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Saturday, 21st June 2015

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**Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra  
2015-16 season**

**Saturday 12th March 2016**

A Russian Celebration to include  
Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture  
and Symphony No. 4

**Saturday 25th June 2016**

An evening at the movies  
to include Star Wars, Jurassic Park  
and Schindlers List

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**WOLVERHAMPTON  
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

*Overture Die Fledermaus*  
Johann Strauss

*Suite Algerienne*  
Camille Saint-Saens

*Horn Concerto No.2*  
Richard Strauss

*Symphony No.3*  
Johannes Brahms



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# Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

A concert at

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Saturday 21st November 2015

Johann Strauss

Overture to Die FlederMaus

Camille Saint-Säans

Suite Algérienne

Richard Strauss

Concerto no 2 for French Horn  
and Orchestra

Interval

Johannes Brahms

Symphony no 3

## 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. We have been invited on several occasions to perform major choral works with local choral societies, in 1999 performing Beethoven's Choral Symphony to commemorate our 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, 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. We are financed through concert receipts and by an annual subscription paid by the members. We are also affiliated to Making Music (formerly the National Federation of Music Societies).

Recently, in addition to its normal programme of full orchestral concerts, the orchestra has performed a number of smaller concerts in aid of local charities. We are currently exploring, as members of the city's music hub, partnerships with Wolverhampton Music School and the Birmingham Conservatoire.

### **Peter Morris—Musical director**

Peter Morris has conducted the orchestra since 2004. He was a cathedral chorister at Chester and Manchester, went to Chetham's School in Manchester and read music at Durham University. He was appointed Director of Music at Bluecoat School, Walsall at the age of 22 and subsequently taught at St. Peter's School in Wolverhampton. He conducted Walsall Choral Society for 30 years and in 2000/2001 he was awarded the Medaille d'Honneur of the French National Association of Music and a Master's degree in history at Keele University.

Peter is now Director of Music at St Peter's Collegiate Church, Borough Organist at Walsall Town Hall, Chairman of Wolverhampton's Music Education Hub and has a number of examining roles at GCSE and A-level, including Chief Examiner. He lives in Wolverhampton.

### **Ros Rayner - Leader and violin soloist in 'The Lark Ascending'**

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.

### **John Davy French Horn soloist**

John Davy studied at Trinity College of Music under Gordon Carr, Jeff Bryant, Michael Murray and subsequently Tim Jackson. Since graduating he has had a varied and exciting career performing with professional orchestras throughout the UK as well as on many West End and touring shows including South Pacific, Les Miserables and West Side Story. He is currently the Principal Horn on the hit West End show Miss Saigon. John is also presently playing with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. As well as his work with the BBC Orchestra he also performs regularly with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra,, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. He was also principal horn in Junction 10 Orchestra.

When not playing the horn, John likes to spend time walking his Border Collie Sophie, cycling and testing out the south-east London drinking establishments.

## Overture to *Die Fledermaus*

Johann Strauss (1825 - 1899)



Unique sounds and styles help define the music of countries around the world and few styles are more recognizable than the Viennese Waltz. The light, airy instrumentation and arrangements, the harmonic stylings, and the notable melodies all highlight the genre that has become all but synonymous with the ringing in of each new year through the New Year's Day concert from Vienna.

Johann Strauss the younger was born and died in Vienna. He composed this operetta in 1874, using a libretto adapted from a German farce as well as a French vaudeville play. The operetta follows the fallout of a prank played on a local official, who awakens after a night of revelry in a park, wearing a bat costume (*Fledermaus* is German for 'bat'). A revenge plot and many antics ensue.

The popular overture has been a concert favourite for decades, with the highlight being the centrepiece waltz of the full operetta.

## Suite Algérienne

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921)

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Saint-Saëns took frequent holidays in Algeria. In July 1879, he wrote a *Rêverie Orientale* for a concert arranged by the pianist Wilhelmina Szavardy to benefit the victims of a flood in the Szégédin district of her native Hungary. The *Rêverie* was a musical memento of the composer's moonlight visit to the exotic Algerian town of Blidah five years before, and in July 1880, while on a seaside holiday at Boulogne-sur-mer, he surrounded it with three other orchestral postcards to create the *Suite Algérienne*. It was first performed in Paris the same month.

1. Prelude. Saint-Saëns writes:

*In sight of Algiers.*

*From the bridge of a ship, shaken up by a heavy swell, we can see the panorama of the town of Algiers. We can hear a variety of sounds and cries and in a last rocking motion we anchor in the harbour.*

2. Rhapsodie Mauresque (Moorish Rhapsody)

*In a number of Moorish Cafés in the old town, the Arabs enjoy costume dances, in turn sexy or wild, to the sound of flutes, folk stringed instruments and tambourines.*

3. *Rêverie du Soir*

*Evening dreams in Blidah*

4. March Militaire Française

*Return to Algiers. In the picturesque bazaars and cafés we can hear the increasing step of a French regiment; the military sounds contrasting with the strange rhythms and languorous melodies of the Orient.*

This march speaks not only of Saint-Saëns' patriotic pride but also of the colonial domination that France had held in Algeria for the preceding three decades. Even at the age of 86 he was still spending winters in Algiers but just before Christmas 1921 he died of a heart attack there.

## Concerto No 2 for French Horn and Orchestra

Richard Strauss (1864 - 1949)

1. Allegro
2. Andante con moto
3. Rondo (allegro molto)

Back we go to Vienna. Richard Strauss's father, Franz Strauss, was the principal horn of the Bavarian Court Orchestra in Munich for nearly 50 years, and one of the great horn virtuosos of his day. Richard's lifelong devotion to the music of Mozart started very young, and he could not have helped absorbing all of the technical and expressive possibilities of the horn, which he heard his father practising daily throughout his youth.

Unsurprisingly one of his early works was the First Horn Concerto, written in 1883. It was the year of Wagner's death, and the year the nineteen-year old composer left university. It was written for his father to perform (though the elder Strauss declared it too difficult). Sixty years later, when the Second Horn Concerto was being written, Strauss was in Vienna - a target for regular allied bombing missions, and this concerto was written as a tribute to his father's memory. He only intended it to be performed once, and that is reflected in its absolute straightforwardness of mood. Barely a hint of the war that raged as he wrote it in 1942 is to be heard. Beyond the occasional moment that hints of darker things, the concerto exists largely in a Mozartean utopia, the hunting calls that abound perhaps an echo of an imagined past when life was more chivalrous, less complicated. Whilst Strauss expressed himself as particularly pleased with the final movement, the entire work reveals the hand of a master, a flexibility and freedom of form, together with an enormous skill at elaborating musical ideas drawn from the complex of motives that open the work. There are three movements.

The orchestration has some memorable touches, most strikingly the great moment when, at the climax of the last movement, the horns in the orchestra join forces with the soloist for a riotous version of the main theme. The elegant flamboyance of this finale, indeed of the work as a whole, belies the composer's age of 78.

## Symphony no 3

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Although Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, he spent most of the last 35 years of his life in Vienna. His Symphony No. 3 was composed and first performed in Vienna in 1883.

Brahms needed an unusually long time to develop an individual style. Much of the difficulty sprang from his awe of Beethoven, even though many of his supporters and colleagues saw him as the earlier composer's true symphonic heir. "I shall never write a symphony," he told conductor Hermann Levi. "You have no idea how the likes of us feel when we hear the tramp of a giant like him (Beethoven) behind us."

Time and experience eventually convinced him to renounce that vow. Some 20 years passed after he began work on his first symphony before he felt it was ready to be played in public. The premiere in 1876 won Brahms great success, confirming in his mind that he really did possess the necessary skills to follow in Beethoven's footsteps as a great composer of symphonic music.

The Third is a more individual and characteristic symphony than its two predecessors. In its striking mixture of passion and pessimism, of restlessness and serenity, Brahms offers a compelling, highly revealing musical self portrait. "What harmonious mood pervades the whole!" his close friend, Clara Schumann, wrote to him after playing through the symphony at the piano. "All the movements seem to be of one piece, one beat of the heart, each one a jewel." It is the shortest of his four symphonies.

One of its most striking features is that all four movements end quietly. Such an unusually reserved practice reveals the degree of confidence that Brahms had attained by this point in his career, and also perhaps a growing pessimism. The opening movement (*Allegro con brio*) is rich with incident and feeling. Surges of emotion, positive and doubting alike, roll across its richly textured surface. The following two movements are peaceful interludes. Only at the climax of the second movement (*Andante*) does its overall atmosphere of almost rustic gentleness give way to a more heated style of utterance. The third movement (*Poco allegretto*) is a dance: slow, melancholy, hauntingly beautiful. The symphony's emotional conflicts are resumed in the finale (*Allegro*), only to dissipate, unresolved, as the music winds down to a resigned, almost exhausted coda, reflecting the harmonic idea with which the symphony began.

# Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

## Violin 1

Ros Rayner  
Jonathan Harper  
Caroline Meads  
Susan Bellingham  
Ty Rowley  
Jo Jordan  
Sarah Wynne  
Adria Dongo Munoz  
Dylan Edge  
Rachel Dunlop  
Jennie Lewis  
Francis Bunch

## Violin 2

Claire Shaw  
Hilary Hurd  
Ken Hawkins  
Margaret Myatt  
Michael Clement  
Philip Ward  
Anne Forster  
Alex Dongo  
Amy Price  
Cloe Godfrey  
Anne Forster

## Viola

David Cope  
Alain Anderton  
Liz Fleetham  
Rory Freckleton  
Sharon Bayley-Kitts  
Peter Whitehead

## Cello

Sarah Tulley  
Jean Waller  
Sheila Moore  
Margaret Bell  
Ian Sumner  
Tim Forster  
Fiona Daniel

## Double Bass

Sharleen Jones  
David Charlesworth

## Flute

Jane Eminson  
Diana Manasseh  
Claire Lakin

## Oboe

Rachel Orotayo  
Jane Gledhill

## Clarinet

Di Cotterell  
Lynn Curtis

## Bassoon

Jill Sparke  
Jan Riley

## Horn

Sara Shepherd  
Jill Brittle  
Percy Cotterell  
Robin Hopper

## Trumpet

Chris Cumming  
Daniel Byant

## Trombone

Laurence Hopper  
Mike Griffiths  
Bernard Moses

## Timpani

Phil James

## Percussion

Harry Bent  
Miriam Kitchener

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.