
**Havering
Concert
Orchestra**

Programme



Havering Arts Council and Havering Adult College
supporting

THE HAVERING CONCERT ORCHESTRA

present

'A Musical Fantasy'

at the

Queens Theatre, Hornchurch

on

Sunday 5th July 1998
8pm

*Conductor - Michael Axtell
Leader - Catherine Ghent
Soloists - Leigh & Maria Thomas*



Emperor Waltz

J Strauss II
(1825-99)

J Strauss II was an Austrian violinist, conductor and prolific composer (over 600 opuses) of waltzes and other Viennese light music. He was the son of Johann Strauss the elder, otherwise known as 'The Waltz King.' J Strauss II founded his own orchestra in 1844, joined this with his father's in 1849 and toured Austria, Poland and Germany. He also directed summer park concerts in St Petersburg.

The Emperor Waltz is one of the composer's more substantial works.

L'Horloge de Flore

Francaix
(1912)

Jean Francaix was born in Le Mans, France, in 1912. He studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Boulanger and quickly forged a reputation for producing elegant chamber music, especially for wind instruments.

L'Horloge de Flore was commissioned by John de Lancie in 1959 and premiered in 1961 by De Lancie and the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy. De Lancie had the idea of commissioning Francaix to write an oboe concerto during a rehearsal of the Philadelphia Quintet in 1958, when they were rehearsing a quintet piece by Francaix. De Lancie comments:

"Early in the summer of 1959, I received a note from the composer saying 'Last night at 11 o'clock I completed *L'Horloge de Flore* for solo oboe, two flutes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and a small string section."

L'Horloge de Flore is in seven short movements, played without a break. Each movement's title comes from one of the flowers of the Flower Clock of the famous Swedish botanist Carl von Linne. Linne gave the name *L'Horloge de Flore* to a series of flowers classified according to the hour of the day or night at which they bloom. The movements are:

- 3am - Galant de Jour (Poisonberry)
- 5am - Cupidone Bleue (Blue Catanache, native of S. France)
- 10am - Cierge a Grandes Fleurs (Torch Thistle)
- 12pm - Nyctanthe du Malabar (Malabar Jasmine)
- 5pm - Belle de Nuit (Belladonne or Deadly Nightshade)
- 7pm - Geranium Triste (Mourning Geranium)
- 9pm - Silene Noctiflore (Night-Flowering Catchfly)



We are delighted to welcome our own Leigh Thomas and his daughter Maria as virtuoso soloists tonight.

The Thomas Family

Leigh is now Head of Music at Robert Clack School in Dagenham, having taught Humanities and Economics for many years. He began learning the oboe at the age of 11, having learnt flute and clarinet. He has played first oboe and cor anglais in the Glamorgan Youth Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and the Franco-Welsh Students Orchestra. He was co-principal in the Forest Philharmonic and Hatfield Philharmonic and principal in the Redbridge Symphony Orchestra, as well as Harlow Symphony. Leigh has also conducted local operatic societies, wind bands and brass bands. He is a founder member of the Sax-4-U Saxophone Quartet. For light relief, Leigh also plays timpani and percussion!

Maria is studying oboe and cor anglais with Stephen Nagy at Trinity College of Music. She began learning the oboe at the age of 9 and passed her Grade 8 (Associated Board) at the age of 13. In 1993 Maria appeared as a soloist on oboe and cor anglais at the Royal Albert Hall in Rotary International's 'Youth Makes Music' concert. She has since appeared as a soloist with the New Essex Choral Society, University of East London Concert Band (at home and abroad) and the Prommer's Orchestra. In her spare time, Maria enjoys playing the piano, recorder and saxophone. She was a founder member of the first youth Saxophone Choir, Saxophonia (part of the National Youth Wind Orchestra). She also enjoys teaching.

Georgina, the third member of the Thomas family, is a music co-ordinator in a primary school in Redbridge and teaches piano and music theory at home. She was a percussionist in the Glamorgan Youth Orchestra, Forest and Hatfield Philharmonics and the Redbridge Symphony Orchestra.

Leigh, Maria and Georgina regularly play with the Havering Concert Orchestra, the Prommer's Orchestra, the Aminta Chamber Orchestra and the Downs' Sinfonia.

Interested in Joining?

The HCO is an enthusiastic and friendly group of local musicians which continues to expand its membership and repertoire under the spirited direction of Robert Ferguson. Please contact Karen Williams on 01708 706795 if you are interested in joining.

Suite from the 'Tale of Tsar Sultan'

**Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)**

1. Tsar's Farewell and Departure
2. Tsarina in a Barrel at Sea
3. The Three Wonders

This work was inspired by Pushkin's folk tale of the same name - and was the composer's contribution to the celebration of Pushkin's centenary 1899. Its first performance was in 1900.

The suite is characterised by a trumpet fanfare at the start of each movement which seizes the listener's attention.

We perform tonight the suite from the opera of the same name which depicts the storey of a Tsar from Russian Mythology.

The Tsar goes to war and whilst he is away, his wife bears him a son. The Tsarina sends word to her husband at war of the joyful news but, the wicked, jealous sister, intercepts the message to the Tsar, saying that she has in fact borne a strange monster.

The Tsar sends a message back to order that his wife and the 'monster' she has borne are put in a barrel and cast out to sea. They are eventually washed up on a far-away island where they both survive by eating the local wildlife. One day, the son who has now grown up into the handsome Prince Guidon - shoots a kite which is pursuing a swan. He doesn't realise that he has saved the swan from certain death and the swan rewards him by promising to be his and the Tsarina's magical helper.

She changes him into a bumble bee, enabling him to fly back over the sea to his home at the palace which he left many years earlier.

Back at the palace, the Tsar has returned from the war and is told amazing stories about the wonders on Prince Guidon's island - the knights of the sea, the magical squirrel which cracks golden nuts and the swan princess. The Tsar undertakes to visit the island but the wicked sisters try and dissuade him - until they are all stung by a mysterious bumble bee!

On arrival at the island, the Tsar realises what has happened, and is joyously reunited with the Tsarina and the son he has never seen. As in all good fairytales, there is a wedding - Prince Guidon marries the swan princess - and they all live happily ever after.....

INTERVAL - 20 Minutes

Toy Symphony

**L.Mozart
(1719-87)**

Leopold Mozart was the father of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. A composer in his own right, his output includes numerous symphonies, chamber and keyboard music.

Mozart was inspired to write *The Toy Symphony* after he purchased some toy instruments at a fair.

The work is scored for 2 violin parts and double bass plus parts for toy instruments. Listen out for the trumpet, drum, rattle, triangle, quail, cuckoo and nightingale played by our orchestral volunteers!

Allegro - Menuetto and Trio - Finale Allegro

Sleeping Beauty Suite

**Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)**

An interval of thirteen years divides *Swan Lake* and Tchaikovsky's second ballet, *Sleeping Beauty*. An adaptation of Charles Perrault's well-known fairytale, the work was first presented in St Petersburg in 1890 to overwhelming effect. Tchaikovsky must have known that his work was to become one of the favourite works of ballet lovers all over the world when he wrote:

"I have the feeling that the music for this ballet will be one of my best works. The material is so poetic and lends itself so well to being set to music that I am highly enthusiastic about it and worked with great joy and wholehearted devotion"

The orchestral suite of *The Sleeping Beauty* consists of five movements. The *Introduction* juxtaposes the theme of the evil fairy Carabosse and that of the music for the scene in which the good Lilac Fairy has the sleeping princess carried into the castle and transforms the park into an impenetrable forest. The *Adagio* which follows musically describes the famous scene in which the princess dances with each of her four suitors and accepts a rose from each. After the humorous *Dance of Puss-in-Boots and the White Cat* from the wedding scene comes the *Panorama*, a soft romantic melody. The sweeping *Waltz* brings Tchaikovsky's unmistakable masterpiece to a charismatic ending.

1. Introduction and the Lilac Fairy
2. The Rose Adagio (princess dances with suitors)
3. Puss-in-Boots and the White Cat (character dances)
4. Panorama (prince riding through the trees)
5. The Waltz (in the palace)

THE ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Catherine Ghent (Leader)
Donna Schooling
Sarah Brooks
Colin Foan
Sarah Claxton
Yvonne Simmons
Christopher Reeve
Jenny Sheppard

Second Violins

Kathryn Andrews
John Phillips
Jenny Robinson
Karen Williams
Paul Lewis
Julie Woodberry
Dorothy Todd
Stan VanLint
Karen Woolfe

Violas

Vic Bradnam
Francis Hider
Mark Wilde
Bob Taylor
Sue Norris

'Cellos

Graeme Wright
Ruth Tyler
Mark Rallis
Brendan O'Connor
Tony Wright
Alan Musgrove
Bill Brooks

Double Bass

Robert Veale

Flutes

Gillian Foan
Joan Luck
Ankie Postma

Oboes

Leigh Thomas
Maria Thomas
Rita Finnis

Clarinets

Brian Luck
Jacqueline Howlett
Mike Youngs

Bassoons

Sarah Head
Jane Chivers

Trumpets

Danny Stone
Matthew Thomas
Douglas Waterson

Trombones

Chris Hoepelman
Andrew Bearman
Keith Bleasdale

Tuba

Jeff Miller

French Horns

Jamie Merrick
Christine Wilde
Ben Eshmade
John Ward

Timpani

Janice Flanders

Percussion

Georgina Thomas
Dave Robinson
Amanda Foan

Harp

Ruth Silkoff

Michael Axtell

Flautist - Conductor - Teacher - Arranger - Coach

When compiling Michael Axtell's biography, it is probably easier to list where and what he hasn't done, rather than what he has!

He spent eighteen years as principal piccolo and principal flute with the English National Opera company (1967 - 1985) and prior to that played with numerous orchestras and ballet companies. His live/solo concerto work includes broadcasts for the BBC Welsh, Swansea Sounds Sinfonia and BBC Bandstand programme, as well as solo performances on TV and radio.

Worldwide, he has performed at opera houses and concert halls in New York (Met), San Antonio, New Orleans, Austin, Munich, Bordeaux, Brussels, Lisbon and Madrid. He was also a flute clinician at the Mid-Atlantic Flute fair in Washington DC, ran a master class at the Elon College in North Carolina and was a chamber music coach at the Orlando Festival, Holland.

His West End of London Musicals include *The Sound of Music*, *The King & I*, *Les Miserables*, *La Cashe aux Folles*, *Barnum* and *42nd Street*.

He has taught the flute for twenty-seven years in Bromley, as well as at Morley, Eltham, St Dunstons and Dulwich colleges and Blackheath Conservatoire. Many of his pupils have achieved entries to music colleges, as well as Oxford and Cambridge.

Catherine Ghent : Leader

Catherine grew up in Wakefield in West Yorkshire until she moved to Essex in 1988. Initially she began playing the piano at the age of eight, and six months later began to learn the violin, realising that this was her preferred instrument of the two. For ten years, she was taught by Harvey Marsden, a member of the Hallé Orchestra, and she played in a variety of youth symphony orchestras, also making several solo performances in the local area during those years.

At the age of sixteen, Catherine passed her Grade 8 violin and piano and decided to go to a Teacher Training College which also specialised in music so that she could continue to play with the college orchestra and ensembles. Beginning her Bachelor of Education course at Bretton Hall College for Performing arts, she continued with her violin lessons, now with Frank Horner, also a member of the Hallé Orchestra.

Graduating in 1988, Catherine initially took a teaching post in Upminster, Essex in an Infant School, and after two years she took a second post in a local Junior school where she is presently responsible for Music and also the Special Needs Department. Catherine also teaches the violin, piano, and guitar. She also plays in the Brentwood Philharmonic Orchestra and Southend Philharmonic Orchestra. Catherine first joined the Concert Orchestra in 1989, taking up the position of leader in 1990. She regularly returns to Yorkshire where her parents still live.

Geoff Pink

It is with much sadness we have to announce that Geoff Pink, a member of the cello section, died after a short illness in March.

Born 1928 in Upminster, the youngest of 5 children, Geoff spent much of his childhood living in post-office cottages in Corbels Tey Road, on the site which is now occupied by Woolworths. He worked on the railways all his life, and after retiring at 55, he embarked on a fulfilled busy retirement.

To say the least, Geoff's interests were diverse. He enjoyed painting, playing scrabble and he was a keen armchair contestant of the TV Quiz, 'Countdown'. He enjoyed turning his hand to anything - from gardening and maintenance at Upminster's Trinity Church, membership of the Railway Locomotive Preservation Society - even to cutting hair!

However, it was to music that Geoff dedicated most of his time. In his early years, he was a chorister at St Lawrence Church Upminster, he was also a tenor in the Cappella singers for 30 years. He taught his sister the piano and also played for the residents of St. Georges Hospital.

It was in later years that he took up the cello, playing in various string quartets, the Mary Ward Orchestra in London, and the HCO. Geoff was a great supporter of the orchestra, putting a great deal of time effort and money into sourcing and hiring the music parts. His legacy reaches this concert as he was responsible for choosing the Strauss Emperor Waltz, which we play tonight.

With thanks and fond memories, we dedicate this concert to you Geoff....



HCO at the Queens in 1998:

Join us for on Sunday 7th December 1998

Overture Pirates of Penzance [Sullivan]

Symphony No. 5 [Schubert]

Adagio [Albinoni]

Marche Slave [Tchaikovsky]

Firebird Suite [Stravinsky]

HCO Mailing List: The HCO operates a regular mailing list for our concert ticket sales. If you would like to receive advance programme details, please contact the Secretary on 01708 706795 leaving your name, address and telephone number.

