



Conductor - Bill Brooks

Leader – Donna Schooling

Saturday 17 March 2007

7.30 pm

Hall Mead School, Marlborough Gardens
Upminster

www.hcoweb.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1076663

This concert is supported by

Swan Books

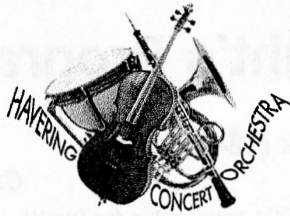
27 Corbets Tey Road
Upminster
Essex RM14 2AR

Tel: 01708 222930

e-mail: upminster@swanbooks.co.uk

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

Antonín Dvořák (1842-1904)

Carnival Overture

In many ways, the 1890s represented for Dvořák a time of creative and personal renaissance. It was during this decade that he made his first forays into the New World, the direct result of which included the production of a wealth of American-influenced chamber music as well as the composer's best-known work, the Symphony No. 9 (1893). The latter proved to be Dvořák's final essay in that form, signalling, perhaps, his increasing interest in other genres. In addition to the operatic stops and starts that occupied much of the composer's attention in the 1890s, Dvořák produced a substantial body of self-contained orchestral works in the guise of overtures and tone poems.



The Carnival Overture, Op. 92 (1891), was the second of a group of three works by the composer collectively titled "Nature, Life, and Love." An operatic spirit informs the overture throughout, as does a prevailing ebullience and stomping, folk dance-like energy. A brief central Andantino con moto episode of sedate, almost nocturnal character is distinguished by more expansive melodies and the use of the Cor Anglais, one of Dvořák's favourite instruments, in an unusual role: sounding an ostinato accompaniment rather than the melody proper. The overture ends in a spirit similar to that in which it begins, aptly embodying the festival atmosphere suggested by its title.

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Peer Gynt Suite No 1

Morning – Aase's Death - Anitra's Dance – In the Hall of the Mountain King

To most of the concert-going public, Edvard Grieg is only familiar as the composer of two popular concert works: the Concerto for piano and orchestra, and the first Orchestral Suite extracted from the incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's play, *Peer Gynt*. Ever since the *Peer Gynt Suite No.1, Op.46* appeared in the late 1880s it has been a staple of the orchestral repertoire. Indeed, it is safe to say that its four constituent pieces are among the most frequently played and immediately recognizable ever

written; yet they still retain a great deal of their original vitality and freshness.

Ibsen's five-act drama concerns a young Norwegian ruffian named Peer Gynt, who dreams of becoming emperor of the world. His sundry adventures - abducting a bride-to-be during her wedding, abandoning her for another woman, being tormented by gnomes, posturing as a prophet among the Arabs, eloping with and being subsequently double-crossed by an Arab princess, and finally returning to Norway - are the stuff of high drama and adventure, and are rough and isolated in a way that is peculiarly Nordic. Grieg captures this tone perfectly.

Grieg opens the first *Peer Gynt* suite with a piece called *Morning*, originally played at the beginning of the fourth act. A gentle E major theme is announced by the flutes, and then the oboes, against a static harmonic background that effectively emulates the stillness of the first moments of dawn. Although *Morning* is only four minutes long, Grieg manages to capture in music something both timeless and universal. *Aase's Death*, which follows, was intended to be played as a prelude to the third act. Peer Gynt has returned home to his mother Aase, only to find that her days on earth have come to an end. *Aase's Death* has but one tiny melodic fragment (set to an absolutely unchanging rhythm), and yet the score never grows tiresome. After a single, magical E major chord, *Anitra's Dance* begins with a buoyant violin melody over a compelling pizzicato background. Our little theme is taken through several small harmonic adventures during the middle of the dance (including a warm and welcome, albeit brief, pass through D major). During the reprise of the opening section Grieg allows for some melodic imitation by the cello.



In the Hall of the Mountain King, written to accompany the gnomes' taunting and chasing of Peer Gynt after he has refused to marry the daughter of the Mountain King, is perhaps the most famous of these four pieces. The music, built on just one small, repetitive thematic fragment grows wilder and wilder until it seems as though Peer Gynt can take no more.



Interval



Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Symphony No. 1 in C minor

Un poco sostenuto. Allegro; Andante sostenuto; Un poco Allegretto e grazioso; Adagio, Piu Andante, Allegro no troppo, ma con brio

Born in Hamburg, the son of a double-bass player in the Hamburg Philharmonic Society, Brahms demonstrated great promise from the beginning, attracting the attention of Robert Schumann. After Schumann's death he maintained a long friendship with his widow, the pianist Clara Schumann, whose advice he always valued. Brahms eventually settled in Vienna and, after a life of spectacular musical triumphs and failed loves (the composer never wed), died of liver cancer on 3 April 1897.

The first sketches for what was to become Brahms's First Symphony were made in 1856; the composition was completed twenty years later, and the first performance was given at Karlsruhe on 4 November 1876, under Otto Dessoff. The premier was a triumph.



The First is the most overtly dramatic of Brahms's four symphonies. The first movement of this work is characterised by restlessness, urgency and a certain element of defiance. The turbulent mood is established at the outset by the searing phrase rising out of the insistent drumbeats; and there is little respite from the nervous drive until the movement's end, which comes on a note of unexpectedly quiet resolve.

The prevailing mood of the second movement is one of calm with a serene vision of peace in the simple motif introduced by the solo violin and echoed in turn by the horn and various winds. Brighter than anything that has gone before is the songlike third movement, which is cheerful in a gentle, restrained way. The massive finale announces its character unmistakably.

When someone remarked on a certain similarity between the hymn-like theme of the final movement and the choral theme in the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Brahms replied testily, "Any ass can see that!" It appears, though, that the horn tune that leads to the first statement of the brass chorale in the finale's introduction was indeed borrowed - not from "Cambridge Quarters," as some English writers suggested in the 19th century, but from a folk source closer to home. Brahms first wrote that theme on a musical birthday card he sent to Clara Schumann from Switzerland on 12 September 1868, under the heading "This is what the alhorn plays today."

The Orchestra

First Violin

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

Second Violin

Paul Kelly
Colin Foan
Dorothy Todd
Stan VanLint
Karen Williams
Jenny Robinson

Viola

Francis Hider
Sue Rowley

Cello

Graeme Wright
Catherine Irvine
Alan Musgrove
Mark Rallis
Jeannie Bevan
Jessie Cooke

Double Bass

Robert Veale
Chris Reeve

Flute

Ankie Postma
Joan Luck
Gill Foan

Oboe

Leigh Thomas
Rita Finnis

Clarinet

Jacky Howlett
Mike Youings
Julie Petherick

Bassoon

Jane Chivers
Katy Hilton

Horn

Jamie Merrick
Andrej Lipkin
John Ward
Dennis Heskew

Trumpet

Ashley Buxton
Guest

Trombone

Chris Hoepelman
Guest

Timpani

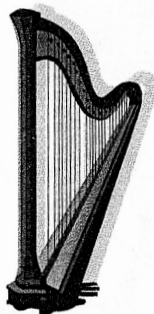
Rob Lucas

Percussion

Georgina Thomas

Harp

Hilary Barkwith



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 or just giving us your valued opinion, either:

🎵 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

Saturday 23 June 2007

7.30pm

Hall Mead School, Marlborough Gardens, Upminster

Mozart - Marriage of Figaro Overture

Haydn - Nelson Mass

with the choir of St Andrew's Church (Hornchurch) and Sound Company

Haydn - Drum Roll Symphony

Tickets at door or telephone 020 8220 5147