

PROGRAMME

126
18/11/06



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

**Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra**



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT
AT
SAINT MARY'S CHURCH
ALBRIGHTON

SATURDAY 18th November 2006

PROGRAMME

- Weber *Overture to the opera "Oberon"*
- Mozart *Sinfonia Concertante in E flat for
Violin, Viola and Orchestra, K 364*

INTERVAL

- Vaughan Williams *Symphony No.5 in D major*

Conductor - Peter Morris
Leader - Ros Rayner

Solo Violin - Ros Rayner
Solo Viola - David Cope

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 extends 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). Recently, in addition to its normal programme of full orchestral concerts, the orchestra has performed a number of chamber concerts

where groups of players from the orchestra have performed works in a more informal lighter vein.

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 Making Music (formerly the National Federation of Music Societies).

Peter Morris

Peter Morris, who has been our Musical Director since 2004, 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 until 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 since 1977, is Borough Organist at Walsall Town Hall, Director of Music at St. Peter's Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton and the founder conductor of Junction 10 Orchestra. He is also principal examiner for A-level and GCSE General Studies and an A-level Music examiner. In 2000-2001 he was awarded the Medaille d'Honneur of the French National Association of Music and a Master's degree at Keele University. He lives in Wolverhampton.

Ros Rayner - Leader and Solo Violin

Ros studied the violin at the Royal Academy of Music. Whilst there she joined the British Youth Symphony Orchestra. Following her PGCE she taught in Bracknell for four years. She

moved to Wolverhampton and was appointed leader of the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra ten years ago. She now teaches at the Wolverhampton Girls' High School, and tutors the first violins in the Wolverhampton Youth Orchestra.

David Cope - Solo Viola

Born and educated in Wolverhampton, David started piano lessons aged seven. At Northcote High School, aged eleven, he began viola lessons and came under the influence of Dennis Powell, who was then Head of Music. He was the leader of the viola section of the Wolverhampton Youth Orchestra and member of the Midland Youth Orchestra in the late 1960's to early 1970's, until leaving to study dentistry at Liverpool University. While there, he played with the University Orchestra and Haydn Camerata Orchestra. After qualifying, he returned to Wolverhampton to work in General Dental Practice and joined the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra. He also plays with the Wyre Forest Symphony Orchestra, Junction 10 Orchestra and the Veracini Ensemble and is Director of Music, Holy Trinity Church, Heath Town.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

Overture to the Opera "Oberon"

Weber's opera Oberon can be seen as a tale which is a cross between Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and a medieval legend, complete with damsels in distress, knights in shining armour and a band of marauding pirates. Commissioned by Covent Garden, the work received its first performance there in 1826, to great acclaim. Weber himself was not particularly happy with it, however. He was not at ease with the libretto, which contained spoken dialogue rather than recitative, but had to bow to the whims of the English paying public. Weber was no stranger to the theatre, having grown up in a theatrical family and held posts in theatres in Germany and Prague. He was a great champion of German opera and intended to rework Oberon in the German style, but sadly he died just two months after the first performance.

The overture takes all its melodies from the main body of the opera. The slow introduction has its roots in fairyland, with its horn call, atmospheric strings and scurrying woodwind, but when we reach the energetic opening theme of the allegro, we are transported into the world of adventurous knights. The lyrical second theme, played by the clarinet and echoed by the strings, is followed by another lilting theme, which will return in exuberant style towards the end of the piece, when Oberon and Puck have worked their magic, perils and dangers have been overcome and everyone lives happily ever after.

If you enjoyed this overture you might be interested to know that we continue with the Weber theme (in a sort of way!) with a performance of Hindemith's Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber in our summer concert in St. Peter's Church, Wolverhampton.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Sinfonia Concertante in E flat for Violin, Viola and Orchestra,
K 364

1. *Allegro maestoso*
2. *Andante*
3. *Presto*

Although very few examples of the genre can be said to have survived to the present day as part of the active repertory, the *sinfonia concertante* was one of the most popular forms of instrumental music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The term is generally used to describe a two- or, later, three-movement concerto for orchestra and several solo instruments of the most varied combinations. As such, it represents a survival of the Baroque concerto grosso, while at the same time drawing on elements of the Classical symphony, solo concerto and various types of *divertimento*. The *sinfonia concertante* flourished especially in Mannheim and Paris, where the many public concert organizations and growing number of instrumental virtuosos encouraged the composition of more and more new works.

On his return to Salzburg from his travels to Mannheim and Paris in 1777-1778, Mozart began work on several concertos which, for the most part, remained unfinished. Only the Concerto for violin, viola and orchestra in E-flat major K. 364 was completed and expressly labelled "*sinfonia concertante*". As with most of his works composed in Salzburg, Mozart's correspondence contains no clues as to its origins, genesis or performance, although it may well have been written during the summer or early autumn of 1779. The combination of violin and viola as solo instruments was particularly popular in Salzburg at this time, as is clear from other works by Mozart and his contemporaries. It may have been premiered by

Antonio Brunetti and Joseph Hafeneder, two members of the Court Orchestra, or even by Mozart himself. With its pairs of oboes and horns in addition to the usual strings, the work is scored for forces no larger than those found in the five violin concertos of 1773-5, but the use of *divisi* violas throughout the piece ensures that the sound as a whole is richer and warmer.

The monumental opening movement (*Allegro Maestoso*) is symphonic in its aspirations, with a broadly structured *tutti* exposition containing what, for Mozart, is a surprising but powerful orchestral crescendo typical of the Mannheim school. The intimate interplay between the two soloists also involves the winds.

In the magnificent, almost melancholic *Andante* in C minor, the listener will be struck above all by the depth and maturity of the emotions expressed.

The piece ends with a virtuoso *Presto* in rondo form, the carefree serenity of which is in striking contrast to the expressive depth of the preceding movements.

INTERVAL

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
Symphony Number 5 in D Major

1. *Preludio - Moderato, Tranquillo, Allegro*
2. *Scherzo - Presto Misterioso*
3. *Romanza - Lento*
4. *Passacaglia - Moderato, Allegro*

In this symphony, Vaughan Williams reinvents his pastoralism of the 1920s, making it leaner and more incisive and injecting a vitalizing dose of counterpoint. Of all the symphonies, this is the composer's most transparently scored. It sums up, to a

certain extent, Vaughan Williams' musical idiom of the previous twenty years: the pastoral mode and polytonalism of the third symphony, the expanded dissonance and contrapuntal virtuosity of the fourth (although softened by dynamics and orchestration), the "moonlight" music of the Serenade.

Vaughan Williams sings in this symphony more than in any other he wrote, perhaps because much of its material comes from the opera *Pilgrim's Progress*, incomplete at the time. The work seems not to proceed by theme (although extremely tight structurally), but from song to song. It is probably his most popular symphony and the one closest to people's idea of his music. The work appeared during World War II, and audiences thought this Vaughan Williams' "vision of peace." Such speculation usually annoyed the composer, who thought himself a musician, rather than a seer. One can say, however, that its mood comes from great emotional strength, to which audiences continue to respond. Of all the symphonies, this comes closest to the spiritual world of the Tallis Fantasia. Yet a disturbing element simmers below. It is not all alleluias and amens.

The opening of the first movement ("Praeludio") is magic. It is as if the symphony does not begin: we merely happen upon a continual song. Contrast this with the definite start of Beethoven's "Eroica." From the very beginning, the outlines of Vaughan Williams' forms are hazier. Even more important to the sound of the movement is Vaughan Williams' fondness for modal, mainly pentatonic (the black notes of the piano played as a scale) themes.

Likewise, the second movement (Scherzo) seems to start from nowhere, but then leads into a rollicking theme in fast triple time. This is followed by what might be described as a

woodwind raspberry or, more politely, as bagpipe skirls. Then comes a chordal, chorale-like motive serving as a trio section. On its return, the scherzo gets cut short with the intrusion of the bagpipe skirls, introducing a duple-time second trio, with attempts to re-establish triple time along the way.

In the third movement ("Romanza"), Vaughan Williams contrasts an idyllic mood with great agitation. A gorgeous chord progression announces a melody in the cor anglais. This is followed by a passage featuring a motive in rising fourths. After a while we arrive at a "free-for-all", led by the oboe and joined by all the winds in a remarkable passage of conversation. This leads to an agitated passage in the strings against rising fourths and chromatic runs in the winds. It begins to die down, as the brass, led by the horn, takes up the cor anglais tune.

The fourth movement ("Passacaglia") indeed starts off just as that. A passacaglia is a musical form which repeats a bass line (usually in triple time) throughout. Against the fixed bass, the upper parts are then varied. Listen out for the passacaglia theme in the bass and a rising countermelody in the upper parts. These increase in intensity until we hear a fanfare theme. After this Vaughan Williams gives up on the passacaglia, the three themes are combined and the triple time speeds up to one in a bar. Then we pass into a more agitated section in quadruple time. The movement and the symphony end with a return to the quiet opening of the first movement.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin 1	'Cellos	Bassoons
Ros Rayner (<i>Leader</i>)	Margaret Bell	Jill Sparke
Anthonia Boden	Rosie Evans	Jan Riley
Barbara Carter	Tim Forster	
Jonathan Harper	Roger Hides	Horns
David Harvey	Sheila Moore	Percy Cotterell
Jo Jordan	Julie Robertson	Robin Hopper
Kate Lorimer	Helen Woolley	Sara Shepherd
Vanessa Owen		Jill Brittle
Alice Rayner	Double Basses	
	David Charlesworth	Trumpets
Violin 2	Robert Crawford	Chris Cumming
Jane Giddings	Rebecca Mansley	Jenny Holt
Ken Hawkins		
Rachael Hibberd	Flutes	Trombones
Fabienne McAllister	Di Manasseh	Laurence Hopper
Margaret Myatt	Kathryn Russon	Joe Cooper
David Naylor		
Ruth Pickles	Oboes	Bass Trombone
Philip Ward	Richard Anderson	Tony Jones
Corinne Wright	Rachel Orotayo	
		Timpani
Violas	Cor Anglais	Debbie Childs
Alain Anderton	Rachel Orotayo	
Elisabeth Barratt		
Sharon Bayley	Clarinets	
David Cope	Di Cotterell	
Martin Cropper	Lynn Curtis	
Philip Turley		

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY
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OUR NEXT TWO CONCERTS

*17th March 2007 - Cranmer Methodist Church,
Newhampton Road West, Wolverhampton*

<i>Rossini</i>	Overture "Semiramide"
<i>Mozart</i>	Piano Concerto No. 24 in C Minor K491 (Solo Piano Alastair Moseley)
<i>Sibelius</i>	Symphony No. 2 in D Major

*30th June 2007 - St. Peters Collegiate Church,
Wolverhampton*

<i>Shostakovich</i>	Festival Overture
<i>Hindemith</i>	Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber
<i>Tchaikovsky</i>	Symphony No. 5 in E Minor

(All details above are subject to change)



Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra
is affiliated to
Making Music
(formerly 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.wolsymorc.org.uk
or e-mail us at info@wolsymorc.org.uk
or call Richard Anderson on 01902 752755

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