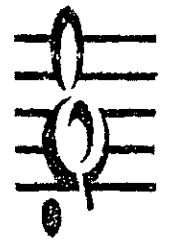


PROGRAMME

147.



Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**CONCERT AT
CRANMER METHODIST CHURCH**

Saturday 3rd March 2012

PROGRAMME

Khachaturian	Spartacus Suite No. 2
Fauré	Pavane
Bach	Brandenburg Concerto No.4

INTERVAL

Bartok	Concerto for Orchestra
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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 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 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.

147.

Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978) Spartacus Suite No. 2

Khachaturian came from Armenia, a far south area of the then Soviet Union. In 1956 he wrote his ballet, *Spartacus*, which he based on the uprising by slaves in ancient Rome in around 70 B.C. This event drew several parallels with the socialist political action that was taking place at the time, where masses of ordinary people were rising up against the authorities. The Soviet authorities put a political spin on the ballet but Khachaturian didn't mind, simply using it as a skeleton for a dramatic story and exciting music; gladiators, soldiers, girls, a love story, and of course a hero.

Following the ballet's success both by the Bolshoi in Moscow and the Kirov in Leningrad, Khachaturian extracted three different suites of contrasting dance music. This is the second suite, which is split into four movements.

i. Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia

This movement depicts the love scene between hero Spartacus and his wife Phrygia. A glorious main theme pervades the movement, with two contrasting themes in between. This movement earned the *Spartacus Suites* a new wave of interest when it was used for the popular BBC drama series *The Onedin Line* in the 1970s.

ii. Entrance of Merchants, Dance of a Roman Courtesan, General Dance

Three different sections make up this movement, each depicting a different area of ancient Roman society. The Entrance of Merchants is fast and gritty, and is followed by a slow, seductive section. This is the Dance of a Roman Courtesan. The movement ends with a fast-paced, energetic General Dance.

iii. Entrance of Spartacus, Quarrel, Treachery of Harmodius

This movement leads straight on from the dances, and begins with the grand entry of Spartacus. It develops into a dramatic, fast and furious quarrel, signalled by bursts of quavers moving through irregular time signatures. The quarrel eventually turns down, allowing the movement to end on a quieter, more sombre note.

iv. Dance of the Pirates

A fast tempo and constant movement give this movement its pirate like mood. It is a short movement, but becomes constantly more exciting as it goes on through the use of offbeat accents, catchy motifs and large crescendos.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Pavane

In 1886, the year before his proclaimed Requiem, Fauré wrote his Pavane. Initially orchestral parts were written for the Parisian Jules Danbé, who conducted the Opera-Comique and directed the Conservatoire concerts. However, Danbé did not perform the work. Fauré transferred it into the care of influential Countess Greffulhe, whose cousin Robert Montesquiou wrote words to fit it. These chorus parts are seldom heard today. In the late 19th century, some French composers began to adopt ideals from the classical period or even before, as a rejection of Wagner's increasingly overbearing shadow. This can certainly be seen in Faure's Pavane.

The Pavane was a 16th century stately dance from Padua. In the local dialect the region was pronounced 'Pava', hence the name Pavane. It had been forgotten about until its rediscovery in the late 19th century by Fauré and other composers such as Saint-Saens, who included an example of it in his 1879 opera *Etienne Marcel*.

The piece opens with a haunting flute melody, which returns following a stern middle section. The periodic nature of the tune gives it an air of mythical French culture. The harmonies are often modal, and feature prominently flattened sevenths and sharpened fourths, but seem reluctant to use perfect cadence. This means that there is far less dramatic tension than in other tonal music from the same time. The clear rhythmic structure of Pavane makes it perfect for dancing. The dancers repeatedly take two single steps and a double hopping step, which are supported by the constant and gentle although never explicitly played pulse underneath the music. Fauré had sometimes been criticised for monotonous rhythms, but the use of rhythmic repetition in Pavane is an undeniable strength.

In 1903, Debussy said, "The play of the graceful, fleeting lines described by Faure's music may be compared to the gesture of a beautiful woman without either suffering for comparison."

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G Major

Soloists: Ros Rayner (violin), Kathryn Russon, Di Mannassah (flutes)

Bach wrote his six Brandenburg concertos, along with several violin works, while working as Kapellmeister at the court of Prince Leopold in Cöthen. Because Prince Leopold was part of the Reformed church, there was no need for elaborate religious music, which gave Bach time to write the bulk of his instrumental music during his time there, including concertos, sonatas and orchestral suites. In 1721, Bach sent the six concertos along with a letter to Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg, who he hoped may be interested in hiring him. Although the concertos were never performed or even acknowledged by Brandenburg, the name became attached to them many years later.

Each of the concertos requires a different arrangement of instruments. No.4 employs a tutti string section, a solo violin, and two solo *flauti*, which would have originally be played by treble recorders but are generally represented by flutes today. In the outer movements especially, the violin solo tends to dominate, with a virtuosic part which gives the piece the feel of a solo concerto. The flutes are sometimes considered to be a solo unit because they spend so much time working in parallel, although there are some contrapuntal episodes where they break apart.

The concerto is made up of three movements:

i. Allegro

This is one of the longest Baroque opening movements ever written; the opening ritornello alone would have been long enough for some composers. This is a graceful dancelike movement, dominated by the solo violin part, which evolves into flurrying semiquavers of scales.

ii. Andante

The solo violin takes on a more subservient role here, making the partnership between the three soloists more equal. This movement has a far more reflective, calm mood, and, unlike the other two, is in a minor key.

iii. Presto

This final movement is a fugue, and its contrapuntal aspects make it the most substantial of the three. On occasions, the solo violin interrupts the fugue with

displays of technical virtuosity. However, the fugue theme always returns, bringing the concerto to an exhilarating end.

INTERVAL

Béla Bartók (181-1945) Concerto for Orchestra

This work – one of Bartók's biggest and most accessible – was commissioned by the Koussevitzky foundation in 1943 and performed in Boston USA on Dec 1, 1944. Bartók had fled his native Hungary in 1940 and settled in the USA.

A number of characteristics of Bartók's music are on display here. There are recognisably Eastern European folk melodies; the 5-movement structure is a kind of arch, where the 1st and 5th movements share a mood; as does the 2nd with the 4th; and the central movement has palindromic features and uses one of Bartók's "night music" textures where the night sounds of insects and animals in a Hungarian village are clearly heard.

The title tells us that Bartók features many different sections of the orchestra in a soloistic way – either individually, in pairs or as whole sections.

i. Introduzione.

This begins with a slow introduction making great use of the interval of a fourth and is followed by an exciting fast movement in classical sonata form, where the main themes are heard several times.

ii. Game of the couples.

Here the side drum introduces pairs of instruments each of whom play the same tune as the other, but a different distance apart. The bassoons are a 6th apart; the oboes in 3rds; the clarinets 7 notes apart; the flutes in 5ths and the trumpets in 2nds. After a chorale like section on the brass, the pairs return – sometimes with extra partners, sometimes at the same time as another pair. All will become clear!

iii. Elegy

The slow movement contains 3 themes which evolve from the first movement. They are framed by Bartók's delicate 'night music' texture.

iv. Intermezzo interrotto

Some of Bartók's most beautiful and soul-searching themes appear here. However, Bartók also chooses to mock the main theme of Shostakovich's 7th symphony, which had been produced in the horrific siege of Leningrad in 1941. While this is very funny and cleverly managed it does beg the question of why Bartók, writing this from the safety of the USA, chose to parody a Russian theme written in such dire circumstances.

v. Finale

This is another sonata form movement with some instrumental fireworks and some obviously folk tune interludes.

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Ros Rayner (*Leader*)
Jonathan Harper
Barbara Carter
Francis Bunch
Jo Jordan
Ella Harold

Double Bass

John Davis
David Charlesworth

Flute

Kathryn Russon
Di Manasseh
Jane Eminson

Horns

Sara Shepherd
Jill Brittle
Percy Cotterell
Robin Hopper

Trumpets

Chris Cumming
Jenny Holt

Violin 2

Anne Forster
Hilary Hurd
Jenny Bailey
Michael Clements
Ken Hawkins
Margaret Myatt
Samantha Spilsbury
Philip Ward

Oboe

Richard Anderson
Rachel Orotayo
Duncan Spiers

Trombones

Mike Griffiths
Philippa Done
Jim Rothnie

Clarinet

Lynn Curtis
Di Cotterell
Lisa Wilson

Tuba

Joe Barnett

Percussion

James Vickers
Phil James

Viola

David Cope
Alan Anderton
Liz Fleetham
Sharon Bayley
Rory Freckleton

Bassoon

Jill Sparke
Jan Riley
Mike Darke

Timpani

Peter Rayner

Cello

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

Continuo

James Luxton

Harp

Stephanie Roberts-Mosely

**WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
FURTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES**

**Saturday 23rd June 2012 at 7.30 pm
Cranmer Methodist Church, Wolverhampton**

Mozart – Marriage of Figaro Overture
Elgar – Cello Concerto - Soloist: Sarah Tulley
Shostakovich - Symphony No. 10

Ticket prices for the 2011-2012 season will be £9, £7 (unwaged), £5 NUS, Under 18s free
(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

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