



# DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## CONCERT

Saturday 7th December 2002 at 7.45pm

St Barnabas' Church, Calton Avenue, Dulwich SE21

**Julian Williamson**

*Conductor*

**Dominic John**

*Pianist*

**Paula Tysall**

*Leader*

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# I N T E R V A L

## Scheherazade Op 35 Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakoff (1849-1908)

(1) Largo maestoso - Allegro non troppo (2) Largo - Andantino-Allegro molto  
(3) Andantino quasi Allegretto (4) Allegro molto

Solo violin: Paula Tysal

The programme I had been guided by in composing 'Scheherazade' consisted of separate, unconnected episodes and structures from 'The Arabian Nights'. This is how Rimsky-Korsakoff explained his approach to his work which, although termed a symphonic suite, has more of the feel of a fantasy about it as the title itself would indicate. Everyone knows the legend of the beautiful wife of the cruel Sultan Shahrar who is threatened, like so many before her, with execution the morning after the wedding night, and how she saves her terrified, but so spinning a tapestry of stories so intriguing that her husband cannot bear to miss the next evening and so constantly puts off the fatal deed. For 101 nights she weaves her web of fantasy and Rimsky-Korsakoff has deep into this treasure-trove of adventure and romance to produce one of his most colourful orchestral works.

The four movements are continually captivating sounds of the solo violin which represent Scheherazade and which ultimately calm the threatening tones of the Sultan. Around this motif the composer allows us to savour the spirit of four stories. In the opening movement we feel the leaving of great women as we are taken aboard the ship of Sinbad, a sailor of fortune whose life was spent rampaging the oceans of the world in search of wealth. The second touches on the exploits of Kalidasa - one of the order of devildom who pursued the honourable profession of begging, earning his supper by means of beautiful story-telling. His tale passed through many different moods and becomes ever more fantastic until finally disappearing in an Arabian desert through many different moods and becomes ever more fantastic until finally disappearing in an Arabian desert through many different moods and becomes ever more fantastic until finally disappearing in an Arabian desert opportunity to beguile us with the haunting atmosphere of a fairy middle-eastern night filled with legend and fantasy. Then the finale throws us into a great festival in Baghdad burning with colour and energy as we move through a myriad of different sounds which flash past like a lightning message. As Sinbad's ship which suddenly crumbles no further we find ourselves transported - as if by magic carpet - back to Sinbad's ship which suddenly crumbles onto the rocks. This breaks the spell of stories and the music ends with the soothing sounds of the solo violin with which Scheherazade finally meets the Sultan's hand heart with the result that her life is spared.

Notes by Julian Williamson

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New players are always welcome, see website on [www.dulwichsymphony.co.uk](http://www.dulwichsymphony.co.uk).  
Choirwork: Way West, Newwood SLE17.

## Symphonic Poem: Orpheus

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

The first half of Liszt's life was spent as a travelling piano virtuoso in which capacity he was celebrated the world over by the age of 15. However, as the years rolled by the appeal of the concert platform paled and he decided to meet his creative powers in other directions. He settled in Weimar and became the Duke's musical director, running his opera company with great success for many years exploring new repertoire, including the first performance of Wagner's 'Lohengrin'. But his change in compositional ideas was even more important. Liszt was the first to introduce the concept of a 'symphonic poem' - the first of which was 'Orpheus' in 1848. The next ten years twelve orchestral works which he termed 'symphonic poems' - the preparation for which came from a mixture of Beethoven's 'Pastoral' symphony and Mendelssohn's picture-escapes opera. They all aim to paint, in musical terms, incidents or figures from literary or pictorial sources. 'Orpheus' and 'Prometheus' are probably the best known of the set but the majority have been almost totally ignored, which is a great pity as they contain some wonderfully evocative music.

'Orpheus' was inspired by some performances of Gluck's 'Orfeo' which he directed at Weimar in 1854. Of comparatively brief duration it displays a mastery of the orchestra amounting for a composer who came to it so late in life. It tells of Orpheus, harp-player at the death of Eurydice, hypnotising the spirits of the Underworld with the beauty of his music so that he can enter the forbidden region and rescue her. The scoring is beautifully delicate and transparent building with the help of prominent parts for harp, solo violin and oboe, a scene of perfect tranquility which is threatened as he passes the gates and will be punished as heard memorably in the bass instruments. But so compelling is his art that their growths gradually subside and he is allowed to pass in an atmosphere of peaceful reconciliation.

Notes by Julian Williamson

## Piano Concerto in A Minor Edward Grieg (1843-1907)

Grieg received his first piano lesson from his mother who was a fine pianist. His early musical talent was noted and on the advice of Ole Bull he was sent to the Norwegian Academy in 1857, at the age of 15. He settled for a time in Copenhagen, but returned to his home town of Bergen. He founded a musical society at the time (the Ole Bull Society) for the promotion of music and education. He also toured Europe as a pianist and composer. He was an accomplished soloist as well as accompanying his wife and other singers. It was during this time that the first met Liszt, who not only gave Grieg great encouragement in his composition, but also sight read the piano concerto faithfully from the manuscript and gave it much praise.

Grieg's style is distinctly Norwegian - his themes being based on the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic idioms of his homeland. His piano concerto was written when he was just 25, but already shows the lyricism and tenderness that we expect from Grieg. It remains one of the repertoire's favourite piano concertos to this day. The concerto begins dramatically with a drum-roll, an A minor chord from the orchestra and the piano's immediate entry in octaves. The first theme is given to the woodwind and horns, with rhythmic figures added from the strings. When the piano takes on this theme it becomes more detailed with arpeggios. The second subject is announced by the cellos and the piano introduces this new melody. From the development of the movement onwards the climax builds to the return of the piano's opening octaves. A solo cadenza leads us to the coda, which is at first quiet, but soon builds to the fortissimo return of the movement's opening octaves.

The second movement opens with a slow melody borne by the strings, followed by a solo horn call, first major, then minor. The piano enters as though floating above the orchestra until it takes up the first melody in a more powerful form. A cadenza follows then the horn and the piano leads us to the end of the movement, after which quiet tutti from the piano and the solo horn's call leads us to the close.

The last movement enters with a quiet fanfare from the wind, answered instantly by a loud flourish from the piano. The first theme is obviously inspired by folk-dance rhythm and builds to a climax, which they slip into a new tune brought in by the flute. The piano elaborates this by expanding the tune and changing the harmony. The themes return and a grand cadenza for the piano ensues, after which the first theme is turned into a quick waltz and the flute's tune is boldly played by piano and the whole orchestra. The movement comes to a stirring conclusion with piano and orchestra uniting.

Notes by Frances Barrett

NEXT CONCERTS: 15th March 2003 7.45pm at St Barnabas Church Dulwich and  
28th June 2002 St Paul's Church Herne Hill

## DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Paula Tysall [Leader]  
Sonali Banerjee  
Tom Brockbank  
Chris Burns  
Katie Cardwell-Oliver  
Ariela Cravitz  
Maisie Hipperson  
Julie Lee  
Sally Park  
Gill Tarlton

### Violin II

Eric Croston  
Adrian Chen  
Elizabeth Cleary  
Stuart Dearnley  
Ann Earle  
George Fuller  
Jane Howard  
Sarah Milnes  
Roz Wall

### Double Bass

Matthew Berry  
Christine Bond  
Mike Lasserson

### Cello

Nicky Jackson  
Caroline Annesley  
Russell Ashley-Smith  
Maria Rosa Borneo  
Charlotte Burkill  
Katherine Croston  
Sarah Toyn  
Brian Tunnicliffe

### Viola

Frances Barrett  
Sarah Guthrie  
Frances Lee  
Claire McKenna  
Philip McKenna

### Flute

Sam Purser  
Zillah Smith  
Hannah Talbot-Cooper

### Oboe

Louise Simon  
Ian Finn  
Jennifer Hough

### Clarinet

Sue Best  
Peter Garem

### Bassoon

Hilary Dodd  
Martin Bament

### Horn

Graham Vernon  
Lucy Steel  
Paul Kajzar  
Jane Urquhart

### Trumpet

Tim Collett  
Eric Milner

### Trombone

Michael Brooks  
Helen Otter  
John Bell

### Tuba

Martin Humphrey

### Percussion

Tony Maloney  
And team

### Harp

Keziah Thomas

**Julian Williamson** Over some 20 years Julian Williamson has been associated with a wide range of orchestras both professional amateur. He has directed concerts with the London Mozart Players, City of London Sinfonia, Milton Keynes City Orchestra and the Ernest Read Symphony Orchestra. Apart from conducting in all the major London Halls he has performed in many other venues throughout Britain. His work abroad has taken him to America, Zimbabwe, Germany, France and Holland.

**Paula Tysall** studied the violin at the Centre for Young Musicians and went on to study at the Royal College of Music and the National Centre for Orchestral Studies. Since then she has divided her time between freelance orchestral playing and violin teaching. As a member of the New London Orchestra she has made recordings for the BBC, Classic FM and Hyperion and appeared at the Proms. With various orchestras she has toured Italy, Spain and America. She is 1st Violin in the Ashington String Quartet.

**Dominic John** Born in 1980, British pianist began lessons with his mother. A versatile musician, he has given numerous solo performances as well as being a member of various chamber ensembles and accompanist to a wide variety of singers and instrumentalists. Venues have included St. John's Smith Square, St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Barbican Hall where he gave the European Premiere of some early variations by Stephen Sondheim in two gala concerts recorded on TER Classics.

In 2001 he received First Prize in the 22nd Brant International Piano Competition and was winner of the prestigious Chappell Gold Medal piano prize at the Royal College of Music. Other prizes have included Worthing Concerto Competition and Sheffield ISM Competition. He has taken part in many master classes, notably Howard Shelley, Piers Lane, Stephen Hough and Pierre-Laurent Aimard. The latter two provided an opportunity to concentrate on slightly unusual areas of the piano repertoire: the works of York Bowen and Ligeti respectively. Dominic is currently a postgraduate studying with John Barstow at the Royal College of Music.