

Solihull Symphony Orchestra



Rising Stars 2012

18:00, Saturday 24 March 2012,
Shirley Methodist Church, Solihull

Programme £1

Martin Leigh



Martin Leigh has conducted more than 50 symphonies, including major works by Mahler and Bruckner and Beethoven's ninth; major symphonic works by Bartok, Lutosławski, Stravinsky, and Webern; and operas by Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Bizet, Handel, and Verdi. He is music director of the Birmingham Chamber Orchestra, the Solihull Symphony Orchestra, and the Halesowen Orchestra. He has also conducted the Shrewsbury Symphony Orchestra and the Oxford Sinfonia.

As assistant conductor to the late Sir Charles Mackerras, he participated in concerts in the Edinburgh International Festival, and recordings for Telarc, Erato, and EMI. He has received advice and tuition from Marin Alsop, Sir Roger Norrington, Neil Thomson, and Libor Pesek,

He studied at the Universities of Cambridge and Nottingham, and holds a doctorate in music.

www.martin-leigh.com

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Programme

Albert Schnelzer - A Freak in Burbank

Weber - Clarinet Concerto

Alvin Chu

Harvey - Saxophone Concerto

Isobel Williams

Mozart - Clarinet Concerto K622

Bethan Irving

Beethoven - Piano Concerto No. 1

Michael Buckland

INTERVAL

complimentary drinks will be served

Mozart - Violin Concerto K216

Prishita Maheshwari

Mendelssohn - Symphony No. 4 (Italian)

Conductor Martin Leigh



Please make sure that all mobile telephones, watch alarms and other electronic devices are switched off before the performance.

Albert Schnelzer (1972 -)

A Freak in Burbank

First performance 11th May 2008 in Stockholm.

All aboard the ghost train! The “freak” in question is film director Tim Burton (Edward Scissorhands, The Corpse Bride, etc.) and his slightly weird childhood in Burbank, near Los Angeles. This scherzo for Haydn-sized orchestra by fashionable Swedish composer Albert Schnelzer, who studied at Malmö Music High School and the RCM in London, received its UK première at the 2010 Proms. Expect all the clichés of modern horror film music.



The music of Joseph Haydn has always been a source of inspiration for me. What I experience as the essence of his music is the transparency, the playful character, the contrasts and the sometimes almost burlesque quality. Another artist with these trademarks is the film director Tim Burton, who was born in Burbank, USA.

‘As a child, Burton was, by his own admission, moderately destructive. He would rip the heads off his toy soldiers and terrorize the kid next door by convincing him that aliens had landed. He would seek refuge from his surroundings in the movie theater or sit in front of the television watching horror movies.’
(From *Burton on Burton*, edited by Mark Salisbury.)

In this piece I wanted to take a Haydn-size orchestra, preserve the essence of Haydn’s music, but place it in a more modern environment. Will the spirit of Haydn survive in an American suburb?

I might add that despite the fact that Haydn was the first inspiration for this piece, Tim Burton more or less took over during the compositional process. What remains of Haydn are little things like the use of G.P. (General Pause) and the transparent textures. I also found that Tim Burton’s childhood contained a great deal of loneliness and sorrow, and that was something I wanted to express in this piece too – to let sorrow and joy coexist side by side, so to speak. The pastel-coloured suburb in Tim Burton’s *Edward Scissorhands* was an image that I had while trying to imagine how life was in Burbank during his childhood.

A Freak in Burbank was commissioned by the Stockholm Chamber Orchestra and was premiered on 11 May 2008 in Stockholm.

Programme note © Albert Schnelzer

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

Clarinet Concerto No.1 in F minor, Op.73

I. Allegro

First performed in 1811 by Heinrich Bärmann, for whom it was written. The first movement makes a miniature fantasia in itself: by turns dramatic and pensive, and finally wistful.



Seventeen-year-old **Alvin Chu** started playing the clarinet at the age of six, tutored by Martin Choy (former principal clarinet of the Hong Kong Sinfonietta), Johnny Fong (principal clarinet of the Hong Kong Sinfonietta) and Nicki Waite. He obtained distinction in his Grade 8 ABRSM practical examination in 2008. Alvin has been an active member of his school band in Hong Kong, and has won numerous prizes in the Hong Kong School Music Festival with the band.

He continues to play for his former school band, which holds concerts annually, and also participates in the School Orchestra, the Foundation Wind Orchestra and the Clarinet Quartet at Warwick School, where he is now studying for his GCSEs.

Rising Stars 2013

If you would like to be considered for the Rising Stars event next year, visit the Rising Stars page on our website. Applications are invited during the Autumn, and auditions are usually held during November and December.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C Major Op.15

I. Allegro con brio

First performed in 1798 in Prague with the composer at the piano. As a young man he had made his name playing his B flat concerto, now known as no.2, but had not published it, keeping it back as his personal party piece and meal ticket. But after ten years he wanted something new and more modern to present to the public.



Michael Buckland started learning the piano seven years ago at the age of ten, and is taking his Grade 8 piano exam this summer. He is currently studying Chopin's Études (Op. 10) and Mozart's Sonata No. 9, but Beethoven has always been one of his favourite composers. Michael is also a member of Warwick School's Big Band, the Jazz Lab, and leads his own sextet combo, Swing Theory. In his spare time, he works in the garden and also helps at a local charity shop and a care home for the elderly. He is studying for his A Levels, and hopes to read medicine at university.

Supporting the Orchestra

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mailinglist@solihullsymphony.org.uk

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Clarinet Concerto in A Major KV622

I. *Allegro*

First performed 16th October 1791 in Prague by Anton Stadler, who had commissioned it to show off his basset clarinet, an extended instrument of his own invention. The instrument was not a success, and the original music is lost, but a version of the concerto published shortly afterwards for the standard instrument has been the jewel of the repertoire ever since. Sadly, in the few months in between, Mozart had died.

Beth Irving is 16 years old and attends King's High School in Warwick, where she holds a performance award in music. She is currently studying Biology, Chemistry, Geography and Music AS Levels. Beth started learning the piano when she was 7 years old and the clarinet when she was 8, and now has a Grade 8 Distinction in both instruments. She has been a member of the City of Birmingham Children's and Youth choruses since the age of 8 and performs regularly with them around the country.



Beth plays the clarinet in her school orchestra and various other ensembles. She has won first prize in clarinet classes at Lichfield, Dudley and Leamington music festivals and in 2011 was selected to play first clarinet in the National Youth Wind Ensemble of Great Britain on a tour of Asia. The Ensemble has made a commercial recording of Philip Grange's 'Cloud Atlas' featuring Beth as a soloist which is due to be released later this year. Beth currently studies the clarinet with Steve Moss in Harpenden and is thinking of going on to study music at university or music college.

Paul M. Harvey (1935 –)

Concertino for Soprano Saxophone

An earlier alumnus of the RCM, Sheffield-born Paul Harvey was co-founder of the London Saxophone Quartet and long term Professor of Clarinet at Kneller Hall. He has written a lot of attractive and practical music, mainly featuring the single-reed instruments, and this one-movement work can be performed either with a small orchestra or a wind band. The opening motto, a pyramid chord built up of rising fourths, reappears later and helps to mark out the sections of the piece.

Isobel Williams has been playing the saxophone for six years and passed the DipABRSM diploma in 2011. Whilst the saxophone is her main instrument, she also passed Grade 8 on the piano and violin. As a violinist she has been a member of the National Children's Orchestra and the Warwickshire Youth Orchestra with which she has been on tour to Vienna. A particular highlight has been taking part with the Warwickshire Youth Orchestra in a 'Music for Youth' festival at the Royal Albert Hall at the end of last year.



Isobel also plays violin with the CBSO Youth Orchestra and is co-leader of the newly formed Spires Youth Orchestra. She is a member of the Girls' Choir at St Mary's, Warwick, which has given her the opportunity to sing in several cathedrals in England as well as Westminster Abbey, Prague and Dublin. She holds the Gold Award from the Royal School of Church Music and is currently taking A Levels with a view to studying Music at university.

Interval

complimentary refreshments will be served

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Violin Concerto No.3 in G Major KV216

II. *Adagio*

III. *Rondeau (Allegro)*

In 1775 Mozart hit 19. No longer a child prodigy, he had to find himself a living in the adult world. He had some small-time, low-paid work in the Salzburg court, but he must have fancied the idea of becoming a concert violinist, because between Easter and Christmas that year he wrote all his five violin concertos (except the first may have been begun earlier). Nothing apparently came of that ambition, however, and before the New Year he had switched his attention to piano concertos.

The five violin concertos grow in compositional and violinistic ambition through the series, but for some critics (myself included) this one is the most perfectly balanced, and the most true to his musical personality at this time in his life.



Prishita Maheshwari was born in 1997 and has been playing the violin since she was nine years old. She is currently a student of Professor Wen Zhou Li at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. Prishita has been a member of the National Children's Orchestra, National Children's Chamber Orchestra and Nottingham Youth Orchestra, and has performed in venues such as Queen Elizabeth Hall in London. She currently plays with the Chetham's Symphony Orchestra and is a member of a piano quintet.

Prishita has performed in masterclasses with Nicola Benedetti, Viktoria Grigorieva and Madeleine Mitchell, and has given solo performances in Italy across the UK. She is also a keen chamber musician, and has received coaching from members of the London Haydn Quartet and the Carducci String Quartet. Prishita has been generously supported by Future Talent and the Benslow Trust. Today, she is playing on a Hesketh violin, dated 1915.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Symphony No. 4 in A Major, op. 90 "Italian"

First performance 13th May 1833 in London conducted by the composer

I. *Allegro vivace*

II. *Andante con moto*

III. *Con moto moderato*

IV. *Saltarello (Presto)*

"The 'Italian' symphony is making great progress. It will be the jolliest piece I have ever done, especially the last movement..." *Letter from Rome to his sister Fanny, February 1831.*

For young German (and British) men in the 18th and early 19th century, Italy was a tourist destination of choice. Great art was plentiful, and inexpensive if you wished to buy some. Pretty girls likewise. And as for the light, the sunshine, the landscape! (Shame about the poverty, and the food: though both have improved enormously since.)

Fresh from his long British tour of Scotland and Wales, which had suggested both his Hebrides Overture and the third ("Scottish") symphony, Mendelssohn made a two year tour of Europe, six months of it in Austrian-governed Italy, including extended stays in Rome (where the first and last movements were mostly written) and Naples. The Risorgimento had already begun. Fragmented, downtrodden Italy was starting to take itself seriously. But this symphony is unambiguously about tourist Italy, Goethe's "land where the lemons bloom", and loves it.

If ever music bottled sunshine, it is this first movement. The second movement represents one of those religious processions which were a cliché for "Italy" among foreigners. The third movement is a bucolic landscape in Scherzo and Trio form: in the middle section note how two horns and two bassoons combine to make fairy-light distant horn calls – an orchestration trick Mendelssohn maybe didn't invent but used wonderfully, e.g. in the Intermezzo of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Fast and vigorous, the Saltarello from Naples, often accompanied by the zampogna bagpipes and a little drum, was a favourite dance in Rome in the Carnival and at weddings.

Solihull Symphony Orchestra

First Violins

Sarah Sasse *leader*
Vivienne Brown
Vanessa Cole
Helen Francis
Charlotte McLuskie
Louise Rhodes
Graham Smye
Melanie Tubbs

Second Violins

Ruth Jenkins
Philip Clare
Jessica Harris
William Hawthorne
Sarah Letters
George Newns
Heather Thompson
Diana Turnbull
Emma Tustin
Elaine Woodward

Violas

Kelvin Farge
Helen Barrett
Norman Cole
Nathanael Farley
Julia Lawley
Alan Thompson

Cellos

Miriam Taylor
Russell Rhodes
Sheila Armstrong
Abby Corfan
Sarah McCullogh
Helen Thompson
Claire Troth
Nicola Walters

Double Basses

David Evans
Bill Gale
Sue Hawthorne

Flutes

Anne Thompson
Vyvyan Jones

Oboes

Sarah Vaughan
Andrew Wilson

Clarinets

Victoria Rex
Jane Emms

Bassoons

Matthew Morgan
Simon Gates

Trumpets

Lynne Hodgson
Paul Barrett

Horns

Kevin Boyd
Stephen Mayes
Tim Overton
Matthew Franklin

Timpani

Christina Slominska



About The Orchestra

The Solihull Symphony Orchestra is a welcoming and friendly group that enjoys taking on the challenge of a varied repertoire. Formerly Knowle Sinfonia, our members span an age range from under 18 to over 90. We are always open to new members, especially string players – commitment and willingness to learn are more important to us than exam qualifications. We aim to perform in different venues throughout the Borough, and welcome invitations to play at special events. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday evening from 19.30 until 21.45 during term time, with at least three concert performances each year. We are grateful to the Head and Governors of Solihull School for the use of the David Turnbull Music School as our regular rehearsal venue.



Our Next Concert

Thomas - King Fergus and the Magic Shoes

Barber - Violin Concerto

Amy Littlewood



Strauss - Serenade op.7 in E flat

Nielsen – Symphony No 2

Saturday 30 June 2012, 19:30

Shirley Methodist Church



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