



BRITISH LIGHT MUSIC



Richard
ADDINSELL

Goodbye Mr. Chips • The Prince and the Showgirl



Philip Martin, Roderick Elms, Piano
BBC Concert Orchestra • Kenneth Alwyn

Richard Addinsell (1904–1977)

British Light Music • 1

In 1941, war-weary cinema-goers, attending the latest 'British film' at the Regal Cinema, Marble Arch, in London's West End, were struck, not necessarily by the acting, dialogue or sets, but by a piece of music that pervaded the whole film, climaxing in a virtually complete performance of it in a concert setting within the scenario. The film company had no idea that it would have such an effect on audiences, and had not prepared a commercial recording for sale. The film was *Dangerous Moonlight*, and the piece everyone was talking about, and humming as they left the cinema, was the *Warsaw Concerto* by Richard Addinsell. After 80 years, more than a hundred separate recordings, and sales in excess of three million, its appeal remains undimmed. So undimmed that it still outshines, in the public's mind, everything else the composer wrote. But he wrote a great deal, and this album attempts to show the breadth of his achievement beyond the *Warsaw Concerto*.

Richard Stewart Addinsell was born on 13 January 1904 in London, the younger of two sons of a successful businessman father and adoring mother, who became very protective of him, to the extent that he was educated at home. Some might say this made him rather wary of institutions of all kinds thereafter. For example, he went to Hertford College, Oxford in 1922 ostensibly to read law, but stayed for little more than 18 months without, naturally, taking a degree. His interests were already turning to music. So he enrolled at the Royal College of Music for the autumn term of 1925, but he remained there only until the following Easter. Lessons in theory must have seemed positively prosaic compared with the prospect of writing songs for that year's Andre Charlot revue, some with the legendary Noel Gay, of *Me and My Girl* fame. He was later to pursue his own line in education, and in 1929, he toured Europe visiting major theatres and musical centres, spending most time in Berlin and Vienna.

One of the most enduring and productive artistic collaborations of his career began when he met the writer

Clemence Dane (1882–1965). His first work for her was incidental music for the play *Adam's Opera* in 1928, but they continued to work together from time to time right up to her death, most notably with the combined version of *Alice in Wonderland / Through the Looking-Glass*. An earlier play, *Moonlight is Silver*, introduced him to Gertrude Lawrence, who recorded the title song with dialogue from one of the scenes, with her co-star, Douglas Fairbanks Jr, and, during the war, Dane's cycle of religious plays for radio, *The Saviours*, benefited from his deft touch.

It was Fairbanks who, with Clemence Dane, was responsible for introducing Addinsell to films in Britain in 1936, with *The Amateur Gentleman*, which starred the American actor, and was partly scripted by Dane. (He had nearly started his cinematic career in Hollywood where he had gone some years earlier to work at RKO studios on what turned out to be an abortive project involving the Czech-born actor Francis Lederer, following the American opening of *Alice*.)

After this debut film came *South Riding*, *Dark Journey*, *Farewell Again* and *Fire Over England* in 1937, *Vessel of Wrath* in 1938, and the following year, the first propaganda feature film of the war, *The Lion Has Wings*. The same year saw his first really international success with *Goodbye Mr. Chips*. 1940 was the year of *Dangerous Moonlight* and *Gaslight*, the first version that MGM sought to suppress in favour of their later American production. *Love on the Dole*, *This England* and *The Big Blockade* followed in 1941, and *The Day Will Dawn* a year later. However, the war was largely spent scoring some 20 documentaries for the Ministry of Information, and similar organisations, culminating in the classic *A Diary for Timothy*.

In 1942, on the steps of the National Gallery, after one of its famous lunchtime concerts, Addinsell met Joyce Grenfell, whose friendship he valued for most of his life thereafter. Together they wrote numerous songs, for revues, or Joyce's one-woman shows, one of the earliest being, *I'm Going to See You Today*, which they recorded

together in 1942. They continued collaborating up to the mid-Sixties, when Addinsell's failing health prevented his playing the piano and writing the memorable tunes for Joyce's witty and touching lyrics.

After a few less memorable films, Addinsell renewed his working relationship in 1950 with the Irish producer/director Brian Desmond Hurst, who had directed *Dangerous Moonlight* some ten years earlier, and two films emerged that produced some of his best music – *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, and *Scrooge*, starring the man who was born to play him, the wonderful Alastair Sim.

All through the Forties and Fifties he wrote for BBC radio plays and features, in between film and stage work. In all this endeavour, his method of working was the same. He would play what he had composed at the piano, making small notes of the outline of the material, but leaving the detailed work of arranging and orchestrating to other hands. This was nothing new. It had happened throughout musical history in some way or another. Even the 'greats', working against the clock, would pass such work to pupils, or in Bach's case, his 'family' to 'expand', and in the film world to this day, it is the norm. Addinsell's first collaborator was Roy Douglas, who had begun by 'doubling' for Vivien Leigh (on the virginals) in *Fire Over England*, and worked through to the middle of the war taking in most films (virtually all 20 documentaries) including *Dangerous Moonlight*, although not *Mr. Chips*. (Douglas went on to write his own film scores and concert music, as well as becoming Vaughan Williams' amanuensis.) Leonard Isaacs also worked with him on the stage shows *Alice*, and *The Happy Hypocrite*, as well as several films including *Fire Over England* and *Blithe Spirit*, directed by David Lean. The period from 1947 to 1957 is shrouded in some mystery, but it is a fair guess that Leighton Lucas was involved at some time, probably on Hitchcock's *Under Capricorn*, since he had worked extensively for Louis Levy since the Thirties, and Levy conducted the score. From 1957 to 1965, his regular musical associate was Douglas Gamley.

The Fifties produced films like *Beau Brummel* (1954), *The Prince and the Showgirl*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and the Sixties, *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* (1961)

starring Vivien Leigh, *The Greengage Summer* – one of the composer's own favourite scores – *Waltz of the Toreadors* based on the Jean Anouilh play, and *The War Lover*, all in 1962. With the completion of *Life at the Top* three years later, he decided to retire from the professional world of music. Clemence Dane died at this time, and in the years that followed Addinsell helped his great friend, Victor Stiebel, the couturier, through the debilitating illness of multiple sclerosis, and when he died in 1976, Addinsell felt his time had come too. On 14 November the following year he quietly turned his face to the wall and died.

As a man, he was a quiet introvert who only really came alive making music. In many ways, a lonely man, particularly at the end, but one who could be very generous to his close-knit group of friends, most of all at Christmas, which he celebrated heartily. He had a lively invention, which, linked to a sense of panache, produced compositions with a singular spark that turned notes into music, and music into a fond memory.

1 Goodbye Mr. Chips – Theme

One of the recurring figures in Addinsell's film career was the producer/director Victor Saville, with whom he worked, from time to time, for over 30 years. They had already collaborated on *South Riding* and *Dark Journey* before, in 1939, Saville brought to the screen, this time as producer only, the James Hilton novel *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, the story of a schoolmaster finding love for the first time in middle life, and suffering its loss thereafter, with only a school and its pupils for comfort. The eponymous leading character was played by Robert Donat, who won that year's Oscar, and his one true love by Greer Garson, in her screen debut.

The MGM film, directed by Sam Wood, was made in England, and Addinsell provided a score to match its high production values. All the musical material (apart from a piano score of the school song, with words by Eric Maschwitz) has been lost, and so I have reconstructed, for concert use, the opening theme from the soundtrack. In so doing, I have taken certain liberties, like omitting the fanfare, covering Leo's appearance and including liberal

use of a tubular bell, which would have clashed in the film with the tolling bell in the opening scene. The school song is heard several times in the film (but only once in the opening titles) so I have included it twice in this version, at first gently on woodwind and harp, and secondly triumphant by the full orchestra. Furthermore, whereas in the film, the music fades into the first scene, I have ended more decisively as befits its general character.

This is one of very few Addinsell films (another was *Under Capricorn*) not conducted by Muir Mathieson, who remained a keen advocate of his music until the end. On this occasion, Louis Levy conducted, as musical director of Michael Balcon's short-lived MGM-British Studios, and the original orchestrations were probably done by one of Levy's circle, which at the time included Hubert Bath, Hans May and Leighton Lucas, among others.

② Invitation Waltz (from *Ring Round the Moon*)

One of Addinsell's most haunting waltzes was written for the 1950 production of Christopher Fry's play, after Jean Anouilh, *Ring Round the Moon*, starring Paul Scofield as the twin heroes and directed by Peter Brook. It was recorded soon afterwards by Sidney Torch and Robert Farnon, both of whom made their own orchestrations of the piece for modest studio forces. In the absence of any surviving material (most probably lost in the Chappell's fire of the 1960s) I have arranged the music afresh using an orchestra rather larger than that at the disposal of my illustrious predecessors.

③-⑤ The Smokey Mountains

A rare work, not linked to the cinema or theatre, this 'concerto' in three movements for piano and orchestra was probably written at the invitation of the American pianist Leo Litwin, who had championed *Warsaw Concerto* in the US, making a popular recording of it with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra. Litwin recorded his own truncated solo piano version of the piece on the Boston Records label soon after its composition in 1950 but it seems to have made little progress in any version since, despite its appealing language, here and there derived from American folk song idioms.

The first movement is the most substantial and symphonic of the three, suggesting that it could have been intended as the first movement of a true concerto. The opening orchestral figures mimic the start of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* – for no apparent reason, and so, one might resort to cinema language and say that it is 'purely coincidental'. It displays Addinsell's distinctive piano style with fast moving left-hand arpeggios beneath a chordal melodic line. (His own left hand could stretch an octave and a half, which explains why pianists, even today, find some of his writing for the instrument less than easy.)

The slow movement, subtitled *Valley Song*, opens with a faintly bluesy melody scored for lower woodwind, that ape a sax section, before the main theme is announced on a clarinet against a gently rocking accompaniment in the piano. The blues element returns at the climax of the third movement, *Old Joe Clark*, this time with a cheeky horn glissando. It starts, however, with a duet for violin and banjo and proceeds to treat the hillbilly tune, at times, in an almost lvesian manner with sudden wild modulations and distortions, producing a montage of alternately clear and obscure images.

⑥ The Isle of Apples

In the early 1940s, Clemence Dane wrote *The Saviours*, a cycle of seven radio plays on a similar theme – that of a hero figure helping to civilise his people, disappearing, but as bad times follow, rumour has it that the hero has not died, but will return one day to bring back a Golden Age. (The plays featured characters like Robin Hood, Elizabeth I and Nelson.) The music for all the plays was by Addinsell. The first play featured Merlin and King Vortiger. The second, *Hope of Britain*, has Merlin narrate a story about King Arthur, for which *The Isle of Apples* comprises part of the scene telling of Arthur being conveyed to Avalon 'safe from harm in the Isle of Apples'.

⑦ The Prince and the Showgirl (selection)

Originally entitled *The Sleeping Prince*, this Terence Rattigan story was produced by Marilyn Monroe's own company as a vehicle for herself in 1957. Her co-star, producer and director was Laurence Olivier. Their working

relationship was far from easy, as certain scenes in the film still show, and are even more vividly on display in the more recent film *My Week with Marilyn*. However, production values were high and the opportunity for theatrical as well as cinematic music must have made Addinsell a clear choice for the film. Monroe plays a member of the chorus in a London theatre show, mischievously entitled *The Coconut Girl*, who is 'picked up' by a visiting mid-European royal (in London for the coronation of George V) and 'entertained' at his London embassy with associated machinations. Lyrics for the song *I found a dream* (sung at the embassy privately by Monroe to Olivier) were by Christopher Hassall.

This *pot-pourri* was put together at the time for the publishers by Felton Rapley from Douglas Gamley's original orchestrations. (The same year Addinsell was to have written the score for *The Admirable Crichton* – he did write the dance music in it – but was sidetracked elsewhere, allowing Gamley to take over. When it was suggested they share a screen billing, Addinsell would have none of it, preferring his contribution to be heard anonymously, and Gamley to take full credit.)

⑧ Tune in G

As dull a title as one could imagine for such a charming piece, this miniature dates from 1943, and seems to have been simply a 'tune' he had to set down. (This orchestral version, with piano obbligato, appeared in 1952, following a commercial recording by Mantovani.) It has no discernible connection with any commercial projects at the time – and they were considerable – but is simply a beautiful melody, perhaps reflecting the countryside around his parents' home, Appleshaw, where it was written (as was the music for *Blithe Spirit* several years later) interspersed with dramatic touches that might have suggested the title, *Ballade* – but didn't!

⑨ Tom Brown's Schooldays – Overture

Thomas Hughes' novel of life at Rugby School under the legendary, reforming headmaster, Dr Arnold, had been filmed in America in 1939, but this version, made in England, in 1951, seems to have superseded it. The cast

included John Howard Davies as the eponymous boy hero, and Robert Newton as Dr Arnold.

Stylistically, the music is very English, in the vein of Eric Coates and Haydn Wood, and almost mono-thematic, with Tom's tune permeating the whole film. By assembling the music to form a viable concert piece, I have followed the storyline, albeit in a rather truncated form, basically following this pattern – Tom goes to school, suffers under bully Flashman's tyranny, and survives to live a happier existence, not only at the school but in his life thereafter. Unlike *Mr. Chips*, this film did not need a specially composed school song since Rugby has its own but in the triumphant final theme, there are echoes of the song he would have written if called upon to do so.

⑩ Festival

In 1940 the actor/playwright Emlyn Williams asked Addinsell to contribute a song and some incidental music for his play *The Light of Heart*. Seven years later, he repeated the request, this time for *Trespass*, a tale of a little Cardiff draper with dubious spiritualistic powers. Two numbers were extracted from the score and published as separate items. One, entitled *Harmony for False Lovers*, is a bitter-sweet piece that would not be out of place as the theme for a Sixties French love film. The other, *Festival*, is an infectious beguine which became popular, long after the play passed out of favour, largely through a recording by George Melachrino in 1948. Six years later, Percy Grainger heard it and made a version for two pianos, as he had for *Warsaw Concerto*, with equal skill. The work is dedicated to Addinsell's parents.

⑪ Journey to Romance

Although the slow melody in *Warsaw Concerto* was based on a rumba he had written in his undergraduate days, Addinsell rarely reworked material, but with this short piece from 1955, he provided one of London's recorded music libraries with something adapted from a work written some ten years earlier under the title *Invocation*, for a BBC radio feature called *Journey to Romance*. Some of the original publication's slight complexities of rhythm were ironed out for this version, but the nostalgic air is as 'fragrant' as ever.

12 Fire Over England – Suite

With the success of Errol Flynn's swashbuckling in Hollywood, it was only a matter of time before British film makers realised the appeal of the genre. Taking a book by A.E.W. Mason (author of *The Four Feathers*), Alexander Korda set up this production in 1937, with a script by, among others, Clemence Dane, photography by James Wong Howe, and music by Addinsell. The cast, in this tale of the Armada, included Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, with Flora Robson as Elizabeth I and Raymond Massey as Philip of Spain. Addinsell's score cannot match the Korngold classics but there is ample invention in the fanfares, marches and tango assembled in this suite, compiled soon after the film appeared.

13 A Tale of Two Cities – Theme

On the original soundtrack of this Rank production of 1958, directed by Ralph Thomas, the fourth feature-length version of the Dickens classic, there is no piano to be heard. However, Addinsell thought the theme so strong that he hoped it would 'take off' in the wake of the *Warsaw Concerto*, as a piano feature; he asked Douglas Gamley to create such a piece. It has been recorded a number of times before (not always in Gamley's actual arrangement) by artists, such as Semprini, but it never achieved the status its composer envisaged.

Philip Lane

Philip Martin



Acclaimed Dublin-born pianist and composer Philip Martin has performed with most of the major London orchestras and has given hundreds of broadcasts across Europe. His passion and interest in American music resulted in a UK/US Bicentennial Arts Fellowship, and he subsequently appeared at the 'Britain Salutes New York' festival. He has also performed at the BBC Proms, and besides festivals in England has appeared as both a pianist and composer at the Tanglewood and Aspen summer schools in the US. Martin is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, a member of Aosdána, and in 2012 was honoured with a professorship from Birmingham City University. He has recently completed a work for massed Celtic harps and instrumental ensemble, commissioned by the Music Network in Ireland to mark its 30th anniversary, with funds provided by the Arts Council of Ireland. The work received its world premiere at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin. His discography includes releases on the Hyperion, Naxos and Somm Recordings labels.

www.philipmartinpianistcomposer.com

Roderick Elms



Roderick Elms appears in concerts and recordings with most of Britain's orchestras as a principal keyboard player and soloist. He has broadcast regularly with the BBC for more than 40 years and has made many solo recordings with the BBC Concert, London Symphony, London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic orchestras. His recording of the *Warsaw Concerto* with the RPO remains a Classic FM favourite. For several years he was London pianist to the eminent cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and also organist to the London Symphony Orchestra. He has performed on many television and film scores including *Poirot*, *Aliens* and the complete *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. Roderick Elms' compositions are widely performed and recorded, both in the UK and North America. An album of his Christmas music, *Festive Frolic*, was released by Naxos in 2007 performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Joyful Company of Singers (8.570793). His autobiography *Just a Little From the Top* was published in August 2020 (The Choir Press).

www.masterkeyboards.co.uk

BBC Concert Orchestra

Bramwell Tovey, Principal conductor • Anna-Maria Helsing, Principal guest conductor
Barry Wordsworth, Conductor laureate • Dobrinka Tabakova, Composer in residence



Photo: Sim Canetty-Clarke

The mission of the BBC Concert Orchestra is to bring inspiring musical experiences to everyone, everywhere. The orchestra is broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 2's *Sunday Night Is Music Night*, it explores a wide selection of classical and contemporary music for broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and BBC iPlayer, and it also records TV and film soundtracks, including *Blue Planet* and *Serengeti*. In February 2021 it performed for the BBC One and BBC Radio 2 national celebration of musical theatre, *Musicals: The Greatest Show*. The BBC Concert Orchestra is an Associate Orchestra at London's Southbank Centre and appears annually at the BBC Proms, including at *Proms in the Park*. Along

with its regular engagements throughout the UK, the orchestra tours internationally and has an exciting programme of learning work, engaging people of all ages with a wide range of music and projects, including the BBC's *Ten Pieces*.

www.bbc.co.uk/concertorchestra

Kenneth Alwyn (1925–2020)



Photo: Robin Adler

After serving as choirmaster and organist in adolescence, Kenneth Alwyn turned his attention to conducting during his time as a student at the London Royal Academy of Music. He served as conductor of the Radio Malaya Orchestra in Singapore, before independence, subsequently moving to New Zealand as conductor of the Wellington Royal Choral Society. Returning to London, Alwyn worked for five years as pianist and assistant conductor of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, thereafter moving to the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden. Recordings for Decca, television and radio performances and work for the theatre, a long-standing interest, added to a career that brought concert appearances throughout the world, in Japan, America and Europe, and a continuing relationship with the BBC Concert Orchestra over 40 years. He died on 11 December 2020 at the age of 95.

World-famous for the *Warsaw Concerto* from the film *Dangerous Moonlight*, Richard Addinsell was one of Britain's leading composers for stage and screen. This selection ranges widely over every area of his achievement and includes the theme from his first international film success, *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, and the overture from *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, which contains some of his finest music. *The Smokey Mountains*, an evocative 'concerto' in three movements, is a rare example of the genre, while *The Isle of Apples* reflects his importance as a composer of music for radio plays.

BBC
Concert
Orchestra

Richard
ADDINSELL
(1904–1977)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Goodbye Mr. Chips – Theme (1939)
(reconstructed by Philip Lane,
b. 1950) 3:19 | 8 Tune in G (1943) 4:55 |
| 2 Invitation Waltz (from <i>Ring Round
the Moon</i>) (1950) (arr. P. Lane) 3:39 | 9 Tom Brown's Schooldays –
Overture (1951) (arr. P. Lane) 7:54 |
| The Smokey Mountains
(Concerto) (1950) 15:25 | 10 Festival (1947) 5:06 |
| 3 First Movement 6:34 | 11 Journey to Romance (1955)
(arr. Leonard Isaacs, 1909–1997) 3:37 |
| 4 Valley Song 4:38 | 12 Fire over England – Suite (1937)
(arr. George L. Zalva [Cruikshank],
1895–1951, orch. Leonard Isaacs) 8:30 |
| 5 Old Joe Clark 4:12 | 13 A Tale of Two Cities – Theme
(1958) (arr. Douglas Gamley) 3:43 |
| 6 The Isle of Apples (1940)
(arr. Roy Douglas, 1907–2015) 5:47 | |
| 7 The Prince and the Showgirl (1957)
(selection arr. Felton Rapley,
1907–1976, orch. Douglas Gamley,
1924–1998) 5:59 | |

Philip Martin **3–5 10**, Roderick Elms **8 13**, Piano

BBC Concert Orchestra • Kenneth Alwyn

Recorded: 20 and 21 April 1994 at Golders Green Hippodrome, London, UK

Producer: Tim McDonald • Engineer: Ray Pilling • Music consultant and booklet notes: Philip Lane

Publishers: Novello & Co. Ltd **1 6 9**, Chappell Recorded Music Library **2**, Warner-Chappell Music Ltd

3–5 7 12 13, EMI Music Ltd **8 10**, Josef Weinberger Ltd **11**

This recording was made possible by the generous financial support of the Richard S. Addinsell Will Trust.

Cover illustration by TimZillion (iStockphoto.com)

© 1994 & © 2021 Naxos Rights US, Inc. • www.naxos.com