



"Didcot's new symphony orchestra"

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Conductor: Geoff Bushell

Leader: Kate Bailey

Honorary President: Ed Vaizey, MP

Second Concert – Sunday 14 October 2018

PROGRAMME

Coleridge-Taylor	Ballade in A minor
Elgar	Cello Concerto (Jacqueline Johnson)
Herbert	Yesterthoughts (Jacqueline Johnson)
Dvořák	Symphony no 6 in D

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A message from our Honorary President

"I am delighted that the Didcot Concert Orchestra has been established. Didcot is a vibrant and growing town, and the arts have always been a central part of its life. The concert orchestra fills a gap, and it is very much needed. Music brings great joy to people, and it also plays an important role in our schools and our communities. I wish the Didcot Concert Orchestra every success and I look forward to seeing them perform soon in Didcot – if not at the Proms!"

The Right Honourable Edward Vaizey, MP

PROGRAMME

Ballade in A minor

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

Born in London on 15 August 1875, Samuel was the son of a West African doctor who had married an English girl. He started to learn the violin at age five, and was 'discovered' by Joseph Beckworth, conductor of the Croydon Theatre Orchestra. In 1890, Samuel entered the Royal College of Music where he studied composition under Stanford. When Elgar was asked to write a piece for the 1898 Three Choirs Festival, he declined, and offered the opportunity instead to Coleridge-Taylor. The result was the *Ballade in A minor, op 33*. Soon famous as a conductor and composer, especially for *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, over-work began to affect his health, and the tragedy of his early death at the age of 37 is reflected on his tombstone: "Too young to die, his great simplicity, his happy courage in an alien world, his gentleness, made all that knew him love him."

Cello Concerto, op 85

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

- I – Adagio
- II – Lento – allegro molto
- III – Adagio
- IV – Allegro ma non troppo

Elgar's heyday had been from the premiere of *Enigma Variations* in 1899 to the beginning of the war in 1914, and included a great success with his *First Symphony*, which was played 90 times during the year following its first performance in 1908. Surprisingly, the 1919 *Cello Concerto* took some time to achieve public recognition for the masterpiece that it is, but later championship by great cellists such as Rostropovich, Tortelier, Casals and du Pré has ensured that it has become one of the most popular of all concertos. Compared with the flamboyance of other cello concertos, and of Elgar's other works, this piece is more reserved and reflective, no doubt influenced by recent memory of the First World

War. After an initial flourish, the violas introduce the lilting main theme of the first movement, soon taken up by the soloist. The accompaniment is always understated, allowing the soloist to be heard even when the pitch of the melodic line sinks within the orchestral texture. Despite being scored for full orchestra, the orchestration is even lighter in the second movement – a scherzo in G major – featuring many repeated notes for the soloist. The slow movement is in Bb major, and has a heart-felt lyricism in which the cello sings uninterruptedly, except for only one of its sixty bars. Here, only clarinets, bassoons and horns are permitted to enter the intimate world of soft strings. The finale begins in the remote key of Bb minor, leaving the composer the challenge of returning to the home key of E minor, but this is achieved through a cadenza passage. Later, there is a reminiscence of the third movement, concluding with a note which many soloists hold for almost ten seconds, and then a brief rousing coda ends the work.

Yesterthoughts

Victor Herbert (1859-1924)

Victor Herbert was born in Dublin on 1 February 1859. After his father's early death, he was cared for by his grandfather, who moved with the gifted child to Stuttgart. Herbert studied at German conservatories on the piano, flute and piccolo, before eventually discovering the instrument he would champion – the cello. He became an orchestral player and soloist, and while playing in the Stuttgart Court Orchestra, fell in love with the opera house's new soprano, Therese Förster. When she was offered a contract at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1886, the couple emigrated. Herbert soon became assistant conductor to Anthony Seidl at the Met, and between 1898 and 1904 is credited with the development of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Perhaps best known for his operetta *Babes in Toyland* and two cello concertos, the second of these is thought to have strongly influenced Dvořák who after hearing its first performance promptly wrote his own cello concerto. *Yesterthoughts* was one of a set of *Six Piano Pieces* published by Herbert in 1900. In recent times it has been orchestrated by Sam Dennison and arranged in tonight's version for string accompaniment by Lynn Harrell.

Jacqueline Johnson graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, Australia. During her studies there she took part in masterclasses with cellists Rohan de Saram, Anner Bylsma and Paul Tortelier. She was a full time member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and played with the Australian Opera and Ballet companies; she also broadcast and recorded recitals for the Australian Broadcasting Company. She gave many solo and chamber recitals throughout Australia, and in China and Hong Kong, and she has made several recordings and CDs. On moving to the UK in 1990, Jacqueline undertook further study with Christopher Bunting, Colin Carr and Pedro de Alcantara, and she has also had coaching from Steven Isserlis. Now based in Oxford, she combines chamber music and solo performances with orchestral work and teaching. More information at www.jacquelinejohnson.co.uk

Symphony no 6 in D major

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

I – Allegro ma non tanto

II – Adagio

III – Scherzo: Furiant

IV – Allegro con spirito

Though Dvořák had already written five symphonies, this opus 60 is the first one to be published (originally it was numbered '1'), and the first of his artistic maturity. It was sketched in the same year that his great friend Johannes Brahms was composing his *Academic Festival Overture*, and was first performed ten weeks after the overture, on 25 March 1881. Like the popular *Slavonic Dances*, the symphony shows clear inspiration derived from folk sources of the Slav nations. The main subject of the first movement appears in flute and oboe, and there is a lyrical second subject. The *Adagio* is a private song for the first violins and horn that sometimes has the character of an improvisation. The *Scherzo* has for its main idea the Czech *Furiant* dance, while the central section is based on the slower *Sousedska* dance. The *Finale*, though opening serenely enough, transforms the opening gentle subject into an outburst of agitation in full orchestra, and the vigour and energy is maintained for the remainder of the movement. Considered as a whole, the sixth appears to be the happiest of Dvořák's mature symphonies, with its high proportion of melodies in a major key and tuneful *joie de vivre*.

Programme notes by Geoff Bushell

CONDUCTOR

Geoff Bushell studied conducting with George Hurst, Michael Rose, Denise Ham and Adrian Leaper. As conductor and musical director of Oxford-based St Giles Orchestra since 1983, Geoff has developed its technical and musical capabilities and led it through many new opportunities such as partnerships with local choirs for the performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Verdi's *Requiem* in Oxford Town Hall, and recordings including Walton's *Crown Imperial March* which was broadcast on the BBC One Show. Geoff also regularly conducts Abingdon Symphony Orchestra and Phoenix Flutes. Renowned for introducing players and audiences alike to lesser-known and unjustly neglected romantic repertoire, he has also earned a reputation as a composer of romantic-style pieces, including four commissions from the Abingdon and District Musical Society to celebrate their successive tenth anniversaries. Geoff is also well known locally as a player of French horn and double bass.

PLAYERS – 14 OCTOBER 2018

FLUTE	Sue Hurst Rachel Wright		Eleanor Bagg Martin Reed Misha Brazier Tope
OBOE	Alan Evans Lorna Rennie		Jennie Wood Noreen Tyson
CLARINET	Barbara Stuart Jackie Bushell	VIOIN 2	Louise Graham * Paul Chesson Rosie Bruce
BASSOON	Simon Payne Chris Grovenor		Alice Little Katie Perkins Michael Garrod
HORN	Joel Allred Rob Bentall Sam Dunwoody Steve Guard	VIOLA	Heather Birt * Evelyn Sanderson Glynne Butt Christina Everson Margarete Lucas
TRUMPET	Jeremy Wood Marion Mayhew		CELLO
TROMBONE	Neil Brownless Becky Maglone David Barnard		Spike Wilson * Jude Barnby Tatiana Judycka Andrew Rendell Rachael Rendell Graham Appleton
TUBA	Matt Sanders		
TIMPANI + PERCUSSION	Chris Fletcher- Campbell	DOUBLE BASS	Richard Hodby Tim Baker
VIOLIN 1	Kate Bailey * Cathy Ng Iris van Pijlen		* professional string section leaders

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Special thanks: Dr Jon Spiro, Chris Fletcher-Campbell, Sue Hurst

ABOUT DCO

The continuing expansion of Didcot is bringing more orchestral musicians and ever-larger potential concert audiences to the area. Didcot Concert Orchestra is the first high-quality amateur concert-giving symphony orchestra based in Didcot. It aims to bring together the best players, so participation is by invitation or audition.

Professional players lead each of the string sections. Players meet for four rehearsals before each concert, and DCO plans to give three concerts every year. DCO's repertoire focuses on concert classics from the late-Romantic era, and a key feature is tuneful unjustly neglected works from this period – at least one such "rare gem" in each concert. DCO is not-for-profit, and is underwritten by founders Jackie and Geoff Bushell. If you are interested in playing in or sponsoring future concerts, please see our Facebook page or visit www.didcotconcertorchestra.org.uk.



DCO is a member of Making Music, which provides advice, support and resources for leisure-time musicians and music groups across the UK.

NEXT CONCERTS

Sunday 3 March 2019 at 4pm at Cornerstone

Glinka	Russlan and Ludmilla: Overture
Glazunov	Poème Lyrique
Mussorgsky	Night on the Bare Mountain
Tchaikovsky	Symphony no 5 in E minor

Sunday 9 June 2019 at 4pm at Cornerstone

Reznicek	Donna Diana: Overture
Glazunov	Serenade no 1
Bruch	Violin Concerto no 1 in G minor, with Leo Appel
Duparc	Danse Lente
Bizet	Symphony in C

Sunday 6 October 2019 at 4pm at Cornerstone

Rachmaninov	The Rock – Symphonic Fantasia
Wagner	Tannhäuser: Prelude and Venusberg Music
Rimsky-Korsakov	Scheherazade

Further information at www.didcotconcertorchestra.org.uk

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