

**Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra
2015-16 season**

Saturday 21 November 2015

Programme to include,
Brahms Symphony No 3
and Strauss Horn Concerto No 2

Saturday 12th March 2016

A Russian Celebration to include
Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture
and Symphony No. 4

Saturday 25th June 2016

An evening at the movies
to include Star Wars, Jurassic Park
and Schindlers List

All design work produced by Stephen Jones.
Contact via email: jonah_the_3rd@yahoo.com

Saturday, 27th June 2015
An English Programme



Edward Elgar - Imperial March

**Benjamin Britten - Serenade for Tenor,
Horn & String Orchestra**

Ralph Vaughan Williams - The Lark Ascending

**Hubert Parry - Symphony no 3 in C
(The English)**

Email: enquiry@wolsymorc.org.uk Tel: 07977 122768 (Ian Sumner)
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WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is a fully independent amateur orchestra formed in 1973 by a group of keen amateur players. The idea behind the formation of the orchestra was to satisfy a need for local players to prepare to as high a standard as possible, interesting works for public performance, and this is still the primary aim of the orchestra today. Membership of the orchestra when at full strength is of the order of 50 players and is drawn from keen competent amateur musicians, students and teachers of music in Wolverhampton and the surrounding areas.

The orchestra meets on a regular weekly basis throughout the academic year and produces on average four public concerts a year. We have been invited on several occasions to perform major choral works with local choral societies, in 1999 performing Beethoven's Choral Symphony to commemorate our Silver Jubilee. The orchestra regularly engages as soloists professional musicians of national and international reputation, as well as local young players of outstanding promise.

The repertoire of the orchestra extends from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, although a symphony orchestra of this type will tend to concentrate on works from the nineteenth century. The orchestra has performed a large number of symphonies by Beethoven, Brahms, Dvořák, Mahler, Schubert, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, etc. Earlier works are represented by Albinoni, Bach, Boyce and Handel, whereas twentieth century composers whose works have been performed include Barber, Copland, Joubert, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, and Rory Freckleton - a member of the viola section.

The orchestra is managed by a committee consisting of the Musical Director and leader, plus members elected by the orchestra. We are financed through concert receipts and by an annual subscription paid by the members. We are also affiliated to Making Music (formerly the National Federation of Music Societies).

Recently, in addition to its normal programme of full orchestral concerts, the orchestra has performed a number of smaller concerts in aid of local charities. We are currently exploring, as members of the city's music hub, partnerships with Wolverhampton Music School and the Birmingham Conservatoire.

Peter Morris—Musical director

Peter Morris has conducted the orchestra since 2004. He was a cathedral chorister at Chester and Manchester, went to Chetham's School in Manchester and read music at Durham University.

He was appointed Director of Music at Bluecoat School, Walsall at the age of 22 and subsequently taught at St. Peter's School in Wolverhampton. He conducted Walsall Choral Society for 30 years and in 2000/2001 he was awarded the Medaille d'Honneur of the French National Association of Music and a Master's degree in history at Keele University.

Peter is now Director of Music at St Peter's Collegiate Church, Borough Organist at Walsall Town Hall, Chairman of Wolverhampton's Music Education Hub and has a number of examining roles at GCSE and A-level, including Chief Examiner. He lives in Wolverhampton.

Ros Rayner - Leader and violin soloist in 'The Lark Ascending'

Ros studied the violin at the Royal Academy of Music. Whilst there she joined the British Youth Symphony Orchestra. Following her PGCE she taught in Bracknell for four years, she moved to Wolverhampton and was appointed leader of the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra in 1996. She now teaches at the Wolverhampton Girls' High School and tutors the first violins in the Wolverhampton Youth Orchestra.

Hazel Whitefoot - French Horn soloist

Hazel started playing French Horn at the tender age of 9 - largely because she was considered too vertically challenged to take on the cello which was the only other instrument then available at school! - and has played it ever since, receiving instruction from Jack Broomfield, Peter Currie (CBSO) and Bill Davies (BBC Welsh SO) along the way.

After studying Music and Economics for 3 years at University College Cardiff, followed by a PGCE in Economics and Business Studies, she then joined the music services of the County Council as a peripatetic brass teacher. 21 years later she left the County's employ to strike out as an independent music teacher, and now teaches brass and recorder around the county.

Hazel is kept very busy as a horn player being a long-time member of Wyre Forest Symphony Orchestra - where she is currently chairperson and "fixer" - and Chandos Symphony Orchestra, which she also chairs. She also lists Midland Sinfonia, Birmingham Philharmonic, Cheltenham Chamber, Worcester Symphony, Worcester Philharmonic, and Asklepios Orchestras on her CV. Additionally she has played in various chamber ensembles, amongst them Pentatonic Wind Quartet, Cecilian Wind Quintet, Lynx Brass Quintet and the Horn Belles and she also really enjoys playing for musical theatre productions when the opportunity arises.

Since 2003 she has followed a childhood passion for archaeology by studying part-time for a first class honours degree in Archaeology and Heritage Studies, at the University of Worcester, awarded in 2009. Further study followed and in 2013 she graduated from Oxford University with an MSc in Applied Landscape Archaeology. Hazel says she has no current plans for more study...but you never know! She keeps her trowel busy these days with active membership of South Worcestershire Archaeology Group and also finds time to volunteer in the Finds Department at Worcester Archives and Archaeology Service.

Tom Castle - Tenor soloist

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Tom is currently a professional singer, teacher and Lay Vicar in Chichester Cathedral choir. His musical education began in the choir of St Peter's Collegiate church, Wolverhampton; first as a chorister, choral scholar and then organ scholar. In 2011, after a year as a Choral Scholar at Exeter Cathedral, he went to study music at Bristol University and became a Choral Scholar at Bristol Cathedral. Even before he finished his music degree he became a professional Lay Clerk at Bristol.

Whilst at Bristol, Tom played Lysander in Britten's opera 'a Midsummer Night's Dream' and Mr Angel in Mozart's opera 'the Impresario' and in 2013 he was accepted onto the highly competitive 'genesis sixteen' course led by Harry Christophers, and graduated with a prize from university. He was also the harpsichordist for the University of Bristol Baroque Ensemble and Director of Music of the Bristol University Madrigal Ensemble.

Tom has been fortunate enough to sing with both the Sixteen and the Tallis scholars, and is a regular member of the Erebus Ensemble, an internationally acclaimed early music choir.

Recent solo engagements have included Evangelist for St John Passion at Portsmouth Cathedral and playing 'the Sailor' in Purcell's Dido and Aeneas with the English Concert. He was also recently the tenor soloist for the world premiere recording of a Stanford mass, recorded on EM records with the choir of Exeter College, Oxford, to critical acclaim.

Edward Elgar Imperial March

Sir Edward Elgar, born in rural Worcestershire in 1857, took a long time to achieve the huge reputation he eventually acquired. In 1897, on the verge of becoming a national celebrity, he was asked by his publishers, Novello, to provide an 'Imperial March' for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

It was first played at a Crystal Palace concert on 19th April and was repeated at a Royal Garden Party on the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation (June 28th) It evokes an atmosphere that is not simply martial or jingoistic but something much more subtle.

Benjamin Britten Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings Opus 31

Solo Horn: Hazel Whitefoot

Solo Tenor: Tom Castle

The famous horn player Dennis Brain asked Britten to write for him, and the outcome is a song cycle written in 1943 for tenor accompanied by a solo horn and a string orchestra. Britten had just returned to England and had such a severe bout of measles that he had to be hospitalised for several weeks. There, while also working on his libretto for Peter Grimes, he composed most of the Serenade. It is a setting of six poems by British poets on the subject of night, in both its calm and its sinister aspects. It was also a collaboration with the tenor Peter Pears, Britten's lifetime companion, and like much of Britten's music, suited his voice perfectly. Sadly, Dennis Brain was killed in a car crash at the age of 36.

The prologue and epilogue which frame the songs are both performed by the horn alone, and in these movements Britten instructs the player to use only the horn's natural harmonics; this lends these short movements a distinctive character, as some harmonics sound sharp or flat to an audience accustomed to 'normal' tonality. The epilogue is to sound from afar, and so the final song does not include a part for the horn to allow the player to move off-stage.



Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears



Dennis Brain

The words of the poems are:

1. Prologue (solo horn)

2. Pastoral Charles Cotton (1630-1687)

The day's grown old; the fainting sun
Has but a little way to run,
And yet his steeds, with all his skill,
Scarce lug the chariot down the hill.
The shadows now so long do grow,
That brambles like tall cedars show:
Mole hills seem mountains, and the ant
Appears a monstrous elephant.

A very little, little flock
Shades thrice the ground that it would
stock;

Whilst the small stripling following them
Appears a mighty Polypheme.

And now on benches all are sat,
In the cool air to sit and chat,
Till Phoebus, dipping in the west,
Shall lead the world the way to rest.

3. Nocturne Alfred, Lord Tennyson
(1809-1892)

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
flying,
Bugle blow; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens
replying:

Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, answer,
dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying,
dying, dying

14. Elegy William Blake (1757-1827)

O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm,
That flies in the night
In the howling storm,
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy:
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

5. Dirge Lyke Wake Dirge,
Anonymous (15th century)

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every nighte and alle,
Fire and fleet and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule.
When thou from hence away art past,
Every nighte and alle,
To Whinny muir thou com'st at last;
And Christe receive thy saule.
If ever thou gavest hosen and shoon,
Every nighte and alle,
Sit thee down and put them on;
And Christe receive thy saule.
If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st
nane
Every nighte and alle,
The whinnes sall prick thee to the bare
bane;
And Christe receive thy saule.

Every nighte and alle,
 To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last;
 And Christe receive thy saule.
 From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st
 pass,
 Every nighte and alle,
 To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;
 And Christe receive thy saule.
 If ever thou gavest meat or drink,
 Every nighte and alle,
 The fire sall never make thee shrink;
 And Christe receive thy saule.
 If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,
 Every nighte and alle,
 The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;
 And Christe receive thy saule.
 This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
 Every nighte and alle,
 Fire and fleet and candle lighte,
 And Christe receive thy saule.

6. Hymn Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,
 Seated in thy silver chair,
 State in wonted manner keep:
 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright.
 Earth, let not thy envious shade
 Dare itself to interpose;
 Cynthia's shining orb was made
 Heav'n to clear when day did close:
 Bless us then with wishèd sight,
 Goddess excellently bright.
 Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
 And thy crystal shining quiver:
 Give unto the flying hart
 Space to breathe, how short so-ever:
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright.

7. Sonnet John Keats (1795-1821)

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
 Shutting, with careful fingers and
 benign,
 Our gloom pleas'd eyes, embower'd
 from the light,
 Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
 O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee,
 close,
 In midst of this thine hymn my willing
 eyes.
 Or wait the "Amen" ere thy poppy
 throws
 Around my bed its lulling charities.
 Then save me, or the passèd day will
 shine
 Upon my pillow, breeding many woes,
 Save me from curious conscience, that
 still lords
 Its strength for darkness, burrowing
 like a mole;
 Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,
 And seal the hushèd casket of my Soul.

8. Epilogue (solo horn)

Ralph Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending

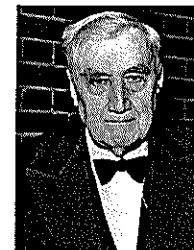
Violin soloist: Ros Rayner

The Lark Ascending is a poem by George Meredith about the song of the skylark. It inspired Vaughan Williams to write this piece, which is now better known than the poem. It was originally composed in 1914 for violin and piano, but in 1920 the composer re-scored it for solo violin and orchestra and termed it a *pastoral romance*.

*The poem includes the following lines:
 He rises and begins to round,
 He drops the silver chain of sound,
 Of many links without a break,
 In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.
 For singing till his heaven fills,
 'Tis love of earth that he instils,
 And ever winging up and up,
 Our valley is his golden cup
 And he the wine which overflows
 to lift us with him as he goes.
 Till lost on his aerial rings
 In light, and then the fancy sings.*

Vaughan Williams dedicated The Lark Ascending to Marie Hall, who premiered both versions. The first orchestral performance, on 14 June 1921, was with the British Symphony Orchestra under conductor Adrian Boult. The critic from The Times wrote, "It showed serene disregard of the fashions of today or yesterday. It dreamed itself along." The freedom of the lark is partly expressed through pentatonic scales (freeing the piece from a tonal centre) and partly from the free rhythms of the cadenzas.

In a 2011 poll of listeners to choose the nation's Desert Island Discs, the work was chosen as Britain's all-time favourite.



Ralph Vaughan Williams

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry Symphony No. 3 'The English'

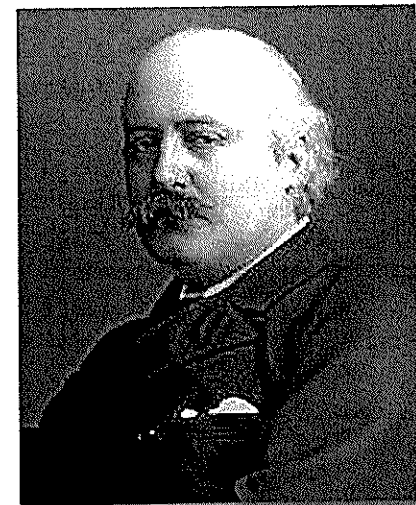
1. Allegro energico
2. Andante sostenuto
3. Allegro molto scherzoso
4. Moderato

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry was born on the 27th February 1848 in Bournemouth, the son of a wealthy amateur artist. He was educated at Eton and Exeter College, Oxford. Coming from a wealthy background and marrying a rich wife he never needed to earn his living. None the less, he joined the staff of the Royal College of Music in 1884 and was appointed its director in 1894, a post he held until his death. He had great personal charm and was a highly successful teacher of composition. Among his pupils were Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, George Butterworth and Herbert Howells. Holst said of him "At last I met a man who did not terrify me. He gave us a vision rather than a lecture". In 1900 he succeeded John Stainer as professor of music at Oxford University, a post he held, concurrently with the directorship of the Royal College, until 1908 when he retired on the advice of his doctor. He died on the 7th October 1918 and was buried in St Paul's Cathedral.

Parry was particularly influenced by Johannes Brahms, for whom he wrote a choral and orchestral elegy in 1897. He adopted a powerful tonal style, and was vitally important in establishing an English choral and orchestral tradition that greatly influenced later composers such as Elgar and Vaughan Williams. He was a major force in establishing art music at the centre of English cultural life. He was widely regarded as the greatest English composer of his age. Edward Elgar said of him "he is our leader, no cloud of formality can dim the healthy sympathy and broad influence he exerts upon us" and Ralph Vaughan Williams declared "Amidst all the outpourings of modern English music the work of Parry remains supreme". However, after the end of the first world war his work fell from favour in a general reaction against the bombastic Edwardian era, and now his reputation rests principally on his famous setting of Jerusalem.

The third symphony was completed in 1897, and was first performed at the Philharmonic society concert on the 23rd May, conducted by the composer. It was an immediate success, and, until Elgar's first symphony was premièred in 1908, it remained the most performed work of any English composer. The subtitle "The English" refers to the melodic and rhythmic character of the themes. Parry makes no direct reference to English folk music. Structurally, the work follows the models of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, though its scale and orchestration place it firmly in the late romantic era. The first movement is in sonata form, though without the repeat of the exposition. It has an energetic dance like character. The andante is a ternary form movement in the relative minor key. In contrast to the first movement it is introspective and nostalgic in character. The third movement is a scherzo and trio, full of drive and energy. The last movement is a set of fifteen variations on an eight bar theme. In the short coda Parry alludes to the thematic material of the first movement, bringing the work to a cyclic close.

Notes by courtesy of the Portobello Orchestra



Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Violin 1

Ros Rayner
Jonathan Harper
Anne Forster
Ty Rowley
Jo Jordan
Susan Bellingham
Sarah Wynne
Caroline Meads
Sharleen Jones

Violin 2

Claire Shaw
Hilary Hurd
Ken Hawkins
Margaret Myatt
Michael Clement
Philip Ward
Adria Dongo-Munoz
Amy Price
Zoe Morris
Jenny Bailey
Kate Hobkirk

Viola

David Cope
Alain Anderton
Liz Fleetham
Rory Freckleton
Sharon Bayley-Kitts

Cello

Sarah Tulley
Jean Waller
Sheila Moore
Margaret Bell
Sarah Carter
Ian Sumner
Tim Forster

Double Bass

John Davies
Mark Goodhew

Flute

Kathryn Russon
Diana Manasseh

Oboe

Rachel Orotayo
Jane Gledhill

Clarinet

Di Cotterell
Lynn Curtis

Bassoon

Jill Sparke
Jan Riley

Horn

Sara Shepherd
Jill Brittle
Percy Cotterell
Robin Hopper

Trumpet

Chris Cumming
Daniel Byant

Trombone

Laurence Hopper
Mark Wilkes
Alexander Robottom

Tuba

Joe Barnett

Timpani and percussion

Ian Richards
Phil James

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is affiliated to

Making Music

(formerly the National Federation of Music Societies)

which represents and supports amateur vocal, instrumental and promoting services throughout the United Kingdom.