

**BRIERLEY HILL CIVIC HALL** 54

**Saturday 6<sup>TH</sup> June, 7.30pm**

**Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra**

*Conductor MARK FINCH*

**Bolero**

**Ravel**

**Guitar Concerto**

**Rodrigo**

**Symphony No 1**

**Mahler**

**BRIAN PERKINS** guitar

**BRIAN PERKINS**

Brian Perkins was born in Wolverhampton and has lived in the town all his life, attending Highfields School. He took up the guitar as a boy, sharing his brother's enthusiasm for playing folk and pop music, from the age of 16 this interest developed on more serious, classical lines, leading to study at the Birmingham School of Music, under Brian Whitehouse, Professor of Guitar, and to master classes with Carlos Bonnel.

Brian has featured on radio, television and gramophone record, and has won first prizes at a number of competitions and festivals. He is recognised as one of the country's leading young recitalists on guitar and lute, and has made local appearances in Wolverhampton Polytechnic's Arena Arts programmes.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Conductor      Mark Finch  
Leader            Martin Blythe

1st Violin  
Colin Elton  
Cyril Love  
Richard Lane  
Susan Hopkins  
Linda Kirk  
Jenny Smith

Cello  
Richard Painter  
Sheila Moore  
Glyn Davies  
Helen White  
Margaret Bell  
Helen White  
Helen Reekes  
Mark Webb  
Peter Gosling

Flute  
Diana Manasseh  
Douglas Servant

Oboes  
Richard Anderson  
Anne Stubbley  
Tony Evans  
Jennifer Jackson

2nd Violin  
Philippa Mitchell  
Katalin Beke  
Rita Lakeland  
Jennie Lewis  
Violetta Burnell  
Philip Ward  
Chris Page  
Gil Alderton  
Chris Harrold

Double Bass  
John Mason  
Colin Birch  
Andrew Jones

Clarinet  
Diana Cotterell  
Lynn Sergeant

Bassoon  
Maggi Rowland  
Stephen MacKellar

Viola  
Stephen McNamara  
Paul Westwood  
Sheila Freeman  
Helen Postings  
Dilys Lane  
Louise McCarthy  
Jason Thornton  
Janet Thomas  
Phil Turley

Trumpet  
David Knock  
Mike Garbutt  
Mark Williams  
Richard Myland  
  
Trombone  
Les Whitehouse  
Philip Harrison  
Don Howard

Horn  
Percy Cotterell  
Julia Burton  
Graham Burhup  
Richard Green  
Trevor Stacey  
Andrew Evans  
Bob Thomas

Percussion  
Hugh Thomas  
Ian Richards

Harp  
Christina Marsh

Bolero

M. Ravel  
(1875-1937)

The Bolero is a Spanish three in a bar dance, performed by one or more couples. Not of folk origin, but invented in 1780 by the dancer Sebastian Cerezo, it made one of its first appearances in artistic music in a work for piano by Chopin. In 1928 Ravel composed the present work. It quickly won popularity by the hypnotic effect of its incessantly repeated slow, rhythmic melody, and its quarter of an hour crescendo, continuing from first to last bar; this bolero was, on its first appearance, danced by Ida Rubinstein, to whom it is dedicated. With its brilliant orchestration and imaginative use of melody in layered parallelism, it reminds us of the well worn observation that the best Spanish music has in fact been written by Frenchmen.

Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra

Josquin Rodrigo  
(b. 1902)

Allegro con spirito  
Adagio  
Allegro gentile

This work appeared in 1939, when it was first performed at Madrid and acclaimed with tremendous enthusiasm. Rodrigo has described his ideal guitar as "a strange, fantastic, multi-form instrument with the wings of a harp, the tail of a piano and a soul of its own". After the guitar's characteristic self identification at the very start, it is set in orchestral contexts where it can most effectively beguile or command. Its voice can be heard through transparent textures, as an accompaniment to solo commentaries by other instruments (as in the lyrical slow movement), as a vehicle for plain or florid melody, or again as the leader of the dance in the concluding movement.

As in all Rodrigo's music, the influence of Spanish folk music, especially that of Valencia, the composer's birthplace, is apparent, not in any pejorative sense but, nevertheless, unmistakable in the buoyant rhythms, the tunefulness, the colourfulness and the demands - virtuosic yet idiomatic - made upon the soloist. "It should sound like the hidden breeze that stirs the treetops" claimed the composer, "as strong as a butterfly, as dainty as a veronica".

Such an element is to be heard in the almost purely rhythmical nature of the first idea, with the frequent 3/4 cross rhythms against the pervading time of 6/8, although this hemiola device is common to a great deal of western folk dance music.

The second movement banishes the vigorous dance with a quasi-improvisatory and highly ornamented song. With no place for the cadenza earlier, the soloist has an elaborate one here.

The finale is more reminiscent of the stately court dances of the Spanish classical period, whose origins are referred to in the formal title of the work, "Concierto de Aranjuez", Aranjuez being

the name of a royal and ancient palace associated with Charles I and Phillip II, and situated between Madrid and Toledo. Throughout the movement a constant but irregular alternation of 3/4 and 2/4 times persists.

#### INTERVAL

#### Symphony No 1 in D

Gustav Mahler  
(1860 - 1911)

- I Slowly, dragging - Allegro Moderato
- II Vigorously, but not too quickly
- III Solemnly and precisely without dragging
- IV Tempestuously - Allegro furioso

Mahler began work on his first symphony in 1884, but the work did not reach its final form until shortly before publication in 1899, ten years after its first performance in 1889. At the Budapest premiere it appeared as a "Symphonic Poem" in five movements, and received a very mixed reception because of its startling originality. In the ten years which followed the work was substantially revised, during a period when not only did Mahler reach the peak of his conducting career (he was appointed Director of the Vienna Opera in 1897), but he also composed his second and third symphonies.

The first movement's hushed introduction plunges us straight into Mahler's unmistakable sound world, as stylized bird-calls and distant military fanfares gradually emerge from a sustained A harmonic in the strings. The falling fourths which characterise the beginning of the symphony are basic to the whole work, and this motive initiates the principal theme at the Allegro. Here we find a reworking of one of the songs from his "Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen". The slow introduction returns, followed by a further development of the song tune and a free recapitulation.

The second movement is a Scherzo and Trio, where the Scherzo is full of the atmosphere of Austrian village music, and the Trio a sentimental Landler. Falling fourths appear again in the cellos and basses (Scherzo) and the horns in the middle of the Trio.

The slow movement is a minor-key canon on "Bruder Martin" (Frere Jacques) with accompanying falling fourths in the bass and in the exclamations from the solo oboe. This funereal canon is interrupted by a section of vulgar dance band music (marked "with parody") and, later, a warmly lyrical episode in a major key, based on material from "Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen".

In Mahler's programme the finale was represented as "from hell to heaven", the emotional "hell" of the first part, followed by a heartfelt lyrical theme. A reference to the beginning of the symphony precedes a stormy development leading to a climax embodying the original chain of falling fourths in a chorale-like theme. A compressed recapitulation follows, and this time the theme is even more overwhelming and leads into the sonorous coda, marked "Triumphal", where the horn section is directed to stand.