

Eastbourne
CONCERT :
ORCHESTRA



Christmas **CONCERT**

PROGRAMME



Welcome

Welcome to our Christmas concert which marks the opening of our 74th Orchestral Season.

The orchestra continues to grow and I am extremely proud of our musical achievements. Looking back on last season I am particularly proud of our performance of Dvorak Symphony No. 8 in our Spring Concert and really enjoyed celebrating my 10th anniversary as Musical Director in our Summer Classical Bangers concert. Last season saw us hit record audience numbers, raise a significant amount of money for St Wilfrid's, and perform as part of the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the Devonshire Park with a special Gala concert in September. I am very excited to see what our 74th season brings!

Tonight's concert begins with the overture to a one-act opera by Wolf-Ferrari. He is best known for transforming wild and witty 18th Century farces into comic operas with great success - they were musically eclectic, melodic, hilarious and internationally successful. In fact, until the outbreak of World War I, Wolf-Ferrari's operas were among the most performed in the world. *Il segreto di Susanna* (Susanna's Secret), premiered in 1909, is a lighthearted intermezzo centred on a peculiar marital misunderstanding. The overture sets the scene with playful, lively themes that hint at the opera's comic intrigue: Count Gil suspects his wife, Susanna, of having an affair with a smoker, only to discover the secret she so vehemently wants to hide, is simply her own penchant for cigarettes.

Geoffrey Toye's Concert waltz, *The Haunted Ballroom*, transports us to an enchanting dance hall, where ghostly figures seem to waltz through the shadows. Composed in 1934, the piece is inspired by a tale of an abandoned ballroom haunted by memories of past revellers, forever waltzing to music that only they can hear. With its haunting melody and darkly elegant rhythm, Toye's music captures a sense of both nostalgia and mystery. The graceful waltz theme feels strangely beautiful yet unsettling, never quite coming to an end before it begins again, as if the echoes of a forgotten past are playing out in front of us in a constant loop.

As the name suggests, Angela Morley's *Reverie* is a musical daydream - a gentle, swirling journey through peaceful melodies that seem to float on air. Known for her work in film and television scoring, Morley brings a cinematic quality to *Reverie*, immersing us in a world of gentle introspection and beauty, as though inviting us to get lost in our own thoughts. The solo violin part is performed by our wonderful leader, Simon Smith.

We end the first half with Schubert's Symphony No. 8 in B minor, the Unfinished - one of music's great mysteries. Why were only two movements completed? Why did Schubert leave the 3rd movement un-orchestrated, and was there ever a 4th movement sketched out? Composed between 1818 and 1825 at a point where Schubert was coming to terms with both his syphilis diagnosis and a crisis of confidence caused by Beethoven's revolutionary symphonic writing; was illness or indecision to blame for the symphony remaining incomplete? Whatever the reason, we are treated to two wonderful movements - a haunting Allegro moderato and a deeply lyrical Andante con moto.

Victor Herbert's March of the Toys comes from his beloved 1903 operetta Babes in Toyland, a whimsical tale set in a magical land of nursery rhyme characters and Christmas cheer. This lively march depicts an army of toys coming to life and parading in grand style.

Taken from the opera La Gioconda, The Dance of the Hours represents, as the name suggests, the passage of time through a series of dances: morning, afternoon, evening, and night. Ponchielli's music captures a different mood in each section, from bright and playful to darkly dramatic, making it one of the most memorable ballet interludes in opera. The music was famously used in Walt Disney's 1940 film Fantasia where hippos, alligators, elephants and ostriches, complete with full ballet regalia dance comically to the timeless music.

Join us on the lively streets of Victorian London with a selection from Lionel Bart's beloved musical, Oliver! These highlights bring the adventures of young Oliver Twist vividly to life. Premiering in 1960, Oliver! has captured hearts with its mix of humour, heartache, and memorable melodies. This selection showcases the full range of the musical's magic - whether it's the scheming antics of Fagin's gang or the wide-eyed optimism of Oliver himself. So grab your bowls, ask for more, and enjoy!

And of course, any ECO festive performance would be incomplete without Leroy Anderson! The Second half starts with his masterful and joyous arrangement of traditional carols in a Christmas Festival, and our traditional Christmas finale - Sleigh Ride - ends tonight's concert on a suitably festive high!

All of us at the Eastbourne Concert Orchestra wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

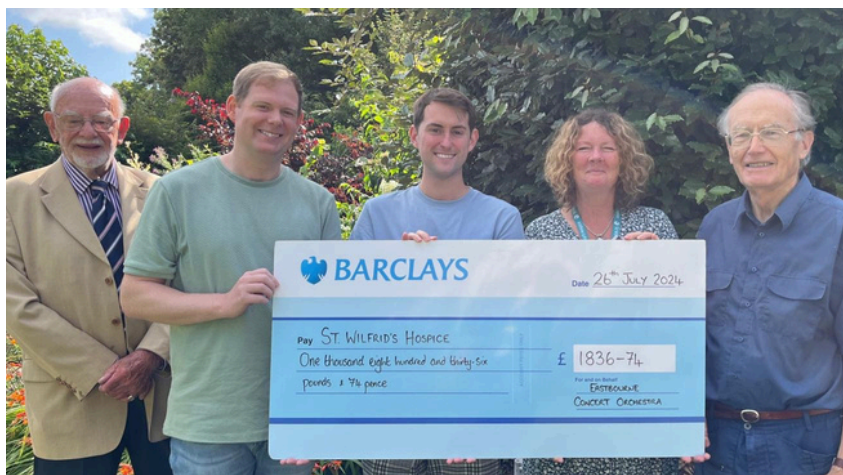
Simon Polton-Gower
Conductor & Musical Director

St Wilfrid's Hospice



Our Classical Bangers concert in July was put on in aid of St Wilfrid's Hospice. Through the ticket sales, your generous donations alongside an additional donation from the Orchestra we raised an impressive **£1,861.74** for the charity.

'Your generosity will help our patients to live well at the end of life and support their families and carers, now and in the future.'



Upcoming Events

SPRING CONCERT

Tuesday 25th March 2025 - Eastbourne Town Hall

Rodrigo: Concierto de Aranjuez

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 3, 'Polish'

SUMMER CONCERT

Tuesday 1st July 2025 - Eastbourne Town Hall

A Summer Romance



Programme

WOLF-FERRARI

Il Segretto di Susanna - Overture

TOYE

The Haunted Ballroom - A Concert Waltz

MORLEY

Reverie. Soloist: Simon Smith

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 8 in B minor 'Unfinished'

I. Allegro moderato

II. Andante con moto

INTERVAL

ANDERSON

A Christmas Festival

CAROL ○ Little Town of Bethlehem

HERBERT

March of the Toys, from Babes in Toyland

PONCHIELLI

Dance of the Hours, from La Gioconda

CAROL Sussex Carol

BART, ARR. REED

Oliver! Concert Orchestra Selections

ANDERSON

Sligh Ride

Some of the music in this programme has been supplied by the Light Music Society. Find out about the charity by scanning the QR code.



The Orchestra

FIRST VIOLIN

Simon Smith
Nigel Bland
Hazel Brewer
Liz Bux
Lindsey Cook
Roz Hall
Yuliia Lypova
Alicia Newell
Jessica Spiteri
Jill Vaughan
Tessa Younger

HARP

Fiona Hosford

FLUTE

Gill Willis
Sarah Thomson

CLARINET

David Bottom
Stephanie Bond
Jason Carbonell-Ferrer
Sally Donegan

FRENCH HORN

Chris Willard
Aussie Pepper
Andrew Cochlin
Mike Sarna
Bob Turner

SECOND VIOLIN

Will Oastler
Marianne Barber
Lucy Blyth
Paula Burr
Julia Carlton-Lowe
John Caroe
Lynn Leppard
Niamh Pearce
Yvonne Spear

DOUBLE BASS

Julian Baker
Kaye Colier

OBOE

Gail Taylor
Sian Russell

BASSOON

Charlotte Willis
Kate Denny
Theresa Keysell
Jan Townsend

TRUMPET

Andy Trowhill
Stuart Welford

VIOLA

Sophie Bayman
Marie-Pierre Bijlani
Elizabeth Cotton
Valmai Crane

CELLO

Jonathan Bruce
Kathryn Anderson
Ruth Bosworth
Miranda Buser
Karen Sinstadt

PERCUSSION & TIMPANI

Ed Bond
Patricia Golds
Avril Vegh

TROMBONE

Andy Simpson
Chris Thompson

Friends of the Orchestra



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Dr John Caroe

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FRIENDS

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Luca Bijlani

Jacqui Bland

Jean Booth

David Cooke

Eva Cram

Pam Dye

Margaret Gardner

Mike Goss

Sue Goss

Jill Haughan

Maggie Haynes

Jeanne Hayward

Barbara Leggett

Bert Leggett

Zoe Luck

Jacqueline Osborn

Patricia Snowden

Jane Stevens

David Van Leer

Brian Waters Esq MBE

David Wood

Names correct at time of print.

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Our Season Ticket saves you £5 compared to buying tickets for concerts separately. An annual season ticket subscription of £25 (renewed in September) gets you:

- » A ticket to our Christmas, Spring and Summer concerts
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- » Your name in the programme.
- » The opportunity to make further donations to support the orchestra.
- » The opportunity to sponsor a piece through purchasing music for the orchestra.

Please email friends.eastbourneorchestra@gmail.com or complete a Friends membership form, available from our front of house team, for more information on becoming a friend or renewing your membership for our 74th Season (2024-25).

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