

The Banbury Symphony Orchestra

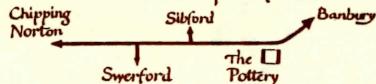
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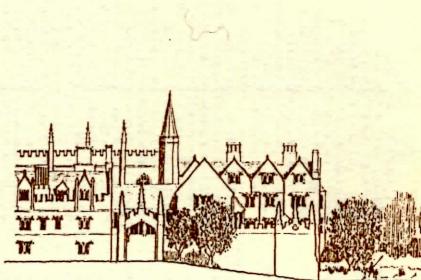
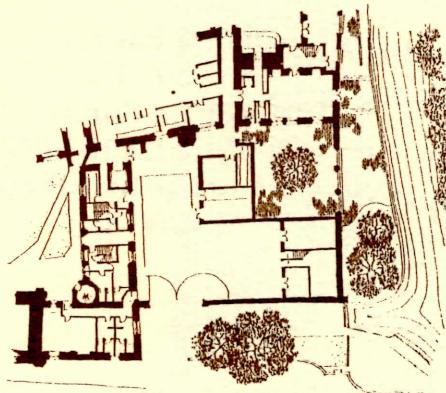
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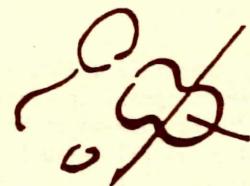
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Visitors welcome

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Monday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

Banbury Symphony Orchestra



Leader: Geoffrey Kent

Conductor: Raymond Head



CHRISTOPHER WINDASS
Violin

Bruch - *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor*

Sir Andrzej Panufnik
1914 - 1991

Heroic Overture

For many years of his life Panufnik lived in Britain as an exile from his native Poland. He had grown up within a musical household but his composing career was cut short by the outbreak of the Second World War, during which Panufnik became a member of the underground. Unfortunately all his works were totally destroyed in the ensuing devastation. He resumed his career after the war, but in the unhelpful Stalinist climate of communist Poland. He finally fled to England in the 1950s. For a time he conducted the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and lived in Adderbury. Gradually Panufnik's reputation as a composer and a conductor spread abroad, and he was much in demand in the U.S.A. He refused to visit Poland while it still remained under communist rule, but eventually in 1990 he returned to a hero's welcome. Shortly before his death last year he was given a knighthood in Britain. The Heroic Overture was written in 1939 at a time when the Nazis had attacked Poland. At first a victory to the Poles seemed assured until Stalin formed his pact with Hitler. In this bitter atmosphere it became impossible to give the work a triumphant ending so he left it unfinished. The overture was finally completed in 1952 when it was played at the Olympic Games in Helsinki. The note of ultimate triumph is now self evident.

Bruch
1838 - 1920

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor
1. Prelude - Allegro moderato - Adagio
2. Allegro energico

In his own day Bruch was famous throughout Europe for his works for chorus and orchestra and his three symphonies. A conducting post with the Liverpool Philharmonic (1880-83) gave him the opportunity to introduce his music into England. However since his death it has been the works for solo instruments and orchestra that have kept his name in the public domain. These include the first violin concerto (there are two others), the Scottish Fantasy, and Kol Nidrei for cello and orchestra. These works are performed by the greatest players of our age and are fondly remembered by audiences everywhere. The first violin concerto is the most famous of them all. It is a work of immediate and deep expression. The composer later talked of having composed the entire work in a semi-trance-like state, in which he was nevertheless completely conscious. The spontaneous quality of the work is apt to mask the originality of its conception. Although in three movements, the first and second are joined by a held B flat in the violins, and the first movement contains no development section or dramatic cadenza. Throughout, the concerto is by turns intimately lyrical and heroic.

I N T E R V A L

(Refreshments are available in Church House, over the road from the church.)

Sibelius
1865 - 1957

Symphony No. 2 in D major
1. Allegretto 2. Andante ma rubato
3. Vivacissimo 4. Allegro moderato

Finland has a remarkable record in the world of music. Despite having a population of only 5 million, its musical reputation is worldwide. Every city of even the most modest size has a professional orchestra sponsored by the city. This has helped to encourage a wealth of talent within the community and a high standard of local music making. Finland's conductors, soloists and composers are now in demand all over the world. Helsinki is no longer the provincial city that it was in the 1980s when works by Sibelius were first heard. It is no doubt largely due to Sibelius that Finland has enjoyed such musical success. When Sibelius was young he had to go abroad to obtain a musical education, firstly to Berlin and then to Vienna. When he returned in 1893 he seemed to revitalise the Finnish musical scene, then languishing under foreign domination.

In our recent concerts we have performed Sibelius' *Finlandia* and the *Karelia Suite*. These nationalistic works are very much the forbears of the first and second symphonies. In the 1890s Finland had something of an identity crisis. For centuries it had been ruled by Sweden and then in the 19th century by Russia. In the 1980s Tsar Nicholas II instituted a policy of russification, giving the Russians sweeping powers over Finland. Such a move met with strong resistance from the native Finns. *Finlandia* and the *Karelia Suite* were among the many works, both artistic and political, appearing at this time, which asserted a new national Finnish identity.

Ever since the first performance of the second symphony in 1902, there has been a long running dispute about the meaning of the symphony. Is it absolute music, or does it have a nationalistic theme? At the time of the first performance some claimed that it represented the triumph of justice. But the truth is invariably more complex. In fact the work was composed far from Finland during a visit to Berlin, Prague (where he met Dvořák) and Italy in 1901. This may account for its summery quality and the almost Dvořákian opening in the woodwind. This mood is contrasted with the heroic nature of much of the brass writing and the passionate climaxes of the full orchestra. The second movement is more gloomy and menacing and reaches a tremendous but tortured climax. The third is hectic with a hauntingly beautiful oboe solo. This movement leads without a break into the final section. It is bold and stirring with a triumphant close, not unlike the *Karelia Suite*. It is hardly surprising that people sensed in it some kind of victory, whether personal or national. Today it stands before us as one of the great musical masterpieces of this century.

Notes by Raymond Head

Christopher Windass

Christopher Windass is a well known local musician who moved into the Banbury area nearly seventeen years ago. He studied the violin at the Birmingham School of Music with Ernest Element and Peter Thomas, leader of the CBSO. Since leaving Birmingham he has played regularly with the English String Orchestra, the CBSO, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, as well as chamber ensembles. In 1985 he established his now highly successful 'Coffee Concerts' in Oxford, and has been responsible for bringing much fine music to Adderbury in his 'Music in Adderbury' series.

Raymond Head

Raymond Head studied piano with Alice Goosens in London and with Jean Churchill at Dartington College of Arts, composition with Roger Smalley and Edwin Roxburgh, and harpsichord with Mary Potts in Cambridge. He has worked in Italy as a répétiteur for Hans Werner Henze and appeared as an accompanist in Britain and Italy. For his researches into the music of Gustav Holst he was given a Holst Foundation Award, and others from the British Academy and Yale. As a conductor he has appeared at St.John's Smith Square and for the National Trust. He has published a book on the subject of East-West influences and has lectured widely, including last year in Virginia in the United States. His programme *Indian Airs* was broadcast by the BBC last year. For the future, concerts are planned with the Jupiter Chamber Orchestra.

Raymond is now conducting the BSO for his fourth season. He has been particularly interested in training, firstly, with the help of the Bournemouth Sinfonietta and Lorna Windass, and subsequently with Peter Walden, oboist with the renowned City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

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SUMMER CONCERT

Saturday 27th June 1992

Holst - The Planets
Rachmaninov - Piano Concerto No.2
Soloist: Charles Martin

in Sibford School Hall

○

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