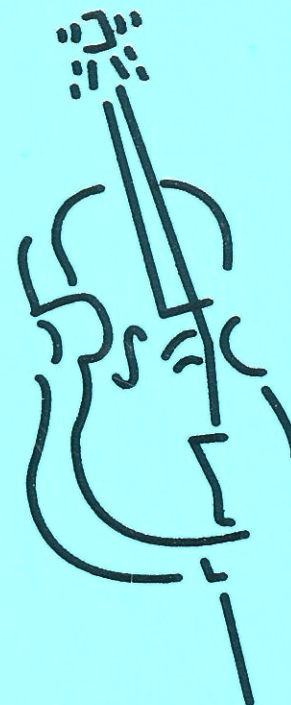



**Making
Music**
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF MUSIC SOCIETIES

110
PROGRAMME



**Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra**



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT
AT
WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SATURDAY 29th JUNE 2002

PROGRAMME

Overture to *Rienzi*.....Richard Wagner
Violin Concerto No. 1.....Dmitri Shostakovich

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 5.....Dmitri Shostakovich

Conductor - Rachel Hyde

Leader - Ros Rayner

Soloist - Edward Bale

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 former member of the viola section).

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

Rachel Hyde

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 Principal Conductor of Sandwell Sinfonia 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 Scheherzade by Rimsky-Korsakov. She particularly enjoys working with soloists, having conducted concerto performances including the Beethoven and Bruch violin concertos, the Mendelssohn D minor Concerto, Weber's first Clarinet Concerto and the 2nd Horn Concerto of Mozart. Rachel remains an active instrumentalist, playing for Chandos Symphony Orchestra, Clent Festival Chamber and the Midland Youth Orchestra among others. Rachael was appointed conductor of Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra in July 2000, and looks forward to guiding the orchestra in its musical future. Rachel's sincere wish for this evening is that she does not humiliate herself in front of Edward Bale.

Edward Bale

Edward Bale was a Music Scholar at Eton College, and studied the violin with Professor Rodney Friend at the Royal College of Music. He won an award from the Constant & Kit Lambert trust for his Masters Degree, and went on to be the Phoebe Benham Junior Fellow for Strings at the Royal College of Music for two years. He has also studied the violin with Krzysztof Smietana, Dong Suk Kang and Ruggiero Ricci.

He has performed throughout the United Kingdom as well as in France, Italy, Spain, Japan and Hong Kong. In the 2000/01 season Edward also worked with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Concert Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Edward has led the Chandos Symphony Orchestra since 1997, and last season was guest leader of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra. He has recorded for BBC Television and has also performed in many major London venues including the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Barbican Hall and as soloist at the Royal Albert Hall.

He has led the Royal College of Music Chamber and Opera Orchestras, the String Ensemble, and the Imperial College Symphony Orchestra, and was a prizewinner in the Essex Young Musician of the Year John Lill Awards. He was appointed Phoebe Benham Junior Fellow for Strings at the Royal College of Music in 1998.

Committed to contemporary music, he appears with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, the Contemporary Consort with whom he has previously appeared at the Cheltenham Festival, and the Commonwealth Sinfonietta. He has worked with George Benjamin, David Sawyer, Marc Yeats, Richard Causton and Huw Watkins. In January 2002 he will appear with the Contemporary Consort at the Purcell Room Park Lane Group series, playing works by Adès, Poole, Stout and Powers.

Edward is currently a 1st violin with the Orchestra of English National Opera. He plays a violin by Emilio Celani, dated 1887.

"..Edward Bale accomplished a tour-de-force - sparkling solo pyrotechnics counterbalancing exquisite dialogue with the orchestra..." Birmingham Post, June 2001

Richard Wagner (1813 - 1883)

Overture to Rienzi

The opera "Rienzi" was first produced in 1842, when Richard Wagner was 31 years old. Set in 14th century Rome, it tells the story of Rienzi, who successfully led a citizens' uprising against the nobility and briefly ruled the city before the citizens turned on him. The trumpet call which opens the overture is a symbol of Rienzi's "Pentecost Revolution", and it is immediately followed by the solemn melody which will become his prayer in Act V, and then by an exciting and challenging allegro that is typical of Wagner.

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 77(99)

- I. Nocturne. Moderato
- II. Scherzo. Allegro
- III. Passacaglia. Andante
- IV. Burlesque. Allegro con brio

Shostakovich and David Oistrakh first met in 1935, and they often played sonatas together in Moscow. Inspired by Oistrakh's artistry, Shostakovich started work on this concerto in 1947, and was writing the finale in February 1948 when

After World War 2, the 'cold war' period was the pretext for appalling repression inside the Soviet Union. Unlike the purges of the 1930s, which hit out at almost anybody, the post-war repression was aimed at the cultural and scientific intelligentsia. Stalin's henchmen began with literature in 1946, moved on to cinema and the theatre, and launched into music in February 1948, with a famous decree, lashing out at corrupt "formalist tendencies" in music. Shostakovich was sacked from his teaching posts, and obliged to write music for Stalinist propaganda films in order to survive. Understandably panic stricken, and despite completing the concerto, Shostakovich knew it had no chance of a public performance, and filed it in his desk drawer. The work was eventually first performed by David Oistrakh in 1955, two years after Stalin's death.

This is a symphonic concerto on the grand scale, lasting over thirty minutes, with a progressive four movement plan. The orchestra has no heavy brass, but major parts for woodwind and percussion.

The first movement is quite long, brooding and mysterious. The opening lyrical but lugubrious theme on lower strings lasts only four bars before the solo violin enters. There is no major climax at all in this movement, and a sad fade-out at the end.

The scherzo, by contrast, is quite manic - loud, hard and brittle in a fast 3/8 time. Yet there is no joy in this energy, rather a feeling of energy expending itself blindly. The contrasting central section, in a swaggering 2/4 tempo, brings in the percussion. The coda, even faster again, whirls the movement to a high energy close.

The passacaglia is noble and expressive, and at last real beauty makes an appearance in the work. As this subsides, a long solo cadenza emerges, which in turn leads directly into the vigorous finale. This combines the beauty of the passacaglia with the energy from the scherzo, to create music with a positive, affirmative message. The music is in a dance style (with a hint of the finale of Tchaikovsky's concerto about it). Towards the end the passacaglia theme returns on the horn which, taken up by the soloist, dominates a hectic and brilliant coda.

INTERVAL

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

- I. Moderato
- II. Allegretto
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro non troppo

In 1937 the "Yezhov Terror", first of Stalin's great purges, gained momentum. It was a time of knocks on the door in the night, arrests, show trials, disappearances and executions. Many millions of people fell victim, including several Shostakovich knew well. Most famously, in May 1937 Marshall Tukhachevsky, a high ranking Red Army commander who was also a close friend and supporter of the composer, was arrested, accused of Treason, tried and shot.

It was in this terrifying atmosphere that Shostakovich wrote his fifth symphony. He wrote it rapidly in the summer of 1937, and it was premiered by the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra under Yevgeny Mravinsky. The significance of the occasion was obvious to everyone; Shostakovich's career - and possibly life - was at stake.

In the event, the triumph was total. A friend later recalled that, as the Largo unfolded, both men and women were weeping openly. And that well before the end, the whole audience was on its feet, and gave Mravinsky and Shostakovich a deafening ovation. Popular success was no guarantee of rehabilitation with the authorities - potentially quite the opposite - and it was only after a few months that Shostakovich felt sure he was safe - for the time being.

The symphony is in the usual four movements, and the orchestral writing is always clear, even in the biggest climaxes, allowing the relationships between the many themes to be heard quite clearly.

The jagged opening motto subsides after a few bars, and then accompanies the violins in the long and winding principal theme of the movement. Soon a second theme appears, calm and ethereal, again on violins and supported by a lilting rhythmic figure. The development section starts as a march, based on the first theme low on the horns, accompanied by piano and lower strings. This section is reminiscent of Mahler, and works up more and more violently, until the jagged opening motto threatens to tear the whole fabric apart, while the second theme is no longer calm but threatening and aggressive on the brass. The climax is a restatement of the main theme in unison for the whole orchestra, fortissimo. Once this collapses exhausted, the movement gradually unwinds, and ends bleakly with a lonely celeste.

The second movement is a sardonic scherzo; Mahler would have called it a Ländler. The middle section employs a tipsy-sounding violin solo, while the third section is an exact repeat of the first, though orchestrated very differently.

The largo is the spiritual heart of the symphony. It is a mourning piece, a lament, in which the brass are silent and the strings are divided into eight parts throughout. It begins in the strings, rich and sorrowful, with a central section for flutes and harp. Then the grieving becomes more personal as oboe, then clarinet, then flute sing a sad lament accompanied by tremolo strings. This is the movement that caused such public emotion at the premiere in Leningrad - after all, many of the audience had lost friends and relatives in the terror. The pain becomes agonising when the cellos take over the melody fortissimo, supported by upper strings, clarinets and barking double basses. The last notes, though in the major key, suggest emptiness rather than comfort.

The brass and percussion, having been silent in the Largo, shatter the mood with a ferocious march. This is constantly loud, and seems to get ever faster. When this finally relents, it allows a long, thoughtful, quiet section to consider themes which are clearly related to those from the first movement. This section ends in consoling beauty, but gives way to a restatement of the opening march, slower and more threatening (notice the ominous low horn notes). This eventually heaves itself out of D minor and into D major for the closing coda - though any feeling of joy is very strained, both by the dissonant trumpets, and the relentless battering of the timpani.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Ros Rayner
Jessica Barnett
Barbara Bostock
Violetta Davis
Jo Gould-Smith
Michael Johnson
Rhiannon Taylor
Sarah Wynne

Cello

Jo Bell
Margaret Bell
Neville Cann
Glynn Davies
Tim Forster
Sheila Moore
Andy Perry
Julie Robertson

Flute

Di Menssah
Heather Lancaster
Jane Eminson

Oboes

Richard Anderson
Tony Evans
Isobel Evans

Horns

Percy Cotterell
Robin Hopper
Richard Waring
Hazel Whitefoot

Trumpets

Steve Bailey
Frank Stubbs
Carolyn Pugh

Violin 2

Terri Bethel
Simon Bedford
Michael Clement
Linda Fowler
Ken Hawkins
Margaret Myatt
Kim Servant
Philip Ward

Double Bass

Helen Andrews
Alan Atkins
Jenny Morris
John Mason
Michael Taylor

Cor Anglais

Isobel Evans

Clarinet

Di Cotterell
Lynn Curtiss
Graham Hobbs

Trombones

Laurence Hopper
Linda Bailey

Bass Trombone

Don Howard

Harp

Marie Leenhardt

Bass Clarinet

Lynn Curtiss

Tuba

Becky Heywood

Viola

Alain Anderton
Sharon Bayley
Steve Hugh
Janet Thomas
Philip Turley

Bassoon

Jill Sparke
Doug Servant
Martin Skirrow

Timpani

Paul McCarthy

Keyboard

Lizzie Coxon

Contra Bassoon

Martin Skirrow

Percussion

Andy Chapman
Debbie James

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2002 – 2003

Smetana – Overture to The Bartered Bride
Mozart – Clarinet Concerto (Soloist Graham Hobbs)
Dvorak – Scherzo Capriccioso
Borodin – Symphony No. 2

St, Mary's Church

Albrighton

19th October 2002

Wager – Seigfreid Idyll
Tchaikovsky – Capriccio Italienne
Faure – Pavane
Bizet – Symphony in C
Tchaikovsky – Selection from the Nutcracker
Anderson – Sleigh Ride

King's School, Wolverhampton

14th December 2002

Tchaikovsky – Fantasy Overture Romeo & Juliet
Saint-Saens – Cello Concerto (soloist Robert Cracknell)
Beethoven – Symphony No. 5

Bridgnorth Leisure Centre

22nd March 2003

*Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is a registered charity, no. 1040991
and is a member of the National Federation of Music Societies*

Saint-Saens - Danse Macabre
Saint-Saens - Bacchanal from Samson & Delilah
Frank - Chasseur Maudit
Berlioz - Symphony Fantastique

Wolverhampton Grammar School
12th July 2003

(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