

Southampton Youth Orchestra
presents

From the New World

Jacques Offenbach
Orpheus in the Underworld Overture

Camille Saint-Saëns
Piano Concerto No. 2
Pianist - Edward Bence

Antonin Dvořák
Symphony No. 9 'From the New World'

Saturday 15 April 2023

Avenue St Andrews Church
The Avenue, Southampton, SO17 1XQ

Conductor - Kevin Withell
Assistant Conductor - Charlie Mann



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SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

Good evening, and welcome to Southampton Youth Orchestra's penultimate concert of the season.

It is a night to celebrate the talent that Southampton Music Services continue to discover, develop and support, and Southampton Youth Orchestra are honoured as always to be able to showcase the hard work and talent of some of Southampton's finest young musicians.

We are delighted to be back at Avenue St. Andrews Church for the first time since March 2020, which was incidentally when we performed Dvorak's 8th Symphony.

I'd like to thank Friends of Southampton Youth Orchestras, who have supported us financially and morally throughout this difficult last couple of years, ensuring that SYO has a post-Covid future. Their involvement in rehearsals this term has also been invaluable; providing sugar for the students and caffeine for the adults, along with unparalleled support in every area of producing a concert. If anybody in tonight's audience feels that they are in a position to support FSYO with an hour or two of their time every term, please do feel free to approach them at the raffle table in the interval.

My thanks extend to SYO's assistant conductor, Charlie, who I'm delighted to be sharing the podium with tonight. Charlie's expertise, experience and organisation have already had a huge impact on the smooth running of SYO, and will play a major part in its future success.

It remains only to thank each and every member of tonight's audience for supporting us tonight, and to wish you all a most enjoyable evening.

Kevin Withell

Musical Director of Southampton Youth Orchestra

Programme

Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld – Jacques Offenbach

Piano Concerto No.2 in G minor – Camille Saint-Saens

- I – Andante sostenuto
- II – Allegro scherzando
- III – Presto

INTERVAL

Symphony No.9 'From the New World' – Antonin Dvorak

- I – Adagio – Allegro molto
- II – Largo
- III – Scherzo: Molto vivace
- IV – Finale: Allegro con fuoco



Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld – Jacques Offenbach

While the Orpheus overture is attributed to Offenbach and all of the melodies were indeed composed by him for the opera, most people are surprised to find out that the overture itself was put together by Carl Binder, some two years after the opera's premiere in Paris ahead of performances in Vienna.

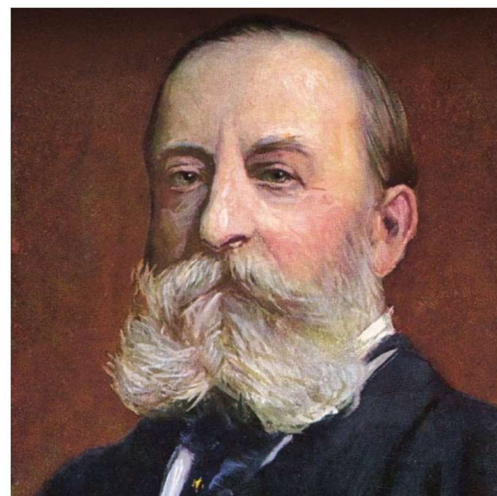
Following a period of harsh restrictions on the duration, scale and content of French opera, Offenbach took the opportunity to work on an idea he'd been thinking of for some time; a satirical take on Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice* – something he had always thought of as a boring opera about a boring story. Offenbach thought it would be fun to revamp Greek mythology, as well as taking the opportunity to have a subtle dig at French political figures. One of the

biggest factors in the success of *Orpheus in the Underworld* was a review so savage in its furious denouncement of the opera as profane, blasphemous and lascivious that the French concert-goers felt compelled to get and see it. The opera broke box-office records and the famous *Infernal Galop* became synonymous with the Parisian burlesque scene and is now universally known as The Can-Can.

The overture begins with a powerful fanfare, fading away to the first of many virtuosic solos – the clarinet plays a short cadenza before handing over to an unaccompanied oboe with a mournful melody. The strings take over, and a slow theme begins with solo cello, interspersed with short interjections from oboe and bassoon. The full orchestra bursts in, building to another brilliant fanfare, conceding suddenly to a solo violin who plays a virtuosic cadenza before inviting the orchestra to join him in a grand waltz. After so many short-lived themes, this waltz, something guaranteed to delight the Viennese audiences of 1860, is allowed to develop fully – the melodies are developed and enriched through the orchestra, finally dying away to a gentle whisper that could easily be the end of the overture. Carl Binder, however, had an instinct which told him that Offenbach's *Infernal Galop* promised to be the biggest crowd-pleaser – and thus, the tune that needs no introduction takes the overture to a rousing finale.

Piano Concerto No.2 in G minor – Camille Saint-Saens

Saint-Saens 2nd piano concerto was composed between April and May 1868, and premiered just three weeks after composition began. This was not unusual for Saint-Saens, a young composer and pianist of huge talent and unbelievable memory. He gave public piano recitals from the age of five, and



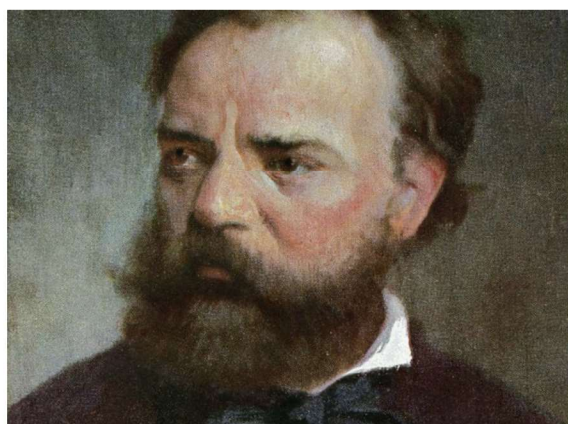
his first professional concerto performance aged ten – by which age he was also able to play any of Beethoven’s 32 piano sonatas on request from memory. The concerto was described as ‘beginning with Bach and ending with Offenbach’ in relation to the wide range of musical styles and influences explored in it.

The first movement begins with a wandering cadenza from the solo piano builds to a thunderous orchestral entry. This is short-lived, however, and passes back over to the piano to introduce the first theme: a slow-paced melody, expressive and mournful, accompanied restless semiquavers and the occasional barely-audible chord from the orchestra. Every time there promises to be a climax, Saint-Saens works in a gentle release of pressure until one last unavoidable build-up of passion explodes into a full orchestra recapitulation of the first theme, accompanied by virtuosic scales in the piano. Another extended cadenza leads to a repeat of the orchestra’s opening chords before an uncharacteristically abrupt ending.

The second movement begins with a short timpani solo which introduces a simple two-note theme that will go on to form a regularly returning bassline before the piano introduces a playful theme that is developed between soloist and orchestra before the lower strings bring in a new theme – one that Saint Saens presents in every form from haughty and imperious to light and playful to apologetic and vulnerable. The composer toys with the audience; losing their sense of direction through short virtuosic development sections but always returning to one of the now-familiar themes before fading suddenly into a delicate ending.

The third and final movement provides a shocking contrast – as fast and lively as the second movement but with the dark, moody power of the first movement. Viciously difficult for soloist and orchestra alike, a thrillingly rhythmic interplay across the ensemble finally relenting into a hymn-like chord progression first in the woodwind and later with the strings joining, before we start all over again and the exchange of short complex rhythms between soloist and orchestra drives through to an exhilarating finale.

Symphony No.9 in E Minor ‘From The New World’ – Antonin Dvorak



Dvorak was born in 1841 near Prague, and although he was a very good violinist from an early age, he didn’t break through into international renown until his early thirties. In 1874, he submitted some compositions for the Austrian State Prize for Composition and came first – judged by none other than Johannes Brahms. Dvorak went on to win the same prize in 1876 and 1877. Brahms had enjoyed the success of his Hungarian Dances but was running out of excuses to avoid composing another set for his eager publishers. Dvorak’s inimitable use of

Bohemian influences impressed Brahms, and he handed Dvorak his first big professional break with a recommendation to his publisher that they approach Dvorak for a set of Slavonic Dances. Within twelve years, Dvorak was in demand as a composer and conductor across Europe, and in 1892 he moved to New York to become director of the National

Conservatory of Music of America where he spent 4 years on a hugely lavish contract.

It was here that Dvorak composed his ninth symphony. He had found the same interest in Native American and African American folk music and spirituals as he had in Bohemian and Slavonic folk music, and it was this that began to help him form his new symphony, later nicknamed 'From The New World', which was proclaimed by the New York Evening Post as 'the greatest symphonic work ever composed in this country.'

The first movement begins with a brief, slow introduction which lays out the important role that rhythm and expression will play in the symphony. Three main themes make up the movement – a dramatic arpeggio theme reminiscent of negro spirituals heard first in the horns, a lighter 'country dance' introduced by the woodwind and a melody of calm optimism from the second flute with an unmistakable likeness to 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot'. A development section toys with all three themes before a furious coda with blaring trombones and fanfaring trumpets brings the movement to a close.

After a quiet back dark chord progression from the brass, the second movement opens with one of the best known melodies in the symphonic repertoire; the slow and optimistic Cor Anglais solo. The movement turns darker and more reflective towards a melody so slow and beautiful it sometimes feels like it's not moving at all. Out of nowhere, a bright oboe introduces a new contrasting theme almost like a dance. We build to a frantic climax, at which the brass reprise two of the themes from the first movement, referencing the Cor Anglais' now recognisable theme as well. This melody comes back one last time in its original form, before the brass remind us of their opening chords as we fade toward a barely audible finish.

The scherzo is an unapologetic look back to Dvorak's Czech roots. With style, energy and rhythms very similar to Dvorak's earlier Slavonic Dances. By now, it's obvious that Dvorak is tying the four movement of the symphony together with references, shared themes and throwbacks. This movement is no different; after the first blaze of Slavonic energy, a slightly slower *trio* section is unmistakably a melodic reference to the main theme from the slow movement. The movement would not be complete without a reference to the now iconic horn theme from the first movement, which thunders in just before the closing coda.

Allegro con fuoco... Fast, with fire... When composers write tunes to be played by unison *fortissimo* brass, it means that they *really* want it to be loud, and after a chromatic introduction, Dvorak introduces the opening theme using two horns and all of the trumpets. The strings introduce a second theme of fiendishly fiery triplets before the music relaxes into wistful clarinet solo. The ensuing development section combined not just the theme from this movement, but from all throughout the symphony. In the way that only a composer at the height of their powers could dream of, Dvorak takes us through an exhilarating rollercoaster – major to minor, fast to slow, full to exposed – until the symphony feels like it blown itself out. Just as we accept that we're in for a gently reminiscent finale, Dvorak has one last twist up his sleeve, and the orchestra finds the energy for one last triumphant burst.

The subtitle 'From The New World' was added on the morning that Dvorak sent the manuscript off to his publishers in Prague. Most people send a postcard. Dvorak sent a symphony.

Southampton Youth Orchestra

Flutes	Alex Jones Poppy Hawkins Vickie Andrews	1 st Violins	Nathan Yam Amelia Wozniak Yumeng Wang Nengwei Zhang
Oboes	Katie Guy Joanna Woodlock		Sam Kinchington Duy Huynh Charlotte McKenzie
Clarinets	Anna Wilkinson Oren Manore		
Bassoons	Lucy Gowans Wendy Lloyd	2 nd Violins	Teresa Kiang Katie Ho Lara Prince Maya Callaway William Tuffrey Joshua Rookes Joshua Clark Hannah Pugh Sofia Mykulynska Eoin Williams
French Horns	Rebecca Cox JJ Lambert Charlie Mann Tyler Saunders		
Trumpets	Daniel Gould Ed Kinge Ghin Choi		
Trombones	Catherine Lewis Lizzie Rowland James Mobley	Violas	Hannah Leary Chris Nichols Tom Gilbert
Tuba	Sam Chappell	'Cellos	Isabella Rose Heather Greenfield Catherine Yi Sophie Blundell
Timpani	Reuben McDermott		
		Doubles Basses	Barnaby Saer Lucas Olley

Kevin Withell – Musical Director



Kevin enjoys a busy and varied conducting career as well as playing and teaching French horn, trombone and percussion. Kevin read music at University of Southampton, where he excelled in conducting, as well as studying composition and orchestration and a writing dissertation in Holocaust Music, before remaining to complete a Masters in orchestral conducting. During his studies at

University of Southampton, Kevin was awarded the prestigious positions of assistant conductor of both Southampton University Symphony Orchestra and Southampton University Sinfonietta. Kevin currently conducts Langtree Sinfonia, Southampton Youth Orchestra and Southampton University String Orchestra, and having served as Musical Director of both Southampton Youth Wind Band and Brass Band. Kevin is in regular demand to conduct rehearsals and sectionals with City of Southampton Orchestra, Worthing Philharmonic Orchestra and London Gay Symphony Orchestra, as well performing in the brass or percussion sections of several orchestras around the Hampshire and Sussex area including Southampton Concert Wind Band, Hyde Brass and City of Southampton Orchestra. He has also recently made two appearances with Meridian Winds to perform Tom Davoren's *Diversons on Calon Lan* for trombone and band.

Kevin has conducted two sell-out concerts with Charity Symphony Orchestra, and organised a much-enjoyed outdoor, socially-distanced performance involving over 100 local musicians to celebrate the end of lockdown.

Kevin continues to dedicate his spare time to researching the lives and works of musicians affected by Nazism and the holocaust, and has had articles published on the Music and the Holocaust website.

Charlie Mann – Assistant Musical Director

Charlie grew up in rural Dorset and has always been musical, starting piano, vocal and violin lessons at age 6. Charlie discovered her love for brass instruments at age 8 and swapped from violin to learning the French Horn. She studied at the University of Southampton, being awarded a BA in Music (First Class Honours) and an MA in International Music Management. Charlie started conducting with Robin Browning in her second year of studies. She conducted a variety of student ensembles whilst at university, and held the Assistant Conductor position with Southampton University Symphonic Wind Orchestra last year. Charlie now conducts Southampton Youth Orchestra, Southampton Youth Concert Sinfonia and Per Piacere.



Alongside conducting, Charlie is a busy freelance French Horn player. Charlie enjoys session work and played with the band Don Broco in the Royal Albert Hall last year as part of the concert series raising money for Teenage Cancer Trust. She tours the UK festival circuit with Symphonica Mr Switch and the Ibiza Orchestra, most notably playing with Symphonica at Melkweg in Amsterdam last June for a drum and bass gig. Most recently, Charlie has started playing with The Fulltone Orchestra, touring the South of the UK with them. She is about to commence a tour with West End star Lucie Jones and The Fulltone Orchestra, performing in Reading, Bath, Bournemouth and Cardiff throughout April and May. Other orchestral work includes Charity Symphony Orchestra, Magna Sinfonia, Dorset Chamber Orchestra, La Primavera Orchestra, New Forest Orchestra and Wimborne Choral Society. Charlie also performs as a soloist, most recently appearing with Southampton University Symphony Orchestra and Southampton Youth Orchestra; she will be playing Strauss' First Horn Concerto with Langtree Sinfonia in May this year.

As a conductor and horn player, Charlie has toured to France, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, and The Netherlands. Charlie accredits her inspiration to become a professional musician to her own experience in a youth orchestra as a teenager, so she is delighted to be working with the next generation of talented young musicians. She has thoroughly enjoyed conducting SYO so far and looks forward to continuing working with the orchestra alongside Kevin in the future.

Edward Bence - Piano



Edward Bence dipABRSM LTCL ARCO is a 19-year-old pianist and organist based in Winchester.

Having been Music Scholar at King Edward VI School, Southampton, Edward was awarded a music scholarship for his sixth form years at Winchester College. During his time there, Edward completed two diplomas on the piano under the tuition of Nick Salwey and became an Associate of the Royal College of Organists while studying under George Castle. Edward gave many solo and chamber performances on the piano, including Beethoven sonatas, Scriabin preludes, Brahms' Horn Trio and other music by Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Bach. He has also performed in many recital series across the

South of England, including The Queen's College Oxford, Gosport Holy Trinity Church and Romsey Abbey, where he is now Organ Scholar.

Edward joined SYO on the horn in 2019 and has been privileged to play some of the great symphonic repertoire with the orchestra. Shostakovich 5, Tchaikovsky 5 and Dvorak 8 were particular highlights. He also has a grade 8 distinction on the recorder and plays it regularly in Baroque ensembles, where he also often plays the harpsichord.

Edward is holding an offer to study mathematics at Oxford University next year and has been awarded the Organ Scholarship at Oriel College. On the piano, his next target is to pass his FTCL.

Nathan Yam – Principal Violin

Nathan started playing violin at the age of seven and joined the Southampton Youth Strings (SYS) in 2017 and Southampton Youth Concert Sinfonia (SYCS) in 2018. He has been a member of Southampton Youth Orchestra (SYO) since 2019 and was violin 1 co-leader in 2022. Nathan has particularly enjoyed playing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Schubert's 'The Great' Symphony at the SYO



concerts in the past years. He also liked playing at the Royal Albert Hall in 2018 with SYCS and at Southampton Mayflower Theatre with SYO and SYWB in 2020.

Other than being a violinist, Nathan is also a clarinettist, a pianist, an organist and a chorister. With the recommendation of his clarinet teacher, Nathan joined Southampton Youth Wind Band (SYWB) in 2018 when he was in Year 6 and became the lead clarinettist in 2022. Nathan is currently an organ scholar at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Bassett, where he has been a chorister since Year 2. He frequently plays piano and organ at church services and contributes to the junior choir as an assistant.

At King Edwards VI School, Nathan participates in many ensembles and choirs and often performs solos at high profile school events. In 2022, he was also awarded an Upper School music scholarship.

In his leisure time, Nathan likes composing and arranging music. He appreciates listening to and playing music from the Romantic era. In addition to music, mathematics, computing, reading and badminton are Nathan's favourite things to do.

Upcoming Concerts

Saturday 15th July 2023, 7.30pm

Southampton Guildhall

Tolga Kashif 'Queen Symphony'

with local massed choirs and

Southampton Music Hub's own rock bands

Saturday 4th November 2023, 7.30pm

Turner Sims Southampton

SYO Autumn Concert

Saturday 13th April 2024, 7.30pm

Romsey Abbey

Programme to include Saint-Saens Organ Symphony

Southampton Music Hub

The Southampton Music Service is the lead partner for the Southampton Music Hub. Over 30 music and arts organisations are represented within the Southampton Music Hub partnership. The group (established in September 2012) work collaboratively to bring a high level of music provision, expertise, access and resource to communities and young people in Southampton.



**SOUTHAMPTON
MUSIC HUB**

Our aim is to support schools and colleges in delivering the National Plan for Music Education and provide opportunities for young people to engage in a rich programme of music making. This is an exciting time for all involved and we look forward to seeing music in Southampton continue to thrive and ensuring our young people can take fond musical memories with them into their future lives.

Southampton Music Service

In March 2011, the Southampton Music Service was judged by the Federation of Music Services as being in the top category of Music Services in the country. SMS has maintained the level of excellence and access to music activity that our community has come to expect. SMS seeks every opportunity to promote and develop the musical potential and personal development of all young people in the City and region of Southampton.

In addition to the specialist instrumental lessons and curriculum support we deliver in schools, SMS also provides an impressive range of choirs, bands and orchestras to support musical progression.

Any young musician interested in joining a Southampton Music Service ensemble or starting lessons for the first time should contact the music service at music@southampton.gov.uk or call 02380 833648

Southampton Hub website www.southamptonmusichub.org

Twitter <https://twitter.com/MusicHubSouth>

If you are age 8-18 and would like to join a student focus group to help shape future Hub activity, please contact us.