

The Lenthall Concerts

Season 2013-14

Michael Bochmann

David Watkins

Oxfordshire County Harp Ensemble

Wednesday, December 4th 2013

Burford School

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, December 13th 7.30pm

Wood Green School, Witney

Duo Karadis with Louise Vale

"Schubertiade"

Programme to include:

Sonata in A minor 'Arpeggione' for viola and piano

Selected waltzes for piano

Sonata in A major for Piano and Violin, D574

The Shepherd on the Rock, D965 (arr for violin,
viola and piano)

Tickets £11/£10 (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 Lenthall Concerts

Coming next:

Wednesday, January 15th 2014

7.30pm

Burford School

Royal College of Music String Band

directed by Mark Messenger

Programme to include

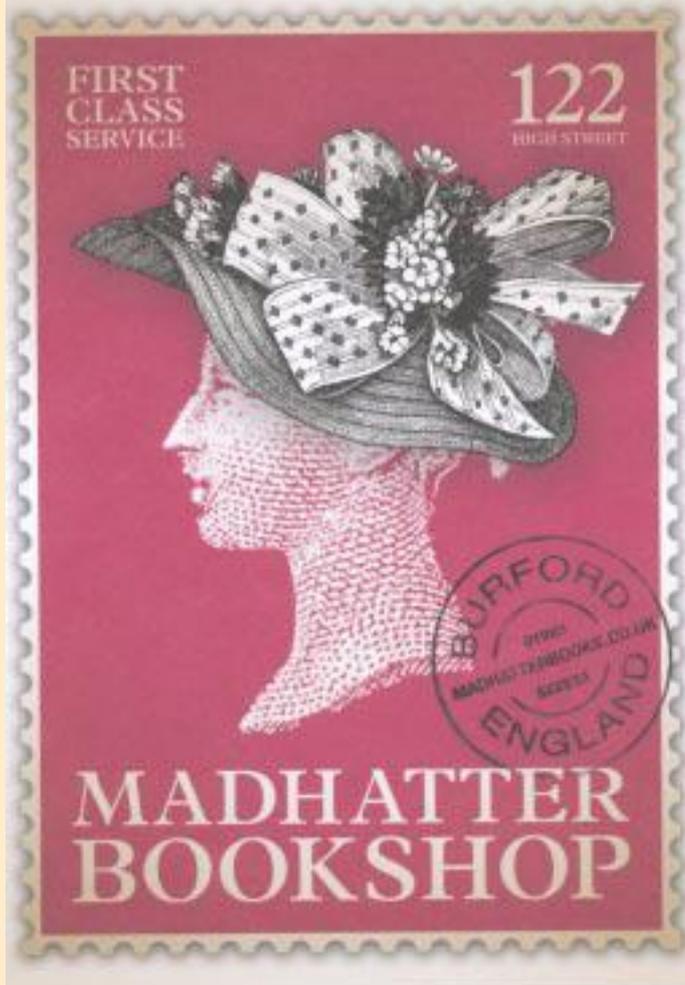
Chamber Symphony in C minor op.110a

Shostakovich

Symphony no.104 in D major Hob 1/104

Haydn

An annual fixture. This year's crop of young string players from the RCM perform under the baton of another Lenthall favourite.



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Programme

Sonata for violin and harp BWV1033

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Andante—presto
Largo
Allegro

Bach, together with other baroque composers, was not overly protective towards his music, which he often recycled to suit the instruments at hand. Thus what appears tonight as a sonata for violin and harp would certainly not have seen the light of day in this form, and appears in the BWV catalogue as being for violin (or flute) and basso continuo. Further reconstruction by tonight's performers has moved the *Allegro* to replace the two *Menuets* which Bach wrote to finish the piece, and replaced an *Andante* with a movement borrowed from another sonata altogether. That Bach's music can take it goes without saying.

Sonata in D major for Harp

John Parry
(1710-1782)

Allegro
Gavotte

John Parry bore the Welsh name Parri Ddall, Rhiwabon (Blind Parry of Ruabon). Blind from birth, he was provided with a harp by his first patrons, the Griifiths Family of Pen Llŷn. He was later taken up by Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn, who besides accommodating Parry on his estate at Wynnstay took him to his house in London, where he met and befriended Handel, and became a member of the Royal Society of Musicians.



John Parry, painted by his son, William

Sonata in Eb for violin and harp

Carl Friedrich Abel
(1713-1787)

Allegro
Rondo



Abel, painted by Thomas Gainsborough

When Johann Sebastian Bach moved from Köthen to Leipzig in 1723, he was succeeded as conductor of the court orchestra by Christian Ferdinand Abel, the principal viola da gamba and cello player. At the end of that year Abel's son Carl Friedrich was born. The young Abel attended the Thomasschule in Leipzig, where he was taught by Bach, on whose recommendation he joined the court orchestra in Dresden. Fifteen years later he went to England and became a chamber-musician to Queen Charlotte. In London he was joined by another ex-pat German composer, Johann Christian Bach, JSB's youngest son, and together they founded the famous Bach-Abel concerts at Carlisle House in Soho

Étude Caractéristique

Edward Elgar

(1857-1934)

Elgar wrote his five *Études Caractéristiques* for solo violin in 1892 and dedicated them to Adolf Pollitzer, the distinguished Hungarian violinist who was Principal of the London (later, Royal) Academy of Music. Elgar visited London intermittently to study with him, and impressed him to the extent that Pollitzer considered him to have the potential to become a leading soloist. Elgar, having sampled the opposition at London concerts, did not agree, and concentrated on composition, not forgetting teaching and conducting to keep the wolf from the door.

The *Études* are exactly what their title suggests: pieces to sharpen up the skills of aspiring fiddle players; but also to engage the ear of a concert audience.

Garland

David Watkins

Rain Forest Prelude

Flights

Bells

Games

Laments

Dances

Garland is a suite of six short pieces suitable for younger harpists. It is dedicated to the harpist Liz Hodges. The titles are all descriptive: "*Rain Forest Prelude*" evokes the dripping of trees in a tropical forest; "*Flights*" has simple fragments linked together to imitate the flight of birds; "*Bells*" is a short exercise in sonority to capture the pealing of bells with all their attendant overtones; "*Games*" is a playful study with contrasting rhythms; "*Laments*" uses an ancient mode to conjure up feelings of sadness, and in "*Dances*" fragments of rhythm lead into a middle section which develops into a rumba with ongoing rhythmic contrasts.

DW

Interval

Two pieces for Harp Ensemble

Glenlivet

trad Scottish arr. Alan Milosevic

Flamenco

Deborah Henson

Meditation (from *Thaïs*)

Jules Massenet

(1842-1912)

Massenet's opera *Thaïs* was first performed at the Paris Opera in 1894. It was based on a novel by Anatole France which tells of the struggle of the monk Athaniël to redeem Thaïs, a beautiful Alexandrian courtesan, and subsequently to suppress his own feelings of longing for her. The meditation comes as an interlude in the scene where Thaïs is visited by the Holy Ghost and receives her conversion.

Three solos for Harp

arr David Watkins

David of the White rock
Miller's song
Watching the Wheat

Country Gardens

arr Michael Bochmann

Country Gardens is a traditional tune collected by Cecil Sharp and famously arranged by Percy Grainger for piano, initially under the title "Handkerchief Dance" to emphasise its connection with the Morris. Subsequently it has had all manner of manifestations, but a solo violin must come very close to its origins.

Intermezzo (from Cavalleria Rusticana)

Pietro Mascagni
(1863-1945)

Cavalleria Rusticana is a one-act opera which the 25-year-old Mascagni entered for a competition run by a Milanese music publisher. Mascagni, who heard about the competition only two months before the closing date, wrote it in a furious hurry, but it made the cut and became a runaway success, clocking up thousands of performances. The opera is full of fine Sicilian passion, but there is a brief relief from this when the protagonists leave the market square and the orchestra plays the intermezzo.

Fantaisie for violin and harp op.124

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835-1921)

*Poco allegretto—Allegro—Vivo e grazioso—Largamente—Andante con moto—
Poco più mosso—Poco adagio*

The *Fantaisie* was written in 1907, during an auspicious period for chamber music featuring the harp. Three years earlier the Pleyel company of Paris had introduced its new chromatic harp and had commissioned Debussy to write his *Danse sacre et danse profane* for the instrument. Two years later the Erard company commissioned Ravel to write his *Introduction and allegro* to show off their rival instrument, the double-action pedal harp. The work was premiered in the same year as Saint-Saëns' *Fantaisie*, which was composed at Bordighera, on the Italian Riviera, where Saint-Saëns had gone to recuperate after the pressures of overseeing the production of his opera *Le Timbre d'Argent* in Monte Carlo.

The piece is in sections, rather than movements. There is a short introductory passage, followed by an *Allegro* which builds to a swirling climax. Then comes a section of pastoral charm, and an *Andante* where the violin meditates and then emotes over an insistent base on the harp. The piece finishes with a recapitulation of the early sections, before wistfully subsiding.

Programme notes by David Watkins and Chris Yapp

Michael Bochmann

Michael Bochmann (violin) was brought up in Turkey and England and has been well known in British musical life for several decades. He has performed in the USA, all over Europe and India. He was a prize-winner in the 1972 Carl Flesch International Violin Competition and in the Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris. For many years he was the leader of the Bochmann Quartet with whom he made many broadcasts and recordings. He was appointed concertmaster of the English String and Symphony Orchestras by William Boughton in 1988. Two years later he partnered Yehudi Menuhin in Bach's Double Concerto in a tour of 18 concerts in the USA and Britain. His recording of "The Lark Ascending" by Vaughan Williams with the ESO for Nimbus Records has been broadcast many times on Radio 3 and Classic FM. He frequently visits Germany to perform and teach.

David Watkins

While still at school, he was a member of the National Youth Orchestra and a finalist in a Daily Mirror Competition for young instrumentalists. After studying at the Royal Academy of Music, a French Government Scholarship enabled him to continue his studies in Paris. Returning to London, Solti chose him to play with the orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. It was a 'Golden Age' which included performances by Callas, Sutherland, Schwarzkopf, Fonteyn and Nureyev. He then became a founder member of the new Welsh National opera company under the direction of James Lockhart and, after a short time with the Royal Philharmonic, joined the London Philharmonic under the batons of Boult, Solti, Haitink and Tennstedt.

His solo concerts have taken him all over the world, performing many of the compositions that have been written especially for him. He has also performed as soloist with the London Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, etc. and appeared as soloist with the London Sinfonietta at the London Proms with Sir Simon Rattle conducting.

Since winning first prize in an International American Competition with his composition *Petite Suite* for harp, he has written many pieces including the Concerto Pastorale, which he played with the London Philharmonic at the Royal Festival Hall, Walter Susskind conducting.

His recording of Ravel's Introduction & Allegro with the National Philharmonic became a bestseller in the USA, and other highly acclaimed recordings have been issued by RCA, Meridian and Pyramid.

For many years he has been Professor of Harp at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has written a 'Method' for the harp published by Boosey and Hawkes.

Oxfordshire Harp Quartet

Amber Sharret

Erin Lawson-Smith

Isobel Lawrence

Heather Wilkinson

Director: Anna Lockett

All four players are members of the Oxfordshire Youth Orchestra



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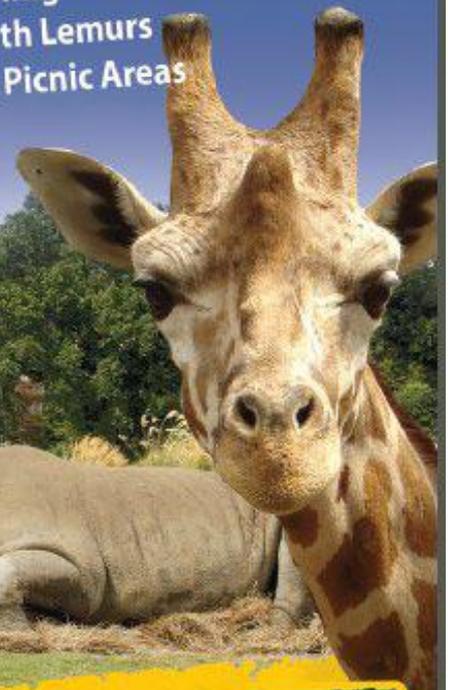
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