
HAROLD FIELDING

presents

Paul Robeson

at

HARRINGAY ARENA — LONDON

on

MONDAY, APRIL 18th, 1949, at 7.30 p.m.

assisted by

LAWRENCE BROWN

with

LIONEL BOWMAN

The Distinguished South African Pianist

and

THE LUTON GIRLS' CHOIR



From a collection curated by harringtononline.com

Ferman

Paul Robeson



HE critic of a newspaper has called Robeson a "Giant of Song". He is, indeed, not only a giant of song, but a giant of a man — just under 6 feet 4 inches in height, and weighing around 200 pounds.

To be an actor or singer — that was the question for Paul Robeson to decide. It was a case of "How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away." Not being able to make a definite decision, Robeson accepted both, and as the future proved, has risen to enviable heights of fame.

The son of a New Jersey preacher, Robeson attended Rutgers College, winning honours in both the scholastic and athletic fields. Then came a course in law at Columbia; he holds degrees from both universities, as well as honorary degrees from several other American universities.

Other honours bestowed upon Robeson include the Spingarn Medal for outstanding achievement, awarded by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (1945); Gold Medal for best diction in the American Theatre, from the American Academy of Arts and Science (1944); Donaldson Award for best acting performance (1944); Abraham Lincoln Medal for most notable and distinguished services in human relations in New York City (1943).

During his studies at Columbia the fair charmers, Drama and Song, began their rival claims. Robeson was at the time not only going to law school but coaching a football team. In Harlem, where he lived, the Y.M.C.A. wanted a substitute for a play they were staging. On the opening night two friends of Eugene O'Neill's were in the audience and spotted him for a revival of O'Neill's play "Emperor Jones." Robeson was persuaded to play Brutus Jones and it was in this part that the Robeson singing voice was discovered. When Jones is lost in the jungle, he is supposed to whistle to keep up his spirits. Robeson's whistling, however, wasn't anything to write home about, so it was decided he would try singing a spiritual instead. The effect was sensational — so much so that Robeson found himself acclaimed as both singer and actor.

Two years later, in 1925, he made his first appearance as a concert singer in a recital held in New York's famous Greenwich Village. The emotional splendour of his magnificent bass-baritone held the throng spellbound. For his next concert, a long queue waited in a snowstorm, only to find the house sold out.

Programme

Over the Mountains (Old English) - - - - - arr. Quilter

A charming air of 17th Century England in a modern setting. "Love will find a way" is the sentiment which it expresses with poetic variations."

Dans le Printemps - - - - - Garat

Dans le printemps de mes annees,
Je meurs victime de l'amour,
Semblable a ces roses d'un jour,
Que le meme jour voit fanees,
Ah! gardez-vous de me guerir,
J'aime non mal, j'en veux mourir,
Ah! gardez-vous de me guerir,
J'aime mon mal, j'en veux mourir.

Creation Hymn - - - - - Beethoven

Of his seventy-four songs with piano accompaniment, this exalted psalm of praise is perhaps the most popular and a broad, sustaining majestic invocation. The text is taken from Psalm VIII.

Lasciatemi Morire - - - - - Monteverdi

Lasciatemi morire! Lasciatemi morire!
E che volete che mi conforte in cosi dura sorte,
in cosi gran martire?
Lasciatemi morire, lasciatemi morire.

Translation

O let me die, Oh let me die!
What do you think will comfort me,
In such hard fate, in this great agony?
Oh let me die! Oh let me die!

Lord God of Abraham ("Elijah") - - - - - Mendelssohn

Among Mendelssohn's greatest works are his oratorios *St. Paul* and *Elijah*.
"Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel; this day let it be known that Thou art God and I am Thy servant! And shew this people that Thou art Lord God; and let their hearts again be turned."

PAUL ROBESON

Twenty Minutes with England's Ambassadors of Song

THE LUTON GIRLS' CHOIR

Musical Director — ARTHUR E. DAVIES

It may be of interest to our patrons to know that immediately after their appearance here tonight, The Luton Girls' Choir will be travelling to Broadcasting House to take part in the two-way exchange programme between London and Paris — "Hello Paris."

1) Trumpet Voluntary

2) Homing

3) I Hear Thy Voice

4) Easter Hymn from
Catholic Relations

and Notes

The Orphan - - - - - Moussorgsky

"Kind sir, please be kind! I am an orphan—a homeless child. Hunger and cold have been supper and bed for me. Oh, please help me!"

Excerpt from "Boris Godounoff" - - - - - Moussorgsky

The story of the opera takes place about 1600. Boris, the Regent of Russia, arranges the assassination of Dmitri, young brother of the incapacitated Czar, thus trying to gain the throne for himself. A young monk, upon hearing the story and believing himself to possess a physical likeness to the Prince, enlists the aid of Poland to usurp the Crown. Boris is torn between his lively conscience and the imminent loss of the throne, which he hoped to retain for his son.

An Eriskay Love Lilt (Songs of the Hebrides) - - - - - Kennedy-Fraser

The King is gone a-hunting - - - - - arr. Benjamin Britton

This is the story of a King, who, when bird-hunting, discovers a beautiful shepherd maiden asleep beneath a tree. The King asks her to be his Queen and tempts her with promises of great riches, but she answers "I thank you Sir, most kindly, but I love a lad, and he loves Marie."

PAUL ROBESON

INTERVAL

Prelude in D minor - - - - -

Scherzo in C sharp minor - - - - -

- 1) Fantasia in G minor
- 2) Chopin Waltz.

LIONEL BOWMAN

NEGRO FOLK SONGS:

Balm in Gilead - - - - -

Go down Moses - - - - -

Steal Away - - - - -

O Gimme Your Hand - - - - -

- 1) Soldiers of the River
- 2) Song of Freedom
- 3) No more

PAUL ROBESON

- (1) Every time I see a feelin' (Queb)
- (2) Weary for you
- (3) I shot my Brother the other Day)
- (4) Rocking Chair
- (5) I dreamed I saw Joe last night Chopin
- (6) (Spanish Song) Ravelle
- (7) "Gab e Holy is my Name"

arr. H. T. Burleigh

arr. Lawrence Brown

- 4) Warsaw Ghetto
- 5) Old Man River

PAUL ROBESON appears by arrangement with

COPPICUS & SCHANG INC., COLUMBIA ARTIST'S MANAGEMENT, NEW YORK CITY

Once in a Lifetime!

By arrangement with

THE LONDON MUSIC FESTIVAL

HARRINGAY ARENA

Saturday June 4 to Sunday June 12

HAROLD FIELDING presents

THE WORLD'S GREATEST ORCHESTRA

with its

110 STAR MUSICIANS

from the film

"FANTASIA"

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

*The First American Symphony Orchestra
to visit England for over twenty years*

*The Orchestra that has sold
over 20,000,000 records*

WATCH FOR FULL DETAILS IN THE NATIONAL PRESS

Continued from Page 5

Soon after, he went abroad, and sensational reports of his successes came from London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Moscow and Leningrad.

Meanwhile, in London, Robeson was approached about playing the role Othello. He accepted, and in May, 1930, the production opened with Robeson in the role of Othello, Peggy Ashcroft as Desdemona, Dame Sybil Thorndike as Emilia, Maurice Brown as Iago, and Ralph Richardson as Roderigo.

Robeson remained abroad for several years and did not return to America until 1939. In 1943 the Theatre Guild agreed with Robeson that the time was ripe for him to revive "Othello" on the American stage. The play was produced by Margaret Webster, who had been in the first-night audience of the London production, and presented in New York for a full season, followed by an equally full second season on the road, enjoying the extraordinary success of no empty seats for two years, and was a personal triumph for Robeson the actor.

Finishing his long run as Othello, Robeson sandwiched in a tour of Europe with Lawrence Brown (his pianist for nearly 25 years) appearing before enormous G.I. crowds in France and Germany.

The Robeson character is a many-faceted one. There is Robeson the actor, Robeson the thunder-throated bass, Robeson the athlete, Robeson the thinker. He speaks Russian, French, Italian, German, Spanish, and reads more than twenty other languages including Gaelic and Chinese.

Mrs. Paul Robeson is an author and lecturer on her own. A graduate of Columbia, she has written a book "African Journey," an account of a trip she took in 1939 with Paul Junr., then eight years old. Paul, now twenty, is as distinguished an athlete as was his father.

Robeson's present tour of the British Isles after an absence of ten years will be welcomed by those who remember the films in which he appeared, such as "Proud Valley," "Big Feller," "Song of Freedom," "Sanders of the River," and the unforgettable "Showboat" in which he immortalized the song which seems to exemplify so beautifully the music of his race — "Ole Man River."





Lawrence Brown



Lionel Bowman



Luton Girls' Choir