

10th January 2004

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Craisleley Music Hall.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT  
AT  
CENTRE STAGE, WOLVERHAMPTON MUSIC SCHOOL,  
GRAISLEY, WOLVERHAMPTON

SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2004

PROGRAMME

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- Copland ... .. Four Dance Episodes from Rodeo
- Dvořák ... .. Romance for Violin and Orchestra  
*Soloist Ros Rayner*
- Smetana ..... Vltava from Ma Vlast

INTERVAL

- Dvořák ... .. Symphony No. 8 in G

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Guest Conductor - Peter Morris  
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, Dvořák, 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.

**Peter Morris**

Peter Morris lives in Wolverhampton and is the founder conductor of Junction 10 Orchestra. He began his career as a cathedral chorister in Chester and Manchester, went to Chetham's School in Manchester and read music at Durham University.

He came to the Midlands as Director of Music at Bluecoat School, Walsall, from 1969 until 1991 and held the same post at St. Peter's School, Wolverhampton from 1991 - 1997. He left St. Peter's School to look after his young family, but has since accumulated a variety of roles. He has conducted Walsall Choral Society for 27 years, is Director of the National Schools Symphony Orchestra, Borough Organist for Walsall, Acting Director of Music at St. Peter's Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton and Chair of the Lichfield Diocese for the Royal School of Church Music. He is also principal examiner for A-level and GCSE General Studies and an A-level Music examiner. In 2000/1 he was awarded the medaille d'honneur of the French National Association of Music and a Master's degree at Keele University.

**Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)**  
*Four Dance Episodes from "Rodeo"*

Born in Brooklyn, the son of immigrant Jewish parents from Poland and Lithuania, Aaron Copland lived to become the doyen of all American composers. He studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. His thoroughly American ballets, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and *Appalachian Spring*, earned his popular reputation in the United States. He also composed film scores and a great variety of other works which won him an unassailable position in American concert life.

*Rodeo*, a ballet in two scenes, was premiered on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1942 by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. It is a lighthearted story of the battle of the sexes which employs folk tunes and cowboy songs as inspiration, like "Buckaroo Holiday", "Nocturne", "Saturday Night Waltz" and "Hoedown". Subtitled "The Courting at Burnt Ranch" it tells the story of a young cowgirl who is working on a Texan ranch. Her efforts to try and attract the attention of the Head Wrangler and the Champion Roper are in vain. This changes when she appears in the middle of the Saturday Night Dance in a party dress.

**Antonín Dvořák (1841 - 1904)**  
*Romance in F minor for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 11*

Dvořák was born at Nelahozeves, a village on the outskirts of Prague. His father, an amateur musician, was the village innkeeper and butcher. Through the patronage of an uncle Dvořák was able to study music and in 1857 became a pupil at the Prague Organ School.

Following the completion of his first symphony in 1865 his music came to the notice of the influential Viennese critic Hanslick and then Brahms. From then his fame throughout Europe gathered a steady momentum and eventually reached the United States of America.

Dvořák composed many chamber works in his early years, few of which ever reached public performance. Even after he had given up on one youthful piece or another he sometimes went back and salvaged a particular movement that still had possibilities. This was the origin of the *Romance*, eventually published in 1879, though a version of this music had been composed as the slow movement of a string quartet in 1873. He later reworked the essential lyric material for solo violin with piano, and later with small orchestra.

**Bedrich Smetana (1824 – 1884)**  
*Vltava from "Ma Vlast"*

In his homeland Smetana has come to be regarded as the first major Czech composer of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. He was born in Bohemia to reasonably prosperous parents. His father, a gifted amateur musician, managed a brewery on the estate of Count Waldstein. Smetana studied composition in Prague and became "resident pianist" to the deposed Emperor Ferdinand I. He accepted a conductorship in Göteborg, Sweden, but following personal bereavements he returned to Prague in 1861. His most productive years followed, during which time he wrote five operas, including the ever-popular "Bartered Bride".

*Ma Vlast* was written between 1874 and 1879, and consists of six tone poems celebrating Bohemia's history, mythology and landscape. The second of the cycle, *Vltava*, describes the river upon which Prague stands.

The music is in the form of a Rondo, united by a recurring theme representing the river. The first tributary is represented by undulating flutes, which are soon joined by clarinets representing the second. The river gathers strength until violins, oboes and bassoons unite in the first expression of the rondo theme, taken from a Bohemian folk tune. The river's journey through the forest is represented by horns and harp - hunting calls are heard over the river motif.

The river then flows past a rustic wedding celebration - we hear dance music, part polka, part march in 2/4 time, and a climax is reached. As it subsides the moon - represented by pianissimo woodwind figures - rises and sparkles in the rippling water. Then fluctuating flutes lead to the "dance of the Water Nymphs".

The Vltava then pursues a smooth course until its pace quickens as it tumbles over the St. John rapids. It then flows majestically into Prague where it passes under the great fortress of Vyšehrad. It then flows on, leaving Prague behind and is lost to sight, but the music ends with two emphatic chords.

**Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)**  
*Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Opus 88*

*Allegro con Brio*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegretto grazioso*  
*Allegro, ma no troppo*

Dvořák visited England many times. Following the Worcester Three Choirs Festival of 1884 Sir Edward Elgar, in a letter to his friend Dr. C. W. Buck, said ... "I wish you could have heard Dvořák's music, it is simply ravishing ... so tuneful and clever - I cannot describe it, it must be heard."

Following difficulties with his publisher, Simrock of Berlin, Dvořák sent a number of his compositions to Novellos of London, including the 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony, which subsequently received the sub-title "The English".

The first movement opens with a solemn theme played by 'cellos, horns and bassoons in G minor, which alternates with a more rhythmic melody in G major, first appearing on the flute.

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There is a touch of pain in the opening harmonies of the slow movement that become pronounced later. The introductory music reaches its climax, fades and modulates into a folk-song like theme in C Major. Flutes and oboes sing away to a delicate accompaniment throughout the orchestra, one of Dvorak's many magical moments. The solo violin is eventually heard picking off fragments of the folk tune, and the second violins suggest the rustle of leaves. This has all been very pianissimo, but the impatient full orchestra cannot be restrained and bursts forth with an impressive rendering of the folk-tune. The opening music finally returns, the movement unwinding towards a peaceful cadence, interrupted briefly by one more short eruption of violence, before being soothed away by the ubiquitous two-note motif.

The first violins lead straight onto the waltz theme of the third movement, which sweeps along to a triplet woodwind accompaniment and the theme adds a flowing enchanting effect. The theme of the trio section, given to flutes and oboes, has two beats to each two bar phrase while the staccato string accompaniment has an insistent three! In the molto vivace Coda Dvořák re-introduces the trio theme but now speeded up and given to clarinets and bassoons; then "head over heels" the orchestra joins in.

The finale opens with a trumpet fanfare in a brisk 2/4, and as it subsides the tympany gently leads the cellos into the theme. There then follow seven variations on this theme, the Coda bursting forth out of the final variant and encapsulating the movement in a headstrong furiant through to the final chord.

<b>Violin 1</b>	<b>Cello</b>	<b>Clarinet</b>	<b>Tuba</b>
Ros Rayner	Jo Bell	Di Cotterell	Becky Heywood
Sophie Anderton	Margaret Bell	Lynn Curtis	<b>Timpani</b>
Jessica Barnett	Glyn Davies	Charlotte Round	Debbie Childs
Barbara Bostock	Gaynor Deveraux	<b>Bass Clarinet</b>	<b>Percussion</b>
David Harvey	Tim Forster	Lynn Curtis	Tom Peverelle
Jo Jordan	Sheila Moore	<b>Bassoon</b>	Vikki Brown
Rhiannon Taylor	Julie Robertson	Jill Sparke	James Souter
Corinne Wright	<b>Double Bass</b>	Doug Servant	<b>Piano &amp; Celest</b>
Sarah Wynne	Alan Atkins		Charlotte
<b>Violin 2</b>	John Mason	<b>Horns</b>	Maidment
Terri Bethel	Jenny Morris	Percy Cotterell	<b>Harp</b>
Jenny Bailey	Ian Parry	Robin Hopper	Helen Barley
Ruth Collings	<b>Flutes</b>	Sara Shepherd	
Ken Hawkins	Diana Manasseh	Richard Waring	
Susan Johnston	Kate Baker		
Fabienne Milhavy	Jane Eminson		
Margaret Myatt	<b>Piccolo</b>	<b>Trumpets</b>	
Krystle Reid	Jane Eminson	Chris Cumming	
Charlotte Round		Frank Stubbs	
Frances Walton	<b>Oboes</b>	<b>Trombones</b>	
Philip Ward	Richard Anderson	Laurence Hopper	
<b>Viola</b>	Rachel Orotayo	Anthony Barrett	
David Cope	<b>Cor Anglais</b>	<b>Bass Trombone</b>	
Alain Anderton	Richard Anderson	Don Howard	
Philip Turley			

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra  
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