



BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR - ADRIAN BROWN

LEADER - BERNARD BROOK

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2008

THE GREAT HALL, RAVENSBOURNE SCHOOL, BROMLEY

£ 1.00

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 8464 5869

PROGRAMME

TCHAIKOVSKY
"HAMLET" FANTASY OVERTURE

RACHMANINOV
PIANO CONCERTO No.2

INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES

Refreshments are available in the Dining Hall.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV
SCHEHERAZADE

AND

MARCH FROM "LE COQ D'OR"

Our next concert is on Jan 24th
Berlioz Roman Carnival, **Ravel** Rapsodie Espagnole,
Rodrigo Guitar Concerto, **Respighi** Roman Festivals.

ADRIAN BROWN – CONDUCTOR

John Carmichael



Adrian comes from a distinguished line of pupils of Sir Adrian Boult, with whom he worked for some years after graduating from the Royal Academy of Music in London. 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 the world-renowned St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and was immediately invited to return. In 1998 he was invited to work with one of Europe's foremost chamber orchestras, the Camerata Salzburg. Adrian has worked regularly with many leading British orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony, the BBC Symphony and the London Sinfonietta. He is a great proponent of contemporary music and has several first performances to his credit.

Working with young musicians has been an area where Adrian Brown has made a singular contribution to the musical life not only of Britain, but also in Europe, Japan and the Philippines. He has been a frequent visitor to conduct the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, working closely with Sir Colin Davis and Sir Roger Norrington. In 1996 he went to Japan to work with the Toyama Toho Academy Orchestra, a visit that was received with much acclaim.

He has been a regular chairman of the jury for the National Association of Youth Orchestras' Conducting Competition, also serving on the panel of jury members for Music for Youth and the Making Music Awards.

Adrian Brown was one of 100 musicians presented with a prestigious Classic FM Award at their Tenth Birthday Honours Celebration in June 2002.

MASA TAYAMA – PIANO SOLOIST



After studying at Toho University of Music in Tokyo, Masa Tayama was awarded a Fellowship to study in the UK, gaining Diploma with Honours from both the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Tayama first came to prominence when he won First Prize in the Takahiro Sonada International Piano Competition in Japan, followed by numerous top prizes in Europe including Brant Birmingham International Piano Competition and the Grand Konzertrum International Piano Competition in Greece.

He has a special relationship with the music of Rachmaninov - *Stereo* magazine included his recording of the two Rachmaninov sonatas in their "Best Recordings of the Month", and his performances of the 3rd Piano Concerto in Osaka, twice on the same day in July 2006 were hailed as "re-inventing the image of Rachmaninov".

PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY — ‘HAMLET’ FANTASY OVERTURE

Tchaikovsky considered a work based on *Hamlet* for many years (as evidenced by various letters between him and his brother—Modest Tchaikovsky— as early as 1876). However, the composer remained unconvinced, returning: “Out of them all *Hamlet* is very much to my taste, but it’s devilishly difficult.”

In 1885, however, he noted down a short musical theme (with “*to be or not to be*”, no less, scribbled beneath) while various notebooks of the period boast sketches designated as being meant for *Hamlet*—though most of the ideas seem to have been abandoned prior to essaying the work itself.

The catalyst for Tchaikovsky was probably that a production of *Hamlet* was planned in St Petersburg in the spring of 1888, starring Lucien Guitry. A few months before the opening night, that actor wrote to Tchaikovsky: “Surely in view of the great urgency you could not possibly set your hand to composing an overture so quickly, but what about an entr’acte to a scene from *Hamlet*, or an entr’acte between changes of scene in the theatre (*depicting the murder scene*), or the big portrait scene in the Queen’s room, where Hamlet kills Polonius and where the ghost appears? I am writing all this to you against my better instincts, as I am aware of the magnitude of what I am asking!” Ironically enough, the *Hamlet* production was eventually cancelled—yet by then Tchaikovsky had been smitten by the idea of his own “take” on the subject.

Dedicated to Edvard Grieg, the Hamlet overture-fantasia was performed for the first time in Saint Petersburg on 12 November 1888, conducted by the composer. Its premiere was less than a resounding success, with some critics whining about its lack of “narrative.” Yet Tchaikovsky’s *Hamlet* is in fact innately theatrical, from the heavy and doom-laden ghostly footsteps of the opening to the evil brass and restless strings that people the rest of the overture. (Various commentators have also suggested that the oboe melody may represent Ophelia.)

However, I believe—in lieu of direction from its composer—that this work is best enjoyed as a representation of the inner life of Hamlet: from the swirling disquietude of the strings to his crashing death at its conclusion. Similarly, the melodic theme that returns with such persistence, could equally be viewed as Ophelia, as hope, as neurosis—or as despair.

SERGEI RACHMANINOV — PIANO CONCERTO No.2

Rachmaninov was “marked out for greatness” at an early age, studying at the Moscow Conservatory under Arensky, among other towering Russian names, while still a teenager. For his final work as a student, Rachmaninov composed a one-act opera entitled *Aleko*, earning him the “Great Gold Medal”—an honour only awarded to two other people in the entire history of the Moscow Conservatory.

Yet Rachmaninov's main inspiration for his hugely successful *first* piano concerto came, rather than from the Russian school, from Edvard Grieg's celebrated piano concerto in A minor (as Barrie Martyn writes "both its Lisztian rhetoric and elements of its formal design left their mark on the Rachmaninov work"). It proved a great success, in every sense, yet Rachmaninov remained dissatisfied to such an extent that when invited for a return engagement in London in 1899 to perform his first concerto, he turned it down, as he believed the work "not good enough to be played there." Instead, he promised that he would write a second concerto for the purpose. In the meantime, he composed his first symphony, a problematic work of which Rimsky-Korsakov remarked: "Forgive me but I do not find this music at all agreeable." (In addition, its premiere was conducted appallingly by Glazunov, and roundly ridiculed by the critics.)

Unsurprisingly, Rachmaninov felt so depressed that he confided to friends that he doubted if he would ever compose again. Yet between January and April of 1900, he was persuaded to undergo therapy under the eminent neuropsychologist (and passionate amateur musician) Dr. Dahl, who convinced him, under hypnosis, that he was indeed a truly great composer who would write the new piano concerto that he had promised for London. The effect on his patient was electrifying. Sure of himself once more, Rachmaninov composed the second and third movements of his second piano concerto "quickly and easily", though he still retained doubts about his first movement. Yet when the concerto was premiered (October 1901) it proved an instantaneous hit, and has never lost its position as the most famous great romantic work for piano and orchestra.

The concerto begins with bell-like (deeply Russian) chords before the main theme intervenes, ornamented by arpeggios. (Medtner writes of the main theme that "the soul of this theme is Russian...every time, from the first bell stroke, you feel the figure of Russia rising up to her full height") A rather bizarre development section reaches so powerful a climax as to potentially undermine the recapitulation, which, in its turn, adjusts neatly to the new harmonic terms of reference.

The renowned second movement—featured in films too numerous to mention—includes a wonderful series of modulating chords in the strings, ornamented by the soloist. The solo flute then brings forth the main theme, which impels towards a powerful climax, leaving the soloist bereft and alone with the first theme, all on its own.

The last movement opens with a short orchestral introduction that modulates to C major before the soloist surges forth on his own, followed by the oboe-dominated second subject. The brilliant development section, becoming increasingly passionate, returns eventually to the second theme in all its glory, and to a scintillatingly pianistic coda.

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV – SCHEHERAZADE

During the long winter of 1887, Rimsky-Korsakov became increasingly attracted to *The Arabian Nights* as the basis for a symphonic suite, which he eventually finished in the summer of 1888. The extreme looseness of his adaptation may be judged by the fact that he initially entitled the four movements Prelude, Ballade, Adagio and Finale, before adding *Arabian Nights* titles. (He later removed the titles altogether, suggesting that the listeners' imaginations might evoke their own oriental themes and stories instead!)

Despite this, Scheherazade's own story was included in a brief introduction from Rimsky-Korsakov himself, intended as a programme note for the première:

The Sultan Schariar, convinced that all women are false and faithless, vowed to put to death each of his wives after the first nuptial night. But the Sultana Scheherazade saved her life by entertaining her lord with fascinating tales, told seriatim, for a thousand and one nights. The Sultan, consumed with curiosity, postponed from day to day the execution of his wife, and finally repudiated his bloody vow entirely.

The Sea and Sinbad's Ship (Largo e Maestoso - Allegro non troppo)

Three climactic passages interspersed with three calm twilight episodes, introducing the implacable Sultan and his ethereal, quicksilver bride, Scheherazade.

The Tale of the Kalendar Prince (Lento - Andante)

(According to legend, Kalendaris were wandering beggars possessed of magical powers, who were treated with superstitious awe.) A powerful and richly orchestrated set of variations, turning into a blazing march with cadenzas for solo clarinet and bassoon.

The Young Prince and Princess (Andantino quasi Allegretto)

The composer associated the main string theme with "the Prince", while the clarinet obbligato represents "the Princess". More variations here, with daring use of snare drum and trumpet, contrasting with the solo violin as Scheherazade, the spell-binding storyteller.

Festival at Baghdad - The Sea - Shipwreck on a Rock surmounted by a Bronze Warrior - Conclusion (Allegro molto)

Scheherazade relates the tale of the "Festival at Baghdad," along with subliminal echoes of the Kalendar Prince. The ship's crashing on the rocks is graphically portrayed in both double basses and tam-tam. This story clearly did the trick, as the work winds down into peaceful conjugal felicity, courtesy of the Sultan and his seductive violin, who has finally earned herself a well-deserved rest.

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

*Bernard Brook (Leader)

Valerie Breeze

* Ruth Brook

Anita Laybourne

Rachel Cheetham

Amanda Clare

Andrew Condon

Mark Cousins

Rosie Cousins

Elizabeth Cromb

Claire Dillon

Diana Dunk

* Sarah Eede

Ruth Elliott

Jane Ferdinando

Kathryn Hayman

Mark Holmes

*Mike Ibbott (lead 2nd)

Rachel Johnson

Gerard Kelly

* Phil McKerracher

Anne Miles

Richard Miscampbell

Judith Montague

Veronica Parry

Jane Rackham

Tracey Renwick

Sheila Robertson

* David Rodker

Philip Starr

Marian Steadman

Audrey Summers

* Michael Thompson

Clare Turner

Rachel Walmsley

* Ann Wibberley

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)

Julius Bannister

Angela Bartlett

Maria Beale

Rachel Burgess

John Davis

Jenny Forbes

Alan Magrath

Chris Newbould

Georgina Oliver

Nicola Oliver

Liz Tarrant

Vanessa Townsend

CELLOS

*Alice McVeigh (Principal)

Helen Griffiths

Helen McDonald

Sarah Bartlett

Mandy Selby

Andrew Garton

Anne Curry

Mary Fall

Samantha Carter

DOUBLE BASSES

Norman Levy (Principal)

Anthony Barber

Julie Cosway

Ron Dunning

Jane Healey

Malcolm Healey

Karen Wallis

FLUTES & PICCOLO

Jane Crawford

Catherine Borner

Marc Esmond

OBOES

* Caroline Marwood

Andrew Mackay

COR ANGLAIS

Philip Knight

CLARINETS

Massimo Roman

Elaine Booth

BASSOONS

Stephen Fuller

Julian Farrel

Chris Richardson

HORNS

*Roy Banks

Frank Cottee

Mary Banks

Brian Newman

TRUMPETS & CORNETS

*Derek Cozens

Tim Collett

Clive Griffin

Matthew Hart Dyke

TROMBONES

*Peter Bruce

*John Carmichael

Paul Jenner

TUBA

Russell Kennedy

TIMPANI

David Coronel

PERCUSSION

Catherine Herriot

David Luckin

Adam Payne

Anthony Summers

Elizabeth Thompson

HARP

Tamara Young

TICKET MANAGER

Riet Carmichael

* denotes a member of the organising committee

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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. Internationally renowned soloists who have performed with the orchestra include Paul Tortelier, John Lill, Dennis Brain, Ralph Holmes, Hugh Bean, Emma Johnson, Leslie Howard and Sir Donald McIntyre.

PRESIDENT	Anthony Payne
VICE-PRESIDENT	Barbara Strudwick ARAM
CHAIRMAN	Roy Banks

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The BSO gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its Patrons, who provide the orchestra with an important and much valued source of funding. If you are able to support the orchestra in this way, please send your donation (we suggest a minimum of £15 for individuals and £20 for couples) to the Treasurer, Mr P McKerracher, 50 Blakehall Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 3EZ.

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, stage management and publicity.

FASCINATING FILM FACTS

Did you know...?

Tchaikovsky's "Hamlet" is the music for the film *The Mousetrap*.

Rachmaninov's 2nd Piano Concerto features most famously in *Brief Encounter*, but also in *Spider Man 3*.

Scheherazade features in at least a dozen films - some telling the Arabian Nights story, others simply unable to resist the seductive orchestral colours and pulsing rhythms (*Lost in a Harem*, *Invitation to the Dance*, *Shadow Dancing* ...).