

Sutton Symphony Orchestra

President Louis Rutland, Vice President Elizabeth Angel

Conductor: Philip Aslangul

Leader: Annmarie McDade

75th Anniversary Concert

Mozart Overture to The Marriage of Figaro

Bizet L'Arlesienne Suite No 2

Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in E minor

Soloist Amber Emson

Vaughan Williams Symphony No 2

St Andrews United Reformed Church
Cheam

Saturday 27th November 2021
7.30pm

In the presence of the Mayor of the London Borough of Sutton, Cllr Trish Fivey and Madam Deputy Mayor, Cllr Annie Moral.

Please note that recording of this concert is strictly prohibited

www.suttonsymphonyorchestra.org
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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

Annmarie grew up in Leeds where she was the leader of the City of Leeds Youth Orchestra. She was a member of the National Youth Orchestra and a founder member of the LPO Youth Orchestra. She then went on to study the violin and piano at the Royal College of Music, learning with Trevor Williams and Howard Davis.

Since graduating she has worked with many orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera North, British Philharmonic Orchestra, London Arts Orchestra, Kentish Opera, Camerata of London and London Musical Theatre Orchestra, several in a principal role.

Annmarie spent 8 years in the orchestra of the London production of Les Misérables and has worked on other West End shows including The Producers, Company, Annie Get Your Gun and Yank. She also led touring productions of The Sound of Music and Oklahoma.

Annmarie has worked with a variety of artists such as Jose Carreras, Plácido Domingo, Jessye Norman and Andrea Bocelli.

As a soloist works performed include Mozart's A major and G major Concertos, Bruch's G minor Concerto, Beethoven's Romances, Vivaldi's Four Seasons and Bach's and Malcolm Arnold's double violin Concertos.

Annmarie lives in Carshalton and teaches both privately and for Sutton Music Service. She has been the leader of Sutton Symphony Orchestra since 2011.

Amber started playing violin at the age of 5 as a pupil of Margaret Norris and later Natasha Boyarsky. She was a student at Chetham's School of Music 2014-16, and attended the Royal College of Music's Junior Department between 2016 and 2019, where she took lessons with Maciej Rakowski.



She currently studies violin at the Royal Academy of Music under the tutelage of So-Ock Kim. In 2019 Amber received 1st prize in Germany's national 'Jugend Musiziert' competition, as well as 1st prize at the International Music Competition Hohenpriessnitz.

A passionate chamber musician, she took part in 'Mit Musik – Miteinander' at Kronberg Academy in September 2018, and regularly participated at 'MusicWorks' chamber music coaching where she worked with mentors including Catherine Manson, James Boyd, Robert Max and Alasdair Beatson. Since August 2019, she is a member of LGT Young Soloists, performing with the group in major concert halls worldwide.

During recent years, Amber's musical activities have been supported by generous grants from a number of trusts and foundations. Amongst these are the National Youth Arts Trust, Kathleen Trust and Spoff's Chamber Music Scholarships.

Amber plays on a violin by Matthew Taylor from 1806.



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PROGRAMME

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

MARRIAGE OF FIGARO OVERTURE

This renowned overture was the first piece ever performed by Sutton Symphony Orchestra in the opening concert in 1946.

The Marriage of Figaro [Le Nozze de Figaro] is the first of Mozart and Da Ponte's trilogy of opera mainstays, the other two being Don Giovanni and Così fan tutte. Da Ponte's libretto is based on the play *La Folle Journée, ou Le Mariage de Figaro*, by the French playwright Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais. The play was considered scandalous at the time due to its political commentary on the excesses of the aristocracy and its overtly sexual nature. Da Ponte removed much of the political commentary, moderated the most risqué parts, and increased the pace of the action for Mozart's opera.

The work premiered in 1786 at Vienna's Burg-Theater with Mozart conducting. It was successful in Vienna, but to a lesser degree than it was when Mozart took it to Prague in 1787. He wrote, "the one subject of conversation here is— Figaro; nothing is played, sung or whistled but— Figaro; nobody goes to any opera but— Figaro; everlastingly Figaro!"

The overture, while containing none of the opera's melodic themes, sets the tone and pace of the ensuing action that will follow. The overture opens with running sixteenth notes in the strings and bassoon, setting up a frenetic clip which continues throughout the entire opera. Even the contrasting lyrical theme in the overture has an impellent feel to it, never sitting back, but always moving forward to its joyous conclusion.

GEORGES BIZET

L'ARLESIENE SUITE NO.2

1.Pastorale, 2.Intermezzo, 3.Minuet, 4.Farandole

Bizet was the son of musicians and entered the Paris Conservatoire just before he turned ten. He later won the Prix de Rome and is best known for "Carmen", which, after Bizet's early death aged 36, became the most popular of all operas. Although he suffered from depression, Bizet's instrumental music is frequently engaging and cheerful.

In 1872 Bizet composed the incidental music to Alphonse Daudet's play, *L'Arlesienne* or *The Maid of Arles*. Although the play was a failure, the music was well-received, and Bizet immediately arranged four of the 27 numbers into a suite of pieces from it. Four years after Bizet's death, his friend Ernest Guiraud arranged a second suite, which is the one performed today. It was also part of the inaugural SSO programme.

The opening "Pastorale" sets the early morning scene for Act 2. The Intermezzo is based on a Provençal folksong, and the "Minuet" is from Bizet's opera "The Pearl Fishers" from 10 years earlier. The rousing "Farandole" is a dance from Act 3, augmented by "The March of the Three Kings" from the first suite.

Coming from a wealthy family, Mendelssohn had no financial worries. His banker father, although a converted Lutheran, was the son of the pre-eminent Age of Enlightenment Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. Felix, along with his sister Fanny, received the best musical education money could buy.

As an adult the composer's personal life was the model of domestic bliss with his joyful marriage to Cécile Jeanrenaud, the daughter of a minister in the French Reform Church. An undisputed giant in Europe's musical community, Mendelssohn was much sought-after as both composer and conductor, beginning his tenure with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1836 at the tender age of 27. Every aspect of his life was nearly perfect, but such a shining star could only burn out quickly. Mendelssohn died at the age of 38, probably from a stroke, the same malady that killed Fanny a year before.

Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor is a late work, dating from the end of 1844, although much of the piece was sketched over the course of the previous decade. By 1835 he resolved to compose a work for his friend, the virtuoso violinist Ferdinand David. However, the composer's many conducting obligations and extensive travels forced him to shelve the project for nine years.

The resulting work is a gem of the solo repertoire. Opening immediately with the soloist and completely foregoing the customary orchestral exposition, the piece begins with a charming melody that has become the signature of this concerto. Traditionally cast in sonata form, the movement shows Mendelssohn's expertise at paring down the orchestral fabric, allowing smaller groups of instruments to accompany the soloist. The first movement is fused to the second by a single sustained note in the bassoon, leading to a lyrical Andante theme. In this middle movement, Mendelssohn skilfully exploits the legato capabilities of the violin while accompanying these passages with multiple stops of considerable difficulty – all played simultaneously by the soloist. The finale is a brilliant and elegant romp – a clear gesture of homage to the virtuoso tradition of solo violinists.

INTERVAL

Please note that due to the need to preserve social distancing, we regret that we are unable to provide refreshments at this event

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

SYMPHONY NO.2 "LONDON"

Prologue(Lento) – Allegro risoluto

Lento

Scherzo (Nocturne) – Allegro vivace

Andante con moto – Allegro – Epilogue (Andante sostenuto)

Vaughan Williams was Vice-President of Sutton Symphony Orchestra at the time of their first concert in 1946. He learned composition from Stanford and Parry in London, and Ravel in Paris.

After the success of his first symphony (Sea Symphony, a setting of words by Walt Whitman) the second was eagerly awaited and was given its premiere in 1914. The preceding Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis gave a hint of what was to come. Vaughan-Williams changed the score several times and the version we play tonight is from 1920. It is dedicated to his close friend the Yorkshire-born composer George Butterworth, who first suggested that Vaughan-Williams should write such a work, but was tragically killed in the trenches in the First World War. A comparison with *Der Rosenkavalier* is interesting because both works were written at about the same time, but in completely contrasting styles. A mere glance at the score shows the Strauss piece to be extremely complex and detailed, whereas the VW symphony is more sparingly orchestrated; a common link perhaps is the feeling of nostalgia in both pieces.

The symphony was not intended to be tone poem about London, although there are graphic images – the Westminster chimes are heard at the end of the introduction (Prologue) and the Epilogue, and in the Scherzo we hear a mouth organ and street songs. Beethoven described the appearance of the cuckoo and the quail in the slow movement of his Pastoral symphony as “more expression of feeling than painting”. Vaughan-Williams said of the London Symphony that “the music is intended to be self-expressive, and must stand or fall as ‘absolute’ music”. Stand it does.

The work opens softly before dawn, down by the misty river, with a rising figure in the basses. Big Ben is heard in the distance, then the great city crashes into life. The first movement is a kaleidoscope of images, from the hustle and bustle of the Strand to the quiet streets that lead down to the river and ends in a very positive mood.

The hauntingly beautiful slow movement was said by VW to depict “Bloomsbury Square on a November afternoon”. This is the emotional heart of the symphony. After a chilly introduction, the cor anglais sings a sad tune. Some consolation is found by the lower strings, to a gently throbbing accompaniment. After a brief moment of passion, a solo viola sings “Sweet lavender, who will buy sweet lavender?” with the distant jingles of hansom cabs. This time the music rises gradually to a searing emotional climax, before dying away and leaving the viola to muse alone.

The Scherzo (subtitled Nocturne) depicts evening revelries – it scurries along until interrupted by the brass. Then a mouth organ appears and everyone joins in a merry dance. The light begins to fade, and so does the action, as if receding into the distance.

The Finale opens with a great cry of anguish, as if the composer was trying to depict the human tragedy found in all great cities. The solemn march that follows has a hint of pageantry but is full of emotion. The Allegro is powerful and barbaric, with no comfort, until the quiet return of the march. The music rises to an impassioned climax, then dies away to the sound of the Westminster chimes – it is the beginning of the end. The Epilogue opens with rippling figures depicting the great river, as London returns to rest – “Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song”. Vaughan-Williams described the ending with a quotation from *Tono-Bungay* by H.G.Wells, in which a ship is slowly steaming down the river – “England and Kingdom...glide abeam, astern, sink down upon the horizon, pass – pass. The river passes, London passes, England passes....” The War to end all Wars started later that year.

SUTTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

75 years ago, Sutton Symphony Orchestra was formed and has entertained the people of Sutton with concerts every year bar one - 2020. We are delighted to be back performing live tonight, with a programme which evokes the very first concert in 1946.

The first SSO committee meeting was held on 3rd May in that year. The minutes of that meeting, the first page of which is reproduced here, show that both Ralph Vaughan-Williams and (Sir) Malcolm Sargent were invited to be vice-presidents. The former accepted, and it is therefore fitting that we include one of his works at our concert tonight.

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

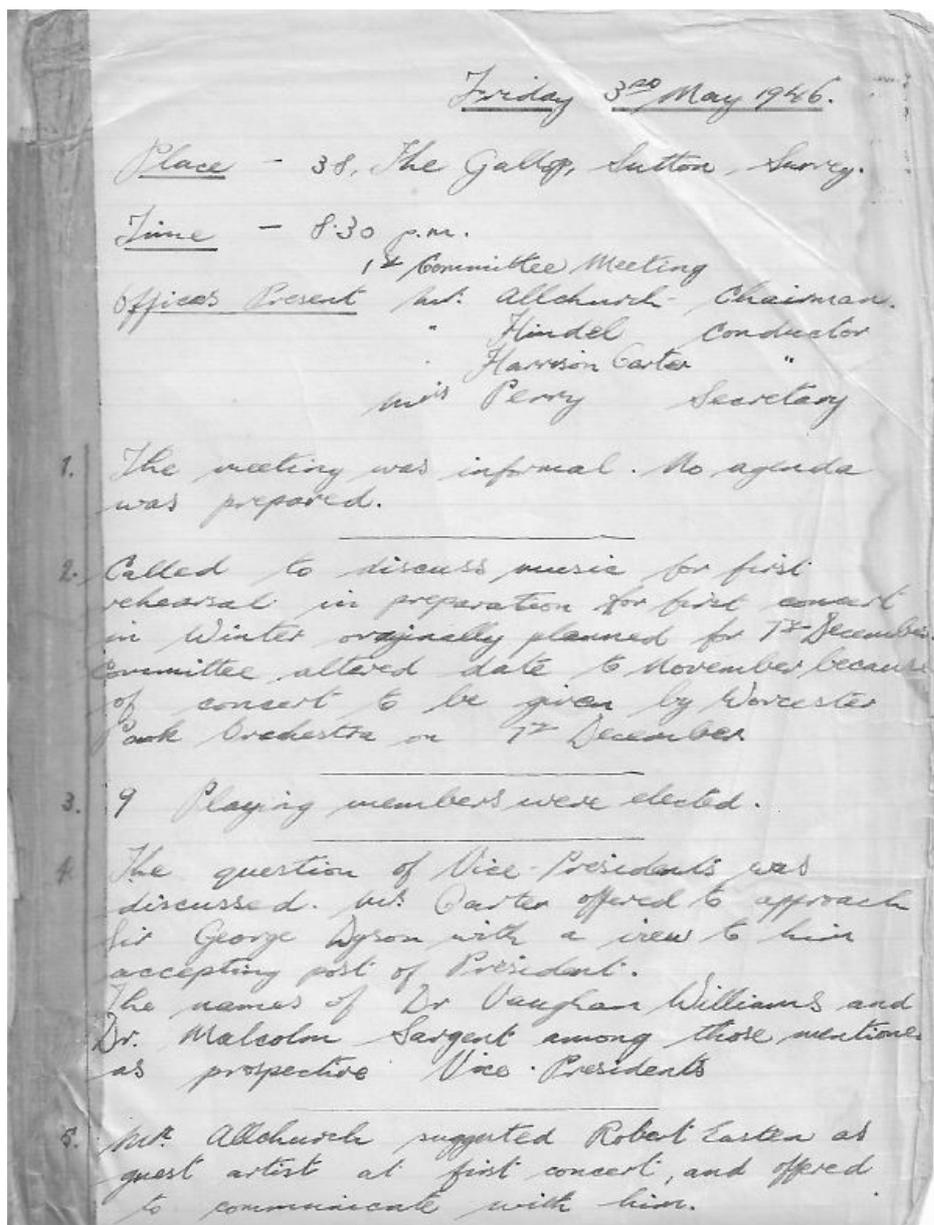
We would like to express our gratitude to **Homefield Preparatory School, Sutton** for its provision of rehearsal space, **St Andrews United Reformed Church, Cheam** for the use of the building for tonight's concert, and **Sutton Music Service** for use of their music stands and percussion equipment.

FUTURE CONCERTS

Future dates for your diary:

26th March 2022 at St Andrews United Reformed Church, Cheam (see enclosed flyer)

25th June 2022 at All Saints Church, Carshalton ("A Night at the Musicals").



LIST OF PLAYERS

1ST VIOLINS

Annmarie McDade
Charlotte Dodwell
Liz Evans
Paul Dickman
Pam Raine
Stephen Lock
Helen Anstis
Vincent Fideli

2ND VIOLINS

Joanna Lee
Lydia Heald
Michael Boxall
Carol Disspain
Stephen Howell
Sophie Ayles
Lexi Weiner-Roup
Jane Stockton

VIOLAS

David Brooker
Penny Dispirito
Sue White
Pauline Dixon

CELLOS

Ann Lines
Alex Clark
Martin Smith
Becva Shujkri
Frances Burton
Clare Tomlinson
Natasha Prewett
Morgan Key

BASSES

Gaye Endler
Adrian Warwick

FLUTES/PICCOLO

Juliet Porter
Richard Ellis
Sam Wade

OBOES

Kathryn Gunn
Emma Downer
Doug Lloyd

CLARINETS

Alan Lakin
Laura Drane

BASSOONS

Alun Stockton
Janet Martin

HORNS

Simon Davey
Caroline Auty
Chris Pocock
Janice Barker

TRUMPETS

Joe Matthews
Jesse Musson
Ed Habershon
Dylan Kirk

TROMBONES

Roger Willey
Vince Freeman
Hannah Roberts

TIMPANI

Helen Burgess

PERCUSSION

Stephen Matthews
Jo Marples
Kark Kramer

HARP

Iona Duncan