

# The Banbury Symphony Orchestra

**Saturday 22nd November 1997**  
**Programme £1**

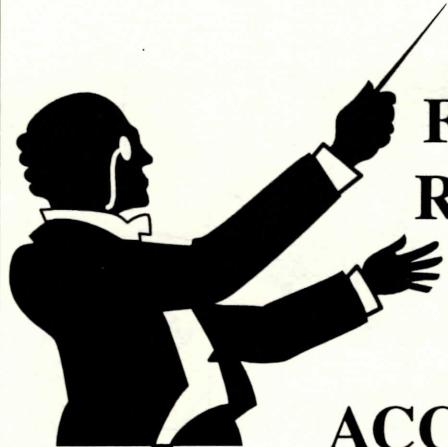


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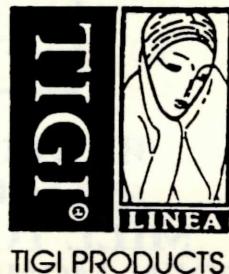
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## **Juliette Bausor**

Juliette is 18 and comes from Lighthorne in Warwickshire. She is currently studying with Paul Edmund-Davies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, having recently left the Purcell School of Music in Harrow where she was a scholar for four years. Juliette is principal flute of the National Youth Orchestra and has also been principal flute with the National Youth Chamber Orchestra and the Junior Academy Symphony Orchestra.

In 1996 she was given an award through The Prince's Trust for a new hand-made Brannen-Cooper flute which she is playing tonight. Juliette enjoys entering competitions and some of her more recent successes include reaching the woodwind finals of the BBC Young Musician of the Year in 1996 and winning the Gold Medal award in the Shell/LSO scholarship in 1997. She has performed as a soloist in most of Britain's major concert halls including The Barbican, The Royal Festival Hall and The Wigmore Hall, where she made her début in July.

## **Paul Willett**

Paul Willett studied the French Horn with Ifor James and gained his performance Diploma from the Royal College of Music at 16.

He read music at The Queen's College, Oxford, on scholarship, and now combines teaching and freelance playing. He has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the country. He was a member of The Five Winds for many years, a group which performed both at home and abroad, and also on BBC radio.

He is currently Head of Music at Fitzharrys School in Abingdon.

**Rossini  
(1792-1868)**

**Overture: The Italian Girl in Algiers**

In 1813 Rossini celebrated his 21st birthday and with it all the success and fame which was making him the most talked of composer in Italy. His opera *The Italian Girl in Algiers* had recently received its first performance in Venice and its reception was so overwhelming that opera houses all over the country were planning further performances.

Its story concerns a young man, Lindoro, who is captured by the Sultan of Algiers. His Italian sweetheart, Isabella, goes off to try to rescue him but is shipwrecked off the coast of Algiers and she, too, finds herself in the hands of the Sultan - or rather his harem. The rest of the story concerns the various plots which Lindoro and Isabella devise to try to outwit the Sultan and escape - which they eventually do.

After the introductory *Andante*, which has some rather nice solos for the oboe and clarinet, the overture soon sets off at a rollicking pace and is full of the delightful tunes and good humour so typical of this particular period of Rossini's music.

**Carl Nielsen  
(1865-1931)**

**Flute Concerto**

*Allegro moderato; Allegretto - Adagio ma non troppo*

The Danish composer Carl Nielsen was born at Sortelung, a village near Nørre-Lyndelse on the island of Fyn. He was the seventh child of a local house-painter and fiddler. Carl showed musical talent while still a boy and at the age of 14 he joined a military band at Odense as a trumpeter. Accomplished also as a violinist, he formed his own string quartet in 1882. From 1884 to 1886 he studied at the Royal Conservatoire in Copenhagen and thereafter made his living as an orchestral violinist with the orchestras of the Royal Chapel and the Royal Theatre, among others. His talent as a musician, fostered by grant-aided study in Germany and Paris, took in conducting as well as composing and playing. He conducted both the orchestra of the Royal Theatre (1908-14) and the Copenhagen Music Society (1915-27). During the 1920's he visited Berlin, Paris and London to conduct performances of his own music. From 1915 he was a member of the teaching staff at the Royal Danish Conservatoire, becoming its director in 1931, shortly before his death.

Nielsen's music gained comparatively little recognition outside Denmark while he was alive. His international reputation only began to grow after World War II. Today, thanks to the efforts of indefatigable champions such as Robert Simpson, we can see Nielsen for the innovator that he was. His six symphonies of 1891-1925 chronicle a move from a romanticism much influenced by the ghost of Mendelssohn to a highly charged and concentrated form of articulation in which Nielsen finds his own voice, and it is a voice that is not easily imitated. One of the first exponents of progressive tonality, where a piece starts in one key and ends in another, Nielsen was at his most original in his instrumental compositions. His vocal music - two operas, some songs and choral works - draw more upon folk and traditional elements and are consequently more conservative.

Nielsen wrote only three solo concertos - for violin (1911), for flute (1926), and for clarinet (1928). The flute and clarinet works were the only completed pieces in a projected series of solo concertos Nielsen planned for the five instruments of his Wind Quintet of 1922. Of these, the Flute Concerto has more of a chamber feel to it than the later clarinet piece. It received its premiere in Paris in 1926.

The Flute Concerto is an outdoor piece full of a generally bucolic flavour. Nielsen wrote of it: "the flute cannot deny its own nature, its home is in Arcadia and it prefers pastoral moods. The composer has to obey its gentle nature, unless he wants to be branded a barbarian." To this end, much of the flute writing is often very florid and rather imitative of birdsong, but a good deal of it is grittily human and the melodies, if rather short-breathed, are nevertheless quite ravishing. The work as a whole is most notable for its mood swings. But the sombre, threatening or angry elements, where they arise in the orchestra, are invariably quickly stifled by music of a merry or serene character. Just a few themes provide the motivic sources of the concerto.

The first movement opens excitingly with a vigorous outburst from the strings, the flute takes up a theme that descends gradually from a high point to the accompaniment of pizzicato strings. The music subsides into an expansive tune introduced by the strings and taken up by the flute, supported by the bassoon. This is the first of several dialogues between the flute and various other orchestral instruments and sections. These include a series of flourishes with the clarinet, a section following a stringendo passage in which the flute flits about among the brass, with the trombone notably prominent, a beautiful slow section with the flute singing mellifluously to a string accompaniment, and a reprise of the opening music with pizzicato accompaniment again. After this comes a flute "cadenza" with strings and brass, and another more decorated flute "cadenza"

supported by the timpani. A flowery duet between flute and clarinet precedes a beautiful section where the flute stands alone. An elegiac passage, with the flute supported by tremolando strings, leading to a section where the accompanying forces of strings and wind are contrasted with consummate skill brings the movement to a tranquil close.

The tempo indications of the second movement might lead the listener to suspect that it consists of two sections, but in fact Nielsen has very definitely laid out his material in three. In the first, the flute, partly in counterpoint with the bassoon, presents a playful melody consisting of two basic ideas. As in the first movement, these themes generate the bulk of the musical material. In the second section, the flute sings slowly and hauntingly over high strings and then in duet with a high bassoon. This exalted music is peremptorily interrupted by the strings, who seem determined to break up this love affair between flute and bassoon. Obediently, the flute reprises its opening playful tune, this time with the violins in counterpoint. The timpani herald yet another flute cadenza. The third and last section opens with the flute's playful tune played by harmonized strings and made even more playful by being transmuted into a triple-time dance, full of rustic charm. Strings and wind again find themselves in dialogue. A soaring, free-form flute part sings above an accompaniment from drums and some rather rude trombone glissandi. The strings dance again, and the flute sings for the last time to the accompaniment of the timpani and the odd one or two parting shots from the trombone.

INTERVAL

*Many thanks to the Church Social Committee for arranging the refreshments*

Allegro con brio; Adagio; Allegretto grazioso; Allegro, ma non troppo

Antonin Dvorak was born on 8th September 1841 in Nelahozeves, a small village north of Prague, the eldest of a poor village butcher and innkeeper's eight children. At an early age he showed signs of unusual musical talent but material circumstances forced him to begin life as a butcher's boy. However, owing to the encouragement and support of his first teacher, Liehmann (organist of the neighbouring village, Zlonice), young Antonin eventually succeeded in taking up music as a profession, though it cost him almost twenty years of very hard

struggle, trying to make ends meet as a private teacher, organist and viola player in a theatre orchestra before he was even noticed. A patriotic *Hymnus* earned him a first success at the age of thirty two and five years later some of his works aroused the interest of Brahms. The Berlin publisher, Simrock, published these on Brahms' recommendation and also commissioned a series of Slavonic dances which met with great success. Thus the year 1878 became the turning point in Dvorak's life, for henceforth his fame spread so rapidly that he found it difficult to keep up with the demands of artistes and publishers, though he kept on writing work after work.

As his compositions made their way in the world he was invited to conduct them abroad and he paid nine visits to England where he became very popular conducting the first performances of several works commissioned for that country (among them the symphony in D minor, op.70). The University of Cambridge conferred upon him an honorary degree of Doctor of Music. Yet, at the zenith of his fame, he never forgot his homeland, as one of his letters written at the time of his successes in England testifies: "in spite of the fact that I have moved about in the great world of music, I shall remain what I have always been - a simple Czech musician". The happiest times of his life were the summers spent in his small cottage in Vysoka amidst a lovely garden where he wrote a great many of his works.

In 1891 Dvorak was appointed professor of composition at the Prague Conservatoire, of which he also later became director. With the exception of the three years spent in the USA as principal of the Conservatory of New York, he held these posts until his sudden death on 1st May, 1904. At his funeral the nation accorded him all the honours due to one of its greatest sons, who indeed had done more than anyone before to establish Czech national music in its rightful place in the musical world.

The Eighth Symphony is Dvorak's last but one, though for a long time it has been known as his Fourth Symphony, as it was the fourth to be published. What is even more strange, this symphony was often referred to as Dvorak's "English" symphony, the sole reason being that, following a quarrel with his Berlin publisher, Simrock, it was published in London by Novello. In reality the symphony shows best his close relationship with Czech folk music as its themes are inspired by the folk lore of his homeland.

The formal construction shows singular features, for the composer deliberately wanted to express his ideas in somewhat unusual ways. The four traditional

movements of the symphony are maintained but all movements show interesting and important deviations from the hitherto prevailing formal devices. To mention but a few, the Sonata form of the first movement is enriched by an independent languorous theme which appears at the beginning of each section, whereas in the Rondo form of the finale we find multiple variations of the main theme. Apart from these technical traits the most characteristic feature of this symphony is the free flow of its rich melodies, the sincerity of its expression and the wide gamut of mood, ranging from nostalgic yearning to exuberant gaiety, and the irresistible rhythmic drive of its vigorous folkdance-like passages.

It is a symphony of direct emotional appeal, a music born of sincerity and written with impeccable craftsmanship in which the dramatic element is associated with a powerful melodic gift and the sweeping lyricism imbued with an attractive strain of Slavonic melancholy.

It took Dvorak just over two months to compose this symphony, in the autumn of 1889. The first performance took place in the Rudolfinum at Prague, the composer conducting. Further performances in the main musical centres of Europe followed in rapid succession; some of them, like the performance at the Philharmonic Society of London on 24th April 1890, conducted by the composer. Henceforth the symphony became one of the standard works of the symphony repertoire, ranking in popularity next to the celebrated New World Symphony.

*Notes supplied by the Programme Note Bank of the NFMS*

*Our next concert is on March 21  
at 8pm in Deddington Church*

*and will feature  
Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony  
and  
Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto*

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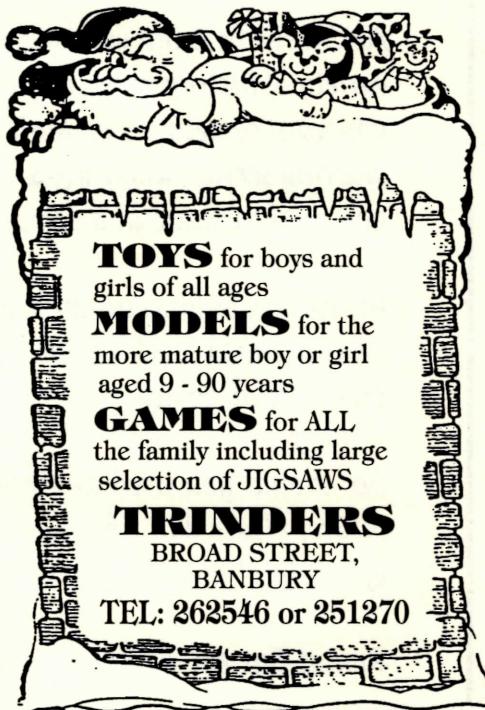
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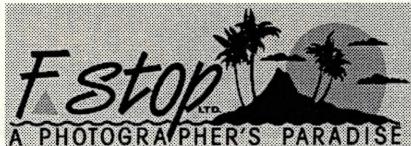
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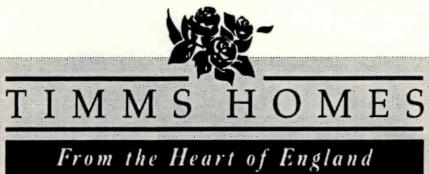


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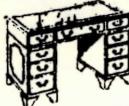
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