

**Making  
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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION  
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# PROGRAMME

12



Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT  
AT  
St. PETER'S COLLEGIATE CHURCH  
WOLVERHAMPTON

SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007

PROGRAMME

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Shostakovich

*Festival Overture*

Paul Hindemith

*Symphonic Metamorphosis on  
Themes of Carl Maria von Weber*

INTERVAL

Tchaikovsky

*Symphony No. 5 in E minor*

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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 local players. The idea behind the formation of the orchestra was to satisfy a need for players from Wolverhampton and its environs 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.

## Ros Rayner - Leader

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 in 1996. She now teaches at the Wolverhampton Girls' High School, and tutors the first violins in the Wolverhampton Youth Orchestra.

## Dmitry Shostakovich (1906-1975)

### *Festival Overture*

The death of Joseph Stalin in March 1953, was followed by a pronounced relaxation of the harsh restraints that had affected the work of composers, playwrights, poets and other creative artists in the Soviet Union following the denunciation of numerous prominent figures by Stalin's cultural spokesman Andrei Zhdanov in February 1948. Shostakovich was high on this list of composers Zhdanov vilified for the sin of "formalism," and although Zhdanov himself died before that year was out, the climate of fear and repression was felt with particular severity until the death of Stalin. Then in December 1953, Shostakovich was called upon to provide a brief orchestral piece to be performed the following year in observance of the 37th anniversary of the October Revolution. The Festival Overture, which was written for that occasion, has survived its original function to take its place in the international repertory.

In most of his short pieces (e.g. his Ballet Suites), Shostakovich used simple repetitive classical dance structures. Occasionally, as in the finale of the Sixth Symphony, he sidestepped into a developmental mode, spinning out an intoxicating string of variants. So it is here. There are no coded messages, no concealed meanings. This is less than Symphony, but more than Music Hall. You can imagine his thoughts: "First, for the Party Members, Grand Celebratory Flourishes, then dash off into a first subject especially for the Komsomol, all skirling woodwind, fizzing strings, and good, old-fashioned *oom-pah*. Ease off the gas, but not the tempo, for a seductively flowing second subject, sumptuous on 'cellos and horns to please the Ladies. Delight the Intelligentsia with a development that makes much more of the materials than they'll expect. Recapitulation? *Hmm . . .* No, let's not bother, just add in more of the Grand Celebratory Flourishes. Finally, a quick charge for the line to bring them all to their feet, cheering".

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

*Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber*

1. *Allegro*
2. *Turandot, Scherzo*
3. *Andantino*
4. *Marsch*

Hindemith was born at Hanau, near Frankfurt in Germany. He was an excellent violinist and became leader of the Frankfurt Opera Orchestra where he married the daughter of the conductor. However, on the rise of Hitler he was persecuted by the Nazis as his wife was half-Jewish and his own musical compositions were considered degenerate. As a result, in 1938 he left Germany making his way to the USA which he made his permanent home, joining the music faculty of Yale University.

Soon after he arrived in America he met the ballet choreographer, Leonid Massine for whom he agreed to write a ballet based on the music of Weber. However, before this progressed far, they fell out. As a result, Hindemith decided to salvage his sketches for use in an orchestral work which was eventually to become *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber* (the original title was in English) which was completed in August 1943. The work is for large orchestra and is based on four of Weber's lesser-known works which he altered and elaborated to make more exciting than the originals. It is structured in four complementary movements, resembling a short symphony.

*Symphonic Metamorphosis* was first performed by the New York Philharmonic under the baton of Artur Rodzinski on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1944 and has since become one of Hindemith's more popular works, being both melodic and a showpiece for orchestra.

The first movement (*Allegro*) is a swaggering march of East European style. This is based on Weber's *Huit Pièces pour le pianoforte à 4 mains* (Op.60), No.4 of 1818.

The second movement (*Turandot, Scherzo*) is distinctly oriental sounding with much use of percussion, including tubular bells. In the middle it features in turn the brass, woodwind and then percussion sections. The theme is based on Weber's overture, *Turandot* of 1809 which is in turn based on an original Chinese tune.

The third movement (*Andantino*) is a short, tender slow movement with a minor-key melody introduced by the woodwind. It finishes with an elaborate flute counterpoint rather resembling bird song. The theme is based on Weber's *Six Pièces pour le pianoforte à quatre mains* (Op.10), No 2 of 1809.

Fanfares open the finale (*Marsch*) which like the first movement is based on *Huit Pièces pour le pianoforte à 4 mains* – this time No.7. Weber's original theme is a funeral march to which Hindemith doubles the tempo to make music which is certainly too fast for marching. It has a very catchy tune which you may well go away humming! The music grows increasingly spectacular, ending fortissimo.

## INTERVAL

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

*Symphony Number 5 in E Minor, Opus 64*

- 1 - *Andante; Allegro con anima*
- 2 - *Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza*
- 3 - *Valse: Allegro moderato*
- 4 - *Finale: Andante maestoso; Allegro vivace*

Tchaikovsky wrote his Fifth Symphony in the summer of 1888 when he had just turned 48. The first performance - an eagerly awaited event in musical circles - took place in St Petersburg, then the Russian capital, with Tchaikovsky conducting.

As so often before, while working on the symphony Tchaikovsky was plagued by self-doubt, often convinced that his creative powers were

deserting him. Things were slow to start, and although the inspiration soon began to gather momentum, before starting work on the instrumentation Tchaikovsky wrote to his patron Mme von Meck that there was "none of the former lightness and constant readiness of material" in the work. However, in time his opinion of the symphony began to improve and he came to love it, and was especially delighted to receive Brahms's approval upon hearing it.

Although Tchaikovsky never assigned a programme to the Fifth Symphony, there exists a fragment from a notebook in which he sets out his thoughts on the first movement, thereby giving us an insight into what his intentions may have been for the work as a whole:

*Introduction. Complete resignation before Fate, or, which is the same, before the inscrutable predestination of Providence. Allegro (I) Murmurs, doubts, lamentations, reproaches against XXX. (II) Shall I throw myself into the embraces of Faith?*

This struggle with Fate is also expressed in his Fourth and Sixth Symphonies, and in the Fifth, although Tchaikovsky never says as much in words, the Finale is a clear representation of the triumph over Fate. As with his Fourth Symphony a unifying, or motto, theme initially in the minor key pervades the work, appearing in one form or another in all of its four movements.

The symphony opens with a statement of the motto theme in the introduction, with clarinets and dark-hued instrumentation. The orchestra broods over this theme before entering upon the despondent or wildly dramatic moods of the first movement proper. A new motive stated by clarinet and bassoons is dwelt upon at great length, as a thought that cannot be shaken off. Two other ideas appear in the course of the movement proper - one of them a mournful phrase in the rhythm of the waltz. But the persistent rhythm of the first theme dominates, and it echoes sadly from instrument to instrument in the concluding bars.

The second movement, introduced by sustained chords in the strings, is a scene of moonlight and romance, if ever there was one in symphonic music. The horn begins a ravishing solo following the

preliminary harmonies of the strings. A second strain, played by the woodwind instruments, brings a more ardent mood. Then the strings, with a fine sweep, and elaborated orchestration, take up the horn theme. There is a sensuous climax, and new material is introduced laden with lyrical feelings of a spring night. After a second climax, the motto theme intervenes, grimly, sardonically, and the end is despondent.

The third movement is really a waltz straight out of the world of the ballet, with a central section in a contrasting rhythm, and as such replaces the classic scherzo. Toward the end the motto theme is woven into the dance like a specter that will not be laid.

But in the militant finale Tchaikovsky is another man. The motto theme is now heard as a triumphant proclamation in the major key, scored for full orchestra. A later theme, somewhat akin to Beethoven in its amplitude of line and its fine curve, is set over a treading bass. Finally the whole orchestra prepares solemnly for the apotheosis, with the motto theme transfigured and glorified, and the composer captain of his soul.

## WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

### Violin 1

Ros Rayner (*Leader*)  
Barbara Carter  
Anne Forster  
Jonathan Harper  
Jo Jordan  
Kate Lorimer  
Vanessa O'Reilly  
Alice Rayner

### Violin 2

Corinne Wright  
Jenny Bailey  
Lucy Clarke  
Rachael Hibberd  
Hilary Hurd  
Fabienne McAllister  
Margaret Myatt  
Ruth Pickles  
Frances Walton  
Philip Ward

### Violas

David Cope  
Alain Anderton  
Elisabeth Barratt  
Sharon Bayley  
Jenny Jacom  
Philip Turley

### 'Cellos

Julie Robertson  
Rosie Evans  
Tim Forster  
Roger Hides  
Sheila Moore  
Helen Woolley

### Double Basses

Diane Baker  
George Fletcher  
John Mason  
Jon Yardley

### Flutes

Di Manasseh  
Kate Russon  
Jane Eminson

### Piccolo

Jane Eminson

### Oboes

Richard Anderson  
Rachel Orotayo  
Duncan Spiers

### Cor Anglais

Rachel Orotayo

### Clarinets

Di Cotterell  
Lynn Curtis  
Ros Jacom

### Bass Clarinet

Lynn Curtis

### Bassoons

Jill Sparke  
Jan Riley  
Mike Darke

### Contrabassoon

Jan Riley

### Horns

Sara Shepherd  
Robin Hopper  
Jill Brittle  
Percy Cotterell  
Derek Wilson

### Trumpets

Chris Cumming  
Jenny Holt  
David Place

### Trombones

Mike Griffiths  
Alison Muir  
Mark Wilkes

### Tuba

Ronnie Pavlock

### Timpani

Emily Cumbie

### Percussion

Bethan Jones  
Benjamin Lewis  
Andrew Smith

## WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA 2007-2008 SEASON

*Sunday 14th October 2007 at 3.00 pm - Walsall Town Hall - a "Last Night of the Proms" concert to include:*

*Rossini - Semiramide Overture*  
*Albinoni - Adagio for Organ and Strings*  
*Khatchaturian - Masquerade Suite*  
**An item featuring the winner of Walsall's "Young Musician of the Year" competition**  
*Elgar - Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1*  
*Henry Wood - Fantasia on Sea Songs*  
*Parry - Jerusalem*  
*Strauss - Radetsky March*  
*Edward Sousa - Washington Post March*

*Saturday 17th November 2007 at 7.30 pm - St. Mary's Church, Albrighton*

*Mendelssohn - Overture "The Hebrides"*  
*Prokofiev - Symphony No. 1 in D Major "The Classical Symphony"*  
*Beethoven - Violin Concerto in D Major (Soloist - Nicole Wilson)*

*Saturday 8th March 2008 at 7.30 pm - St. Peters Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton*

*Weber - Overture "Der Freischütz"*  
*William Lloyd Webber - Serenade for Strings*  
*Dvorak - Symphony No. 7 in D Minor*

*Saturday 21st June 2008 at 7.30 pm - Cranmer Methodist Church, Newhampton Road West, Wolverhampton*

*Schubert - Rosamunde Overture*  
*Dvorak - Cello Concerto in B Minor (Soloist - Edward Smith)*  
*Berwald - Sinfonie Singulière*

*(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,  
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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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