

### **New members**

If you would be interested in joining the orchestra, please contact us at [info@abergavennysymph.org.uk](mailto:info@abergavennysymph.org.uk). You can check our website for details of the rehearsal schedule.

### **Easy Fundraising**

This is an easy way to raise money for the orchestra if you shop online for anything from groceries to holidays. Say you want to buy a book from Amazon. Instead of going to [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk), you go to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) first. You click from the easyfundraising website through to Amazon to make your purchase. The price of the book is exactly the same as if you'd visited Amazon directly. After you have bought your book, Amazon will make a donation to your cause as a thank you for shopping with them. easyfundraising collect these donations, and it costs nothing! As the saying goes, every little helps!

Go to our website and follow the link at the bottom of the home page.

### **Acknowledgements**

Abergavenny Orchestral Society is grateful to the staff and members of Our Lady and St Michael's RC Church for allowing us to use this beautiful church for our concert. AOS is affiliated to **Making Music**, which represents and supports amateur music societies throughout the UK, and gratefully acknowledges the support of: **The Tithe Barn** for selling our tickets; **Dance Blast** for provision of our rehearsal venue; Music publishers **Wilhelm Hansen**; The Music Parts Service at **Liverpool Libraries**; **David Fraser at Abergavenny Library** for helping secure inter-library loans.

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# Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

Our Lady and St Michael's RC Church  
Pen-y-Pound, Abergavenny

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2017, 8pm

[www.abergavennysymph.org.uk](http://www.abergavennysymph.org.uk)

# Abergavenny Orchestral Society

**Honorary Life Members:** Jean Bradley, Ruth Brown, Sally Ellerington,  
Eiry Hanbury, Odette Hutchison, Barbara Price, Sue Rogers

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Our Friends scheme enables us to benefit from your financial support and to involve you with the Society. For a subscription of £20 per annum you will not only be making a valuable contribution but you will receive newsletters giving details of forthcoming concerts and other orchestra news. For more information please contact the Friends' Secretary: Mr Ian Smith  
37 Cae Pen-y-Dre, Abergavenny, NP7 5UP

## Mailing List

If you would like to be kept informed of future events, why not join our mailing list? Contact us on [info@abergavennysymph.org.uk](mailto:info@abergavennysymph.org.uk) and we will send you details of forthcoming events and concerts.

## Players in the Orchestra

### 1st Violin

Heidi Forde  
Romilly Cook  
Mary Dixon  
Selina Hamilton  
Jane Leney  
Elizabeth McFie  
Stephen Shearman  
Gemma Ratcliffe \*  
Paul Walster \*

### 2nd Violin

Rachel Stublely  
Jane Anscombe  
Cynthia Bailey-Wood  
Brigid Jones  
Asia Joseph  
Simon Marr-Johnson  
Lynne Pollitt  
Stephen Shaw  
Diana Turnbull  
Roger Levett \*

### Viola

Simon Large  
Clare McGowan  
Lucy Meredith  
Rachel Tucker  
Gavin Stoddart  
Angi Turnbull

### 'Cello

Stephen David  
Clare Fisher  
Laura Kostoris  
Rohan Lewis  
Tessa Lewis  
Alan Lodge  
Sue Rogers

### Double Bass

James Leney  
Kate Stephens  
Will Stephens

### Flute

Bethan Barlow  
Heather Leighton  
Sian Rees

### Oboe

Malcolm James  
Martin Bailey-Wood

### Clarinet

Robert Watson  
Trina Lodge

### Bassoon

Janet Lloyd  
Chris Poynton  
Becky Rogers

### Horn

Peter Geraghty  
Sarah Jones  
Rod Paton  
Hannah Stonelake

### Trumpet

Mark Perry  
Paul Kelly \*

### Trombone

Iestyn Harding  
Salvatore Frusteri  
Mike Standley

### Tuba

Chris Baker

### Timpani / Percussion

Judith Pendrous  
David Fraser  
William Fraser  
Odette Hutchison  
Sam Proll \*

\* The orchestra is grateful for the support of non-members who have augmented various sections for this concert.

such an assured performance of the Sibelius violin concerto in 2015. This time he will be playing Tchaikovsky's violin concerto, and the programme will also include Rossini's *William Tell* overture and Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*.

#### Other local concerts coming soon ...

##### **November 24<sup>th</sup> The Mavron Quartet**

Wales' leading string quartet perform Mozart String Quartet No. 1 in G, Ravel String Quartet in F and Tchaikovsky String Quartet No. 1 in D.

7.30pm at The Chapel, Brewery Yard

[artshopandgallery.co.uk/events/](http://artshopandgallery.co.uk/events/)

##### **November 25<sup>th</sup> Crickhowell Choral Society**

Dvořák Mass in D, with Brecknock Sinfonia.

7.30pm at Brecon Cathedral

[crickhowellchoralsociety.org/](http://crickhowellchoralsociety.org/)

##### **November 26<sup>th</sup> Monmouth Concert Orchestra**

Come along and listen to some of your favourite tunes including a selection from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, sing-along songs from *Mary Poppins* and some favourite carols.

4pm at Llangynidr Village Hall

##### **December 10<sup>th</sup> Unicorn Singers**

Thrilling sounds to herald the festive season. Choir, brass and the authentic sounds of Cornetts and Sackbutts join forces in sumptuous settings of Christmas favourites by such innovatory composers as Michael Praetorius and Giovanni Gabrieli.

8pm at Our Lady and St Michael's RC Church

[unicornsingers.co.uk/](http://unicornsingers.co.uk/)

# Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

Leader

**Heidi Forde**

Conductor

**Dennis Simons**

Guitar

**Giacomo Susani**

Overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, H76

Berlioz

Concierto de Aranjuez

Rodrigo

Allegro con spirito

Adagio

Allegro gentile

### **INTERVAL**

Refreshments will be available in the St Michael's Centre

Festive Overture, Op. 96

Shostakovich

Symphony No 5 E $\flat$ , Op. 82

Sibelius

Tempo molto moderato – Allegro moderato (ma poco a poco stretto) – Vivace molto – Presto – Più Presto

Andante mosso, quasi allegretto – Poco a poco stretto – Tranquillo – Poco a poco stretto – Ritenuto al tempo I

Allegro molto – Misterioso – Un pochettino largamente – Largamente assai – Un pochettino stretto

## Programme Notes

### **Overture to Benvenuto Cellini, H 76**                      **Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)**

Benvenuto Cellini, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian sculptor and goldsmith, appealed to Berlioz as the subject for an opera because they had in common the role of the bold innovatory artist adventuring in the world in defiance of its conventions. The opera *Benvenuto Cellini* was the first of three by Berlioz. When it appeared at the Paris Opéra in 1838 it failed partly because of an inadequate performance, and although it was performed in Weimar and London during the composer's lifetime it did not reappear in Paris until 1913.

In this overture, Berlioz takes some of the themes from the opera, beginning with a flourish that turns out to be the principal theme of the main body of the piece. Before the main allegro there is a slow section containing two themes from the opera, in which Berlioz uses the distinctive sound of the bass clarinet with muted strings and high wind. The composer uses sonata form except that in the recapitulation the themes are represented in reverse order with a final coda the culmination of a long crescendo.

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### **Concierto de Aranjuez**                                      **Joaquín Rodrigo (1901-1999)**

The Spanish composer Joaquín Rodrigo was born in Valencia. He became blind at the age of three after contracting diphtheria, but developed an early aptitude for music that eventually allowed him to study in Paris between 1927 and 1933 under the composer Paul Dukas. His output included a symphonic poem, several choral pieces, and a number of evocatively titled concertos featuring various solo instruments or instrumental groups (one of them, the *Concierto Anadaluza*, features four guitars). In 1947 he became professor of music history at Madrid University and continued composing into old age.

audition for Help Musicians UK as well as the Star Award of the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and First Prize at the David Russell Guitar Award held at the Royal Academy of Music.

In February 2015 the recording studio Stradivarius brought out his first solo CD *Giacomo Susani plays Petrassi, Bach, Tansman, Weiss*, which obtained excellent reviews from the public and critics alike published most notably in BBC Music, Gendai Guitar, Classical Guitar and Amadeus.

Giacomo Susani plays a guitar made by the English luthier David Rubio (1996), a guitar made by the Spanish luthier Domingo Esteso (1926) and a guitar by the German luthier Matthias Dammann (2013) kindly provided by Calleva Foundation.

### **Christmas Concert for Children**

This year's concert, conducted by Michael Bell, will be held in King Henry VIII school hall on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> at 4pm. This time it has a theme of Pirates and Mermaids and will include music from the films *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *The Little Mermaid* and much, much more. Entry is free and we will once again be collecting in aid of the Nevill Hall Children's Centre Trust.

### **Orchestra Workshop 2018**

Following the success of last year's Mahler 2 workshop we will be holding another workshop on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2018. Dennis Simons will again be directing us as we tackle Mahler's Symphony No 5. We welcome enquiries from players in every section. You can find more details and an application form on our website.

### **Spring Concert 2018**

Our spring concert will be held in Our Lady and St Michael's RC church on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March conducted by our Music Director Dennis Simons. We are delighted to welcome back Cristian Grajner de Sa, who gave

**DENNIS SIMONS**, PhD FRAM has returned to the UK after 20 years in North America where he was music director and conductor of the orchestras of Saskatoon (1993-1997), Shreveport (1996-2003) and North Dakota's Minot Symphony Orchestra (2002-2012). He has also guest conducted in the USA, Europe and Australia including the Toronto Symphony and the Victoria Symphony.

Prior to this he was founder leader of the Alberni String Quartet, co-leader of the London Philharmonic Orchestra and leader of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. He has performed as solo violinist on three continents and has given over 20 solo broadcasts for the BBC.

In addition to his position as Music Director of the Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra, he is also conductor of the Bristol Chamber Orchestra with guest conducting appearances including the Mid-Somerset Orchestra and return engagements with the Wessex Sinfonietta

**GIACOMO SUSANI** was born in Padua, Italy and started playing the guitar at the age of 7, eventually studying under the direction of Stefano Grondona at the Conservatorio Arrigo Pedrollo in Vicenza where he graduated with the highest marks and honours in 2013. He is currently continuing his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London, in the class of Michael Lewin, where he has completed his Bachelor of Music, gaining First Class Honours and the discretionary Bache Fund Prize, and is now studying for his Master's degree. On his entrance to the Academy he was awarded the prestigious Julian Bream Trust Scholarship, after an audition with Julian Bream himself.

In October 2016 he won First Prize at the London International Guitar Competition. In the same year he was also selected by the International Guitar Foundation under their Young Artist Platform Scheme for a series of concerts across the UK.

In April 2017 he was awarded First Prize at the Ivor Mairants Guitar Award in London after which he became a Yeoman of The Musicians' Company. Shortly after, he won the Ian Fleming Award following an

The *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra was completed in 1939. It takes its name from Aranjuez, a town not far from Madrid in central Spain and the site of a royal palace. This concerto is Rodrigo's best-known piece outside Spain and perfectly represents his total mastery of the Spanish idiom. The work is cast in the sunny key of D major following the traditional pattern of three movements (fast – slow – fast) and exudes throughout the warm, Mediterranean atmosphere of Spain, whether in its exotic rhythms, its folk-like tunes, its luxuriant orchestral colouring, or the virtuosic demands it makes on the solo guitarist. The most overwhelming impression made upon the listener is of a light and airy work in which the musical textures are very clear and well defined. Rodrigo ensures that at no time does the orchestra overpower the soloist.

The first movement is a cheerful dance, contrasting 3/4 and 6/8 rhythms simultaneously. The slow movement is measured and expressive. Some regard it as a piece of "night-music", calling to mind Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. But it also represents an evocation of timeless grandeur, evoking Spain's great history, a wander through an ancient famous palace (the royal palace at Aranjuez itself, perhaps), the glory days of which are in the past. Near the end of this movement there is a cadenza for the guitar, followed by an outburst for full orchestra. The last movement has a catchy main theme in which 3/4 rhythms alternate with 2/4 ones. The main musical idea is thrown around many different instruments and many different keys until after a final triumphant statement by the orchestra the concerto ends lightly and quietly.

### **Festive Overture, Op. 96**

**Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)**

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in St. Petersburg, and became an outstanding student at the Conservatoire. At first, his music was highly successful, but towards the end of the 1920s, his musical outlook became more experimental and this brought him into conflict with the Soviet authorities. In 1929, his first opera was officially criticised and his second, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, had to be withdrawn after violent

press attacks on its 'decadence'. While in 1938 his Fifth Symphony, subtitled 'a Soviet artist's reply to just criticism', resulted in his reinstatement, the relationship between the composer and the authorities remained strained. He weathered a further crisis period in 1948, when the then leading Russian composers were attacked for 'deviationism', 'formalism', and other perceived inadequacies. However, with the death of Stalin in 1953, he wrote one of his finest symphonies, the Tenth, followed in 1954 by this Festive Overture. The sparkling gaiety of this piece was undoubtedly stimulated by the hope of a less oppressive, more liberal, musical atmosphere in Russia – a hope that, as it proved, was not without foundation.

**Symphony No 5 in E♭ major, Op. 82**                      **Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)**

The Symphony No. 5 is one of the most approachable of the seven symphonies that Sibelius completed. It has something in common with his heroic second symphony. But Sibelius worked on it during a time of great trial, both personal and national.

Sibelius's native Finland took no part in World War I, but its merchant fleet was blockaded in the Gulf of Bothnia and the country suffered food shortages and unemployment. Sibelius's publisher, Breitkopf & Härtel, was German, and consequently his income from royalties dried up. Inflation had eroded the purchasing power of his state pension. Nor could he obtain any conducting engagements outside Finland. Following the Soviet Revolution of 1917, Finland declared its independence. In the civil war that ensued between the Communist Red Guards and the non-Socialist White Guards, Sibelius supported the Whites and was forced to leave for a time his beloved home at Järvenpää. Against this unfavourable and disruptive background Sibelius was forced to keep body and soul together by writing for the domestic market. Consequently, he composed a large amount of piano music and short pieces for violin and piano. Yet he also managed to complete this symphony, the only major work that he wrote during the war years. He finished the original version of it in 1915 and it was premièred in this

form in Helsinki on his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, 8<sup>th</sup> December of that year, under the direction of his friend Robert Kajanus. Thereafter, the symphony underwent a series of revisions. Cumulatively, the alterations proved so radical that the resulting symphony, first performed in Helsinki on 24<sup>th</sup> November 1919, was virtually a different piece from that which had been heard in 1915.

The work as we know it today starts as if it were a cousin of Brahms's second symphony – horn calls introduce a big, wayward movement that takes in a lot of emotional and musical ground. It is founded upon a succession of thematic ideas – one an ascending melody for horn (the tune that opens the whole piece); another, a bleak theme for woodwinds heard against shimmering strings; still another, a bright, victorious-sounding passage for three trumpets. This movement was originally two separate movements, the second being a scherzo; but after much experiment Sibelius ran them together for a performance in 1916. The intermezzo-like slow movement shows what Sibelius could do in developing a fragment of tune by cunning variation. The massive finale alternates whirling strings and sonorous brass writing, and the bell-like theme first heard on the horns comes to dominate the music in one of the composer's most majestic perorations. A series of powerful chords with plenty of silence between each one underlines the triumphant close to a symphony that was so long in the making.

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