



# **HAVERING CONCERT ORCHESTRA**

13 March 2010

Hall Mead School, Upminster



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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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**BILL BROOKS (Musical Director)** has lived in Havering for most of his life being educated at Hornchurch Grammar School and 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 now play in the Concert Orchestra, and for twelve years was conductor of the Upminster Bach Society. He is still very involved in local music making. As well as being a member of the Havering Concert Orchestra, Bill is Musical Director of St. Andrew's Church, Hornchurch.

## TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME

### MIKHAIL IVANOVICH GLINKA (1804-1857)

#### *Ruslan and Ludmilla Overture*

Glinka is commonly regarded as the founder of Russian nationalism in music. His influence on Balakirev, self-appointed leader of the later group of five nationalist composers, was considerable. His melodies show a distinct affinity to the popular songs of the Russians, so that the term "national" may justly be applied to them. His appointment as imperial chapelmaster and conductor of the opera of St. Petersburg was the reward for his dramatic successes. He was a contemporary of the Irish composer, John Field, and the Spanish composer, Fernando Sor, both of whom had moved to Russia.

His second opera, *Ruslan and Ludmila* (1842) was founded on the epic poem of Pushkin, undoubtedly the greatest of Russian writers. The opera had its first staging in St Petersburg in 1842. Glinka wrote the overture to this opera in the course of a single night, as an example in composition to his students. Glinka died in Berlin in 1857.

### LEO DELIBES (1836-1891)

#### *Coppelia Ballet Suite for Orchestra*

*Slavische Volksmelodie mit Variationen, Festtauz und Stundenwalzer, Notturmo,  
Musik der Automaten und Walzer, Czardas*

Delibes was trained at the Paris Conservatoire, where he achieved no particular distinction. In 1882 Delibes wrote a set of pastiche ancient airs and dances for Victor Hugo's play *Le roi s'amuse*, later to provide a subject for Verdi's opera *Rigoletto*. His opera *Lakmé*, dealing with the love of a British officer and the daughter of a Brahmin priest in mid-19th century India, provides the well known Bell Song for ambitious coloratura sopranos. *The Flower Duet*, popularised by its recent commercial use, remains singularly attractive. Delibes's last opera, *Kassya*, was orchestrated by Massenet after the composer's death.

His first major triumph came with the ballet *Coppélia*, based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann and staged at the Opéra in 1870. The tale tells of eccentric toymaker, old Dr. Coppélius and his doll Coppélia, who seems to come to life. When Dr Coppélius leaves Coppélia on his

workshop balcony she causes quite a stir in the village, particularly in the heart of redblooded young lover Franz, and the jealous mind of his real-life fiancée, Swanilda - who mistakes the mannequin for a crying, talking, sleeping, walking rival. Comic chaos is riotously unleashed when humans and automatons collide in Dr Coppélius's spooky toyshop.

## GEORGES BIZET (1838-1875)

### *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*

*Prelude, Minuetto, Adagietto, Carillon*

When, in 1872, Bizet was commissioned to compose incidental music for a production of Alphonse Daudet's play "*L'Arlesienne*", he had for the first time in his career the opportunity of working with a writer whose gifts equalled his own. The play caught his imagination, and he responded with a suite of 27 short numbers scored for chorus and small orchestra. The production ran for only 21 performances, to largely empty houses. The audience's objections seem baffling today; some appear to have resented the fact that the title character, the "Girl from Arles", does not actually appear in the play. Despite this, Bizet's faith in the quality of his music was unshaken, and he took immediate steps to ensure its survival outside the theatre. He drew a four-movement concert suite from the score, arranged for full orchestra, and this was performed within a month of the play's closing at one of Jules Pasdeloup's concerts of contemporary music. As a suite, the music was an immediate success, so much so that the orchestrator Ernest Guiraud created a Second Suite from "*L'Arlesienne*" four years after Bizet's death. Both suites have held the repertoire ever since, although the First Suite, performed tonight, was the only one sanctioned by Bizet himself. Set in Provence, "*L'Arlesienne*" is the story of two young peasants, Frédéri, who is obsessed by a girl from Arles, and his simple brother, known as "L'Innocent". The girl from Arles never appears but is a femme fatale in the mould of Bizet's most celebrated dramatic creation, *Carmen*. Frédéri's unrequited passion gradually drives him to distraction, and at the climax of the play he throws himself from a high window as the villagers dance a farandole in the streets below. The plot gave Bizet ample opportunity for sundrenched orchestral colours and folk melodies, as well as some sensitive musical character-studies. The *Prélude* is in three sections; first a short set of variations on the *Marcho dei Rei*, a melody of unknown Spanish or Provençal origin, then the expressive saxophone melody which characterises "L'Innocent", and finally the impassioned, chromatic music associated with Frédéri's hopeless longing. The graceful *Minuetto*, with its flowing trio section, was one

of the entr'actes to which the original audience objected so strongly, while the touching *Adagietto* (for strings alone) is a *mélodrame*, originally played beneath a scene in which two elderly peasants, childhood sweethearts, are re-united. The suite closes with the sonorous Carillon, the prelude to Act 4 of the play – the bells of the village ring out to celebrate the festival which will be the setting for the drama's tragic climax. The short central section, pastoral in character, comes from another *mélodrame*, after which Bizet skillfully re-introduces the bell music to bring the suite to a vigorous conclusion.

## INTERVAL

### BEDRICH SMETANA (1824-1884)

#### *Ma Vlast, No.2, Moldau (Vltava)*

*The two sources of the Moldau – Woods; Hunt – Peasant wedding – Moonlight; Nymphs' round-dance – Rapids of St. John – The Moldau flows broadly onwards; Vysehrad.*

Bedrich Smetana is a heroic figure in Czech culture, and even today is accorded higher public esteem in his own country than better-known composers such as Dvořák. The son of a Bohemian brewer, he is seen as the founder of a Czech national school of music; such operas as *Libuse* and *The Bartered Bride* are staples of the Czech repertoire and his cycle of symphonic poems *Má Vlast* (My Country) is performed annually at the Prague Spring, the great national cultural festival. Nationalism is not everything in Smetana's music – he was brought up speaking German and is not known to have written a word of Czech before the age of 32. *Má Vlast* is an unquestionably patriotic work, but it uses the common musical language of the Central European tradition (with a particular debt to Smetana's friend Liszt) and does so in a remarkably innovative way. *Vltava* (1874) is the second symphonic poem in *Má Vlast*, and portrays the river, called the Moldau by German-speaking Czechs such as Smetana, which rises in the Sumava forest and flows through the Bohemian countryside and the city of Prague before joining the River Elbe. For Smetana, the course of the river provided a ready-made musical structure; *Vltava* is a sort of rondo, with the flowing theme of the river recurring in different forms between colourful episodes depicting Bohemian life and folklore along the riverside. Two brooks, portrayed on two flutes, form the sources of the river; these flow into the main stream of the river itself, the surging string melody which

Smetana is said to have derived from a Swedish folk-song but which now sounds quintessentially Czech. Hunting horns are heard in the forests, before the river flows past a rustic wedding celebration where the guests are dancing a polka. Smetana led the way (here and in his String Quartet *From my Life*) in introducing this light-hearted dance to symphonic music. The next episode portrays moonlight shimmering on the river in magical orchestral colours, and Smetana evokes the legend of the Rusalkas, the water-nymphs who feature prominently in Slav folklore and would later form the subject of Dvorák's best-known opera. The music accelerates and grows agitated as the river crashes over the Rapids of St. John, above Prague, and finally sweeps through the Czech capital itself. The majestic chorale-theme of Vysehrad, the great rock-fortress that is the symbol of the Czech nation, towers over the closing bars, as the Vltava flows unstopably onwards to the Elbe.

## PYOTR IL'YICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

### *Capriccio Italien*

Tchaikovsky and his brother Modest arrived in Rome in December 1879. The previous months had been stressful but as Tchaikovsky relaxed and absorbed the Roman atmosphere his thoughts returned to composition. By late January 1880 he was writing to his patroness Nadezhda von Meck about an "Italian Fantasia" he was planning, based on Glinka's second Spanish Overture. By the next month it had become an "Italian Suite" and soon after that it was fully sketched out. It was orchestrated in May, receiving its final title of "Capriccio Italien" at the same time, and was premiered to great acclaim in Moscow that December.

There is no reason to doubt that the melodies are genuinely Italian, although only two have been positively identified - the opening fanfare, which, according to Modest, could be heard by the brothers each morning from a barrack adjacent to their hotel, and the closing tarantella, known in Italy as "Cicuzza". Tchaikovsky simply fits them together and scores them in his own inimitably flamboyant manner, with just a few splashes of folk-colour such as the brief "bagpipe" oboe passage in the final tarantella. .

### *1812 Festival Overture, Op. 49*

In 1880 plans were being laid in Moscow for the inauguration of a new cathedral, built over a period of 40 years to commemorate Russia's deliverance in 1812 from the advancing armies of Napoleon.

The Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was to be consecrated on the 70th anniversary of Borodino in the presence of Tzar Alexander II. The plans included military bands and artillery salutes, massed singing, and the first peal of the Cathedral's bells. This was just one of three upcoming state occasions which the composer Nikolai Rubinstein suggested as lucrative opportunities for his impoverished colleague Peter Tchaikovsky. Rubinstein had been appointed Music Director of the 1881 Moscow Exhibition of Industry, and he suggested that Tchaikovsky write either "(1) an overture to open the exhibition, or (2) an overture for the Tzar's Silver Jubilee, or (3) a cantata, with a hint of Orthodox church music, for the opening of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour". After initial misgivings, Tchaikovsky decided to combine two of Rubinstein's suggestions and write a festive overture for the consecration of the cathedral. Once he had decided on the subject and purpose of the piece, his musical material was virtually ready-made - Russian and French national hymns, a dramatic battle sequence (ideas he had lifted shamelessly from Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory* symphony of 1813), military bands, cathedral bells and cannon. Throwing in a Russian folksong, *U Varot* and a theme from his own opera *The Voyevoda* he wrote the piece in less than five weeks in October and November 1880. Four months later, the Tzar was assassinated and the consecration of the Cathedral was postponed indefinitely. The premier was eventually held on 20 August 1882 - in an all-Tchaikovsky concert at the Moscow Exhibition, which had itself been postponed for a year. "Capriccio Italien" was also on the programme.

Tchaikovsky would have been puzzled and deeply hurt had he known that *1812* would become his most popular single work. "I don't think it has any serious merits" he'd told Napravnik. Although *1812* is something of a "patchwork", Tchaikovsky's innate sense of drama makes it utterly effective. From the opening, chant-like statement of the Russian imperial anthem "God Save the Tzar", through the long, stormy battle-sequence and the clash of the two national anthems, *1812* sweeps the listener on towards one of the most spectacular and uninhibited celebrations in all music. The bells peal, the cannon roar and Russia is saved in a blaze of sheer, glorious sound.



# HAVERING CONCERT ORCHESTRA

## **VIOLIN 1**

Donna Schooling  
Margaret Collins  
Jenny Sheppard  
Gabrielle Scott  
Karen Williams  
Jenny Robinson

## **VIOLIN 2**

Colin Foan  
Paul Chubb  
Dorothy Todd  
Stan VanLint  
Kathryn Andrews  
Jenny Reckless

## **VIOLA**

John Hawkins  
Bruno Handel  
Sue Yeomans  
Jenny Meakin

## **CELLO**

Graeme Wright  
Catherine Irving  
Alan Musgove  
Mark Rallis  
Jessie Cooke  
Brendan O'Connor

## **DOUBLE BASS**

Christopher Reeve

## **HARP**

Hilary Barkwith

## **FLUTE**

Gill Foan  
Ankie Postma

## **OBOE/COR ANGLAIS**

Leigh Thomas  
Rita Finnis

## **CLARINET**

Jacky Howlett  
Liz Piper

## **BASSOON**

Jane Chivers  
Sarah Head

## **ALTO SAXOPHONE**

Amanda Foan

## **HORN**

Jamie Merrick  
Deris Haskew  
John Ward  
Andrej Lipkin

## **TRUMPET**

Andy Pearce  
Jonathan Alder

## **TROMBONE**

Martyn Bowden  
Andy Bearman  
Chris Hoepelman

## **EUPHONIUM**

Cameron Burrows

## **TUBA**

Les Shadrake

## **TIMPANI**

Helen Sheehan

## **PERCUSSION**

Hilary Barkwith  
Judith Brooks  
Amanda Foan  
John Morris  
Georgina Thomas

## 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.hcweb.co.uk](http://www.hcweb.co.uk)

We look forward to seeing you at our next concert on

**SATURDAY 26 JUNE 2010**

**New Windmill Hall, Upminster**

**Beethoven - Prometheus Overture**

**Elgar - Cello Concerto**

**Schubert - Rosamund Overture**

**Beethoven - Symphony No 2**

**Tickets at door or telephone 020 8220 5147**

