
**Havering
Concert
Orchestra**

Programme

Havering Arts Council and Havering Adult College
Support



Presenting their 50th concert
With Robert Ferguson



On

Sunday 14th March, 1999

8.00 p.m.

At the

Queens Theatre
Hornchurch



Conductor - Robert Ferguson
Leader - Kate Ghent
Soloist - Michael Axtell

Overture - The Italian Girl in Algiers

Rossini
(1792 - 1868)

Rossini was an Italian composer the son of musical parents his father being the town trumpeter and his mother a singer. He studied at Liceo Musicale in Bologna producing his first comic opera *La Cambiale di Matrimonio* in 1810. He had his first great success with the Opera Seria, *Tancredi* in Venice 1813.

The Italian Girl in Algiers is in two acts with libretto by Angelo Anelli and was first performed in Venice in 1813. The 'Italiana' of the title is Isabella who has been searching for her lover Lindoro, a slave of the Mustapha, Bey of Algiers. Eventually Isabella and Lindoro are reunited but not before the Bey too has fallen for Isabella. This was Rossini's first comic opera written in just over three weeks when he was 21.



Concerto No. 3 - Il Gardellino
(The Goldfinch)

Antonio Vivaldi
(1675 -1741)

Vivaldi was an Italian composer and violinist, a pupil of his father. He was ordained a priest in 1703 and nicknamed "Il Prete Rosso" (the red-haired priest). For many years he was in the service of the Conservatorio Dell'Ospedale della Pieta, a music school for girls in Venice. He travelled extensively and was one of the most prolific composers of his time, writing 450 concertos alone for a wide variety of solo instruments. We perform tonight his Concertos 3 and 4, from a set of six which he wrote for Flute and Strings in 1728.

In the Goldfinch, immediately after the introductory *ritornello* theme has been announced, the flute plays a solo cadenza, evocative of birdsong. The central *siciliano* uncannily evokes the pastoral Arcadian landscapes which were then all the rage in Baroque Venice. The piece is adorned by onomatopoeic trills in the solo part with the occasional suggestion of fluttering in the accompanying figurations.

Concerto No. 4

The *Fourth Concerto* is the only entirely original composition in the set. The opening *allegro*, characterised by its reiterated bass notes in the *ritornelli*, and the relative terseness of its flute episodes, is delightfully offset by the central *Largo*'s reflective melodic contours, typically supported by a steady and discreet accompaniment. Vivaldi turns the coin over in the finale with an inspired outburst of high spirited exuberance.

We are delighted to welcome back our good friend Michael Axtell as our virtuoso soloist tonight.



Crown Imperial

William Walton
(1902 -1983)

Walton was an English composer and chorister at Christchurch Oxford. As a composer he was mainly self taught and made his reputation with a string quartet performing at the festival of ISCM, Salzburg 1923, and *Façade*, a series of instrumental pieces played in conjunction with the recitation of poems by Edith Sitwell. He reached maturity with his viola concerto 1929 and the *Oratoria Belshazzar's Feast* 1931.

The commission for William Walton's first Coronation March, *Crown Imperial*, came from the BBC in November 1936 when it was expected that Edward VIII would be crowned but it was for George VI that the march was played in Westminster Abbey to accompany the entry of the then Queen Mary on the 12th May 1937. The first performance had been in the recording studio on the 16th April with a broadcast on the 9th May and the obvious suitability of the work for the occasion led to comparisons with Elgar.

INTERVAL



Symphony No. 4 in F Minor Opus 36

**Tchaikovsky
(1840 -1893)**

1. **Andante Sostenuto - Moderato con Anima**
2. **Andante in modo di canzona**
3. **Scherzo - pizzicato ostinato**
4. **Finale - allegro con fuoco**

Soon after the first performance of his fourth symphony, at St Petersburg on the 22nd February 1878, Tchaikovsky wrote to his friend that it was "the best thing I have done". The composition had occupied him intermittently at much the same time as his opera Evgeny Onyegin, which was premiered in Moscow a year later.

Like the violin concerto which immediately preceded it, the fourth symphony was begun during Tchaikovsky's convalescence abroad after a breakdown brought on by his ill-fated marriage. Incapable of sustaining a loving relationship with his wife, who was subsequently found to be mentally unstable anyway, Tchaikovsky soon fled from her after his breakdown which threatened his own sanity and led him to contemplate suicide.

Around this time he was communicating with a wealthy widow, Nadezhda Von Meck, who had conceived such a passion for Tchaikovsky's music that she offered him generous financial help which lasted for the rest of his life.

They mutually agreed never to meet and their only means of communication was by exchange of letters in which he revealed the meaning of his fourth symphony which he had written for her.

His contribution to symphonic form was to bring to it new and vivid contrasts of melody and harmony. This symphony is filled with imaginative instrumental scoring throughout the orchestra with harmonic skill in the use of inverted and chromatically altered chords and especially with richness of melody. Tchaikovsky was never afraid of exposing a good melody for all it was worth and then turning it upside down to make another just as effective, as happens in the first movement of this symphony.

This long and complex movement begins with a fanfare on horns and trumpets which recurs throughout the movement and again in the finale. "This is fate" wrote Tchaikovsky to Madame Von Meck, "that inevitable force which prevents our hopes of happiness from being realised ... it is inescapable and it can never be overcome".

HCO AT THE QUEENS

Come and celebrate American Independence Day on Sunday 4th July at our new starting time of 7.30 with a programme to suite all tastes

Gershwin's Piano Concerto
Ravel's Bolero
Dvorak's Serenade for Strings
Handel's 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba'

HCO Mailing List

The HCO operates a mailing list to give our audience advance notice of forthcoming concerts. If you would like to be included, please call the number below.

HCO Membership

The HCO continues to expand its membership and repertoire under the spirited direction of Robert Ferguson and always welcomes new members. For further details, please call the number below.

To Let

Room in shared house, Ardleigh Green. £55 p.w. incl bills. Would suit teacher or musician! Call Karen on the number below.

Hon. Secretary: Karen Williams, Tel: 01708 706795

THE ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Kate Ghent (Leader)
Donna Schooling (Co-Leader)
Yvonne Simmons
Jo Foot
Christopher Reeve
Jenny Sheppard
Julie Woodberry
Paul Lewis

Second Violins

Kathryn Andrews
Colin Foan
Dorothy Todd
John Phillips
Stan Vanlint
Karen Woolfe

Violas

Vic Bradnam
Francis Hider
Karen Williams
Bob Taylor

Celli

Graeme Wright
Ruth Tyler
Brendan O'Connor
Mark Rallis
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

Claire Adams
Jacqueline Howlett
Mike Youings

Bassoons

Sarah Head
Mark Flanders

Trumpets

Danny Stone
James Stygall
Douglas Waterson

Trombones

Sebastian Abbott
Chris Hoepelman
Andrew Bearman
Keith Bleasdale

Tuba

Jeff Miller

French Horns

Jamie Merrick
Christine Wilde
Claire Stygall
John Ward

Timpani

Janice Flanders

Percussion

Georgina Thomas
David Robinson
Amanda Foan
Jenny Robinson

Michael Axtell

Flautist, conductor, teacher, arranger, coach, Michael is all of these and more. He spent eighteen years as principal piccolo and principal flute with the English National Opera Company (1967-1985) and prior to that he played with numerous orchestras and ballet companies. His live and solo concerto work includes broadcasts for BBC Welsh, Swansea Sounds Sinfonia and the BBC Bandstand Programme, together with solo performances on TV and radio.

Worldwide, he has performed at opera houses and concert halls in New York (Metropolitan), 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 and ran a master class at the Elon College in North Carolina and was a chamber music coach at the Orlando Festival in Holland. His London West End musicals include *The Sound of Music*, *The King and I*, *Les Miserables*, *La Cage 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 College and Blackheath Conservatoire. Many of his pupils have achieved entries to music colleges as well as Oxford and Cambridge.

Kate Ghent

Kate grew up in Wakefield in West Yorkshire and moved to Essex in 1988. She began playing the piano at the age of eight and six months later began to learn the violin, soon realising that this was her preferred instrument. She was taught by Harvey Marsden, a member of the Halle 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, Kate passed her Grade 8 violin and piano and decided to go to a Teacher Training College which specialised in music, enabling her to continue to play with the college orchestra and ensembles throughout the course. Beginning her Bachelor of Education course at Bretton Hall College for Performing Arts, she continued with her violin lessons with a new teacher, Frank Horner, also a member of the Halle Orchestra. Graduating in 1988 Kate initially took a teaching post in Upminster in an infants school and after two years she took a second post in a local junior school where she was responsible for music and the special needs department. She has recently moved on from there to Oaklands Montessori School in Upminster as music specialist. Kate also teaches the piano and guitar. She plays with the Brentwood Philharmonic Orchestra and the Southend Philharmonic Orchestra. Kate first joined the HCO in 1989, taking up the position of leader in 1990.

Robert Ferguson LGSM ARCM LRAM

Robert Ferguson's early music training was at the Guildhall School of Music. At the age of 18 he attended the Royal College of Music where he studied piano for five years with Cyril Smith. His piano playing gained him the Hopkinsol Gold Medal, presented by the Queen Mother and the Dannreuther Prize for his performance of Prokofief's 3rd Piano Concerto. His concert debut was at the Royal Festival Hall in 1973.

From 1972, Robert worked as a piano duo with the late Christopher Kite. Their London debut was at the Wigmore Hall in 1973 and they appeared many times on the South Bank to critical acclaim. They performed throughout the British Isles and recorded much of the piano duet and two-piano repertoire for the BBC after their first live broadcast in 1980. The majority of their performances were broadcast on BBC Radio 3, the most recent transmission being February 1990. Their concerts sometimes employed reproduction or antique early pianos for the works of J C Bach and Mozart. They toured Ireland twice and performed at the Belfast Festival and Bath Festival. Robert recorded the piano music for the cartoon film 'Rarg', which has been broadcast several times on British TV. He also recorded the piano music for the TV film 'The Grass Arena', first broadcast on BBC2 and subsequently in Norway, Greece, Israel and Australia. He also recorded a series of nine programmes for Radio Television Hong Kong in 1992.

Robert has had teaching commitments at the Perse School for Girls in Cambridge since 1979 and at the Anglian Polytechnic University since 1984. He has been an enthusiastic adjudicator at various competitive festivals including the Stratford and East London Festival and Exeter Festival. Robert recently formed a duo partnership with the flautist Brenda Dykes. His work as an examiner has taken him worldwide, including Ireland, Jersey, the Orkneys and Shetlands and also to Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia. He has been conducting the Havering Concert Orchestra for the past 15 years and this evening's concert will be his 50th .



