

New members

If you would be interested in joining the orchestra, please contact us at 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, you go to 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: **Abergavenny Music** for their tireless support of local music and for selling our tickets; **Dance Blast** for provision of our rehearsal venue; Music publishers **Boosey & Hawkes**; The Music Parts Service at **Liverpool Libraries**; **David Fraser at Abergavenny Library** for helping secure inter-library loans.

Abergavenny Orchestral Society is a Registered Charity no: 1076523



Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

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

Sunday 25th June 2017, 8pm

www.abergavennysymph.org.uk

Abergavenny Orchestral Society

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

Friends:

Mr E & Mrs J Anscombe	Mr A & Mrs S Konieczny
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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 and we will send you details of forthcoming events and concerts.

Players in the Orchestra

1st Violin

Sophie Silverstone
Ruth Brown
Romilly Cook
Jane Leney
Stephen Shearman
Rachel Stubley
Lisa Orton
Pui Yee Holly Shum
Jill Stanbury
Paul Walster

2nd Violin

Alice Cox
Jane Anscombe
Cynthia Bailey-Wood
Brigid Jones
Simon Marr-Johnson
Kim Mather
Stephen Shaw
Diana Turnbull
Dayna Townsend

Viola

Simon Large
Rachel Tucker
Meryl Jones

Jim Drummond
Deborah De Lloyd

'Cello

Stephen David
Clare Fisher
Laura Kostoris
Rohan Lewis
Alan Lodge
Sonia Hammond
David Rose

Double Bass

James Leney
Kate Stephens
Will Stephens

Flute

Bethan Barlow
Heather Leighton
Sian Rees

Oboe

Malcolm James
Martin Bailey-Wood
Charlotte Salter

Clarinet

Robert Watson
Bob Osborne

Saxophone

Emily Maloney
Daisy Cooksley

Bassoon

Janet Lloyd
Becky Rogers

Horn

Peter Geraghty
Sarah Jones
Hannah Stonelake
Dai Williams

Trumpet

Jonathan Mudd
Mark Perry
Paul Kelly

Trombone

Iestyn Harding
Salvatore Frusteri
Mike Standley

Tuba

Chris Baker

Timpani / Percussion

James Joseph
David Fraser
William Fraser
Odette Hutchison
Judith Pendrous
Justine Wheatley

Piano

Chris Lovegrove

Harp

Alys Bailey-Wood

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

July 8th Gwent Bach Choir

Music for a summer's evening by Mendelssohn, Elgar, Pearsall and others

7.30pm at The Priory Centre, St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny

gwentbachchoir.org/

July 9th Crickhowell Choral Society

HMS Pinafore. For one night only, the good ship Pinafore has docked. So if you are yearning to sail the ocean blue, come and join the crew for a voyage full of infectious tunes and sparkling libretto as it navigates the choppy waters of love across the class divide.

6pm at St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell

crickhowellchoralsociety.org/

July 17th Llangenny Flutes Summer School

Sarah Newbold and Zoe Smith give a flute and piano recital on the first night of this week-long summer school

7.30pm at School Hall, Llangenny, Crickhowell

llangennyflutes.com/

Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

Leader

Sophie Silverstone

Guest Conductor

Michael Bell

Finlandia, Op. 26

Sibelius

Valse Triste, Op. 44, No 1

Sibelius

Suite for Variety Orchestra (Jazz Suite No 2)

Shostakovich

March

Lyric Waltz

Dance 1

Waltz 1

Little Polka

Waltz 2

Dance 2

INTERVAL

Refreshments will be available in the St Michael's Centre

Suite No 3 in G, Op. 55

Tchaikovsky

Élégie (Andantino molto cantabile)

Valse mélancolique (Allegro moderato)

Scherzo (Presto)

Tema con variazioni (Andante con moto)

Programme Notes

Finlandia, Op. 26

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

The most characteristic feature of the music of Sibelius is that, in spite of not being deliberately modern, it is completely different from any other music. His strong individuality and personal style revealed itself in his very first compositions and it is noteworthy that, unlike most other composers in their earlier works, he never came under the dominant influence of any of the great composers of his younger days. He succeeded in absorbing all foreign influences into his own musical personality, which was firmly rooted in his native soil, gaining constant inspiration from both folk music and the natural beauty of his surroundings. These sources of inspiration account for an elemental, almost pagan, strength characterising all his writings.

The tone-poem Finlandia is one of Sibelius' earliest compositions and perhaps the first to bring him international recognition. Written in 1899, at a time when Finland suffered under Russian domination, it appeared to express in such a vivid way the struggle of the Finns against oppression and their yearning for liberty that it soon became the treasured possession of his compatriots and the musical manifestation of Finnish patriotism for the rest of the world.

It is significant that the principal theme is so much like a Finnish folk song that it was at first found hard to believe that it was in fact an original invention of Sibelius. When it first appears, intoned gently by the woodwind after the gloom of the powerful brass passages of the introduction, it conveys the impression of an enchanting landscape emerging from the mist after a storm. But darkness and vigorous conflicts return again building up towards the final climax which culminates in a last victorious return of this lovely tune – played this time by the brass with the support of the full orchestra – which brings to a rousing conclusion this wonderful musical expression of an oppressed nation's struggles and hopes for freedom and deliverance.

Autumn Concert 2017

Our autumn concert will be held in Our Lady and St Michael's RC church on Sunday 19th November conducted by our Music Director Dennis Simons. The programme will include Berlioz *Benvenuto Cellini Overture*, Rodrigo *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra, Shostakovich *Festive Overture* and Sibelius *Symphony No 5*.

Christmas Concert for Children

We will be putting on another children's concert this year, this time conducted by Michael Bell. We are still working on the theme for our concert this year, so check our website for further details.

Orchestra Workshop 2018

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

Other local concerts coming soon ...

June 30th Charlie Beresford & Sonia Hammond

Welsh Marches based duo, Beresford & Hammond will be launching their new album *Each Edge of the Field*

7.30pm at The Chapel, Brewery Yard

artshopandgallery.co.uk/events/

July 2nd Harp and Flute Evening

Katherine Thomas and Sarah Newbold from the Dragonfly Ensemble

6pm at the Walled Garden Treberfydd, Llangasty

www.walledgardentreberfydd.com/events/

MICHAEL BELL was born in Neath. After graduating from Cardiff University Michael formed Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra and has conducted the orchestra since CPO's inaugural concert in June 1982.

With Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra Michael has conducted a wide range of works, most notably major pieces such as Mahler's Symphony No 2 *Resurrection*, Richard Strauss' *An Alpine Symphony*, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, Shostakovich's *Leningrad Symphony*, Elgar's Symphonies 1 & 2 and Rachmaninov's Symphony No 2. Michael is also a great enthusiast of light music and film music, and each year since 1994 has conducted CPO in an annual series of "A Night at the Movies" at venues throughout South Wales.

Michael is a regular presenter of talks with Cardiff Recorded Music Society.

In February 2010 Michael was invited to conduct the Brecknock Sinfonia at Brecon Cathedral and has since become the orchestra's regular conductor.

Michael is honoured to have been invited to conduct the Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra's summer concert in 2017.

IVOR COX



The members of Abergavenny Orchestral Society wish to dedicate this concert to our friend and colleague, Ivor Cox, who died suddenly on May 15th, the day after rehearsing this programme, with his customary huge enjoyment and gusto, in the

midst of us all. Ivor will be greatly missed, and our thoughts are with his family.

Valse Triste, Op. 44 No 1

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

This piece was originally part of the incidental music that Sibelius composed for his brother-in-law Arvid Järnefelt's 1903 play *Kuolema* (Death), but is far better known as a separate concert piece. This description is taken from the original programme notes:

"It is night; the son, who has been watching beside the bedside of his sick mother, has fallen asleep from sheer weariness. Gradually a ruddy light is diffused through the room; there is the sound of distant music (strains of a waltz melody). The sleeping mother awakens, rises from her bed and begins to move silently. She waves her hands and beckons in time to the music. Strange visionary couples appear, turning and gliding to an unearthly waltz rhythm. Then she seems to sink exhausted on her bed and the music breaks off. Presently she gathers all her strength and invokes the dance again with more energetic gestures than before. Back come the shadowy dancers gyrating in a wild mad rhythm. The weird gaiety reaches a climax; there is a knock at the door which flies wide open; the mother utters a despairing cry; the spectral guests vanish. The music dies away. Death stands at the threshold."

Suite for Variety Orchestra

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

It is difficult to reconcile the Dmitri Shostakovich who wrote symphonies full of bitter introspection, and hollow triumph, with the same Dmitri Shostakovich who played piano for silent films and had an enduring love of light music. For many years this work was misidentified as the "lost" Suite for Jazz Orchestra No 2 (1938), a different work in three movements that was lost during World War II and eventually rediscovered as a piano score in 1999.

The Suite for Variety Orchestra is a collection of movements largely derived from other works by the composer. It is thought to have been assembled by Shostakovich at least post-1956, because of the use of material from that year's music to the film *The First Echelon*. However, little else is known about it.

This is a work full of joy and wit, a succession of typically Russian, brazen marches, catchy polkas and mock-Viennese waltzes. It is scintillatingly scored for a large orchestra including piano and a clutch of saxophones, and gives every orchestral section a chance to shine.

Suite No 3 in G, Op. 55

Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

The suite was written in 1884 while Tchaikovsky was staying at his sister's country estate at Kamenka near Kiev. He wrote in his diary at the time "While walking in the forest and indoors I have been trying to lay the foundation of a new symphony ... but I am not at all satisfied. Walked in the garden and found the germ, not of a symphony, but of a future suite." The first performance in January 1885, conducted by Hans von Bülow, was a huge success. "Never have I had such a triumph," Tchaikovsky wrote to his patroness, Nadejda von Meck. "I could see that the greater part of the audience was touched and grateful. Such moments are the best in an artist's life."

The Suite's opening movement, subtitled *Élégie*, though thoroughly devoid of any morbidity, is a fine example of the skill Tchaikovsky had developed by the last decade of his life in sustaining simple lyrical expressions over an extended time span. The opening theme, a sweet melody in swaying 6/8 meter initiated by the strings, is followed by a step-wise motive in a contrasting rhythm, which in turn becomes the accompaniment for the repeat of the principal theme. The movement's subsidiary theme is a smooth, flowing strain given by unison flutes in a new key area. The centre section maintains the movement's mood by suave juxtapositions and elaborations of the themes which use the techniques of symphonic development in a lyrical rather than a dramatic manner. The return to the home tonality is marked by a grand presentation of the second theme. The *Élégie* closes with a truncated recall of the opening melody and an extended coda led by the English horn.

The *Valse mélancolique* ("the obligatory waltz" he dubbed it in his diary because of the trouble it cost him) is based on one of Tchaikovsky's

most finely crafted melodies. To complement the breathy sound of unison flutes in their low register, the orchestral palate is dark and subdued, an effect which presages many of the murmuring pages of Sibelius. The movement's climax, strewn with ribbons of woodwind scales, comes in its centre section before the wistful waltz returns to round out the form.

Tchaikovsky's friend Herman Laroche characterized the following Scherzo as music for "a lilliputian army, tiny elfin-soldiers on parade." Its scoring shimmers, and its mercurial filigree and rhythmic restlessness lend it an effervescence that looks forward to passages in the *Nutcracker*.

The finale is a splendid set of eleven variations with a concluding Polacca equal in length to the three preceding movements combined. It was one of Tchaikovsky's favourites among his own works, and he conducted it frequently by itself and as part of the Suite. He led the Suite during the inaugural week of concerts in New York's Carnegie Hall in May 1891 with great success. Arthur Nikisch, music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, heeded the public demand to hear the piece again, and played it on the BSO's East Coast tour that November. The movement's theme is a four-square Classical melody, original with Tchaikovsky, which he elaborated into a wide variety of beautifully polished variations — lyrical, sweeping, balletic, fugal, folk-like, ecclesiastical, virtuosic — and concluded with a brilliant Polacca.

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Programme notes include those supplied through Making Music's programme note service.