



WOLVERHAMPTON
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Saturday
25th June 2022
7.30pm

Grieg

Peer Gynt Suite No 1

Kodály

Hary Janos Suite

Prokofiev

Symphony No 5

Conductor: Peter Morris

Leader: Ros Rayner

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Compton Road, Wolverhampton, WV3 9RB

Tickets: £10

Available **on the door** or at

www.ticketsource.co.uk/wolverhamptonsymphonyorchestra

All students in full time education enter free

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Saturday June 25th 2022

Edvard Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1

Zoltan Kodaly: Hary Janos Suite

Sergei Prokofiev: Symphony No 5

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Welcome to another WSO concert!

WSO was formed in 1973. The next season is our Golden Jubilee. Membership is around 55 players and is drawn from keen amateur musicians, students and teachers in Wolverhampton and the surrounding areas. The orchestra meets weekly during term time and produces around three concerts a year, as well as an annual play-day focussing on a major work and attracting musicians from far and wide.

We are financed through subscriptions, are affiliated to *Making Music* and have a partnership arrangement with the city's Music Education Hub.

WSO is very grateful to Wolverhampton Grammar School for their help with the use of instruments.

Peter Morris – Musical Director

This is Peter's 70th concert with WSO. He is the Organist of Walsall Town Hall and at St Michael's Church, Tettenhall. He studied at Durham and Keele and has Fellowships from Wolverhampton University, the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors and the Royal Society of Arts. He was awarded the Medaille d'honneur de la Confédération Musicale de France in 2000.

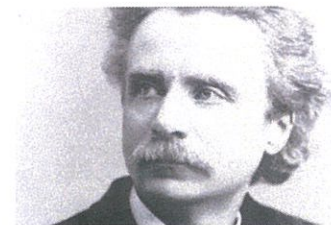
Ros Rayner - Leader

Ros studied the violin at the Royal Academy of Music and was appointed leader of the Symphony Orchestra in 1996. She teaches at Wolverhampton Girls' High School.

Georgie Lewis and **Arjun Toora** are members of the Wolverhampton Youth Orchestra who are performing in Hary Janos as part of the collaboration between the Wolverhampton's Symphony Orchestra and Music School, through the city's Music Education Hub. We are delighted to welcome them and thank the Hub for their support of this concert.

Peer Gynt Suite No 1

Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907)

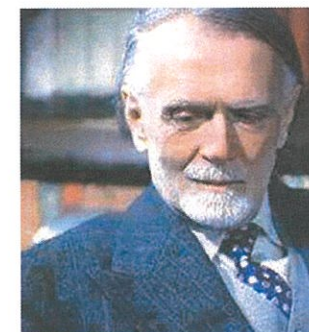


Peer Gynt was written by Grieg in 1876 as incidental musical to Ibsen's play of the same name. Peer was an arrogant but charming Norwegian 'peasant' who abducts a bride from her wedding and then abandons her to travel the world. The movements are:

1. Morning (Morning Mood in the desert): The Prelude to Act IV of the play.
2. The Death of Åse: Peer Gynt has returned home to find his mother is dying.
3. Anitra's Dance: Peer has become very rich after solving the riddle of the Sphinx. In Morocco Anitra dances seductively and steals all his money.
4. In the Hall of the Mountain King: Peer is captured and refuses to marry the King's daughter and become a troll.

Hary Janos

Zoltan Kodaly (1882 – 1967)



Our second piece on the theme of tall stories told by charming peasants comes from Hungary. It is firmly based, like much of Kodaly's work, on Hungarian folk melodies. Kodaly, along with Bartok, Dohnanyi, Janacek and Vaughan Williams, shared a strong affinity with a generation of composers who would both express their national identity by using their country's folk music and preserve it before it was lost.

This is the story of Hary Janos (or in modern times it would be Janos Hary): Taken from the opera of the same name we hear of an old soldier who claims that he took part in the Napoleonic Wars and that his imaginary exploits had become legendary. Sitting in the pub in his village he would tell anyone who would like to listen of his early life.

1. Prelude. The tale begins.

The opening bars of the music demonstrate the old Hungarian custom of sneezing when someone tells a tall story. Janos is a border guard who comes to the attention of the Empress, Marie Louise, the wife of Napoleon, when he helps her to cross the border. She falls in love with him and takes him to Vienna where he hears the music of

2. The Viennese Musical Clock

3. Dal (Love Song)

There is a little tender music accompanied by the sound of the Cimbalom (a traditional Hungarian string instrument played by small leather hammers).

4. The Battle and Defeat of Napoleon

Napoleon's Minister, because he is also in love with the Empress and therefore is jealous of Hary Janos, declares war on Vienna. Janos single-handedly defeats the armies of Napoleon by mighty strokes of his sword. We can hear the terror of the soldiers and also of Napoleon who is found behind a rock with his knees knocking and teeth chattering.

5. Intermezzo

The Empress is even more in love with Janos for his exploits and he is given a hero's welcome in Vienna.

6. Entrance of the Emperor and his Court

The Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire himself arrives and offers the hand of his daughter and half the Kingdom to Janos.

Wolverhampton's famous musicologist, Dr Percy Young, who knew Kodaly and wrote his biography, says 'Now confident that true happiness lies in his love for his girlfriend from his own village, Hary dismisses the Empress and returns home with his sweetheart, to spend the rest of his days in recounting and embellishing his memories.'

SHORT INTERVAL

Symphony No 5 in B flat (Op.100)

Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)



Prokofiev was born in Ukraine. He studied in St Petersburg and left Russia after the 1917 Revolution to live in the USA, Germany and Paris. The Great Depression limited his opportunities and he returned to the USSR in 1936 with his family. There he wrote *Peter and the Wolf*, *Lieutenant Kije* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

In 1944, he worked on his Fifth Symphony at an artist's retreat far outside Moscow, where he had been evacuated to safety from the war. Soviet troops were starting their final advance into German-held territory. On the night of January 13, 1945, when the symphony was premiered in Moscow, artillery fired a salute to the 1st Ukrainian Front, which had broken through German defences hundreds of miles to the west. *Time* magazine later reported: "The first distant volley shook the hall. A lanky, bald-headed man in white tie and tails... mounted the podium and stood and bowed his head, facing Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra. He seemed to be counting the rumbles of artillery. At the 20th, he raised his baton and began the world's premiere of his newest symphony. The bald-headed conductor was Russia's greatest living musician, Sergei Prokofiev."

"I conceived of it as glorifying the grandeur of the human spirit," Prokofiev said, "praising the free and happy man—his strength, his generosity, and the purity of his soul."

In later times, Prokofiev found himself accused, with other composers (notably Shostakovich), of 'formalism.' The accusation most frequently came from the very top (Stalin) and those around him. Many artists despaired of the constraints of this slur on their work. 'In the work of Comrade Prokofiev natural emotion and melody has been replaced by grunting and scraping'. He found these attacks very stressful and must have wished for something to relieve these pressures from above. However, ironically, he died on the same day as Comrade Stalin, 5th March, 1953.

The Music

This symphony is, above all, a melodic piece. Not in the sense that Grieg used melody, or Kodaly used folk song, but in constantly developing and repeating fragments of melody.

Beginning with a fragment of gentle rising melody first heard in the lower strings, the music then leads to a soft, contrasting second theme in the flute and oboe. One last theme then appears in the violins and brass, followed by a skittish figure in the strings. The opening melody then returns in the cellos and double basses as these melodies are fragmented, recombined, and made to interact with each other. After a lyrical yet intense development, the opening melody returns in the trumpets. The other melodies return as well, leading to a grand but foreboding ending based on that first melody.

The second movement is a fast scherzo, full of Prokofiev's characteristically sardonic sense of humour. The music dodges around unpredictably, as if the orchestra is engaged in an elaborate game of cat and mouse. A slightly slower middle section appears with a more lyrical melody in the woodwind. The return to the scherzo is a frighteningly gradual crescendo where the music slowly gets faster and louder.

The third movement is a slow and deeply felt meditation. It begins with a long, twisting melody passed among the woodwind before soaring in the strings. The sudden surges to the highest notes of the violins are particularly expressive. A new, urgent melody appears in the lower strings accompanied by a Morse code-like pulsing in the piano and clarinets, leading to a more ominous melody in the trumpet and bassoon recalling the style of a funeral march. The melodies conflict with each other, becoming increasingly tumultuous. After a violent outburst, a high, delicate version of the opening lyrical melody returns.

The last movement begins with a dialogue between the sections of the orchestra that recalls the opening of the symphony. The solo clarinet then launches into a quick, vivacious theme. This melody alternates with contrasting sections, and many ideas from the previous movements reappear. The symphony ends in a wild and brilliant coda.

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Violin 1	Viola	Flute & Piccolo	Horn
Ros Rayner	David Cope	Jane Eminson	Sara Shepherd
Francis Bunch	Alain Anderton	Di Manasseh	Jill Brittle
Jonathan Harper	Sharon Bayley-Kitts	Claire Lakin	Sarah Gee
Barbara Carter	Michael Clement		Robin Hopper
Fiona Fraser	Elizabeth Fleetham	Oboe	Joe Clarkson
Caroline Meads	Ruth Srodinsky	Duncan Speirs	
Margaret Mascarenhas	Anselm Waters	Rachel Orotayo	Trumpet
Sarah Wynne		Cor Anglais	Chris Cummings
	Cello	Jane Gledhill	Paul Dyson
			Bob Thompson
Violin 2	Sarah Tulley	Clarinet	
Claire Tilt	Margaret Bell	Ros Jacom	Trombone
Jenny Bailey	Louise Lawrie	Lisa Wilson	Laurence Hopper
Jo Bircher	Ian McCarthy	E flat Clarinet	Neil Venables
Donna Booth	Ian Sumner	Huw Daniels	Bernard Moses
Barbara Bostock	Julie Robertson	Bass Clarinet	
Rory Freckleton	Jean Waller	David Beauchamp	Tuba
Hilary Hurd	Arjun Toora*		Joe Barnett
Philip Ward		Alto Saxophone	
Georgie Lewis*	Double Bass	Jo Bircher	Timpani
	Holly Anderson		Ian Richards
Cimbalom	Mark Goodhew	Bassoon	Percussion
Rory Freckleton	Sharleen Jones	Sean Massey	Rowan Bendall
	Moray Jones	Michael Darke	Zoë Bendall
Piano / Celeste		Contrabassoon	Jonathan Pearce
Michael Dutton		Chris Long	Alex Walton

Forthcoming WSO events

October 29th 10.0 – 4.00

Wolverhampton Music School

COME AND PLAY (or Come and Hear at 3.00 pm)

in association with the Music Education Hub

Sibelius: Symphony No. 6

November 19th 7.30 pm

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Music by Women Composers

Ethel Smyth: Overture: The Wreckers

Cécile Chaminade: Flute Concertino

Amy Beach: Gaelic Symphony

Soloist Leila Hooton

March 18th 2023 7.30 pm

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 (The Unfinished)

Fauré: Pavane

Stravinsky: Symphony No. 1

June 24th 2023 7.30 pm

Wolverhampton Grammar School

Bizet: Carmen Suites

Rodrigo: Guitar Concerto

Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol

Ravel: Pavane for a dead Infanta

Chabrier: España

July 9th 2022 St Mary's Church Albrighton 7.30 pm

Wolverhampton Chamber Choir

Music for Royal Occasions