

**Making  
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# PROGRAMME

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**Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra**



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT  
AT  
CRANMER METHODIST CHURCH  
NEWHAMPTON ROAD WEST  
WOLVERHAMPTON

SATURDAY 17<sup>th</sup> March 2007

PROGRAMME

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- Rossini *Overture "Semiramide"*
- Mozart *Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K491*

INTERVAL

- Sibelius *Symphony No. 2 in D major*

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Conductor - Peter Morris  
Leader - Ros Rayner

Solo Piano - Alastair Moseley

## 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 to 60 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 - Musical Director

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.

### Alastair Moseley - Solo Piano

Alastair Moseley started playing piano when he was six and was soon playing piano duets with his mother. He first studied with Joyce Mildren and then later with Joyce Woodhead of the

Birmingham Conservatoire. Shortly after starting piano lessons, Alastair took up the clarinet with David Sharp and these two instruments have been of equal importance in his playing career ever since. When at school, Alastair was always in demand as an accompanist and it was not long before he was playing for exams, music festivals and competitions. Since then his particular interest has been the piano and wind repertoire and he has performed most of the major works for wind groups and soloists at recitals and competitions throughout the U.K. For many years Alastair accompanied at all of the Midlands Competitive music festivals where he would often be required to play over 100 different works during the day!

Alastair has been principal clarinetist with the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra since 1990, and has also appeared with them in many concerts as soloist, both as pianist and clarinetist. These have included the Mozart Clarinet Concerto and Mozart D Minor and C Major Piano Concertos. In 1997 he appeared as soloist and accompanist at the Stratford English Music Festival with English Serenade, with whom he recorded his first CD. Alastair is often invited to give concertos with other orchestras and these have included Beethoven's 1st and 3rd Piano Concertos with the Sinfonia of Birmingham, Mozart's "Elvira Madigan" Piano Concerto No. 21 with the Knowle Sinfonia with whom he has also performed the Weber Clarinet Concerto, the Mendelssohn 1st Piano Concerto and the Mozart D Minor Piano Concerto. In 2002 Alastair performed Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue with the Junction 10 Orchestra and Peter Morris for the opening of the New Walsall Art Gallery. Alastair has performed as soloist once before with the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra in 2005, when he demonstrated his versatility by playing the solo piano part in Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" followed by the solo clarinet part in Copland's clarinet concerto, both in the same concert!

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Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)  
*Overture to the Opera "Semiramide"*

Like most of Rossini's works, *Semiramide* was written very quickly - his contract allowed him forty days to complete the opera, but he finished the job in thirty-three! His standard operating procedure was to wait until the last minute to write the overture: as in most of his operas, *Semiramide's* overture is based almost entirely on what he considered to be the best tunes in the opera. Unlike the majority of his operas, however, *Semiramide* is thoroughly serious stuff - the opera was considered almost too dramatic and long-winded by a Venetian audience that was used to lighter *opere buffe*. *Semiramide* met with moderate success in its first run, however, and is still one of the works that lurk on the outskirts of the standard operatic repertory today.

The story of the opera involves the evil Babylonian queen Semiramide who conspires with her lover Assur to murder her husband Nino and place Assur on the throne. In an Oedipus-like turn of the plot, Semiramide falls in love with a dashing young general, Arsace. Unknown to anyone but the high priest, Arsace is, in truth, Semiramide's own son, Prince Ninia. Nino's ghost appears, prophesying that Arsace will become king. When the priest informs him of his true identity, Ninia vows to revenge his father by killing Assur, but the dagger thrust intended for the usurper strikes the guilty Semiramide instead. When Ninia's identity is proclaimed Assur is condemned to die, and Ninia sadly ascends to the throne.

After the initial orchestral flourishes, the overture opens with an extended slow introduction, a feature found in most Rossini overtures. In this section the horns and woodwinds play a lyrical hymn like melody - a chorus of praise for the queen heard in the first act. The opening flourishes return,

announcing the beginning of the main *Allegro* portion of the overture, which is set in D major. The first *Allegro* theme is taken from the orchestral introduction to the opera's tragic final scene at the tomb of King Nino - a tragedy that is belied by the happy, bouncy nature of this theme! The second theme, in A major, first played by clarinet and bassoon and then by the piccolo, is similarly jovial, yet somewhat more martial than the first theme. A long *crescendo* passage and a string interlude lead back to a repeat of the opening *Allegro* material.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

*Concerto No. 24 in C minor for Piano and Orchestra, K491*

*Allegro*

*Larghetto*

*Allegretto*

In March 1786, just several weeks before the premiere of his opera, *The Marriage of Figaro* on 1 May 1786, Mozart began writing the Piano Concerto in C minor K. 491 - in great haste, as always in his Viennese years. It was completed on 24 March and premiered at a concert in the Burgtheater on 3 April.

The work has a quantity of characteristics which make it stand out from Mozart's other piano concertos. The key, for instance: it is the only concerto in a minor key next to the D minor concerto. The 3/4 time in the first movement is found only twice in Mozart's piano concertos. The size of the orchestra is also remarkable: it is the largest and most colourful of all the piano concertos. In addition to the strings, it features pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets. Timpani were added to heighten all this brilliance. The scoring reflects Mozart's intention of wanting to write not merely a concerto, but also a symphonic work.

The first movement is fully under the sway of the first theme, which is stated softly and in unison by the strings. It is a powerfully ascending triad followed by a chain of descending sequences which in their turn are concluded by an upward leap of a diminished seventh. The secondary theme remains little more than a swiftly scurrying episode whenever it appears. The piano must wait 100 bars before it can finally enter, and when it does, then with no less than two new themes. Impatient, as if upset by the piano's impertinence, the winds and strings soon burst in with the primary theme. The development takes on an equally unexpected turn when the entire orchestra keeps re-forming itself in ever new constellations as it illuminates the original material from every possible rhythmic and harmonic perspective.

The second movement, in E flat major, is a romance in rondo form. The secondary themes - in C minor and A flat major - are in a more rapid tempo and express something like restrained sorrow. They thus contrast with the enchanting, tranquil songfulness of the principal theme.

The third movement, whose mood is related to that of the first, consists of a march-like theme stated by the orchestra and six variations whose modifications are sometimes effected by changes in the instrumentation. At the beginning, Mozart returns to the thematic material of the first movement by inverting its direction. The C minor triad now descends, and the diminished seventh makes a downward leap. The first variation is entrusted to the piano. The second sets up a dialogue between the strings on the one side, and the winds and piano on the other. The third tautens the material through rhythmic dotting, whereby an episode in A flat major (divided between the piano and the winds) provides a momentary slackening of the tension. The fourth variation, again in C minor, focuses on the development of the piano part (while the

theme is in the right hand, the left is given much figurative and chordal work) into which another soothing episode (in C major) slips in with new material. Almost as if this were an error, the strings return with an emphatic statement of the theme at the beginning of the fifth variation. The piano weaves figurations around it and the winds introduce caesura. After the solo cadenza, at the beginning of the final variation, the meter switches abruptly from 2/2 to 6/8 and is accompanied by an intensification of the drama. The work ends on an irreconcilable note; it is the only one of Mozart's concertos to end in the minor mode.

## INTERVAL

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

*Symphony Number 2 in D Major, Opus 43*

*Allegretto*

*Tempo Andante ma Rubato*

*Vivacissimo - Lento e Suave, leading to*

*Allegro Moderato*

Sibelius's Second Symphony was written in 1901, two years after the First, over which it shows a striking advance. The romantic composers frequently tried to realise a unity in their symphonies by the use of a motto theme which appeared in each movement, but Sibelius strove for, and achieved a unity of a higher order. As in the case of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Sibelius's unity stems from the frequent employment of a characteristic 'germ cell'. In the case of his Second Symphony, this 'germ cell' is a downward leap of a fifth, in which the upper note comes on an accentuated beat.

Quite unprecedented, however, is Sibelius's reversal of the classical manner of treating sonata form. Earlier composers

invariably presented us with a series of complete themes, then discussed some or all of their various elements, and finally restated their themes with minor changes. Sibelius, however, in the first movement of his Second Symphony, does exactly the opposite; he presents us first with a whole lot of seemingly disconnected thematic fragments, then, in the second part of the movement, reveals hitherto unsuspected relationships between them, eventually putting them all together into a glorious and impressive theme. Finally, in the recapitulation the music disintegrates back into its elements.

The other three movements pose no difficult formal problems, although the second in particular is very original in other ways. Who but Sibelius could have written the long pizzicato passages for 'cellos and basses with which it sets off after the initial drum roll? Here, too, much of the material is fragmentary, but unlike the first movement, there is an obvious relationship between several of the motives.

The only other formal aspect of the work that demands special attention is the linking of the third and fourth movements. The third movement is a Scherzo and Trio, the latter beginning with eight repetitions of its opening note; the Trio returns a second time, but a new element is woven into it. This grows in strength until it becomes the opening theme of the finale.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**Violin 1**

Ros Rayner (*Leader*)  
Anthonia Boden  
Barbara Carter  
Anne Forster  
Jonathan Harper  
David Harvey  
Jo Jordan  
Kate Lorimer  
Vanessa Owen  
Alice Rayner

**Violin 2**

Corinne Wright  
Lucy Clarke  
Helen Harper  
Ken Hawkins  
Rachael Hibberd  
Hilary Hurd  
Fabienne McAllister  
Margaret Myatt  
David Naylor  
Ruth Pickles  
Frances Walton  
Philip Ward

**Violas**

David Cope  
Alain Anderton  
Elisabeth Barratt  
Sharon Bayley  
Philip Turley

**'Cellos**

Julie Robertson  
Margaret Bell  
Rosie Evans  
Tim Forster  
Roger Hides  
Sheila Moore

**Double Basses**

David Charlesworth  
Robert Crawford  
Ian Parry

**Flutes**

Di Manasseh  
Kate Russon

**Oboes**

Richard Anderson  
Rachel Orotayo

**Clarinets**

Di Cotterell  
Lynn Curtis

**Bassoons**

Jill Sparke  
Mike Darke

**Horns**

Sara Shepherd  
Robin Hopper  
Percy Cotterell  
Jill Brittle

**Trumpets**

Chris Cumming  
Jenny Holt  
Jenny Bourgeois

**Trombones**

Laurence Hopper  
Mike Griffiths  
Bernard Moses

**Tuba**

Joe Barnett

**Timpani**

Debbie Childs

**Percussion**

Owen Muir

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

OUR NEXT CONCERT

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

*Shostakovich*

**Festival Overture**

*Hindemith*

**Symphonic Metamorphoses on  
Themes of Carl Maria von  
Weber**

*Tchaikovsky*

**Symphony No. 5 in E Minor**



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

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or e-mail us at [info@wolsymorc.org.uk](mailto:info@wolsymorc.org.uk)  
or call Richard Anderson on 01902 752755

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