

Hampshire County Youth Orchestra

Hampshire County Youth String Orchestra



The Anvil

**Saturday 2 May 2015
7.30pm**

Welcome...

On behalf of Hampshire County Council's Music Service I would like to welcome you to today's concert by some of Hampshire's outstanding young musicians. Each performer has shown great commitment and dedication to their music and put in many hours of practice to reach this standard. They are amongst 55,000 young people who are now learning to play and sing with Hampshire Music Service.

Today's concert is just one of many similar events which take place each year, featuring some of our 60+ area and county ensembles. In addition we organise and co-ordinate special musical events in schools and at venues across the county which recently included: "The Big Sing" at Winchester Cathedral with children from schools across the Itchen Valley and "Friday Afternoons", a countywide synchronised performance of songs to celebrate what would have been Benjamin Britten's 100th birthday and a successful attempt at the Guinness World Record for the largest ukulele ensemble, which saw 2,370 players and 1,233 singers performing at St Mary's Football Stadium in July.

Hampshire Music Service is proud to promote the highest quality learning opportunities through:

- Small group instrumental and vocal tuition in schools
- Our ensembles and orchestras
- Classroom support for teaching staff
- World music, rock, pop and jazz,
- Workshops and special projects,
- *Listen2Me* – a whole-class instrumental and vocal teaching programme for all primary school children.

We recently celebrated the second anniversary of our appointment as the lead partner in the Hampshire Music Education Hub, which has gone from strength to strength. Partnership working has always been a keystone of HMS's provision and we now work with over 100 partner organisations to improve the breadth and scope of our music activities and performance opportunities. Over the course of the year over 220 events have taken place ensuring the best possible opportunities for young people, whatever their musical tastes and ambitions. More recently we have worked with the Southampton Music Hub to be awarded a diploma for 'Services to Jazz Education' at a national ceremony in London.

We are committed to giving every child and young person the chance to *participate, enjoy and achieve* by *making music together*.



Head of Hampshire Music Service

For more information about Hampshire County Youth Orchestra and future events please visit the Hampshire County Youth Orchestra website www.hcyo.co.uk or simply scan:



Making Music Together
Participate, Enjoy, Achieve!



Telephone 023 8065 2037

Email music.service@hants.gov.uk

www.hants.gov.uk/hms

Programme

HCYO Brass and Percussion

Conductor: David Scott

From *Funeral Music for Queen Mary*:

Henry Purcell

March and Canzona

The March and Canzona are part of Purcell's *Funeral Sentences* written in 1694 for the Funeral of Queen Mary II in Westminster Abbey. Queen Mary, the wife of William of Orange, was one of the many victims of the smallpox epidemic of December 1694. One of the choristers at the funeral, Thomas Tudway, later recalled the extraordinary effect of Purcell's music; '*I appeal to all that were present whither they ever heard any thing so rapturously fine, & solemn, & so heavenly which drew tears from all; & yet a plain, Naturall Composition; which shows the pow'r of music, when 'tis rightly fitted, & Adapted to devotional purposes.*'

This resigned anthem for a departing spirit was fittingly repeated at Purcell's own funeral service, held only a few months after the Queen's, in November of 1695.

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Conductor: Brian Lloyd Wilson

String Symphony, Op 110

Dmitry Shostakovich

Shostakovich's String Symphony in C Minor is an arrangement of the **String Quartet no. 8** in C minor, opus 110, the most loved of all Shostakovich's quartets. Highly popular, it is performed more frequently than all of the other fourteen together. The quartet has five linked movements, marked:

1. Largo, *attacca*
2. Allegro molto, *attacca*
3. Allegretto, *attacca*
4. Largo, *attacca*
5. Largo

It is the only substantial work that Shostakovich composed outside Russia. It was written in 1960 whilst Shostakovich was visiting the former Communist State of East Germany. Officially he was there to write the score for the Soviet film 'Five Days - Five Nights'; a film concerned with the ruin of Dresden. The centre of that beautiful baroque city, known as the Florence of the Elbe, had been destroyed in the night of the 13th/14th February 1945 through an incendiary attack by British and American bombers.

The quartet, composed in just three days is one of the most powerful and personal works of the twentieth century – a score that, behind its dark and troubled façade, is unmistakably autobiographical. Shostakovich decided to dedicate the score to 'the memory of the victims of fascism and war' but his letter to Glikman, a long life friend and literary critic in Leningrad, tells another story:

'I have been thinking that when I die, it is hardly likely that anybody will ever write a work dedicated to my memory. So I have decided to write one myself. The dedication could be printed on the cover: *Dedicated to the memory of the composer of this quartet.*'

The autobiographical nature of the music was hardly a secret. The main theme boldly stated in the opening bars and woven into every page of the score, consists of the initials D, S, C, H, (in German music notation this is the equivalent of the notes D, Eb, C, B) and the piece is full of quotations from his other works, including his *First Symphony*, the opera *Lady MacBeth* which famously invoked Stalin's fury and the *First Cello Concerto*, composed for Rostropovich just one year before the quartet.

The day of Shostakovich's funeral, in August 1975, fifteen years after that initial visit to Dresden, the string quartet was performed to honor the memory of the composer, As Shostakovich prophesied ...it was his farewell to life.

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Leader: Dominika Latusek

Violin Concerto

Samuel Barber

Violin solo: Frida Backman

Allegro

Andante

Presto in moto perpetuo

Samuel Barber was one of three American composers often linked together, including Lukas Foss and Leonard Bernstein. All three wrote notable and highly characteristic works for the violin but it is Barber's concerto which is now more often heard. The concerto was composed mostly in Europe during the summer of 1939 and it is a full scale post-romantic work full of lyrical elements evident right from the start. Briselli, for whom the concerto was originally written, liked the first two movements but was unhappy with the third – he complained the finale was too easy after which Barber came up with the fiendishly difficult third movement we know today. Briselli never played the concerto and the work was eventually premiered by Albert Spalding and the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1941.

Interval

Hampshire County Youth Orchestra

Conductor: Carl Clausen

Leader: Matthew Crisp

Symphony No 1

Gustav Mahler

1. Langsam, schleppend / Im Anfang sehr gemächlich
2. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell
3. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen
4. Stürmisch bewegt

When the symphony was first heard in Budapest in 1889, it was not an instant success. For years the 1st Symphony led an unhappy existence, greeted by chilly receptions whenever it was played. No other symphony gave Mahler so much trouble. He could not decide if this music was a symphonic poem, a program symphony, or a symphony plain and simple - or whether it should contain four or five movements and it took a good fifteen years before the piece was finally published.

The piece Mahler introduced in Budapest on November 20, 1889, was billed as a "Symphonic Poem in two parts" with three movements in part 1 and two in part 2. Only the funeral march had a title, to help listeners coming to the music cold. Today it is easy to see that it was not the lack of labels or comments, but simply the staggering range and provocative juxtaposition of materials that bothered the first audience. It is dangerous to think of this as programme music or story telling, for what Mahler was trying to do was simply to incorporate the sounds of the whole world around him in his music. This includes the sound of nature (with frequent bird call) as well as the street, trumpet fanfares heard in the military parades he attended as a child and the Klezmer music of his Jewish ancestry. He even asks for some of the instruments, which folk musicians might have used as in the bass drum and cymbal combination in the third movement.

The first movement begins "like a sound of nature," with fanfares and bird calls sounding from the distance over the gentle hum of the universe, tuned to an A and scattered over seven octaves. It took Mahler a long time to get the opening to sound the way he wanted it; every effect is precisely calculated, with consideration given not only to the most delicate shades of dynamics, but to the placement of the players on and off the stage. A cuckoo - unlike Beethoven's cuckoo in the Pastoral Symphony, it sings the interval of a fourth instead of a third - eventually pushes the sounds of nature into a lovely, rolling melody. That tune, beginning with the cuckoo's descending fourth, comes from the second Wayfarer song, "Ging heut' Morgen übers Feld" (I went through the fields this morning), and its proud walking music takes Mahler a long way. Mahler reinvents the song as he goes, reshuffling phrases and motives so that even someone who knows the song finds this music continually fresh.

Next comes a brief scherzo set in motion by the foot-stomping dances and yodeling that Mahler heard and had already put to good use in one of his first songs, "Hans und Grete," in 1880. "Dance around, around!" the song goes. "Let whoever is happy weave in and out! Let whoever has cares find his way home." There is a wistful trio, music Mahler might have heard in a Viennese café, more full of cares than joy, and then the Ländler resumes.

The third movement encapsulates Mahler's sound world at its best and yet – it is the most misunderstood and even today it is puzzling to those hearing it for the first time. What are we to make of this odd assortment: a sad and distorted version of "Frère Jacques" (played first on a lonely double bass at its highest possible register!), a lumbering funeral march; some sad dance-band music by pairs of oboes and trumpets over the beat of the bass drum; and the ethereal closing pages of the Wayfarer songs - heaven and earth all rolled into one? Mahler's only clue is that he was inspired by "The Hunter's Funeral Procession" - a well known story amongst children in Austria at the time and a famous woodcarving by Moritz von Schwind. It tells of the burial of a hunter, whose funeral procession is composed not of humans but of wild animals, including a bear, foxes, hares, a wolf, cranes and partridges. The animals seem to derive great joy from the occasion, with rabbits leading the procession holding banners and music being sung by all animals, accompanied by the musical cats and a group of Bohemian musicians – it is all ironic off course and great fun for all concerned!



The finale begins with a "flash of lightning from a dark cloud," Mahler tells us. "It is simply the cry of a wounded heart." This is music in search of victory, and Mahler retreats from battle several times before he triumphs. The first stop allows us to savour some lovely pastoral music we would recognise if Mahler hadn't ultimately chosen to omit his original second movement, *Blumine*. Later we return to the fields of the first movement, but we're no longer setting off on our journey - we're headed straight for the triumph that Mahler's *Wayfarer* couldn't achieve. This time success is swift and unequivocal, and when the seven horns plus reinforcements ('*as many as possible*' on the score..) are asked to play out - "even over the trumpets" - victory is won.

Mahler pushed his musicians to the limit, often making impossible demands and was not shy on calling extra players purely for effect - a THANK YOU to ex HCYO horns for making the journey and joining in the last few minutes of the piece!

Quasar Mahler

Finnish violinist **Frida Backman** first appeared as a concerto soloist at the age of nine. Concertos performed include Sibelius, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Bach and Vivaldi violin concertos. A keen performer of chamber music, Frida has undertaken trio and duo concert tours across Finland and the UK, including the Sibeliusstalo, Helsinki Music Centre and St James Piccadilly and she has given music performances in Spain, Germany and Romania. Since 2009 Frida performs as a member of *The Backmand Trio*

A graduate from the music conservatoire in Lahti and Trinity College of Music, London and a postgraduate from Royal Academy of Music, she left a career as a freelancing violinist in London to start a family in Salisbury in 2010.

Important teachers and mentors include Brien Stait, Robert Jacoby and Diana Cummings. Master classes attended with John Storgårds, Thomas Brandis (ex Berlin Phil Leader), Tasmin Little, Maxim Vengerov, Ernst Kovacic, Sergei Kravchenko, Pavel Vernikov, Vilmos Szabadi, Olivier Pons, Sylvia Rosenberg and Emmanuel Hurwitz (Aeolian String Quartet).

In addition to being a chamber musician with the *Backman Trio* Frida is also a soloist. She also enjoys running workshops, teaching and coaching musicians in the art of performance. She believes the well of creativity and musical expression is best reached intuitively through the instrument of a relaxed body. She guest leads ensembles such as the Bristol Ensemble and is a regular extra with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Frida is settled in Hampshire with her partner and four year old son.

Dates for your diary:

Sunday 28 June – The Anvil, Basingstoke

4pm start – tickets available from the box office 01256 844244

Hampshire County Youth Orchestra with their guests, the *Hampshire County Youth Band*

Bernstein: *Candide Overture*

Gershwin: *Rhapsody in Blue* – soloist Roger Owens

... and more family favourites!

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