



B S O

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR – ADRIAN BROWN

LEADER – ANDREW LAING



SATURDAY 17TH MAY 2014

LANGLEY PARK CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

£1.50

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 3627 2974

PROGRAMME

HECTOR BERLIOZ THREE MOVEMENTS FROM THE DRAMATIC SYMPHONY 'ROMEO ET JULIETTE'

INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES

Refreshments are available in the dining hall.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN SYMPHONIC DANCES FROM 'WEST SIDE STORY'

PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY 'ROMEO AND JULIET'

Unauthorised audio or video recording of this concert is not permitted

Our next concert is on Nov 15th
at the Langley Park Centre for the Performing Arts:
Walton Portsmouth Point overture, **Walton** Viola concerto
(soloist: Catherine Harrison), **Elgar** Symphony No.1

ADRIAN BROWN – CONDUCTOR



John Carmichael

Adrian Brown comes from a distinguished line of pupils of Sir Adrian Boult. After graduating from the Royal Academy of Music in London, he studied intensively with Sir Adrian for some 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. Sir Adrian said of his work: "He has always impressed me as a musician of exceptional attainments who has all the right gifts and ideas to make him a first class conductor".

In 1992 Adrian Brown was engaged to conduct one of the great orchestras of the world, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1998 he was invited to work with the Camerata Salzburg, one of Europe's foremost chamber orchestras at the invitation of Sir Roger Norrington. Adrian has also conducted many leading British orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony, the BBC Symphony, the BBC Scottish Symphony and the London Sinfonietta. He is a great proponent of contemporary music and has several first performances to his credit.

In his 60th Birthday Year, 2009, Adrian had a major success conducting the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra in Vilnius. Bromley Symphony honoured him with a 30th Anniversary/60th Birthday concert in November.

In 2010 he conducted Elgar's 'The Dream of Gerontius' in Ely Cathedral, his Enigma Variations in Girona Cathedral, a stunning debut with the Corinthian Orchestra in London, Mahler's Fifth Symphony in Bromley, and gave an important lecture to the Berlioz Society where his Lithuanian concert recording of the 'Symphonie Fantastique' was much admired.

His concerts with the Corinthian Chamber Orchestra in 2011 were met with critical acclaim, and Adrian has been appointed their joint principal conductor.

Britten centenary celebrations included a triumphant return to the Salomon Orchestra in February 2013 conducting Sinfonia da Requiem.

2013 saw Adrian retire from Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra and honoured with being one of three national figures nominated for a Lifetime Achievement Award by 'Music Teacher' and Classic FM. In the summer of 2013 he was awarded the 'Making Music' NFMS Lady Hilary Groves Prize for services to Community Music, a much appreciated and admired honour.

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

BERLIOZ — 3 MOVEMENTS FROM ‘ROMEO ET JULIETTE’

Berlioz had long ruminated on a possible *Romeo and Juliette*, but the actual spur came when he attended a performance of the play in Paris (starring Harriet Smithson, with whom Berlioz became famously obsessed, and later married). In his *Memoirs*, Berlioz describes its overwhelming effects:

‘... to steep myself in the fiery sun and balmy nights of Italy, to witness the drama of that passion swift as thought, burning as lava, radiantly pure as an angel’s glance, imperious, irresistible, the raging vendettas, the desperate kisses, the frantic strife of love and death, was more than I could bear. By the third act, scarcely able to breathe—it was as though an iron hand had gripped me by the heart—I knew that I was lost.’

However, his day-job as a music critic continued to absorb far too much of his time and energies. Relief from this frustration arrived in the form of a hugely generous 20,000 francs gifted him by Paganini, who publicly hailed him ‘the heir of Beethoven.’ Thus was Berlioz enabled to clear his debts and put his whole heart into this ambitious work (which is, at 85 minutes, much longer than the section that we’re performing tonight, and includes solo singers and full chorus). Sadly, Paganini did not live to hear it performed.

Berlioz, no slave to convention, allowed his Shakespearean fancy full flight, dedicating a whole movement to a delicious aside from Mercutio about ‘Queen Mab’ (of course, not even a character in the play). I find Peter Gutmann persuasive, as he suggests that to Berlioz this ‘represents the elements of fantasy and jest that Shakespeare wove into even his most profound tragedies, so as to make them an inextricable part of the overall human experience.’

Romeo Alone: Sadness – Distant sounds of dancing and music – the Capulets’ Ball.

Violins in unison perhaps represent a rambling fancy, a young man’s wandering, in a (wonderfully descriptive) ‘*andante malinconico*’. Romeo’s wistfulness however turns into more focussed yearning—to dance—as the allegro emerges (plangent solo oboe, *sotto voce* castanets) along with the titillation of distant dance music from the Capulets’ ball. We experience his every feverish surge of anticipation as he approaches the ball where he is fated to meet Juliette.

Love Scene: Serene night – The Capulets’ garden, silent and deserted – The young Capulets on their way home singing snatches of music from the Ball – Love Scene.

In these sections Berlioz almost cinematically describes the action, but most of all encapsulates youthful first love: the fear, the disbelief, the agitation, the hopefulness, the blissful traumas, the traumatic blissfulness, and the overwhelming strength of sensation. Listen for the over-arching tenderness of the theme in the violins, the pulsating undulations of the lower strings, the lines so achingly long no singer could possibly sing them. . . There is at least one lover’s tiff—all the sweeter for being resolved—and possibly a chase in the garden. . . It’s as if the orchestra *becomes* the characters—as if Berlioz’s own tumult of feeling finds welcome outlet here. Later in

life, Berlioz admitted in his *Memoirs* 'If you now ask me which of my pieces I prefer, my answer will be that I prefer the adagio (the Love Scene) in *Romeo and Juliette*.'

Queen Mab, or the Dream Fairy. Berlioz described a successful performance of this electrifying, almost malevolent, scherzo as one in which the orchestra 'identifying completely with Shakespeare's exquisite fantasy, made itself so small and fine and nimble' that the queen darted 'gleefully among her noiseless harmonies.'

Here is a swift reminder of Shakespeare's own genius:...

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies
Over men's noses as they lie asleep;
Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs,
The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;
Her traces, of the smallest spider web;
Her collars, of the moonshine's wat'ry beams;
Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;
Her wagoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
...Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,
Made by the joiner squirrel or old grub,
Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.
And in this state she gallops night by night
Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love.

As David Cairns writes, 'No Berlioz score is more abundant in lyric poetry, in a sense of the magic and brevity of love, in '*sounds and sweet airs*' of so many kinds: the flickering, fleet-footed scherzo stands not only for Mercutio's *Queen Mab* speech but for the whole nimble-witted, comic-fantastical, fatally irrational element in the play, in which strings and wind seem caught up in some gleeful but menacing game. . .'

BERNSTEIN — SYMPHONIC DANCES FROM 'WEST SIDE STORY'

From its first bars, there is a carelessly insouciant, pitch-perfect yet utterly heartfelt certainty to *West Side Story* that perhaps nobody, in writing a musical, has yet equalled. It opened in 1957 and, despite some ambivalent reviews, has been triumphing ever since. Fascinatingly, Bernstein first considered Catholic and Protestant gangs in New York, but the Puerto Rican flavour he settled on for Juliet/Maria's background works brilliantly.

In these *Symphonic Dances* (in which the sections run seamlessly together) a finger-snapping orchestra is transformed into a cocky combination of youthful gangs, with Latino rhythms never far away. Things heat up with the snare, the percussion get seriously involved, a fight is depicted amidst an exuberance of trumpets, xylophone, and even (ultimately) a police whistle.

The gangs scatter while solo viola and violin, and a marvellous French horn moment, take us into ‘*Somewhere*’ (‘Somewhere, there’s a place for us’): Tony and Maria’s theme-tune. This eases into a ‘*grazioso*’ interlude, and from that into a wild Cuban ‘*mambo*’ which almost disintegrates under the weight of competing beats before eliding into a gentle (cha-cha) version of ‘*Maria*’—perhaps Bernstein’s most effortlessly beautiful song—featuring pizzicato violins, and delicate-breathed winds.

A short transition featuring four violin soloists and a good deal of youthful yearning leads into a brilliantly fugal version of ‘*Cool*’ and we’re back in gangland, big-time (note the sardonic snare as well as the gun-shots from the percussion). This feeds directly into a more purposeful ‘*rumble*’ (fifties gangland fight) culminating in a ruminative cadenza for solo flute. The flute lifts us into the finale, ‘*I have a love*’ (with reminiscences of ‘*Somewhere*’) in an ecstasy of sorrow, echoing Maria’s anguished lyrics, which might be the theme for our concert:

‘I love him; I’m his, and everything he is I am, too.’

TCHAIKOVSKY — ‘ROMEO AND JULIET’

Listening to Tchaikovsky’s *Romeo and Juliet*, it’s hard to believe that such a vital, organically conceived work could be the outcome of so much stress and trauma—not to mention revision. This is in fact the third version, written to an overall plan by Tchaikovsky’s fervent mentor (possibly bullying tormenter?) Balakirev—who provided the youthful composer with the structure, and even some of the keys, for the piece, and pretty much ordered him to compose it. While Balakirev responded to the love theme the young Tchaikovsky submitted to him with, ‘*I play it often, and I want very much to kiss you for it—Here is the very tenderness and sweetness of love!*’ he was critical of almost everything else in the first two versions, persuading Tchaikovsky to recompose the whole in sonata form, with introduction and epilogue. The hymn-like introduction, heavy and portentous from lower strings, represents Friar Laurence. This leads into an unnervingly modern, syncopated sword-fight between Capulets and Montagues, which itself flows into the soaring love theme, ravishing and tender but always with an undercurrent of nerves and tension.

The warring factions overrule, and with greater fury, one can almost discern Mercutio’s fall, Friar Laurence’s counsels, the lovers’ separation. Then strings lay the foundation for solo flute and oboe, which emerge with the love theme (in development)—no question about the consummation of the marriage here—rising into E major, when brutal chords from full orchestra and cymbals end their lives. The battle murmurs into a funeral section, garnished by winds, where the limitlessness of their love is celebrated in a final triumphant oration. (The work became so popular that Balakirev was constantly requested to perform it, until he grew to know it by heart—another happy ending!).

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Andrew Laing (Leader)
Clare Wibberley
(Associate Leader)
Peter Bicknell
Bernard Brook
* Ruth Brook (lead 2nd)
Judy Brown
Andrew Condon
Mark Cousins
Rosie Cousins
Elizabeth Cromb
Claire Dillon
Jenny Endersby
Jane Ferdinando
Mike Ibbott
Amy Jordan
Gerard Kelly
Penny Longman
* Phil McKerracher
Richard Miscampbell
Judith Montague
Sarah Norman
* David Rodker
Laura Selby
Philip Starr

VIOLAS

Jenny Carter (Principal)
David Griffiths
Julius Bannister
Jenny Carter
John Davis
Richard Longman
* Alan Magrath
Simon McVeigh
Maria Staines
Georgina Tanner
Nicola Oliver
Liz Tarrant

CELLOS

*Alice McVeigh (Principal)
* Helen Griffiths
Helen McDonald
Jane Broadbent
Samantha Carter
Becky Fage
Andrew Garton
Marion Hitchcock
Alexandra Jackman
Mandy Selby
* Berard Somerville
Amanda Stephen
Crispin Warren

DOUBLE BASSES

Norman Levy (Principal)
Thomas Dignum
Catherine Stack
Rosalind Keates

FLUTES & PICCOLO

Mark Esmonde
Catherine Borner
Sharon Moloney

OBOES & COR ANGLAIS

* Caroline Marwood
Philip Knight
Richard Whitehouse

CLARINETS

Hale Hambleton
Jay Bevan (Eb)
Shelley Phillips
Nicky Jenkins
David Floyd (Bass)

ALTO SAX

Hale Hambleton

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller
Julian Farrel
Chris Richardson
Cerys Evans

HORNS

Roy Banks
Brian Newman
Mary Banks
Frank Cottee

TRUMPETS & CORNETS

Martin Bunce
Derek Cozens
Tim Collett
Clive Griffin

TROMBONES

* Peter Bruce
* John Carmichael
Paul Jenner

TUBA

David Young

TIMPANI

David Coronel
Joley Cragg

PERCUSSION

Stefan Beckett
Joley Cragg
Louise Goodwin
Catherine Herriott
Adam Payn
William Riby
Anthony Summers

DRUMKIT

William Riby

CELESTE & PIANO

Catherine Herriott

HARP

Anne Denholm
Stephanie Beck

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CONCERT MANAGER

Neil Selby

* committee member

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, Kathleen Ferrier, Ralph Holmes, Hugh Bean, Emma Johnson, Leslie Howard and Sir Donald McIntyre.

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
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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 £25 for individuals and £40 for couples) to:
The Treasurer, Bromley Symphony Orchestra, PO Box 1065, Bromley, BR1 9QD

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.

For information on our concerts, visit www.bromleysymphony.org
or leave your name & address or email address at the ticket desk.