

Orchestrate...

the newsletter of Wrexham Symphony Orchestra

Issue No 12 – Summer 2017

Another concert season draws to a close as we welcome back to the podium popular conductor Richard Howarth, in a programme that includes works by Gershwin, Sibelius and Saint-Saëns, 'Rondo Capriccioso', which will be played by our guest soloist Lily Whitehurst, whose performance at our recent Proms in the Park concert was outstanding, receiving a well-deserved prolonged ovation from the large audience. You can read more about the Proms concert below. Tonight's programme also includes a world premiere of a new composition, 'Arenig', by young composer and orchestra member, Louie McIver. We have had a busy season with 5 concerts and we have been greatly encouraged to see more people coming to our performances. As we look forward, we have a couple of exciting concert seasons ahead with a number of special concerts. We shall be supporting the 50th anniversary of the Wrexham Hospital League of Friends in our first concert on November 5th (we can expect some fireworks perhaps!) and this is quickly followed by our joint gala concert with Glyndwr University in February 2018 when we celebrate two special events. We will commemorate 10 years since the University gained its independent status and our 20 years as the Orchestra in Residence. An additional concert in May 2018 will see us perform Mahler's 9th Symphony as part of our ongoing Mahler Charitable Concert Series when we seek to heighten awareness about the impact that Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia have on individuals, their families and communities, raising funds in support of the work of Wrexham Memory Clinic. Thank you for supporting us throughout our 48th concert season and we now invite you to sit back and enjoy this evening's wonderful concert. Have an enjoyable summer and we look forward to welcoming you back to our 49th concert season in the autumn – please do share news about us and our concerts with your friends and family, encouraging them to come along to a concert and help us grow our audiences.

What a Night, Oh what a Night it was, It really was SUCH A NIGHT!



The Orchestra's performance at the Proms in the Park concert held on Saturday June 10th at the British Ironworks Centre received wide acclaim. Clive Knowles, founder and Chairman of the British Ironwork Centre was thrilled with their inaugural Proms in the Park event and said "A fabulous Proms in the Park concert. You really smashed it and you should all be personally very proud. Thank you for the huge contribution by the members of the Wrexham Symphony Orchestra, the Clwyd Clippers and especially Lily Whitehurst – you were all truly outstanding".

The Proms concert was a new venture for the British Ironwork Centre and their initiative was well supported by a large audience, despite the disappointing weather during the afternoon. However, the sun shone through around 7pm and the evening was bathed in lovely sunshine. Clwyd Clippers got the Proms off to a great start with their popular brand of harmony singing before returning to perform a second set of songs and also leading the singing of the Proms favourites towards the end of the evening.

The Orchestra's programme was a combination of popular and favourite classical pieces and music from blockbuster films which included a wonderful performance of the main theme from Schindler's List by Lily Whitehurst which received a well-deserved standing ovation. Other film music performed by the Orchestra included the theme tunes from Thunderbirds, Jaws and Raiders of the Lost Ark.

Sophia Knowles, Operations Director at the Ironwork Centre, commented "Tonight was sensational; we are already planning next year's Proms! It was wonderful to see a stiff upper lip attitude following driving rain all of Saturday morning and afternoon, the guests' resilience paid off as the sky cleared shortly after the start. A sense of patriotism was prevalent throughout the event, particularly when flags were waved in time to the music which varied from classic movie soundtracks to the National Anthems".

The final Proms session started when Darth Vader, complete with light sabre, landed on the podium and took over the conducting role for the Imperial March and Throne Room from Star Wars. On the conclusion of the Proms songs and the National Anthems, a spectacular firework display lit the Oswestry night sky in time to the First movement from Star Wars.



Conductor, Richard Howarth posted about the Proms concert experience, "Congratulations to Wrexham Symphony Orchestra and thanks to all those too numerous to mention who helped organise last night's concert at the British Ironwork Centre. We had a great evening. The orchestra excelled, Lily Whitehurst played her violin beautifully and I got to be Darth Vader.". Orchestra Leader Mark Lansom spoke glowingly about the Proms experience 'Thanks to everyone who made last night such a success. The Orchestra for keeping their spirits up despite rehearsing all afternoon in pouring rain and an audience who turned up, even though they knew how wet they might get. We were rewarded by an Orchestra that played its socks off and the SUN CAME OUT Hooray'. The Proms in the Park was certainly a night to remember – indeed it was SUCH A NIGHT! (Photographs by kind permission of Rachel Hall and ORB Sound and Lighting of Llangollen).

Future Dates for your Diary – Our 49th Concert Season

All our concerts start at 7.30pm and are performed at the William Aston Hall, Glyndwr University, Mold Road, Wrexham LL11 2AW (unless otherwise stated)

Sunday 5th November 2017
at 3.30pm

Sunday Afternoon Family Concert

50th Anniversary of the
Wrexham Hospital League of Friends

'Classics at the Movies'

A popular family concert with popular film music for all ages.

Conductor: Mark Lansom

Sunday 14th January 2018
at 3.30pm

Sunday Afternoon Family Concert

'An Afternoon at the Ballet'

featuring music from
Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty
and many more favourites from popular
ballets

Conductor: Russell Gray

Saturday 24th February 2018
at 7.30pm

A Gala Celebration Concert with Wrexham Glyndwr University

'A Night at the Opera'

Staged scenes from
La Bohème, Carmen, Madam Butterfly
and La Traviata
performed by our special guests
North Wales Opera Studio

Conductor: Russell Gray

A preview of our 49th Season... coming up soon

Our 49th concert season starts with a bang on Sunday November 5th when Mark Lansom will conduct the orchestra in a family afternoon concert programme featuring music from popular family films including 2001 Space Odyssey, Fantasia, ET and Back to the Future. This concert will support the work of the Wrexham Hospital League of Friends who are celebrating their 50th anniversary in 2019.

We welcome Russell Gray to the conductor's podium for two concerts in January and February 2018. On Sunday January 14th 2018 we invite you to join us in another family concert, 'An Afternoon at the Ballet'. We have some real treats in store and the programme will feature music from Swan Lake, Nutcracker and Sleeping Beauty. We are encouraging children of all ages to dress up in their favourite character costumes for this special New Year family concert.

We have a special Gala Celebration Concert with Glyndwr University on Saturday 24th February 2018 - 'A Night at the Opera' with our special guests North Wales Opera Studio, who will perform staged scenes from a number of popular operas including La Bohème, Carmen, Madam Butterfly and La Traviata. We join with the University to mark 20 years as the Orchestra in Residence and 10 years since Glyndwr was granted University status. This will be an extra special night and a highlight of our 49th concert season. So book the date and be here for that concert.

On Saturday May 19th 2018 we continue with our Mahler Charitable Concert Series performing Mahler's Symphony No 9 with the valuable support of Betrinac, and raising funds for the work of the Wrexham Memory Clinic who support those in our communities affected by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Popular conductor Richard Howarth will return to conduct this concert.

Our 49th season draws to a close on July 14th 2018 with a delightful programme of music by Tchaikovsky, Liadov and Dvorak. Nic Fallowfield returns to conduct the orchestra and introduce us to international violinist and chamber musician Fenella Humphreys, whose credits include performances for the BBC and Classic FM.

We are in for a wonderful 49th season of all that is best in classical and popular contemporary music with something for the whole family. Our 50th season is just around the corner and we are planning some very special concerts including another 'Proms in the Park' concert at the British Ironwork Centre in September 2018, which will be the launch pad for an exciting new concert season.

'We are going on a summer holiday' with the NYOW



We are thrilled that two of our young musicians have been selected to join the National Youth Orchestra of Wales summer school which is being held in Lampeter in August.

Competition to gain a place on this prestigious programme is stiff, so we are delighted that our 2016 Young Musician of the Year, Rhiannon Collins and 2013 BBC Proms Young Composer of the Year, Louie McIver, have secured their places. They are excited at the prospect of developing their musical talents with the best young musicians in Wales. Referring to their forthcoming 'summer holiday', Rhiannon and Louie comment about the prospect of the NYOW summer school experience, "We know that the NYOW residential will involve lots of fun, a brilliant orchestral experience and great, memorable concerts. So excited to see musician friends from across Wales and playing 2 Strauss pieces. We can't wait to get there!"

Our thanks and congratulations go to.....



We have had a good outcome to our collaboration with the School of Creative Arts. As many of you will know we have been working with students to refresh our image. We have been delighted with the work of the students who were involved and we will be able to use many aspects of their work.

After careful evaluation we selected the work of Vicki Jones from Caernarvon as our preferred design. Vicki, her husband and family are with us for our concert this evening and we offer our congratulations to her for the work she has done and for the design of our promotional artwork for the concert. We wish to also acknowledge the work of the remaining 6 students and the support and guidance they received from their tutor, Pauline Amphlett.

Here is some feedback about our concert in May with William Bracken 'I just wanted to thank you for a great evening last night. What an excellent standard the orchestra is. Dad was very impressed, and as someone who has been a concert pianist within Shropshire in his life, he was so impressed with William. Dad will be 80 in June so I may buy him tickets for the July concert!' Clare Morris Wrexham.

'I thought you should know that my parents and Florence absolutely loved the concert. Shaking hands with the pianist (William Bracken) and meeting orchestra violinist Abbie will be a lasting memory for her. Thank you WSO'. Bridget Drucker Ruabon.

Our next Newsletter will be published in time for the November 2017 concert and will be available through our website www.wrexhamorch.co.uk from where you can obtain information about our future concerts. Keep up to date via Facebook page and follow our Twitter feed. If you have any comments about the Orchestra's concert programme or have any suggestions on how we can grow our audiences, please speak with us at a concert or send an email to wrexhamso@gmail.com.