

Last Night of the Pelly Proms – 13th July 2013

From our Musical Director

Ladies and Gentlemen - welcome to the Last Night of the Pelly Proms 2013!

I feel I should head this welcome note 'new beginnings' (always preferable to endings). We recently learned that October's concert will be Amanda's final concert as Leader of the Orchestra. Sad news as this is, it is for the happiest of reasons: she has recently been appointed to the First Violin section of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. We are delighted, however, that she has already agreed to come back and play for us as soloist in next year's Prom concert.

The 2013-2014 season will also be my final season as Musical Director of the Pelly Concert Orchestra, with the Pelly Prom 2014 being my final concert at the helm. I always wanted to leave the orchestra on a real high, and this seemed like the right time to hand over to someone else to continue the incredible journey the orchestra and I have been on together. I look forward to welcoming you back for as many concerts as you can make of my final season.

So with new beginnings out of the way: on with tonight's concert. Aside from the usual Proms misbehaviour we will also be playing Tchaikovsky's bombastic 1812 Overture, an extraordinary work combining beauty, technical fireworks, and a not insignificant part for bass drum. We also welcome Eleanor Ross to sing with us tonight. Eleanor is a fast-rising star and one to watch out for in the future!

So sit back, relax, and get your clapping hands ready!

With best wishes,

Christopher Braime

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TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME

Poet and Peasant Overture Franz von Suppé

Vltava, from *Má vlast* (*My Homeland*) Bedřich Smetana

Gloria Antonio Vivaldi

‘Ah non credea...Ah non giunge’ from ‘La Sonnambula’ Vincenzo Bellini

Eleanor Ross - Soprano

At the Castle Gate Jean Sibelius
from *Pelléas et Mélisande* Suite Op.46

Concerto in G minor - 'Summer' from *The Four Seasons* Antonio Vivaldi

Allegro non molto – Adagio/Presto e forte – Presto

Soloist and Director – Amanda Lake

--- Interval ---

1812 Overture Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Pomp and Circumstance March No 1, Edward Elgar

Les oiseaux dans la charmille (Doll Aria) Jacques Offenbach
from *Tales of Hoffmann*

Eleanor Ross - Soprano

Fantasia on British Sea Songs Henry Wood

Rule Britannia Thomas Arne

Eleanor Ross - Soprano

Jerusalem Hubert Parry

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The Four Seasons, Concerto No.2 in G minor, "SUMMER" - Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

*Allegro non molto – Adagio/Presto e forte – Presto
(Summer Storm)*

The Four Seasons (Italian: *Le quattro stagioni*) is a set of four violin concertos composed in 1725. It is Vivaldi's best-known work, and is among the most popular pieces of Baroque music. The texture of each concerto is varied, each resembling its respective season. For example, "Winter" is peppered with silvery pizzicato notes from the high strings, calling to mind icy rain, whereas "Summer" evokes a

thunderstorm in its final movement, which is why the movement is often dubbed "Storm".

The concertos were first published as part of a set of twelve concerti, Vivaldi's Op. 8, entitled *Il cimento dell'armonia e dell'invenzione* (The Contest Between Harmony and Invention). The first four concertos were designated *The Four Seasons*. Each one is in three movements, with a slow movement between two faster ones. At the time this work was written the modern solo form of the concerto - typically a solo instrument and accompanying orchestra - had not yet been defined. Vivaldi's original arrangement for solo violin with string quartet and basso continuo helped to define the form.

The four concertos were written to accompany four sonnets. Although it is not known who wrote these sonnets, there is a theory that Vivaldi himself wrote them, given that each sonnet is broken down into three sections, neatly corresponding to a movement in the concerto.

Here, in translation from the original Italian, is the Sonnet for Summer.

Allegro non molto Beneath the blazing sun's relentless heat men and flocks are sweltering, pines are scorched. We hear the cuckoo's voice; then sweet songs of the turtle dove and finch are heard. Soft breezes stir the air...but threatening north wind sweeps them suddenly aside. The shepherd trembles, fearful of violent storm and what may lie ahead.

Adagio e piano - Presto e forte

His limbs are now awakened from their repose by fear of lightning's flash and thunder's roar, as gnats and flies buzz furiously around.

Presto

Alas, his worst fears were justified, as the heavens roar and great hailstones beat down upon the proudly standing corn.

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Franz von Suppé - Poet and Peasant

In the notes to a concert last year in which we played a piece by Suppé, his unusual personal background was noted. One might imagine Francesco Suppé Demelli to be French from his better known abbreviation, but in fact he was Croatian, with only distant relatives from what is now Belgium. He was a fairly prolific composer of the 19th century with over 30 operas which are rarely if ever performed. This is not the case, however, with some of the overtures, especially *Poet and Peasant* (1846) and the *Light Cavalry* of 1866 (which incidentally we performed exactly two years ago in July 2011). Both overtures have been used in cartoon films including *Popeye* and *Mickey Mouse*!

Bedrich Smetana - Vltava, from *Má vlast* (*My Homeland*)

The recent flooding of central Europe has brought the sound of Czech into our living rooms and onto our television screens. This symphonic tone poem is one of six such pieces and the themes illustrate the origin of the river Vltava from two sources (warm and cold) as they join together and pass through the countryside, with rustic celebrations taking place. In due course the river comes to Prague on its way to the Elbe. The piece has Smetana's most famous tune which is in the key of E minor and which was based on folk songs of the area.



Jean Sibelius - Pelléas et Mélisande

This is not to be confused with the opera of the same name written by Debussy which premiered in 1902, nor with Schoenberg's symphonic poem of 1903, nor indeed an orchestral suite by Fauré of 1898! The offering from Sibelius was initially a ten-part incidental piece written in 1905 and *At the Castle Gate* is the first of these. This section should be familiar to many of us being the opening music of what is claimed to be the world's longest-running TV programme, the BBC's *The Sky at Night*, originally presented by Patrick Moore.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky - 1812 overture

This, as the title suggests, is in commemoration of Russia's defence against the invading army of Napoleon, but it was first performed quite some time later in 1882 in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. The piece itself includes Russian religious music and is intended to invoke the suffering of the Russian people from the invading French. The cannon shots signify the actual Battle of Borodino which was something of a pyrrhic victory for the French, as in due course the ferocious winter depleted them of the means to continue fighting. Ironically, Tchaikovsky did not rate the work at all, yet it one his most performed pieces and he himself conducted it on his 1891 visit to the United States at the dedication of Carnegie Hall. One wonders now how our American cousins would choose between the French and the Russians!

Vincenzo Bellini - La Sonnambula – *Ah! Non giunge uman pensiero*

Bellini's opera *La Sonnambula* (translated into English as *The Sleepwalker*) was first performed in 1831 and can be said to be performed with moderate frequency in our times. It is described as *opera semiseria* (= half serious) and therefore is from a style which blends comedy but also pathos typically of a pastoral nature. This particular setting is a village in Switzerland in the time of the early nineteenth century with the usual mixture of love story and various entanglements and misunderstandings. The particular passage which is probably the most well known of this opera is sung by Amina who, when awaking to find a ring upon her finger, sings the piece to be sung this evening – 'Mingle not an earthly sorrow With the rapture now o'er me stealing'. It is regarded as

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one of the showpieces of Italian opera, originally written for mezzo-soprano but sung now by a soprano. In the 20th century, the role of Amina was sung by Maria Callas in the now-famous 1955 production by Luchino Visconti at La Scala. Joan Sutherland sang Amina at the Metropolitan Opera in 1960.

Jacques Offenbach - The Tales of Hoffman – *The Doll Song*

Offenbach's opera was first performed in 1881, based on a series of stories from much earlier in the century, and *The Doll Song* is one of its most famous arias. Olympia – an automaton created by the scientist Spalanzani – runs up and down but needs to be wound up to keep going. Hoffmann imagines that his feelings for her are reciprocated but all comes to grief when he falls down and Coppélius tears Olympia apart in retaliation for not been paid his fees. Last year in early 2012, ENO performed a highly colourful production with the American soprano Georgia Jarman taking on all three incarnations of the woman whom the poet imagines he falls in love with. Her performance was highly praised by the critics and incidentally much enjoyed by this writer!

Land of Hope and Glory

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free,
How shall we extol thee, who are born of thee?
Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set;
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet.
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet.

Jerusalem

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the Holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!
I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

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1st Violins

Amanda Lake
Leon Crampin
Jinny Gribble
Rachel Haver
Carole Kaldor
Lynne Thomson
David Wallace

2nd Violins

Lesley Lemon
John Beckett
Polly Dickinson
Sue Gillis
Alice Gribble
David Grocutt
Michael McConnell

Violas

Tony Smith
Tracey Milne
Gareth Hamill
Zami Jalil

Cellos

Lynda Trice
Martin Heath
Sarah Higgs
Clive Jackson
Linda Forsyth

Double Basses

Michael Atkinson
David Barnes
Lorraine Collins

Flutes/Piccolo

Elaine Herbert
Barbara Sykes

Oboes/Cor Anglais

Barry Collisson
Katy Warren

Clarinets

Andrew Norris
Helen Lister

Bassoons

Paula Burton
Karen Carter

French Horns

Peter Kaldor
Sally Myles
Roger Sowter
Tim Jones

Trumpets

Paul Harris
Michael Chapple
Alistair Steel
Mollie Autherson

Trombones

Keith Maxwell
Frances Jones
Mike Thomson
Paul Dodge

Tuba

Daniel Barnes

Percussion

Katie Tyler
Derek Vickers
Len Tyler

Harp

Anneke Hodnett

The Pelly Concert Orchestra Committee 2012 - 2013

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Assistant Librarian – Paula Burton
(Bassoon)
Musical Director – Christopher Braime
Leader – Amanda Lake

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Amanda Lake: Leader and Soloist



Amanda began learning the violin at the age of four. She graduated from the Royal College of Music with a First in 2007, where she was a scholarship student of Dona Lee Croft. She has since studied with Levon Chilingirian and Bela Katona.

Amanda has appeared extensively as a soloist with orchestras across the country, performing works by Bach, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Ravel, Prokofiev and Berg. In 2010-11 she led the Amadeus Orchestra on tour to China, appearing as soloist in Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*.

She is in demand as an orchestral leader and chamber musician. As a former member of the Alea Quartet, Amanda appeared at Aberystwyth MusicFest, Sounds New Festival and the Harnos

Festival, Portugal. In 2009, the quartet performed at the Purcell Room as part of the Park Lane Group's Peter Maxwell Davies quartet cycle. She performed at the 2011 Aldeburgh Festival as part of the Lake/Maryon Davies Duo.

She was invited to lead the RCM Chamber Orchestra under Sir Roger Norrington at "The Power of Mozart" festival, and has guest led the Dmitri Ensemble and the Berkeley Ensemble. She has undertaken freelance work with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, BBC Concert Orchestra and the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Lisbon.

In her spare time, Amanda also enjoys sailing and swimming in the North Sea.

When it comes to Vivaldi's "Summer", Amanda already has a track record, as she explains:

I once managed to achieve the impossible with the storm from Vivaldi's "Summer" by appearing as both soloist and member of the orchestra in the same performance! I was invited to perform the movement accompanied by my school orchestra for the BBC drama "Being April".

We initially spent a few hours making an audio recording in which I performed the solo part, then I moved to the back of the orchestra for the filming, as one of the main characters in the drama (a musical prodigy apparently) took my place as the soloist.

We discovered that filming one scene takes a long time and involves a lot of hanging around, although we used the time to help the actors who had to mime playing the violin having had just one lesson and having replaced their music with instructions such as "high whizzy bit"!

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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 where he studied oboe with John Anderson, Christopher Cowie and David Theodore; and conducting with Neil Thomson and Richard Dickins.

Christopher was the Musical Director of the Imperial College String Ensemble from 2003 - 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 Orchestra, and in 2010 Musical Director of the Grosvenor Light Operatic Company. In 2011 Christopher beat significant competition to become Musical Director of the London Gay Symphony Orchestra, and in March 2012 was invited to guest conduct the Redhill Sinfonia.

Eleanor Ross - Soprano

English soprano Eleanor Ross was a scholar at the Royal College of Music and the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo, and subsequently gained an Honours degree as an oboist. Eleanor has recently finished studies with renowned tenor Dennis O'Neill at the Wales International Academy of Voice, and will join the OperaWorks training scheme at English National Opera in September 2013.

An experienced choral musician, Eleanor sings with the BBC Singers and the Academy of Ancient Music. Notable opera performances have included *Konigin der Nacht* (Die Zauberflöte, Mozart) for the Castelo de Sao Jorge in Lisbon, *Melia* (Apollo et Hyacinthus, Mozart) amongst the ruins of Shakespeare's first theatre The Rose, *Miss Wordsworth* (Albert Herring, Britten) under Stuart Bedford, *Philadell/Venus* (King Arthur, Purcell) at the Cheltenham International Festival, and *Barbarina/Bridesmaid* (Le Nozze di Figaro, Mozart) at the Dartington International Festival under Diego



Masson. Other roles include *Zerbinetta* (Ariadne auf Naxos, Strauss), *Vixen Sharp-Ears* (The Cunning Little Vixen, Janacek), and *Amina* (La Sonnambula, Bellini).

Eleanor is a Concordia Foundation Artist, a member of Scottish Opera's Freelance Chorus and is a regular recitalist for Opera Pour un Salon. Performances in 2013 include *Giannetta* (L'Elisir d'Amore, Donizetti) for OperaUpClose, *Iris/Cover Semele* (Semele, Handel) for Jackdaws Young Artist Programme, scenes as *Clorinda* (La Cenerentola, Rossini) and *Despina* (Cosi Fan Tutte, Mozart) with British Youth Opera, *Cover Yum-Yum* (The Mikado, G&S) for Co-Opera Co, and the role of *Jessie Manning* (The Miller's Wife, Mike Christie) in a world premiere for the 2013 Grimeborn Opera Festival

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Forthcoming Concerts

We have an exciting programme of concerts lined up for next season. They all take place at The Church on the Heath, Elvetham Heath, at 7.45pm, except for the Proms Concert in July 2014 which will start at 7.30pm.

26th October 2013

From Russia With Love

- Borodin - Overture from *Prince Igor*
- Tchaikovsky - Piano Concerto No1 (Soloist - Simon Ballard)
- Rachmaninov - Vocalise
- Khachaturian - Waltz from *Masquerade*
- Rimsky-Korsakov – movement from Scheherazade

21st December 2013

Christmas with the Pelly

- Weber - Der Freischütz Overture
- Delibes - Selection from *Coppelia*
- Blake - The Snowman
- Tchaikovsky - Selections from *The Nutcracker*
- Russ Conway - Snow Coach (Soloist - Mike Thomson)
- Leroy Anderson - Sleigh Ride

March 29th 2014 A Night at the Opera - Opera favourites for Orchestra

- Bizet - *Carmen* Overture
- Verdi - Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves
- Wagner - Ride of the Valkyries
- Puccini - Selection from *La Bohème*
- Ponchielli - Dance of the Hours

19th July 2014

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Acknowledgements

The Pelly Concert Orchestra would like to thank the following people, who have in their various ways made significant contributions to this evening's concert:

- Mary Grocutt, Rolly Trice, Martin Burton, Chris Bagust and Lesley Nicholls for helping with front of house
- All those who donated raffle prizes
- Our thanks to Wellington Country Park, who have donated a family ticket
- Our Patrons and Friends
- Tony Roberts and the team at Church on the Heath
- Paul Richards for contributing programme notes on the music being played
- Michael McConnell for maintaining the website
- Tonight's soloists: Amanda Lake (Violin); Eleanor Ross (Soprano)
- Our inspirational Conductor and Musical Director Christopher Braime

Programme Editor: Mike Thomson
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From October 2013 tickets will be priced as follows:

	Adults	Concessions	Children under 16
Purchased in advance:	£11	£9	£6
Purchased on the door:	£13	£11	£6

Friends and Patrons Scheme

The Orchestra's Friends and Patrons Scheme offers a three-tier system as detailed below.

Patron: for a minimum of £45 per annum a Patron will be entitled to:

- Advance notice of forthcoming concerts
- A champagne reception before the first concert of the season
- A ticket for each of the four scheduled concerts in the season with a reserved seat for the subscriber
- Their name in each programme as a 'Patron' of the orchestra

Junior Patron: for a minimum of £20 per annum a Junior Patron will be entitled to:

- Advance notice of forthcoming concerts
- A soft drinks reception before the first concert of the season
- A ticket for each of the four scheduled concerts in the season with a reserved seat for the subscriber
- Their name in each programme as a 'Junior Patron' of the orchestra

Friend: for a minimum of £35 per annum a Friend will be entitled to

- Advance notice of forthcoming concerts
- A champagne reception before the first concert of the season
- A ticket for each of the four scheduled concerts in the season (no reserved seat)
- Their name in each programme as a 'Friend' of the orchestra

For more information or to become a Patron or Friend, please contact Sue Gillis (Second Violin) by email on: susancgillis@ymail.com

We are very grateful to all our patrons who help to support the orchestra:

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