

The Lenthal Concerts
Season 2009-2010

**The
English String Orchestra**
directed by
Michael Bochmann

Wednesday, November 11th, 2009

The Lenthall Concerts

Artistic Director: Michael Bochmann

Programme 2009-2010 season

Wednesday, December 2nd 2009 7.30pm

Michael Bochmann (violin) and
Michael Blackmore (piano), plus
Members of the Gloucester Youth Orchestra

Sonata for two violins in G minor	Handel
Violin Sonata in E minor	Elgar
Poème	Chausson
Caprice no.17	Paganini/Busch
Melodie op.42	Tchaikovsky
Pieces for two violins and piano	Shostakovich
Caprice in A minor	Wieniawski

Wednesday, January 13th 2010 7.30pm

Royal College of Music String Orchestra
directed by Mark Messenger
Thomas Carroll (cello)

Metamorphosen	Richard Strauss
Cello Concerto	Schumann
Landscape with Birds	Colin Riley

Wednesday, February 10th 2010 7.30 pm

David Watkins (harp) and the
Cotswold Children's Chamber Choir
conductor Jacki Pattenden

Rig Veda	Holst
Wainamoinen Makes Music	Kodaly
Welsh Landscapes	Watkins
Swansongs	Chilcott
Somewhere over the Rainbow	Arlen
I will give my love an Apple	trad., arr. Phillips
Maria walks among the Thorn	Carter

Wednesday, March 17th 2010 7.30 pm

Bochmann Quartet

Quartet in A minor op.132	Beethoven
Quartet no.11	Shostakovich
Quartet op.103	Haydn/Drabkin

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to the many members and other ticket buyers
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WITNEY WINTER CONCERTS

Friday, December 11th 7.30pm

Wood Green School, Witney

'Jubowski'

Liz Cowdrey (violin)

Peter Cowdrey (piano)

Jub (double bass)

'The Esthazy Connection): a light-
hearted look at the musical interplay
between Haydn, Bartok and others, and
Eastern European folk and gypsy
music.

"Liz Cowdrey' nifty violin was stunning" -
(The Independent)

Tickets £9/£7.50 (Children/WOC students £1)
from Music Stand, High Street;
Greenway Antiques, Corn Street; or at the door

Music in Adderbury Sundays at 4pm

15th November

St Mary's Church, Adderbury

Tippett String Quartet

Mendelssohn	String Quartet op.12
Korngold	String Quartet
Dvorak	String Quartet op.96 (American)

29th November

Recital Room, Bloxham School

Three Peters Piano Trio

Peter Fisher (violin); Peter Adams (cello);
Peter Hewitt (piano)

Haydn	Trio in G HobXV:25 Gypsy Rondo
Beethoven	Trio in B flat op.11
Mendelssohn	Piano trio no.1 in D minor op.49

Tickets £11 (£9 concessions)
Information: Christopher Howell (01295 738313)

Programme

Divertimento in D K136

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756-1791

Allegro
Andante
Presto

This work first saw the light of day as a string quartet, written in 1772, when Mozart was at the end of his career as a boy wonder, dazzling audiences all over Europe, and about to enter the employ of the new Archbishop of Salzburg. From now on, until he departed from his home town for Vienna on less than cordial terms with his employer, he would have the duties of court composer and musician.

The first movement is quintessential early Mozart, twinkling away merrily in best Eine Kleine Nachtmusik style, with semiquavers flying in all directions. The andante has a stately dance form, and the finale, after a few staccato steps, turns into a gambol not unlike that of the first movement, and ends at full tilt.

Violin concerto in E major BWV1042

Johann Sebastian Bach
1685-1750

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro assai

In 1723 Bach left the court of Prince Leopold at Cöthen and took up his appointment as Kantor at the Thomasschule in Leipzig. For the next six years his duties were almost entirely concerned with sacred music, but in 1729 he was appointed to the Collegium Musicum, and was able to write secular compositions for it. This concerto is almost certainly one example, although such are the uncertainties of dating Bach's works that it is possible that it was a re-jigging of a work originally written in the Cöthen days.

Whether or not it was, there are certainly affinities with the Brandenburg Concertos, which certainly date from the Cöthen period. A muscular first movement, with the soloist hard at it from start to finish, with or without the orchestra, is followed by the gorgeous theme of the adagio, stated by the orchestra with the solo violin playing a sort of descant above it, then breaking free with its own melodic inventions. We are back to the forthright mood of the first movement in the finale, which has another memorable tune and more ensemble playing for soloist and orchestra.

Concerto in B minor for 4 violins op 3 no10

Antonio Vivaldi
1678-1741

Allegro
Largo - Larghetto
Allegro

"Op 3" suggests an early work, but Vivaldi already had a mass of compositions behind him when this was published in 1711: these being the many concerti and other works he had

written in his post as *maestro di violino* at the Pio Ospedale della Pietà for his talented girl pupils. But his contract had not been renewed two years previously (although it was about to be restored) and he had been concentrating on composing for publication. Opus 3, *L'Estro Armonico*, was one of the fruits of these labours: a collection of twelve concerti for one, two and four violins. It became probably the most influential piece of music written in the first half of the eighteenth century. J S Bach transcribed several of its constituent concerti: this one for four harpsichords and strings.

Not the easiest of tasks, one might think, writing a concerto for four solo instruments. If it is a problem Vivaldi conceals it intriguingly in the first movement: sometimes letting each instrument have its moment in the sun, sometimes letting all four have a conversation, and sometimes giving them their head as a small ensemble to vie with the orchestra. The second movement starts with a slow, rather yearning theme played by each soloist in turn, and then lightens the mood with its gently bouncing *larghetto*, before returning to the solemnity with which it started. The finale keeps all four soloists busy, whether in turn or in consort, with the orchestra reduced to a more-or-less *basso continuo* role.

Interval

Forvantan for cello and strings

Sven Fridolfsson is a distinguished Swedish jazz saxophonist. In 1978 he founded and still leads Himlavasen, a Blues Brothers inspired group known for exciting performances. Since 1990 he has been director of the Lutheran Mission Church Choir in Gothenburg.

First performed at his wedding, the title Forvantan means literally longing, waiting, hoping. Written in a single reflective movement, it ends with a simple rising intonation from the cello, questioning and inviting.



Sven Fridolfsson

Sven Fridolfsson
b1963

Folk Medley for viola and strings

The Gentleman Soldier—John Barleycorn—When I was a little Boy—All Things are quite silent—Towd Yow wi' one Horn—The New York Trader—The Trees they grow so high

Stephen Roberts studied the horn at the RCM and Birmingham University, where he gained a Ph.D. in composition. His works have been performed all over the world, and he has written several for the ESO, including Canticum Novum for three choirs, two orchestras and audience, which was premiered in October 2008 in Gloucester Cathedral.

The English Miniatures are seven light-hearted pieces for solo viola and strings, written for Stephen's wife Helen, tonight's soloist. Space does not permit a description of the original

Stephen Roberts

songs' subject matter, which inclines, as one might expect, to the earthy and robust. If you are not easily fobbed off, please see the author of these notes for further details.

Simple Symphony

Benjamin Britten
1913-1976

Boisterous Bourrée—Playful Pizzicato—Sentimental Saraband—Frolicsome Finale

Britten graduated from the Royal College of Music in 1932 with a travel grant for £100, which he intended to use to go to study with Alban Berg, whom he much admired. But his parents were suspicious of Berg's morals, and Vienna replaced with Lowestoft and the family home. There Britten started to sort out his considerable trunk of juvenilia, some of which he worked up into the Simple Symphony. It received its first performance in Norwich in 1934, with Britten conducting an amateur orchestra, and has become a staple of the string orchestra repertoire.

As a young man, naming his works was not Britten's strong suit, and the title "Simple Symphony", with its rather twee alliterative movement titles, suggest a work of lighter weight than it proves. Although short, it has four finely wrought movements. The first alternates some classical counterpoint with a hint of the English pastoral style which Britten would later be rather rude about. The second has some deft writing for the plucked strings, with surprising changes in colouration as it progresses. The *saraband* is anything but sentimental: "sorrowful" might do it more justice, for it has a tragic feeling worthy of Tchaikovsky. Likewise, the finale is more purposeful than frolicsome, and packs a lot of punch in its three and a half minutes, ending with a storming coda.



Britten in 1933

Andante Cantabile (from first quartet)

Pyotr Tchaikovsky
1840-1893

Tchaikovsky wrote his first string quartet (discounting a single movement, written six years before) in 1871, two years after his first masterpiece, *Romeo and Juliet*, but at a time when he was particularly short of money. His friend Nicholas Rubenstein suggested that Tchaikovsky should give a concert of his own works at the Moscow Conservatory and, lacking the means to engage an orchestra, the composer instead wrote a quartet. It was dedicated to his friend, the pianist Sergei Alexandrovich Rachinsky, and was an immediate success.

When he was fifteen, Tchaikovsky and his younger twin brothers had spent a happy summer on his sister's estate at Kamenka, in the Ukraine. Here he had heard a carpenter singing a folk song called *Sidel Vanya*, which translates as *Vanya sat on the divan*, and this he used in the second movement of the quartet, marked *andante cantabile*: a piece so immediately appealing that it brought Tolstoy to tears when he first heard it. It subsequently became a bit of an albatross for Tchaikovsky, who, faced with the host of transcriptions of it, thought it was the only piece of his that people wanted to hear.

Molly on the Shore

Britten much admired Percy Grainger. At about the time he wrote the Simple Symphony he was writing of "two brilliant folk-song arrangements of Percy Grainger ... knocking all the V. Williams and R.O. Morris arrangements into a cocked-hat". Whether this was one of them we don't know. Perhaps not, as Grainger wrote it in 1907, for his mother. The original version was for string quartet, and it is possible that one of his later "dish-ups" for piano or another combination, may have caught Britten's ear. Like most of his other famous folk-song arrangements, it is by no means sophisticated, but quite irresistible.

Percy Grainger
1882-1961



Rumanian Folk Dances

*Jocul Cu Bata—Braul—Pe Loc—Bucurmeana—Poarga Romaneasa—Maruntel—
Maruntel from Nyagra*

Bartok was born on the border of Hungary and Rumania; 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, perhaps, that during his long and meticulous research into folk music the composer should expand from Hungary into Rumania, and in 1908 he notated his first Rumanian folksong. These dances were arranged for piano in 1915, and an orchestral version followed two years later.

Bela Bartok
1881-1945

CY

The English String Orchestra

Violins: Michael Bochmann, George Ewart, Jackie Hill,
Angus Gibbon, Eleanor Cooke.
Violas: Helen Roberts, Adrian Turner
Cello: Corinne Frost
Double Bass: Stephen Warner

The English String Orchestra was formed in 1980 by William Boughton. It is well known for its recordings, which are often played on Radio 3 and Classic FM. From 1985 until 1999 Yehudi Menuhin was its principal guest conductor and with him the orchestra played all over Europe, USA and Canada.

Over the last few years it has been very active in its smaller group, as it appears tonight and it has on many occasions involved young players playing alongside in its performances. A high point in the orchestra's recent history was its Fantasia Concert in Gloucester Cathedral in Oct 2008 celebrating 50th anniversary of Vaughan Williams' death in which 140 young string players and 290 young choir members took part with the ESO and filled the cathedral.

A particular feature of the orchestra is that the members of the group become the soloists and then retake their place within the orchestra, a tradition that they will continue in tonight's performance.



The Burford Singers



Haydn: *The Creation*

The Cotswold Chamber Orchestra

Leader: Kate Bailey

Soloists

Martene Grimson soprano

Richard Edgar-Wilson tenor Quentin Hayes bass

Conductor Brian Kay

7.30 pm Sunday 6 December 2009

Burford Parish Church

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