



HAVERING CONCERT ORCHESTRA

PROGRAMME £1

HAYERING CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Sunday 2 November 2008

7.30 pm

Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch

www.hcweb.co.uk

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We are most grateful to the Friends of the HCO who help support the orchestra. Friends of the HCO receive first choice of concert seating, invitations to social events and periodic newsletters. If you would like to become a Friend please contact:

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This concert is supported by

Swan Books

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Established in 1937, Swan Books (originally Swan Libraries Booksellers) combine local bookshops in Havering and Essex, school and educational supply and internet/mail order services.

BILL BROOKS (Musical Director) has lived in Havering for most of his life being educated at Hornchurch Grammar School and from there going on to study at the Royal College of Music. After teaching for a short time in Oxfordshire, Bill returned to Havering where he taught Music at Gaynes and Sanders Draper Schools. During this time he conducted the Havering Youth Training Orchestra, a number of whom play in the Concert Orchestra, and for twelve years was conductor of the Upminster Bach Society. Bill left Havering to take up the post of Head of Music at West Hatch High School in Chigwell from where he retired in July 2004. He is still very involved in local music making. As well as being a member of the Concert Orchestra, Bill is Musical Director of St. Andrew's Church, Hornchurch.

DONNA SCHOOLING (Leader) has spent the majority of her musical career helping to create music in Havering. Initially leading her school orchestras, she then joined and led both the Havering Youth Sinfonia and the Havering Youth Orchestra. On leaving school she joined the Havering Concert Orchestra. Outside of her musical activities Donna is an IT Project Manager for Lloyds TSB.

Tonight's Programme

Sergey Prokofiev (1891-1953)
Romeo and Juliet Suite No2

*Montagues and Capulets - Juliet the Young Girl - Friar Laurence - Dance -
Dance of the Antilles Girls - Romeo at Juliet's Grave*

In the early 1930s, after nine years spent in the United States and then France, Sergey Prokofiev began contemplating a move back to Russia. As a young composer in Russia he had found himself praised or reviled as a modernist; in America and France he was more often seen as a representative of the old Russia he had left behind. He had had a number of successes working with fellow expatriate Sergey Diaghilev, for whose Ballets Russes in Paris he had written short ballets such as *Chout* (1915-20), *Le pas d'Acier* (1925), and *The Prodigal Son* (1929).

In 1935, Prokofiev signed a contract with the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre to produce a ballet based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. He completed the music that summer but Prokofiev wanted to give the story a happy ending. Prokofiev wrote "There was quite a fuss about our attempt to give *Romeo and Juliet* a happy ending. ... The reason for this bit of barbarism was purely choreographic: the living can dance, the dying cannot." However after several conferences with the choreographer, it was found that the tragic ending could be expressed in dance after all, and in due course the music for the ending was written.

This wasn't the end of the ballet's troubles, however. The Bolshoi rejected it, calling it "impossible to dance to." So the composer signed contracts with the Leningrad Ballet School in 1937 and the Brno Opera in Czechoslovakia in 1938 to stage the work. Because the Ballet School violated their contract, the ballet was finally premiered in 30 December 1938 in Brno. It was successful enough that the Kirov decided it might stage the work after all, doing so in 1940. The ballet was met favourably by its audiences.

March from the opera *The Love for Three Oranges*

Prokofiev composed his opera *The Love for Three Oranges* in 1919, and it was first produced in Chicago on December 31, 1921. Prokofiev himself conducted the premiere. In 1918, Prokofiev left Russia for the United States, the beginning of nearly 20 years away from his homeland this opera was one of his first large compositions in America. Before he left Russia, the playwright Vsevolod Meyerhold had given him his adaptation of an 18th-century *Commedia dell'arte* story by Carlo Gozzi. Prokofiev was

immediately taken with this modernist and somewhat surreal take on Gozzi's satire, and wrote his own libretto, doing most of the work during the long cruise across the Pacific to Los Angeles. After a few delays the opera was produced in Chicago in 1921. Though there were sour notes from the critics, it was warmly received by a somewhat confused audience. But a production two months later in New York was a complete flop. Prokofiev later wrote: "*It was as though a pack of dogs had broken loose and were tearing my trousers to shreds.*" The poor response to *The Love for Three Oranges* and other works by Prokofiev led him to leave America shortly afterwards.

The opera's plot is deliberately absurd, and its subtext is a parody of several turn-of-the-century theatrical movements. A hypochondriac Prince is physically unable to laugh until the sorceress Fata Morgana takes a fall, and he is cured. Laughing at an evil sorceress is always a bad idea, and she lays an unusual curse on him. He must go on a quest for three oranges, guarded by a female giant (sung by a bass). When he finds them, each of the oranges turns out to contain a princess, two of whom promptly die of thirst. The third is saved, and after a few more misfortunes—she is turned briefly into a rat—the opera ends happily.

The *March* comes from a large festival procession scene in Act II.

INTERVAL

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Sleeping Beauty Suite Op 66a

Introduction: La fête des lilas - Adagio, Pas d'action - Le chat botté et la chatte blanche -

Panorama - Walz

Tchaikovsky, a master of the miniature forms necessary for ballet, succeeded in raising the quality of the music provided for an art that had undergone considerable technical development in 19th century Russia under the guidance of the French choreographer Marius Petipa. The first of Tchaikovsky's full length ballet-scores was *Swan Lake*, completed in 1876, followed in 1889 by *The Sleeping Beauty*. His last ballet, based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann, was *Nutcracker*, first staged in St. Petersburg in December 1892.

The story of *Sleeping Beauty* is a classic fairy tale: The wicked fairy Carabosse, angry at not being invited to the christening of the Princess Aurora, lays a curse: that one day she will prick her finger on a spindle and die. The good Lilac Fairy can only modify the curse, not revoke it, so that Aurora will not die, but sleep for a hundred years, and will be woken by the kiss of a young Prince. Events turn out as foretold, and the Prince (named Desire) duly wakes her, marries her, and they all live happily ever

after. The ballet's focus is on the conflicting forces of good (the Lilac Fairy) and evil (Carabosse), and a leitmotif representing both of them runs through the entire ballet serving as an important thread to the underlying plot. The scenario for *The Sleeping Beauty* was based on the Brothers Grimm version of the story in which the Princess's parents survived the 100 years' sleep to celebrate the Princess's wedding to the Prince.

The centrepiece of the ballet is the *Rose Adagio*, in which Princess Aurora is presented to her four suitors in Act I. With its thrilling balances and its emphasis on regally perfect presentation (Aurora has to balance unsupported on one leg and on point between taking the hand of each of her Princes), it presents a challenge to the ballerina matched only (in theatrical lore) by the 32 fouettée turns of *Swan Lake*.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Slavonic Dances Op 46

No 1 in C major, No 4 in F major, No 6 in D major, No 8 in G minor

The Slavonic Dances, one of the most frequently performed compositions by Antonín Dvořák became very popular immediately after publication. They were composed at the request of a Berlin publisher Fritz Simrock who learned about Dvořák through Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), the famous German composer. Brahms was a member of the Austrian imperial committee established to assign scholarships to "young, poor and indigent artists." Dvořák, an unknown Czech composer at that time, applied to this committee for evaluation of his work. Noticing Dvořák's talent, Brahms recommended him to his own editor Simrock after the committee awarded him the scholarship.

The very first of Dvořák's works published by Simrock, *The Moravian Duets*, attained enormous success, prompting Simrock - who had a dance-like piece in mind - to invite Dvořák to write another composition for him and between 18 March and 7 May 1878 he composed the eight contrasting dances for four-hand piano playing at home. Six days after he started the first dance, he wrote a letter to Brahms in Vienna: "*Mr. Simrock asked me to write a couple of Slavonic dances. Not being sure how to commence, I did my best to get hold of your famous Hungarian Dances which I'm taking the liberty of using as a pattern for my Slavonic Dances.*" In contrast to Brahms who used the original melodies of Hungarian folk dances, Dvořák created entirely stylized versions of the characteristic Slavonic dances using the folk rhythms only, and composing his own original music.

The Dances were an artistic and financial success and in 1886 Simrock requested a second series from Dvorak.

The Orchestra

First Violin

Donna Schooling
Kathryn Andrews
Margaret Collins
John Hawkins
Chris Reeve
Gabrielle Scott
Jenny Sheppard
Kathryn Talintyre

Second Violin

Colin Foa
Paul Kelly
Sue Page
Jenny Robinson
Dorothy Todd
Stan VanLint
Raghu Vindlacheruvu
Karen Williams

Viola

Bruno Handel
Francis Hider
Sue Rowley

Cello

Graeme Wright
Jessie Cooke
Catherine Irvine
Brendan O'Connor
Mark Rallis
Martin Sheppard

Double Bass

Robert Veale

Flute

Gill Foa
Joan Luck
Ankie Postma

Oboe

Leigh Thomas
Rita Finnis

Clarinet

Jacky Howlett
Liz Piper

Bassoon

Jane Chivers
Katy Hilton

Saxophone

Brian Luck

Harp

Hilary Barkwith

Horn

Jamie Merrick
Andy Coombes

Trumpet

Paul Hollingsworth
Andrew Pearce

Trombone

Craig Beattie
Andrew Bearman
Chris Hoepelmann

Tuba

Les Shadrake

Percussion

Georgina Thomas
Leigh Thomas

Timpani

Shaun Bajnoczky

About the HCO

Are you a keen musician?

Under the direction of our conductor, Bill Brooks, we continue to expand our membership and our repertoire. We always look forward to welcoming new members – especially string players.

Rehearsals are held at Upminster Infants School, St Mary's Lane, Upminster on Wednesdays at 7.30pm, during term time.

How to Contact the HCO

If you are interested in being added to the mailing list, joining the orchestra

- Contact Jane Chivers on 01708 389138 or hco@btinternet.com
- Speak to any member of the orchestra during the interval, or
- Visit our website at www.hcoweb.co.uk

We look forward to seeing you at our next concert

SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009

Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch

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