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Orchestra

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DOME

87th Concert season

October 2011 – March 2012

Sunday 29 January 2012

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Welcome

to the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra's 87th Concert Season

“ It is a great pleasure to welcome Vasko back to Brighton to play these virtuoso showpieces. This programme came into being as a tribute to the late Sir Charles Mackerras whose influence is so widely felt in the musical life of this country, and so it's only natural that the programme has more than a scent of the "opera house" about it. Here was a truly remarkable musician whose wide range of interests and thought-provoking approach to so many areas of the repertoire have had a lasting effect on musical performance across the musical world. A conductor who wrote two wonderful scores for the ballet as a young man, and who was one of my predecessors at the BBC Concert Orchestra; who could bring as much flair and commitment to Gilbert and Sullivan as to Janáček; and who was so passionate about authenticity in performance long before that concept became as fashionable as it is today, has always been an inspiration to me, and to countless musicians in so many different areas of musical performance.

I hope today's programme will be an afternoon of light-hearted pleasure, and a reminder of one of the less celebrated areas of Sir Charles's achievements. ”

Barry Wordsworth

Barry Wordsworth

MUSIC DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR



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to have an orchestra
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MID SUSSEX TIMES



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Brighton PHILHARMONIC *Orchestra*

brighton
DOME

Sunday 29 January 2012 | 2.45PM

Barry Wordsworth Conductor

Vasko Vassilev Violin

Rossini

Overture *William Tell* [12']

Sarasate

Zigeunerweisen

(Gypsy Airs) [13']

Sarasate

Carmen Fantasy on
themes of Bizet Op. 25 [13']

Interval [20 minutes]

Sullivan

(arr. Mackerras)

Pineapple Poll [40']



Unwanted noise in the auditorium can be distracting for the rest of the audience and the performers. Please try to restrain coughing until the normal breaks in the performance, and if you have a mobile telephone or digital watch alarm ensure that it is switched off.

Please note that the Brighton Dome Concert Hall does not have an induction loop. If you wish to use the Sennheiser infra-red assisted hearing system, headsets can be obtained from the Box Office (book in advance to ensure availability) and used in place of a hearing aid.



Programme notes

BY PETER BACK © 2012



Overture *William Tell*

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)



Following the production of *Le Comte Ory*, an elegant swan song to his career as the master of opera buffa (comic opera), Rossini made his final operatic statement in the form of a grand opera – *William Tell*. Based on Schiller's play about the Swiss patriot who organised his countrymen against the occupying Austrian forces, it is a large-scale work of great originality and power.

It has been described, however, as 'a species of serious heroic comedy'. There are two aspects to comedy and Rossini had mastered them both: comedy as humour and comedy as a vehicle for expressing the ability of ordinary mortals to overcome the potential for disorder in their human affairs. In the latter sense *William Tell* could be described as a 'serious heroic comedy'. *William Tell* is the story of simple countrymen and women stirred by tyranny to acts of great courage; its mood is at once both idyllic and heroic.

The central scene in the opera is where Tell is punished by being made to shoot an arrow through an apple placed on his son's head. This is preceded by one of Rossini's most personal musical utterances. The anxious Tell cries to his son, 'Sing to your mother', the power of the music owing something to Rossini's own recent

loss – to his mother’s death and his father’s grief. He later told Wagner: ‘I’ll tell you that the feeling which moved me most in my life was the love I had for my mother and father, and they repaid it at a usurer’s rate of interest, I’m happy to tell you. It was there, I think, that I found the note that I needed for this scene of the apple in *William Tell*’.

Pastoral and folk elements and an instinctive feel for the picturesque are all present in the Overture, which is in effect a four-movement symphonic poem in miniature. The opening colloquy for five solo cellos evokes ‘the calm of profound solitude, the solemn silence of nature when the elements and human passions are at rest’ (Berlioz). This calm is broken by the gathering fury of an Alpine storm; as it subsides the cor anglais intones the shepherds’ thanksgiving, to which Rossini adds a shrill flute and a triangle that evokes the bells of the mountain sheep. Soon a trumpet announces the approach of Swiss soldiers and an exhilarating final section in martial style.

Zigeunerweisen (Gypsy Airs)

Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908)



Pablo de Sarasate was part of that triumvirate of 19th century violin virtuosi that included Nicolò Paganini and Joseph Joachim. The son of a military bandmaster in Pamplona, Spain, Sarasate began violin lessons at five, and gave his first public performance at eight. In Madrid he was heard by Queen Isabella, who presented him with a Stradivarius violin and helped finance his studies at the Paris Conservatoire, which he entered at the age of twelve.

He established his reputation as a leading violin virtuoso in his twenties, giving concerts on all the great stages of Europe and North and South America. Whereas Paganini was known for his flamboyant technical wizardry, and Joachim for his deep musical insights, Sarasate was famed for the elegance and effortless execution of his playing. He produced, in the words of the Viennese music critic Eduard Hanslick, a ‘stream of beautiful sound’. Such technical perfection, however, sometimes led to the criticism that his performances lacked the emotional content of Paganini’s and the dynamic nuances of Joachim’s. Be that as it may, Sarasate’s great celebrity from the 1870s onwards is reflected in works composed for or dedicated to him by Lalo, Saint-Saëns, Bruch and others. Saint-Saëns dedicated two of his three violin concertos to Sarasate, as well as his *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*.

Sarasate was a gifted composer and wrote many concert pieces for the violin to showcase his own talents. The most popular and famous of these is *Zigeunerweisen*, written in 1878. The gypsy airs used in this work are not the flamenco melodies of Sarasate’s native Spain, but rather those of the Hungarian gypsies whom he encountered on his concert tours. The work consists of a cadenza-like introduction followed by a pair of dance melodies (slow and fast) following the pattern of the *Hungarian Rhapsodies* of Liszt, whom Sarasate met in Budapest during the 1870s. After the richly-embroidered slow section, the tempo quickens and the mood brightens for a blazing dance in the most brilliant gypsy manner energised by a whole battery of violin pyrotechnics.

Carmen Fantasy on themes of Bizet

Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908)

Introduction: Allegro moderato

Moderato

Lento assai

Allegro moderato

Moderato

Sarasate was known for his violin technique, displaying his virtuosity both through dazzling pyrotechnics and a singing tone. Both are called for in his *Carmen Fantasy*. It was to become a benchmark piece by which violin virtuosos were measured. However, the Fantasy is no mere technical platform for the soloist, for within the challenges of the music lies the drama of the opera itself – its passion, rage, love, betrayal, wit and excitement. Published in 1883, only eight years after the opera's première, the Fantasy consists of an Introduction and four movements. Sarasate introduces five of Bizet's themes while allowing the technical effects and difficulties to accumulate as he does so. Features such as left-handed pizzicatos and entire passages played in harmonics are combined with enough fireworks to leave an audience (if not the violinist) breathless at the close.

The *Introduction* is an adaption of the Entr'acte to Act Four of the opera (*Aragonaise*), while the first movement (*Moderato*) introduces the famous *Habañera* sung by Carmen in Act One, adding little grace notes to the chromatic tune as it does so. The gentle second movement (*Lento assai*) takes Carmen's song *Tralalala* from Act One as the perfect foil for the more active music that surrounds it. The third movement (*Allegro moderato*) is the *Seguidilla* aria from Act One, shining every bit as brightly as it does in its original guise. Sarasate makes a direct link between this movement and the finale, the frenetic *Danse bohémienne* from Act Two, full of raw, athletic virtuosity, bringing the Fantasy to an exciting - and exhausting - conclusion.

Pineapple Poll

Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)

arr. Charles Mackerras (1925-2010)

Scene One

Opening Dance

Poll's Solo and Pas de deux

Belaye's solo

Pas de trois

Finale

Scene Two

Poll's solo, Jasper's Solo

Scene Three

Belaye's solo and Sailors' Drill

Poll's Solo

Entry of Belaye with Blanche as Bride

Reconciliation

Grand Finale



Sir Charles Mackerras was one of the most versatile, adventurous and generally admired and respected conductors of the past six decades. His conducting was marked by an exuberance of rhythm and a keen sense of colour, and to these he added a scholarly concern for textual accuracy and interpretative style. He was as eager to argue with colleagues

on authenticity in performing Handel as in discussing the relative merits of the operas of Janáček, which he championed from the early 1950s when they were almost unknown. He was a scholarly Mozartian and kept up with the latest research in performance practice, and an expert in early 19th century operas by Donizetti and others. He was also an abiding admirer of Gilbert and Sullivan. It was his arrangement in 1951 of some of Sullivan's music in the ballet *Pineapple Poll* for what was then the Sadler's Wells Ballet, later the Royal Ballet, that first brought him to general attention.

Mackerras described his score for *Pineapple Poll* as 'a patchwork of tunes from the Savoy Operas, which pass by so quickly as to bewilder even Sullivan experts'. Although every bar is taken from the operas, he found it necessary to 'cheat' a little at the end and insert a few bars of Sullivan's delightful *Overture di Ballo*. He makes several of the tunes 'go together', a trick often used by Sullivan himself. Those who consider Sullivan incomplete without Gilbert will find that the original words in the opera often fit the situation in the ballet. For those who enjoy a bit of musical detective work, the sources of *Pineapple Poll* are included with the outline of the plot that follows.

Scene One (Portsmouth, morning)

Opening Dance (*The Mikado, Trial by Jury, Patience, The Sorcerer, The Gondoliers*): Sailors from the good ship HMS 'Hot Cross Bun' greet their wives and sweethearts at 'The Steam Packet' tavern, while Jasper, the pot-boy, serves drinks.

Poll's Solo and Pas de deux (*The Gondoliers, Patience*): Pineapple Poll comes in selling her wares. Jasper makes shy advances, which she rather rudely rejects. Like every other girl in town, Poll has eyes only for the dashing Captain Belaye.

Belaye's Solo (*Cox and Box, Patience*): Captain Belaye appears, the girls swoon with admiration and the Captain performs a brilliant hornpipe. The jealous sailors drag the women off, leaving Belaye to meet his fiancée, Blanche.

Pas de trois (*The Mikado, Pirates of Penzance, Ruddigore*): Blanche arrives with her aunt, Mrs

Dimple, who talks incessantly, never leaving the couple for a moment. None too pleased, but too polite to object, Belaye escorts the two women off.

Finale (*Patience, Ruddigore, Iolanthe*): The girls are all still looking wistfully after the Captain, which infuriates the sailors. An altercation ensues, and Belaye's arrival only makes matters worse. The scene ends in confusion.

Scene Two (The quayside, that evening)

Poll's Solo, Jasper's Solo (*Iolanthe, Princess Ida*): Belaye returns to his ship, followed by Poll, who disguises herself in some sailor's clothes she finds on the wharf. She rushes on board, followed by other odd-looking sailors. Jasper arrives on the scene, finds Poll's clothes, and concludes that she has drowned herself. He dances alone with her clothes.

Scene Three (On board HMS 'Hot Cross Bun', next morning)

Belaye's solo and Sailors' Drill (*Princess Ida, Gondoliers, Ruddigore*): Belaye drills his crew, now strangely clumsy. He orders the cannon to be fired and Poll faints.

Poll's Solo (*Trial by Jury, Iolanthe, Patience, Princess Ida*): Belaye tries to revive her but on hearing a clock chime he suddenly takes a ring from his pocket and rushes ashore. Poll recovers, and is rather bewildered by the unmasculine behaviour of the crew.

Entry of Belaye with Blanche as Bride (*Yeoman of the Guard, Trial by Jury, Iolanthe*): Belaye returns and presents Blanche, his bride, to the 'crew'. The crew members faint in horror, before tearing off their sailor suits and beards while declaring their love. The real sailors rush on to the ship in a rage.

Reconciliation (*Ruddigore*): They are reconciled when Belaye is promoted to admiral, while Jasper takes the captain's uniform.

Grand Finale (*Mikado, Trial by Jury, H.M.S. Pinafore, Patience, Princess Ida, Pirates of Penzance, Overture di Ballo*): Poll falls in love with the new captain, and everyone lives happily ever after, with Mrs Dimple raised on high as Britannia.

Barry Wordsworth

Music Director/Principal Conductor

Barry Wordsworth is Music Director of the Royal Ballet Covent Garden, having previously held the position from 1990–1995. He has also been Music Director and Principal Conductor of the BPO since 1989, and in 2006 became Conductor Laureate of the BBC Concert Orchestra, having served as its Principal Conductor since 1989. From 2005–2008 he was Music Director of Birmingham Royal Ballet.

In 1989, Barry Wordsworth made his first televised appearance at the BBC Proms, and has conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra regularly in subsequent seasons of the Proms. He has also toured extensively with the orchestra, including tours to Japan and the USA for their 50th Anniversary in 2002.

Highlights in recent seasons have included guest appearances with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic, Guangzhou Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, New Zealand Symphony and Sydney Symphony. In the UK, he has conducted the Philharmonia, London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

In addition to his symphonic career, he has enjoyed a long and close relationship with the Royal Ballet and the Birmingham Royal Ballet and in recent seasons has also conducted the New National Theatre Tokyo, Leipzig Ballet and the ballet of the Opéra National de Paris.

He has a large catalogue of recordings, including a long association with Argo/Decca International. His recording of the 'Last Night of the Proms' achieved enormous popular success and his most recent release, with Bryn Terfel and the LSO, won a Grammy Award in 2007.

He holds honorary doctorates from the University of Brighton and the University of Central England, and in 2006 was made an Honorary Fellow of Trinity College of Music.



John Bradbury Leader



John Bradbury, Leader of the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra, is a Fellow of the Royal Manchester College of Music where he studied

with four eminent violinists: the concerto soloists Endre Wolf, Manoug Parikian and Georgy Pauk, and finally with Alexandre Moskowsky of the Hungarian String Quartet.

Within a year of leaving College he was appointed Leader of the BBC Midland Light Orchestra which was then conducted by Gilbert Vinter. During this time he embarked upon the first of many broadcast recitals with his wife, the pianist Eira West, and also performed a wide range of solos with the orchestra.

He then transferred to the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra as their Leader combining duo, trio and quartet recitals with numerous concerto and solo performances before moving to London to lead the BBC Concert Orchestra. The ensuing seven years of BBC broadcasting ensured that the name John Bradbury was so well-known that he was able to turn freelance, and this has led to a wealth of diverse opportunities that would not otherwise have been possible.

In addition to guest leading for all the major London Symphony Orchestras John's busy freelance schedule has encompassed a great deal of commercial studio work including leading for all the James Bond movie sound tracks made since 1998. He was the founder leader of the Royal Philharmonic Pops Orchestra under the baton of Henry Mancini, and has toured extensively as leader for Dame Shirley Bassey, Lesley Garrett, Russell Watson and Andrea Bocelli. Equally fascinating was a year as Leader of *Les Misérables* at the Palace Theatre, London. More recently John was engaged by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to lead the 'Star Wars in Concert' tours of America and Europe.

His ten year appointment in 1986 as Director of Johann Strauss Gala performances for Raymond Gubbay Ltd was especially

rewarding, and John's expertise in this multi-talented form of entertainment is now well-known through the many exciting and highly acclaimed concerts he has presented throughout the UK and abroad.

Besides regular appearances as Leader of the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra, John has conducted a number of concerts in the Dome, and has performed many exciting violin solos including works by Ysaye, Paganini, Kreisler, Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Bruch, Vivaldi and Saint-Saëns.

Vasko Vassilev Violin



Born in Sofia in 1970, Vasko began learning the violin at the age of 5. By the age of 8 he was already a prodigy violinist and a leading child actor on both stage and screen. Between 1987 and 1989, he won top prizes in three major international violin competitions –

Jacques Thibault, Carl Flesch and Paganini – and embarked on a world-wide solo performing career. By the age of 19 he was appearing as guest Concertmaster with major London orchestras, including the LSO, the Philharmonia and the LPO. At the age of 23, he became the youngest Leader and first-ever Concertmaster at the Royal Opera House, where his ceiling-height photograph by Mario Testino is prominently displayed. He now combines his role as Creative Producer at the Royal Opera House with an international career encompassing a wide range of performance and music-making.

Vasko is committed to widening both his own and his audiences' horizons through the range of his music-making, while still maintaining the highest of standards. He is Artistic Director of Laureate, an instrumental group made up exclusively of international prize-winning instrumentalists. With Laureate, he recorded the multi-platinum-selling 'Original Four Seasons' with Vanessa-Mae, who had been his student since the age of 11. Other recordings include a multi-genre project called 'Total Immersion' which had its launch at the Royal Opera House. He collaborates with many musicians and performers from a wide range of disciplines, including Domingo, Sting and Erasure, and has played for film and ice-dance performances. Apart from his native Bulgarian, he speaks English, Russian and Spanish. Now partly based in China, he is adding Mandarin to this portfolio.

Brighton PHILHARMONIC *Orchestra*

Conductor **Barry Wordsworth**



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Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra

The Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra was formed by Herbert Menges in May 1925 as the Symphonic String Players 'to become a large and powerful String Orchestra, and to give periodical concerts of a high standard in Brighton and Hove'.

By 1928 they had already moved into the Brighton Dome and become the fully orchestral 'Symphonic Players'. Menges remained as Principal Conductor and in 1932 Sir Thomas Beecham was appointed as the orchestra's first President (a position later held by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten).

In 1972, after 47 years as Principal Conductor and having conducted more than 300 concerts, Herbert Menges died at the age of 69. His successor was John Carewe, whose first concert as Principal Conductor marked the start of the orchestra's 50th Anniversary season. In 1989 Barry Wordsworth was appointed as only the third Principal Conductor in the BPO's history. Barry's distinguished tenure at the helm has been marked by a series of notable performances of both well-known and more unfamiliar works together with a roster of accomplished and distinguished soloists. This and recent seasons have seen premières of new works by Will Todd, Richard Rodney Bennett, Martin Butler and Howard Goodall together with a series of all the Beethoven Symphonies and regular collaborations with the Brighton Festival Chorus and Brighton Festival Youth Choir.

Ten years later the Brighton Dome closed for refurbishment and the BPO returned temporarily to Hove Town Hall, and gave a series of Mozart Piano Concerto concerts in the Theatre Royal Brighton with its current President, John Lill. In 2002 the Dome re-opened, since which time more than 93,000 tickets have been sold for the BPO's concerts in its home venue.

The orchestra itself is best described as an 'all star' line up. That is all the musicians on stage play regularly for other premier orchestras in London and across the UK and we are fortunate to capture their skills, interest and love of the repertoire for our series of Sunday concerts.

We share players with the London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia, London Mozart Players, Britten Sinfonia, English String Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony and Concert Orchestras and the the orchestras of the Royal Opera House and English National Opera. Further details of the individual glories of our principal players are contained on our website.

We look forward to welcoming you once again to our 87th season of concerts. More details of all our activities and of our Friends membership scheme can be found on our website at www.brightonphil.org.uk

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The John Carewe Orchestra Trust was established in 1987 and provides financial support for the Brighton and Hove Philharmonic Society. Each year the Society receives a grant from the Trust which is used either to fund additional orchestral rehearsals or to support a specific concert given by the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Since its foundation the Trust has given over £80,000 in grant aid to the Society.

The Trust's capital comes from various sources, notably the proceeds of the fundraising New Year's Eve Viennese Concert, now in its seventeenth season. The Trust also welcomes donations and encourages concert-goers to remember the Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra by means of legacies.

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Orchestra

Principal Conductor

Barry Wordsworth

87th Concert Season

October 2011 – March 2012

Concerts commence at 2.45pm

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España

Rodrigo
Concierto de Aranjuez

Bizet
Orchestral Suite from *Carmen*

Debussy
Petite Suite

Nigel Westlake
Shadow Dances for Guitar

Rimsky-Korsakov
Capriccio Espagnol

SUNDAY 4 MARCH 2012

Robert Cohen Cello

Bax
Tintagel

Elgar
Concerto for Cello Op. 85 in E minor

Vaughan Williams
Norfolk Rhapsody

Dvořák
Symphony No. 8 Op. 88 in G major

SUNDAY 25 MARCH 2012

John Lill Piano

Debussy
Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune

Rachmaninov
Piano Concerto No. 3 Op. 30 in D minor

Berlioz
Symphonie fantastique Op. 14

