



Bedfordshire Orchestral Society

2025 Spring/Summer Season Concerts

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Bedfordshire
Orchestral Society
is a registered
charity. No. 262813



Welcome

A message from the Chair of Bedfordshire Orchestral Society

Welcome to our 2025 season. As we enter the second quarter of the 21st century, we make no apology for championing great composers of the past such as Dvořák, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky, Elgar and Vaughan Williams. We are also throwing in a few bonuses like Britten's sparkling *Violin Concerto* and some Delius, as well as a work by our Conductor Emeritus, Michael Rose, and a new piece by Gregory May, commissioned by our friends at Bedford Choral Society.

We also welcome back two of our guest conductors. Cathal Garvey will be conducting us in Sibelius' much-loved *Symphony No. 2*, while Bjorn Bantock will be performing his great-grandfather's work, *The Sea Reivers*.

We are always conscious of the need to support young musicians, on whom our future depends. We will again be helping some of the winners of this year's Bedfordshire Festival of Music, Speech and Drama by giving them the chance to work on a concerto with a full orchestra. We are also actively engaging with local schools to give advanced students the chance to experience playing with a full symphony orchestra, as well as offering seats at our concerts to under 18s.

Our members are volunteers who love performing and sharing great music, but we receive no financial support from local or national government or arts councils. So our heartfelt thanks go to our supporters, partners and, most of all, you the audience, without whom we could not continue.

Live music is unique. No stream, download or broadcast can match the live experience. We hope you enjoy the concert and, if you do, please spread the word so that we can fulfil our exciting plans for the years ahead. Stay tuned!

David Mercer
Chair, Bedfordshire Orchestral Society

Coming up...

BEDFORD SINFONIA CONCERT

Sat 25 January 2025

Corn Exchange, Bedford 7:30pm

Svendsen **Norwegian Rhapsody No. 3**

Milhaud **Le Boeuf sur le toit**

Andrzej Panufnik **Concertino for timpani and percussion**

Dvořák **Symphony No. 7**

BEDFORDSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Sat 15 February 2025

Corn Exchange, Bedford 7:30pm

Lyadov **The Enchanted Lake**

Britten **Violin Concerto**

Sibelius **Symphony No. 2**

BEDFORD SINFONIA CONCERT

Sat 3 May 2025

St. Paul's Church, Bedford 7:30pm
(with a pre-concert talk from the soloist,
Paul Harris)

Delius & Holst: **Orchestral songs**

Arnold **Clarinet Concerto**

Vaughan Williams **Symphony No. 5**

BEDFORDSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Sat 24 May 2025

Corn Exchange, Bedford 7:30pm

Bantock **The Sea Reivers**

Shostakovich **Cello Concerto No. 1**

Tchaikovsky **Symphony No. 6 'Pathétique'**

BEDFORD CHORAL SOCIETY with BEDFORD SINFONIA

Sat 21 June 2025

Corn Exchange, Bedford 7:30pm

Handel **Dixit Dominus**

Michael Rose **Songs of Innocence & Experience**

Gregory May (new commission)

Elgar **Serenade for Strings**

Tickets

Box Office, Harpur Suite,
3 Harpur St, Bedford MK40 1LE

Tel: 01234 718044

www.bedfordsymphony.com



About us

The Bedfordshire Orchestral Society is a registered charity and exists to support music education and to provide high quality classical music for the people of Bedfordshire: local musicians performing for local audiences.

There are two orchestras. Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra has approximately 50 members, including talented young musicians from sixth formers to local university students. BSO is passionate about sharing music, especially larger symphonic works of the nineteenth and twentieth century, with their audience and making this music accessible to all. It attracts internationally renowned musicians as soloists, allowing them to perform a wide range of challenging repertoire.

Since their first concert nearly 60 years ago, many generations of young professionals, amateur musicians and dedicated professionals have played together in BSO. The orchestra deserves its reputation as a training ground for many classical musicians who have gone on to have careers in music around the world.

Bedford Sinfonia is a smaller orchestra which specialises in chamber works and brings a huge diversity in programming, creating unforgettable musical experiences that inspire and captivate audiences in Bedford. Having established itself as one of the most innovative orchestras in the region, it demonstrates a strong commitment to bringing ambitious and interesting programmes to the stage. Bedford Sinfonia also frequently accompanies Bedford Choral Society in their concerts.



Young musicians speak

BOS in the community

"I enjoyed seeing how the orchestra and Ian performed the Beethoven. The tone and atmosphere were particularly compelling and we can take a lot away from the concert."

Olivia, NBYCO student

"It's inspired me to practise! There's such a high level of playing and musicianship! I appreciated the fact we got free tickets - it meant many more of us from NYBCO could come."

Hannah, NBYCO student

"I just want to say a huge thank you to Bedfordshire Orchestral Society for granting me and my fellow youth orchestra members to attend the recent Bedford Sinfonia concert..."

Nelly, leader of NBYCO cello section

Supporting young people

Our work with local people begins with schools, colleges and youth music groups. We are delighted that young musicians from the excellent North Bedfordshire Youth Chamber Orchestra (NBYCO), as well as local schools, are rehearsing with us and benefiting from the experience of performing with a full symphony orchestra.

For a number of years Bedford Sinfonia has supported young musicians from the Bedfordshire Festival with a concerto workshop. Our stars of the future get the chance to rehearse and perform one of their favourite concertos with a full orchestra in front of an audience, often the first time they have done so.

We are also running a project which allows young people to attend our concerts free of charge so that they can experience the joy and excitement of attending live music events. We work directly with local schools to promote this initiative.

During this season we are collaborating with Bedford Greenacre Independent School to support Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra's performance of Lyadov's *The Enchanted Lake* in February. Year 6 students will create artwork related to this fabulous music and will see it displayed during the performance. It should be a unique and rewarding experience!

The BOS Committee has many other exciting ideas for improving our collaboration with and support for young people in the community, and we always welcome suggestions and invitations from potential partners. Please contact chair@bedfordsymphony.com to discuss.

Friends of BOS

Our orchestras attract a growing audience of regular supporters who often ask if they can support us on an ongoing basis. The Committee is currently developing a Friends scheme which will meet this need and which should be up and running for our 25/26 season.



To register your interest, and for regular news and updates on our activities, please join our WhatsApp group: see the back page of the programme for the QR code.

Sponsors

Since the 1960s Bedfordshire has developed a proud reputation as a recognised national centre of excellence in music education. The BOS is immensely proud of our young musicians as they move on to the next stage in their education and careers. Many of us have followed similar paths in the past and we are pleased to work with organisations which help them to fulfil their musical dreams.

By attending our concerts, our audiences play a vital role in allowing us to support young people as well as enhancing the cultural life of the community. In order to meet our ambitions, we also invite sponsorship from public and private sector organisations who wish to benefit from being associated with this valuable work. Please contact chair@bedfordsymphony.com to discuss how we might work together.

We are grateful to the Gale Family Charity Trust for their generous support.



**Bedford
Greenacre
Independent
School**

We are very excited to be collaborating with Ms Vicky Garden, Art Teacher at Bedford Greenacre Independent School, and her Year 6 classes in a very special project for the concert on 15 February.

Using *The Enchanted Lake* by Lyadov as a stimulus for their artwork, the Year 6 children will create unique pieces for us to share with our audience during the performance.

Huge thanks to Vicky Garden, the staff and the Year 6 pupils at BGI for their investment in this collaboration. Thanks to them, this is certainly going to be a concert like no other, that you will never forget!

For more information about Bedford Greenacre Independent School:
www.bedfordgreenacre.co.uk

BOS Leaders

Caroline Waters was born in Jersey and began violin lessons at the age of 7. With the help of a musical benefactor, Caroline continued her studies from the age of 14 in Manchester at Chetham's School of Music. Continuing at the Royal Northern College of Music, she studied with Richard Deakin; throughout her time in Manchester she enjoyed opportunities to lead orchestras and perform chamber music.

Caroline has lived in Bedfordshire since 1989, when she began playing with the Bedford Orchestras under the baton of Michael Rose. She divides her time between performance work and teaching violin and viola. Caroline is happiest playing music with others and spent 27 years enjoying playing string quartets with the Kaznowski String Quartet. She performs regularly as a soloist and chamber musician, now leading The Element String Quartet, Trio and Duo.

Caroline leads the Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra. She also enjoys working with a number of London-based orchestras including the King's Chamber Orchestra, Adoramus, All Souls' Langham Place and the Dove English Orchestra, with whom she performed in Jerusalem last year. She has played on tours in Italy, Germany, France and the Channel Islands.

Alex Collins started learning the violin at the age of 8 and won numerous local competitions and a music scholarship to Bedford School to study with Martin Hughes. This started to sculpt Alex's musical identity, and he later gained a place at The Royal College of Music. During his time at the RCM, Alex played under Sir Antonio Pappano, Vladimir Jurowski and Thomas Zehetmair. He also formed part of the Vesta Quartet, who gave concerts in and around London, and received regular coaching from the Chilingirian Quartet. Alex was then given a scholarship to complete his Masters at Guildhall School of Music and Drama under Stephanie Gonley, graduating this year.

Closer to home, Alex enjoys performing as soloist with Bedford Sinfonia, and other highlights have included performances at the Royal Albert Hall and at Birmingham's Symphony Hall. He performs regularly with the Element String Quartet and the London Firebird Orchestra.



BOS Members

Bedfordshire Orchestral Society members who play in either one or both of our orchestras: Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra and Bedford Sinfonia

Leaders:

Alex Collins
Caroline Waters

Violin

Alex Collins
Alison Brown
Amelie Gemmill
Andrea Broughton
Ann Collins
Ann Martin
Caroline Waters
Carolyn Adams
Catherine Shedden
Chris Phelps
Christine Bullough
Clive Bachmanis

David Mercer
Debbie Saunders
Diana Stammers
Dorothy Williams
Ellie Calstar-Fisher
Georgina Aylott
Georgina Murphy
James Beauchamp
Jan Kaznowski
Jane Roper
Jane Thomas
Julia Robinson
Julia Smith

Kate Thain
Lucy Pollard
Martin Gill
Mike Gemmill
Olivia Collins
Olivia Sneddon
Philip Hines
Rupert Adams
Sara Brindley
Sebastian Whitmarsh
Sue Walsh
Toby Henson
William Pool



BOS Members

Viola

Benjamin Phillips
Hazel Farrow
John Shayler
Julia Dunmow
Julian Pentz
Lucy Norton
Sheila Kaznowska
Zoe Ashford

Cello

Andrea Kilpatrick
Andrew Blake
Barbara Taylor
Emily Lawson

Felicity Gibson
Gwyneth James
Hannah Kilpatrick
James Jarvis
Jane Sieling
Jane Wheeler
Jo Ploszajski
Julia Benham
Julia Lence
Molly Oldland
Nick Ingles
Pam Rogers
Phillip Luck
Rachel Wainwright
Susan Bradley

Double Bass

Alison Randall
Ben Atkins
David Williams
Ian Tipping

Flute

Bridget Wilson
Lucy Buckland
Nicola Phillips
Philippa Bennett

Oboe

Jayne Henderson
Jo Bell
Simon Cooper
Vicky Owen

Clarinet

Claire Vogeli
Dominic Mills
Liz Cox
Malcolm Green

Bassoon

Caroline Cartwright
David Della Valle
Sian Bunker

Horn

Bob Bright
Eoin Dineen
Heidi Woodhead
Kate Knight
Luke Woodhead
Matt Jewell
Tom Molloy

Trumpet

Andrew Russell
Frank Stevens
Nick Bunker
Peter Halliday
Stephen Rapp

Trombone/Tuba

Ben Williams
Chris Topley
Gareth King
Nick Williams





Saturday, 25 January 2025, Bedford Corn Exchange

BEDFORD SINFONIA

Guest conductor: Ian Smith

Soloists: Rachel Gledhill (timpani) and David Hext (percussion)

Norwegian Rhapsody No. 3, Op. 21
Johan Svendsen (1840 – 1911)

Born in Christiania (now Oslo) on 30 September 1840, Johan Svendsen learned several instruments and played in his father's regimental band before concentrating on the violin and becoming a pupil of Carl Arnold. In 1863, Svendsen began to study at the Leipzig Conservatory where he focused on composition and conducting. Returning to Norway in 1867, he directed a concert of his music that drew positive notices (not least from his contemporary Edvard Grieg), but public response was less forthcoming. After two years in Paris, he returned to Leipzig where he became leader and assistant director of the Euterpe Orchestra. In 1872 Svendsen returned to Christiania as joint conductor, along with Grieg, of the Music Society concerts. The next five years saw his most significant achievements as a composer, after which he wrote only a handful of new works, and conducting became dominant in his career. Aside from guest engagements, he remained in Norway until 1883, when he became principal conductor of the Royal Opera in Copenhagen. His quarter-century there raised orchestral standards to a new level, and many younger musicians (not least Carl Nielsen, who played in

the orchestra between 1889 and 1905) benefited from his example.

Nowhere is the Classical-Romantic fusion of Svendsen's thinking better illustrated than with his four Norwegian Rhapsodies. The first three of these emerged toward the end of 1876, with the final one appearing early the following year. They were inspired by the Hungarian Rhapsodies of Liszt and material drawn from Ludvig Lindeman's *Older and Newer Melodies from the Norwegian Mountains*, which became the starting point for Svendsen's creations.

The *Norwegian Rhapsody No. 3* starts with lively gestures on strings before the first theme, robust and suave by turns, enters on woodwind and is taken up by the strings. A hushed transition on the timpani prepares for the rapt second theme, initially on upper strings before being developed by solo horn and then by the lower strings, offset by pert woodwind chords. Reaching an eloquent climax, it makes way for a more energetic theme that shares its predecessor's pathos, and whose ebullience brings about a decisive close to the piece.

Concertino for timpani, percussion and strings

Andrzej Panufnik (1914 – 1991)

Andrzej Panufnik's *Concertino for timpani, percussion and strings* was composed on a commission from the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) to write a work for a competition for young performers organised by the LSO in collaboration with Shell Oil. For the final of the competition, the young musicians were to perform solo instrumental concertos accompanied by the LSO. In 1980 it was the turn of the percussionists (every year the winners were selected in a different instrumental section) and it was suggested to Panufnik that the new composition might include a variety of percussion instruments in its solo parts.

Although the *Concertino* has brevity and limited scoring (the soloists are accompanied only by the strings), it is fully aware of the need to match the difficulty of the piece to the skills of the young, though already fully professional, players. The *Concertino* consists of five short movements following one another without a break. They are: *Entrata*, *Canto I*, *Intermezzo*, *Canto II* and *Fine*.

The composer approached the work in an unconventional manner, treating the solo instruments in a way that was far from obvious, which he explained as follows: 'In this work I wanted to take a fresh look at percussion and to emphasise especially the expressive, even the singing quality of the instruments:

hence the title 'song' for two of the movements. Rather than presenting conventional technical challenges or producing a variety of new gimmicks, my intention was to compose a test of true musicianship; to demonstrate quality of sound, precision, and above all an understanding of the musical content of the work, its poetic element.' This does not mean, however, that the *Concertino* is totally devoid of virtuoso or showy accents (evident primarily in *Fine*). It is dominated by an aura of reflection and nostalgia, perfectly highlighted by the use of percussion instruments, for example tubular bells (*Entrata*), and by the homogeneous, warm sound of the strings (especially in *Canto I* and *II*).

The composer has written that 'Regarding musical language, as in my previous works, I was trying to achieve clarity and a sense of order through a self-imposed discipline. Thus, the *Concertino* is based on one four-note cell (fa, sol, si, do), introduced at the beginning of the work by the tubular chimes. This cell, used both melodically and harmonically, emerges from time to time throughout the whole work to bring organic unity to the whole piece.'

Programme notes: Anon, edited Uwe Radok

Le Boeuf sur le toit

Darius Milhaud (1892 – 1974)

Born in Aix-en-Provence into an affluent, cultured family, Darius Milhaud studied violin, but mainly composition, at the Paris Conservatory.

When he wrote the ballet *Le Boeuf sur le toit* ('The Ox on the Roof'), Milhaud was a member of Les Six, a group of composers living and working in Paris from 1917 into the 1920s, whose members reacted against 'Wagnerism' and Impressionism. In 1917, Milhaud travelled to Brazil and became fascinated with its music and rhythms, which inspired him to write *Le Boeuf*, a rondo-form fantasia on popular Brazilian tunes that included folk tunes, maxixes, sambas, tangos, a Portuguese fado and 'O boi no telhado', a popular Brazilian song.

The following is Milhaud's own account of the origin of the work: 'Still haunted by my memories of Brazil, I assembled a few popular melodies, tangos, maxixes, sambas and even a Portuguese fado and transcribed them with a rondo-like theme recurring between each successive pair. I called this fantasia *Le Boeuf sur le toit*, which was the title of a Brazilian popular song. I thought that the character of this music might make it suitable for an accompaniment to one of Charlie Chaplin's films. At that time, the silent films were accompanied by fragments of classical music, rendered by large or small orchestras, or even a single piano, according to the financial means available.'

Although *Le Boeuf sur le toit* did not provide an accompaniment for any Charlie Chaplin film, the work gained popularity. Jean Cocteau provided a separate scenario, and it was produced in 1920 as a curious mixture of

ballet and farce, set in an American 'speakeasy' during Prohibition. Characters include a barman, a bookie, an African-American boxer, a dwarf, a fashionable lady and a red-haired woman in male attire. Bizarre events include the classy lady carrying off the dwarf over her shoulder to play pool, and the bookie knocking out the boxer. When a policeman enters, the bar quickly becomes a milk bar (this was the time of Prohibition in the United States). The barman switches on the overhead fan, which decapitates the investigating policeman, and the red-haired woman imitates Salome by dancing with the severed head. Customers leave. The barman reattaches the policeman's head, and the reanimated policeman is left to pay the customers' bills.

Programme notes: Stuart Brown

Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70

Antonin Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

Allegro maestoso

Poco adagio

Scherzo vivace

Finale: allegro

Although Dvořák wrote a great many compositions of all kinds and of variable quality during the 1860s and 1870s, including his first four symphonies, it was not until 1875 that he won recognition following the award of an Austrian State Grant. At this time, his music came to the attention of Brahms, one of the adjudicators for the

award, and it was Brahms who became one of his earliest champions and his staunch and loyal friend. Brahms recommended Dvořák to Simrock, his Berlin publisher, who accepted Dvořák's Moravian Duets and first set of Slavonic Dances. These works brought Dvořák international fame and Simrock a handsome profit.

Dvořák's first four symphonies remained unpublished in his lifetime and it was the later, mature batch of five that won him renown in this medium. With the new numbering of the symphonies in the 1950s, based on the chronological order of Dvořák's output, we can now see clearly the composer's artistic development as a symphonist.

The symphony in D minor, now rightly called No. 7, came in one continuous flow of inspiration during 1884-85. Dvořák had been excited by hearing Brahms' *Symphony No. 3* and set out to compose something 'capable of shaking the world'. By this time, Dvořák had visited England twice, and the *Symphony No. 7* was a response to a commission from the Philharmonic Society of London, with the outcome a powerful work close to the symphonic concept of Brahms. Further, its seriousness, sombre colours, and choice of D minor as its key came as a surprise to audiences who had become used to hearing warm Bohemian melodies from the Czech master.

There is also a sense in which the D minor symphony can be considered as an abstract opera. It is intensely dramatic and tragic. The burden of the action is borne by the closely argued outer movements, both of which are in sonata form. The slow movement can be heard as a reflective scena, and the Scherzo as a dance sequence. Concerning its quality, one only needs to quote Donald Tovey, who rated it 'among the greatest and purest examples in this art form since Beethoven, possessing none of the weaknesses of form which so often spoil Dvořák's best work'.

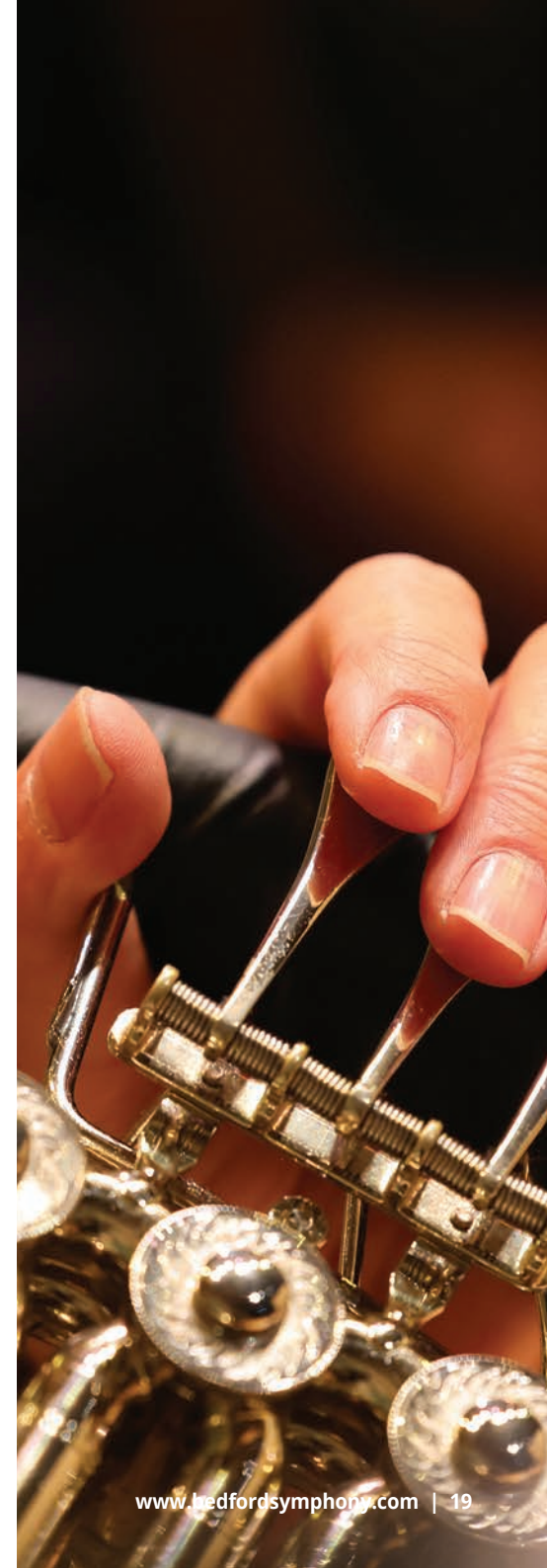
In the opening Allegro maestoso, a lugubrious theme emerges from the depths of the orchestra on violas and cellos. From this beginning it gives way to a warm, broad melody in B flat major, introduced by flute and clarinets, and this welcome lyrical subject is used to usher in the concise development followed by impassioned interventions from the main theme. The lyrical theme provides the movement's fierce climax. There is a sense of tragedy, exhaustion and finally resignation as the music dissolves into silence.

A beautiful, yearning melody is glowingly presented by the clarinet in the second movement. There is a remarkably ruminative, withdrawn passage followed by signs of hope from the horn, and outbursts of firm faith from the full orchestra. The cellos give their own version of the melody, and hope rather than resignation is suggested as this movement of changing moods draws to a quiet close.

The Scherzo leaves drama and reflection to one side in favour of the dance; here it is a kind of furiant, a Czech dance in quick triple time. In the outer sections there are two lines to follow – a broken figure and a smooth counter-melody. The main theme of the trio is a legato figure introduced by the oboe, who passes it to the flute.

The atmosphere of serious, heroic endeavour is resumed in the Finale. A grim theme is introduced and is soon given further impetus by an upward arpeggio-like figure from the winds. Other themes enter, and the argument is stormy before we hear the second subject, a confident melody in A major presented by the cellos. Gloom and doubt from clarinet and bassoon commence the powerful, extended development, and the intense struggle continues into the recapitulation culminating in victory, though the agonised outburst near the end tells us how hard-won the triumph was. True to the source of its commission, the symphony received its first performance at St James Hall, London, in April 1885, with the composer conducting.

Programme notes: Ben Brickman



Saturday, 25 January 2025

Soloists: Rachel Gledhill (timpani) and David Hext (percussion)



David Hext - Percussion

David was an active participant in a great number of the youth ensembles in Bedfordshire during the 70s, performing alongside Rachel Gledhill in many of them. His father Terry was head of brass teaching in the county and his mother Marion was head of music at Daubeney School in Kempston.

He took part in the Shell/LSO Percussion Competition in 1980 for which the Panufnik Concertino that's being performed today was written. He then went on to study percussion at the Royal College of Music in London and was also a member of the European Youth Orchestra.

He has been Principal Percussionist of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester since 1989.

Rachel Gledhill - Timpani

Rachel, born in Yorkshire, began her musical journey in the Brass Band world. She moved to Bedford in 1981 and attended Pilgrim School, where her music teacher was Ian Smith, our conductor this evening. She soon joined the Bedfordshire Youth Music Service and became involved with Bedford Town Band, run by Terry Hext.

Rachel studied at the Royal College of Music (RCM), supported by the Harpur Trust. In 1998, she won the silver medal in the Shell LSO scholarship, performing Panufnik alongside David Hext's wife, Kate. She joined the London Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO) in 1992, becoming Principal Percussion two years later, and can be heard on the *Lord of the Rings* soundtrack.

In 2011, Rachel became Section Principal Percussion at the Royal Opera House. She now has a varied freelance career, performing solo and ensemble works, and teaching at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Rachel is also a composer, recently contributing to the ABRSM percussion syllabus.



Saturday, 25 January 2025

Conductor: Ian Smith

Ian is a leading conductor in the Bedford and Milton Keynes area. Educated at York University and Queens' College, Cambridge, he moved to Milton Keynes in 1975 and to Bedford in 1981. Ian serves as Musical Director and Principal Conductor of Bedford Choral Society and the Danesborough Chorus.

His extensive choral repertoire includes Rachmaninov *Vespers*, Vaughan Williams *Sea Symphony* and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Verdi *Requiem*, Bach *Mass in B minor*, Christmas Oratorio, and Passions, Britten *War Requiem*, Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius*, Vivaldi *Gloria*, Karl Jenkins *The Armed Man*, Handel *Messiah*, Monteverdi *Vespers*, Lauridsen *Lux Aeterna*, and Goodall *Eternal Light*.

Ian is also accomplished in orchestral conducting, with works such as Brahms *Academic Festival Overture*, Rachmaninov *Piano Concerto No. 2*, Elgar *Enigma Variations*, Dvořák *'New World' Symphony*, Beethoven *Violin Concerto*, and Copland *Appalachian Spring*.

His career spans radio and television appearances for the BBC and ITV. He conducted the Bedfordshire County Youth Second Orchestra for 23 years and plays violin as leader of the



Beverley String Quartet. As a freelance musician for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, he has delivered courses across the UK, Hong Kong and Singapore.

In 2023, Ian was awarded an honorary Master's degree from The Open University for his exceptional contributions to education and culture, enriching the musical and artistic life of Milton Keynes and Bedfordshire.



The Enchanted Lake, Op. 62

Anatoly Lyadov (1855 – 1914)

Anatoly Konstantinovich Lyadov may today be best known outside his native Russia for the music he did not compose, being the first composer to whom Sergei Diaghilev offered the commission for a ballet based on the Russian legend of the Firebird for his Ballets Russes. The composer declined the commission, telling Diaghilev that the task would take him at least a year and making its completion too late for the work's inclusion in Diaghilev's projected 1910 Paris season. The commission thus went to Igor Stravinsky, whose name and career were made by his *Firebird*. 'Laziness was Anatoly Konstantinovich's most remarkable feature' recalled Sergei Prokofiev, Lyadov's most famous pupil at St Petersburg Conservatory. Yet, in his prime, he was a member of the hugely influential circle of composers that included Rimsky Korsakoff, Alexander Borodin, César Cui, Mily Balakirev and Modest Mussorgsky. Lyadov was admired as a pianist, editor, conductor, and composer of, above all, elegant piano miniatures.

The composer referred to *The Enchanted Lake* (1908) as a 'fable-tableau', and it was his favourite among

his compositions. 'How picturesque it is,' he wrote to a friend, 'how clear, the multitude of stars hovering over the mysteries of the deep. Above all no entreaties and no complaints, only nature – cold, malevolent, and fantastic as a fairy tale'. The piece is a marvel of mystical serenity, the waters gently stirring under starry skies in suggestively shifting major and minor thirds and ninth chords supported by deep pedal points, with the 'enchanted' sounds of harp and celesta, and delicate flute trceries.

Programme notes: Herbert Glass

Violin Concerto, Op. 15

Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976)

As a committed pacifist and a homosexual who would have been barred from service and imprisoned had his orientation been revealed, Benjamin Britten, along with Peter Pears, decided to join their friends W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood in America in 1939. Together, they hoped to avoid the coming war and find creative stimulus in the wide-open spaces of the New World, and it was against this backdrop of looming war that Britten composed his *Violin Concerto*. As it was nearing completion,

the 25-year-old composer wrote to his publisher: 'So far it is without question my best piece. It is rather serious, I'm afraid – but it's got some tunes in it'. The work was completed in September during the composer's stay with Aaron Copland in Quebec, Canada, and it had its premiere in March 1940 with Antonio Brosa as soloist and John Barbirolli conducting the New York Philharmonic.

The concerto begins with a distinctive rhythmic figure on the timpani, beginning pianissimo, which grows louder as it is repeated three times. The soloist enters soon after with a fresh, vernal melody marked 'dolcissimo ed espressivo' – very sweet and expressive. The rhythmic figure continues in the accompaniment as the melody soars higher and higher. The music becomes more animated as it transitions to an edgier, more energetic theme. After a moody and mysterious development, the opening melody returns in the orchestral violins, with the soloist now playing the accompanying timpani figure. A haunting coda ends with magical false harmonics, airy flute-like notes produced by barely touching the violin's strings.

Without pause, the orchestra launches into the second movement, a fantastical, ironic scherzo. The soloist begins by playing a dance-accompaniment pattern, but soon breaks into a rather arch melody and high-wire finger work. A contrasting middle section is tinged with an expressive, unplaceable exoticism.

After a sly trio for two piccolos and tuba, the main melody resumes its puckish hijinks. The movement ends with the sudden appearance of the exotic central melody in the full orchestra, which builds to a precipice. The soloist then begins an intense, searching cadenza, an extended solo without orchestral accompaniment.

The cadenza begins with the exotic melody of the second movement, but it soon morphs into memories of the first. The opening timpani figure returns, becoming an obsessive crescendo that leads to a quiet lament in the form of the once innocent first movement melody. This seamlessly transitions to the last movement, which begins with the ominous entrance of the trombones, which have been silent until this moment.

The finale is a passacaglia, a type of theme and variations based on a repeated bass line. This passacaglia's bass line is first intoned by the trombones, and is then taken up by the strings. Its mournful character comes from its shape: a compressed, chromatic rise followed by a downward falling scale. This bass line becomes the foundation for a range of contrasting episodes – an intense dialogue between soloist and orchestra, a passage of Mahlerian yearning, memories of an old waltz, grand trumpet fanfares and orchestral flourishes – all of which are intensely emotionally charged. In the twilight world of the coda, the soloist plays high on the violin's lowest string, creating an

intense sound choked with emotion, and ends with a trill suspended between major and minor – light and dark.

Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43

Jean Sibelius (1865 – 1957)

Allegretto
Tempo andante
Vivacissimo
Allegro moderato

Jean Sibelius' close identification with Finnish nationalism and Norse mythology gives him a special place which is not only unrivalled in Finnish music, but special to all Scandinavian music. Extraordinarily original as a symphonic thinker, he had a highly developed feeling for form, and is acknowledged as a master of orchestral technique. His second symphony, written in 1901, was composed at a time when the Russian Tsarist hold in Finland was tightening, and music (also represented by his composition *Finlandia*) became a rallying point for patriotic sentiment. This symphony, therefore, strikes a more overtly nationalistic stance than any of Sibelius' other symphonies, and the patriotic fervour of the Finale is immediate and striking despite being the least complex of his symphonic movements.

The first movement is typical of the composer's individual use of short themes, with the woodwind announcing a rustic peasant dance with horn calls sounding from the

distance. The short themes, with their distinctive and exaggerated rhythmic emphasis, continue and recur throughout the movement with the composer's characteristic orchestral style which makes use of woodwind passages played in thirds, and long brass chords which start 'ff' then subito 'p' and a long crescendo to 'ff' again. The second movement begins in the style of a string ostinato with solo bassoons anticipating the orchestra, which is mimicking the style of the first movement but with a completely different thematic content.

The third movement's hectic string opening is balanced by two lengthy interludes in which the flute presents a peaceful theme, now accompanied by figures from the strings, and the tempo slows for the arrival of a tender trio. Sibelius repeats the various phrases of the scherzo with rising three-tone motif (now G flat - A flat - B flat) which builds a highly effective bridge to connect the scherzo with the finale. Noticeable features of this movement are the long stretches in which major sections of the orchestra move together in scale passages whilst accompanying the gentle yet accentuated second theme. The movement ends with the full orchestra playing fortissimo and yet with a derivative of the first theme played by the brass still clearly discernible above all else.

Programme notes: David Harding / Ilkka Oramo

Saturday, 15 February 2025

Conductor: Cathal Garvey



Cathal Garvey began his musical studies at the Cork School of Music, specialising in violin and piano, before pursuing a music degree at University College Cork. He later earned a master's degree in conducting and studied violin at the Moscow Conservatory.

Cathal started his career as chorus master with several major Irish opera companies, including Opera Ireland,

Opera Theatre Company and Lyric Opera, contributing to over fifty productions. He regularly conducted the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, and other prominent ensembles. From 2001 to 2009, he served as principal conductor for the Dublin Orchestral Players and Dun Laoghaire Choral Society.

In 2009, Cathal relocated to the UK to work as chorus master and assistant conductor for Grange Park Opera. He has since conducted various ensembles, including the London International Orchestra, Southern Sinfonia and Leicester Symphony Orchestra. He also held leadership positions with Newbury, Billingshurst and Wokingham Choral Societies, and founded the Ulysses Symphony Orchestra and the London Ulysses Orchestra, with which he toured China in 2016-17.

Cathal was appointed Musical Director of Reading Symphony Orchestra and continues to play violin with various ensembles in London. A respected teacher, he lectures in orchestral conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, where he was named Honorary Associate (HonARAM) in 2019.

Saturday, 15 February 2025

Soloist: Charlie Lovell-Jones (violin)

Welsh violinist Charlie Lovell-Jones (b. 1999) is recognised as one of the most promising international soloists of his generation. Since debuting at the Royal Festival Hall at age 15, he has performed with orchestras such as the English Chamber Orchestra, Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. His radio appearances include performances of Waxman's *Carmen Fantasy* and Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* on BBC Radio 3, as well as his own composition *Cariad Cyntaf* on BBC Radio Wales. Charlie has worked with conductors including Sir Mark Elder, Edward Gardner and John Wilson.

He is a Beare's International Violin Society Artist and has received numerous accolades, including winning The Gregynnog Young Musician Competition (2013), and reaching the finals of BBC Young Musician (2016). He also placed in the Sendai International Music Competition (2019) and Shanghai Isaac Stern International Violin Competition (2020). At 16, he became the youngest-ever recipient of the Under-25 Composers' Medal at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Wales.

Charlie has led the award-winning Sinfonia of London, including on their BBC Proms debut and subsequent



tours, earning critical acclaim for his solos. He studied Music at the University of Oxford, graduating with the Gibbs Prize in 2020. He continued his studies at the Royal Academy of Music, winning the Strings Postgraduate Prize in 2022. Charlie now studies at the Yale School of Music with Augustin Hadelich, and plays a 1777 G.B. Guadagnini violin.

Saturday, 3 May 2025, St Paul's Church

BEDFORD SINFONIA

Guest conductor: Ian Smith

Soloist: Paul Harris

You are invited to a special pre-concert talk by our guest soloist and expert on Malcolm Arnold, Paul Harris, where he will talk about the concerto he is about to perform.

6.30pm - 7pm, St Paul's Church

Booking for the talk not required.

Two Pieces for Small Orchestra

Frederick Delius (1862 – 1934)

On hearing the first cuckoo in spring
Summer night on the river

Frederick Delius' *Two Pieces for Small Orchestra* were composed, it is said, at the behest of Philip Heseltine (Peter Warlock), although they are dedicated to Balfour Gardiner. *On hearing the first cuckoo in spring* was composed in 1912, with *Summer night on the river* composed in the previous year, and the first performances were given in Leipzig by the Gewandhaus Orchestra conducted by Arthur Nikisch. Delius wrote to his wife: 'The public seemed to like the first piece [Cuckoo] best, although I like the second one best'. It has been theorized that 'First cuckoo' is the more popular of the two works because it is harmonically more conservative than its companion piece. It has two main themes, one of which, introduced by the flute, is a

folk-melody also used by Delius' friend Grieg in his *19 Norwegian Folk-Tunes*, Op. 66, for piano (1896). Textures are mainly homophonic, with chords of the seventh, translucent strings, and delightful woodwind solos. The cuckoo's first call is fairly discreet but becomes more insistent.

Summer night on the river is in some respects Delius' most advanced orchestral work. The chromatic harmony evokes perfectly the calm and peace implied by the title, allowing one to visualise the moonlight glinting on the water, and to hear the nocturnal insects. A central section has a long cello solo which epitomises Delius' special magic. Delius had moved to a villa in the French village of Grez, which backed onto the river Loing, and this tone poem was the result of many contemplative hours spent there.

Programme notes: Michael Kennedy

Two Songs without Words

Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

Country Song

Marching Song

Gustav Holst came from a musical family. His father, Adolph, mother Clara and aunt Nina were all pianists. Forced to abandon piano studies in his late teens because of neuritis in his hands, he took up the trombone, which, together with his modest earnings as a church organist and choirmaster, provided much of his income as he developed his compositional skills. In 1895, Holst received a scholarship to study composition at the Royal College of Music, where he formed a lasting friendship with Ralph Vaughan Williams, whose footsteps he followed into his first teaching post at James Allen's Girls' School, in Dulwich. In 1905 he became Head of Music at St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith, where he remained for the rest of his life. He was also Director of Music at Morley College from 1907 to 1924.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, British musical circles had experienced a new interest in national folk music, and the composers Parry, Stanford, Stainer and Mackenzie were founding members of the Folk-Song Society. Although Holst never collected English folk songs himself, he was very familiar with them through his friendship with Vaughan Williams and the members of the Society, and he used several of them in his

compositions. These two short works, *Country Song* and *Marching Song*, are a prime example.

Country Song begins with a lyrical folk-melody on the clarinet before it is taken up by the flute and strings. The development leads to a second gentler tune in which, after further elaboration, the two tunes are recalled as they converge to the grand finale.

Marching Song follows a similar structure, but with a distinct militaristic disposition. The second subject is a very gentle folk song of East Anglian origin.

Clarinet Concerto No. 1 Op. 20

Sir Malcolm Arnold (1921 – 2006)

Allegro

Andante con moto

Allegro con fuoco

Malcolm Arnold started his career as principal trumpet of the London Philharmonic Orchestra before devoting himself to full-time composition. He was a pupil of Gordon Jacob, from whom, no doubt, he learned his mastery of orchestral technique. His large output of music consists of film scores, orchestral works, concertos, ballets and chamber music, all tinged with his characteristic sense of humour and feeling for instrumental colour. In this, his first clarinet concerto, an early work dating from 1948, Arnold exploits the solo instrument's capabilities to the full –

from the brilliant statements of the opening movement to the racy and audacious finale.

Programme notes: John McLeod

Symphony No. 5 in D major

Ralph Vaughan Williams

(1872 – 1958)

Preludio (Moderato)

Scherzo (Presto)

Romanza (Lento)

Passacaglia (Moderato)

Vaughan Williams composed his Fifth Symphony between 1938 and 1943. The original manuscript score bore certain annotations that have not been allowed to survive in the printed pages. On the first page was written 'some of the themes of this symphony are taken from the [then] unfinished opera *The Pilgrim's Progress*'. There is no programme to this symphony, nor does the music stand in any need of interpretation; but this connection with *The Pilgrim's Progress* does give a key to the spirit of the whole.

The symphony opens with a low octave held by strings on C, which is followed by a D major call from the horns in apparent contradiction of the tonality. The woodwinds take up the dotted rhythm from the horns, while strings play a cantabile theme, which is frequently heard throughout the movement. These themes are elaborated in various remote keys

until the tempo increases to an allegro, where strings keep up a busy quaver movement while the wind adds colour with chords and fragments of melody. After a final chorded entry from the full orchestra, the movement dies away as it began, with a muted horn call above the held dissonance from the cellos and violas.

The Scherzo enters quietly but rapidly, with muted strings accompanying the first theme. The second theme comes from the flutes and bassoons over the same hurrying background. This gathers momentum as the strings join in, staccato, with occasional interjections from oboe and cor anglais. Horns, bassoons, clarinets and cor anglais together give an impressive solemnity to the last theme in the trio-like middle section. The opening material reappears in epigrammatic form, with a strong rhythmic motif given to woodwind and taken up by the rest of the orchestra before the first theme ends the movement.

In the manuscript score, the Romanza was prefaced by a quotation from Bunyan which gives the key to the mood of the movement: 'Upon this place stood a cross, and a little below, a sepulchre. Then he said, "He hath given me rest by his sorrow and life by his death".' The movement opens with mysterious chords on divided and muted strings, and these are repeated as a shimmering background to the cor anglais solo. The flute plays the

next important theme, with oboe and bassoon in imitation. There is a slight increase in tempo and dynamic density, which then fades into an imitative wind passage. A new insistent theme is heard in the woodwind, the horns announce the original oboe solo, and fragments of earlier motifs are heard as, with a last call from the muted horn, the music sinks to the lower strings and fades away.

For the last movement, the cellos in unison announce the main theme of the Passacaglia variations, soon joined by flutes and violins with a complementary theme. The whole movement flows from their interplay. Both tunes show links with earlier movements so that the work becomes one organic whole. It finishes as it began, with the Passacaglia hovering on D and the opening prelude returning to end the work on C.

Programme notes: Anon



Saturday, 3 May 2025

Soloist: Paul Harris (clarinet)

Paul Harris studied at the Royal Academy of Music (where he won the August Manns Prize for outstanding performance in clarinet playing) and has gone on to establish a career which frequently takes him to all corners of the globe presenting workshops, giving masterclasses, adjudicating and performing.

Among many performances he has played the Arnold, Mozart, Finzi, Spohr and Weber concertos and the two Krommer Double Concertos with Jean Cockburn. He has given many recitals and performances of various chamber works, including most of the clarinet quintets, and the Mozart 'Kegelstatt Trio' innumerable times with violist Robert Secret. He has given first performances of various Malcolm Arnold works including the re-discovered *Wind Quintet*. He has recorded a CD of works by lesser-known British composers and is internationally recognised as one of the UK's most distinguished teachers. His books on education include *The Clarinet* – a comprehensive guide to playing the instrument – two clarinet tutors, a variety of works from short solo pieces to concertos and a ballet, and other books that deal primarily



with stimulating and helping young players to develop their musical skills. He has won many awards and among his pupils number the great Julian Bliss.

Paul has been a judge for the BBC Young Musician of the Year and Classic FM's Music Teacher of the Year and he works regularly with NYWO and NCCO as their woodwind tutor.

Saturday, 24 May 2025, Bedford Corn Exchange

BEDFORDSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Guest conductor: Bjorn Bantock

Soloist: Jakob Kullberg

The Sea Reivers

Sir Granville Bantock (1868 – 1946)

Granville Ransome Bantock was born in London. His father was an eminent Scottish surgeon, and his younger brother was the dramatist and film director Leedham Bantock. Granville was intended by his parents for the Indian Civil Service, but suffered poor health and initially turned to chemical engineering. At the age of 20, when he began studying composers' manuscripts at the South Kensington Museum Library, he was drawn into the musical world. His first teacher was Gordon Saunders at Trinity College of Music, and in 1888 he entered the Royal Academy of Music where he studied harmony and composition with Frederick Corder, winning the Macfarren Prize in the first year it was awarded.

At its first performance, in London's Queen's Hall on 21 February 1920, *The Sea Reivers* was described as a 'Hebridean Sea-Poem'. Though Sir Henry Wood was the concert's principal conductor, Bantock took charge of his own work. Composed in 1917, it is a concise, vigorous scherzo based on 'A Hebridean Sea-Reiver's Song' (Na Reubairean), which expresses the wild

exultation and daring exploits of the Hebridean pirates. At first only hinted at, the song soon appears in its entirety in tumultuous and vivid orchestral colours. *The Sea Reivers* was originally intended as the scherzo section of the Hebridean Symphony, although no mention is made of this in the composer's programme notes for the first performance.

Tonight's conductor, Bjorn Bantock, is the great-grandson of Sir Granville Bantock.

Programme notes: Michael Hurd and others.

Cello Concerto No. 1 in E flat, Op. 107 Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975)

Allegretto
Moderato
Cadenza
Finale – Allegro con moto

Quite a number of concertos have been inspired by outstanding instrumentalists whose technique and musicianship became an incentive for the composer. Shostakovich was stirred to compose his first cello concerto by the Russian virtuoso Mstislav Rostropovich, who committed the work to memory in four days and

gave the premiere on 4 October 1959, with Yevgeny Mravinsky conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra.

The solo part makes very high demands, but these are not limited to a display of technical brilliance. A musical motto is a prominent feature of the score, and here consists of the first four notes of the concerto's opening theme, derived from the composer's personal DSCH motif (using the first letters of his name Dmitri SHostakovich), although the intervals, rhythm and shape of the motto are continually distorted and re-shaped throughout the movement. These four notes not only leave their mark on the first movement, but recur towards the end of the Cadenza, and play a decisive part in the Finale.

In marked contrast, the second movement (the second, third and fourth movements are played continuously), is lyrical and yearning. The return of the main theme sets the scene for a gradually developing climax, and the theme's third appearance is followed again by the soloist's theme to which the celesta now gives new colour and significance.

The Cadenza stands as a movement in itself, and is frequented by the first DSCH motive. The cello's first theme of the second movement is played in an altered form, and after the third time, a continual accelerando passes through allegretto and allegro sections to a più mosso section. An unobtrusive re-entry of the orchestra opens the way

for the Finale, which starts as a wild dance. The change from two to three beats in a bar is a notable landmark, but an even greater impact is caused by the reappearance of the original four-note motto. It is soon combined with the Finale's own theme, but gains the upper hand and expands into several repeats of the full DSCH theme of the first movement. This link with the beginning marks the culminating point of the concerto's structure, and the concerto ends with seven dramatic timpani strokes.

Programme notes: H. W. Freyhan

Symphony No. 6 in B minor (‘Pathétique’)

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840 – 1893)

Adagio – allegro non troppo
Allegro con grazia
Allegro molto vivace
Adagio lamentoso

For nearly five years after the composition and success of his fifth symphony, Tchaikovsky was unable to contemplate writing another symphony, although when he did, in late 1892, the self-doubts were still there. He was also tired from the effects of a strenuous foreign tour and had just gone through the upheaval of a move into a new home (his last) in Klin, just outside Moscow. He abandoned his initial sketches for a symphony in E flat, dismissing them as 'an empty patter of sounds without inspiration'. But as he settled down



to drafting a new outline in the early months of 1893, something caught his imagination. He wrote to his nephew, 'It goes with such ardour that in less than four days I have finished the first movement, whilst the remainder is clearly outlined in my head'. Tchaikovsky finished the composition of the symphony in April; all that remained was to complete the scoring. After a trip to England to conduct a performance of his fourth symphony in London and to receive an honorary degree from Cambridge University, he finished the scoring in August, and the work received its premiere on 28 October 1893. Nothing in Tchaikovsky's

symphonies matches the huge scale and unusual structure of the sixth symphony. The symphony is a work of dynamic emotional extremes and highly contrasting moods, a document of the greatest pessimism and inner torment. On 6 November, just nine days after the first performance, the composer died, undoubtedly by his own hand.

The despondency and anguish of the sixth symphony is evident from the first movement. In the introduction, the bassoon plays a dark theme as the first subject, subsequently taken over by the strings. A soaring second subject played by flute and bassoon deepens

the mood of sadness, and the music now alternates between gloom and turbulent intensity. The second movement is a waltz, curiously in 5/4 time. The movement functions as a scherzo, and its general mood is lighter than anything else found in the symphony, although its trio section displays some of the harmonic tensions heard in the outer movements. The third movement is a march; this military and very masculine movement is a positive element in this work and as such leaves us utterly unprepared for the tragedy to come.

The adagio that forms the finale to this work is unprecedented in its raw emotional content and effect. Grief, pain, sadness and personal tragedy are all embraced in this music, which opens with a heart-rending falling melodic phrase for the strings. This musical equivalent of weeping, together with another descending melodic phrase, provides the dominant thematic material in the movement. As the music sinks to nothing at the end, we feel that we are hearing the very heart and soul of the man himself, a man in mental agony saying farewell to life.

Several of these notes were supplied through the Programme Note Bank of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies, and from other sources.



Saturday, 24 May 2025

Conductor: Bjorn Bantock

Bjorn Bantock has over 30 years of professional conducting experience and has led numerous ensembles and orchestras internationally, performing in countries including Chile, Argentina, Brazil, China, South Africa, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Russia, Malta, Ireland, Norway and the UK. He is currently the principal conductor of the Irish Memory Orchestra, with which he has toured Europe, Ireland and South Korea. He also holds the position of principal conductor of the Peterborough Philharmonic Orchestra.

Bjorn has been principal conductor for various ensembles, including the St Albans Symphony Orchestra, London Medical Orchestra, Huntingdonshire Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, the Europa Ensemble, and the Open Strings Festival Orchestra in Copenhagen. He has also conducted the Cape Town Philharmonic and the Film Score Spectacular orchestra, presented by the BBC Concert Orchestra.

Additionally, Bantock is principal conductor for the International String Orchestra Festival in Malta, the Svanker Music Festival in Denmark, and the Alpine Summer School Orchestra in Geneva. He has worked with prestigious orchestras such as the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, the Guildhall School of Music Contemporary Ensemble and the

National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain.

A sought-after educator, Bjorn adjudicates and teaches at several renowned institutions, including the Royal College of Music in London, the Royal Conservatoire of Music in Copenhagen, and the Stavanger Conservatoire in Norway. He also leads the Conducting Course for the National Schools Symphony Orchestra at Malvern College and the Open Strings Festival in Denmark.

Bjorn has written for *MUSO* and *The Strad*, and broadcast live on SABC Radio, the BBC and TV4 Ireland. He is also the founder and principal conductor of the London Chamber Strings, showcasing London's top string professionals.



Saturday, 24 May 2025

Soloist: Jakob Kullberg (cello)

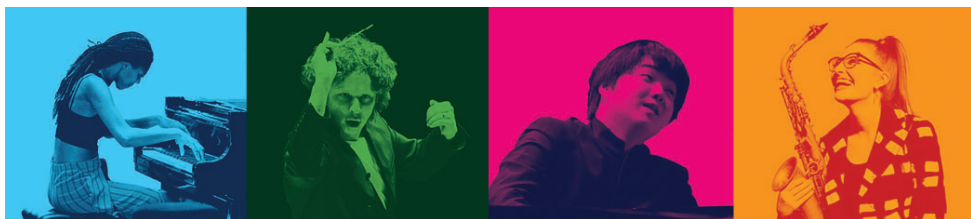


Jakob Kullberg is a Danish classical cellist, renowned for his collaboration with composer Per Nørgård. He began his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in Jutland under Harro Ruijsenaars, then continued his education at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Dmitri Ferschtman. After earning his diploma in 2001, Kullberg studied in Zagreb with Valter Despalj before moving to London, where he completed a master's degree at the Royal Academy of Music with Mats Lidström and Colin Carr. He also studied privately in Vienna with Reinhard Latzko before returning to Denmark for his Soloist Diploma at the Royal Danish Academy of Music with Morten Zeuthen.

Kullberg is particularly known for his close working relationship with

Danish composer Per Nørgård, who has written numerous works for him, including the fourth solo cello sonata, *Rhizome*, which Kullberg premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival in 2007. His performance of the sonata received critical acclaim for his remarkable technique and expressive control. Another product of their collaboration is Nørgård's second cello concerto, *Momentum*. Kullberg has also worked with English composer Simon Holt, who wrote the duo *Telarañas* (2009) for him and dedicated it to him.

In recent years, Kullberg has focused on the solo cello suites by J.S. Bach, studying under Dutch baroque cellist Anner Bylsma. His ongoing exploration of Bach's works reflects his deepening interest in solo performance.



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The aim is to give our audience great quality preparation for our concerts with episodes with our conductors. We aim to celebrate local musicians and educators and contribute to the national conversation about music education and support for young musicians. We also want to showcase our own talented musicians in the Bedfordshire Orchestral Society!

Guests for this Season (Sept 2024-July 2025) include Ian Smith, Michael Rose and Carolyn Sampson, as well as a

special episode featuring our youngest members, who took over the mic with Charlotte Course, our Social Media Assistant!

Your host otherwise is Ann Collins, our Publicity Officer and second violinist. She said, 'I have thoroughly enjoyed getting this project off the ground. It's a real privilege to have quality time with such wonderful guests. To be honest, I'm asking the questions I've always wanted to! It's great to hear that people are enjoying the episodes.'

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