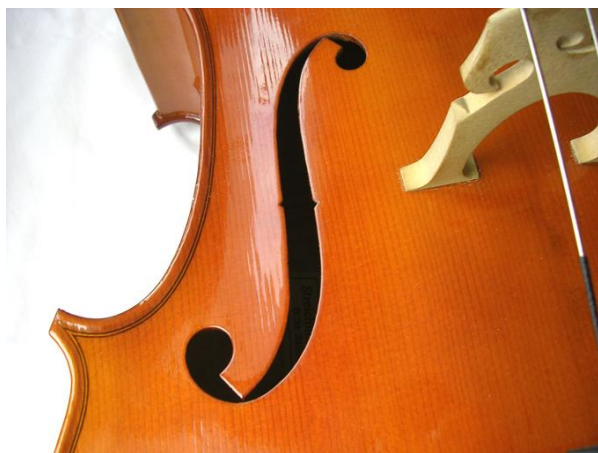


# Spring Concert

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015**

**Church of St Peter and St Paul,  
Deddington**

**Programme £1**



# **Concert Dates for Your Diary**

## **Banbury Chamber Orchestra**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Apr 2015**

Overture 'The Hebrides' - Mendelssohn

Adagio in G minor for Organ and Strings - Albinoni

Canon in D - Pachelbel

Symphony No.3 in D major - Schubert

**4:00 pm – St Peter's Church, Hook Norton**

## **Banbury Symphony Orchestra**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

### **Charity Concert – Music to Make You Dance**

**Supporting our charity partners**

**British Heart Foundation and Anjali Dance Company**



Symphony of Dances (World Premiere) - Planas

Symphonic Dances - Bernstein

Swan Lake - Tchaikovsky

**7:30 pm – St Mary's Church, Banbury**

*Hello everybody and a very warm welcome to this evening's concert!*

We are in for a treat with a terrific programme that is full of variety and interest.

It's likely that you will come across some new works in the first half of the programme. For many, the highlight of our concert will be the superb symphony.

We are delighted to announce the start of our involvement with our new charity partners, Banbury British Heart Foundation. We will tell you a bit more about this exciting initiative during the evening.

Thanks for being with us and we sincerely hope that you enjoy the evening as much as we will!

Peter Button  
Chairman, BSO

## **Programme**

### **Overture 'Hussite' – Dvořák**

### **Ballet Suite 'Le Cid' – Massenet**

Castillane – Andalouse – Aragonaise – Aubade – Catalane – Madrilène - Navarraise

### **Capriccio Italien – Tchaikovsky**

Andante un poco rubato—Pochissimo più mosso—Allegro moderato

### ***Interval***

### **Symphony No. 3 in F major – Brahms**

Allegro con brio

Andante

Poco allegretto

Allegro

## **Paul Willett – Conductor**

Paul Willett is our Conductor and Musical Director. Paul studied violin, singing and piano as a student but his main instrument was the French horn on which he gained his Performance Diploma from The Royal College of Music at the age of 16. He then went on to read music on scholarship at The Queen's College, Oxford, and studied for his teaching certificate in Music and Physical Education at Reading University.

For several years Paul combined teaching and freelance playing. He has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the country. He was a member of The Five Winds, a group that performed both at home and abroad, and also on BBC radio. Paul worked as a brass teacher for Oxfordshire Music Service and was director of a Saturday Music School of 200 students.

Paul is currently Deputy Headteacher at Didcot Girls' School and he continues his music making conducting various ensembles, both adult and youth.



## **Anna Fleming - Leader**

Anna was born in South Africa where she started playing the violin at the age of ten. While studying music at secondary school, Anna became a member of the South African National Youth Orchestra. After successfully completing her music degree, majoring in orchestral studies, Anna joined the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra in 1992.

Anna moved to England in late 1996. Keen to continue her orchestral playing, Anna joined the Banbury Symphony Orchestra in 1997 and became the leader of the orchestra in 2000, a post that she has held ever since. As a committed Christian, Anna plays an active role in church music. Focusing primarily on private violin tuition, Anna particularly enjoys helping adults to learn to play and she can be contacted on 01295 780017.

## Overture ‘Hussite’ – Dvořák

Dvořák<sup>1</sup> wrote this work in the summer of 1883 at the request of the Committee for the Completion of the National Theatre. The composition was originally intended as a musical introduction to a planned trilogy set in the Hussite era, written by the director of the National Theatre, Frantisek Adolf Subert. The latter, however, did not realise this objective and so the Hussite Overture was performed for the first time at a gala concert held on the day the theatre was reopened to the public on 18 November 1883. Dvořák regarded this commission from the National Theatre as a task of honour, which is evident from the fact that he cancelled his planned visit to see his closest friend Alois Gobl at Sychrov castle in order to devote himself to his writing. Dvořák worked on the Hussite Overture at his summer residence in Vysoka near Pribram; it took him exactly one month, from 9 August to 9 September.



**Antonín Dvořák**

The form of the work was originally to have corresponded to Subert’s planned trilogy: *“The rise of the Hussite movement, the struggles of the Hussites and, after the wars, reconciliation”*. However, Dvořák had in mind a somewhat broader framework. While he essentially maintains the proposed outline, he characterises Hussitism not only through the realistic depiction of battle, but also as the victory of heroic ideas. During his time, Dvořák naturally did not yet perceive Hussitism as a historical period of contradictions and questionable ethical codes. The approach to the work as pure music also reflects this. It consists of three main themes, of which two are deliberately taken from universally familiar melodies: the Hussite hymn “Ye Who Are Warriors of God”, and the St Wenceslas Chorale. His use of both these melodies together led to subsequent criticism that he was ideologically mistaken; today this view is regarded as outdated. All the more, then, do we appreciate the work’s extraordinary music for its own sake.

From a formal point of view the composition might be characterised as a sonata-form movement with a slow introduction. The solemn opening bars most likely represent the dawn of the Hussite movement, the exposition and development describe the Hussite wars, and the recapitulation and coda are a noble apotheosis celebrating the final victory of Hussite ideals. The thematic treatment reflects Dvořák’s exceptional musical imagery, from which the composer builds the individual passages and artfully combines the

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<sup>1</sup> Programme note – with kind permission from [www.antonin-dvorak.cz](http://www.antonin-dvorak.cz)

various motifs in order to achieve maximum impact. The exquisite instrumentation is a triumph in itself – one of the greatest accomplishments of Dvořák's entire oeuvre. Music critic Eduard Hanslick noted after the Viennese premiere that the music *"is so fanatical that, in places, it seems to have been orchestrated using scythes, flails and maces"*. Yet Dvořák achieves these devastating sound effects (Hussite battles) while essentially still employing a classical orchestral roster.

Dvořák's Hussite Overture was one of the composer's most performed works during his lifetime. This interest was probably also fired by its non-musical subject matter, rather than by its worth as pure music. The work was premiered on 18 November 1883 during a gala concert to mark the reopening of the National Theatre and it was played once more the very next day before the start of the evening performance. In both cases the National Theatre Orchestra was conducted by Moric Anger. Dvořák conducted the work himself six times: in London on 20 March 1884, in Berlin on 21 November 1884, in Prague on 3 April 1887, in Frankfurt on 7 November 1890, in New York on 6 April 1893, and in Worcester, USA, on 28 September 1893.



**Jules Massenet**

## **Ballet Suite 'Le Cid' – Massenet**

Massenet<sup>2</sup> is probably best known as an opera composer, though only a handful of his 34 operas are regularly performed. *Le Cid* (based on Corneille's drama about the 12th century Spanish nobleman's exploits in war and love) is not one of them; however, its delightful ballet music has endured on the concert stage. Massenet was following the convention of many late-19th century operas in which it was de rigueur to include a ballet, whether it made sense or not in the plot. The popularity of the ballet music from *Le Cid* comes as no surprise, what with its many colourful characteristic dances from various regions of Spain,

including a Castillane, Andalouse, Catalane, Navarraise, and the most recognizable Aragonaise. Vibrant rhythms, sun-splashed colours, and the clicking of castanets make this music an invigorating curtain raiser.

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<sup>2</sup> Programme note – with kind permission of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra

## Capriccio Italien – Tchaikovsky

The *Capriccio Italien*, Op. 45, is a fantasy for orchestra composed between January and May 1880 by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky<sup>3</sup>.

The *Capriccio* was inspired by a trip Tchaikovsky took to Rome, during which he saw the Carnival in full swing, and is reminiscent of Italian folk music and street songs. As these elements are treated rather freely initially he intended this piece to be called *Italian Fantasia*. Tchaikovsky even uses as

the introduction a bugle call that he overheard from his hotel played by an Italian cavalry regiment. Another source of inspiration for this piece are Mikhail Glinka's *Spanish Pieces*.

The premiere was held in Moscow on December 18 of the same year; the orchestra was led by Nikolai Rubinstein. Although Tchaikovsky wrote to his patroness Nadezhda von Meck that the work would be successful (the piece was praised by most critics) by the time he came to orchestrate the work he expressed doubts about its musical substance.

The *Capriccio* is dedicated to Karl Davydov, cellist, composer, conductor, and director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory.

## Symphony No. 3 in F major - Brahms

Johannes Brahms<sup>4</sup> was born in Hamburg in 1833, the son of a double bass player. The boy was fortunate in being born into a loving and understanding family; fortunate also in the choice of teachers who were able to develop his early musical gifts. To supplement the family's income, at the age of 13, the young innocent found employment as a pianist in local dance halls, taverns, and a dock-side brothel.

Youthful friendships with the Hungarian violinists Remenyi and Joachim found Brahms touring Germany as accompanist and composer and playing in chamber music groups. But it was as a composer that Brahms knew his future lay. Broad-shouldered,



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky



Johannes Brahms – aged 20

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<sup>3</sup> Programme note – Wikipedia under terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License

<sup>4</sup> Programme note – Roy Saberton for Burgess Hill Symphony Orchestra, 1997.

short of stature, at the age of 20 this flaxen-haired youth knocked on the door of Robert Schumann, who immediately recognised in him a budding genius. Later, Brahms' life-long friendship with Schumann's widow Clara is part of music's folk lore.

During those early years composing piano pieces, chamber works, songs and choral pieces, and dogged by the epithet that he was Beethoven's natural successor; he was reluctant to indulge himself in orchestral writing until he was confident of his own abilities. It was not until 1876 after he had settled in Vienna that he launched upon the world his First Symphony. The Second followed quickly, but a further six years (to 1883) elapsed before No 3 appeared.

It may not always be realised that all Brahms' major orchestral works, with the exception of the 1st Piano Concerto were written between 1873 and 1887, the final ten years being, as he began, devoted to piano pieces, chamber music and songs.

### **1st movement - allegro con brio**

In his youth Brahms adopted a motto "frei aber froh" (free but happy). It is the initials of these three words - F.A.F. - that form the three-note motto theme of the Symphony and are played over the opening three bars by woodwind and brass. Although this Symphony is given as being in F major, Brahms chooses to flatten the A, but in the immediate descending reply from the strings, the A is restored to its natural. This ambiguity pervades the movement and gives it its character.

The second subject has a radiance and charm of its own. It is in A major and 9/4 time, and is initially in the care of woodwind and strings (omitting violins). During the development Brahms works upon the motto theme until, when it is firmly in F major, the movement ends in quiet resignation.

### **2nd movement - andante**

Marked "Semplice". A folk-like tune is given out by the clarinets supported by bassoons, with violin and cello interjections. A feature of this movement is the deft scoring, somewhere between "chamber music" and full orchestra. Trombones are used with great restraint; trumpets and timpani remain silent. The movement ends gently and quietly.

### **3rd movement - poco allegretto**

The "scherzo" movement of the symphony opens in C minor and a Schubertian melancholy gently pervades the music. The opening theme is entrusted to the celli. It is a characteristic of bluff, gruff Brahms to place his melodies in lower registers. The cello melody is later taken over by the French horns.



The trio section has two themes - one in chords for woodwind and the other for strings. The opening theme reappears re-orchestrated, and the symphony's three-note motto variant is prominent as the movement reaches a forte climax just six bars from, yet again, a "piano" ending.

#### **4th movement - allegro**

The final movement opens in F minor, marked Sotto Voce ("subdued voice") and scored for strings and bassoon. Yet despite the modest forces employed, these opening bars suggest that Brahms means to impress, and a substantial symphonic movement is being opened up before us.

This movement is one of complex variety. The motto theme continues to be heard in varied form in the woodwind until trombones introduce a quasi-chorale theme which is then entrusted to woodwind and strings, and is prominent in the following development.

Following the return of the opening theme, a joyful robust tune in C major is heard in the French horns and strings. A grand development follows, combining motifs of the opening and chorale. Then the C major tune returns and is played out by the full orchestra, only to subside.

Muted violas now present a triplet version of the movement's opening bars in a remote minor key. After this, Brahms works upon all his themes leading to a climax, although not a cataclysmic one. Then, with the recall of the motto theme, the music floats away into a Brahmsian quietude.



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# Banbury Symphony Orchestra

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Karina Bell

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Banbury Symphony Orchestra



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## Interested in Joining the Orchestra?

If you play an instrument to a standard of Grade 7 or above and would like to play with the orchestra, find out more by contacting Anna Fleming on 01295 780017. All rehearsals take place in Banbury in term time on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30pm.

