


**Making
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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
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109
PROGRAMME



**Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra**



109.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT
AT
KINGS SCHOOL
REGIS ROAD
TETTENHALL
WOLVERHAMPTON

SATURDAY 23rd MARCH 2002

PROGRAMME

**The Walk to the Paradise Garden.....Frederick Delius
Appalachian Spring.....Aaron Copland**

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 3 (Scottish).....Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Conductor – Rachel Hyde

Leader – Ros Rayner

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is a fully independent amateur orchestra formed in 1973 by a group of keen amateur players. The idea behind the formation of the orchestra was to satisfy a need for local players to prepare to as high a standard as possible interesting works for public performance, and this is still the primary aim of the orchestra today. Membership of the orchestra when at full strength is of the order of 50 players and is drawn from keen competent amateur musicians, students and teachers of music in Wolverhampton and the surrounding areas.

The orchestra meets on a regular weekly basis throughout the academic year and produces on average four public concerts a year. It has been invited on several occasions to perform major choral works with local choral societies, in 1999 performing Beethoven's Choral Symphony to commemorate its Silver Jubilee. The orchestra regularly engages as soloists professional musicians of national and international reputation, as well as local young players of outstanding promise.

The repertoire of the orchestra spans from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, although a symphony orchestra of this type will tend to concentrate on works from the nineteenth century. The orchestra has performed a large number of symphonies by Beethoven, Brahms, Dvorak, Mahler, Schubert, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky etc. Earlier works are represented by Albinoni, Bach, Boyce and Handel, whereas twentieth century composers whose works have been performed include Barber, Copland, Joubert, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Meirion Williams (a former musical director of the orchestra) and Rory Freckleton, a regular member of the viola section and the orchestra's deputy musical director.

The orchestra is managed by a committee consisting of the Musical Director, her Deputy and the leader plus members elected by the orchestra. It is financed through concert receipts and an annual subscription is paid by the members. It is also affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies.

Rachel Hyde was born in 1977 and began lessons on her first musical instrument at the age of 7. By the age of 14 she had discovered that she had limited patience when playing one instrument, and therefore was busy playing piano, cello, percussion and drum-kit, French-horn and trumpet. At 15 she was given her first opportunity to conduct, having already decided that this was where the real interest in performance lay whilst on an orchestral tour of Eire. Rachel rapidly began to acquire conducting experience, and is currently Musical Director and Principle Conductor of Sandwell Sinfonia, The Central England Ensemble and Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra, as well as having acted as MD for a variety of Musical Theatre companies, including Brierley Hill Amateur Operatic Society, Mayhem and Oldbury Rep. She has conducted works ranging from Baroque classics to romantic masterpieces such as Brahms Symphony No 1, Sibelius 2nd Symphony, Tchaikovsky Symphony No 4 and Scheherazade by Rimsky-Korsakov. She particularly enjoys working with soloists, having conducted concerto performances including the Beethoven and Bruch Violin Concertos, the Mendelssohn D minor Violin Concerto, Weber's first Clarinet Concerto, and the 2nd Horn Concert of Mozart. Rachel remains an active instrumentalist, playing for Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Chandos Symphony Orchestra, Clent Festival Chamber Orchestra and the Midland Youth Orchestra among others. Rachel was appointed conductor of WSO in July 2000, and looks forward to guiding the orchestra in its musical future.

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Frederick Delius (1862 - 1934)

The Walk to the Paradise Garden

The English composer Frederick Delius worked in his father's wool business until 1884, after which he went to Florida to grow oranges. He studied music with Thomas Ward in Florida until 1886, when he went to study at the Leipzig Conservatory. There he met Grieg, under whose guidance he devoted himself to music.

The Walk to the Paradise Garden is one of the orchestral interludes from Delius's opera *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, occurring as an intermezzo between the fifth and sixth scenes of the opera. The episode begins with a waltz-like subject for 'cellos and bassoons. This is the introduction to the main part, which is dominated by two deeply moving melodies, the first for horns and bassoons, the other for oboe, set against a counter subject in the basses. The piece was not originally in Delius's score, he wrote it when his opera was first being produced in England in 1910, three years after its appearance in Berlin, at the request of Thomas Beecham, who needed an interlude to allow time in which to make a change of scene.

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

Appalachian Spring

While in Hollywood working on the music for *North Star* Copland received a commission from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation to write a ballet for Martha Graham. The first sketches were made in June 1943 and the score completed in the following year in Cambridge Massachusetts, where he was teaching at Harvard University.

The ballet *Appalachian Spring* with its original scoring for 13 instruments, was first produced in the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress in Washington on 30th October 1944. Not until the day before the first performance was the title *Appalachian Spring*, taken from a poem by Hart Crane, given to the work.

The story, set in the early 19th century tells of the preparations for a wedding in a Pennsylvania farming community. Although the music reflects the folk-songs of the Appalachians, the only quotation is the Shaker song "Simple Gifts" on which the composer writes a sequence of variations.

The original score is in one continuous act, falling into linked sections.

1. The slow, quiet opening introduces the principal characters, the bride and bridegroom, the preacher and a neighbour.
2. *Allegro*. A lively dance recalls fiddle music, with typical Copland cross-rhythms. Against this, the composer introduces a four-note motto in longer notation derived from the introduction. This provides a melodic link with the following section.
3. *Moderato*. A slower dance for the bride and groom of affecting tender simplicity.
4. Fast. The preacher and his congregation join the couple in a barn-dance.
5. Solo for the bride; this joyful dance is derived from the music of section 2.
6. Return of the music of the introduction.
7. The Shaker Melody, "Simple Gifts", appears first on the clarinet and is followed by four variations.
8. Before the final statement of the tune on the full orchestra there is an extended passage, mostly comprising new material, but making some passing references back to ideas in sections 1, 3, and 4, ending with a brief reappearance of the Shaker melody before its full concluding version.
9. The material of the introduction forms the basis of the close of the ballet to portray the newly married couple left alone on the steps as the guests depart. With quiet confidence and hope for the future they enter their home.

This appealing score marks Copland's most traditional standpoint in his progress away from austerity and dissonance of the works at the beginning of his composing career. Although only one genuine folk-song appears in the ballet, it must be seen as the epitome of his 'American' style. Even divorced from the visual aspects on stage, every bar of *Appalachian Spring* has its roots in the countryside of New England, and will long remain a strong expression of national feeling.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809 – 1847)
Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56 "Scottish"

The origins of the *Scottish* symphony, which is dedicated to Queen Victoria, date back to 1829, during Mendelssohn's first visit to his beloved England. The twenty-year-old composer had endeared himself to London audiences as both conductor and composer, and immediately after this early success he embarked on a tour of Scotland. He visited Glasgow, Perth and Edinburgh, and in a letter home he described the impact of a twilight visit to the palace at Holyrood, where Mary Queen of Scots had lived and loved. "The chapel beside it had lost its roof, and is overgrown with grass and ivy, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything is in ruin and decay, and open to the sky. I believe I have found today the beginning of my *Scottish Symphony*". Elsewhere he described the Highland countryside as "broad and wide, covered with dense vegetation, from all sides cascades of water are rushing under the bridges... everywhere beautiful green, deep water – but everything is stern, dark, and very lovely. How could I describe it?" Mendelssohn's letters and drawings from this period (he was a gifted artist) attempt to preserve these impressions, but perhaps the most successful record of his impressions is contained in the music that he subsequently wrote, including the popular *Hebrides* overture (*Fingal's Cave*), and the symphony that would emerge years later as the *Scottish*.

The slow introduction to the first movement is a poetic and mournful evocation of the twilight visit to Holyrood that had excited the composer so much, and leads to an *allegro* whose opening theme has an unmistakably Scottish lilt. The clarinet introduces a brief subsidiary idea, and towards the end of the exposition, a lovely string melody is heard. The Scottish tune is the basis of the development section, and when it returns in the final recapitulation, it is accompanied by a beautiful melody on the 'cellos. The closing pages of the *allegro* include a clear evocation of a thunderstorm, but the calm nostalgia of the opening theme returns to end the movement on a more wistful note.

If the first movement represents something of the darker side of Mendelssohn's impressions, the second movement, which follows after a brief pause, is all sunshine and light. Mendelssohn was renowned for his skill in writing these bubbling *scherzo* movements, and this Scottish dance is one of his happiest inspirations. A mood of tragedy darkens the lovely *adagio* movement that follows, and the finale is a war-dance of enormous energy. The *Scottish* Symphony is a canvass of alternating colours, and if the music is predominantly dark, the closing pages are an expression of light and optimism, described by his friend Schumann as "sheerly poetic, the proper evening for a lovely morning".

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Ros Rayner
 Jessica Barnet
 Jo Jordan
 Sarah Wynne
 Anne Forester
 David Harvey
 Violetta Davis

Violin 2

Terri Bethel
 Michael Clement
 Andrew Clothier
 Ken Hawkins
 Jenny Bailey
 Margaret Myatt
 Philip Ward
 Richard Lane

Viola

David Cope
 Alan Anderton
 Sharon Bayley
 Phil Turley
 Steve Hugh

Cello

Jo Bell
 Margaret Bell
 Glyn Davies
 Sheila Moore
 Julie Robertson
 Brett King

Double Bass

Helen Andrews
 Jenny Morris

Flute

Di Manasseh
 Heather Lancaster

Oboes

Richard Anderson
 Rachel Orotayo

Cor Anglais

Rachel Orotayo

Clarinet

Di Cotterell
 Lynn Curtis

Bassoon

Jill Sparke
 Doug Servant

Horns

Percy Cotterell
 Robin Hopper
 Sarah Robertshaw
 Richard Waring

Trombones

Laurence Hopper
 Ian Bourne

Bass Trombone

Don Howard

Trumpets

Greg McEwan
 Rachel Collins

Timpani

Debbie James

Percussion

Trisha De
 Lois Collins

Harp

Eleri Darkins

**WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
2002**

NOTES

6.45pm Pre Concert talk by Rachel Hyde

Programme includes:

Wagner – Overture to Rienzi

Shostokovitch – Symphony No. 5

Wolverhampton Grammar School

29th June 2002

Smetna – Overture to the Bartered Bride

Mozart – Clarinet Concerto (Soloist – Graham Hobbs)

Dvorjak – Scherzo Capricioso

Borodin – Symphony No. 2

St Mary's Church

Albrighton

19th October 2002

(Please note that the above details are provisional).

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra
is affiliated to the
National Federation of Music Societies
which represents and supports
amateur vocal, instrumental and
promoting services throughout the
United Kingdom

For further details regarding membership or ticket prices,
please visit our website at www.listen.to/wso
or call Richard Anderson on 01902 752755