



Eastbourne
CONCERT :|| 75th
ORCHESTRA ANNIVERSARY

Christmas CONCERT

Programme



Welcome

Welcome to the Christmas concert of our 75th anniversary season. We're excited to bring you a truly festive programme to kick-start your Christmas celebrations.

The first half begins with Mozart's overture to his comic opera *Così fan tutte*. It sets the scene for this compelling tale of deception - Two young men are prompted by a wager to trick their respective girlfriends into betraying them. The title, which refers back to a line from *The Marriage of Figaro*, translates as "all women are like that." Yet despite the misogyny of the phrase, both genders prove to fit the pattern and it reveals an unsettling truth about blind faith in love.

John Foulds was a successful composer of Light Music and theatre scores, although he had an experimental and serious streak that was ahead of his time. He also had a bone to pick with the BBC for only playing his light music and ignoring his serious works. The *Suite Fantastique*, from the Music to a French Pierrot Play falls into the theatre music category. The story follows the characters Pierrette and Pierrot as whimsical, wayward figures, both winsome and romantic, tragic and humorous. The *Chanson Plaintive* movement follows Pierrot's long and arduous journey 'tramping' the roads of Russia, Poland and Hungary in pursuit of an elusive livelihood. The *Wayside Cross* describes an episode in which the man behind the pierrot-mask is glimpsed. For "is not the actor a man with a heart like you?" The fourth and final movement is 'just a gay revel, a riot of fun, fantastic, merry full of quips and cranks and unflagging good humour.

Ronald Binge was also a successful light music composer. He started as a cinema organist in Blackpool and Great Yarmouth before going on to become an arranger for many of Mantovani's most famous pieces as well as a composer in his own right. His *Elizabethan Serenade* was used by the BBC as the theme for the 1950s 'Music Tapestry' Series and as the play-out on British Forces Network Radio. 'Sailing by' was used by the BBC as the theme to the Shipping Forecast, which celebrates it's 100th anniversary as a BBC radio broadcast this year.

Delibes' Ballet Sylvia premiered on 14 June 1876 at the Palais Garnier in Paris, the first ever ballet performed at the newly built theatre. It went unnoticed by the critics and was unsuccessful with audiences mostly down to the poor lighting and problems with the choreography. In the end it was Delibes' score that saved the first production and encouraged several revivals. Without such highly esteemed music, the ballet would have soon drifted into obscurity. Tchaikovsky remarked upon the ingenuity of Sylvia, calling it

"... the first ballet, where the music constitutes not only the main, but the only interest. What charm, what elegance, what richness of melody, rhythm, harmony".

The second half is where we ramp up the Christmas music and the Christmas cheer! There are opportunities for you to test drive your Christmas carolling with a couple of sing-a-longs so don't forget to warm up in the interval!

Christmas at the Movies, as the name suggests, takes us on a musical journey through some top Christmas Films, including Miracle on 34th Street, The Polar Express and Home Alone.

We couldn't have a festive concert without some Strauss. Venerated in the annual Vienna New Years' concert, the Strauss composing dynasty was known for their marches, waltzes and polkas. Tonight we play Johann Strauss senior's Radetzky March from 1848, written to celebrate the Victory of the Austrian Empire over the Italians at the Battle of Custoza during the First war of Independence. Best known now as the encore in the aforementioned New Years' Day concerts.

The second half isn't all festive though. Shostakovich's Suite for Variety Orchestra was actually put together by Levon Atovmyan sometime after 1956. Atovmyan was regularly entrusted with arranging concert suites of Shostakovich's film music, and although made with Shostakovich's approval and based on his music, Atovmyan's arrangements incorporated extensive alterations and newly-composed material.

The instantly recognisable material for the Waltz no. 2 is an arrangement of cues composed for the soundtrack to 1955 film 'The First Echelon'. We play this at the request of one of our Eastbourne Concert Orchestra Friends and you too can become a Friend and request a piece! More details can be found within this programme.

The Musical Chicago was first performed on Broadway in 1975 and was a commercial hit for the duo Kander and Ebb. The Jazz hall melodies, murderous leading ladies, based on real crimes committed in the 1920s and vaudeville inspired scenes caught the imagination of the general public. The Broadway and West End revivals won the Tony and Olivier awards for best revivals in 1997. The 2002 film, starring Catherine Zita Jones, Renee Zellweger and Richard Gere won the Best Picture Oscar.

The medley heard tonight features some of the hit songs from the show, including All that Jazz and the Cell block Tango.

We end the concert with two Christmas pieces by Leroy Anderson - it just wouldn't feel like Christmas without them! The first, A Christmas Festival is a wonderful arrangement of well known Christmas Carols, followed by the frolicsome Sleigh Ride. This year we play Sleigh Ride in honour of Mike Goss, a very long standing member of the orchestra both as a player and as a friend, who sadly passed away this year. He really enjoyed playing this piece every year so we feel it is a fitting tribute to him.

We hope this Concert puts you in the festive mood and all of us at the Eastbourne Concert Orchestra wish you, and yours, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Simon Polton-Gower

Conductor & Musical Director

Eastbourne Concert Orchestra

Upcoming Events

75th Anniversary Spring Concert

A celebration of female composers

Tuesday 24th March 2026 - Eastbourne Town Hall

75th Anniversary Gala Concert

Tuesday 7th July 2026 - Winter Garden, Eastbourne

Programme

Mozart

Così fan tutte - Overture

Foulds

Suite Fantastique
I. Pierrette and Pierrot
II. Chanson Plaintive
III. The Wayside Cross
IV. Carnival Procession

Binge

Sailing By

Binge

Elizabethan Serenade

Delibes

Sylvia Selections

INTERVAL

Krogstad

Christmas at the Movies

Strauss

Radetzky March

Traditional English

Here we come a-wassailing

Carol

Hark the Herald!

Shostakovich

Suite for Variety Orchestra - Waltz No. 2

Kander

Chicago - Selections from the Musical

Carol

O Come All Ye Faithful

Anderson

A Christmas Festival

Anderson

Sleigh Ride (*In memory of Mike Goss*)

The Orchestra

1ST VIOLIN

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

2ND VIOLIN

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

VIOLA

Sophie Bayman
Marie-Pierre Bijlani
Valmai Crane
Katie Manley

CELLO

Jonathan Bruce
Kathryn Anderson
Ruth Bosworth
Felix Buser
Miranda Buser
Karen Sinstadt

FLUTE & PICCOLO

Gill Willis
Sarah Thomson
Katie Potter

CLARINET & SAXOPHONE

David Bottom
Stephanie Bond
Sally Donegani

DOUBLE BASS

Julian Baker
Kaye Colyer

OBOE & COR ANGLAIS

Gail Taylor
Sian Russell

BASSOON

Charlotte Willis
Jan Townsend
Theresa Keysell
Kate Denny

FRENCH HORN

Aussie Pepper
Chris Willard
Andrew Cochlin
Mike Sarna

TRUMPET

Andy Trowhill
Bob Turner

TROMBONE

Will Roberts
Chris Thompson

TIMPANI & PERCUSSION

Ed Bond
Avril Vegh

Friends of the Orchestra

CHAIRMAN

Dr John Caroe

PRESIDENT

The Worshipful, The Mayor of Eastbourne

FRIENDS' SECRETARY

Kathryn Anderson

FRIENDS *Names correct at time of print.*

Andy Anderson	Pam Dye	Jeanne Hayward	Mike Townsend
Gaurav Bijlani	Ian Ferguson	Barbara Leggett	David Van Leer
Luca Bijlani	Sue Ferguson	Bert Leggett	Brian Waters
Jacqui Bland	Margaret Gardner	Zoe Luck	David Wood
Jean Booth	Patricia Golds	Yvonne McDonald	
Bernadette Chandler	Sue Goss	Richard Miers	
Jenny Cole	Vicky Harwood	Jacqueline Osborn	
Nigel Cole	Peter Harwood	Lori Phillips	
Dr David Cooke	Jill Haughan	Patricia Snowden	
Eva Cram	Maggie Haynes	Jane Stevens	

BECOMING A FRIEND AND SUPPORTING YOUR ORCHESTRA

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
- » Advance information about upcoming concerts and other events.
- » 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 75th Anniversary Season (2025-26).

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