

DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SPRING CONCERT

Saturday 24th February 2007 at 7.45 pm
All Saints' Church, Lovelace Road, SE21

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 2

DVOŘÁK

Violin Concerto

NIELSEN

Helios Overture

conducted by

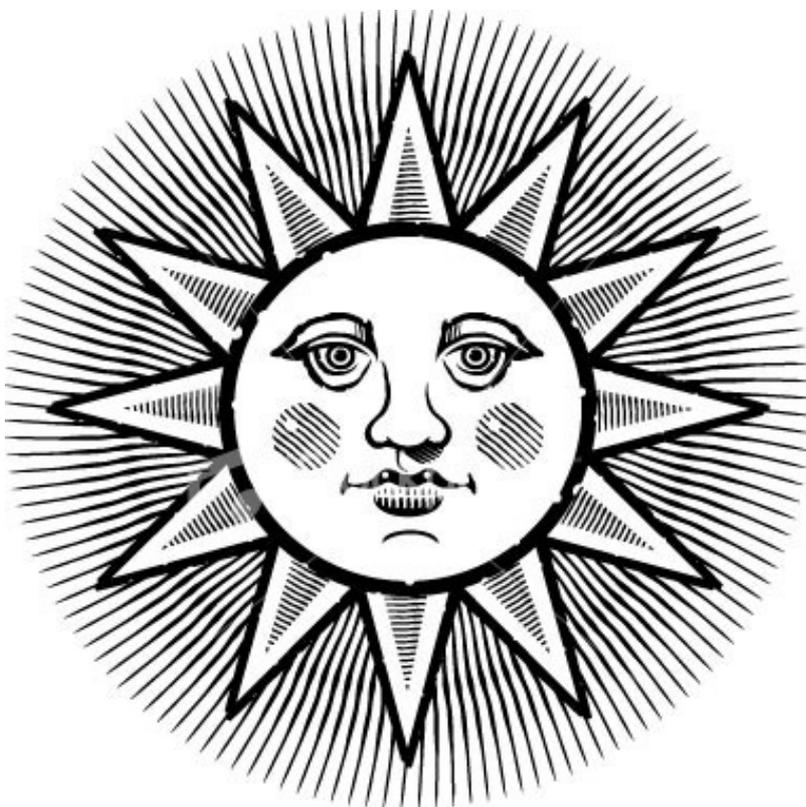
Julian Williamson

leader

Paula Tysall

Naoko Miyamoto

Violin



Interval collection for St. Christopher's Hospice

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Helios Overture, Op. 17

Carl Nielsen (1865 - 1931)

Nielsen is by far the most celebrated Danish composer in the concert hall today. Although his family were poor both his parents were very musical – his father played a variety of instruments in the local village band and his mother had a very appealing singing voice. Carl learnt much from both sources early on, and added to this a very useful exposure to the classical repertoire through his years in a local amateur orchestra. After a spell at the Copenhagen Conservatory in his early twenties he obtained a professional post as violinist in the Royal Chapel Orchestra in which he was exposed to a wide range of music of all genres. After the production of his first symphony in 1891 he quickly achieved national fame which grew steadily throughout the remainder of his life.

In 1903 he paid a visit to Greece, staying in a hotel overlooking the Aegean Sea. He became intrigued with the movement of the brilliant sunlight over the glistening water and the inspiration for a miniature tone poem quickly grew within him, along with the idea of building the work around the ancient legends of the country he was visiting. In classical mythology Helios was the all-powerful sun god who rose out of the ocean at dawn riding his chariot driven by four snow-white horses breathing fire and light. As he rose into the sky the rays around him broke the darkness of the night illuminating the whole world and he carried this dazzling brightness right across the heavens until he sank into the western sea returning all once more to a stygian gloom. Nielsen's overture follows this pattern very closely. Misty sounds from the cellos and basses are joined by gentle horn calls which herald the coming of dawn. Around these gather further motifs which build gradually into vibrant fanfares from the brass which suddenly thrust us into the central fast section of the piece as Helios rides triumphantly across the heavens. You can almost feel the heat in the sound as the composer conveys the joyful progress of the young sun god across the heavens until the tension gradually releases towards the end and the music sinks back slowly to where it had begun as the light dims and we feel night approaching once more.

Violin Concerto in A Minor, Opus 53

Antonin Dvořák (1841 - 1904)

- (1) Allegro ma non troppo**
- (2) Adagio ma non troppo**
- (3) Allegro giocoso, ma non troppo**

Dvořák wrote three concertos – for piano, cello and violin. This last work he dedicated to his friend, the famous virtuoso Joseph Joachim for whom he had already written a considerable amount of chamber music. The completed score was sent to the great man for his comments and suggestions, all of which Dvořák made use of in a revised version. For some reason, however, Joachim did not give the first performance which had to wait a further two years, finally being premiered in 1883 by Frantisek Ondricek.

Stanford once said of Dvořák; “He is a child of nature who does not stop to think and says on paper anything that comes into his head”. This may seem a little unfair to a composer who often showed great skill in structuring his pieces, but it does highlight one of the essential features of Dvořák's music – his wonderful fount of melody which really does spring from him as though from the soil of his native Bohemian countryside. The concerto is thus full of a whole variety of themes – both lyrical and ebulliently rhythmic - which seem to flow from the author's pen as easily as writing a letter and endow the whole concerto with a richness which, like so much of Dvořák's work, seems to be born of nature herself. The work is in the standard three movements, the first vibrant allegro (during which the soloist rarely stops playing) leads directly into a peaceful adagio whose tranquillity is disturbed from time to time by dark stormy episodes. The finale, as in many concertos following the pattern of Beethoven, has its roots in folk music and dances along in a joyful fashion to bring the work to a lively conclusion.



INTERVAL

During the interval please give generously to the collection for St. Christopher's Hospice



Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Opus 73)

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1896)

- (1) **Allegro non troppo**
- (2) **Adagio non troppo**
- (3) **Allegretto grazioso (Quasi Andantino)**
- (4) **Allegro con spirito**

After the lengthy trauma of completing his first symphony, Brahms found that the second reached its goal much quicker. It was largely written in a single summer while the composer was staying in the little lakeside village of Portschach, and the warmth of the sun combined with the relaxed atmosphere of the countryside are apparent on every page. In contrast to the heavy, almost Teutonic, quality of the previous symphony this one has a smile on its face from beginning to end and it is not surprising that, from the time of its premiere in 1878, it has remained a firm favourite with audiences all over the world.

The first movement is full of lyrical themes which are handed round all sections of the orchestra giving us a mosaic of tone colours effectively disproving the often-quoted theory that Brahms was a boring orchestrator. Incidentally, do not miss the opening three notes played by the cellos and basses. This apparent throwaway phrase is, in fact, the binding element of all the music you will hear and it will appear in a variety of disguises throughout this movement and beyond.

The rich ebony colours of the adagio maintain the abundant flow of warm melodies, interspersed here with brief bursts of almost theatrical drama, but the real surprise of the symphony comes with the third movement. Here Brahms turns his back on the ebullient rumbustuous scherzo of Beethoven and gives us instead an idyllic pastoral interlude in which a gentle tune for woodwind (with a prominent part for oboe) acts as a framework for two more energetic episodes the material for which is built out of the original melody. The reason for this change quickly becomes clear; a reflective movement allows the breadth and energy of the ensuing finale to be set in greater relief. Here all is light and vigour, and the lyrical qualities of the previous movements combine with an exuberant gaiety which sweeps the symphony to a fitting resolution. It is no wonder that a friend of Brahms, having heard this work, remarked; "It is all rippling streams, blue sky, sunshine, and cool green shadows. How beautiful it must be at Portschach".

Programme notes by Julian Williamson

Julian Williamson

In a career spanning over forty years Julian Williamson has conducted choirs and orchestras in many parts of England and abroad. He has directed concerts in all the major concert venues in London and has given many performances all over the country. He also spends much time lecturing, a part of his work which takes him all over Britain and abroad. He is particularly delighted to have been associated with the Dulwich Symphony Orchestra over a number of years, with whom he has explored many interesting corners of the orchestral repertoire.

Naoko Miyamoto

Naoko Miyamoto made her first appearance as soloist with orchestra at the age of eight, playing Bach's *Concerto for Two Violins* with the Sydney Youth Orchestra. Since then, she has performed in such venues as the Sydney Opera House, Sydney Entertainment Centre, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, the Purcell Room and Esbjerg Musikhuset (Denmark).

Having completed her undergraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music with First Class Honours and winning numerous awards including the "Vice-Principal's Award for singularly meritorious studentship", Naoko is now in her first year of the Postgraduate Masters programme at the Academy, studying with Maurice Hasson.

As an avid orchestral and ensemble player Naoko has also been leader of the Royal Academy of Music Concert, Symphony and Sinfonia Orchestras.

Highlights of this season include Dvorak *Romance* with the Philharmonia Orchestra for Sir Charles Mackerras's 80th Birthday Concert and Mozart's Rondo with the Royal Academy Soloists. Naoko's debut CD on the Trust label, playing the Hindson Violin Concerto with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, will be released shortly.

Violin 1	Viola	Flute	Horn
Paula Tysall (<i>leader</i>)	Frances Barrett	Sam Purser	Graham Vernon
Martin Stokes (<i>co-leader</i>)	Julian Elias	Annabel Noton (+ <i>piccolo</i>)	Paul Kajzar
Sonali Banerjee	Morag Fergusson	Gemma Pritchett	Naomi Kent
Helen Bartholomew	Philip McKenna		Jane Urquhart
Anna Borrett	Malcolm Sentance	Oboe	
Tom Brockbank	Judith Smith	Louise Simon	Trumpet
Victoria Dawes		Ian Finn	Tim Collett
Mary Galloway	Cello		Elsbeth Hackett
Sinead Hayes	Nicky Jackson	Clarinet	Eric Milner
Louisa Marcq	Caroline Annesley	Roland McCabe	
	Russell Ashley-Smith	Brendan O' Neill	Trombone
Violin 2	Sarah Colyer		John Edney
Jane Howard	Brigid Constantine	Bassoon	Steve Jenkins
Elizabeth Cleary	Margaret Hodgson	Hilary Dodd	John Bell (<i>bass</i>)
Tessa Crilly	Tim Ingles	Jeremy Crump	
Ann Earle	Oliver Pearce		Tuba
Pippa Jameson-Evans			Mike Llewellyn
Lara Marcinkiewicz	Double Bass		
Philippe Masson	Samantha Weitzel		Timpani
	William Cole		George Bird
	Clare Galtrey		

The next DSO concert is on Saturday 12th May at All Saints' Church as part of the Dulwich Festival

The programme will consist of music by Vaughan Williams, Finzi and Elgar



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