

FEBRUARY 2021



A
LOCKDOWN
VIOLA



UPCOMING
EVENTS



A LOVELY
CROSSWORD



A Word from the Chair

Welcome to our fifth newsletter. In it you will find an article from Theo Sturge, a listing of upcoming events (including our free NSO online quiz open to everyone), and our monthly crossword.

This month it is my pleasure to present a fascinating article by Theo Sturge, a respected leather conservator and long-time member of the viola section, about his project to build a viola during the lockdown. Thank you Theo!

February marks a full year since the last concert of our Season of Contrasts. I have very fond memories of that concert, in particular the orchestra's performance of the Strauss Duet- Concertino with William Gold on bassoon and Cathal Killeen on clarinet— I wasn't needed for the all string orchestra for this piece, and had the extreme pleasure of sitting in the audience, enjoying at the artistry on display from our young soloists, but also proud of our incredible string section— what a great concert.

I hope you too, have memories of great concerts or interests in a particular piece of music . We would like to feature articles from the membership of the orchestra, Friends, and members of the audience about a concert you enjoyed or a piece of music you love. If you wish to contribute an article or have suggestions for this newsletter please contact me by e-mail at chair@nso.org.uk .

Until next time, enjoy this newsletter—we look forward to seeing each other again when circumstances allow.

In friendship and music,

Frank Jordan – Chair, Northampton Symphony Orchestra

NOTE—During production of this newsletter, we got word that our former principal trombone and well known NMPAT teacher Jon Lloyd had passed away. There have been lovely recollections of Jon's time with NMPAT in a recent article in the Northampton Chronicle and Echo. Jon was a fantastic musician, an inspirational teacher, and an incredible human being. He will leave a massive gap in the Northampton performing arts community, and our thoughts are with his family, his friends, and his students.



What's On

Wednesday Evenings 7:30 pm

Socials, interviews with John Gibbons, and Jamulus virtual play sessions for Members of the NSO— details circulated by the secretary.

Orchestra Members contact Robin Simpson for instructions on how to set up and connect to Zoom and Jamulus

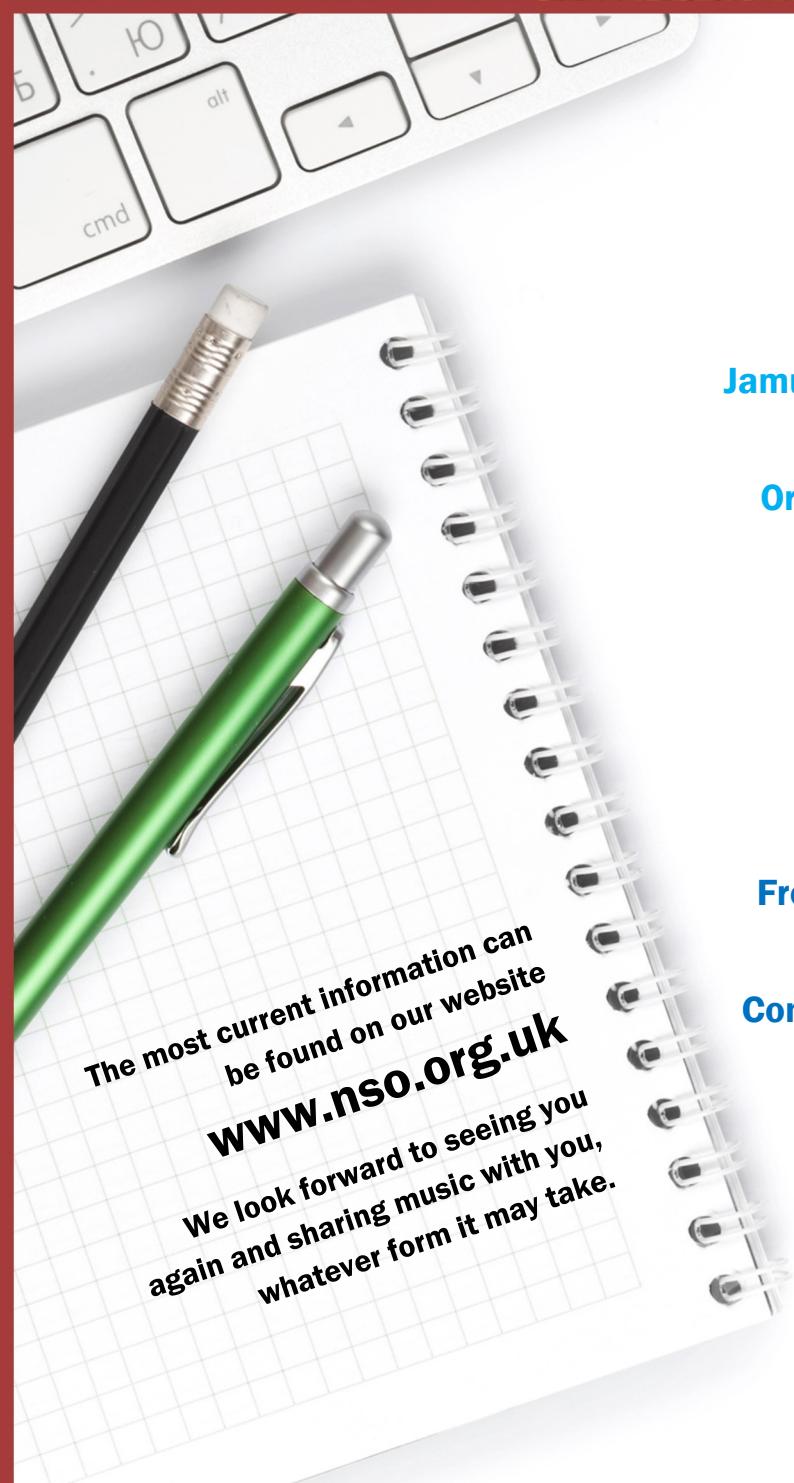
February 27 2021—7:30 pm

NSO Monthly Quiz

Free to members of the Orchestra, Friends, and anyone who would like to participate.

Contact chair@nso.org.uk for details or register interest on our Facebook event

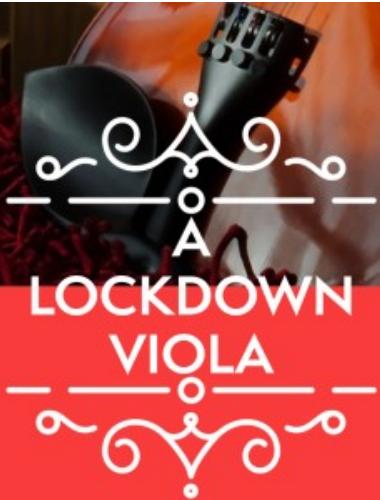
Do you have an idea or wish to host a virtual event for the orchestra during this time? Please contact Frank Jordan at chair@nso.org.uk



The most current information can
be found on our website
www.nso.org.uk

We look forward to seeing you
again and sharing music with you,
whatever form it may take.





Leather conservator and long-time member of the NSO Theo Sturge documents his efforts to build a viola during the lockdown.

Needless to say, work has been a bit spasmodic since last March.

There have been some novelties such as an elephant with its trunk chewed by a dog. I was expecting something about 18 inches high I could tuck under my arm and take upstairs to my studio to mend. When it arrived, it was four feet high and the ears were three feet across. It came through the front door and would go no further so had to be treated in my front hall. We got quite fond of it but were pleased to see it go. (In case you don't know, I am a leather restorer/conservator working mainly for clients like the National Trust).



Rosemary Sturge and the elephant in the room

So what to do? A year or so previously, I started making a viola. I had made the ribs but got no further. Time to get stuck in. The rest was uncompromising chunks of maple, and pine for the front.

I have made six violas over the last 40 years or so but there is usually quite a big gap, so it is a steep learning curve each time. To learn to do it properly takes three years at college/university, I have been on a one week course about 40 years ago. It is possible to do all the rough and some of the finer work using routers attached to templates, but this takes the craft out of it so I start from scratch and make it by hand. Once the ribs are finished, they are hand bent round a hot bending iron, then the front and back (the plates) are made. The wedges of wood have to be hand jointed to get as perfect a join down the middle as possible, surprisingly hard to do, particularly on the tough maple.

They are then hand carved to shape to get the arching and to take the excess wood off the inside surface.

There is a black art to tuning the plates. They are tuned by tapping the wood to find the “tap tone”. Not too bad - if you accept a lack of perfection—until you cut the sound holes and try to re-tune by adding the base bar and then it goes all over the place (there is a reason why college takes three years) It also helps if you put the base bar under the C string rather than the A string.

For the first time ever, I did it the wrong way round, the inside surface was all back to front. Getting it off was a game, fortunately I realised before attaching the front to the ribs. Anyway, I got it all together, and varnished it. The varnish did not come out like the test piece but so be it. The best I could do with it was play around on Jamulus and do a bit of practice, and then came the day when we had our one rehearsal in St Giles. An exciting and magical day in so many ways, oh to do it again! Yes, it plays, it is different from the others I have made, and it improves as I play it, but I am not giving up the day job, what there is of it at present. However, I get a buzz each time it comes out of the case.



We welcome any articles from the orchestra membership or our audience regarding music or your memories of a performance of the NSO.

Please contact chair@nso.org.uk if you are interested.

NSO CROSSWORD

ANSWER KEY FOR OUR LAST WORD SEARCH

UCMBTGCXODROHCISPRAHXXRC
DBRXCALMJPDLYEXJRHYEKRFQO
TDHLXKTJOCMTINCJNTTTHSQM
YKHSSWWPSKRJYPQOWPUXEBIIFP
PONNEQYFQWIYSBLHLUWRUREO
MHPQBTYJGIJNZYGFPERNWEUS
IRXRVRHKDSKQQQCIPMDHWIFE
TETRAUQGNIRTSIXVMUYUILFR
NLLRBHQSWFDYGIIEWMBSPARJ
OBXMNYICJVDAAEEXNUELGJSBS
XNGNJDFLIGMANHZRLEWCPCPA
BTMJXPYLOUWNTJSVOOCDLHKL
POFMXRAAONAQDWRPWNDOAINZ
OMLNXRRCCHKPNYYOYTDHQCKLB
OHLXEDXILNRTRLWDRNLSIAJU
KUQPXSMSSCOODDBTXWERPSNGR
FLOHCWESOWDMFGGLGMYNNUEKG
LCRCPZIANNIGIISOYNUAMDLB
OEFWMNULSGGXGDZSCYVGDEAI
NQXPDUQCTRYCAAUZWLVUJRSW
DJFJSUEYAAEWRNOCAIERBMXH
OBIBVMRJNVSTOGIQJTOSJUSL
NRLPVXJKZEALOAUSTRIAIIUU
NLFEKHCZEHAYQGABKEYBOARD

NSO CROSSWORD



A crossword puzzle grid with numbered squares for clues. The grid consists of 16 numbered squares arranged in a cross pattern:

- 1**: A tall vertical column on the right side.
- 2**: A horizontal row on the left side.
- 3**: A vertical column in the center.
- 4**: A horizontal row next to square 3.
- 5**: A vertical column on the right side.
- 6**: A tall vertical column on the far left.
- 7**: A horizontal row below square 5.
- 8**: A horizontal row below square 3.
- 9**: A horizontal row below square 6.
- 10**: A vertical column in the center.
- 11**: A horizontal row below square 10.
- 12**: A vertical column on the right side.
- 13**: A horizontal row below square 11.
- 14**: A vertical column on the right side.
- 15**: A horizontal row at the bottom.
- 16**: A tall vertical column on the far right.

The grid contains several empty squares where words do not fit. To the right of the grid, there is a statue of a cherub (a winged infant) in a dynamic pose, seemingly flying or falling. The statue is rendered in a light gray color and is partially obscured by a white cloud-like shape.

NSO CROSSWORD

Across

6. The love that dare not speak its name
7. Oberon's better half
8. Princess Fiona's main squeeze
9. He orchestrated the St. Valentine's Day Massacre
11. Best Picture Oscar winner in 1998
13. Orchestral instrument featured in "Love and Marriage"
14. Greek cupid
15. "A tale as old as time,..."
16. The city where Harry met Sally

Down

1. Guess who's coming to dinner?
2. This website premiered Valentine's Day 2005
3. The love planet
4. Ancient Roman Valentine's Day
5. Represented by yellow roses
10. The love apple
12. The show with the Ricardos

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Facebook — Northhamptonsymphonyorchestra

Twitter — @NtonSymphOrch

Instagram - Northhamptonsymphonyorchestra

Website - NSO.org.uk

**What would you like to see
in our newsletter?**

What else would you like to see? Please contact the Chair, Frank Jordan at chair@nso.org.uk with suggestions.

We are particularly keen to hear from members of the orchestra, our Friends, and members of our audience who would be interested in writing a short article for inclusion.

Until next time, stay safe, healthy and musical!

