

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
SEASON 2005-2006

Royal College of Music
String Band &
Cello Ensemble

directed by Mark Messenger

Wednesday, January 11th 2006

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Tangleton by Gordon Ottevell



Two children come to live on the outskirts of a Cotswold village and begin to enjoy the pleasures of country living. But why does the village seem so sad and unloved? And what is the secret of the Hall, that makes it so forbidding? Plenty of action for 8-11s as the two young incomes find out.

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Programme

Elegy for Strings op.58

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Elgar wrote this Elegy in 1909 and it was first performed for the Worshipful Company of Musicians at Mansion House, London, in a memorial concert for the late Junior Warden, the Rev. RH 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, 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'.

Concerto for two violins in D minor RV565

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

solo violins: Mark Messenger and Michael Bochmann

Allegro

Largo e spiccato

Allegro

The D minor concerto is one of twelve collected by the astute publisher Estienne Roget in 1711 under the title L'Estro Armonico. All were written for the Conservatorio dell' Ospedale della Pieta in Venice, where young girls who were orphaned or otherwise abandoned by the parents were housed at the state's expense and given what must have been some extraordinary musical training, both as singers and instrumentalists. Vivaldi directed concerts on Sundays and feast days and audiences came from far and wide. Charles de Brosses, one of the most notable French writers of the time, was enchanted, possibly by the music: "I swear to you that there is nothing more pleasing than to see a pretty young nun in white habit, with a spray of pomegranate blossom behind her ear, conducting the orchestra and beating time with all the grace and precision imaginable".

The works are arranged in four groups of three, each group consisting of a solo, double and quadruple concerto. The set was put together to show as much diversity as possible if the work was played as a whole, but each concerto has plenty of variety, and Vivaldi crams a lot into the nine-plus minutes of no.11: a forthright allegro, starting with an animated conversation between the two soloists, followed by a meditative moment before a fugue takes over. The slow movement is dreamier than its *spiccato* marking might suggest, and the finale has some robust interplay between the soloists.

WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, January 13th 7.30pm

Wood Green School

Jennie-Lee Keetley (oboe) Jonathan French (piano)

supported by the Countess of Munster Trust

Jennie-Lee graduated with distinction from the Royal College of Music in 2004. She has toured China and Spain and played principal oboe for a tour in Italy and Israel with the World Youth Chamber Orchestra

Tickets £8.50/£7 (Children/WOC students £1)
from Music Stand, High Street;
C Greenway (Antiques), Corn Street; or at the door
Lenthall Members receive a further concession of £1.00.

Ghost Ranch



Peter Liewen

The work is a musical impression of the natural beauty and legends of Ghost Ranch in Northern New Mexico, located in Abiquiu, about an hour and a half north of Santa Fe. The 21,000 acres that comprise Ghost Ranch were part of a land grant to Pedro Martin Serrano from the King of Spain in 1766. The name *Ghost Ranch* was derived from the many tales of ghosts and legends of hangings in the Ranch's history.

Musically, a mournful melodic gesture by a solo cello introduces the work, which soon becomes more animated with the juxtaposition of various rhythmic and melodic sound-streams. A pointillistic section then gives way to music with an increasing rhythmic drive. Following several energetic harmonic bursts by the full ensemble, the work closes much as it began.

INTERVAL

Chamber Symphony in C minor op110a

Dimitri Shostakovich
(1905-1975)
orchestrated by Rudolf Barshai
(b 1924)

The Eighth Quartet, arguably Shostakovich's most famous piece of chamber music, was written during a period of deep depression in the composer's life. His first wife Nina had died, and his second, unhappy marriage had ended in 1959 in divorce, while his relationship with Russia's Communist government was complex and troubled. In 1960, he visited Dresden in order to carry out research for a film score, and saw the ruins left by the bombing in the Second World War. His reaction served as part of the inspiration in composing the Eighth Quartet.

The Eighth String Quartet contains many self-quotations from a wide variety of earlier works: at least four of the symphonies, the First Cello Concerto, the Second Piano Trio, and

Peter Liewen
(b 1953)

Peter Liewen is Professor of Music and Composer-in-Residence at the Texas A & M University. His symphonic music has been performed in North America and in Europe by groups such as The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Saint Louis Symphony, the Mexico City Philharmonic and the National Orchestral Association Orchestra. Peter Liewen's chamber music has been performed by artists and ensembles including the Ravel String Quartet, the Western Arts Trio, the New Mexico Brass Quintet, Quintessence Winds and the Moran Wind Quintet. His music has been performed at festivals throughout the USA and in England and Finland, and widely recorded. *Ghost Ranch* was written for the Cello Ensemble of the Aberystwyth Musicfest in 1997.

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the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsenk* (at that point banned – it was later revised under a new title). It is almost as if Shostakovich is surveying his life and music through these quotes. The Quartet is in four movements, each marked *attacca* so the music flows continuously onwards.

The piece opens with a slow rendition of the composer's name motif (DSCH). A canonic passage, restated with the music 'in reverse' sets a pensive and bleak opening mood, before a sudden transition to a new quick tempo, and a furious statement of the *Dance of Death* theme from the Second Piano Trio. This rapidly turns into a sardonic waltz, using the DSCH motif, before the pulse returns to duple time with a quotation from the opening of the First Cello Concerto. What follows is a stream of reminiscences of earlier works, including a quote from Katerina's aria expressing her longing for her lover in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsenk* (perhaps linked to the composer's own lonely mood). The music gradually winds down, culminating in a quiet slow statement of music related to the DSCH motif, before dying away in a quiet conclusion.

This arrangement of the Eighth Quartet for string orchestra is by Rudolf Barshai, an international conductor and violist, who studied composition with Shostakovich, and was a good friend of the composer. Barshai's other arrangements include a completion of Mahler's Tenth Symphony.

Programme Notes by Michael Messenger



Shostakovich

The Royal College of Music String Band

First Violins	Stepan Lavrov Amirjan Bisengaliev Willemijn Steenbakkens	Charis Jenson Cesar Guigue Natalia Czerska	Joshua Burke Eduardo Romero
Second Violins	Javier Gregori Arriaza Michael Trainor	Marko Pop Ristov Faidon Miliadis	Botagoz Tynebekov Ayumi Oshim
Violas	Bryony Mycroft Natalie Hirst	Aiveen Gallagher Alison D'Souza	Benjamin Harrison
Cellos	Frédérique Legrand Benjamin Havas Bulat Tynybekov	Angélique Lihou James Greenfield	Hugo De Labrusse Benjamin Pont
Double Bass	David Cousins		

The Royal College of Music Cello Ensemble

Barbara Le Liepvre-David Thomas Maternik William Imbert	Jessie Richardson Lydia Shilling Naomi Watts	Katherine Sayles Stella Page
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Mark Messenger

Mark Messenger began his violin studies with Leonard Hirsch and Christian Ferras, and was awarded a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music at the age of sixteen to study with David Martin and Sidney Griller. Three years later he made his Wigmore Hall debut, and has since played as a soloist and chamber musician in all of London's major concert halls, and internationally, appearing at many festivals. He has broadcast many times on television and radio, and has recorded for six labels. His very popular jazz/rock group Mercury Jazz was launched in 1990.

At the age of seventeen, Mark was appointed a violin professor at Goldsmiths College. He has also been Education Projects Manager for the English Symphony Orchestra, and was Director of Chamber Music at the Aberystwyth International Summer Music Festival for four years from 1993. In 1998, he instigated the Essex String Orchestras' project, a raft of string ensembles at all levels designed to re-invigorate string playing throughout the county. Mark has been a consultant on music education policies for the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra, for Colchester Borough Council and for the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields. He has much practical Outreach experience, both with the education programmes for the Bingham and Bochmann Quartets, and also through his work for many youth orchestras in the UK. He was appointed conductor of the Essex Young People's Orchestra in 2001.

Mark was appointed Head of Strings at the Royal College of Music in September 2002, having previously been Head of String Studies at the Colchester Institute of Music (1997-2002). In 2004 he was appointed Artistic Director of London String Quartet Week, and was invited back for 2005. Mark now travels across the globe as a performer, teacher, consultant and examiner.

Michael Bochmann

Michael Bochmann has been well known in British musical life for several decades both for his solo performances and for his work with the Bochmann String Quartet. He has performed in the USA, all over Europe and India. Brought up in Turkey and England, he comes from a family of professional musicians. While still a student and a pupil of Frederick Grinke he was the winner of the British Prize in the 1972 Carl Flesch International Violin Competition and a year later, prizewinner in the Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris. 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 Violin Concerto in a tour of eighteen concerts in the USA and Britain. He is a professor at Trinity College of Music in London and holds courses for young professional ensembles and soloists at his home in Gloucestershire.



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