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# MUSIC AT ST. JOHN'S

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## DULWICH ORCHESTRA

Conductor  
JOHN KIRBY

Leader  
LYNN COOK

Solo Violins  
LYNN COOK, TOBY HAWKS

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Saturday March 16th 1996 at 7.45 p.m.

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Admission by Programme £4.00 • Concession £2.50 • Family £10

# PROGRAMME

## FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847) : "The Hebrides" Overture Opus 26 (1830)

When he was twenty Mendelssohn made the trip to Scotland (no mean one in the days of stagecoach and sail) and fell in love with the magnificent scenery. It inspired the superb third symphony (subtitled "The Scottish") and the deep effect on his memory of a visit to "Fingal's Cave" on the rocky Hebridean coast produced this famous overture.

It is quite special even for Mendelssohn, since his customary melodic invention and surfeited mastery of form are combined with marvelously musical scene-painting. From the memorable opening theme in the very first musical scene - Mendelssohn tells us he actually jotted down while standing in Fingal's Cave) to the second main melody (as great a tune as he ever wrote) we go through to the magical ending, it is as if you can hear the surge of the tide, the crashing of breaker onoulder, the echo of seabirds and the beauty and grandeur of that unique place.

## ANTONIO VIVALDI (1678-1741) : Concerto for two violins in D minor Opus 3

1. Allegro: 2. Largo: 3. Allegro

Vivaldi was a prolific composer (you could play a different concerto of his every day for two years) who seemingly made a point of writing for any instrument that could conceivably play a solo - including the mandolin and the double bass. This makes him a favourite today with instrumentalists of all kinds who need a repertoire!

Notwithstanding this great versatility, his greatest contribution was certainly for the violin, like so many of his contemporaries. The "Four Seasons" are his most celebrated set of violin concertos and this one for two violins in D minor is an even finer piece, in three movements as usual but remarkably original.

The soloists begin the work by introducing themselves unaccompanied in canon - in a close imitation of each other. A solo cello follows with busy arpeggios, then a quiet recitative leads to the main part of the movement, one of the most vigorous figures you could imagine, beautifully exploiting the instruments.

Vivaldi's slow movement is one of his loveliest, with a beautiful lilting rhythm in 12/8 time. The finale resumes the muscular mood of the first movement, jaunty and full of exciting textures and suspensions (when the solo lines clash harmonically with each other). No wonder Bach admired Vivaldi so much.

## MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937) : Pavane pour une infante defunte (1899)

The Pavane is a slow dance with a majestic swing, originating in Italy ("Padovino", i.e. from Padua). It was very common in English Elizabethan music, and later in Spain, especially for solemn occasions.

French composers of the late nineteenth century were fascinated by the music of Spain - Bizet's Carmen, Chabrier's Espana, Debussy's Iberia and Ravel's Rhapsodie Espagnole are famous examples. So it was natural enough for them to turn to the "Pavane", and Chabrier, Faure and Ravel all wrote them.

The title of Ravel's sad and beautiful piece doesn't mean "on a dead child" as is often thought, but "a dead Infanta" - or Spanish princess.

# INTERVAL

## RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949) : Serenade for Wind Instruments Opus 7

This attractive piece is one of Strauss's earliest compositions, later described by himself as "the respectable work of a music student". He also admitted that "to have a wind player for a father, a splendid asset for this ensemble". His father was a horn player in Munich, and it is clear that the young Strauss had an excellent understanding of the instruments he brought together in this music. The Serenade, which shows a Mendelssohnian influence, is constructed in sonata form, though with no true development section; instead a contrived air of exposition, followed by a recapitulation. Its first performance took place in November 1882 and a year later Strauss himself suggested to Strauss that he should write another similar piece. The sonata form he then composed thus followed the Serenade but owing to complications connected with other works it was given a lower Opus number when printed in 1911. It is the music of a 7, which is in fact the earlier work, a worthy precursor of such great music to be given us by this composer.

## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) : Symphony No.8 in F major Opus 93 (1812)

In the company of Beethoven's great "odd number" symphonies - the Eroica, the Fifth, the Seventh and the "Choral" - the even-numbered ones seem to suffer by comparison. This was just as true in Beethoven's day - his explanation for the Eighth being less of a public success than the Seventh was "because it is so much better!"

But the Eighth's compactness and geniality are easily misunderstood - it's a highly concentrated, original work, and a thing as Beethoven ever wrote. In the last movement becomes as powerful a thing as Beethoven ever wrote. It dates, too, from that period of his maturity when his grand heroic style was becoming more complex, searching and unpredictable - an inwardness that perhaps resulted from his by then almost total deafness.

The first movement starts with a short, innocent sounding theme with a strident, requiem-like quality. The second movement, a jolly, dancing, singing, what key he will give the graceful but no less pithy second tune. The movement goes on its delightfully quirky way until five minutes later it ends punctually with the same phrase as it began.

Next, another challenge to our sense of humour, which so shocked serious - the third movement, a jolly, dancing, singing, what key we are told, the movement is a flowing minuet, looking back to the eighteenth century but definitely through the eyes of the nineteenth.

The last movement opens with a witty and harmless sounding rondo theme, but then builds to a big, dramatic movement with a fierce bite. Not to be dismissed lightly, this little symphony!

1. Allegro con brio
2. Allegretto
3. Tempo di minuetto
4. Allegro

## THE CONDUCTOR

John Kirby who is conducting this evening is no stranger to Dulwich Orchestra having on several occasions played in our well-known concert. We are happy to welcome him to Dulwich. John was trained at the Royal College of Music, a pupil of that great teacher Leonard Slatkin, and graduated from the Royal College of Music, where he studied conducting. John has in addition to cello he also studied conducting. John has been a member of the Dulwich Orchestra and ensemble experience he also appeared regularly with the Dulwich Orchestra. He has conducted the Blackheath Concert Orchestra and the Camden Chorus Orchestra.

### THE SOLOISTS.

Lynn Cook has led the Dulwich Orchestra for five years and has had wide experience in symphony orchestras at home and abroad. She studied at the Guildhall School of Music and under Dorothy Delay in the United States.

Toby Hawks is 16 years old and is a pupil of Lynn Cook. He has played in a number of chamber ensembles and symphony orchestras in London and the Home Counties and is presently principal second violin in the prizewinning Broml Youth Chamber Orchestra. He is a music scholar at St. Dunstons College.

### MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA.

#### 1st. Violins.

Lynn Cook (leader)  
Maisie Hipperson  
Chris Martin  
Toby Hawks  
Lina Timini  
Emma Robson  
Alan Thompson  
Susannah Allen

#### 2nd Violins.

Nigel Stevens  
Barry Mawer  
George Fuller  
Wendy Talbot  
Adrian Chang  
Pauline Martin  
Dinah Hyams

#### Violas.

Roger Mundy  
Phillip McKenna  
Maureen Montrose  
Barbara Mattner  
Vincent Turner  
Bernadette Benati

#### Cellos.

Sara Heathcote-Holmes  
Julian Barber  
Kate Anderson  
Katie Hawks  
Julie Spencer  
Hugh Lockington

#### Double Bass.

Arthur Pennie  
Christine Bond

#### Flutes.

Sam Morris  
Jim Colby  
Barbara Langford

#### Oboes

Graham Ruffell  
Hilary Gould

#### Clarinets.

Sue Best  
Duncan McInnes

#### Bassoons.

Jill Blakey  
Stephen Preston

#### Trumpets.

Derek Couzens  
Eric Milner

#### Horns.

Peter Brown  
Joe Wright  
Ann Warnes  
Graham Vernon

#### Timpani

Mike Grant

#### Harp.

Keziah Thomas

Programme Notes by Lynn Cook.