

ABC
Classics
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TUBA CONCERTOS

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS | LOVELOCK | WILDER | KENNY | DANIELSSON



PETER WHISH-WILSON

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra | David Stanhope

ABC
Classics

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS 1872-1958

Concerto in F minor for Bass Tuba and Orchestra

1	I. Allegro moderato	4'42
2	II. Romanza (Andante sostenuto)	5'42
3	III. Finale (Rondo alla tedesca)	3'02

WILLIAM LOVELOCK 1899-1986

4	Concerto for Bass Tuba and Orchestra	13'59
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ALEC WILDER 1907-1981 arr. Irving Rosenthal

Tuba Suite No. 1 'Effie the Elephant'

5	I. Effie Chases a Monkey	0'53
6	II. Effie Falls in Love	4'14
7	III. Effie Takes a Dancing Lesson	1'24
8	IV. Effie Joins a Carnival	1'35
9	V. Effie Goes Folk Dancing	1'47
10	VI. Effie Sings a Lullaby	3'17

MICHAEL KENNY b. 1939

Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra

11	I. Passacaglia and Fugue	7'52
12	II. Serenade	4'21
13	III. Gigue	2'40

CHRISTER DANIELSSON 1942-1989

Concertante Suite for tuba and four horns

14	I. Largo – Allegro vivo	3'11
15	II. Moderato misterioso	3'22
16	III. Andante con sentimento	3'02
17	IV. Alla marcia	3'30

Horns: Philip Hall, Philip Paine, Nelson Green, Sarah Galbraith

Total Playing Time 68'33

Peter Whish-Wilson tuba
Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
David Stanhope conductor

The last decade of the life of **Ralph Vaughan**

Williams was a time of great productivity, the composer showing no signs of diminishing creative powers. The Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Symphonies are works of a master composer, and are interspersed with a rich variety of works which show that Vaughan Williams, even in his eighties, relished a sense of musical curiosity and inventiveness. One characteristic of the works of this period is the composer's willingness to explore unusual instrumentations: the three above-mentioned symphonies feature a wind machine, tuned gongs and flugelhorn respectively, and he also wrote concertos for two very un-standard soloists: a harmonica piece for Larry Adler, and the Tuba Concerto.

Vaughan Williams liked the tuba as an instrument, and often included parts for it in his orchestral works. In the concerto he cajoles melodic gracefulness and agility from an instrument that battled the pre-conception – in the orchestral mainstream anyway – that it was strictly a bass-line filler only. To reinforce his own conception of the tuba as a profoundly musical instrument, Vaughan Williams provides two cadenzas for the soloist, giving plenty of opportunity for virtuoso display.

Vaughan Williams was characteristically straightforward in describing his work, as if no words were really needed: "The Concerto is nearer to the Bach form than that of the Viennese School, though the first and last

movement finish up with elaborate cadenzas, which allies the concerto to the Mozart–Beethoven form. The music is fairly simple and obvious... The orchestration is that of the so-called theatre orchestra, consisting of woodwinds, two each of horns, trumpets and trombones, tympani, percussion and strings."

The piece opens with a scherzo, showing off the agility of the tuba, while the slow second movement is dominated by an alluring melody which, in a reversal of the usual trend, has since been taken up and transcribed for cello, bassoon and piano. The mood of the *Finale* is vivacious and dance-like, with a cadenza to challenge the soloist's "chops" just before the work closes.

The concerto was premiered in 1954 by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbiroli, with soloist Philip Catelinet.

The English composer **William Lovelock** came to Australia as the founding director of Queensland's State Conservatorium of Music in 1956. Although his stint as Director was brief, he remained in Queensland until 1981, when he returned to England for the final years of his life. He was regarded as an arch-conservative and in fact relished that reputation, resolutely championing traditional musical values in a time when avant-gardism and new approaches to composition were being passionately advocated.

His insistence on the continuing relevance of traditional musical craft and skills suited him to the role of pedagogue and examiner for institutions like the Australian Music Examinations Board, but put him on the outer as far as the mainstream of Australia's creative community was concerned.

Nevertheless, Lovelock's years in Australia were good for his creativity, and he composed more works during his 25 years here than he had composed during the rest of his life in London. What's more, his music has survived better than many predicted. While his pieces seemed like anachronisms at the time, nobody ever accused him of lacking anything in terms of the quality of his musical craftsmanship, and his pieces can now be judged on their own terms, regardless of their relevance or not to the fashions of the period. Performers are now grateful for the series of well-written and approachable concertos he composed for saxophone, trombone, trumpet, tuba, harp, viola, horn and organ, all of which exemplify his mission to "provide entertainment rather than cold-blooded intellectual abstractions."

The Tuba Concerto (1967) is a short work, "known of" amongst tuba players, but omitted from most records of Lovelock's oeuvre. The present recording will serve to restore it to the repertoire, and assuage the curiosity of the world's tuba-lovers!

Alec Wilder occupied a highly individual place in the American musical life of the 20th century, restlessly shifting between the worlds of popular and classical music. An unconventional, hard-drinking bachelor, Wilder valued friendship ahead of possessions, enjoying close acquaintance with people from diverse musical worlds, such as Judy Holliday, Marian McPartland, Mitch Miller, Gunther Schuller and – most famously – Frank Sinatra (who conducted an album of Wilder's chamber music for Columbia Records).

Among the many friendships of Wilder's life, one of the most enduring was that with the tuba player Harvey Phillips. Phillips had joined the circus, playing tuba in the band, to escape a childhood of poverty in Missouri, before winning a scholarship to the Juilliard School of Music and from there pursuing a "legit" performing and teaching career, balanced with stints in the jazz domain (notably the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra). A large and gregarious man, he connected with Wilder both as a personality and as a musician.

Inspired by such friendships, Wilder took up the cause of composing for "underdog" instruments – like the tuba. For Harvey Phillips, Wilder wrote a Sonata (1959) and two Suites (1959 and 1975), of which the first is known as "Effie the Elephant" or the "Effie Suite".

The piece came about as the result of a request from one Clark Galehouse, owner of Golden

Crest Records, who introduced Wilder to Phillips. Galehouse wanted to make a children's album, specifically one that would describe the adventures of an elephant called Effie: as she chases a monkey, as she falls in love, has dancing lessons, joins the circus, goes folk-dancing and sings a lullaby. As Phillips told Wilder's biographer Desmond Stone, "Alec was successful in musically documenting these imaginary events without the usual insult to the instrument occasioned by almost every other application of the tuba as a hippopotamus, whale, elephant or other large creature."

Originally for piano and tuba, the suite was arranged for string orchestra by Irving Rosenthal, who, like Wilder, enjoyed a career that traversed the worlds of jazz and classical music. As a french horn player, he not only performed and recorded classical repertoire, but was also a core member of the famous Stan Kenton Orchestra at the height of its ambitious endeavour to create a new music from the melding of jazz and classical techniques and aesthetics. He also made many arrangements for brass instruments and brass and wind combinations. Rosenthal came to Adelaide late in his life to teach, and there heard Peter Whish-Wilson perform the *Effie Suite* in its original version with piano, and proposed to Peter that he would like to arrange the work for strings and harp. It is this arrangement that is recorded here for the first time.

Adelaide composer **Michael Kenny** is also highly regarded as an arranger and conductor. In the 1960s, he played horn in the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, during which time he wrote many arrangements for the ABC Light Entertainment Department. He also studied composition with J.V. Peters, Antony Hopkins and Henk Badings at the Elder Conservatorium of Music at the University of Adelaide. His list of serious works includes more than a dozen compositions for ensembles ranging from chamber group to full orchestra.

The composer has provided the following note for his piece:

"The Tuba Concerto was written for Peter Whish-Wilson in 1981 and uses material derived from some of my earlier works. The first movement is a reorchestration of *A Symphonic Study* for symphonic wind ensemble (1965), the other movements being expanded versions of parts of my *Divertimento* for violin and viola (1964).

"The first movement, entitled *Passacaglia and Fugue*, begins with a short orchestral flourish during which the solo tuba plays a brief declamatory motif. The flourish quickly subsides and links with the passacaglia theme stated by the tuba in its bottom register, accompanied by the harp. There follow nine variations culminating in a repeat of the opening flourish and motif. The fugue is set in basic sonata form in which its first subject matter is a fugal exposition of a

theme grown from the declamatory motif, whilst the second subject is a brief variation on the passacaglia theme. Various individual sections of the orchestra are featured in the development section, during which solo strings take up a modified version of the passacaglia theme as a secondary fugal exposition. Both fugal themes are played together forming the start of the recapitulation. A short cadenza for the soloist is followed by a return of the second subject leading straight into a coda in which the passacaglia theme is heard in the brass, with final flourishes from the solo instrument.

“The second movement, *Serenade*, is in ternary form (three sections, A–B–A) and starts with a soft chordal passage in the brass, with the solo tuba supplying the bass line. Accompanied by harp and pizzicato strings, the ensuing main melody has a singing quality with a Sicilian lilt to it. A brief transition, delicately scored for strings (now bowed rather than plucked) and celeste, leads into the middle section, a canon for pizzicato strings with a subsidiary melody for the soloist.

“The final *Gigue* is in two parts, with a repeat of each section followed by a recitative-like passage that has the tuba introducing unrelated material, only to be led back on track by an impatient-sounding orchestra!”

Swedish trombonist and composer **Christer Danielsson** began playing in a Salvation Army junior brass band and at the age of 17 graduated to the Band of the Swedish Navy in Karlskrona. Entering the State Academy of Music in Stockholm in 1967, Danielsson studied there for five years, but remained self-taught as a composer. His career as a trombonist threw him into the contrasting worlds of symphonic music, big-band jazz and the avant-garde. Composing and arranging for brass combinations became his specialisation, and his style effectively steered a course between the “extremes” of the various music worlds he inhabited.

The Concertante Suite (1977) is one of his most admired works, a thoroughly pleasurable, rambunctious and catchy divertimento, recorded here with the rarely-heard but musically splendid combination of tuba and four french horns.

James Koehne

Peter Whish-Wilson

Born in Tasmania in 1958, Peter Whish-Wilson commenced tuba studies at the age of 11. At 15 he moved to Melbourne to study at the Victorian College of the Arts. Two years later, after a European tour with the Melbourne Youth Orchestra, he was appointed Principal Tuba with the Elizabethan Melbourne Trust Orchestra (now Orchestra Victoria).

In 1978 Peter Whish-Wilson joined the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra as Principal Tuba, and has been a featured soloist on many occasions, including television appearances and a recording of *Tubby the Tuba* with Rolf Harris narrating. One of his many orchestral highlights was performing in the first Australian production of Wagner’s massive 17-hour *Ring* cycle, conducted by Jeffrey Tate in 1998. In March 2006, Peter Whish-Wilson gave the world premiere of *Stoccata*, a work written for him by Elena Kats-Chernin and commissioned for performance with the ASO at the Adelaide Bank Festival of Arts.

Peter Whish-Wilson has studied with many of the world’s greatest teachers and players including Arnold Jacobs (formerly with the Chicago Symphony), John Woods and Ian King (formerly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra), Roger Bobo (former member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic), Zachariah Spellman (San Francisco Opera Orchestra) and Michael Lind (Stockholm Philharmonic). He has played

with the Sydney, Melbourne, West Australian and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, Adelaide Chamber Orchestra, Australian Contemporary Music Ensemble, Adelaide Brass Quintet, Elizabethan Brass Ensemble, Sydney Brass Ensemble and Renaissance Brass.

In 2001, *Australia’s Band World* magazine compiled their “Band of the Century” featuring the best band players from around the country. Peter Whish-Wilson was chosen on tuba.

Peter Whish-Wilson is also a highly-regarded teacher; he has been the tuba lecturer at the Elder Conservatorium, University of Adelaide since 1979, and has held similar positions at the Canberra School of Music (1990-91) and the University of South Australia (1991-97). He has also been the Tuba Instructor for National Music Camps (now Youth Music Australia) and artist-in-residence at the Riverina and Darling Downs Colleges of Advanced Education.

In 2005, Peter Whish-Wilson was painted with his tuba by Andrew Baines for the Archibald Prize; this portrait is reproduced on the cover of this booklet.

David Stanhope

David Stanhope is one of Australia’s leading conductors, and has notable achievements in repertoire from Bach to Birtwistle. His many seasons with Opera Australia include the Australian stage premiere of Berg’s *Lulu*, and definitive performances of operas by Britten and

Janáček. Although he has given a large number of premieres of Australian music and is a regular guest conductor with Australia's finest contemporary music group, Sydney Alpha Ensemble, he is not a 20th-century specialist. He has given memorable seasons of operas such as *Fidelio* and *Eugene Onegin* as well as concerts of standard Classical and Romantic repertoire. David Stanhope has also conducted the soundtracks for a number of feature films, including *Babe*, *Paradise Road* and *Children of the Revolution*. He is an expert on the music of Percy Grainger, and recorded all the solo piano music for the film *Passion* as well as being the hand "double" for Richard Roxburgh. David Stanhope has a professional background as a principal horn-player, and later as a bass trombonist. He has a growing reputation as a composer, particularly in the field of music for large wind and brass ensembles.

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

With a reputation for youthful vitality and superb artistry, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra plays a central role at the heart of the South Australian community.

In 2006, the ASO proudly celebrates its 70th anniversary season under the leadership of Music Director and Chief Conductor, Arvo Volmer. It is the largest performing arts organisation in South Australia, each year performing over 100 concerts across a diverse musical spectrum. The ASO provides the

orchestral support for the State Opera of South Australia, the Australian Ballet and Opera Australia, and is the most prolific contributor to the biennial Adelaide Festival.

The ASO's commitment to artistic excellence has also strengthened its reputation within the international community. Following its groundbreaking 1996 tour to China, the ASO won world acclaim in 1998 with Australia's first production of Wagner's *Ring* cycle. This monumental project was repeated in 2004 under the baton of Israeli conductor Asher Fisch.

The ASO excels as a dynamic, versatile orchestra, performing with such outstanding artists as Placido Domingo, Luciano Pavarotti, Split Enz, Shirley Bassey, Tony Bennett, James Morrison, Dionne Warwick, Andrea Bocelli, kd lang, Lalo Schiffrin, Ben Folds – and even Bugs Bunny!

The ASO reaches out to all sections of the community with music experiences that are accessible, affordable, informal and entertaining. The popular annual tradition of Santos Symphony under the Stars, the outdoor Alfresco concerts, daytime Tea and Symphony Series, the innovative Education Program, ASO on Tour, and the entertaining Showcase Series are just some of the diverse concerts bringing music to South Australians each year.

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