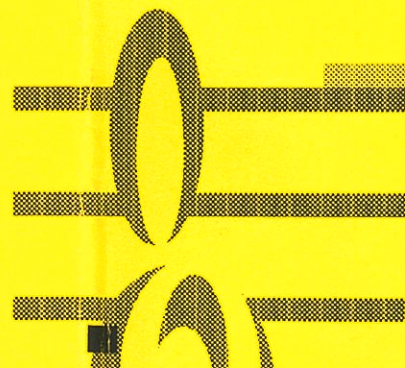


92.91

**Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra**



**PROGRAMME**



1317/96.

**WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**CONCERT  
AT CRANMER METHODIST CHURCH,  
WOLVERHAMPTON**

**SATURDAY, JULY 13TH, 1996**

**PROGRAMME**



**Fantasia on a Theme by  
Thomas Tallis ..... Vaughan Williams**

**Wind Serenade ..... Dvorák**

*Interval*

**Symphony No. 40 ..... Mozart**



**Conductor - Michael Darke**

**Leader - Ros Rayner**

*Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis for double string orchestra*

*Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)*

Ralph Vaughan Williams was something of a late bloomer in terms of his development as a composer. He began to produce his best work after new horizons and expressive possibilities were opened up to him while studying with Ravel in Paris when he was thirty-six. An important part of his musical development was his collection and study of both English folk-song and the music of the composers of Tudor England. Thomas Tallis was the earliest significant composer of that period. Vaughan Williams found an important point of contact between English folk song and the music of Tudor composers. The melodies and (in Tudor music) the harmonic progressions were constructed from church modes (ancient scales upon which Gregorian chant was based) rather than from the familiar major and minor scales. The church modes were eventually almost completely replaced by the major and minor scales of Western secular music of 1600-1900. Vaughan Williams was one of the first modern composers to realise that the use of modal melodies and harmonies could give rise to a very different expressive atmosphere than that of, for instance, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms who relied exclusively on the major and minor scales.

The *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* was first performed in 1910 at the Three Choirs Festival in Gloucester Cathedral, but was only published in 1921 after being revised. It is scored for double string orchestra and solo string quartet. The work is based on a psalm tune in the Phrygian mode, one of eight tunes composed by Tallis in 1567 for the Archbishop of Canterbury. Each tune was based on one of the eight ecclesiastical modes. Tallis's tune made a profound impression on Vaughan Williams and when he edited the

English Hymnal in 1906 he included it as the tune for the hymn "When rising from the bed of death". The character of Tallis's theme is one of English dignity, restraint and simplicity, and in the course of the Fantasia, Vaughan Williams elaborates on its innermost nature and musical devotion. The ecclesiastical flavour is maintained throughout and portrays the noble solemnity and reverence of a cathedral.

***Serenade in D minor Op. 44, for wind instruments, cello and double bass***

***Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)***

- I Moderato quasi marcia*
- II Minuetto (Tempo di minuetto)*
- III Andante con moto*
- IV Finale (Allegro molto)*

Antonín Dvořák was born in rural Bohemia, the son of an innkeeper and butcher. The folk songs of that area (now part of the Czech Republic) had a profound effect on him as his interest in music and his abilities to play the violin, piano and organ began to emerge. By the age of 16 it was obvious that he was not destined to take over the family business but rather to study at the Prague Organ School. It must have been hard for him, trying to survive on what he could earn playing the violin in cafés. His financial situation improved a little when he joined the orchestra of the National Theatre under the direction of Smetana. In 1873 he found a less demanding job as an organist, which gave him time to compose more (he also married one of his former pupils the same year). That year was also to mark the upturn of his fortunes and before another five years had passed he was being acclaimed throughout Europe.

The wind serenade was written in 1878. The structure and scoring of the piece remind one of music written for open-air entertainments in the Rococo period. The first movement, a march, brings to mind images of Baroque pomp. The second, a *minuet*, is a graceful Bohemian folk-dance known as a *sousedská*. The central *presto* section of this minuet is like a *furiant*, a fast and lively dance with characteristic cross-rhythms. These two were often danced following each other to provide variety. The slow third movement, marked *andante con moto*, gives a few moments of rest and relaxation before the lively *finale* in which the march from the first movement is heard again.

INTERVAL

***Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K 550***  
***Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)***

- I Molto allegro*
- II Andante*
- III Minuetto-Allegretto*
- IV Finale-Allegro assai*

Mozart wrote his first symphony at the age of eight and his last at thirty-two. To a great extent his early symphonies were written as entertainments and resemble *divertimenti* or serenades, and it is not until the final three (nos. 39, 40 & 41) that the real essence of Mozart's symphonic writing appears. Mozart wrote these last three great symphonies in the summer

months of 1788, whilst he was in Vienna. All three were completed within weeks of each other - quite a staggering achievement when you consider the high quality of the works! Mozart could handle musical organisation in an extraordinary way. He could transcribe long works he had heard only once and orchestrate one piece whilst planning another in his head, feats way beyond the capabilities of most normal people.

Mozart's original manuscript shows that the symphony was initially scored for flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns and strings. He made changes later, adding 2 clarinets which gave the piece darker and more romantic tones. The scoring is also unusual because no trumpets or timpani are used. Despite this Mozart achieves sharper and more dramatic effects than with his 39th or 41st symphonies. Most of the tension in the work results from the choice of key - G minor.

The first movement has extreme contrasts of dynamics and orchestral colour. The horns impart a sense of drama to the loud passages and the tension is maintained in the *piano* episodes by the quaver rhythms in the inside string parts. The *andante* has the same contrasting dynamics as the opening movement and, as a result, almost as much tension. The incorporation of subtle rhythmic hesitations only adds to this effect. The third movement, written in the form of a Minuet and Trio, shows off Mozart's ability to write creatively for wind instruments, especially in the Trio. The *finale* dashes through with much drive and vivacity - almost to the extent of being self-propelled! It brings the whole symphony to an energy-charged conclusion.

M.W.

## WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

*Leader* - Ros Rayner

### *First Violins*

Colin Bates  
Susan Bellingham  
Jessica Ford  
Colin Elton  
Jennifer Lewis

### *Second Violins*

Sara Birchall  
Barbara Bostock  
Michael Clement  
Ken Hawkins  
Jo Jordan  
Margaret Myatt  
Jenny Walton  
Philip Ward

### *Violas*

Alan Anderton  
Sharon Bayley  
David Cope  
Rory Freckleton  
Sheila Freeman  
Heather Ling  
Philip Turley

### *Violoncellos*

Margaret Bell  
Glyn Davies  
Tim Forster  
Louise Lawrie  
Sheila Moore  
Julie Robertson  
Sylvia Ulrich  
Maggie Wenham

### *Basses*

Jenny Morris  
Rebekah Heminsley

### *Flute*

Heather Lancaster

### *Oboes*

Richard Anderson  
Sally Griffiths

### *Clarinets*

Diana Cotterell  
Peter Bayliss

### *Bassoons*

Jill Sparke  
Doug Servant

### *Horns*

Percy Cotterell  
Sara Robertslaw  
Robin Hopper  
Caroline Hunt