

BSO **BROMLEY** **SYMPHONY** **ORCHESTRA**

Centenary Season 1918-2018



Armistice Centenary Concert

Conductor - Adrian Brown

Leader - Andrew Laing

Soloist - Nicholas McCarthy

Saturday 10th November 2018

Langley Park Centre for the
Performing Arts

£1.50



www.bromleysymphony.org
Box office 020 3627 2974
Registered Charity no 1112117

Programme

The National Anthem (arranged Elgar)

Brahms - Tragic Overture

Butterworth - A Shropshire Lad

Ravel - Piano Concerto for Left Hand
Soloist - Nicholas McCarthy

Interval - 20 Minutes

Refreshments are available in the dining hall

Elgar - Symphony No 2

Unauthorised audio or video recording of this concert is not permitted

Our next concert is on Saturday 26th January at Langley Park Centre
for the Performing Arts

Mozart Symphony No 32 in G major

Beethoven Piano Concerto No 1 in C major

Soloist **John Lill**

Mahler Symphony No 1 in D major

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.

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.

The 2018-19 Centenary celebrations at Bromley Symphony Orchestra were preceded by another centenary - Holst 'The Planets', premiered by Sir Adrian Boult, Adrian's Teacher, was conducted by that pupil 100 years later in Bromley.

Adrian has formed his own orchestra, the Elgar Sinfonia of London, launching in November 2018 with a performance of Elgar's Violin Concerto with Sasha Rozhdestvensky. Adrian has conducted Bromley Symphony Orchestra since 1980.

Nicholas McCarthy - Piano Soloist

Born in 1989 without his right hand, Nicholas began to play the piano at the late age of 14 after being inspired by a friend playing Beethoven's Waldstein Sonata.

His graduation in 2012 drew press headlines around the world, as the only one-handed pianist to graduate from the Royal College of Music in its 130 year history. In March 2018 he was awarded honorary membership by its President, HRH The Prince of Wales.

Nicholas is a champion of the dynamic and brave world of left hand alone repertoire, a repertoire that first came into being in the early 19th Century and developed rapidly following the First World War as a result of the many injuries suffered on the Battlefield. Paul Wittgenstein was responsible for its 20th Century developments with his commissions with Ravel, Prokofiev and Benjamin Britten amongst others.

Johannes Brahms - Tragic Overture (Op 81)

Brahms wrote the Tragic and Academic Festival Overtures in the summer of 1880. Opinions differ as to his inspiration, though its title resonates with contemporary German literature, as in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*.

On the other hand, Brahms' mood could have been affected by all the rain on holiday that year in Bad Ischl – or by the painful ear infection that sent him back to Vienna for treatment, terrified of losing his hearing. Relieved once the infection had passed, he wrote to his doctor: 'The Academic has led me to a second overture which I can only entitle the Dramatic, which does not please me.' He added, to two friends: 'I cannot find a proper title ... One overture weeps while the other laughs.'

The work opens uncompromisingly, with two blasting D minor chords, and soon powers into a muscular theme for full orchestra, stressing the darker brass and lower strings. The second theme is more lyrical yet still disquieted, and leads irresistibly to another climax. This transitions into a harmonically uncertain section, featuring driven motives and restless passagework. The powerful recapitulation of the opening chords gives way to a lighter, intricate, more fugal section – almost, a homage to Bach. Fragments of the main theme rise at last from the depths, but are overruled by more fisting chords at the unreconciled conclusion.

George Butterworth - 'A Shropshire Lad' Rhapsody

Butterworth's musical career was cut short on the Somme, aged only 31. He also distinguished himself in combat. His commanding officer wrote that Butterworth was; 'A brilliant musician in times of peace, and an equally brilliant soldier in times of stress.'

Before the war, George Butterworth and his friend Vaughan Williams had made expeditions into the countryside to research folk songs. After Butterworth's death, Vaughan Williams gloomily told Holst: 'I sometimes think that it is wrong to have made friends with people much younger than oneself—because soon there will only be the middle-aged left.'

Inspired by Alfred Edward Housman, Butterworth composed a song cycle for baritone and piano, as well as this eloquent orchestral epilogue. The poems – presciently enough – explore life in the face of imminent death (in the Boer War, in Housman’s case). It is extremely lucky that this short orchestral gem survived, as Butterworth destroyed many compositions before heading off to war, perhaps suspecting that he might never return. Its glowing lyricism and textural imagination testify to a burgeoning talent cut down in its prime.

Maurice Ravel - Piano Concerto for the Left Hand

This stunning one-handed piano concerto – at times almost harsh, at times jazzily bright – came about thanks to Paul Wittgenstein, a pianist who lost his arm in WWI, serving the Austrian army on the Russian front. After the war, determined to resume his pianistic career, he commissioned works for the left hand alone.

Wittgenstein at first was unimpressed with the concerto and even dared to arrange it, to Ravel’s fury: altering harmonies, cutting bars and adding arpeggios. (‘It always takes me a while to grow into a difficult work,’ was his lame excuse, ‘Only much later did I realize what a great work it was.’)

The work, in two continuous parts, begins slowly and builds powerfully, with the double basses a softly arpeggiating (E-A-D-G) background to atmospheric solo contra-bassoon. (These are the basses open strings, creating the vague illusion that the orchestra is still tuning.) The pianist’s first solo section encompasses the whole of the fingerboard, winding down into lyricism – but still often with an edge. The movement rises to a timpani-led climax, leaving solo piano to whip the orchestra into a march-like scherzo, followed by music possibly inspired by nights Ravel enjoyed in New York jazz clubs. The ultimate return of the opening theme from the first section is followed by a solo cadenza that would be hard for both hands, finishing what the composer himself termed a ‘brutal’ conclusion.

Edward Elgar - Symphony No 2 in E flat major

Allegro vivace e nobilmente – Larghetto – Rondo: Presto – Moderato e maestoso.

Elgar admitted that his second symphony was inspired by places – and people – he knew. At the top of the score is scribbled part of a poem by Shelley: ‘Rarely, rarely, comest thou, Spirit of Delight!’ Additionally, the words: ‘Venice and Tintagel’ are included at the work’s conclusion. Elgar had recently travelled to Venice, while Tintagel was intimately connected in Elgar’s mind with ‘Windflower’ – his nickname for his confidante Alice Stuart Wortley – whom he visited in Cornwall in April, 1910. It is a deeply personal, intensely intimate work – if on a massive scale, as he again took refuge in Shelley to explain: ‘I do but hide/ under these notes/ like embers/ every spark of that which consumed me.’

Oddly enough, the Second Symphony was received without much enthusiasm at its premiere. (‘What’s the matter with them, Billy?’ Elgar testily asked the LSO leader, when taking his bow: ‘They sit there like a lot of stuffed pigs!’) Perhaps it was the quiet ending. More likely, the audience was, quite simply, overwhelmed. The symphony explodes into being – there is an accelerando in the second bar – and yet its confidence is continually

undermined. Turbulent winds rage, despite nostalgic aspirations in the second subject and a rhapsodic flow throughout. It then winds down into what Elgar described as, 'a malign influence ... like a love scene in a garden at night, when the ghost of some memories come – it makes me shiver.' The movement recovers, to end in a hectic shower of orchestral fireworks.

The superb second movement – the opening supposedly inspired by the grandeur of St Marks, Venice – settles into an elegiac march, and includes themes of deeply tender consolation. However, the funeral cortege is never quite lost, particularly in the recapitulation, where a solo oboe grieves disconsolate over the orchestra. (Most authorities accept that Elgar was thinking here not of the late Edward VII - the work's dedicatee - but instead of the recently deceased Alfred Rodwald, a close friend and fellow musician.) The intimacy of the following section is beyond words, though eventually propelled into an astonishing culmination (marked *fff*, very loud). Yet it ends with a fragrant reminiscence of the opening theme, in a section Elgar described as 'a woman dropping a flower on a man's grave.'

No average run-of-the-mill scherzo, the third movement erupts in joviality, supposedly inspired by some good-humoured, less-than-expert musicians in St Marks' Square – but the festivities are eventually undermined. As Elgar explained to the London Symphony: 'Some of you may know that dreadful beating that goes on in the fevered brain, that seems to drive out every coherent thought. This hammering must overwhelm everything. Percussion, you must gradually drown the rest of the orchestra!') Sometimes described as the symphony's 'nightmare' it is a pulsating outburst in the middle of the scherzo's overall ebullience and represents (again according to the composer) 'the madness that attends the excess or abuse of passion' – linking it to a Tennyson poem that imagines a still conscious corpse being run over by horses whose hooves, 'beat, beat into my scalp and brain.' (The scherzo theme returns, however, relatively unscathed.)

The finale starts with a flowing, long-limbed theme in the lower strings, marked 'with dignity'. This merges into an eloquent second subject which Elgar affectionately nicknamed 'Hans' (for conductor Hans Richter). The development is fugal, culminating in a solo trumpet high 'B' ringing out over the whole. (LSO trumpeter Ernest Hall triumphantly held the note for two bars instead of one, which so thrilled the composer that he altered his score.) The coda not only recollects the cello's opening theme but harkens back to the symphony's opening 'Spirit of Delight' motive, ending on a note of glowing resolution and serenity. In Elgar's words: 'The spirit of the whole work is intended to be high and pure joy - the whole of the sorrow is smoothed out and ennobled in the last movement.'

He also wrote, rather later, referring to the violin concerto and the Music Makers, as well as the Second Symphony: 'In these works, I have written out my soul.' This he did with such consummate skill that I predict that, by the time Adrian has finished with it, you will not be 'sitting there like stuffed pigs' but will instead bring down the walls of the Langley Park Centre for the Performing Arts, to the intense annoyance of Bromley Council, and to the detriment of our rates and taxes.

BROMLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

1ST VIOLINS

Andrew Laing (Leader)
Clare Wibberley
(Associate Leader)

Caroline Atkinson

Peter Bicknell

Bernard Brook

* Judy Brown

Andrew Condon

* Jacqueline De Ferrars

Rachel Dubourg

Eleanor Harber

Elizabeth Hayman

Richard Miscampbell

Monika Molnar

Judith Montague

Kim Morrisey

Rachel Pullinger

Tracey Renwick

* David Rodker

Dasha Veysey

VIOLAS

David Griffiths (Principal)

Rachel Bowley

Jenny Carter (co-principal)

Emily Colyer

Richard Longman

* Alan Magrath

Simon McVeigh

Nicola Oliver

Maria Staines

Liz Tarrant

Vanessa Townsend

CELLOS

Alice McVeigh (Principal)

Helen McDonald

Jane Broadbent

Anne Curry

Becky Fage

Andrew Garton

Marion Hitchcock

Mandy Selby

Berard Somerville

Amanda Stephen

2ND VIOLINS

* Mike Ibbott (lead 2nd)

Ruth Brook

Mark Cousins

Rosie Cousins

Claire Dillon

Yasmeen Doogue-Khan

Ruth Elliott

Jane Ferdinando

Nick Georgiadis

Andrew Harber

Gerard Kelly

Maja Kurtilic

Phil McKerracher

Veronica Mitchell

Sarah Norman

Philip Starr

LilyRose Wallace

DOUBLE BASSES

Adrian Ball (Principal)

Thomas Dignum

Barrie Pantrey

Keith Pinnock

Tony Saunders

FLUTES & PICCOLO

Mark Esmonde

Catherine Borner

David Sullivan

OBOES & COR ANGLAIS

* Caroline Marwood

Vicky Dowsett

Philip Knight

CLARINETS

Hale Hambleton

David Floyd (Bass)

Chris Jeffery

Alistair Logan

BASSOONS & CONTRA

Stephen Fuller

Julian Farrel

*Chris Richardson

HORNS

Roy Banks

Jonathan Stoneman

Frank Cottee

Mary Banks

Brian Newman

TRUMPETS

Terry Kallend

Derek Cozens

Clive Griffin

TROMBONES

Sam Dye

* Peter Bruce

* Paul Jenner

TUBA

*James Dowsett

TIMPANI

David Coronel

PERCUSSION

Gosia Kepa

Tony Lucas

Sharon Moloney

Anthony Summers

ORGAN

Anthony Summers

HARP

Milo Harper

Glain Dafydd

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

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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

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