

Pelly Concert Orchestra

29th January 2011

The Church on the Heath

Elvetham Heath

7.45pm

Gershwin

Rhapsody in Blue

Soloist - Mike Thomson

Rodgers

Carousel Waltz

Shostakovitch

Tahiti Trot

Conductor - Christopher Braime

Leader - Amanda Lake

www.pellyorchestra.co.uk



Welcome to tonight's concert which replaces the postponed Christmas Concert. We have altered the programme slightly to reflect the fact that it is no longer the Christmas season and hope you will enjoy the additional pieces such as Copland's Rodeo, the Tahiti Trot and Arnold's Cornish Dance. Thank you for your support tonight and wishing you a very Happy New Year from all associated with the Pelly.

Pelly Concert Orchestra News

HMS Pinafore 30 October 2010

The Pelly Orchestra was delighted to have the opportunity to play with Grosvenor Light Opera Company at the end of October. The performance was 'from scratch' and was semi-staged in St Gabriel's Church, Pimlico. This was a new experience for the orchestra and proved that we can adapt ourselves to a new setting and role. It was fun to be part of this vibrant production and the singers enjoyed performing with such an enthusiastic and competent orchestra.

Playday 27 February 2011

Come and play with the Pelly Concert Orchestra for the day in February when our third Playday will be taking place at Farnborough Hill. The programme will include: Pictures at an Exhibition – Mussorgsky, The Pines of Rome – Respighi and La Mer – Debussy. To find out more please speak to our bassoonist, Karen Carter, during the interval or send an email to nellyorchestra@hotmail.co.uk.

Peter Houghton RIP

We were very sorry to hear of the death on 11 November of Peter Houghton who was a Patron and a staunch supporter of the orchestra. For many years Peter attended our concerts when his sister Doris was a member, and they both continued to support the orchestra as Patrons on her retirement. We would like to extend our sympathy and kind wishes to Doris and her family.

Next Concert 2 April 2011 – 'Pellizabethan Serenade'

To include - Elizabethan Serenade, Binge; Henry 5th Suite, Walton; Gloriana Dances, Britten; Ancient Airs and Dances Suite No 2, Respighi; Dance Episodes from Dido and Aeneas, Purcell; Capriol Suite, Peter Warlock.

Other Dates for your Diaries

2 July 2011 – Children's Afternoon Concert, High Cross Church, Camberley

16 July 2011 – Summer Concert, Church on the Heath, Elvetham Heath

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Cornish Dance No. 1 Malcolm Arnold

Sleigh Ride Frederick Delius

Hoe-Down from 'Rodeo' Aaron Copland

Rhapsody in Blue George Gershwin
Soloist: Mike Thomson

~~ Interval & Refreshments ~~

The Carousel Waltz Richard Rodgers
Arr. George Pollen

Tahiti Trot (based on 'Tea for Two') Vincent Youmans
Orch. by Shostakovich
Arr. Jerry Brubaker

Beatlecracker Suite Lennon & McCartney/
Tchaikovsky/Wilkinson
Arr. George Pollen

1. Overture: Help!
2. March: When I'm 64
3. Danse de la fee dragee: Can't buy me love
4. Danse Arabe: It's for you
5. Danse Chinoise: Ticket to ride
6. Danse des Mirlitons: She loves you
7. Waltz of the flowers: From me to you
8. Grands pas de deux: All my loving

'Mambo' from Overture to Leonard Bernstein
West Side Story

The Pelly Orchestra would like to thank Morrisons supermarket and S C Johnson for their contributions to our raffle and Jim and Katharine Bell for providing the prize for our Quiz.

Rhapsody in Blue - George Gershwin (1898 – 1937)

This piece was composed in 1924 in its original version for solo piano and jazz band. When it was first performed, Gershwin decided to keep some of his options open as to when Paul Whiteman would bring in his band, and in at least one place the words "Wait for nod" were scrawled on the band score, so that Gershwin could improvise. It is now fully notated classical music whose irresistibly jazzy feel tempts the pianist to play the solo passages with considerable interpretative freedom.

The opening of the Rhapsody is written as a clarinet trill followed by a 17-note scale. During a rehearsal the clarinetist Ross Gorman played the upper portion of the scale as a trombone-like glissando. Gershwin apparently appreciated this touch of humour and insisted that it be repeated in the performance. Since then it has been standard concert practice to challenge the clarinetist in this way.

Despite its immediate and enduring popularity, Gershwin's concert works have attracted some criticisms, neatly summarised by Leonard Bernstein when he remarked that "those beautiful tunes ... still don't add up to a piece". As for the Rhapsody itself he observed that "you can't just put four tunes together... and call them a composition". Nonetheless, Bernstein viewed Gershwin as the greatest melodist of his era, bearing comparison even with Tchaikovsky in this regard. The Rhapsody can indeed feel a little episodic in places, but that does nothing to diminish the sheer exhilaration of playing such brilliantly pianistic music and the special thrill of performing it with a concert orchestra.

Gershwin started work on the Rhapsody during a train journey to Boston, as he recounted to his first biographer: "It was on the train, with its steely rhythms, its rattle-ty bang, that is so often so stimulating to a composer ... And there I suddenly heard, and even saw on paper – the complete construction of the Rhapsody, from beginning to end. No new themes came to me, but I worked on the thematic material already in my mind and tried to conceive the composition as a whole. I heard it as a sort of musical kaleidoscope of America, of our vast melting pot, of our unduplicated national pep, of our blues, our metropolitan madness. By the time I reached Boston I had a definite plot of the piece, as distinguished from its actual substance."

One possible reason why melodies from the Rhapsody have not been converted into hit songs by Tin Pan Alley may be that they do not fit a standard song format. Indeed, once the orchestra and piano have milked the famous rhapsodic theme for all it is worth, Gershwin simply lets it tail off and instead distracts us with a bravura two-handed repeated-note syncopated passage for piano solo. We hear the thematic material in different forms but it does not have a conventional ending.

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After Gershwin's death, Ira Gershwin became his brother's greatest advocate and defender against detractors, and responded thus to what he regarded as unfair attacks: "Generally, an unfavourable notice of my brother's music doesn't bother me too much... What does bother me is when I see phrases like 'naive orchestration' or 'structural ignorance' as though my brother were just a terribly talented fellow who somehow stumbled into the concert hall... With these critics there is an utter disregard of the facts that George from the age of 13 or 14 never let up in his studies of so-called classical foundations and that by the time he was 30 or so could be considered a musicologist of the first degree besides being a composer. When, in 1928, he went to see Nadia Boulanger in Paris about studying with her she turned him down on the grounds that there was nothing she could teach him. And she wasn't kidding."

Apparently, Gershwin also approached French composer Maurice Ravel, who likewise turned him down, asking why he would want to be a second-rate Ravel when he was already a first-rate Gershwin!

Notes by Mike Thomson



Mike Thomson - Piano:

From an early age Mike was enthralled by the sound of the piano, and started lessons in his home town of Fraserburgh. Although he worked his way up to Grade 7 while still at school, it was many years later before he sat his Grade 8 as a pupil of Peter Croser. He then went on to take his ARCM Diploma in Piano Performance in 1984.

Since then he has enjoyed some solo appearances with the Pelly Concert Orchestra, including Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* in the UK and Germany about ten years ago. More recently he won the Newbury Older Musician of the Year Contest in 2009 and was rewarded in September 2010 with the opportunity to perform a Beethoven Piano Concerto with the Southern Sinfonia under David Hill. He is of course delighted to be playing once more with the Pelly.

Alongside his interest in classical music Mike has also pursued an enthusiasm for the syncopated piano styles typical of George Gershwin, Fats Waller and Russ Conway, amongst others.

Amanda Lake: Leader

After begging her parents for eighteen months, Amanda Lake began learning the violin with Patricia Calnan, at the age of four. Having studied with Marius Bedeschi for eight years, Amanda recently graduated from the Royal College of Music with a First, where she was a scholarship student of Dona Lee Croft. She is now undertaking further studies with Levon Chilingirian and Bela Katona.

Amanda has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the New Mozart Orchestra (Vivaldi Spring), Camden Chamber Orchestra (Prokofiev Violin Concerto No 2, Sibelius Violin Concerto), Blackheath String Orchestra (Mozart Concertos No 3 & 4), and the Dal Segno Orchestra (Bach Concerto for Two Violins with Gonzalo Accosta). She recently led the Amadeus Orchestra on tour to China, where she performed Vaughan Williams "The Lark Ascending". Amanda is also in demand as a chamber and orchestral musician. As a member of the Alea Quartet, Amanda performed at the Purcell Room as part of the Park Lane Group's Maxwell Davies Quartet Cycle in 2009.



Christopher Braime: Conductor and Musical Director



Christopher was born in Beverley in 1983. He was awarded a Foundation Scholarship to study at the Royal College of Music, London, where he studied oboe with John Anderson, Christopher Cowie and David Theodore; and conducting with Neil Thomson and Richard Dickins.

Christopher became the Musical Director of the Imperial College String Ensemble in 2003, where he remained until 2007 and now works as assistant conductor for the Kensington Philharmonic Orchestra, the Farnborough Symphony Orchestra, and the Sussex Symphony Orchestra. In 2007 he took up the role of Musical Director of the Pelly Concert Orchestra. He has recently been appointed Musical Director of the Worthing Youth Orchestra, Worthing Youth String Orchestra and West Sussex County Wind Ensemble, and for the 2009–2010 season assumed the role of Musical Director of the Grosvenor Light Opera Company.

As an oboist, Christopher has worked with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Chamber Orchestra of Wales, the Southbank Sinfonia, and he is oboist with Kokoro - the contemporary music ensemble of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. He is also principal oboe with the Sussex Symphony Orchestra.

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1st Violins

Amanda Lake
Carole Kaldor
Nicola Farnworth
Jinny Gribble
Rachel Haver
Janet Shelley
Lynne Thomson
Henna Wong

2nd Violins

Lesley Lemon
Chloe Baudet
John Beckett
Sue Gillis
Michael McConnell
Paul Richards

Violas

Ed Shelton
Tracey Milne
Emily Myles
Vanessa Russell
Tony Smith

Double Bass

Naomi Anderson
David Barnes

Cellos

Lynda Trice
Linda Forsyth
Martin Heath
Sarah Higgs
Margaret Houston
Clive Jackson

Flutes/Piccolos

Elaine Herbert
Barbara Sykes
Helen Manente

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Barry Collisson
Katy Warren

Clarinets

Max Welford
Joanna Wood

Bass Clarinet

Dennis McLaren

Alto Saxophone

Jeremy Page
Karen Van Lovkyn

Tenor Saxophone

Susan Moss

Bassoons

Paula Burton
Karen Carter

French Horns

Peter Kaldor
Sally Myles
Peter Peacock
Roger Sowter

Trumpets

Hannah Mitchell
Alistair Richards
Craig Burnett

Trombones

David Horden
Keith Maxwell
Len Tyler

Percussion

Chris Scott
Tim Lain

Banjo

Hilary Wood

Piano/Keyboard

Linda Tan

The Pelly Concert Orchestra is very grateful for the support of:



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Patrons

We are very grateful to all our patrons who help to support the orchestra by purchasing a season ticket in advance. Benefits include reserved seats, advanced notice of the programme and an annual pre-concert champagne reception with the Musical Director.

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About the Pelly Concert Orchestra

The Orchestra is a local orchestra made up of enthusiastic amateur musicians who enjoy making good music to a high standard and entertaining audiences with live music. It gives four or five public concerts a year with around 40 players, most of whom are local musicians. Its repertoire is very wide, comprising both light and classical music, along with representations from radio, television, stage and screen. It is therefore rather different from orchestras which play lengthy symphonic works, and concerts usually consist of more than a dozen items in a variety of styles.

There are concerts in Autumn, Spring and Summer, plus a special – and always well-attended – concert at Christmas or New Year. Besides the musical enjoyment of the players and the listeners, concerts have been given in aid of charities, and of course they are essential for maintaining orchestra funds.

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