



B S O

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR – ADRIAN BROWN

LEADER – ANDREW LAING

SOLOIST –



Photo: Ton Stanowick

MATHIEU
VAN BELLEN

SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER 2013

LANGLEY PARK CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

£1.50

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 3627 2974

PROGRAMME

WAGNER
OVERTURE, DIE MEISTERSINGER VON
NÜRNBERG

BRITTEN
VIOLIN CONCERTO

INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES

Refreshments are available in the dining hall.

WAGNER
ACT 3 PRELUDE, DIE MEISTERSINGER

BEETHOVEN
SYMPHONY NO.7

Unauthorised audio or video recording of this concert is not permitted

Our next concert is on Jan 25th
at the Langley Park Centre for the Performing Arts:
Haydn Symphony No.103 "Drumroll"
Wagner Die Walküre Act 1 (soloists: Janice Watson, John
Upperton, Oliver Gibbs).

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. The Corinthian Chamber Orchestra's 2012 season included Elgar's First Symphony in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, where future concerts are also planned.

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.

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

MATHIEU VAN BELLEN — VIOLIN SOLOIST

Mathieu van Bellen, born in the Netherlands in 1988, started studying the violin when he was 4. He studied in Belgium with Nico Baltussen, at the Amsterdam Conservatoire and Chethams School of Music, Manchester with Jan Repko (on scholarship from the VandenEnde Foundation); Royal College of Music with Itzhak Rashkovsky and Hochschule für Musik, Berlin with Ulf Wallin. He had masterclasses with Ida Haendel, Shlomo Mintz, Pinchas Zukerman and Maxim Vengerov.

Laureate of Yehudi Menuhin Competition, Wieniawski Competition, Prinses Christina Competition and Oskar Back Competition he is also a recipient of MBF, RPS Emily Anderson Prize, Philharmonia Martin Musical Scholarship Fund Awards and Making Music Awards. He was also awarded the Bach Prize and the String Player of the Year 2008 at the Royal College of Music. He has given concerts in Europe, Asia and the USA, playing in major music festivals like Festspiele MV in Germany, Haagse 3daagse, and Chamber Music Festivals in Manchester. He has appeared several times on television and radio, and he performed in halls like the Purcell Room at the Southbank Centre, Royal Festival Hall London, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Tel Aviv Opera House, and Megaron in Athens, performing as a soloist with orchestras such as the National Orchestra of Belgium, Holland Symfonia, Southbank Sinfonia, Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra, and Camerata Athena.

Co-Founder of the Busch Ensemble, future plans include recording the violin works of Adolf Busch, as well as Haydn, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Bridge piano trios.

RICHARD WAGNER — OVERTURE, DIE MEISTERSINGER

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg is the only late Wagner work with an original plot, and also one of the few lacking mythological beasts and characters. Wagner had long been attracted by the traditions of the Mastersingers guild in Renaissance Nuremberg. His first notes about the opera date from 1845, but *Lohengrin* intervened. As Wagner recalled in his memoirs:

‘I must confess that the Assumption of the Virgin by Titian exercised a most sublime influence over me, so that my old powers revived within me, as though by a sudden flash of inspiration . . . I determined at once on the composition of Die Meistersinger.’

(Seems an odd prompt for a work about a work whose plot pivots on the struggle between the forces of musical conservatism and musical change, but Wagner’s was a very strange genius!) At any rate, in his script the hero Walther wins the contest (and the soprano) with his controversial ‘new’ song.

The opening starts two thrillingly majestic themes, along with a taster of Walther’s moving ‘prize song’. The theme of the mischievous apprentice mastersingers is then transformed into a nimble-fingered fugue. When the opening themes return, they only gain power and grandeur from the contrast.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN — VIOLIN CONCERTO

Britten, famously pacifistic, began his Violin Concerto in Britain in November 1938 and finished it in North America in the first weeks of the Second World War. He was staying with friends, including Aaron Copland, who encouraged Britten to stay, as W.H. Auden had decided to do. ‘*Anyone can shoot a gun,*’ Copland argued, ‘*but how many people can write music like you?*’ A couple of years later, the homesick Britten returned to wartime England with Peter Pears.

Although he never admitted it, the darker moments of the work might reflect Britten’s depression at world events. To his publisher, he wrote: ‘*it is without question my best piece. It is rather serious, I’m afraid.*’ To Wulff Scherchen, possibly his first lover, Britten wrote, ‘*It is at times like these that work is so important—that humans can think of other things than blowing each other up!*’

There’s no break between the three movements, though there are definitely stylistic unities, including the mesmerising opening rhythmic snap in the timpani with cymbals, which the work’s first soloist, Antonio Brosa, suggested was of Spanish origin (Britten and Brosa had visited Spain together in 1936). Brosa hinted that the melancholy in certain sections related to Britten’s loathing of war. (Violinists have occasionally joked that the work instead relates to Britten’s detestation of violinists, with a soloist’s part so demanding that Jascha Heifetz himself declared it ‘unplayable!’.) However, despite the technical trickery—especially in the acerbic, feverish scherzo—the work is very moving, with every dissonance fully earned by the luminous violin writing, particularly in the riskiest of registers. The key (D major) too feels constantly under threat, especially by plangent F-naturals at critical moments, while Britten’s scoring is consistently inventive (listen for the flutes accompanied only by the double basses, and the crucial tuba part, coupled with piccolos. . .)

An emotionally soaring cadenza, recapping previous themes, is interrupted by the first appearance of the trombones. They announce the third movement and Britten’s first ever deployment of what was to become a favourite device: the passacaglia (variations on a ground bass). Nine variations follow, eliding seamlessly into each other, with a particularly plangent solo oboe variation. The ending is pure Britten: with the ground bass disintegrating, the soloist is left lost, the final F-natural unsettled by a semitone trill — a perfect summation of ambivalence and ambiguity.

WAGNER — PRELUDE TO ACT 3, DIE MEISTERSINGER

The beginning of Act 3 is a little gem, incorporating everything that makes Wagner special: rich sonorities and a dramatic contrast between intensity and tenderness. The lower strings begin with the germ of incipient power, inspiring repetitions from the violas and then the violins. The horns with lower brass sweep into a glorious chorale, tapering into one of Wagner’s most eloquent themes, starring flute and violins in flowing triplets. The return of the sterner

brass chorale is interrupted by a swelling power from the strings, layering overarching phrase upon phrase, in ardent, yet consolatory harmonies.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN — SYMPHONY NO. 7

Beethoven himself called this symphony ‘*one of the happiest products of my poor talents*’. Acclaimed from its first performance (when the *Allegretto* movement was encored—and thereafter frequently substituted for ‘less loved’ slowish movements in other Beethoven’s symphonies), musicians have long attempted to describe its powerfully uplifting qualities. Richard Wagner’s poetic account is well-known: ‘*All tumult, all yearning and storming of the heart, become here the blissful insolence of joy . . . shouting in glad self-consciousness as we sound throughout the universe the daring strains of this human sphere-dance. The Symphony is the Apotheosis of the Dance itself.*’

The introduction features powerful chords supported by the momentum of rising scale passages, giving way to an irresistibly sunny motif in solo oboe. Beethoven locks on to this swaggeringly joyful (almost puppyish) kernel, playing with it, manipulating it, sometimes giving it its head, almost toying with it. Eventually he conjures up an insistently repetitive theme for the lower strings, inspiring the rest of the orchestra to a fantastic climax.

The famous *Allegretto* sustains a single pulse, its measured footsteps starting in the cello with a theme of almost ethereal perfection. This is succeeded by one of equal poise and beauty starting in the clarinets and bassoons. Once the first theme returns, still sustained by that endless pulse, it elides into a fugue, until the first theme, ornamented by intricate weaving of lines, infects the entire orchestra. Despite a short excursion into the minor, this movement feels like an effusion on the inevitability of joy. At the end, the footsteps move inexorably into the distance, leaving us in a different place.

The third movement scherzo begins with a hypnotically rhythmic folk-like melody, contrasting with a peculiarly lovely woodwind-dominated Trio section, possibly a pilgrim tune heard by Beethoven in Teplitz. Beethoven here appears to be entranced by contrast, alternating between scherzo (with its little spurts of pure joy) and the floating trio—interrupted by five impatiently *furioso* chords.

But Beethoven’s good mood appears inexhaustible. The finale propels us forwards with a rhythmic snap of seven notes swirling upwards, permeating the theme. This rushes into moments of pure rhythmic ebullience, with impudent offbeat accents. There are sections of elemental fury, led by the brass, and a hushed section of electric tension, before high spirits burst forth triumphantly again. Even the very last chords, accentuated by timpani, get a ‘spin’ of two cheeky semi-quavers preceding them: perhaps another Beethovenian spurt of joy at having just completed one of the greatest works of Western music.

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Andrew Laing (Leader)
Clare Wibberley
(Associate Leader)
Peter Bicknell
Bernard Brook
* Ruth Brook
Judy Brown
Amanda Clare
Andrew Condon
Mark Cousins
Rosie Cousins
Elizabeth Cromb
Claire Dillon
Rachel Duborg
Ruth Elliott
Jenny Endersby
Jane Ferdinando
Mike Ibbott (lead 2nd)
Amy Jordan
Penny Longman
* Phil McKerracher
Anne Miles
Richard Miscampbell
Alan Mitchell
Judith Montague
Sarah Norman
Rachel Pullinger
* David Rodker
Philip Starr
Sarah Vasen

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)
Rachel Burgess
Jenny Carter
John Davis
Richard Longman
* Alan Magrath
Simon McVeigh
Maria Staines
Georgina Tanner
Liz Tarrant

CELLOS

*Alice McVeigh (Principal)
* Helen Griffiths
Helen McDonald
Jane Broadbent
Anne Curry
Becky Fage
Andrew Garton
Marion Hitchcock
Mandy Selby
* Berard Somerville
Amanda Stephen

DOUBLE BASSES

Norman Levy (Principal)
Anthony Barber
Thomas Dignum
Hannah Turnbull

FLUTES & PICCOLO

Mark Esmonde
Catherine Borner
David Sullivan

OBOES & COR ANGLAIS

* Caroline Marwood
Philip Knight

CLARINETS

Hale Hambleton
Shelley Phillips

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller
Julian Farrel
Chris Richardson

HORNS

Roy Banks
Frank Cottee
Mary Banks
Rich McDermott

TRUMPETS

Martin Bunce
Derek Cozens
Tim Collett
Clive Griffin

TROMBONES

* Peter Bruce
* John Carmichael
Paul Jenner

TUBA

Stephen Calow

TIMPANI

David Coronel

PERCUSSION

Jon Jacob
Anthony Summers

HARP

Keziah Thomas

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Simon McVeigh

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.

PRESIDENT Anthony Payne
VICE-PRESIDENTS Shirley & Geoff Griffiths
CHAIRMAN Helen Griffiths

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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.