



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture: Don Giovanni

Gustav Mahler

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
(Songs of a Wayfarer)

soloist: William Berger (baritone)

Hector Berlioz

Symphonie fantastique

Conductor Julian Williamson
Assistant conductor Lindsay Ryan
Leader Paula Tysall

All Saints' Church, Lovelace Road, SE21

Saturday 29 November 2008



Interval collection for St Christopher's Hospice
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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Overture: Don Giovanni

Today's concert is made up of music depicting love – both passionate and tragic. The overture to the concert is an overture to an opera depicting love – satirical, passionate, and tragic. Following the great success of *The Marriage of Figaro* at the National Theater in Prague, Mozart received a commission from Pasquale Bondini for another *opera buffa* for that house. Mozart again collaborated with librettist Lorenzo da Ponte, this time on a work which explored the dark side of comedy. The resulting work develops the legend of the dashing nobleman Don Juan, an incorrigible womaniser. The tale was widely used in literature from the 16th century onwards. The work was premiered in Prague on October 29, 1787. Although the opera was completed before the premiere, the overture remained incomplete until the last moment. Legend has it that the night before the performance Mozart attended a party. On returning home, his wife kept him awake throughout the night with stories as he wrote down the overture, finally providing the score to copyists at 7 o'clock the next morning.

The opening of the overture gives a premonition of Don Giovanni's fate with the ominous treading of the stone statue from the last scene of the opera. What follows is a mini-symphonic movement. The musical motifs create an ambivalent atmosphere directly related to the opera's conflicts.

Lindsay Ryan was appointed as assistant conductor of DSO in October 2008 and will be leading community engagement work for the orchestra. Lindsay has a Bachelor of Music (French Horn) and a Bachelor of Teaching (Honours) gained from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She also has an Associate of Music, Australia performance diploma from the Australian Music Examinations Board. Lindsay is the Associate Conductor of Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra.

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer)

Mahler wrote the *Lieder eines Fahrenden gesellen* in 1884-5, and orchestrated them sometime in the 1890s. The first performance of this version was in 1896. The words are Mahler's own, and tell of the disappointed love of a travelling journeyman for a woman who marries another man. After the first song ('When my love is married'), Mahler bases the second ('I went this morning over the Field') on a melody which also appeared in his First Symphony in 1889. It is the happiest of the four songs, but at the end the wayfarer is reminded that despite the beauty of the world, his love can never bloom again. By the third song ('I have a gleaming knife') the mood is suicidal. In the final song, he has gone away from his beloved into the world, resigned to suffering endless grief. He finds respite falling asleep under a linden tree whose blossom rains down on him – a symbol of death and the end of springtime hope. The material in this last song is also reused in the First Symphony. Mahler wrote the songs after meeting, falling in love and then out of love, with a singer, Johanna Richter, who had made a guest appearance in Kassel, where Mahler was conductor at the opera. The theme of a man who goes out into the world stricken by fate and lost in love is a common one in romantic poetry. The most notable example is Schubert's song cycle *Winterresie*, which also ends with its hero under a linden tree.

William Berger (baritone) ('...one of the best of our younger baritones'. Gramophone magazine), an Associate and graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, is a member of ENO's Young Singers Programme. In 1999, William Berger won the Kathleen Ferrier Society Bursary for Young Singers.

Claire Palmer has worked with the DSO in preparing this piece. She is a final year undergraduate at Trinity College of Music in Greenwich, studying with Sophie Grimmer and Alistair Young. Her recent engagements include three performances of *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen* with TCM Wren Ensemble, and B Minor Mass in St James's Piccadilly.

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) *Symphonie fantastique*

DSO Clarinetist **Roland McCabe** writes: My little brother Barney introduced me to Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* when he was doing A level music. All he now remembers about this auspicious act is that he failed to return the Vinyl to school and has been living with the guilt ever since. I have been listening to the *Symphonie Fantastique* regularly for some 30 years now and I still find it as invigorating as ever. I certainly never imagined I would ever get a chance to play this symphony on the clarinet, so I feel quite honoured and I get to tell you about it too.

Berlioz was obsessed by Shakespeare, Goethe's *Faust* and Beethoven's music, and was highly neurotic. Berlioz was also impressed by a translation of Thomas de Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater* (1821) - an interest in opium which was in common use amongst the fashionable of the time. Opium consumption may well have fuelled Berlioz's obsessive visions.

Berlioz won the Prix de Rome in 1830 at the fourth attempt, the reward for which was to study music in Rome for two years. He hated Rome and got out of the city at every opportunity to spend time with brigands, revolutionaries and the like. During this period he completed his *Symphonie Fantastique* which was first performed in December 1830.

Berlioz was a genius of an orchestrator. As an orchestral player you soon get to know how well a composer knows your instrument by how he writes for it. The clarinet parts are a joy to play. Berlioz wrote a seminal text on instrumentation - *Grand Traité d'Instrumentation et d'Orchestration Modernes* - which explores the expressive possibilities of each instrument of the orchestra. What I particularly love in this Symphony is the way you can hear the shepherds in the fields calling to each other - cor anglais in the 3rd movement, a head being severed and bouncing at the end of the fourth and in the fifth the clattering of skeletons engaged in an orgy. This is achieved through the violins bouncing the wood of their bows on the strings. The sinister menacing tone of the strings is achieved through bowing very close to the bridge, I love it.

The *Symphonie Fantastique* was one of the first pieces of music with an explicit programme - Berlioz asked for a copy of the story portrayed in the work to be distributed at every performance, and you will find one in this programme. The notion of an *idée fixe* - a theme which recurs throughout the work and represents the beloved - anticipates Wagner's use of the leitmotiv in his operas.

The symphony is semi autobiographical in that its programme and music reflect the obsession Berlioz had with the Irish actress, Harriet Smithson whom he first saw perform in 1828 and who also entranced Gautier, Delacroix, Hugo and Dumas. Berlioz saw her perform *Ophelia* from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Juliet* from *Romeo and Juliet* in Paris. Despite a poor French translation, Harriet bowled him over. Berlioz wrote the following in his memoirs "*The impression made on my heart and mind by her extraordinary talent, nay her dramatic genius, was equaled only by the havoc wrought in me by the poet she so nobly interpreted.*" Perhaps he actually fell in love with the characters of *Juliet* and *Ophelia* that she was playing. Nevertheless after a very lengthy pursuit he got his prize after Harriet attended a performance of the *Symphonie Fantastique* in 1832 and they were married in 1833. Perhaps inevitably, the marriage did not last. As Berlioz's fame grew, Harriet's career waned. They lived apart, and Harriet turned to drink. Harriet died in 1854.

The Dulwich Symphony Orchestra

Julian Williamson has conducted a wide range of professional and amateur orchestras for over 40 years. He has directed concerts with the London Mozart Players, the City of London Sinfonia and the Ernest Read Symphony Orchestra. Apart from conducting in all the major London Halls, he has performed in many other venues throughout Britain.

First violins

Paula Tysall (leader)

Robert Pack

Anna Carlisle

Catrin Hepworth

Harriet Lamb

Christopher Martin

Alan Mitchell

Jenny Owen

Iain Speirs

Wendy Talbot

Ted Thornhill

Second violins

Jane Howard

Helen Bartholomew

Tom Brockbank

Elizabeth Cleary

Ariela Cravitz

Tessa Crilly

Emma Gant

Phillipe Masson

Nancy Taylor

Rachael Williams

Violas

Frances Barrett

Suzi Clements

Laura Davis

Julian Elias

Rachel Harvie

Philip McKenna

Malcolm Sentance

Cellos

Nicky Jackson

Caroline Annesley

Russell Ashley-Smith

Fiona Clarey

Sarah Colyer

Bridgid Constantine

Peter Watkins

Double Basses

Mike Lasserson

Billy Cole

Sam Wise

Harps

Elizabeth McNulty

Federica Mossone

Flutes

Sam Purser

Sarah Evett (and *piccolo*)

Annabel Norton

Oboes

Louise Simon

Ian Finn (and *cor anglais*)

Clarinets

Roland McCabe

Alex Fleming

Brendan O' Neill

(and *bass clarinet*)

Bassoons

Jeremy Crump

Hilary Dodd

Eloise Carpenter

Emma Sheppard

Horns

Graham Vernon

Ellie Dragonetti

Maria Gavor

Lindsay Ryan

Trumpets

Tim Collett

Tom Rogers

Cornets

Susan Emmons

John Kelly

Trombones

John Edney

Steve Jenkins

Bass Trombone

John Bell

Tubas

Chris Bearman

Mike Llewellyn

Timpani

Tony Maloney

Percussion

David Holmes

(and *timpani*)

George Bird

Feargus Brennan

Merlin Jones

Next concert

Saturday 14 March 2009

Edward Elgar

Overture: Cockaigne (In London Town)

Jacques Ibert

Flute Concerto (Soloist Christopher Wyatt)

Peter Tchaikovsky

Symphony No 4 in F minor

DSO concerts begin at 7.45 pm and take place in
All Saints Church, Lovelace Road, London SE23

