



# BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**CONDUCTOR - ADRIAN BROWN**

**LEADER - BERNARD BROOK**

## PROGRAMME

**SATURDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MARCH 2003 AT 7.45PM**  
**THE GREAT HALL, RAVENSBORNE SCHOOL, BROMLEY**

**£1.00**

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# PROGRAMME

**VERDI** — OVERTURE 'SICILIAN VESPERS'

**BERLIOZ** - DRAMATIC SYMPHONY 'ROMEO & JULIET'  
(EXCERPTS)

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**INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES**

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**ARNOLD** - SYMPHONY No 5

## Letter from Sir Malcolm Arnold

To Adrian Brown ARAM & Bromley Symphony Orchestra.

Dear Adrian.

Thank-you so much for your kind invitation, sadly I cannot be with you at this time as I will be in the States and do not return until the end of April.

Thank-you so much for programming my Symphony Five which I hope the orchestra will enjoy learning and playing.

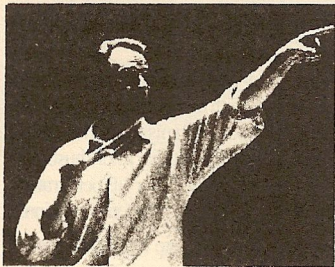
I wish you all a great concert and I hope the audience enjoy my piece. My thoughts will be with you on this special evening.

Sir Malcolm Arnold

## ADRIAN BROWN – CONDUCTOR

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John Carmichael



After graduating from the Royal Academy of Music in London, Adrian Brown studied with Sir Adrian Boult with whom he worked for several years. He remains the only British conductor to have reached the finals of the Karajan Conductors' Competition and the Berlin Philharmonic was the first professional orchestra he conducted.

In 1992 he was engaged to conduct one of the great orchestras of the world, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra and was immediately invited to return. In 1998 he was invited to work with the Camerata Salzburg, one of

Europe's foremost chamber orchestras and again he was invited back. Adrian works regularly with many leading British orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony, the BBC Symphony, the BBC Scottish Symphony and the London Sinfonietta. He is also a great proponent of contemporary music and has several first performances to his credit

Working with young musicians has been an area where Adrian has made a singular contribution to the musical life of Britain and also further afield. He has been a frequent visitor to conduct both the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, working closely with Sir Colin Davis and Sir Roger Norrington, and the National Youth Wind Orchestra. He regularly runs courses for young musicians and his success in this general area was recognised when he was given the Novello Award for Youth Orchestras at the 1989 Edinburgh Festival conducting Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra with whom he has been Musical Director for thirty years.

He recently returned to the Royal Academy of Music on a number of occasions, to work with their Senior Orchestra. He has been a regular chairman of the jury for the National Association of Youth Orchestras' Conducting Competition. In 1996 he went to Japan to work with the Toyama Academy Orchestra, a visit that was received with much acclaim from all those with whom he worked.

Recent engagements have included a Millennium performance of Tippett's "Child of our Time", "Die Fledermaus" and he received rave reviews in The Guardian for a performance of Strauss's "Feuersnot". He has performed successful concerts with the Salomon Orchestra and Goldsmith's Sinfonia and Chorus.

In June Adrian was presented with a prestigious Classic FM Award at their Tenth Birthday Honours Celebration.

## GIUSEPPE VERDI (1830-1901) — OVERTURE TO ‘SICILIAN VESPERS’ (I VESPRI SICILIANI)

Verdi’s operatic overtures, introducing the principal melodies of the opera itself, are frequently played in the concert hall.

The Vespers, originally ‘Les Vêpres Siciliennes’, stems from a two-year stint in Paris, fulfilling a contract with the Opéra and at least partly motivated by competition with Meyerbeer. It suffers the lengthy extravagance of French opera of the period, compounded by poor organisation and a prima donna, Sofia Cruvelli, who absconded from rehearsals for a month in late 1854 with her future husband! After its premiere in June 1855 however, Berlioz, among others, praised the music for “its penetrating intensity of melodic expression, the sumptuous variety, [and] the judicious sobriety of the orchestration”.

The story, recast by the librettist Scribe from an original written for Donizetti in 1839, is the usual complexity of intrigue and love crossing national lines: Elena loves a Sicilian patriot Arrigo who turns out to be son of the French governor of the island. The opera ends with the massacre of the French by the patriot rebels (maybe not the ideal conclusion for an opera written for Paris!), the start of the insurrection being signalled by the ringing of the vesper bells at Elena and Arrigo’s wedding.

Verdi possessed the ability to write a melody line that stirs the audience’s emotions to match the dramatic intent of the story line. From its darkly haunting opening to its whirlwind conclusion, this compact overture captures the listener’s imagination: it tells a story, even before a word is sung.

Immediately after the brooding introduction, a lilting cello tune establishes a peaceful mood. This is actually reused from the final allegro in the overture to ‘Giovanna d’Arco’, played at a more moderate tempo, and used also for one of the major duets in the opera’s third act. It gives way to agitation, but eventually returns in a more insistent form. In its turn, the agitation becomes more and more frenzied, leading to the final prestissimo, which requires considerable virtuosity in the strings.

## HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

### ORCHESTRAL EXCERPTS FROM DRAMATIC SYMPHONY ‘ROMEO AND JULIET’

1. Romeo alone - Sadness - Distant sounds of music and dancing - Great festivities at the Capulets’ (*Andante malinconico e sostenuto - Allegro - Larghetto espressivo - Allegro*)
2. Love scene (*Adagio - Allegro agitato - Adagio*)
3. Queen Mab, the Dream Fairy: Scherzo (*Prestissimo*)

The choral symphony on ‘Romeo and Juliet’, one of the most innovative of his works, occupied Berlioz on and off for nearly twenty years. Berlioz first saw the play in 1827, with his future wife Harriet Smithson as Juliet. He discussed a possible work with the poet and Shakespeare translator Émile Deschamps in 1829 and a scherzo on Queen Mab with Mendelssohn in 1831. In an article on Italian music later that year he set out an ideal scenario for a Romeo and Juliet opera, emphasising the ritual act of reconciliation between the warring families—covered in only a couple of lines in the play, but in due course expanded into a large-scale finale in its musical setting.

In the event it was not until 1839 that, heartened by Paganini’s public act of recognition after a performance of the ‘Fantastic Symphony’ and ‘Harold in Italy’ and relieved of debts by his gift of 20,000 francs, Berlioz felt free to compose the work so long projected. Even after it had been performed to great acclaim at the Paris Conservatoire in Nov/Dec 1839, with the composer conducting, it went through another seven years of revision before being published, dedicated to Paganini, in 1847.

The work has two key influences: the first is the play itself and his desire to recreate the Shakespearean theme in music. Somehow Romeo is always to the fore, signifying perhaps the composer’s own identification with the role. The second is Beethoven, whose symphonies he first heard in 1828, and who showed him, particularly through the Ninth, the potential dramatic language of the orchestra for expressing human experience. As his biographer David Cairns puts it: “Roméo et Juliette, impossible without Shakespeare, is unthinkable without Beethoven.”

So the seven-movement choral symphony was, to Berlioz, a natural progression from Beethoven’s. The great celebration of fall-embracing love, the heart of the work, was cast in the form of a long orchestral

Adagio; the language of instruments, as he said in his preface to the score, by its imprecision and variety, was more suited to express the emotion than the literal meaning of the words sung.

The three orchestral interludes – which we play this evening in celebration of Berlioz's bicentenary – form the main structure of the symphony, leading to the concluding climactic choral reconciliation led by Friar Laurence over the lovers' bodies. First we hear Romeo alone, sad and yearning, the sounds of the Capulets' ball heard initially in the distance, then close at hand. The dramatic imagery is linked by superimposing the Largetto theme over the Allegro of the ball scene. The serenity of the love scene speaks for itself - without the words: an introduction leads to a rondo where the lovers' themes are combined to symbolise their union. The importance of this movement demanded patient, laborious working out by Berlioz. The Scherzo, however, sounds as if it were composed at a gallop, the somewhat sinister fairy queen flickering fantastically and at high speed through Mercutio's speech.

## SIR MALCOLM ARNOLD (B -1921) SYMPHONY NO 5 OP 74

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### *Tempestuoso - Andante con moto - Con fuoco - Risoluto*

Sir Malcolm Arnold was born in Nottingham on 21st October 1921. From 1941 to 1948 he held the post of principal trumpet with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, with the interruption of two years' military service during the war. Composition finally demanded 100% of his time, and from 1948 until the early 1960s Arnold's productivity was at its peak. His role as a conductor of his work, in the concert hall and in film and recording studios, also increased at this time.

With a remarkable catalogue of major concert works to his credit, including nine symphonies, seven ballets, two operas, one musical, over twenty concertos, two string quartets, and music for brass and wind bands, Sir Malcolm has also written 132 film scores. Among these (eg. 'Bridge Over the River Kwai' and 'The Inn of Sixth Happiness') are some of the finest works ever composed for the medium, and have gained him two Oscars.

The influence of Sibelius (in the earlier works), Mahler and Berlioz can all be heard in Arnold's works. However, in his grotesque marches and sleazy distortions of familiar phrases we can almost hear the collapse of the British Empire.

Symphony No 5, completed in May 1960, was commissioned by the Cheltenham Festival Society, and was given its premiere in Cheltenham on 3rd July 1961. The opening *Tempestuoso* begins with a questioning oboe theme, tonally ambiguous, answered by an ominous tolling motion in brass and tubular bells. A carillon motif calms the atmosphere, then strings take up the oboe theme in fatalistic tones. A wistful horn idea marks a passing tribute to Dennis Brain. Eventually the brass hammer out an impassioned variant of the tolling motion, collapsing to leave strings and chimes in musing uncertainty.

Of the second movement, *Andante con moto*, the composer himself explains its Mahlerian simplicity thus: "... the composer is unable to distinguish between sentiment and sentimentality ... in times of great emotion we speak in clichés." This movement is such an emotional cliché.

The third movement, *Con fuoco*, is thematically related to the first. Bongos and a deep tom-tom are allowed, as Arnold often does with his percussive instruments, to stand out on their own. The nagging opening gesture prefaces a series of nonchalant motifs over a walking bass line, merging into an aggressive fugato texture and falling away just as quickly. The trio is a telling incorporation of 1950s pop music into the symphonic argument, given substance by the constantly changing rhythm and instrumentation. The scherzo resumes its wayward course, only to be interrupted by a raucous brass outburst, driving the movement to a hectic conclusion.

The brash opening of the final *Risoluto* features Arnold's own instrument, the trumpet. A 'pipe and tabor' theme of military flavour follows, soon to be disturbed by disquieting harmonies. The climactic return of the slow movement theme, richly scored for full orchestra, heralds the close. Arnold's greatest strength was always as an endlessly inventive, fresh and memorable melodist. As a single instance, the use of this theme at the climax of the finale is overwhelming. The distortion of its final phrase stirs up old passions, but bells and timpani sound in valediction, bringing the work full circle.

## BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Bromley Symphony Orchestra was formed in 1918 by Miss Beatrice Fowle and Miss Gwynne Kimpton, teachers at Bromley High School for Girls. Over the years, it has earned a high reputation for concerts of professional standard and has worked with many famous soloists and conductors. Sir Adrian Boult conducted regularly in the 1940s and in 1952 Norman Del Mar took over. Soloists who have performed with the orchestra include Paul Tortelier, John Lill, Ralph Holmes, Hugh Bean, Emma Johnson and Leslie Howard.

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You are reminded that a bequest in your will, as well as being a "painless" form of giving, is particularly valuable since, being a gift to a charity, it does not form part of your estate, thus reducing your Inheritance Tax liability.

The Orchestra is most appreciative of the help kindly given by many other individuals in the provision of such services as stewards, interval refreshments, ticket and programme sales, etc.

Finally, you will realize that putting on quality concerts with attractive programmes while trying to keep down ticket prices is a problem faced by all symphony orchestras. If you are able to identify or open up any opportunities for corporate sponsorship arrangements, however modest, we would be very pleased to hear from you. Likewise we would welcome any offers of more direct help, eg serving interval drinks, selling programmes, etc.

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# BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Rachel Burgess

Nicola Oliver

Penny Steer

Elizabeth Tarrant

Alan Magrath

Jenny Forbes

## CELLOS

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Helen Griffiths

Marion Hitchcock

Samantha Carter

Mary Fall

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Vivaldi - 'Spring' from the  
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