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PRESS SERVICE

Press Conference

Subject: AMERICAN WIND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

Date : Monday, July 3rd.

Place : Recital Room, Festival Hall, South Bank.

Time : 10.30 a.m.

Details: The American Wind Symphony Orchestra, appearing for the first time in Europe, is to make a concert tour of the Thames in July.

First concert is off the Festival Gardens, Battersea on July 4th at 8.30 p.m.

All concerts will be given from a specially constructed concert barge.

Purpose of the conference is to meet members of the Orchestra and to see the concert barge which will be moored at the Festival Hall pier.

(Background brief attached. Further briefs, photographs etc. will be available at the conference)

With compliments:

Major-General A.C. Shortt,
Voice & Vision Ltd.,
26, Upper Brook Street,
London W.1.

(Reply Slip)

24th June, 1961

This is to let you know that:

- (a) I can/cannot attend the A.W.S.O. press conference on 3rd July.
- (b) I will be represented by:
- (c) I will be sending a photographer . . . Yes/No

(Signed)

(Position)

(publication, etc.)

BACKGROUND BRIEF ON
THE AMERICAN WIND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
CONCERT TOUR OF THE THAMES - JULY, 1961

What it is

The American Wind Symphony Orchestra is the only organisation of its kind in the world. It is made up of three components: the normal percussion section of the symphony orchestra, plus symphony orchestra brass and woodwind sections each of double size. The Orchestra has thus placed in the hands of composers a wholly new and highly flexible instrument; composers have responded with a sizable catalogue of music especially created with the capabilities of the orchestra in mind, and employing instrumental groupings that had never before been readily available to the composer.

The American Wind Symphony Orchestra was established in Pittsburgh in the summer of 1957. It performed in its first season on a renovated barge anchored in the Alleghany River near Point Park.

Pittsburgh businessmen and civic leaders rallied to the support of this new organisation. In 1957, thanks to local support, the orchestra acquired its own specially constructed barge. On this barge, it has performed for hundreds of thousands of listeners on waterfronts from Pittsburgh upstream along the Alleghany and Monogahela rivers; and far downstream in towns along the Ohio, Kanawha, Cumberland, Kentucky and Mississippi rivers.

The American Wind Symphony Orchestra includes fifty-five to sixty professional musicians drawn from universities and conservatories, selected from among hundreds of candidates.

The Orchestra, from the start, has been international in character. The 1961 organisation includes musicians, under the age of thirty, from, for example, Japan, Mexico and China.

International composers have been commissioned to create works for the orchestra.

The A.W.S.O. is directed by its founder, Robert Austin Boudreau. (See biography attached)

The Orchestra works on the philosophy that 20th Century music should reflect 20th Century life just as the great music of earlier centuries reflected the times and circumstances that gave them birth. New forms have, as consequence, been introduced to the unaccustomed ears of its many audiences.

The following are some of the achievements of the Orchestra in America to date:

First It has presented music that stands as a statement of today for artists of today.

Second It has presented this music in a natural environment, bounded by river and green park, yet within sight and sound of the commercial hearts of great cities. As a result the Orchestra's performances have become not a special occasion that one takes special pains to attend in a special, removed, location, but a part of the city's life.

Third It has made river communities aware of the cultural and recreational potential of their waterfronts.

In a time when the amount of urban land available for cultural and recreational use is steadily declining, the American Wind Symphony Orchestra approach has demonstrated the worth of restoring the riverfronts. In addition, it has stimulated the use of these riverfronts for cultural purposes other than the Orchestra programmes. In Pittsburgh, for instance the Three Rivers Art Festival, an outdoor exhibit of painting sculpture, and crafts, has been instituted as an annual event at the site of the Orchestra concerts. Similar events are taking shape in other river towns and cities along the Orchestra's route of visit.

To sum up,

Musically, the Orchestra has created a solid beginning towards the establishment of an impressive literature for wind instruments. There now exists for the first time a body of music that is not only appropriate to the particular time in history in which we live, but that has been created expressly for wind instruments, rather than having been rearranged from other works. The result has been a collection of compositions true to themselves and true to their purpose. Each of these compositions reflects the composer's delight at having found himself working under new disciplines and possessed of an entirely new instrument for the exercise of his art; at the same time exploiting the rivers which are the commonest geographical experience of all nations.

Mountains, plains, beaches, these vary greatly from land to land, and are seldom working into the consciousness of an entire people; but the cities of man have been built mainly from the river edges, and it is here that one may go to understand a people. It is hoped that the Orchestra's concerts will be presented on rivers where the universality of music is most needed, and will be most effective, in bridging the gap in cultural communications between the United States and other nations.

Against such a background as this, the American Wind Symphony Orchestra is coming to England at the beginning of July to give a concert tour on the Thames.

The 1961 Thames Concert Tour

Mr. R.A. Boudreau, the conductor and founder of the Orchestra has been to England. During this trip, he contacted the Inland Waterways Association, who obtained permission from the Port of London Authority and the Thames Conservancy, for permission to present a series of concerts on the Thames, similar in nature and scope to the American concerts. Permission was enthusiastically granted by all these bodies. Mr. Robert Aickman, Founder and Vice-President of the Inland Waterways Association, contacted towns on the Thames and, has received most enthusiastic co-operation. The Musicians of the Orchestra have agreed to accept no monetary compensation for the English tour.

The Orchestra will play from a specially constructed barge which will be towed up and down the river by towboat.

Details of the Barge

This has had to be specially constructed to enable it to get through all locks and under all bridges on the route. The barge is 118 feet long and 16 feet 6 inches wide; and, to obtain a stage depth of 32 feet, large flaps have been constructed on either side, 100 feet and 60 feet long respectively, with a depth of 8 feet.

Special emphasis is given in the design for the purpose of acoustics in order to bring out the necessary sections of the Orchestra. The barge will have three large acoustical sounding panels which may be adjusted to fit the need of the specially composed music.

Storage of instruments and equipment is provided for and the barge is fitted out with its own electrical system throughout. (From batteries generating 14 kilowatts)

The barge has been specially built in Charringtons Dartford Barge Yard and it is interesting to note that the first steel was only laid on April 19th 1961. One of the leading American Architects, Mr. Louis I. Kahn, F.A.I.A., was asked to design a suitable structure and his representative is working in collaboration with The Fairmile Marine Construction Company in this country. Mr. Kahn has also, as the musicians, given his services free of charge.

The colour, design and decoration of the barge will present a spectacle in itself. It is also equipped to present a firework display at everyone of the towns at which a concert is arranged.

The barge will be moored offshore at selected spots; and as the schedule now stands, the orchestra will arrive from New York in time to give their first concert on 4th July.

Grand Committee of Patrons

The following have been approached by Mr. Aickman and agreed to become Patrons of the tour.

His Excellency the United States Ambassador.

The Viscount Astor.

Humphrey Atkins, M.P.

John Betjeman, C.B.E.

Sir Adrian Boult.

Sir Felix Brunner, Bart.

Sir Hugh Casson, R.D.I., F.R.I.B.A.

Gerald Coke.

The Right Honourable J. Chuter Ede. P.C., C.H., D.L., M.P.

Douglas Fairbanks, K.B.E., D.S.C.

Wing Commander R.G. Grant-Ferris, M.P.

John Hay, M.P.

Sir Alan Patrick Herbert.

The Right Honourable Philip Noel-Baker, M.P.

His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, K.G.

Sir Richard Nugent, Bart., M.P.

Miss Margaret Rawlings.

Sir Malcolm Sargent.

Peter Scott, C.B.E., D.S.C.

The Viscount Simon, C.M.G.

Sir John Wolfenden, C.B.E.

Music

Mr. Boudreau will be accompanied on the tour by the following composers who have been commissioned to write special **works** for the orchestra and who, it is planned, will introduce their works and present a short analysis prior to the performance.

Sir Arthur Bliss

Alan Hovhaness

Harry Somers

Ulysses Kay

Chou Wen Chung

The Heinz Foundation and the H.J. Heinz Company Ltd. of England are sponsoring the English tour of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra and on completion of the tour the barge becomes the property of the Orchestra.

Further detailed information can be obtained from Major General A.C. Shortt, C.B., O.B.E. Voice & Vision Ltd., 26 Upper Brook St., London, W.1., Telephone Number Hyde Park 6050

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ROBERT AUSTIN BOUDREAU

Mr. Boudreau holds a B.A. degree in English literature from Boston University. He received his M.S. degree at the Juilliard School of Music in 1950; and has completed his year of residence towards a doctorate degree at Columbia University. In 1954, he was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and continued his studies of music for wind instruments at the Paris Conservatory. He has taught at Ithica College and Lehigh University, and was an associate Professor of Music at Duquesne University from 1955 to 1958.

While at the Juilliard School of Music, Mr. Boudreau found himself one of 252 trumpet players, practising 10-12 hours a day to get a post in an orchestral ensemble; often finding himself waiting during a rest of many bars before an entry. There was born in his mind the idea that trumpets as well as the other brasses and woodwinds had no real literature of their own.

He resolved to do something about it.

This idea led to the founding of the American Wind Symphony Orchestra.

American Wind Symphony Orchestra - Itinerary

Dates & Places of Engagements are scheduled as follows:-

4th July	The Festival Gardens, Battersea Park, London
7th July	Thamesfield, Henley
9th July	Caversham Gardens, Reading
11th July	Christ Church Meadow, Oxford
13th July	Abingdon
15th July	Marlow
16th July	Ray Island Gardens, Maidenhead
17th July	The Brocas, Eton
21st July	Island Gardens, Greenwich (North bank of river)
22nd July	Twickenham Ferry, adjoining Ham House, Richmond
23rd July	South Bank Promenade, London