

LIONEL FRIEND



Thoughts from the Podium - November 2010 **Lionel Friend, conductor**

A WONDERFUL YEAR of varied music-making is drawing to its close. I am fortunate indeed to have been involved in some very special projects.

For the first two months of 2010 I was working with Keith Warner and students from the Birmingham Conservatoire in preparation for the world premiere production at the beginning of March of *Scoring a Century*, a brilliantly entertaining stage work for which David Blake composed the music to Keith Warner's witty and thought-provoking text that looked at the history of the 20th century.



Photo © Christian Payne

After that I had a marvellous time with director Aidan Lang and a terrific cast mounting a strikingly imaginative production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in two cities in New Zealand. It was a fascinating experience to rehearse two different orchestras and choruses in close succession.

RETURNING TO THE UK, I conducted my last official concert as Conductor-in-Residence of the Birmingham Conservatoire: in the famous Town Hall we performed Mahler's awe-inspiring 6th Symphony to tremendous acclaim from the audience and most gratifying press coverage, too.

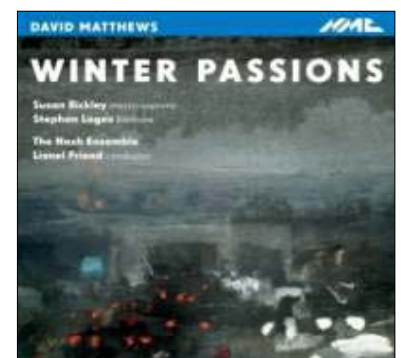
Birmingham Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra gave undoubtedly its finest performance in its long and busy history, when it performed nothing less than Mahler's mighty, probing and technically demanding Sixth Symphony under the brilliantly clear conducting of Lionel Friend.

Birmingham Post, 2/7/10

Whether it was a question of formal design or blistering intensity, Lionel Friend's Mahler 6th was second to none.

Mahler Society Newsletter, July 2010

JUST AROUND that time the recording I'd conducted of a beautiful Shakespeare setting by David Matthews was issued. It's sung by wonderful mezzo-soprano Susan Bickley with the Nash Ensemble and called *Terrible Beauty*.



ANOTHER TRIP SOUTH to conduct Humperdinck's gorgeously beautiful *Hänsel und Gretel* for State

Opera of South Australia in a delightfully original production with a fine cast and the magnificent Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

From the sombre brass of the overture to the swirling strings, conductor Lionel Friend brings out the full range of colours in the score and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra responds with immense energy.

Adelaide Advertiser, 9/11/10

THEN ANOTHER SHARP turn around to direct three world premiere performances with the Nash Ensemble at London's Wigmore Hall, part of the 70th-birthday celebrations for their inspiring founder, Amelia Freedman. The privilege of working with this remarkable ensemble of quite outstanding musi-

cians has been a bright light for the past 35 years of my career.

TWO FINAL PERFORMANCES this year. Firstly, at a memorial service on **December 7th at St James's Church in Piccadilly, London**, for the exceptional English composer Nicholas Maw, I shall direct a performance of his beautiful Roman Canticle with outstanding German mezzo soprano Angelika Kirchschlager. And then on **December 16th**, I shall again be in **Birmingham's Town Hall** to conduct the farewell concert for the Conservatoire's departing Principal, George Caird, much-loved and admired. He is one of Britain's outstanding oboists, and will play Strauss's formidable Concerto to end our programme.

Lionel Friend

Upcoming projects for 2011

28 January 2011

Birmingham Conservatoire Repertoire Orchestra, UK
Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, Debussy *La mer*

5 March 2011

Wigmore Hall, London, UK
Patricia Routledge, Nash Ensemble - Prokofiev
Peter and the Wolf

10, 11, 12, March 2011

Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, UK
Janáček *The Cunning Little Vixen*

23 March 2011

Wigmore Hall, London, UK
Nash Ensemble, works by Mark-Anthony Turnage
and Michael Berkeley

27 March 2011

Knighton, Shropshire, UK
accompanist for cello recital with Jane Hyland

14, 16, 19, 21, 23 July 2011

His Majesty's, Perth, Australia
The Tales of Hoffmann, West Australian Opera

May-June 2013

Royal Danish Opera, Copenhagen
Parsifal



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