



Welcome to the Summer edition of our Newsletter.....

Our 47th concert season draws to a close with our Mahler Charitable Concert when, along with our partner Betrinac, we are raising funds in support of the work of the Wrexham Memory Clinic who are at the forefront of helping those in our local community concerned about how their memory or thinking ability is affecting their day to day life. We are pleased to welcome members of the Wrexham Memory Clinic to our concert this afternoon and we hope you will all be encouraged to find out more about their work and take the opportunity to meet them. As we shared in our Spring newsletter, our Mahler project with Betrinac was recognised by Arts and Business Cymru in making a positive contribution to the engagement of arts and business for the benefit of our local society and communities. Cartrefi Cowny was selected as the health category winners of the award for their photography work with older people in their local community. We were amazed at the diverse range of collaboration that happens between business and arts organisations across the whole of Wales and the real benefits that communities across our country experience. We were thrilled to be a finalist for our collaborative Mahler project; it will encourage us to continue with our charitable work and consider how we might further enhance the collaborations we have with businesses in our communities. Thank you for all your support during our 47th concert season during which we have seen a number of memorable concerts and soloist performances. We enjoyed our largest audience in February, which was a great encouragement to us all. We look forward to welcoming you back for our 48th concert season which opens on November 26th when Nic Fallowfield returns as our guest conductor and we extend a first time welcome to cellist Timothy Gill. Nic shares some thoughts about the concert programme in this newsletter. In the meantime time we wish you a safe, pleasant and relaxing summer.

"In Conversation with..."



We are delighted to welcome back Richard Howarth to conduct our Mahler Charitable Concert today. He so memorably conducted Mahler 2 at Bridgewater Hall last May. Richard shares insights about himself and his passion for music.

Music and all that Jazz... what does it mean to you? *'For me music is the food of life. It keeps me happy and fulfilled. I cannot imagine a time when I would not wish to be involved in music in all its aspects. Music has been good to me and it enables me to give something back to others, whether it be through my coaching, teaching or orchestral conducting.'*

How did you first get into music? *'My parents were musical, but it was my grandfather who got me started on the Violin. My father was an accomplished jazz/dance band pianist. His early death meant I couldn't share my career experiences with him which I regret. My brother is also musical and plays the violin to a high amateur standard.'*

What were the circumstances that led you to consider making a career in music and then as a profession? *'I suppose the emphasis of music during my childhood education was a powerful element and, when I got to my mid-teens, helped me make the decision that I wanted to focus on it. I eventually realised that it was what I wanted to do and off I went to The Royal College of Music in London in 1967 to continue my music studies for 4 years. My first job was with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in 1971 which was a wonderful experience. I played under Sir Adrian Boult and several other renowned conductors who helped to shape my early musical development.'*

Looking back over your career what have been some of the main career highlights for you? *'Conducting Mahler's 2nd Symphony 'Resurrection' for WSO's Bridgewater Hall debut last May was one of my most memorable musical projects. David Oistrakh, the renowned Soviet classical violinist played Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No 1 with the CBSO when I was a fresh young professional and it was an experience I will never forget. As I was so engrossed playing the violin, conducting had never entered my head until I was invited to conduct some Viennese New Year concerts with the Ulster Orchestra and I was encouraged to continue.'*

You are well connected with the music scene in the NW - what are some of the exciting things that are happening right now? *'It is so exciting. As well as all the professional music making in the NW, there are large numbers of amateur orchestras similar in nature to the WSO which provide the opportunity for lots of people from all walks of life and across the generations to come together and enjoy playing and performing music to a high standard. It really is incredible and a healthy demonstration of the huge personal commitment it takes to rehearse, organise and perform their concerts for loyal audiences. I particularly enjoy the coaching work I am privileged to do with students at the Royal Northern College of Music and at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. There are many highly talented young students coming through the system.'*

What pieces of music and which composers have particular meaning for you? *'The Alpine Symphony by Richard Strauss is an illustrative piece of music which reflects on the journey through life that we all experience. It is a deeply personal score and one that has much meaning and encouragement for me. I also like Strauss's 4 Last Songs which he wrote towards the end of his life. The work is for soprano (or tenor) and orchestra and makes for some of the most delicious moments in all music. I also enjoy JS Bach and Rameau. Bach was a master of counterpoint and Rameau was one of the most important French composers and music theorists of the Baroque era.'*

Looking to the future, what plans do you have as a music professional? *'I would like the orchestras I am involved with to push the boundaries of the music they perform so they can experience the thrill of performing a really challenging work successfully. There is something extraordinarily special when you achieve something outside your comfort zone.'*

How did you first get involved with the WSO? *'It was in the late 1990's when I was asked to do some string sectionals with the Orchestra. I found the members warm, welcoming and willing learners. It was a most enjoyable first engagement. They eventually let me conduct a concert and we've been firm friends since. I was thrilled to be asked to complete their Mahler Charitable Concert project and specifically to conduct them at their debut concert in the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, last May. I am looking forward hugely to today's performance of Mahler 5.'*

What can you tell us about Mahler 5 and what should the audience look out for in particular? *'Mahler wrote the 5th at a time when he was immersed in the music of JS Bach, enjoying particularly the contrapuntal writing which is a trademark of his music. I would encourage the audience to look out for the 3rd and 5th movements where Mahler weaves several themes and strands together. Mahler wrote this symphony when he was falling in love with Alma who was soon to become his wife. The famous Adagietto movement is a love song to her and based around a poem which contains these lines: "How much I love you, you my sun; I cannot tell you that with words, I can only lament to you my longing and love." Mahler 5 is a very challenging work and we have worked hard for our performance this afternoon. I hope our audience will enjoy listening to us.'*

The WSO celebrates its 50th anniversary in 3 years' time- how would you like to see the Orchestra recognise this wonderful milestone? *'The WSO is planning a return to the Bridgewater Hall in 2018 to perform Mahler's 8th Symphony. It is a huge undertaking and has the strap line 'Symphony of a Thousand' which says it all. It is then planned to complete the Mahler Charitable project with a performance of his Symphony No 9 in 2019. The 50th anniversary year opens up all sorts of programming possibilities and wouldn't it be nice to welcome back former young members of the orchestra who have gone on to develop their talents and careers in the big, wide musical world?'*

Richard, thank you for sharing your passion for music with Orchestrate

Orchestrate is published periodically during the concert season to provide up to date information about the Orchestra. For more information please visit our website www.wrexhamorch.co.uk or send an email to our Friends email address. (please see details overleaf)

Future Dates for your Diary

(All our concerts are performed at the William Aston Hall, Glyndwr University, Mold Road, Wrexham LL11 2AW)

Saturday 26th November 2016 @7.30pm

Mendelssohn – Ruy Blas Overture
Schumann – Cello Concerto
Brahms – Symphony No 1

Conductor: Nic Fallowfield

Soloist: Timothy Gill

(Principal Cello of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra)

Saturday 25th February 2017 @7.30pm

Elgar - In the South
Grieg - Peer Gynt Suite No. 1
de Falla - Spanish Dance No 1 from La Vida Breve

Nielsen - Symphony No 3 - Espansiva

Conductor: Mark Lansom

Saturday 6th May 2017 @7.30pm

Liadov - The Enchanted Lake
Tchaikovsky – Piano Concerto No 1
Rachmaninov – Symphony No 3

Conductor: Jonathan Small

Soloist: William Bracken (Piano)

The WSO Mahler Charity Project with Betrinac supports the Wrexham Memory Clinic

The Orchestra continues its ambitious, groundbreaking charity project to perform all Gustav Mahler's symphonies with the generous support of Betrinac Ltd, a Wrexham based medical research business. We draw our 47th concert season to a close with Mahler's Symphony No 5, donating the money raised to support the work of the Wrexham Memory Clinic at the Maelor Hospital. In April, we presented a cheque for £3,000 to the Clinic from the money raised during our Bridgewater Hall debut concert. Members and friends of the Wrexham Memory Clinic will be joining us for our Mahler Charitable Concert on July 3rd.



Matthew Ellis, Chairman of Wrexham Symphony Orchestra, is delighted that the Orchestra supports the work of the Wrexham and Flintshire Memory Services. *'Ensuring that the money raised through our Mahler Project is used locally is a key element of our project. We now know that £3,000 will be put to good use in the Wrexham Memory Clinic in supporting some of the most vulnerable members of our local communities. We are grateful for the support of Betrinac, a local company, to enable us to bring our series of Mahler charitable concerts to fruition.'* In the picture Karen Pearson of Wrexham Symphony Orchestra and Andrew McCaddon, representing Betrinac Ltd, present a cheque for £3,000 to Rowenna Spencer, Memory Services Lead and Dr. Sharmi Bhattacharyya, Consultant Old Age Psychiatrist in Memory Services at Wrexham Maelor Hospital.

Conductor Nic Fallowfield looks forward to the opening concert of our 48th season in November



Tackling a Brahms symphony is always both a joy and a challenge for conductors and orchestras alike and that alone would be reason enough for me to look forward to conducting WSO once again in their concert on November 26th. Opening the score of this piece is an exciting and awe-inspiring experience: the spine-tingling, anguished Adagio opening with its fateful, pounding timpani; the urgent, surging energy of the first movement's Allegro; the exquisite, transcendent Andante sostenuto; the contrasting lightness and grace of the third movement (one of Brahms' intermezzos with which he often replaced the traditional scherzo); and the extraordinary finale, the opening of which plunges us back into the dark, questioning world of the symphony's opening, only to be transformed by a shift to C major and the soaring alpenhorn theme, like the sun breaking through heavy cloud. Indeed the whole symphony can be seen as a journey from darkness to light, from tragedy to joyous liberation. Perhaps the biggest challenge for an interpreter is to keep that bigger picture in mind while at the same time allowing every phrase and every musical gesture its space and trying to ensure that every detail of Brahms' masterful orchestration - over which he agonised endlessly - is heard. Brahms is always a fascinating amalgamation of classicist and Romantic. If all this were not enough, we also look forward to hearing a truly marvellous soloist in Schumann's cello concerto. Tim Gill is principal cello of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and it has been a huge pleasure and a privilege to perform with him on several occasions in recent years. We are both looking forward very much to revisiting this lovely and perhaps unjustly neglected piece. Wrexham audiences can expect a real treat in the opening concert of the WSO's 48th concert season.

Here are some exciting ways you can follow us, keep involved, support and help us

Website and Social Media Communications

You can keep up to date on all WSO news and events through our website at www.wrexhamorch.co.uk. You can purchase tickets for our concerts through the website. Orchestrate is also available as a download from the website.

We also have a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/wrexhamorch), a Facebook group and a Twitter feed @wrexhamorch.

A Friend of the WSO enjoys a great benefits package

You can support the Orchestra and be guaranteed tickets for our concerts by becoming a Friend of the WSO. Our new, simplified Friends of WSO scheme provides you with four tickets and programmes per person (one for each of the 2016/17 season's William Aston Hall concerts) for the price of three. Friends of WSO packages (per person) for the 2016/17 season are £30 for concession tickets, £36 for stalls and £42 for the balcony. Existing Friends of WSO and new people interested in applying for membership can contact us at friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk. You can also apply for membership by writing to us at WSO, 32 St David's Terrace, Saltney, Flintshire CH4 0AF.

Our next Newsletter will be published in time for the opening concert of our 48th concert season on November 26th 2016 and will also be available through our website and Facebook page. If you have any comments about the Orchestra's concert programme or suggestions for items you would like to see in Orchestrate, please speak with us at a concert or send an email to friendsofwrexhamsymphony@yahoo.co.uk. We would love to hear from you. Thank you for your loyal support and interest in the WSO.