



# Sutton Symphony Orchestra

President Louis Rutland, Vice President Elizabeth Angel

Conductor: Philip Aslangul  
Leader: Annmarie McDade

Bizet Roma

Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto No 1  
**Soloist Daniel Brandon**

Debussy La Mer

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St Andrew's United Reformed Church  
Northey Avenue, Cheam

Saturday 24th November 2018  
7.30pm

In the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of the London Borough of Sutton  
Councillor Steve Cook and Mrs Pauline Cook

*Please note that recording of this concert is strictly prohibited*

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## **CONDUCTOR PHILIP ASLANGUL**

Philip Aslangul graduated from the Guildhall School of music in 1990, where he studied cello, piano and conducting with Stefan Popov, Carola Grindea and Alan Hazeldine respectively.

He has pursued a varied career; as a cellist, he has given recitals around the country with the Burlington Duo and The Q Piano Trio, including a live radio broadcast in 1991. He has worked as a freelance cellist appearing as principal with orchestras including the National Pops Orchestra, The Camerata of London and The City Chamber Ensemble, and has played with other orchestras including the English Philharmonia.

As a pianist, Philip is in demand as a répétiteur and accompanist; he has worked with the award-winning ladies choir 'Impromptu' for the past 20 years including performances on BBC2 and Radio 3. He is a Jazz and Grades examiner for ABRSM for whom he is also a Music Medals Moderator, and has worked as a Mentor for The Open University.

Philip is actively involved in youth music and conducted Kingston Schools Orchestra and Kingston Young Strings between 1998 and 2004. He is currently conductor of SYSO, Sutton's Youth Orchestra, which performs regular concerts at St Andrew's, with a tour to the Music Festival in Lisbon and a concert at the Royal Festival Hall held in 2017.

## **LEADER ANNMARIE MCDADE**

Annamarie studied violin with Trevor Williams and Jonathan Carney and piano with Raymond Fischer at the Royal College of Music.

Annamarie had many years leading touring shows and in West End shows such as Annie get Your Gun, Aspects of Love, The Sound of Music, Oklahoma, The Producers and Company.

She spent nearly eight years in the West End production of Les Miserables (frequently leading) until 2004 and worked with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, English Northern Philharmonia, British Symphony Orchestra, Opera Della Luna, London Arts Orchestra (principal 2nd), Camerata of London (principal 2nd & guest leader), Pro Arte Orchestra (leader), London Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (principal 2nd & founder member) and many others.

Solo performances include Mozart A major and G major and Bruch G minor concertos, Beethoven's F major Romance, Bach's and Malcolm Arnold's Double Violin Concertos and Vivaldi's Four Seasons.

Annamarie teaches in schools and privately - all ages, all abilities! She was orchestral coach for Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust, Beauchamp House International Music and drama courses and ENCORE.

## DANIEL BRANDON

Daniel Brandon is a 17-year-old cellist from Epsom studying at Sutton Grammar School.

He learnt initially with Elizabeth Angel and then moved to the Royal College of Music Junior Department (RCMJD) where he currently studies with Michal Kaznowski.

He is the Principal Cellist in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and the Stoneleigh Youth Orchestra.

Dan has won numerous awards in various competitions including winner of the Sutton Festival Concerto competition and runner up in the Gordon Turner competition at the RCMJD.

He has taken part in international masterclasses, most recently with Alexander Baillie and Leonid Gorokhov.

He recently performed the Dvorak Concerto in London with the Great Ormond Street Orchestra and the Saint-Saëns concerto with the Leatherhead Orchestra.

Dan has performed a number of recitals, most recently in Shrewsbury and Poole and has been invited by RCMJD to perform a recital in February 2019 in the Elgar Room at the Royal Albert Hall.

Dan plays on an English cello kindly loaned by the Benslow Trust.



## SUTTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Fancy joining us? If you've enjoyed the concert and are interested in joining the orchestra, or know someone who might be, then please get in touch. We're a friendly bunch and are always keen to welcome new members, particularly in the string section. Just go to our website [suttonsymphonyorchestra.org](http://suttonsymphonyorchestra.org) for details of how to contact us by email, twitter and facebook.

We are grateful for the continuing financial support from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust, our President, Patrons, and our loyal audience and donors.

We would like to thank St Andrew's United Reformed Church for the use of the building for tonight's concert, Homefield Preparatory School for use of their premises for rehearsals, and Sutton Music Service for use of their music stands and percussion equipment.

Future dates for your diary: March 30<sup>th</sup> 2019 at St Andrew's URC Cheam, and June 29<sup>th</sup> at All Saints Church, Carshalton.

## PROGRAMME

### BIZET

### ROMA

Andante/Allegro – Scherzo - Andante Molto - Finale

Unlike Georges Bizet's other symphonic work, the more famous Symphony in C, which he composed very quickly at the age of 17, La Roma took him more than 10 years to arrive at a definitive version after several revisions. The composer never got to hear all four movements played together, with the full work in its final revision only performed in 1875 after his death.

In 1857, Bizet won the Prix de Rome, which awarded him two years of free study at the French Academy in Rome. In the end he stayed in Rome until the Summer of 1860 when he then went on a tour of Italy, after which he came up with the idea of a four-movement orchestral piece with each movement based on a different Italian city: the first, Rome, second, Venice, third, Florence and the final one, Naples. The scherzo, based on Venice, was first publicly performed in 1863 in the presence of Camille Saint-Saëns but was not particularly well received. However, there was more enthusiasm for its second performance at the start of the following year.

By 1866, Bizet had completed the first version of the work with the Rome movement appearing as a Theme and set of Variations. However, he was so unsatisfied with his attempts that he totally reworked this movement in 1868. The following year the 3 pieces, excluding the homage to Venice, were performed under the title *Fantaisie symphonique: Souvenirs de Rome*. It was not until after the composer's death 1875, following further revisions that the four-movement symphonic suite was published under the title *Roma*.

### SAINT-SAËNS

### CELLO CONCERTO NO 1

The composer's long lifespan oversaw an epic journey from the heyday of romanticism through to the midst of modernism. It encompassed the revolutionary new music of Liszt and Wagner, which he boldly championed, and the breakthroughs of Debussy and Stravinsky. Yet Saint-Saëns himself fell victim to the shifting tides of musical fashion. Though his output was enormous, ranging across all the major genres, only a handful of these works has remained an active part of the repertory. His most familiar compositions date from the 1870s and 1880s, when Saint-Saëns was at the peak of his fame. Along with the first of his two cello concertos, these include the tone poem *Danse Macabre*, the opera *Samson and Delilah*, the Third Symphony (the "Organ" Symphony), and *Carnival of the Animals*.

It was early in this period that Saint-Saëns wrote the Cello Concerto No. 1 for Auguste Tolbecque who first performed the work in January 1873 in Paris. This premier marked an important turning point in establishing Saint-Saëns' own reputation as a composer and the work has secured a spot as one of the best-loved of 19<sup>th</sup>-century concertos.

The First Cello Concerto is renowned for its condensation of the conventional concerto's three-movement format into an organically compact single movement of about 20 minutes. Additionally, Saint-Saëns transcends the Romantic cliché of the solo protagonist as a hero in conflict with the orchestra. His alternative is to carefully integrate the cellist into the orchestral fabric, though sufficient drama is generated by keeping the cellist at the centre of attention throughout much of the work.

The orchestra yields centre stage to the cellist immediately, following a brisk opening chord. Fast-flowing triplets come to a pause on a rising and falling half-step. Together, both gestures - the agitated flow and the basic motivic idea - serve as the main opening theme group and recur as a unifying device. They are followed by a lyrical theme. Tempo and key change provide passage to an enchanting middle section - an embedded slow movement - in which muted strings supply a minuet accompaniment, while the cello, playing high in its register, joins in the serenade. Then agitated strings of flowing triplets bring a recapitulation of the opening motifs and then eventually Saint-Saëns fashions an arresting coda for the concerto. The pace and passion quicken, a sequence of sustained chords from the orchestra then steers the music from A minor to major, and the field is left to the soloist for a concluding flourish touching on both the lyrical and the gymnastic.

## INTERVAL

### DEBUSSY

### LA MER

- I De l'aube à midi sur la mer (From dawn to midday on the sea)
- II Jeux de vagues (Play of the Waves)
- III Dialogue du vent et de la mer (Dialogue of the wind and the sea)

Although Debussy's parents once planned for him to become a sailor, *La Mer*, subtitled *Three Symphonic Sketches*, proved to be his greatest seafaring adventure. Debussy's childhood summers at Cannes left him with vivid memories of the sea, "worth more than reality," as he put it at the time that he was composing *La Mer*, some thirty years later.

As an adult, Debussy seldom got his feet wet, preferring the seascapes available in painting and literature. *La Mer* was written in the mountains, where his "old friend the sea, always innumerable and beautiful," was no closer than a memory. Like the great British painter J. M. W. Turner, who stared at the sea for hours and then went inside to paint, Debussy worked from memory, occasionally turning for inspiration to a few other sources. Debussy first mentioned his new work in a letter dated September 12, 1903; the title he proposed for the first of the three symphonic sketches, "Calm Sea around the Sanguinary Islands", was borrowed from a short story by Camille Mauclair published during the 1890s. When Debussy's own score was printed, he insisted that the cover include a detail from *The Hollow of the Wave off Kanagawa*, the most celebrated print by the Japanese artist Hokusai, then enormously popular in France.

It is also apparent that Debussy greatly admired Turner's work. His richly atmospheric seascapes recorded the daily weather, the time of day, and even the most fleeting effects of wind and light in ways utterly new to painting, and they spoke directly to Debussy.

There's something in Debussy's first symphonic sketch very like a Turner painting of the sun rising over the sea. They both reveal, in their vastly different media, those magical moments

when sunlight begins to glow in near darkness, when familiar objects emerge from the shadows. This was Turner's favourite image—he even owned several houses from which he could watch, with undying fascination, the sun piercing the line separating sea and sky.

Debussy's achievement, though decades later than Turner's, is no less radical, for it uses familiar language in truly fresh ways. From Dawn to Noon on the Sea can't be heard as traditional programme music, for it doesn't tell a tale along a standard time line. Nor can it be read as a piece of symphonic discourse, for it is organized without regard for conventional theme and development.

Debussy's audiences, like Turner's before him, were baffled by work that takes as its subject matter colour, texture, and nuance. Debussy's second sketch too is all suggestion and shimmering surface, fascinated with sound for its own sake. Melodic line, rhythmic regularity, and the use of standard harmonic progressions are all shattered, gently but decisively, by the fluid play of the waves. The final Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea was completed at The Grand Hotel in Eastbourne, which he described to his publisher, Durand, as "a charming peaceful spot: the sea unfurls itself with an utterly British correctness."

La Mer repeatedly resists traditional analysis. "We must agree," Debussy writes, "that the beauty of a work of art will always remain a mystery, in other words, we can never be absolutely sure 'how it's made'."

La Mer was controversial even during rehearsals, when, as Debussy told Stravinsky, the violinists tied handkerchiefs to the tips of their bows in protest. The response at the premiere was mixed, though largely unfriendly. It is hard now to separate the reaction to this novel and challenging music from the current Parisian view of the composer himself, for during the two years he worked on La Mer, Debussy moved in with Emma Bardac, the wife of a local banker, leaving behind his wife Lily, who attempted suicide.

Two weeks after the premiere of La Mer, Bardac gave birth to Debussy's child, Claude-Emma, later known as ChouChou. Debussy married Emma Bardac on January 20, 1908. The night before, he conducted an orchestra for the first time in public, in a program which included La Mer. This time, it was a spectacular success, though many of his friends still wouldn't speak to him.



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## LIST OF PLAYERS

### 1<sup>ST</sup> VIOLINS

Annmarie McDade  
Liz Evans  
Paul Dickman  
Rachel Curtzon  
Charlotte Dodwell  
Eleanor Gilchrist  
Natalia Wierzbicka  
Hazel Crossley

### 2<sup>ND</sup> VIOLINS

Joanna Lee  
Michael Boxall  
Carol Disspain  
Fiona Glasscock  
Henrik Jensen  
Sarah Hackett  
Peshawa Ballek

### VIOLAS

Miriam Grant  
Penny De Spirito  
Sue White  
Carolyn Brett  
Evelyn Newman  
Pauline Dixon

### CELLOS

Sharon Beales  
Lorraine Lenaghan  
Alex Clark  
Frances Burton  
Claire Sturdy

### BASSES

Gaye Endler  
Claire Kiernan

### PICCOLO

Sam Wade

### FLUTES

Richard Ellis  
Juliet Porter  
Sam Wade

### OBOES

Kathryn Gunn  
Doug Lloyd

### COR ANGLAIS

Cynthia Betts

### CLARINETS

David Cox  
Laura Drane

### BASSOONS

David Silvera  
Jamie O'Connor  
Janet Martin

### HORNS

Ollie de Cataret  
Caroline Auty  
Chris Pocock  
Janice Barker  
Johnny Marsh

### TRUMPETS

Rebecca Seaton  
Tom Thornton  
Mick Ahearn

### TROMBONES

Roger Willey  
Vince Freeman  
Hannah Roberts

### TUBA

Charlie Yuxiang Zhang

### HARP

Harriet Adie  
Elizabeth Bass

### TIMPANI

Helen Burgess

### PERCUSSION

Sophie Simpson  
Sam Aslangul  
Cameron Reed

Next Concert  
March 30th 2018 at St Andrews URC Cheam

Khachaturian Suite No 2 from Spartacus  
Arutunian Trumpet Concerto  
Tchaikovsky Symphony No 4

