

# The Banbury Symphony Orchestra

Sunday 19th March 1989

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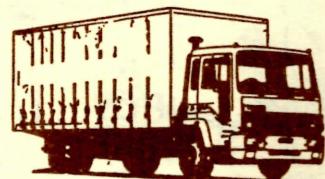
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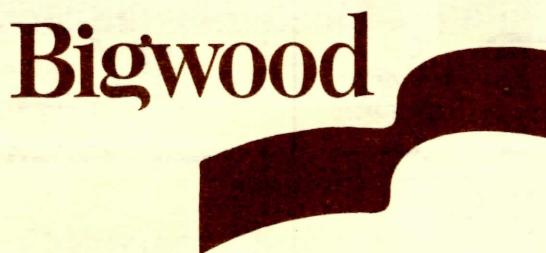
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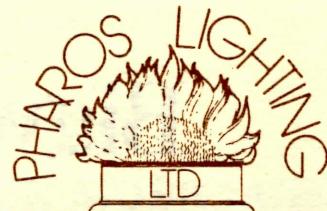
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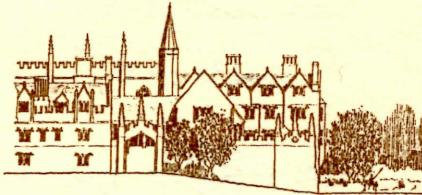
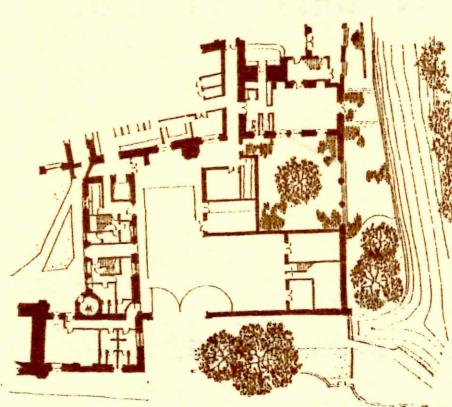
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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

May I wish you a very warm welcome to the second concert in our 1988/89 Season and I hope you will enjoy the varied programme presented this evening.

During this Season the Banbury Symphony Orchestra has seen its membership and Patronage increased substantially and playing standard raised considerably, which is, in no small measure, due to the commitment of our Management Committee and Conductor Raymond Head. Raymond has been instrumental in conducting first performances of long forgotten British composers and one result is that Gustav Holt's "Indra" has now been performed by the London Philharmonic.

Last January concert pianist Margaret Fingerhut from London rehearsed with us before making the first ever recording of Stanford's "Concert Variations" with the London Philharmonic.

It is very rewarding to know that we are now building up a reputation in the professional world as a "run-through" orchestra for musicians about to record unfamiliar pieces.

To-night we are continuing this trend by giving the world premiere of John Fould's "Chinese Suite".

Finally, on behalf of the Banbury Symphony Orchestra, thank you all for your loyal support. We are committed to further improve our musical and financial standards and to achieve these we very much need and look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Bigland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "I" at the beginning.

# BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Leader - Geoffrey Kent)

*Conductor*  
**Raymond Head**

*Soloist*  
**Charles Martin**  
(Piano)

## PROGRAMME

Rimsky-Korsakov -

Capriccio Espagnol

Debussy -

Prelude à l'après Midi d'un Faune

John Foulds -

Chinese Suite

(1st performance)

## INTERVAL

Grieg -

Piano Concerto in A minor

Percy Grainger -

Shepherd's Hey

## PROGRAMME NOTES

N. Rimsky-Korsakov - Capriccio Espagnol  
(1844-1908)

This is one of the Russian composer's most popular pieces and well illustrates his skill as an orchestrator. Initially, the work was conceived as a Fantasy on Spanish Themes for violin and orchestra but in 1887 it was expanded into a full orchestral piece. The Capriccio is one of a great number of works written in the late 19th Century which were inspired by exotic subjects. Rimsky-Korsakov's work is no exception. At one point he imitates the sound of the flamenco guitar, and, at another, the excitement of Spanish dancing. The work is in five sections played without a break.

C. Debussy - Prelude à l'après Midi d'un Faune  
(1862-1918)

This is one of the most important pieces of all French music and has been seen as a turning point in musical impressionism. The Prelude was begun in 1892 and finished in 1894. Originally it was conceived on a larger scale as Prelude, interludes et paraphrase finale pour l'apres-midi d'un faune. Of this only the Prelude was completed. It seeks to evoke a poem by Mallarme which describes the dreams and desires of the faun in the heat of the afternoon, tired of pursuing nymphs and the naiads, he succumbs to intoxicating sleep, in which he can finally realize his dreams of possession in universal Nature.

J. Foulds - Chinese Suite (1st Performance)  
(1880-1939) 1. In the Gardens of Bliss  
2. The Perfume Pagoda  
3. Procession to the Temple  
4. The Ming Mandarin

Foulds is a greatly neglected British composer who in his own lifetime was famous for his Keltic Lament, the monumental World requiem, and his incidental music for plays notably Shaw's St Joan. In 1935 he went to India and died there four years later in Calcutta. Only in recent years has his music been re-discovered, and a few records have now been made of it. They show a composer of considerable originality. Foulds was interested in all kinds of music and the suite is founded upon original Chinese melodies and was written in India in 1935. The suite is essentially a good example of Foulds light music side that shows his serious pre-occupation with unusual rhythms and tone colours. It has not received a performance until now.

## INTERVAL

E. Grieg - Piano Concerto in A minor  
(1843-1907) 1. Allegro molto moderato  
2. Adagio  
3. Allegro moderato e marcato

Grieg composed this work in 1868 when he was only twenty-five. It was first performed in Copenhagen in 1869 with the composer as soloist. The work was much praised by Liszt among others, and it has proved to be one of the most popular works ever written. The dramatic opening may have been influenced by Schumann's piano concerto. Certainly he was much influenced by that composer as can also be heard in the many sudden changes of mood throughout the work. The orchestra is large but economically used. Only in the last few bars do orchestra and piano unite in a majestic statement of the last movement's secondary theme, thus bringing the work to a triumphant close.

P. Grainger - Shepherds Hey  
(1882-1961)

This brilliantly eccentric Australian was a masterly pianist who knew Grieg well and gave by all accounts one of the finest performances of that composer's concerto. He is best remembered today for his folk-song arrangements such as Shepherds Hey and Molly on the Shore. These are all anarchic and delight in polyrhythms and unusual instrumentation. In 1909 he wrote "One reason why things of mine like Molly and Shepherd's Hey are good is because there is so little gaiety and fun in them, these dance settings are energetic rather than gay - more Russian than English". In this way he hoped to avoid any comparison with the "twee" folksong arrangements that then abounded, and convey the earthiness of the originals.

Notes by Raymond Head

RAYMOND HEAD studied the piano with Alice Goosens in London and with Jean Churchill at Dartington College of Arts, Devon; composition with Roger Smalley and Edwin Roxburgh, and harpsichord with Mary Potts, Cambridge. He has worked in Italy as a repetiteur for Hans Werner Henze and appeared as an accompanist in the U.K. and Italy. He has attended Diego Masson's conducting masterclass at Dartington Summer School. For his research into the music of Gustav Holst he was given a Holst Foundation award, and he has received others from the British Academy and a Yale Fellowship. As a conductor he has appeared with the Govannon Orchestra at concerts in St. John Smith's Square, London and for the National Trust. He is interested in East-West influences and has published a book The Indian Style on that subject, as well as lecturing in universities in this country and abroad. His programme Indian Airs was broadcast by the BBC last year and was about Eastern influences on Western music.

He lives in Chipping Norton and is known locally as the founder-conductor of the North Oxfordshire Scratch Orchestra which specialises in the performance of neglected British music.

CHARLES MARTIN studied with John Simons and the composer Richard Arnell at Trinity College of Music, London. He left there in 1974 to become a pianist at the Royal Ballet School. During this time he performed regularly, as part of a piano duo, in and around London.

In 1978 he went to live in Klagenfurt, Austria, where he was a repetiteur in an Opera Company. It was here that he gained experience as an accompanist, and he broadcast on Austrian radio in a series on Yugoslavian music. He returned to England in 1981 to take up a post at Winchester House School, Brackley, where he is now Director of Music. He has become well known locally as an accomplished and enthusiastic teacher, accompanist and performer.

BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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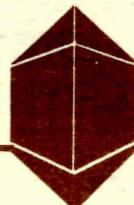
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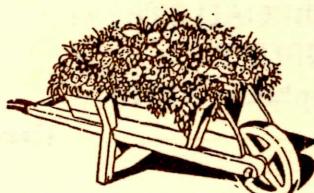
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