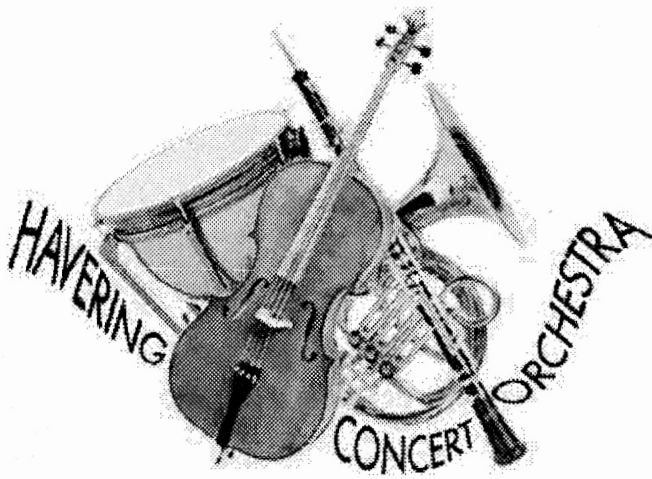


# **Midsummer Concert**

## **Programme**

***Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2008***





**Sunday 22 June 2008**

**7.30 pm**

**New Windmill Hall, Upminster**

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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.

**LAURA JEFFRIES (Clarinet)** began her formal musical studies at the age of seven, under tuition at the Havering Music School. As an undergraduate student at Kingston University, London she studied with Victoria Medcalf and was principal clarinettist of the University Symphony Orchestra. As well as being a member of the highly acclaimed British Clarinet Ensemble, she has taken part in master classes with Angela Malsbury and most recently Victoria Soames Samek. Alongside a keen and active interest in music education, Laura is currently awaiting the results of a performance MA, which she studied for at the Colchester Institute Centre for Music and Performing Arts with Charles Hine.

**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

**Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)**

*Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*

Mendelssohn grew up with an enthusiasm for Shakespeare (in the German translations of his distant relative August Schlegel), not only studying the plays but also taking part in family play-readings and performances. His favourite play was the magical comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which inspired him at the age of 17 to write his famous concert Overture. This was completed in the summer of 1826, and first played in the family home in Berlin; it was performed in public in Stettin (now Szczecin) early the following year, and later included in many of Mendelssohn's concert programmes. (Mendelssohn returned to the play 17 years later to write incidental music for a production at the Prussian royal palace in Potsdam.)

The Overture, in E major, is scored for a modest orchestra which includes pairs of woodwinds, horns and trumpets, but also with a part for the ophicleide, a now-obsolete bass keyed bugle. It begins with a sequence of four quiet chords which immediately transports the listener to the enchanted wood of Shakespeare's play; they usher in a minor-key dance for divided violins, in the fairy vein of which Mendelssohn was such a master. Further ideas evoke in turn the ceremony of Duke Theseus's court, the two pairs of young lovers lost in the wood, and the 'rude mechanicals' who meet there to rehearse their play (complete with the 'hee-haw' of Bottom when he is magically disguised with an ass's head). The central development section is dominated by the fairies; but it ends with a disjointed version of part of the lovers' theme, suggesting a heartbreak which is healed by the return of the magical chords.

**George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)**

*Sinfonia: Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*

*from Solomon Act III*

German by birth, Italian in early musical ambitions and later English by choice of domicile (he spent most of his adult life in England and became a subject of the British crown in January 1727), Handel dominated music in London for some 40 years, his influence continuing long after his death in 1759. From Italian opera for the London theatre he turned his attention to a remarkable creation, the English oratorio, a compromise that proved popular in its use of English, its religious texts and its Italianate music. Written during the reign of George II in 1748, the oratorio, *Solomon*, is based on the biblical accounts in Chronicles II and Kings I of the Hebrew king Solomon. It is the first in Handel's final sequence of great oratorios: *Solomon*, *Susanna*, *Theodora* and *Jephtha*.

Always an astute businessman Handel praised and paid homage to his patron, George II, by highlighting the perceived parallels for the eighteenth century audience between Solomon and the reigning English King; his piety (Act I), wisdom (Act II) and splendour (Act III).

In Act III Solomon presents a musical masque for the visiting Queen of Sheba. The Sinfonia from the introduction to Act III heralds the entrance of the Queen and her entourage in all their splendour.

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

*Clarinet Concerto in A major, K622*

*Allegro, Adagio, Rondo: Allegro*

**Soloist: Laura Jeffries**

Although it was still a relatively new instrument, Mozart expressed great interest in the clarinet in his final years. A critic once said of Mozart's personal friend and renowned clarinettist Anton Stadler, "Never have I heard such things as you are able to perform on your instrument. I would not have thought that a clarinet could imitate the human voice so deceptively as you imitate it. Your instrument is so soft, so delicate in tone that no one who has a heart can resist it." Perhaps it was this immense talent of Stadler that led Mozart to accept his commission to compose the Clarinet Concerto in A, K. 622, the only concerto he ever composed for the instrument. The concerto was premiered in Prague on 16 October 1791 with Stadler as the soloist.

The work is in three movements. The first movement is written in sonata form with the complete orchestra usually introducing the various themes before they are heard in the solo clarinet. The movement is upbeat and the soloist and orchestra continue their back-and-forth, often polyphonic, dialogue throughout the movement. The second movement contains perhaps one of Mozart's greatest and most memorable melodies. Featured in the film *Out of Africa*, it is sweet and lyrical. Rich harmonies add to the delicately developed singing themes and the light orchestrations support the flowing melody without overpowering it. The finale is an upbeat rondo written in 6/8. The solo line is featured throughout, and it is at times playful and rhythmic. There are several instances where the movement shifts into a minor key, and the dramatic effect is striking. These sections are never long enough to overshadow the overall jollity of the movement, and it soon returns to the lighthearted texture that dominates.

Sadly, it was to be the last instrumental work Mozart ever completed, as he died on 5 December 1791, just two months after the premiere.

## Interval

**Gabriel Faure (1809-1847)**

*Pavane, Op.50*

Gabriel Fauré was born in 1845 in the Ariège district of the south of France, the son of a village schoolteacher. He showed early talent, and was sent to Paris to receive a musical education from the Swiss composer Louis Niedermeyer, who specialised in church music. In addition to being known for his fine songs and the teacher of eminent students, Fauré has also gained fame for his music in other genres, including chamber music and orchestral pieces. Written during

the summer of 1887, *Pavane* received its first performance in Paris a year later. The pavane is a slow, stately processional court dance of the Renaissance (probably from Italy, the name a corruption of *padovana*, a dance from Padua), was performed by pairs of dancers arranged in formal patterns. With *Pavane*, Fauré joins many of his peers in paying homage to music of the past. The piece has served as a model for some of his younger contemporaries; Debussy in *Suite Bergamasque* and Ravel in *Pavane pour une infante defunte*, written while he was a student of Faure at the Paris Conservatoire. Scored for winds in pairs and strings, *Pavane* is built on one basic melody, first announced on solo flute against pizzicato strings, with other instruments taking it up in turn.

**Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)**

***Symphony No. 4 in A Major, Opus 90, "Italian"***

*Allegro vivace, Andante con moto, Con moto moderato, Saltarello: Presto*

When he was 21, Mendelssohn embarked on an extensive grand tour of the Continent. He met Chopin and Liszt in Paris, painted the breathtaking vistas of Switzerland, marvelled at the artistic riches of Italy, and here in 1831 began a musical work based on his impressions of Rome, Naples and the other cities that he visited. The composition of this "*Italian*" *Symphony*, as he called it, caused him much difficulty, however, and he had trouble bringing all of the movements to completion. The spur to finish the work came in the form of a commission for a symphony from the Philharmonic Society of London which caused Mendelssohn to gather up his sketches and complete the task.

The new *Symphony* was met with immediate acclaim at its premiere on 13 May 1833 in London, and was one of the series of British successes that helped enshrine Mendelssohn in the English pantheon of 19th-century musical genius as Queen Victoria's favourite composer. Mendelssohn, however, was not completely satisfied with the original version of the *Symphony*, and he refused to allow its publication. He revised it several years later, paying special attention to the finale, but never felt the work to be perfected and it was only after his death that the score was published and became widely available. Despite Mendelssohn's misgivings, the "*Italian*" *Symphony* has become one of the most enduring and popular pieces in the orchestral repertoire.

Mendelssohn cast his "*Italian*" *Symphony* in the traditional four movements. The opening movement is a sparkling sonata-allegro with an elaborately contrapuntal development section. The *Andante*, in the style of a slow march, may have been inspired by a religious procession that Mendelssohn saw in the streets of Naples. The third movement, is in the form of a minuet/scherzo whose central trio utilizes the burnished sonorities of bassoons and horns. The finale turns to a minor key for an exuberant and mercurial dance modelled on the whirling *saltarello* that Mendelssohn heard in Rome.



## The Orchestra

### *First Violin*

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

### *Second Violin*

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

### *Viola*

Bruno Handel  
Francis Hider  
Sue Rowley

### *Cello*

Graeme Wright  
Jeannie Bevan  
Jessie Cooke  
Catherine Irvine  
Alan Musgrove  
Brendan O'Connor  
Mark Rallis

### *Double Bass*

Sara Rowe  
Robert Veale

### *Flute*

Gill Foan  
Joan Luck  
Ankie Postma

### *Oboe*

Leigh Thomas  
Rita Finnis

### *Clarinet*

Jacky Howlett  
Mike Youngs

### *Bassoon*

Jane Chivers  
Katy Hilton

### *Horn*

Jamie Merrick  
Andy Coombes  
John Ward

### *Trumpet*

Nick Haslam  
Andy Pearce

### *Timpani*

Shuan 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](mailto:hco@btinternet.com)
- Speak to any member of the orchestra during the interval, or
- Visit our website at [www.hcoveb.co.uk](http://www.hcoveb.co.uk)

We look forward to seeing you at our next concert

**Sunday 2 November 2008**

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