

# PROGRAMME

140



Wolverhampton  
Symphony  
Orchestra



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT AT  
CRANMER METHODIST CHURCH,  
WOLVERHAMPTON

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010

PROGRAMME

\*\*\*\*\*

Wagner

*Siegfried Idyll*

Shostakovich

*Piano Concerto No. 2 in F major*

INTERVAL

Beethoven

*Symphony No. 3 in E flat major,  
"Eroica"*

Conductor - Peter Morris  
Leader - Ros Rayner  
Soloist - 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 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).

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.

### **Alastair Moseley - Soloist**

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 before with the Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra, once in 2007 with Mozart's C minor piano concerto and once 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!

### Wilhelm Richard Wagner (1813 - 1883)

#### *Siegfried Idyll*

Wilhelm Richard Wagner was a German composer, conductor, theatre director and essayist, primarily known for his operas (or "music dramas", as they were later called). Unlike most other opera composers, Wagner wrote both the music and libretto for every one of his works. Wagner's compositions, particularly those of his later period, are notable for contrapuntal texture, rich chromaticism, harmonies and orchestration, and elaborate use of leitmotifs: musical themes associated with particular characters, locales or plot elements. Wagner pioneered advances in musical language, such as extreme chromaticism and quickly shifting tonal centres, which greatly influenced the development of European classical music. He transformed musical thought through his idea of Gesamtkunstwerk ("total artwork"), the synthesis of all the poetic, visual, musical and dramatic arts, epitomised by his monumental four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (1876). To try to stage these works as he imagined them, Wagner built his own opera house, the Bayreuth Festspielhaus.

The *Siegfried Idyll*, one of Richard Wagner's few non-operatic works, is a symphonic poem lasting approximately twenty minutes for chamber orchestra. Wagner composed it as a birthday present to his second wife, Cosima, after the birth of their son Siegfried in 1869. It was first performed on the morning of Christmas Eve (Cosima's birthday) in 1870 by a small ensemble on the stairs of their villa at Tribschen (today part of Lucerne) in the Canton of Lucerne, Switzerland; Cosima awoke to its opening melody. Today, it is often performed in Wagner's full orchestral version. Its original title was *Tribschen Idyll* with Fidi's birdsong and the orange sunrise. "Fidi" was the pet version of the name Siegfried. It is thought that the birdsong and the sunrise refer to incidents of personal significance to the couple.

Wagner's opera *Siegfried*, which was not premiered until 1876, incorporates music from the *Idyll*. It was once thought that the *Idyll* simply used musical ideas intended for the opera, but it is now known

that the opposite is the case. Wagner adapted melodic material for the Idyll from an unfinished chamber piece and later incorporated it into the love scene between Siegfried and Brunhilde in the opera. The work also uses a German lullaby, whose title can be translated "Sleep, Baby, Sleep." Wagner published a detailed program for the work which describes his mother singing the boy asleep with a lullaby and then contemplating what he will be like as a young man.

### **Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)** *Piano Concerto No. 2 in F major*

Shostakovich was a Russian composer of the Soviet period and one of the most celebrated composers of the 20th century. Shostakovich achieved fame in the Soviet Union under the patronage of Leon Trotsky's chief of staff Mikhail Tukhachevsky, but later had a complex and difficult relationship with the Stalinist bureaucracy. Despite the official controversy, his works were popular and well received. Shostakovich's orchestral works include 15 symphonies and six concerti. His music for chamber ensembles includes 15 string quartets, a piano quintet and two piano trios. For the piano he composed two solo sonatas, an early set of preludes, and a later set of 24 preludes and fugues. Other works include two operas, and a substantial quantity of film music.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F major, Op. 102, by Dmitri Shostakovich was composed in 1957 for his son Maxim's 19th birthday. Maxim premiered the piece during his graduation at the Moscow Conservatory. It is an uncharacteristically cheerful piece, much more so than most of Shostakovich's works.

#### **Allegro**

The jolly main theme of the first movement is played by the bassoon, which is soon accompanied by the clarinets and oboes. The piano enters unobtrusively with an answering theme, played as single notes in both

hands an octave apart. Soon, the piano picks up the pace with the British sea shanty melody 'Drunken Sailor'. A new theme in d minor, unisons two octaves apart on the piano, gives an oriental, songlike effect, winding down to nothing when an abrupt blast from the orchestra leads into tumultuous and jumping octaves in the lower piano register while the orchestra plays the original piano melody fortissimo. This section is marked by the occasional appearance of the soloist in the upper register playing the 'What shall we do with a drunken sailor' theme, as well as tumbling chromatic chords and runs. The piano builds in a triplet pattern to introduce the recapitulation of the main theme in a triumphant tutti. At the climax, everything comes to a silent pause, and the piano comes in with an almost fugue-like counterpoint solo. After a minute of the fugue, the orchestra comes back in playing the melody in the high winds. The orchestra builds on the main melody while the piano plays scales and tremolos, which lead into a joyous few lines of chords and octaves by the piano, with the main theme finally resurfacing and bringing the movement to a bouncy close.

#### **Andante**

The second movement is far more subdued and romantic, almost as if Shostakovich tried his hand at a Chopin Nocturne. The mood is tender with a touch of melancholy. Strings start gently in C minor, with a short introduction before the piano comes in with a beautiful, ecstatic triplet theme in C major. Although it remains slow throughout, and with a comparatively small range, it is marked by the recurrence of two- or four-on-three rhythms, as well as the remarkable amount of expressiveness available for such a seemingly easy piece.

#### **Allegro**

The finale is a lively dance in duple time, making much use of pentatonic scales and modes. Soon, the second theme is introduced, in 7/8 time, with the piano accompanied by balalaika-like pizzicato strings. This carries on for a short time before a new motif arrives in "Hanon" exercise mode, with scales in sixths and semiquaver runs, this

being the joke for Maxim's graduation. These three themes are then developed and interwoven before a final statement of the 7/8 theme and finally a virtuoso coda in F major.

## INTERVAL

### Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827) *Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, "Eroica"*

Ludwig van Beethoven was a German composer and pianist. He was a crucial figure in the transitional period between the Classical and Romantic eras in Western classical music, and remains one of the most acclaimed and influential composers of all time. Born in Bonn, he moved to Vienna in his early twenties and settled there, studying with Joseph Haydn and quickly gaining a reputation as a virtuoso pianist. His hearing began to deteriorate in the late 1790s, yet he continued to compose, conduct, and perform, even after becoming completely deaf.

Eroica Symphony stems very strongly from eighteenth-century practices of symphonic composition but, like a great earthquake, it created a huge fissure between everything that came before and the orchestral style that developed in the following decades.

The sharp "hammerstroke" chords that open the symphony are a heroic imitation of the three loud chords heard in countless tiny, frivolous little Italian sinfonias composed in Naples and Milan in the 1730s. They had merely been used to silence a noisy audience, but Beethoven made them into huge structural pillars that recur at crucial junctures throughout the first movement of the Eroica Symphony. And as in thousands of its predecessors, Beethoven's Third Symphony opens with a simple theme that rocks gently up and down the notes of the E-flat major triad.

Though the first-movement exposition is set forth as a typical set of short, pithy themes, the energy gathered in them foretells the scope of the symphony's musical structure. He avoids the main thematic

materials during the first half of the development section, concentrating on materials previously heard in relatively less important transitional episodes between the exposition's main themes. But developmental proceedings are suddenly interrupted by a brand new theme, in the quite foreign key of E-minor. Beethoven gradually introduces the opening triadic theme in a variety of tonalities that eventually lead back to the main key of E-flat major and a recapitulation of all the thematic material. He appends a long coda to the movement, reintroducing the new theme as one of its dramatic events.

The grand and solemn funeral march that comprises the slow movement features contrasts of somber, heroic and elegiac sentiments. It is cast in a very large three-part form with a fughetta dramatically delaying the return of the main C minor theme.

The Scherzo, with its pizzicato string effects, its contrasting horn colors in the trio section, its stubborn syncopations and changes of meter, is a virtuoso symphonic movement and a prime example of Beethoven's Jovian laughter. Its exuberant high spirits are capped only by the Olympian set of variations that conclude the symphony.

Where Mozart or Haydn would normally have placed such variations in a slow movement, Beethoven dared to make them a symphonic climax. Not only are the nine variations based upon two distinct themes, they include two complicated fugal sections, a stormy "Turkish" march in the sixth variation, and two seraphic variations that lead to a magnificent five-section coda. Beethoven ends the movement with another set of fierce "hammerstroke" chords.

## WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

### Violin 1

Ros Rayner (*Leader*)  
Corinne Walters  
Barbara Carter  
Alice Rayner  
Francis Bunch  
James Hamilton  
Catherine Rayner  
Jon Harper  
Ann Perry

### Violin 2

Anne Forster  
Hilary Hurd  
Jenny Bailey  
Rosie Shuttleworth  
Margaret Myatt  
Ken Hawkins  
Georgina Crane  
Suman Kanchan  
David Naylor  
Samantha Spilsbury  
Philip Ward

### Viola

David Cope  
Liz Fleetham  
Alain Anderton  
Sharon Bayley

### Cello

Sarah Tulley  
Roger Hides  
Sheila Moore  
Jean Waller  
Tim Forster  
Ian Sumner  
Sarah Carter  
Margaret Bell

### Double Bass

Sarah Smith  
John Mason  
Robert Crawford

### Flute

Di Manasseh  
Kathryn Russon  
Jane Eminson

### Oboe

Alison Reynolds  
Rachel Orotayo

### Clarinet

Di Cotterell  
Lynn Curtis

### Bassoon

Jill Sparke  
Jan Riley

### Horns

Sara Shepherd  
Jill Brittle  
Percy Cotterell  
Robin Hopper

### Trumpets

Chris Cumming  
Jenny Holt

### Timpani

Laura Birch

### Percussion

Peter Rayner

## WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FURTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

19th June 2010 - Holy Trinity Church,  
Heathtown, Wolverhampton

Malcolm Arnold - Tam O'Shanter Overture  
Saint-Saëns - Danse Macabre  
Humperdinck - Excerpts from the opera, Hansel and Gretel  
Ravel - Ma Mere L'Oye (Mother Goose Suite)  
Mussorgsky - Pictures at an Exhibition

All concerts start at 7.30 pm  
Ticket prices for the 2009-2010 season will be £9 and £7 (unwaged),



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](http://www.wolsymorc.org.uk)  
or e-mail us at [info@wolsymorc.org.uk](mailto:info@wolsymorc.org.uk)

*Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is a registered charity No. 1040991*