

## A Sea Symphony

Vaughan Williams

Composed in 1912, Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony proclaimed that a new style was moving through the minds of composers in England around that time: this movement was begun by Parry, Stanford and Elgar. The first movement of the Symphony bears the title 'A Song for all seas, all ships'. It opens with a fanfare figure, in which major and minor triads are set in sharp juxtaposition, and say, as clearly as anything that is not words or pictures can say, "Behold the sea itself". The slow movement 'On the Beach at Night alone' is a meditation for baritone solo and chorus. The Scherzo 'The Waves', is constructed in the customary binary form with trio and repeat of first section: the melody for the trio being a fine broad melody set to the words "Where the great vessel sailing".

The last movement has for its heading 'The Explorers' and the words are more discursive and the sequence of ideas determine the sections of the movement; the main idea being what is life and what is its purpose.

M. FOSTER

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WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

# CIVIC HALL

General Manager: ROBERT J. S. PARSONS

## Wolverhampton Civic Choir

(Conductor: MARK FOSTER)

and

## Wombourne & District Choral Society

(Conductor: Dennis Powell)

with

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Conductor: Peter Barlow)

Angela Beale . . . . . Soprano  
Allen Fair . . . . . Tenor  
William Timmins . . . . . Organ

Conductors: MARK FOSTER & PETER BARLOW

SUNDAY, 15th JUNE, 1975

8.00 p.m.

*Recording of any music in this hall is strictly forbidden*

Programme 5p



COMBINED  
WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC CHOIR  
(Conductor: MARK FOSTER)

and

WOMBOURNE & DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY  
(Conductor: Dennis Powell)

Present

Overture: Ruslan and Ludmilla	<i>Glinka</i>
Pelléas et Mélisande	<i>Fauré</i>
Billy the Kid	<i>Aaron Copland</i>
Sea Symphony	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>

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Conductors	Mark Foster
	Peter Barlow
Organist	William Timmins
Soprano	Angela Beale
Tenor	Allen Fair

with

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra  
(Conductor: Peter Barlow)

**Overture : Ruslan and Ludmilla** *M. I. Glinka (1804-57)*

Glinka's opera 'Ruslan and Ludmilla' is his second major work for the stage and was composed in 1842. The composer had received much praise after his first opera 'A Life for the Tsar' but the response to this work was cool. Today we see the work as a fine musical achievement although we recognise that it is difficult to stage. The Overture, which is fast throughout, has three main contrasting ideas with a final *accelerando*.

**Pelléas et Mélisande** *G. Fauré (1845-1924)*

*Prelude*  
*La Fileuse*  
*Molto adagio*  
*Sicilienne*

The French composer Fauré was invited to compose the incidental music for the London premier of Maeterlinck's play 'Pelléas et Mélisande' in 1898. Although one of his pupils was largely responsible for the orchestration of the music we see typically delicate scoring enhancing the many beautiful tunes. The third movement was associated with the death of Mélisande while the Sicilienne, which is often played on its own, is a graceful end to the suite.

**Billy the Kid Suite** *Aaron Copland (1900- )*

The ballet 'Billy the Kid' was composed in 1938 and is based on incidents in the life of the famous outlaw and Pat Garret, the sheriff who finally caught up with him. Copland chose some of the more colourful music when arranging a suite of the same name. After establishing the atmosphere of the Open Prairie the music moves to a frontier town and includes some interesting five-beat rhythms. The oboe introduces the muted strings in central section describing the Prairie at Night and this is brought to a noisy end by a percussive gunfight. Billy, now safely in the hands of the sheriff, witnesses a celebration of his capture before the music of the Open Prairie returns, suggesting the continuity of life.

P. A. BARLOW