

The Lenthall Concerts

Season 2012-13

The Royal College of Music String Band

directed by

Mark Messenger

Oundle School Chamber Orchestra Strings

directed by

Angus Gibbon

Wednesday, January 16th 2013

Burford School

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, February 8th 7.30pm

Wood Green School, Witney

'Exploring Beethoven'

Mary Hofman

(violin)

Richard Ormrod

(piano)

Sonata no.8 in G major for violin and piano op.30.3

Sonata no.31 in A flat major for piano op.110

Sonata no.9 (Kreutzer) in A major for violin and piano op.47

Tickets £10/£9 (under 18 £1)

from Music Stand, High Street;

Greenway Antiques, Corn Street; or at the door, 30 minutes before the start of a performance

The Lenthal Concerts

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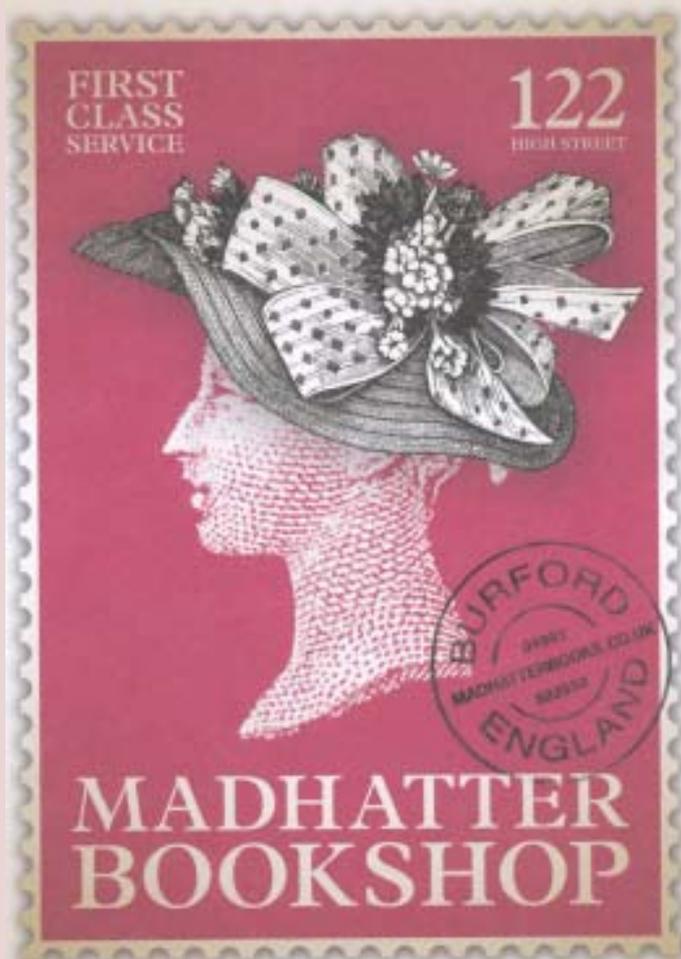
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Programme

Elegy op.58

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Elgar wrote this Elegy in 1909 and it was first performed on July 13th for the Worshipful Company of Musicians at Mansion House, London, in a memorial concert for the late Junior Warden, the Rev. R H Haddon, to whom it was formally dedicated. The view of many Elgarians, however, is that it also represents a very personal tribute to Elgar's friend and editor at Novello's, the German August Jaeger, who died that year after a long, wasting illness, at the age of 49. Those who seek Jaeger's monument, though, cannot do better than the ninth of the Enigma Variations, to which Elgar attached the nickname of his friend, and which is known to one and all as 'Nimrod', after the hunter (in German, Jäger) of Greek mythology.



A F Jaeger

St Paul's Suite op.29 no.2

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Oundle school Chamber Orchestra strings and the RCM String Band (directed by Angus Gibbon)

- *Jig: Vivace*
- *Ostinato: Presto*
- *Intermezzo: Andante con moto*
- *Finale (The Dargason): Allegro*

Gustav Holst can well lay claim to be the Cotswolds' most famous composer and the one who lived closest to Burford (OK, Vaughan Williams' birthplace was slightly nearer, but he left Down Ampney as a child of three). He was born in Cheltenham, and as a young man was organist and choirmaster in Wyck Rissington. If he had had the inclination to write chamber music we could have feted him in this concert series; but he gave up the violin for the trombone, which his father thought would be good for his son's asthma, and his works for strings alone are few and far between.

While he was composing the works (notably The Planets) which would make him world famous, Holst was also Musical Director at St. Paul's Girls' School, Hammersmith, where he remained until the end of his life. It provided him with a steady income and, later, a sound-proof room to teach in during the week and compose in at weekends. In 1913 he composed the St Paul Suite for the school orchestra: a work of infectious good humour which has proved to have a life far

beyond the classroom and is still going strong in its centenary year. Holst later expanded the instrumentation for full orchestra.

Holst's skill in handling different time signatures shows itself in the alternating 6/8 and 9/8 of the first movement, which has two themes cleverly combined: just the thing for a student orchestra to cut its teeth on. The *Ostinato* is marked *presto*, and the forthright figure which gives the movement its title continues throughout, with the theme above it given to the viola. The *intermezzo* is a duet for violin and viola over *pizzicato* chords, and the last movement borders on the esoteric, Holst introducing a concept possibly borrowed from John Dowland, who also wrote dargasons, eight-bar circular tunes which refuse to come back to the key-note, and are combined with other tunes. The tune which emerges in this piece will not be unfamiliar.



Holst's statue in Imperial Gardens, Cheltenham

Six Romanian Folk Dances

Bela Bartok
(1881-1945)

Oundle senior strings and the RCM String Band
soloists: Emma Oldfield, Jessica Coleman and Anna Lee

Bot tánc (Stick Dance)
Brâul (Sash Dance)
Topogó (In One Spot)
Bucsumí tánc (Dance from Bucsum)
Román polka (Romanian Polka)
Aprózó (Fast Dance)

Bartok was born on the border of Hungary and Romania; his birthplace was, in fact, at that time in the latter, although Hungary was later to claim both it and Bartok as their own. It was inevitable that during his long and meticulous research into folk music the composer should cover Transylvania, then part of Hungary. Ironically, Bartok's original title, *Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary*, was changed by the composer when Transylvania was annexed to Romania in 1918.

These dances were arranged for piano in 1915, and an orchestral version followed two years later. The titles above are in Hungarian; their Romanian equivalents are, as they say, available on request.

Interval

Variations on a theme of Frank Bridge op.10

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

Introduction and Theme
Variation 1: Adagio
Variation 2: March
Variation 3: Romance
Variation 4: Aria Italiana
Variation 5: Bourrée classique
Variation 6: Wiener Waltzer
Variation 7: Moto perpetuo
Variation 8: Funeral March
Variation 9: Chant
Variation 10: Fugue and Finale

The composer Frank Bridge (1879-1941) is highly regarded, especially for his chamber music, but his reputation has been overshadowed by that of his most famous pupil, whom he tutored privately in the twenties. The Variations stemmed from a commission by the Boyd Neel Orchestra to perform a new piece by an English composer at the 1937 Salzburg Festival, and Britten produced this in about a month. Both he and Bridge attended the rehearsals.



Frank Bridge

During his lifetime Bridge was irked by the fact that his more 'modern' music was less popular than the backward-looking compositions he had written before the first World War. Three Idylls for String Quartet was one, and it provided the theme for this work. Unusually, it is not stated at the outset, but sidles out shyly after about a minute. It gets a pretty thorough reworking in each of the variations, which show Britten at his most inventive.

Britten dedicated the score "to FB. A tribute with affection and admiration" and his annotations on the score he presented to Bridge (but not on the printed score) made explicit the qualities of the dedicatee represented by each movement: the Adagio his integrity; the March, energy; the Romance, charm; the Aria Italiana his humour; the Bourrée, tradition; the Wiener Walzer, enthusiasm; the Moto perpetuo, vitality; the Funeral March, sympathy; the Chant, reverence; the Fugue, skill (it contains a number of references to other works by Bridge). The Finale demonstrates their mutual affection. Bridge later wrote to Britten "*I don't know how to express my appreciation in adequate terms. It is one of the few lovely things that has ever happened to me.*"

Programme notes by Chris Yapp



The Royal College of Music String Band

The core of the Royal College of Music String Band comprises the first year undergraduate bowed string players. The ensemble brings together the most talented students from a wide variety of continents and backgrounds. Within this, the ethos of chamber musicianship, and being a soloist within an ensemble is explored. Rehearsal periods are short and intense, and much of the educational experience is developed through repeated performances. Standards and expectations are high, with individual responsibility being a key component.

Since its inception, the Royal College of Music String Band has been much in demand, and now has a busy concert schedule both within and outside the College during the three months of its existence before the members are subsumed into the College's larger orchestral activity. Regular engagements include concerts for The Lenthall Concert Society, Churchill Music, Oundle School as well as annually being invited to perform at the Worshipful Company of Musicians' evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral

Violins 1

Anna Lee
Jessica Coleman
Anny Chen
Emma Purslow
Jumash Poulsen
Ji Hye Lee
Anna Ziman
Kaarin Lehemets

Violins 2

Emma Oldfield
Laure Chan
Osian Dafydd
Mun Jeong Kim
Pekka Oskari Niemi

Violas

Kristiana Ignatjeva
Deni Teo
Cecilia Chan
Eva Delatorre

Cellos

Kristiana Ignatjeva
Deni Teo
Cecilia Chan
Eva Delatorre

Double Basses

Jon Mikel Martinez Valganon
Lewis Tingey

Mark Messenger

An old friend of the Lenthall Concerts, Mark was a member of the Bochmann Quartet, in effect the quartet-in-residence of the concerts from their inception in 1992 until 2009. Since 2002, he has been much in demand as an international judge, external examiner, to give masterclasses and as a lecturer, and as a consultant on curriculum development. He has also undertaken work for Oxford University Press, New Holland Publishing and the Associated Board, for whom he has just finished editing the complete works for violin and piano by Elgar.

As an educationalist, Mark has also been responsible for the initiation and delivery of outreach programmes for many orchestras and organisations including the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra and Colchester Borough Council. For four years, he was Director of Chamber Music at the Aberystwyth International Summer Music Festival, and now is regularly invited to deliver chamber music courses at the Britten-Pears school in Aldeburgh. In

1998, he set up the Essex Schools' String Orchestras Project in order to stimulate string playing within the county and reverse a ten-year decline, and in 2000 he was invited to become Artistic Director and conductor of the Essex Young People's Orchestra, a position he currently holds.

This year sees appearances in the Middle East, China, Russia and throughout Europe. He is currently Head of Strings at the Royal College of Music in London.

This year Mark will be again running in the London Marathon in aid of young musicians who cannot afford to come to the RCM without assistance. If you would like to contribute go to his charity website: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/madviolinist>.



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