
Banbury 
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PICTURES IN SOUND

A concert for all the family!



Saturday 1st July 2006



Programme £1

Banbury Symphony Orchestra

Registered Charity no. 239112

Conductor: Paul Willett, Leader: Jennifer Maynard

Saturday 1st July 2006 at 6.30pm
St. Mary's Church, Banbury

PICTURES IN SOUND

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)

William Tell Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Symphony No.6 in F “Pastoral” - excerpts

Paul Dukas (1865 – 1935)

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

~ INTERVAL ~

Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

The Planets – “Mars” and “Jupiter”

Howard Shore (1946 -)

Lords of the Rings – Symphonic Suite

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

1812 Overture

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)



Overture "William Tell"

Weber, who initiated German romantic opera, wrote his last work, *Oberon*, in English, for Covent Garden. At about the same time Rossini, the leading Italian opera composer of his day, settled in Paris and wrote his *Guillaume Tell* in French. His move to Paris was significant: the French capital was about to become the centre of European opera and retained this position for much of the 19th century, attracting many foreign composers, such as Meyerbeer, Wagner and, for a brief period, Verdi.

The opera's libretto is based on Schiller's play; its subject is the liberation of the Swiss from Austria's despotic rule and the deeds of their legendary hero, William Tell. The Overture divides into four sections of which all but the last bear some reference to the action and its background.

The slow opening, exquisitely scored for a solo quintet of cellos, seems to suggest both the calm Swiss scenery and the gloomy situation of the people. The following Allegro is a vivid representation of the violent storm which occurs in the last Act. Peacefulness returns with the famous pastoral tune of the cor anglais, in duet with the flute. The final Allegro vivace, with its springy main theme, secures a brilliant conclusion.

Author: H W Freyhan (1972)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Symphony No. 6 in F major "Pastoral", Op. 68 (extracts)

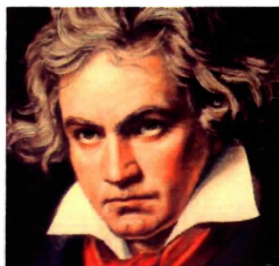
IV - Allegro – "Thunderstorms"

V – Allegretto – "Shepherds' Hymn of Thanksgiving after the Storm"

Beethoven described his sixth symphony, written during the summers of 1807 and 1808, as "an expression of feeling rather than painting". He loved nature deeply and profoundly and would impatiently await the early summer when he could escape to the village of Heligenstadt. It was here that he found peace and tranquillity after the strenuous Vienna season and where he would sketch many themes for his music in the notebook that he always carried on his country walks.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F major "Pastoral", (cont'd)

Beethoven aptly titled the movements of the symphony enabling the listener to grasp the great emotional experience from which the piece originated. Tonight, instead of the full symphony, the orchestra is going to perform the fourth and fifth movements, which are played together without a break in between.



Fourth movement - "Thunderstorm". A sudden ominous rumbling is heard in the cellos and basses, symbolising the approach of the storm. Heavy drops of rain patter downwards in the violins, the storm abates, only to return with renewed vigour, emphasised by the scream of the piccolo, the sound of the trombones and the rolling of the timpani. Eventually the clouds begin to break, the thunder fades into the distance, and the first flute leads straight into the finale.

Fifth movement - "Shepherds' Hymn of Thanksgiving after the Storm". As the storm dies away the woodwind indicate the return of the sunshine, and the violins sing a Hymn of Thanksgiving. Several finely worked out episodes contrast with the main section before the symphony comes to a quiet close.

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Paul Dukas (1865 - 1935)



The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Many people consider that the French composer Dukas only ever wrote one work – this one! Sadly, this is not the case, but Dukas only had a few works published, and before he died he destroyed all his remaining manuscripts! Yet this is a man who won the prestigious *Prix de Rome* for composition, achieved high office as an administrator, teacher and member of the *Legion d'Honneur*, and also became a respected writer.

One can only sympathise with a man who feels his music to be too inadequate to be heard by anyone else. Although this work has only really survived because of the enormous popularity of Walt Disney's *Fantasia* cartoon which depicts Mickey Mouse in the role as the unfortunate apprentice, closer inspection of the music itself

Dukas: The Sorcerer's Apprentice (cont'd)

reveals a composer who is more than capable of cunning colouring and imitative effects using the orchestral palette. Dukas offers us his own unique sorcery skills as he manages to find the right ingredients, and the right mix, to cast a musical spell on us, converting the lesson "a problem halved is a trouble doubled" into mesmerising music.



*The Sorcerer's Apprentice –
picture by S Barth (1882)*

The basis of this orchestral *scherzo* was a ballad by Goethe, based on a tale by the Greek poet Lucian (120- 180 AD). This timeless story depicts a young magician's apprentice who tries to lighten his workload by experimenting with magic spells he has seen his master use. When the boy is alone, he commands a broom to go to the well to fetch water for the house. The broom obliges all too well and the apprentice finds that he does not know how to command the broom to stop, when the basin begins to overflow, soon filling the room with water. In desperation, the boy uses an axe to stop the broom's progress, but instead he creates two slaves bent on fulfilling the task (unlike the Disney version in which Mickey Mouse creates hundreds of brooms!).

Near to drowning, the apprentice calls for help. The sorcerer arrives and takes command of the scene with a few magic words; both parts of the broom fly back into the corner, the waters recede, and peace returns to the scene.

Nick Planas

~ **INTERVAL** ~
Refreshments available

Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934)

The Planets, Op. 32 (extracts)

Mars, the bringer of war

Jupiter, the bringer of jollity



Holst's suite *The Planets* is arguably his best-known and most popular work. It was written between 1914 and 1916, the inspiration being Holst's interest in astrology; it is from this, and not from classical mythology, that the titles and moods are derived. Albert Coates conducted the first full public performance of this work on 15 November 1920.

In *The Planets*, Holst shows himself to be a master orchestrator, skilfully using such instruments as the celesta and tubular bells to heighten colour at various moments and conjure up other-worldly sensations. Each movement has its respective character.

Mars, the bringer of war – Holst conjures up a vivid picture of the brutal, senseless horror of war. A panoply of relentless struggle, anguish, fear and menace is portrayed. Percussion, brass and woodwind predominate in this movement with terrifying effect.

Jupiter, the bringer of jollity – Jupiter portrays a very human jollity – robust and forthright. It is also the jollity of official festal or religious rejoicing. The music combines a folk-like earthy quality expressing infinite joy with a thankfulness for life embodied within the hymnlike central section. This central portion formed the basis of the rousing anthem "I vow to thee, my country" and was also used in a pop arrangement called "The World in Union" to introduce television coverage of the Rugby World Cup during the 1990s. Here in its correct context we may savour it as the musical depiction of boundless goodwill.

Holst was also a conductor and schoolteacher. He taught at St.Paul's Girls School from 1905 and despite considerable success as a composer in later life, he remained in that post until his death from an ulcer in 1934. He also taught at Morley College and Wycombe Abbey Girl's School. His teaching style was considered very informal for the time, dispensing with the presence of a second (female) teacher to keep discipline in class.

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Howard Shore (1946 -)

The Lord of The Rings – Symphonic Suite

Canadian composer Howard Shore studied in Boston at the Berklee School of Music and worked for a time as a musician playing flute, sax and trumpet in the rock group "Lighthouse". After a few years on the road, his first screen work was for the small screen on "Saturday Night Live", before he began his film career alongside director David Cronenberg, since when he has scored many films including "The Fly", "Dead Ringers" and "Naked Lunch".



However, despite a substantial career grounding, it must still have come as a surprise to some when Shore was chosen for the "Lord of the Rings" films. In contrast to the early Cronenberg films where the music is often a mere backdrop to the eye-catching visuals and downright weird plots, the Tolkien epics demand a much more prominent position in the finished product.

The music we hear tonight is a Symphonic Suite arranged by John Whitney, of the music from The Fellowship of the Ring, the first film in the trilogy. In this short suite we hear all of the main thematic material used in the substantial film score, which won Shore his first Oscar. The music is very Celtic in style, as befits the setting of Tolkien's great stories.

Nick Planas

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893)



Overture: 1812, Op.49

This magnificent overture was composed in late 1880 as a special contribution to the All Russian Exhibition of Arts and Crafts held in Moscow to be held in 1881. Searching for a subject for the piece, which he approached with little enthusiasm, Tchaikovsky hit upon the fact that the magnificent new Cathedral of Christ the Redeemer was nearing completion, and its consecration was expected to coincide with the Exhibition.

Tchaikovsky: Overture: 1812, Op.49 (cont'd)

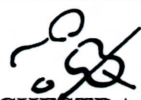
In addition to the church ceremonies, the events of 1812 – that is, Napoleon's invasion of Russia, his defeat at the Battle of Borodino, and his retreat from Moscow – were being commemorated by a big music festival. Tchaikovsky apparently took little joy in composing the piece and seems not to have had a high opinion of it. There appears to be no evidence that it was performed at the consecration, and what is now believed to be the world première of the overture took place in Moscow on 26 August 1882.

A wealth of thematic material is employed in this overture; much of it taken from folk sources and welded into a symphonic whole along with the French and Russian national anthems. The piece opens with a theme for woodwind and strings taken from the Russian hymn "God preserve Thy People." The main body of the piece is a portrayal of the Battle of Borodino, with the Russian and French national anthems used to depict the warring armies. The work ends in a blaze of glory as the bells peel and the cannon fires a salvo of triumph with the tune of the Russian National Anthem dominating all the splendour.

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A date for your diary...

Banbury



SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA:

Saturday 18th November 2006, 7.30pm
St Mary's Church Banbury

- ***Elgar: Cockaigne Op.40***
- ***Liszt: Symphonic Poem No.8 "Heldenklage"***
- ***Tchaikovsky Manfred Symphony in B minor, Op.58***

Paul Willett - Conductor

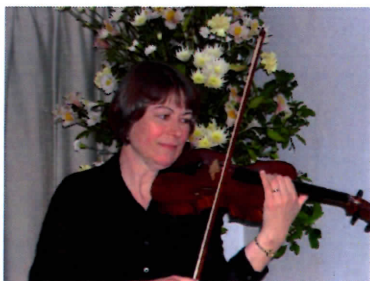
Paul Willett studied violin, singing and piano as a student but his main instrument was the French Horn on which he gained his Performance Diploma from The Royal College of Music at 16. He then went on to read music on scholarship at The Queen's College, Oxford, and studied for his teaching certificate in Music and Physical Education at Reading University.



For several years Paul combined teaching and freelance playing. He has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the country. He was a member of The Five Winds, a group that performed both at home and abroad, and also on BBC radio. Paul also worked as a brass teacher for Oxfordshire Music Service and was director of a Saturday Music School of 200 students.

Recently, Paul has combined class teaching with conducting various ensembles, both adult and youth. He has been the guest conductor of several brass bands and the conductor of Thames Vale Youth Orchestra. He is also in demand as an adjudicator for both adult and student competitions. Paul is Head of Expressive Arts at Didcot Girls' School and the conductor of Oxfordshire Schools' Senior Orchestra and Oxfordshire Central Music School Symphony Orchestra.

Jenny Maynard - Leader



Jenny Maynard started playing the violin at the age of eight. She led her County Youth and University Symphony Orchestras, and has since always played an active part in local orchestras and other musical ensembles wherever she has lived – Oxford, San Francisco and currently Warwickshire, where she lives with her husband and young daughter.

She has studied the violin with Roger Coull of the Coull Quartet, and she leads a busy life as Principal Lecturer in Accounting at Coventry University, plus plenty of playing, including the Banbury Symphony Orchestra, the Cherwell Orchestra and a quartet.

Jenny is our guest leader for this concert, as our regular leader Anna Fleming has recently become a proud mother!

Banbury Symphony Orchestra

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If you play an instrument to a standard of Grade 7 or above and would like to play with the orchestra, find out more by contacting Anna Fleming on 01295255585. All rehearsals take place at Banbury School during term-time on Tuesday evenings, 7:30 - 9:30 pm.

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