



● Banbury Symphony Orchestra pictured during rehearsals for their concert on Sunday.

# Orchestra play a popular style

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A large audience heard Banbury Symphony Orchestra give a splendid concert on Sunday, under their lively conductor Raymond Head.

The playing of the orchestra has improved greatly, the strings have a firm incisive quality, the woodwind are alert and responsive and the brass have a warm tone with good articulation.

These characteristics were well in evidence in the opening work Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*.

The orchestra played this with great panache, and when needed, lyricism too. The difficult solos in the third section were all played musically, if not with the ultimate virtuosity.

Debussy's classic score *Prelude à l'après midi d'un faune* of 1892 needs special attention to balancing and shading if this

difficult score is to reveal its subtle beauty.

It says a lot for the performance, that despite some tentative moments the interpretation was rich and fluid.

The novelty of the evening was the first performance of the *Chinese Suite* by the British composer John Foulds. It was written in 1935.

The work is essentially light music of first rate quality with unusual harmonies and rhythms, and

an imaginative use of a large orchestra.

The latter was augmented by a large percussion section which added lustre and punch to the orchestration. On this showing, Foulds' music deserves to be more widely known. The piece was enthusiastically received by the audience.

After the interval Charles Martin was the attentive soloist in Grieg's piano concerto.

The many magical

moments of originality in this work have often gone unnoticed, so popular has it become.

The admirable soloist fully projected the many varied moods, and except for a slight hiccup in the first movement cadenza, was played with considerable virtuosity.

The orchestra was an adept and responsive partner. Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey* brought this stimulating concert to a rumbustious conclusion.

TP