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**A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL – A VERY BUSY ONE FOR US**

The Officials and members of the Orchestra hope that you had an enjoyable Christmas and wish you and your families a Happy New Year. 2018 will be a busy 12 months for the Orchestra with 6 concerts in the programme and will see the launch of our 50th anniversary concert season. Here is an overview of what we have in store for you during the year ahead.

We were delighted with the large audience who came to the opening concert of our 49th season in November and we are hoping that many of them will be encouraged to return for our January family concert 'An Afternoon at the Ballet'. The programme has contributions from Romeo and Juliet, Spartacus, Coppélia and from one of the most popular ballets of all time, The Nutcracker, which is a Christmastime favourite for so many people. There will be some extra special treats for children at the concert from 'The Nutcrackers Land of Sweets and Treats'.

We have a special Gala Celebration concert on February 24th as we join with Wrexham Glyndŵr University to celebrate two special anniversaries: our 20th as the Orchestra in Residence at Glyndŵr University and their 10th since gaining University status. It promises to be a very special night and members from North Wales Opera Studio will perform staged scenes from several of the most popular operas of all time. The front bank of seats in the hall are being removed to accommodate the Orchestra leaving the stage for the Opera company and as a result, tickets are being pre-allocated to specific seats. **If you are planning to come to the Gala Celebration concert, we do advise you to purchase your tickets early as we do not expect to have many for sale on concert night.** We have an important announcement to make during the evening and we hope you will be able to join with us for this extra special occasion. We have been working with students from the School of Creative Art since October on several valuable contributions to this Gala concert, especially for concert night!!!

On May 19th, we resume our Cobalz sponsored Mahler Charitable Concert Series when we will perform his demanding 9th Symphony and in doing so, raise funds for the work of the Wrexham Memory Clinic with their Alzheimer's and dementia clients and support a brand-new project with Pendine Park; we shall share more about this exciting development over the next couple of months. We are thrilled that the Gustav Mahler Society of the UK will be supporting our concert with several of their northern membership joining us. Our 49th season ends on July 14th with a wonderful programme of music for a summer's evening when we welcome renowned violinist Fenella Humphreys to the stage who will perform Tchaikovsky's wonderful Violin concerto. The programme also includes a delightful trio of pieces by Dvorak about Nature, Life and Love. We welcome back popular conductors Richard Howarth (May) and Nic Fallowfield (July).

We launch our 50th concert season with another spectacular 'Picnic Proms in the Park' concert at the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry on Saturday September 15th. The Proms programme will include popular, well known pieces that will be guaranteed to bring summer to a spectacular end and welcome autumn with a splash of musical colour and the traditional Proms music and songs; the evening will conclude in a magnificent firework display. Please try and ensure that you can be with us for a very special evening at the start of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert season.

On November 24th, we join in the national commemorations that will mark 100 years since the end of World War 1 with a special concert in collaboration with the Welsh Royal British Legion. The concert programme will feature music that is synonymous with WW1 and include some of Wilfred Owen's poems. We shall be working with students on an encompassing project related to WW1 around creative sounds, imagery and words which will be displayed in the foyer at the concert. As you can see, we have a full, demanding and very exciting year ahead and we look forward to sharing it with you all.

You can find out more about the orchestra from its website [www.wrexhamorch.co.uk](http://www.wrexhamorch.co.uk) and Facebook pages. Please search for Wrexham Symphony Orchestra. We also have a Twitter feed @wrexhamorch. We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions about our concerts and events. Please either speak to one of us at a concert or send them in an email to [wrexhamso@gmail.com](mailto:wrexhamso@gmail.com). You can also write to us at 26 Park Avenue, Wrexham LL12 7AH.

# WSO Concert Diary in the William Aston Hall

Saturday 24th February 2018 at 7.30pm	Saturday 19th May 2018 at 7.30pm	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 7.30pm
<p><b>Gala Celebration Concert</b> with <b>Wrexham Glyndŵr University</b> <b>'A Night at the Opera'</b> Special guests <b>North Wales Opera Studio</b> Staged scenes from well-known Operas including from La Traviata, Carmen, La Bohème, Tosca, Turandot, The Magic Flute, Madame Butterfly</p> <p><b>Conductor: Russell Gray</b> <b>Leader: Mark Lansom</b> <b>Artistic Director: Anne Williams-King</b></p>	<p><b>Mahler Charitable Concert Series</b> Supporting the work of Wrexham Memory Clinic and Pendine Park Care Organisation</p> <p><b>Mahler's Symphony No 9</b></p> <p><b>Conductor: Richard Howarth</b> <b>Leader: Mark Lansom</b></p> <p><i>Our Mahler Charitable Concert Series is generously sponsored by Cobalz Limited</i></p>	<p><b>Music for a Summers' Evening</b></p> <p><b>Liadov</b> – Kikimora and Baba Yaga <b>Tchaikovsky</b> - Violin Concerto <b>Dvorak</b> – A Trilogy of Nature, Love and Life 'In Natures Realm' 'Carnaval' 'Othello'</p> <p><b>Conductor: Nic Fallowfield</b> <b>Leader: Craig Clewley</b> <b>Soloist: Fenella Humphreys</b></p>

## Wrexham Music Service..... Past, Present and Future.....

In the run up to our November concert, Wrexham Borough Council announced that it was launching a consultation on its budget proposals for 2018/2020 and seeking savings of some £13m over the next 2-3 years. Wrexham Music Service was highlighted as an area where potential savings might be available, and we now know that an Executive Board decision has been taken to significantly reduce the annual budget by some 75-80% with effect from September 2019. The public response to this proposal has been outstanding with some 16,000 people expressing their views about the benefits that Wrexham Music Service provides for children across the Borough. It is important for the Orchestra to publicly state its case too, as many of our 'young' and 'not so young' musicians have joined us through the valuable contribution of the Music Service in Wrexham. Indeed, many of our members today can testify to the dedication of their teachers who worked in and with Wrexham Music Services. Those of you who attend the regular WMS concerts in the William Aston Hall and St Giles Church, when the students demonstrate their playing and performing abilities, will recognise the value that giving children and young people the opportunity to learn to play an instrument or sing in the Youth choir offers them. A number of those who have played with the Orchestra over the years are now progressing their professional careers with several of the UK's leading Orchestral ensembles and others with leading regional and national Choirs and Choruses. And it is not just about music in isolation. Music offers so much more in educational terms and personal development. 'Music really is the food of love and life'. Our long-term future depends on a vibrant and progressive Wrexham Music Service and we were thrilled when our Westminster MP, Ian Lucas, spoke so passionately about the vital contribution that the service provides for children and young people across the Borough during our November concert. We are 100% committed to the excellent work that Wrexham Music Service does, and we would encourage you all to speak up and lend support in seeking to ensure a viable continuation of the Schools Music Service in Wrexham, for the benefit of the whole community.

WSO Friends Membership Scheme	Members and Friends Snippets - Congratulations to...
<p>We have been delighted with the response to our revised Friends Membership Scheme with a doubling of the membership in the current season. Along with a reduction of 25% on the cost of tickets for the concert season, the scheme also offers members a complimentary pre-concert drink in the Members and VIP reception area.</p> <p>We are offering a final Friends promotion for the current season when you can receive a retrospective discount on the cost of your tickets for the January concert. You will find the details on the Friends promotional card at the tickets desk... or simply ask one of us for information. Alternatively email us at <a href="mailto:wrexhamso@gmail.com">wrexhamso@gmail.com</a> and we will get in touch with you.</p> <p><b>WSO Friends members are guaranteed discounted seats for the joint Gala Celebration concert in February</b></p>	<p><b>Abbie Jones (Viola)</b> on achieving Grade 8 in her Viola studies and gaining an unconditional place at the Royal Welsh School of Music and Drama</p> <p><b>Bedwyn Philips (Timpani)</b> our 2017 Young Musician of the Year, on taking his first ever flight over Christmas and New Year when visiting the Choir from Los Angeles he looked after during the Llangollen Eisteddfod in 2017</p> <p><b>Rhiannon Collins (Viola)</b> on passing her driving test in November.</p> <p><b>Sarah Rodriguez-Jones (Flute)</b> on the birth of her son, Oscar William Jones on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2017</p> <p><b>Sam Regan (Lemon Tree)</b> on the birth of his daughter, Georgia Rose on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2017</p>