



DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Autumn Concert

Saturday, 4th December 2004
at 7.45 pm

St. Barnabas' Church,
Calton Avenue, Dulwich, SE21

Julian Williamson Conductor

Lesley-Jane Rogers Soprano

Paula Tysall Leader

Programmes : 50p

www.dulwichsymphonyorchestra.org.uk

Registered charity No. 1100857

she lies awake haunted by the sound of a flute outside which she imagines is serenading her with sounds of love. It plays "a melody now languorous, now flighty...and every note flies toward my cheek like a mysterious kiss." The final song sees Shéhérazade looking out of her window and seeing a handsome young man, so young that he has almost the features of a lovely girl. She tries to invite him in. "But no, you pass by and from my threshold I see you move on making a graceful gesture, your hip lightly swayed by your girlish languid gait".

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 1 in A flat major [Op. 55]

Edward Elgar [1857 - 1934]

- [1] Andante. Nobile e semplice - Allegro
- [2] Allegro molto
- [3] Adagio
- [4] Lento - Allegro - Grandioso

Haydn was about twenty when he first tried his hand at a symphony. Beethoven was thirty, Brahms was forty but Elgar had reached his half-century before the above work was completed. All his large works had, from an early age been designed around programmes and his natural insecurity as an artist made him shy of attempting music which had to stand on its own formal feet. He had no shortage of desire and initially thought of a compromise - a symphony as a tribute to one of his great heroes, General Gordon of Khartoum and the broad melody eventually honed to open the work seems to fit the scheme admirably. However you do not have to progress far to realize that, as the work expanded in his mind, Elgar jettisoned any such idea and the symphony proves a brilliant essay in tonal and emotional contrasts. The first sign-post of this for the listener is that the serene glow of these first bars in the warm key of A flat is but short-lived and is replaced by a turbulent Allegro in D minor. This is full of nervous, tense anxiety and this mood takes over the whole movement until the opening theme can be heard in the background attempting to pour oil on these troubled waters. It gradually makes its presence felt more but it never succeeds in banishing the black thoughts and the movement ends with a rather eerie chord of A flat which, rather than sounding like home, seems as though it comes from a foreign planet.

The two middle movements do not contain the opening music at all but the contrast in ideas remains the same - the one being a foil for the other. The scherzo has all the elements of a frenetic moto perpetuo with restive string semiquavers running everywhere amidst brash, edgy march tunes. This is only relieved by a more pastoral episode [which recurs later] strongly redolent of Mahler - not a stylish connection one makes easily, incidentally. The whole movement never settles, like the Allegro before it, until the music gradually relaxes and links into a beautiful Lento which provides some of the calm so sorely wanting previously. Once into this atmosphere of rich sonority one can become hypnotised but you slowly realize that the seeds of anxiety are never very far away. They burst into life again in the finale when, after an introduction full of foreboding, a torrent of agitated sound is unleashed which proves unrelenting and seems bent on driving the music to destruction. Then, quietly, the music of the symphony's beginning reappears and this time slowly takes command and rebuilds the shattered remnants so that in the end the powerful force of stability triumphs over the shifting sands of anxiety and the work ends in a blaze of glory.

Programme notes by Julian Williamson

Tone Poem: "Tintagel"

Arnold Bax [1883 - 1953]

The tone poem was one of the most popular forms of orchestral music for composers of the Romantic era. From Mendelssohn through Liszt, Dvorak, Tchaikovsky, Debussy to composers of the twentieth century there was a fascination to portray striking pictures, scenes or incidents in terms of sound using all the wonderful palette of colours which the modern orchestra offered.

Bax was intrigued with this idea all his life and wrote about a dozen of them into which he poured all his immense skill as an orchestrator. This piece was completed in 1919 and combines three of the composer's great loves - history, stunning scenery, and the sea and since Bax himself wrote a very evocative description of its content I can do no better than to quote his words: "Though detailing no definite programme this work is intended to evoke a tone-picture of the castle-crowned cliff of Tintagel, and more particularly the wide distances of the Atlantic as seen from the cliffs of Cornwall on a sunny but not windless summer day. In the middle section of the piece it may be imagined that with the increasing tumult of the sea arise memories of the historical and legendary association of the place, especially those connected with King Arthur, King Mark, and Tristram and Iseult. Regarding the last named, it will be noticed that at the climax of the more literary division of the work there is a brief reference to one of the subjects in the first act of Wagner's opera "Tristan". The work is comprised of a single continuous movement.

Shéhérazade. Three poems for voice and orchestra

Maurice Ravel [1875 - 1937]

Lesley-Jane Rogers Soprano

- [1] Asie [Asia]
- [2] La Flute enchantée [The magic flute]
- [3] L'Indifférent [The indifferent one]

It is an astonishing fact that France should have produced so many experimental composers over the years when its musical establishment was so very conservative. Berlioz, Bizet, Debussy, Messiaen all had to fight long battles to override the deep prejudices of the country's artistic judges. Ravel was no exception to this and was refused entry to composition classes at the Paris Conservatoire on more than one occasion because his music did not conform to accepted tastes. In the case of Ravel, and his contemporary Debussy this was partly due to a novel view of harmony and partly that both had a decided penchant for the exotic. At the age of fourteen he had heard a Javanese Gamelan ensemble which opened up a whole new sound world and soon afterwards there were opportunities for hearing and studying the exciting works being produced by the modern Russian school. Among these was Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic Suite "Shéhérazade", a subject which was to fascinate him in years to come. One of his first attempts at orchestral writing was an overture evoking the atmosphere of the despotic Sultan and his clever wife who escaped death by keeping her husband in suspense with exciting stories. Then a few years later he came across the poetry of Tristan Klingsor on the same subject from which was borne this beautiful song cycle the style of which is strongly influenced by the heady sounds of Debussy's recently produced "Pelleas et Melisande". The songs do not tell any story but dwell on the hopes and desires of the imprisoned and frustrated young wife. The first, by far the longest of the three is a vision of all the magical sights and sounds of the East which she would long to embrace but can only dream of. "I would like to go with the schooner that rocks in the harbour...to the isles of flowers...to see eyes dark with love...to see Persia, India and China; and then return and intrigue my listeners, like Sinbad, by my extraordinary tales." In the second song she says her master is asleep "a cone-shaped silken hat upon his head and his long yellow nose in his white beard" but

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Violin I Paula Tysall [Leader] Sonali Banerjee Helen Bartholomew Tom Brockbank Chris Burns Sinead Hayes Kirsty Mallett	Viola Frances Barrett Bryony Conroy Julian Elias Frances Lee Martin Humphrey Philip McKenna Anne Miller Liz Milward	Flute Sam Purser Zillah Smith Piccolo Annabel Noton Oboe Louise Simon Paul Blaker	Horn Graham Vernon Lucy Steel Paul Kajzar Jane Urquhart Trumpet Tim Collett Eric Milner Hamish Cook
Violin II Gill Tarlton Adrian Chen Ann Earle Jane Howard Sarah Milnes Jim Nierobisz Miklós Pohl Andrew Poulter	'Cello Nick Jackson Russell Ashley-Smith Caroline Annesley Margaret Hodgson Antero Manocchi Chris Pengruez Mary Windus	Cor Anglais Ian Finn Clarinet Roland McCabe Alex Fleming Bass Clarinet Brendan O'Neill	Tenor Trombone Michael Brooks Charles Mackworth-Young Bass Trombone John Bell Tuba Martin Humphrey
Harp Carys Hughes	Double Bass Matthew Berry Chris Bond Mike Lasserson Samantha Weitzel	Bassoon Hilary Dodd Jeremy Crump Contra-Bassoon Jackie Hayter	Timpani George Bird Percussion Alison Turner Anthea Downey Cleo Taylor

Over the last twenty years, Julian Williamson has been associated with a large number of orchestras and choirs. He has performed regularly at the South Bank, at St. John's Smith Square and the Barbican Hall where, apart from his many concerts with the Camden Choir, he has appeared with the London Bach Orchestra and the English Festival Choir. His work has taken him not only to many parts of Great Britain but also to Germany, Holland, Zimbabwe and the USA.

Lesley-Jane Rogers studied singing and piano at the Royal Academy of Music, taking both subjects successfully to postgraduate level. She now specialises in oratorio and solo cantatas, and is heralded as one of the most versatile soloists of today with a vast repertoire of several hundred works. She has worked with many leading conductors and orchestras, and her discography includes Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' opera Resurrection, Carl Rittl's Magnificat and Alpha et Omega, Sadie Harrison's Aster, Julia Usher's Sacred Physic, as well as several recordings with the Wren Baroque Soloists. Lesley-Jane has also given many world premières, most notably Ivan Fedele's La Chute de la Maison Usher with the Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris's prestigious Cité de la Musique. She has also recently released two CDs, one of Schubert Lieder and one of English Song with the pianist Christopher Ross.
[Sales at: www.penchant-recordings.co.uk]

Paula Tysall studied the violin at the Royal College of Music and the National Centre for Orchestral Studies. She won the Associated Board Silver Medal for Grade 7. As a member of the New London Orchestra she has taken part in many acclaimed recordings for Hyperion Records, Radio 3 and Classic FM Quartet.

Our thanks to Sally Gross for providing flowers for this occasion.
IVYWORKS Floral Design orders taken for flowers for all occasions including Christmas door wreaths and indoor decorations. Please contact Sally Gross on 020 7639 2291 or ivyworks@btinternet.com

The details of the next concert will be published on the website in January 2005. www.dulwichsymphonyorchestra.org.uk