Merry Doll* bursts into laughter and jumps around, while *Dreaming*, for muted strings, finds the child gently sleeping. The *Envoy* is introduced by a violin cadenza, as the composer leads the way to the return of the serious doll, and then, after the intervention of the violin, the merry doll, the child's dreaming and the initial awakening.

Keith Anderson

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra is the country's national orchestra and enjoys a lively profile both inside and outside New Zealand. International quality concerts performed by major artists to well-filled halls are testament to the orchestra's developing reputation, with programmes of traditional and contemporary repertoire. The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra gave its first public performance in March 1947 and its first (and current) Music Director was appointed in 1999. The orchestra plays more than a hundred performances each year; these include seasons of major symphonic repertoire in seven centres and also a wide range of special programmes. The orchestra is involved in education projects, performs family and schools concerts, accompanies opera and ballet productions and records for television, films (including *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Fellowship of the Ring*) and radio. It commissions and performs New Zealand music and has a long recording history, which has seen it move into the world market and win international awards. The orchestra also administers the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Chamber Orchestra, which has its own series, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra National Youth Orchestra. Highlights of the orchestra's tours outside New Zealand are the much-celebrated visit to Seville to perform at the 1992 Expo with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa under the baton of Conductor Laureate Franz-Paul Decker. More recently there have been the performances at the Summer Sydney Olympic Arts Festival in 2000, the televised Millennium Concert with Kiri Te Kanawa at Gisborne, which was screened world-wide, and recent recordings such as the high-flying Lilburn *Three Symphonies* (Naxos 8.555862). The orchestra continues to collaborate with conductors and soloists of the highest international distinction.

James Judd

The Music Director of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and the newly-appointed Music Director-Designate of the Malaysian Philharmonic, British-born conductor James Judd stands at the forefront of a period of unprecedented artistic growth with the New Zealand Symphony. In addition to embarking on a sizable series of recordings with the orchestra for Naxos he has brought the orchestra international acclaim through appearances with the New Zealand Symphony at the 2000 Summer Sydney Olympic Arts Festival as well as a specially televised Millennium Concert with Kiri Te Kanawa as soloist. A graduate of London's Trinity College of Music, James Judd came to international attention as the Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, a post he accepted at the invitation of Lorin Maazel. Four years later he returned to Europe after being appointed Associate Music Director of the European Community Youth Orchestra by Claudio Abbado, an ensemble with which he continues to serve as an honorary Artistic Director. Since that time he has appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic and the Israel Philharmonic, and has conducted in the great concert halls of Europe, including the Salzburg Mozarteum and Vienna's Musikverein. He has also made guest appearances with such prestigious ensembles as the Vienna Symphony, Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, Prague Symphony, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, the Monte-Carlo Symphony Orchestra and the Mozarteum Orchestra of Salzburg. As an opera conductor he has appeared with the English National Opera, conducting productions of *Il trovatore*, *La traviata*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Rigoletto*, and *Le nozze di Figaro*, and at the Glyndebourne Opera Festival with Rossini's *La Cenerentola*. He continues to conduct all of the major British ensembles, including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, and the English Chamber Orchestra. He was co-founder of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, which he has led on tours throughout the United States, the Far East and Europe. In North and South America James Judd is a frequent and much-admired guest conductor, having appeared with the orchestras of St Louis, Montreal, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Utah, Vancouver and Ottawa, and for some fourteen years served as Music Director of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra. In the Far East, he is one of the most sought-after conductors of his generation. In addition to his new position with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, he is a regular guest conductor with the NHK Symphony Orchestra of Tokyo, the KBS Symphony Seoul, and many other prestigious South East Asian ensembles. His many successful recordings include works by American and English composers for Naxos.

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934)

Wand of Youth Suites · Dream Children · Nursery Suite

Sir Edward Elgar nimmt im eigenen Land eine merkwürdige Position ein. Für viele ist sein Name mit dem britischen oder, genauer gesagt, dem englischen Imperialismus verbunden, der sich nirgendwo patriotischer äußert als in der Hymne *Land of Hope and Glory*, die noch heute mit ausgelassener Begeisterung, wengleich auch nicht ohne Selbstironie, am letzten Abend der Promenade Concerts (Last night of the Proms) in der Londoner Royal Albert Hall gesungen wird. Doch das Bild vom englischen Gentleman der „Edwardian Epoch“ mit seinen Hunden und Pferden trägt. Elgar stammte aus einfachen Verhältnissen. Er heiratete seine Schülerin Caroline Alice Roberts, die Tochter eines pensionierten indischen Armeegenerals, die neun Jahre älter war als er und von der er die nötige moralische Unterstützung erhielt, um sich in der gehobenen Gesellschaft zurechtzufinden. In musikalischer Hinsicht stand Elgar der deutschen Hochromantik näher als der herrschenden englischen Musikströmung mit ihrer Rückbesinnung auf einen pastoralen, dem anglo-keltischen Volksliedgut abgelauchten Stil.

Edward Elgar wurde 1857 im westenglischen Worcester als Sohn eines Klavierstimmer, Organisten, Geigers und später Musikalienhändlers geboren, dem er seine musikalische Grundausbildung verdankte. Seine eigene Laufbahn begann er als freiberuflicher Musiker und Lehrer; er spielte Violine und Orgel und leitete lokale Liebhaberorchester und -chöre. Sein erster Erfolg außerhalb seiner Heimatprovinz kam, nach mehreren gescheiterten Versuchen, 1897 mit dem *Imperial March*, komponiert anlässlich des sechzigjährigen Thronjubiläums von Königin Victoria. Weite Bekanntheit erlangte er 1899 mit den so genannten *Enigma-Variationen*. Das Oratorium *The Dream of Gerontius* war 1900 bei der Uraufführung in Birmingham weniger erfolgreich, entwickelte sich aber später zu einem der meistgespielten Werke der

englischen Chorliteratur. Der Verleger Novello zeigte sich dem Komponisten gegenüber nicht immer von seiner großzügigen Seite, und so verließ sich Elgar mehr und mehr auf die Unterstützung des deutschstämmigen A.E. Jäger, der als Lektor beim Verlag arbeitete und der Elgars Musik wegen ihrer Verwandtschaft mit der deutschen Hochromantik schätzte.

Die öffentliche Anerkennung führte bald zu zahlreichen Ehrungen; vollends gefestigt war Elgars Stellung, als er einen Kompositionsauftrag für die Krönungsfeierlichkeiten von König Edward VII. erhielt. Er wurde mit zahlreichen Ehrendoktoraten ausgezeichnet und 1904 geadelt. Spätere offizielle Ehrungen waren u. a. 1911 der Order of Merit und 1931 die Verleihung eines Baron-Titels. Das musikalische Establishment des Landes würdigte seine Leistungen 1925 mit der Goldmedaille der Royal Philharmonic Society, nachdem zuvor bereits Delius diese Ehrung zuteil geworden war.

In den späten Kriegsjahren hatte Elgar seine Musik einem bedeutsamen Wandel unterzogen – eine Entwicklung, die besonders in seinem 1919 entstandenen *Violoncellokonzert* spürbar wurde. Der Tod seiner Ehefrau im Jahr 1920 entzog ihm die Unterstützung, die er während vieler Jahre erfahren hatte, und so waren die letzten vierzehn Jahre seines Lebens in kompositorischer Hinsicht von nachlassender Inspiration und Energie gekennzeichnet. Seine Verpflichtungen als Dirigent, im Konzertsaal wie im Schallplattenstudio, erfüllte er jedoch weiterhin nach Kräften. Elgar starb 1934 in Worcester.

1907 begann sich Elgar Kompositionen zuzuwenden, an denen er in seinen Jugendjahren gearbeitet hatte, namentlich der Musik für ein im Rahmen der Familie mit seinen Brüdern und Schwestern aufgeführtes Kinderstück. Das Stück handelte vom Gegensatz zwischen Jung und Alt, wobei

die Jugend die Erwachsenen davon zu überzeugen versucht, dass das Märchenland mehr zu bieten hat als das wirkliche Leben. Dieses frühe Material bearbeitete Elgar zu zwei Suiten. Die erste wurde im Dezember 1907 in der Londoner Queen's Hall unter Sir Henry Wood uraufgeführt, die zweite unter der Leitung des Komponisten im September 1909 beim Worcester-Festival. Auf Teile dieser Suiten griff Elgar 1915 für seine Musik zu Violet Pearn's Schauspiel *Starlight Express* (nach einem Roman von Algernon Blackwood) zurück.

Die *Suite Nr. 1* beginnt mit einer lebhaften Ouvertüre in der unverwechselbaren Musiksprache der Reifezeit Elgars. Die *Serenade* hebt mit einer reizenden Klarinettenmelodie an. Das im alten Stil komponierte e-Moll-*Minuet* begleitet den Auftritt der beiden Erwachsenen. Einen plötzlichen Stimmungswechsel bringt der spritzige *Sun Dance*. In *Fairy Pipers* rahmt eine Melodie für zwei Klarinetten zwei Passagen für Streicher. Es folgt die *Slumber Scene* für sordinierte Streicher, zwei Fagotte und Horn. *Fairies and Giants*, basierend auf einer *Humoreske* von 1867, fand später auch in *Starlight Express* Verwendung.

Der feierliche g-Moll-*Marsch*, mit dem die *Suite Nr. 2* beginnt, stand ursprünglich am Ende des Kinderstücks. An zweiter Stelle folgt *The Little Bells*, ein kleines Scherzo mit dazu passendem Klingeln eines Glockenspiels und einer Es-Dur-Glocke. Von ganz eigenem Charme ist *Moths and Butterflies*, laut Elgar der älteste der Sätze. Er leitet über zum *Fountain Dance* mit seinen sordinierten Streichern und geteilten I. Violinen. *The Tamed Bear*, im traditionellen Tanzmuster daherkommend, bildet einen Kontrast zu den abschließenden *Wild Bears*, in dem die Tiere freien Lauf erhalten.

Die beiden Sätze der *Dream Children* komponierte Elgar 1902. Auch aus ihnen spricht eine Art Sehnsucht nach der Kindheit. Der Partitur als Motto vorangestellt ist ein Zitat aus Charles Lambs *Dream-Children, a Reverie*: „Während ich schaute, erschienen die beiden Kinder immer verschwommener und verschwanden

schließlich so weit in der Ferne, dass ich nur noch zwei traurige Schemen gewahrte, die, ohne selbst zu sprechen, seltsamerweise zu sagen schienen: „Wir sind nicht Alices und nicht deine Kinder, wir sind ganz und gar keine Kinder. Wir sind nichts; weniger als nichts und als Träume. Wir sind nur, was gewesen sein könnte.““ *Dream Children* ist vermutlich eine Neubearbeitung von früherem Material, geschrieben, wie Elgar erklärte, „vor langer Zeit und skizziert vor einigen Jahren“.

Das erste der Idylle, ursprünglich *Sorrowful Child's Suite* betitelt, eröffnet mit den sanften Klängen zweier in Terzparallelen geführten Klarinetten, wobei die Beginntonart g-Moll in das hellere Es-Dur übergeht, bevor die träumerische Stimmung des Beginns in Flöten-, Klarinetten- und Fagottpaaren zurückkehrt. Im zweiten der beiden Stücke, in dem zunächst die Klarinette die Führung übernimmt, spielen die Streicher mit Sordinen. Einen Kontrast bilden die etwas langsameren Passagen dieses gefühlvollen Stücks, dessen elegische Stimmung an Grieg oder Tschaiowsky denken lässt.

Mit seiner *Nursery Suite* aus dem Jahr 1930 kehrt Elgar zum letzten Mal in seine Kindheit zurück. Das dem Herzog und der Herzogin von York und ihren Kindern, den Prinzessinnen Elizabeth und Margaret Rose gewidmete Stück erklang erstmals bei einer im Mai 1931 vom Komponisten geleiteten Schallplattenaufnahme. Das eröffnende *Aubade* ist ein sanfter Weckruf mit einem Zitat aus dem Kirchenlied *Hear Thy children, gentle Jesus. The Serious Doll* enthält ein Flötensolo, das nach einer kurzen melodischen Intervention der Oboe in immer ausgearbeiteter Form zurückkehrt. *Busy-ness* wird seinem Namen gerecht, vor allem mit den in schnellem Tempo wiederholten Noten seines Nebenthemas. *The Sad Doll* ist ein melancholischer Walzer, beginnend mit sordinierten Streichern und zu einer kurzen Soloviolinpassage überleitend. *The Wagon (Passes)* beschreibt die Ankunft eines mühsam gezogenen Karrens, der wieder in der Ferne verschwindet. Die

ausgelassene *Merry Doll* springt lachend herum, während in *Dreaming*, wiederum für gedämpfte Streicher, das Kind sanft einschlummert. *Envoy* wird von einer Violinkadenz eingeleitet, danach folgt die Rückkehr der ersten Puppe und nach einer Unterbrechung durch die Violine, die der fröhlichen

Puppe, der Traum des Kindes und das Erwachen des Beginns.

Keith Anderson

Deutsche Fassung: Bernd Delfs

Illustrating a generally little known facet of Elgar's music, this recording brings together a number of works on which the composer had worked in childhood. Forty years after writing the tunes for a children's play about age, youth and the escapism of fairyland, for performance in the family with his brothers and sisters, Elgar refashioned them into the two suites known as *The Wand of Youth*, from which *Wild Bears* continues to enjoy a separate existence as a popular concert encore. With its tender, wistful moods and restrained scoring, the *Nursery Suite* of 1930 is Elgar's final evocation of childhood.

**Edward
ELGAR**
(1857-1934)

**The Wand of Youth
Suite No. 1, Op. 1a**

1	I	Overture	1:45
2	II	Serenade	2:23
3	III	Minuet	2:09
4	IV	Sun Dance	2:41
5	V	Fairy Pipers	4:30
6	VI	Slumber Scene	4:14
7	VII	Fairies and Giants	3:01

**The Wand of Youth
Suite No. 2, Op. 1b**

8	I	March	3:49
9	II	Little Bells	2:41
10	III	Moths and Butterflies	2:18
11	IV	Fountain Dance	3:15

12	V	The Tame Bear	2:37
13	VI	The Wild Bears	2:16

Dream Children Op. 43 8:22

14	I	Andante	4:26
15	II	Allegretto piacevole	3:56

Nursery Suite 20:48

16	I	Aubade	3:33
17	II	The Serious Doll	2:57
18	III	Busy-Ness	2:00
19	IV	The Sad Doll	2:21
20	V	The Wagon (Passes)	1:36
21	VI	The Merry Doll	1:32
22	VII	Dreaming	6:50

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra • James Judd

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 Post-Production: Andrew Walton • Booklet Notes: Keith Anderson
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 Mary Evans Picture Library



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Playing Time
66:47



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