

The Orchestra

The Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra, formed in 1973, is a fully independent amateur orchestra. It rehearses each week and gives, on average, six concerts a year in Wolverhampton and the Midlands.

The orchestra's symphonic repertoire covers a wide range of Western Music from the eighteenth century to the present day. Concertos are regularly performed with soloists of national and even international repute, as well as with exceptionally talented local students. Occasional performances are also given with local choral societies.

Management and Finance

The orchestra is managed by a committee which consists of the Musical Director, Assistant Conductor, Leader and six other officers, each of whom is elected by members of the orchestra for a three-year term.

It is financed mainly by concert receipts and an annual subscription paid by the members. The orchestra is also affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies, through which it receives financial support from the Arts Council of Great Britain.

Applications for Membership

The normal minimum requirement for membership of the orchestra is a playing standard equivalent to Associated Poard Grade VII.

New applicants are auditioned by participating in normal rehearsals during which their orchestra playing abilities are assessed by the Musical Director and appropriate section leader.

Applications to join the orchestra may be made to the Secretary.

Conditions of Membership

Membership of the orchestra is subject to the following conditions:

- i Payment of an annual subscription. All members are eligible to vote at Annual General Meetings and to stand for election as officers of the orchestra's committee.
- ii Members are expected to contribute fully to the musical quality of the orchestra's concerts by maintaining regular practice and attendance at rehearsals.
- iii Members are expected to support and assist where possible, the promotion of the orchestra's concerts.

Contacts

Hon. Secretary	Dr R. Anderson, 11, Redhouse Road, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton	Tel: W'ton 752755
Musical Director	Mark Finch, 33, Grosvenor Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17.	Tel: B'ham 427 3294



CONDUCTED BY

MARK FINCH

WITH

MARK BEBBINGTON

piano

KYM COOPER

soprano

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Walsall Mencap



4.5.85

44

Kym Cooper - Soprano

Kym Cooper is currently studying in the Department of Vocal Studies at Birmingham School of Music. Recently she was awarded the prestigious Canoldir prize at the College.

Mark Bebbington - Piano

Mark Bebbington was born in 1962 and started on his prizewinning career by becoming a finalist in the BFC Major Minor Piano competition in 1975. In 1978 he won the BRMB Radio Music Scholarship.

After appearing on several occasions on BEC Radio, and as soloist with the Midland Youth Orchestra, Mark Bebbington commenced his studies with Kendall Taylor at the Royal College of Music in 1981. Whilst at the RCM, Mr Bebbington was awarded the Silver Medal in the Chappell Medal Competition, and was awarded the Trophy for Outstanding Piano Performance at the National Festival of Music for Youth in 1983.

Last summer Mr Bebbington was awarded a Vlado Perlemuter Scholarship by the Franco-British Society for study in France with Aldo Ciccolini. In January of this year he was awarded a Leverhulme Scholarship.

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

	<u>Leader</u>	Les Bowron
<u>1st Violins</u>	<u>Violas</u>	<u>Flutes</u>
Jim Hyslop	Cyril Love	Diana Manasseh
Philippa Mitchell	Stephen McNamara	Douglas Servant
Christine Wilkinson	Phil Turley	Jane Coxon
Colin Elton	Hilary Dewar	David Werry
Louise MacCarthy	Paul Westwood	
Jules Riley	Janet Thomas	<u>Oboes</u>
Beth Riley	Dilys Lane	Ann Whittaker
Richard Lane	Roy Lehrle	Ann Stubbley
Jim Gosling		Richard Anderson (Cor A)
Barbara Clements	<u>Cellos</u>	
Gil Henderson	Sheila Freeman	<u>Clarinets</u>
Della Lawrence	Richard Painter	Di Cotterell
Bill Hart	Sheila Moore	Monica Walker
Nancy Attfield	Glyn Davies	Julia Hones (BK1)
	Peter Crawshaw	
<u>2nd Violins</u>	Mark Webb	<u>Bassoons</u>
Kati Beke	Helen White	Michael Servant
Rita Lakeland	Darren Turner	Maggi Rowland
Ken Hawkins		
Christine Butler	<u>Double Basses</u>	<u>Horns</u>
Philip Ward	Colin Birch	Percy Cotterell
Violetta Burnell	Annette Simpson	David Dewar
Edward Burton	Mike Taylor	Julia Burton
Harry Green	Robert Bunting	John Meades
Sarah Wills	Thelma Green	
	Andrew Woods	<u>Trumpets</u>
<u>Percussion</u>		Mike Garbutt
Ann Douglas	<u>Harp</u>	David Knock
Gregory Evans	Margaret Knight	Jeremy Cross

The next concert by Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra will be on Saturday, 13th July, 1985, in the Great Hall of the Compton Park site of Wolverhampton Polytechnic. The concert will start at 7.30pm and will include Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde.

Overture, "Don Giovanni"

W. A. Mozart
(1756 - 1791)

44

The opera, Don Giovanni, with libretto by Da Ponte, was first performed in Prague in 1787. Mozart conducted the performance having completed the overture, it is said, only hours before. The work received much acclaim in a city that fully appreciated Mozart's genius.

The overture, as was usual, is in sonata form, preceded by a slow introduction, whose opening chords foreshadow the "statue music" in the last scene of the ensuing opera. Here the statue of the murdered commandant reappears to claim the unrepentant Don in fulfillment of the opera's main title, "Il Dissoluto Punito" (Rake Punished). An interesting feature of the main allegro is the 'dummy' start to the recapitulation that interrupts the repetitive developmental sequences of the second main theme.

M.A.F.

Piano Concerto no. 4 in G

L. van Beethoven
(1770 - 1827)

Allegro moderato
Andante con moto
Rondo - vivace

The first performance of this concerto took place in March, 1807, with the composer as soloist at one of two subscription concerts given at the palace of Prince Lobkowitz in which the 4th symphony and Coriolanus overture were also premiered. The few years leading up to this event were the most prolific of Beethoven's composing life and he was often working on as many as six works at the same time. Yet his resourcefulness is such that most listeners do not notice that the exquisitely gentle and sensitive main theme is founded on the same rhythm as the fierce opening of his 5th Symphony, a work written during these same few years.

The obvious stroke of genius by which the pianoforte opens the concerto and gives the orchestra occasion to enter in a foreign key is not more wonderful than the art with which the sequel to this retains and enhances the processional character of the classical tutti. The wonderful modulating second theme quietly takes its place in the procession starting on the supertonic and yet it covers a wide range of keys, only to confirm the home tonic the more strongly. After this notice the complete freedom with which the soloist's exposition expands in brilliant and ruminating passages on the material of the previous tutti. Every allusion to it increases by reflection the cogency of the original orchestral statement. The development is the most complicated section in all Beethoven's concertos in which the themes are transformed almost beyond recognition amongst a considerable amount of free episodic material. The recapitulation is fairly regular although the piano's interruption between the 1st and 2nd subjects which now occurs in E^b rather than B^b presents a quite new idea. The essentially lyrical quality of the whole movement is emphasised by the restrained scoring without trumpets and drums.

In the slow movement, in which Beethoven dispenses with all his wind instruments, the stark ferocity of the strings in unison is quelled almost imperceptibly by 'serene meditation' from the soloist. At the subdued end of the movement, which has been likened to Orpheus taming the Furies with the beauty of his music, we hear a heart-rending cry from the piano.

Following on without a break the finale undermines the minor of the preceding movement with a chord of C major. The odd phrasing, chord scheme and cadence of this first theme are all quirks which are stressed in the course of the movement. Trumpets and drums are added for the first time. Although Beethoven calls it a rondo the key scheme and sectional proportions of the movement are more akin to sonata form with the two main themes being recapitulated in the reverse order. The second theme, a beautiful cantabile for the soloist with a wide-ranging left hand all over a soft tonic pedal from the cello, alludes to the serene mood of the first movement. At the beginning of the long coda a distant shift to F[#] by the pianist brings back this second theme only for the full orchestra to turn it quietly back to C and thence to G. It is now taken up in a thunderous tutti leading to the cadenza, which Beethoven insists should be short, after which a further variant of the main theme repeat in canon is heard before the movement breaks into its final presto.

M.A.F.

Symphony no. 4 in G

G. Mahler
(1860 - 1911)

- i Bedächtig. Nicht eilen
- ii In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast.
- iii Ruhvoll.
- iv Sehr behaglich.

We may view Mahler's 4th symphony as the conclusion of a long period of musical gestation since it is the last of a group of four symphonies in which the composer drew inspiration from the volume of traditional folk poetry known as "Das Knaben Wunderhorn" (The Boy's Magical Horn). One of his favourite poems from the collection, which is called "Das himmlische Leben" (Life in Heaven), was destined to become the text for the finale of the present work. Indeed, Mahler had set this poem in 1892, some 7 years before he started work on his 4th symphony, intending it to form part of a cycle based on the Wunderhorn entitled "Humoresken". He withdrew it, however, deciding instead to use it for the finale of his 3rd symphony. In turn, that symphony was to become so vast a project that the song, once again, had to be discarded. Thus, it was to become the inspiration for the present symphony and as such it can give us clues as to the character of the work.

The song gives a childlike picture of life in heaven, innocent, naive, charming; Mahler's music reflects the text perfectly. As the first three movements form a gradual approach to this naive, charming and yet profound picture, there can be no room in them for the more monumental aspects of Mahler's art such as are heard in the 2nd and 3rd symphonies. Instead, we have here something which gives, in spite of a few great climaxes, an impression of lightness, airiness and tender delicacy. Mahler said that the work's basic tone was the "undifferentiated blue of the sky". It was suggested by Paul Bekker, an early biographer of the composer, that the work is a kind of journey upwards to the Elysian Fields and that Death is here, particularly in the second movement, a friendly figure who leads us on from the present to the hereafter with his music. The work was completed in 1900 and first performed in 1901 with Mahler conducting.

In the first movement we hear music that is classical in structure with its strong thematic individuality and lucid, chamber-like scoring. It is so elegant in its formal precision, so sure in its melodic persuasiveness, and owes more to the Viennese school than it does to Schumann or Liszt, let alone Brahms. The unmistakable 2nd subject on the cellos clarifies the sonata form of the movement. Yet the tone of innocence, which Mahler is to maintain throughout most of the work, is emphasised at the outset by the use of jingle bells.

Mahler described his second movement as "so mystical, confused and uncanny that it will make your hair stand on end". This effect is partly created by the prominent use made of solo violin scordatura (in this case, the instrument is tuned up a whole tone) and partly by the obscure intervalllic content of the violin's melody with its use of augmented broken chords and Neapolitan notes of the scale. According to his daughter, Mahler was influenced by Böcklin's self portrait, which shows the figure of death fiddling in the background. Thus, the movement is a kind of Totentanz in which obscure minor key episodes alternate with ones in the major. Formally, the movement is a scherzo with two trios (in the Beethoven tradition) although it is far removed from anything pertaining to a joke, save, perhaps, for the trio sections which, when they arrive, bring in a placidly gurgling ladder in F major, most of it very soft.

Mahler's Viennese lineage is once again confirmed in the third movement which seems almost to start as a reincarnation of Schubert's song, "Who is Sylvia?". He was never to surpass the concentrated poetry of this broadly conceived and subtly executed movement which ranks as one of the most searching studies in sustained quietude ever composed. The framework is just as original being part rondo and part variations, in which the main theme with its ostinato undergoes spacious transformation; including a walk, a courtly dance, and eventually a surprising Allegro vivace, all in the context of a continually unfolding texture of sublime calm. The heaven-opening outburst which follows, announcing on the horns one of the themes of the finale to come, in E major, is finally quelled by the persistent use of the appoggiatura until the movement reaches out into the rarefied atmosphere of a hushed imperfect cadence.

We are brought back to earth by the clarinet; albeit to a child's fantasy of paradise. In a gay, innocent G major the singer, who is expressly instructed to adopt a cheerful and childlike tone of voice free from every breath of caricature, impersonates not a child, but the childlike innocence that is in all of us. We are reminded that "Unless ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven". The form is basically strophic with touches of rondo form. We are made to recall, through the use of jingle bells, the sonic innocence of the symphonies opening bars. Through innocence we attain serenity and for the last section the music arrives at the serene E major, as the poem reaches heavenly music with which none on earth can compare.

M.A.F.

Kym Cooper appears by kind permission of the Head of Birmingham School of Music.



The National Federation of Music Societies

It was in 1935 that a group of music society members broached the idea of forming a federation of interested parties to exchange ideas and discuss problems with the aim of helping all to improve the concerts offered to the music-loving public. The NFMS duly came into being, and this Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra concert celebrates the Jubilee.

Nearly 1,200 amateur music societies are affiliated to the federation, giving between them 3,500 concerts per annum to audiences in excess of 1,000,000 and spending over £3,000,000 on engagements for professional musicians.

The geographical area of the Midland Region of the NFMS (one of the largest regions with over 80 member societies) coincides with that of West Midlands Arts and relationships between the two groups have always been very cordial despite the different approaches to the funding of musical activities. Both organisations hope that you have enjoyed this concert and will give your support to the Orchestra in its future efforts.

Walsall MENCAP

The object of the Society is to increase public awareness and understanding of the problems of the mentally handicapped, so as to secure provision for them commensurate with their needs.

Membership is open to parents and relatives of mentally handicapped children and adults, and also to anyone in sympathy with the society's aims.