



VALE ROYAL STRING ORCHESTRA

Robert Anderson, Leader

Robert Anderson & Adam Kornas, Violins

Adam Kornas, Conductor

Strings at the Abbey

Sunday, 17th February 2019
at 7.45 pm

**THE GREAT HALL
VALE ROYAL ABBEY**

PROGRAMME

**making
music**

For St Mary's Whitegate Church

Concerto for 2 violins in D minor BWV 1043

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Vivace, Largo ma non tanto, Allegro

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Double Violin Concerto* was written sometime between 1717 and 1723, Without doubt the concerto for two violins and strings is one of the greatest works of Baroque violin repertoire. It is in the three movement Vivaldi form, typical of all Bach's violin concertos, but with remarkably fresh invention and a new approach to standard structures. At the entrance of the soloists the orchestra drops to a supporting role, occasionally adding to the melodic line. The celebrated slow movement is a flowing melody for the two violins in canon, with accompaniment reduced to a reiterated, gently lulling bass theme in *siciliano* rhythm. In the *Allegro*, the dance-like form usually associated with the final movements of this period is but fleetingly recognized. Tension is also generated by the fugal presentation of the themes, bringing a brilliant and vigorous close to the concerto

Nocturne, Op 40, for Strings, Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

This piece was published as Op. 40 as late as 1883, but the composer then stated that "this composition was originally part of the quintet with double-bass, Op. 18, written in 1874. But because the two slow movements seemed to me too much, I had this composition published independently as *Nocturne*, Opus 40. The other movements were published by Simrock as the G major quintet, Opus 77."

We can be grateful for the salvage work. The general marking is *Andante religioso* and the melody on the first violin is virtually continuous. It is notable that for more than half its length the 'cello's bass remains unchanged being quietly adorned by the *pizzicato* of the double-bass.

Holberg Suite, Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Praeludium, Sarabande, Gavotte, Air; Rigaudon



The Norwegian Edvard Grieg was very popular during his lifetime, as pianist, composer and conductor. His music is romantic, and often small scale, prompting Debussy's description of his compositions as "bon-bons wrapped in snow".

He wrote this suite in 1884 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Norwegian humanist playwright Ludvig Holberg. Wishing to echo the music of Holberg's time, he based the five movements on eighteenth century dance forms.

Interval

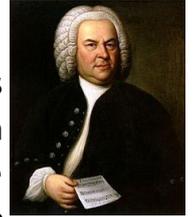
Coffee and tea served in the library. Bar Open

Brandenburg Concerto No3 in G major BWV 1048

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Allegro moderato, Adagio, Allegro

The set of 6 Brandenburg concertos are a reworking from previous concertos he had written over a number of years. The concertos were dedicated to Bach's employer, the Margrave of Brandenburg, in March 1721. For the concertos Bach used a different instruments and combinations in 'daring combinations'. The score was rediscovered in the Brandenburg archives in 1849 and the concertos were published in the following year.



This concerto splits the orchestra into 9 separate parts, 3 violin, 3 viola, 3 cello with bass and continuo. The second movement consists only of two chords around which a cadenza by violin or harpsichord is played.

Sentimental Saraband from The Simple Symphony

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

The Simple Symphony is based on a number of early childhood pieces written between the ages of nine and twelve. Britten re-scored the pieces to produce a work which, despite the somewhat flippant titles of the movements, is a good example of Britten's ability to invest the commonplace with new freshness and spontaneity. The piece is dedicated to the composer's viola teacher Audrey Alston and was first performed in 1934.

The Sentimental Saraband is the slow movement within the symphony and uses to the full the depth of expression that is possible with a String Orchestra.

Serenade for Strings, Josef Suk (1874 - 1935)

Andante, Allegro, Adagio, Allegro Giocoso



When dismissing his Prague Conservatory composition class for the summer at the end of the 1891-1892 school year, Suk's father-in-law to be, Anton Dvořák, bade the 18-year-old Josef Suk, "It's summertime now, so go and make something lively for a change." Suk took that advice and that summer created what is still his best-known work, a sunny and uncomplicated Serenade of substantial dimensions, lasting nearly a half hour. In mood and mastery it is worthy of comparison with other great nineteenth century string works such as the String Serenade by Dvořák himself.

Little in the way of analysis is required to absorb and appreciate this gentle and beautiful piece. The most substantial movement is the lyrical slow movement, which lasts for more than ten minutes.

Adam Kornas, Conductor/Violin



Adam studied at Chetham's School of Music and then went on to Royal College of Music in London where he studied composition and graduated with a first class honours degree. His compositions have been performed at the Salzburg Chamber Music Festival and with the Liverpool Mozart Orchestra. Last June, Chester Philharmonic Orchestra gave the world premiere of *Celestial City*. Adam is a graduate from the Royal Northern School of Music with a master's degree in conducting.

Robert Anderson, Violin



Robert took up the violin almost by accident at Manchester Grammar School where he was taught by Frank Horner, a player in what was then the BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra. Robert continued playing whilst studying civil engineering at Bristol University and then during a short period working in London. Here he played in orchestras including the London Repertoire Orchestra. He has enjoyed playing in many local orchestras especially Chester Philharmonic and Vale Royal Strings, both of which he now leads.

St Mary's Church Whitegate



A chapel has stood on the site of the church since the founding of the Cistercian Abbey of Vale Royal in 1277. The Cistercians were known as the white monks and hence the name of the village at the gate of the Abbey. The church was last rebuilt around 1874-75 at the expense of Lord Delamere. The architect was John Douglas of Chester. St Mary's has an active congregation and profits of the concert will go to St Mary's funds for its continuing ministry.

Vale Royal String Orchestra

The Vale Royal String Orchestra brings together experienced amateur and professional musicians. It was formed in 1993 and performs regularly at local venues. The VRSO plays primarily for the love of music and to support local charities.

Violins

Robert Anderson; Margaret Parks-Smith; Rosy Smith; Val Meeks; Paul Constardine; Alison Gabbitas; Kate Spiers; Kris Foulger-Roberts; Sarah Williams; Andrew Ball;

Violas

Judith Stunnell; Jeremy Hagen; Ian Fitzpatrick; Lorelly Wilson

Cellos

Alison Burns; Peter Raynes; Rachel Pugh

Double-bass

Susan Smale

Harpsichord

David Taylor

Next Concert

St Peter's Little Budworth, Saturday 9th June 2019

Programme to include works by: Handel (Organ Concerto No 3, Soloist Andrew Millinchip), Vivaldi, Moszkowski; Barber; and Sibelius
Conducted by Adam Kornas

© VRSO, Programme notes Andrew Ball and Making Music, Chairman; Peter Raynes
www.valeroyalstringorchestra.co.uk