



BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR – ADRIAN BROWN

LEADER – BERNARD BROOK

PROGRAMME

SATURDAY 19TH MAY 2012

LANGLEY PARK SCHOOL FOR BOYS, PERFORMANCE HALL

£1.50

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 3627 2974

PROGRAMME

ROSSINI
'WILLIAM TELL' OVERTURE

WALTON
TWO PIECES FROM 'HENRY V'

STRAUSS
HORN CONCERTO No.2

MASSENET
MEDITATION FROM 'THAÏS'

INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES

Refreshments are available in the refectory.

BRAHMS
SYMPHONY No.4

Our next concert season starts on Nov 17th
at the Langley Park School for Boys Performance Hall:
Bax Tintagel, **Elgar** Cello concerto (soloist Jamie Walton),
Vaughan Williams Symphony No.2 (London)

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

Adrian's programme for 2012 includes three concerts with the Corinthian Chamber Orchestra, performing Elgar's First Symphony in May in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Ely Cathedral hosts a Jubilee Concert in July of Elgar's Coronation Ode and Berlioz's Te Deum.

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

RICHARD WATKINS — HORN SOLOIST

Keith Saunders



Richard Watkins, one of the most sought-after horn players of his generation, is well-known as a concerto soloist and chamber music player. He was Principal Horn of the Philharmonia Orchestra from 1985 until 1996, and is currently a member of the Nash Ensemble and a founder member of London Winds and the Transatlantic Horn Quartet.

Since playing under Adrian Brown in Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra, Richard has worked with conductors such as Giulini, Sawallisch, Salonen, Slatkin, Sinopoli, Rozhdestvensky, Andrew

Davis and Mark Elder, at major concert halls in the UK, Europe and the USA.

In recital, Richard Watkins regularly performs at the Wigmore Hall.. He holds the Dennis Brain Chair of Horn Playing at the Royal Academy of Music and is in great demand for masterclasses both in the UK and abroad.

ROSSINI — ‘WILLIAM TELL’ OVERTURE

William Tell—last of Rossini’s many operas—premiered in 1829. Afterwards, he ‘retired’, only composing cantatas, and secular vocal music—which was still a good deal, at his advanced age!

The overture was (and remains) famous. It begins with a lyrical section, scored unusually for five solo cellos, ending with a very high ‘E’ sustained by the first cellist. This wistful mood is immediately disrupted by the ‘storm’, introduced by nervy, scuttling violin runs and dominated by trombones. The storm eventually blows itself out, resolving into a pastoral idyll featuring a famous cor anglais solo.

However, by far the most famous part of the work is the scintillating finale, heralded by trumpets. With its spiccato string bowings and terrific natural thrust, it has been used in numerous films, satirised in cartoons, and was quoted by Shostakovich in his Symphony No.15. In America, an intellectual has been defined as ‘someone who can listen to the William Tell Overture without thinking of the ‘Lone Ranger’ theme . . .’

WALTON — SELECTIONS FROM ‘HENRY V’ FILM MUSIC

‘The Death of Falstaff’ is a mini-masterpiece, capturing the pathos and dignity in Shakespeare’s essentially comic figure. Foreshadowing the passacaglia at the end of Brahms fourth, notice the ingenious way in which the implacable bass line slips from section to section.

The second excerpt from Walton’s Henry V Suite, ‘Touch Her Soft Lips And Part’, is very different, expressing a youthful delicacy and longing.

STRAUSS — HORN CONCERTO NO.2

Strauss wrote two concertos for the horn (both in E-flat major), one at the very beginning and the other near the end of his long creative life. (He had a special fondness for the instrument, as evidenced by the thrilling horn writing in his tone poems, and in the 'Four Last Songs'.) Richard's father, Franz, was a famous horn player, known as the 'Joachim of the horn.' Even Wagner commented on Franz, 'Strauss is an unbearable fellow, but when he plays the horn, it is impossible to be angry with him!'

Composed in 1943, the first movement begins with the soloist in bravura mood, but shifts into a rather more autumnal feel, typical of late Strauss. Throughout the work—one of the ultimate challenges for any horn player—the soloist is required to combine the lightness and agility of the clarinet with the gravitas of a true brass instrument: the athletic leaps alone are enough to give most horn players pause, not to mention the virtuosic chromatic passages, and the projection and range of tone colours required.

In the second movement solo woodwinds at first emerge as near-equals of the soloist. However, once the horn takes flight, its tessitura (both high and low) and unmatched tone dominate; this is Strauss at his most warmly lyrical.

The finale too is pure delight: a nimble, elegant rondo in 6/8, ending with an irresistible flourish. (As Strauss modestly put it in a letter: the last movement 'turned out quite nicely . . .')

MASSENET — MEDITATION FROM 'THAÏS'

The 'Meditation' from Massenet's opera *Thaïs* occurs after the curtain falls on Act 2. It represents the struggle within *Thaïs* (a court prostitute) after her morals are challenged by the monk Athanaël (who later falls for her, with an audible clunk). During her 'meditation' *Thaïs* discovers a lurking spirituality, and decides to take the veil and become a nun. The soaring solo lines and poignant mood have made this a favourite with violinists and audiences alike. Our soloist is Bernard Brooks, esteemed leader of this orchestra for 22 years.

BRAHMS — SYMPHONY NO.4

Brahms' fourth symphony, undoubtedly his greatest, is far darker, more intense and more intellectual than his third, which might explain the ambivalence of its first reception. Upon hearing the two-piano reduction, conductor Hans von Bülow reported, 'it seems to be difficult, very,' while critic Eduard Hanslick confessed: 'All through I felt I was being thrashed by two terribly clever men'.

The lilting opening theme is actually a linking of descending thirds. This pattern resurfaces again and again: as if the work is ingeniously woven out of a single piece of cloth. A clue to Brahms' state of mind might be extrapolated from his quotation of his own song setting: 'Oh death, how bitter you are!', spelt out before the recapitulation, and forming the opening phrases of the first theme.

The Andante moderato opens in the 'Phrygian' mode. Brahms's biographer Malcolm MacDonald discovered that, in one of his favourite books, Brahms circled a passage stating that this mode 'expresses deep need and remorse, and longing for heavenly comfort.' There are—as ever with Brahms—more life-affirming episodes, along with the powerful dialogue between winds and strings and the cello restatement of the main theme, over which the violins cast an exquisitely consoling web—yet even here lies what Karl Geiringer terms 'the shadow of an inevitable fate.' At the next restatement of the theme (in the violins, ornamented by flutes, then horns) there is a sense of inner turmoil against which the memory of the main theme labours in vain. When the entire orchestra unites, there is a breathless moment before the first violins assume ownership of the theme (its last hoorah), with some unease in the woodwinds, leading to an ineffable moment of sheer release with solo clarinet and horn.

The third movement provides a welcome relief from foreboding. It opens in jovial and impetuous mood, trumpets to the fore. An irresistible impulsivity leads into a second, more introspective theme, but undercurrents of jubilation remain, with the innate urge to return to the first theme, reinforced by timpani and percussion. The impetuosity of offbeat exuberance feels bound to prevail—and does!

Brahms (almost alone among his contemporaries) was obsessed by the most powerful music of the past, studying Monteverdi as well as Bach. This may have been why, for his finale, he returns to a passacaglia, a baroque form of variations on a bassline theme. As musicologist Stephen Johnson opines: 'Joy may have vanquished Phrygian gloom, but the first movement's challenging evocation of death still needs to be faced. Brahms does this magnificently in the passacaglia. The theme is adapted from the final chorus of Bach's cantata "Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich" ("My soul longs for thee, O God"), which expresses the hope that God will turn the singer's "days of suffering" into joy.'

The finale opens with the strings in a mood of brooding darkness, leavened only by brass offbeats. Stark string figuration wars for dominance over wind lines spiralling into a solo for principal flute of striking loneliness and even misery. Eventually a wonderful brass chorale emerges, endorsed by lower strings, leading into thematic unrest (listen for the horns and trumpets) before a staccato section which dissolves into spiccato lightness undercut by the low brass. There is a final quiet section but the impetus is unmistakeable—and irrevocable. Stephen Johnson again: 'Despite a wonderful moment of "heavenly comfort" (with trombones), the dark minor mode prevails in the end. Yet there is a kind of joy here: defiant, yet undoubtedly still full of life. One may remember Dylan Thomas's words: "Time held me green and dying / Though I sang in my chains like the sea."'.

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Bernard Brook (Leader)
Peter Bicknell
Hannah Bromley
* Ruth Brook
Amanda Clare
Andrew Condon
Mark Cousins
Rosie Cousins
Liz Cromb (lead 2nd)
Ruth Elliott
Jenny Endersby
Jane Ferdinando
Mike Ibbott
Amy Jordan
Gerard Kelly
Penny Longman
* Phil McKerracher
Anne Miles
Richard Miscampbell
Alan Mitchell
Judith Montague
Veronica Parry
Rachel Pullinger
Sheila Robertson
* David Rodker
* Clare Wibberley

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)
Rachel Burgess
Jenny Carter
John Davis
Richard Longman
Alan Magrath
Chris Newbould
Maria Staines
Nicola Oliver
Liz Tarrant
Vanessa Townsend

CELLOS

*Alice McVeigh (Principal)
Helen McDonald
* Helen Griffiths
Helen Ansdell
Sarah Bartlett
Jane Broadbent
Anne Curry
Becky Fage
Mary Fall
Andrew Garton
Mandy Selby
Berard Somerville
Catherine Darling

DOUBLE BASSES

Norman Levy (Principal)
Thomas Dignum
Billy McGee
Julie Buckley
Anthony Barber

FLUTE S & PICCOLO

Jane Crawford
Mark Esmonde

OBOES

* Caroline Marwood
Philip Knight

COR ANGLAIS

Philip Knight

CLARINETS

Hale Hambleton
Shelley Phillips

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller
Julian Farrel
* Chris Richardson

HORNS

* Roy Banks
Brian Newman
Mary Banks
Rich McDermott

TRUMPETS

Matthew Hart Dyke
Derek Cozens
Tim Collett
Clive Griffin

TROMBONES

* Peter Bruce
* John Carmichael
Nick Armstrong

TIMPANI

David Coronel

PERCUSSION

Joley Cragg
Sharon Moloney
Merlin Jones

KEYBOARD (HARP)

David Grubb

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

David Grubb

TICKET MANAGER

Riet Carmichael

* 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	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, 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.