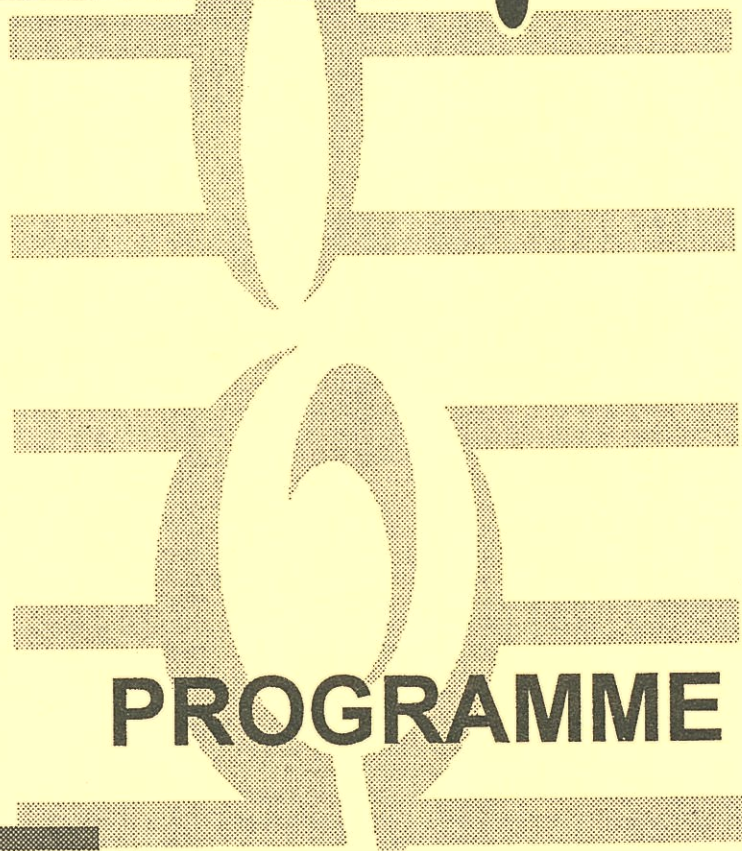
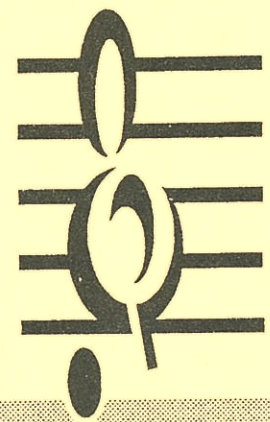
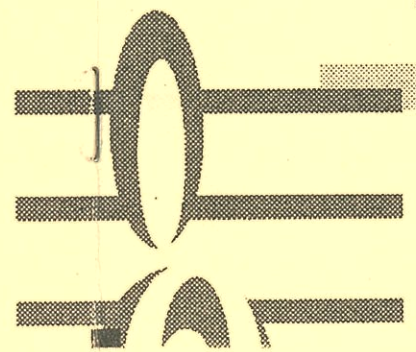


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96

**Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra**



**PROGRAMME**



7/2/98

q b.

**WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**CONCERT  
AT WOLVERHAMPTON UNIVERSITY  
BUSINESS SCHOOL**

**SATURDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 1998**

**PROGRAMME**

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<b>Roman Carnival Overture</b>	<b>Berlioz</b>
<b>Violin Concerto</b>	<b>Beethoven</b>

*INTERVAL*

<b>Symphony No. 3</b>	<b>Brahms</b>
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<b>Solo Violin</b>	<b>Mark Robinson</b>
<b>Conductor</b>	<b>Michael Darke</b>
<b>Leader</b>	<b>Ros Rayner</b>

## TONIGHT'S SOLOIST

Born in Hull, Mark Robinson studied at the RSA in Glasgow and the RCM in London. He joined the CBSO in 1980 and has toured the world with that orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle, playing as far afield as Japan and South America. Alongside this busy orchestral schedule, he is also active in chamber music, being a member of the Guidanti, Arcadian and Aethanium Ensembles.

This is Mark's eagerly-awaited fourth performance with the WSO. His last appearance was in 1990 with the Mendelssohn Concerto, having previously performed those of Bruch and Prokofiev.

Mark plays on a Nicolas Gagliano violin, made in Naples in 1721. This was purchased by the CBSO Endowment Fund following a generous anonymous donation.

### Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

The French composer Berlioz lived a life of tremendous emotional energy and died in Paris, worn out at the age of 66. He was an extraordinary man, in the sense that there was absolutely nothing ordinary about him - his 'Memoirs' make fascinating reading. He was captivated by the Italian goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini, with whom he certainly had much in common, and during 1834-8 composed an opera based on the life of this man. At its first performance in Paris in 1838, the overture was cheered but the rest of the opera was dismissed as a hopeless failure. Berlioz had faith in his work, however, and in 1844 salvaged a couple of sections which he worked into this overture. For its time it was a remarkable piece of orchestral scoring and is today regarded as a masterpiece.

The opening bars give us a hint of a wild Italian folk dance, called the tarantella, which comes later. There follows a slow section, *andante sostenuto*, in which one of the salvaged themes from the opera is presented by the cor anglais. Rushing scales in the wind bring us back to the tarantella, *allegro vivace* in 6/8 time, that goes on developing in exuberance through to the end.

John Marshall

### Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61 Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

- I *Allegro ma non troppo*
- II *Larghetto*
- III *Rondo. Allegro*

Beethoven's single Violin Concerto was composed in 1806, a particularly profitable and fertile time in his career. It was written for Franz Clement, a famous Viennese violinist of the day, who first presented it at a public concert in December of that year, without much success. The fault was more Beethoven's than either Clement's or the audience's, however. As usual, Beethoven was woefully late with the manuscript and poor Clement had pretty well to read it at sight. Seeing the demands that the piece makes on its soloist, it is much to Clement's credit that he contrived to make an impression at all.

The Concerto remains to this day one of the finest ever written for the instrument. It is also a most valuable document in the study of its composer's overall creative genius. We are accustomed to thinking of Beethoven as essentially a demonic nature; a wild, untamed individual, literally possessed by his own genius. We have to remember, however, that throughout his music there is another counter-balancing pull, a sense of order, elevated beauty and serenity. The Violin Concerto represents the supreme expression of this side to his character. Both in form and spirit, it is instilled with a classical sense of proportion, mingled with great expressiveness in its florid melodic lines. One of its key features is the preponderance of rising themes, a characteristic of Beethoven in his more expansive moods.

The concerto begins with a long orchestral *ritornello*, built on strictly classical lines, yet full of Beethoven's own creative personality. The opening bars present what sounds like four strokes on the drum. In fact a fifth is covered by the entry of the woodwind and completes a motif which plays an important part in the first movement. It can be said to be related to the famous 'Fate' motif in the Fifth Symphony, although this is a very different composition altogether.

After this opening *tutti* passage, the soloist enters on a rising figure, very difficult to play but supremely effective, with its octave grace notes. The two main subjects, which are subtly related, are developed on the largest scale. The soloist soars and swoops in phrases of great splendour and

eloquence, while the orchestral contribution, which is never mere accompaniment, is notable for a delicacy and sensitivity not always found in his symphonies. Although Beethoven himself did not leave one, it is the custom to insert a long cadenza before the coda. Several eminent violinists have written cadenzas and tonight we will hear one of the most famous, that of Kreisler.

The slow movement is a long and beautiful outpouring of lyric melody in which Beethoven, himself a pianist (although he had studied the violin in his youth) shows complete understanding of the violin's expressive powers. The orchestral strings are muted, the horns and woodwind make soft comments, and the overall effect is of the solo violin singing clear and radiant against a subdued background of soft shimmering colours.

The finale follows without a break. It is a lively rondo, bubbling with good humour and high spirits. Some have said that after the soaring beauty of the slow movement, the boisterous energies of the finale introduce a jarring note. Beethoven, however, knew better and, for the episodes, turned away from the brightness of the dominant key of A major to the serenity of G minor, thus preserving the elevated nature of this masterpiece.

#### INTERVAL

### Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

- I *Allegro con brio*
- II *Andante*
- III *Poco allegretto*
- IV *Allegro*

Brahms was born in Hamburg but eventually settled in Vienna where to some he seemed the awaited successor to Beethoven. His gruff idiosyncrasies were similarly tolerated by those who valued his genius. Brahms' First Symphony was 20 years in writing and was not performed until 1875, the unusual caution perhaps being a reflection of the uncomfortable haunting of his predecessor. The Third Symphony dates from 1883 and some ways it is the black sheep of his four symphonies. It

is certainly the one which strays farthest from the model of Beethoven. There is no heated argument, no victory of a major key over minor, no Romantic heroism; instead this is Brahms's most intimate symphonic work. It has warmth and emotional intensity but is expressed in a more lyrical and less luxuriant manner than the others. It is also the only one of the four to end quietly (in fact all four movements do so).

The first movement opens with motif based on the notes F, A-flat and F which supposedly represent the words "Frei aber froh" ("Free but happy") that were the unmarried Brahms's answer to the motto of his friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim, "Frei aber einsam" ("Free but lonely"). Whatever the meaning of the notes, the remarkable thing is that Brahms manages to generate virtually the whole movement out of them. The themes are attractive, there are moments of intense emotional energy and the development of ideas is most impressive.

The *andante* is full of quiet and subtle beauty. The opening is simple and pastoral in its manner but the mood becomes very hushed for the second subject. The repeated notes which are a feature of this theme are given much imaginative treatment around the orchestra. The coda builds into a marvellous cascade of melody before the clarinet brings us back to the peaceful atmosphere of the beginning of the movement.

The third movement is built around a gorgeous theme that was featured in the 1961 film "Goodbye Again". It is lyrical and delicately scored, anticipating the mood of some of Brahms's later piano works.

The sombre finale has a characteristically flexible main theme but there are several others, one of which is almost certainly derived from the second subject of the *andante*. There are intensely dramatic passages but the final mood is one of serenity as the strings give us quiet reminiscences of the impulsive opening to the first movement.

**Our next concert:**

Elgar: Cockaigne Overture

Albinoni: Oboe Concerto  
(Soloist: Richard Anderson)

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2

**Codsall High School**

**7.30 pm, Saturday 11th July 1998**

**WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

**1st Violin**

Ros Rayner  
Colin Bate  
Susan Bellingham  
Barbara Bostok  
Jessica Ford  
Sandy Hunt  
Jennie Lewis  
Louise Rhodes  
David Smith  
Sally Wilmot

**2nd Violin**

Jo Jordan  
Tom Anderson  
Michael Clement  
Ken Hawkins  
Louise Hunt  
Caroline Meads  
Margaret Myatt  
Philip Ward  
Jenny Walton

**Viola**

David Cope  
Alan Anderton  
Alison Brown  
Rory Freckleton  
Sheila Freeman  
Ruth Hammond  
Chris Nunn  
Miles Payne  
Phillip Turley

**Cello**

Louise Lawrie  
Fiona Baldwin  
Joanne Bell  
Margaret Bell  
Glyn Davies  
Sheila Moore  
Julie Robertson

**Double Bass**

Rhona Digger  
John Mason  
Ian Parry

**Flute**

Di Manasseh  
Heather Lancaster

**Oboe**

Richard Anderson  
Rachel Orotayo

**Cor Anglais**

Richard Anderson

**Clarinet**

Diana Cotterell  
Lynn Curtis

**Bassoon**

Jill Sparke  
Doug Servant

**Contrabassoon**

Martin Skirrow

**Horn**

Percy Cotterell  
Robin Hopper  
Eric Large  
Sara Robertshaw

**Trumpet**

Tony Bayliss  
Chris Cumming

**Trombone**

Laurence Hopper  
John Barnett

**Bass Trombone**

Don Howard

**Timpani**

Peter Morley