



B S O

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Conductor – Adrian Brown

Leader – Andrew Laing

PROGRAMME

Saturday 19th May 2018

Langley Park Centre for the Performing Arts

£ 1 . 50

www.bromleysymphony.org

Box office: 020 3627 2974

Registered Charity N° 1112117

PROGRAMME

Leonard Bernstein
Overture to 'Candide'

Roy Harris
Symphony No.3

INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES

Refreshments are available in the dining hall.

Gustav Holst
'The Planets'

Unauthorised audio or video recording of this concert is not permitted

Our centenary season opens on Nov 10th
at the Langley Park Centre for the Performing Arts:
Brahms Tragic Overture, **Butterworth** A Shropshire Lad,
Ravel Piano concerto for left hand, **Elgar** Symphony No.2

ADRIAN BROWN – MUSIC DIRECTOR



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.

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

2013 saw Adrian retire from Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra after 40 years and honoured with being one of three national figures nominated for a Lifetime Achievement Award by 'Music Teacher' and Classic FM.

The 2014-17 seasons featured several concerts with the Royal Orchestral Society, including a performance of Elgar's 'The Dream of Gerontius' and concerts with the Corinthian Orchestra including Vaughan Williams 'Pastoral' Symphony.

The 2018 centenary of 'The Planets' by Holst is celebrated by Bromley Symphony Orchestra; 'The Planets' was premiered 100 years ago by Sir Adrian Boult, Adrian's Teacher and is conducted by that pupil tonight.

Future plans include the formation of his own orchestra, the Elgar Sinfonia of London, and work for the Bromley Symphony Centenary season.

Adrian Brown was one of a hundred musicians presented with a prestigious Classic FM Award at their Tenth Birthday Honours Celebration in June 2002. 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. In December 2017, he was presented with the Berlioz International Society Medal for services to the great French composer.

Leonard Bernstein – Overture to ‘Candide’

In 1953, playwright and librettist Lillian Hellman and Leonard Bernstein combined to attempt an operetta of Voltaire’s *Candide*, satirising von Leibniz’s philosophy. The operetta was a success, but not the runaway success Bernstein had expected and, off and on, throughout his career and even until shortly before his death, he tweaked at it and tinkered with it, never entirely satisfied. (As he wryly noted, ‘There’s more of me in that piece than anything else I’ve done.’) Yet he didn’t mess around with *Candide*’s overture. What there is of him in this glittering four-minute curtain-raiser represents insouciance and humour, daring and pizzazz.

In the upbeat opening, violins are scattered to the four winds by percussive power and woodwind, starring a chirpy solo piccolo. Then the string theme arrives, glowing in the middle strings, then taken over by violins, and endorsed by horns. Cymbals summon the flute-led recapitulation along with a nutty violin solo, syncopation, off-beats and chipper grace-notes. The burnished, optimistic second theme resurfaces, this time in the winds, with improvisational string ornamentation. At the end the themes brilliantly overlap – the opening returns, this time remorselessly subverted. Undiluted genius.

Roy Harris – Symphony No.3

Harris once joked, ‘Let’s not kid ourselves – my third Symphony happened to come along when it was needed’. This is quite true, but also over-modest. In 1939, with the New Deal and the shadow of WWII, America was certainly yearning for some pioneering, heady, raw and aspirational departure from the European norm. But Harris’ Third is also both austere and magnificent. Its Renaissance-style intervals of fourths and fifths, craggy textures and sense of flung-wide expansiveness were to influence composers for a generation, the intensity of the first ‘Tragic’ section propelling the audience irresistibly through the other four (Lyrical - Pastorale – Fugue Dramatic – Dramatic Tragic).

Written in five sections without a break, the symphony opens with a long-limbed, almost oratorical statement in the cellos, which builds in power as the rest of the strings are added. (Harris liked to use winds, brass and strings as distinct units.) In the – still slightly angular – ‘lyrical’ section, horns and woodwinds are added. Woodwinds dominate the ‘pastorale’ section: two violins, a bucolic oboe and flute, a clarinet – even an athletic bassoon!

The ‘fugue dramatic’ section presents canonic development of ‘lyrical’ material, rather than an actual fugue. It is punchy, powerful, and crunchy with percussion. The first desks of strings are deliberately omitted for what feels like hours – no, we’re not lost! – while the remaining strings wrestle with irregularly overlapping figuration, and while the woodwind build-up is fuelled, layer upon layer with brass, into a glorious climax.

The ‘fugue dramatic’ then blends into the concluding ‘dramatic tragic’ section, featuring tutti strings in canon with tutti woodwinds, while brass and percussion persist with the powerful rhythmic motif borrowed from the climax of the fourth section. (Listen for timpani retorts and Copland-influenced antiphonal brass,

alongside Harris' trademark flow and pacing.) Finally, the strings – gloriously fervent – rise above the answering brass. Then the timpani begins its inexorable beat, and the final climax grows, uniting brass and strings in a fiery ball of drums.

Yes, Harris' Third did 'happen to come along when it was needed'. But it remains an American masterpiece.

Gustav Holst – The Planets

Holst wrote: 'As a rule I only study things which suggest music to me. Recently, the character of each planet has suggested lots to me.' The background: during the 1910s, Holst befriended astrologer Clifford Bax – brother to Arnold – and also read and re-read Alan Leo's astrologically-based *The Art of Synthesis*, in which Leo delineated the astrological characteristics of each planet. How closely Holst's own vision adheres to Leo's must remain a matter of speculation, however, as he also called this work 'a series of mood pictures.' (It is also interesting that, following the wild international success of *The Planets*, Holst claimed to have 'gone off' astrology – admitting to annoyance that his other works were so overshadowed by this one, in the public consciousness.) Another remark Holst made might explain how astrology married with his world-view: 'Everything in this world . . . is just one big miracle. Or rather, the universe itself is one.'

For a 1920 performance, Holst also wrote: 'These pieces were suggested by the astrological significance of the planets; there is no programme, neither have they any connection with deities of classical mythology bearing the same names. If any guide to the music is required the subtitle to each piece will be found sufficient, especially if it be used in the broad sense. For instance, Jupiter brings jollity in the ordinary sense, and also the more ceremonial type of rejoicing associated with religions or national festivities. Saturn brings not only physical decay, but also a vision of fulfilment. Mercury is the symbol of mind.'

This work also has a particular significance to the Bromley Symphony Orchestra, as the world premiere was given on September 29, 1918, at The Queen's Hall, London, by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra, under Sir Adrian Boult. (It was a hit even in rehearsal: there are tales of the Queen's Hall cleaning ladies linking arms and dancing as the orchestra rehearsed!) Sir Adrian Boult, a regular conductor of the BSO in the 1940s, later taught and mentored Adrian Brown. So the 100th anniversary of the master's premiere is now celebrated by the student. This is the age-old classical music trope: inspiration passed from generation to generation.

Mars, Bringer of War, represents pure grindingly metallic menace from start to finish (Holst apparently told Sir Adrian Boult that the aspect of war he most wished to express was 'its stupidity'.) Which explains the robotic 5/4 beat, the martial menace of the brass, and the clattering hoof-beats of the strings (*col legno* – using the wood rather than the horsehair of the bows). The strings settle into army-locked footsteps. Then trumpets and horns clash and flare, before enduring disintegration by percussion. The lower strings roll ominously: the brass lash back, against an infuriated snare drum. This rises to a shattering chord at climax, inciting scurrying terror in the strings and a final astringent snarl of blasting 5/4.

Venus, Bringer of Peace by contrast, is cool, ethereal and peaceful, featuring gloriously high solo horn. Over pulsing harps, the horn sings again: almost otherworldly. A single violin floats over the texture – other principal players respond, almost meditatively. A sense of timelessness pervades, down to the rising solo horn and lowering winds: it is a study in still life with celeste, and endless watery smoothness before the movement drifts off in a cloud of harps and flutes.

In astrology, apparently, **Mercury** represents ‘the thinker’ (though Holst still subtitled his ‘the Winged Messenger’). Holst’s Mercury is fleet, glib and mischievous, with solo violin, oboe, flute and percussion empowering a glowing culmination. Descending horns and the highest instruments lead into the puckish recapitulation. The tessitura winds higher and higher, the solo violin recalls, the percussion teases. It is unstable, nervous, changeable – and mercurial.

Jupiter, Bringer of Jollity is big, bold and brassy from the off, with a sunny theme bubbling up in horns and strings, full of panache and brio. Oboe and piccolo eventually effervesce it away to allow the strings to launch the – now famous – second theme of sombre joy (arranged as ‘I vow to thee, my country’). The opening theme returns, accelerating faster and wilder until the lower instruments briefly light up part of the iconic second theme into a rousing summation of both.

Saturn, Bringer of Old Age was Holst’s own favourite movement, representing ‘man’s time on earth, his ambition, his strategic delay, his wisdom toward fulfilment, his disappointments and frustrations.’ It starts with hypnotic flute chords from which lines of double basses eventually emerge. Amid breathy wisps of phrases, a pacing trombone theme eventually rouses the massed forces into one of his most inspired moments. Reiterated woodwind chords – inexorable as death – are taken over by the brass, with timpani-led heavy off-beats, until the tension can be spun no farther, and explodes, amidst funeral bells and gusts of trumpets. The movement subsides into reminiscence from double basses before summery woodwind roudades ease into a glorious reconciliation, seconded by bells.

In astrology, **Uranus** the Magician ‘rules’ invention. Here the brass state its four-note theme (G, E-flat, A, B) before a *Sorcerer’s Apprentice*-like motif surfaces in the bassoons. A bolshy tutti responds with tambourine, brass, and cymbals – then timpani and solo tuba subside into the opening bassoon theme again before the beginning of another slow burn. Glittering brass builds and grows, glowing radiologically at the thundering climax – but then appears spent. Solo harp – the same four notes – resurrects the bassoons, a final brass blast is summoned, only to falter. There’s nothing left but the solo harp – and those same four notes.

Given the last word here, **Neptune** the Mystic astrologically represents ‘rapport between the worlds’. Otherworldly oscillating flutes and piccolo, studded with low harps, feature along with eerie chordal underlay. Undulating lines rule, with starry flickers from the celeste, along with very high violins. Finally, the endless scales, aspiring upwards, begin in the oboes. The vocal theme in celeste – or are we imagining it? - become just distinguishable. Rising and falling sighs from violins can’t halt the vocal line from rising, rising, until it drifts off into the sky, somewhere halfway between music and silence.

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Andrew Laing (Leader)
 Clare Wibberley
 (Associate Leader)
 Peter Bicknell
 Bernard Brook
 Ruth Brook
 * Judy Brown
 Andrew Condon
 Mark Cousins
 Rosie Cousins
 Elizabeth Cromb
 Jacqueline De Ferrars
 Claire Dillon
 Rosanna Dowlen
 Rachel Dubourg
 Ruth Elliott
 Jane Ferdinando
 Nick Georgiadis
 Andrew Harber
 Eleanor Harber
 Elizabeth Hayman
 Mike Ibbott
 Penny Longman
 * Phil McKerracher
 Richard Miscampbell
 Veronica Mitchell
 Monika Molnar (lead 2nd)
 Judith Montague
 Kim Morrissey
 * Sarah Norman
 Tracey Renwick
 * David Rodker
 Philip Starr

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)
 Jenny Carter (co-principal)
 Rachel Burgess
 Richard Longman
 * Alan Magrath
 Simon McVeigh
 Nicola Oliver
 Maria Staines
 Liz Tarrant
 Vanessa Townsend

CELLOS

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

DOUBLE BASSES

Adrian Ball (Principal)
 Julie Buckley
 Thomas Dignum
 Barrie Pantrey
 Keith Pinnock
 Tony Saunders

FLUTES & PICCOLO

Mark Esmonde
 * Catherine Borner
 Sharon Moloney
 David Sullivan

OBOES & COR ANGLAIS

* Caroline Marwood
 Vicky Dowsett
 Philip Knight (Cor)
 Gemma Davies (Bass)

CLARINETS

Hale Hambleton
 Chris Jeffery
 Nicky Jenkins
 David Floyd (Bass)

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller
 Julian Farrel
 Chris Richardson
 Phillip Pike (Contra)

HORNS

Roy Banks
 Jon Frank
 Frank Cotte
 Mary Banks
 Brian Newman
 Gary Copnall
 Derek Holland

TRUMPETS

Terry Kallend
 Derek Cozens
 Clive Griffin
 Matt Rainsford
 Jacob Rosenberg

TROMBONES

Graeme Boyd
 * Peter Bruce
 * Paul Jenner
 Les Lake

TENOR & BASS TUBAS

Geoff Batty (Euphonium)
 James Dowsett
 David Young

TIMPANI

David Coronel
 Jess Wood

PERCUSSION

Isis Dunthorne
 Stephen Harker
 Gosia Kepa
 Anthony Summers
 Jess Wood

CELESTE & ORGAN

Tracey Renwick (celeste)
 Anthony Summers (org)
 Derek Holland (chorus)

HARP

Elizabeth Green
 Jean Kelly

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 John & Riet Carmichael
Chairman	Paul Jenner

Patrons

Mrs Jill Brodie	Glynn & Denyse Griffiths	Dr Beryl Magrath
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		Richard and Barbara Wood

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.