

Guildford Borough Council  
Concerts 1976/77

The forty-third concert in the Enterprising series

Guildford  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra

**Guildford Borough Council**  
1976/77

**CIVIC HALL – GUILDFORD**

**SATURDAY 6 NOVEMBER 1976**  
at 7.45 p.m.

# **Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra**

Associate Leaders:

Hugh Bean and John Ludlow

**PHILHARMONIC CHOIR**

**JOHN BARROW**

**BERNARD PARTRIDGE**

**VERNON HANDLEY**

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This concert is promoted by Guildford Borough Council with financial support from the South East Arts Association.

## **John Barrow**

John Barrow was head chorister at Lichfield, where he gained valuable grounding in music. However, before pursuing his present profession he served for five and a half years at sea, navigating passenger and cargo ships all over the world. Since coming ashore he has sung in America, Canada, Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium and Holland, as well as such far flung places as East Africa and Mauritius.

John Barrow appears at major festivals in this country, such as the Three Choirs, Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Oxford Bach and the City of London, and he is heard regularly in the Royal Festival Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall and at the Proms. As well as numerous operatic appearances, John Barrow is an accomplished recitalist. He has appeared on television in leading roles in two operas which were commissioned by the BBC.

He has performed with the Guildford musical forces on several occasions, the last of these with the Proteus Choir and Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra in a performance of Delius's 'Appalachia' in 1975.

## **Bernard Partridge**

Bernard Partridge was born in Gloucester in 1944, and started to play the violin at the age of six, under the guidance of his father. His next teacher was Gertrude Fuller, herself a pupil of the great Eugene Ysaye. He then studied for a time with Emil Telmányi in Denmark, and at sixteen won a scholarship to study with Yfrah Neaman at the Guildhall School of Music in London. He was subsequently awarded a scholarship by the Vaughan Williams Trust, which enabled him to participate in Tibor Vargar's master class at the Nordwestdeutsche Musikakademie, Detmold. Impressed by the young violinist, Sir Robert Mayer enabled him to continue his studies with a Leverhulme Foundation.

In 1971, after his return to England, he made a successful debut at the Wigmore Hall. Since then he has given concerts throughout Britain and appeared on BBC Television. In 1973 he was appointed Associate-leader of the New Philharmonia Orchestra of London.

He plays, of course, all the major works in the violin repertoire but is also a keen protagonist of Twentieth Century music. In fact, he is shortly to give the premieres of works by two British composers, both of which have been dedicated to him.

Bernard Partridge is planning an American tour in the near future.

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The Philharmonic Choir is the larger of the two choirs under the conductorship of the Musical Director, who acknowledges with thanks the help he has received in training the choir from Kenneth Lank and Mary Rivers, and accompanists Patricia Finch and Prudence Smith. In 1973 the choir made its first recording with the orchestra: 'Intimations of Immortality' by Gerald Finzi. The Philharmonic Choir will be recording Hadley's 'The Trees so High' with the New Philharmonia Orchestra next week.

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## PROGRAMME

### 'The Trees So High' – Symphonic Ballad in A minor

Patrick Hadley 1899 - 1976

The composer's Preface to the full score says all that needs to be said about this deeply felt work. However, since the Guildford 'enterprising' series has introduced so many unfamiliar and rewarding pieces of music to its public, it is as well to add that Patrick Hadley is only one of many composers whose music is unjustly neglected. One has in mind not only the British music which has constantly appeared in these programmes, but the work of such men as Cyril Rootham, George Butterworth, Joseph Holbrooke, Cyril Scott and other men whose larger works are not heard at all. All have a command of the craft which, even if their inspiration were not of the level that it is, would demand a hearing for them.

The following is the Preface to the full score of 'The Trees So High':

This work – of some thirty minutes' length – has four linked movements, of which the first three

are purely orchestral. They may be said to resemble three independent brooks which flow into one stream at the beginning of the last movement. Here the soloist and chorus sing the words of the ballad 'The Trees So High' to music which is reminiscent in part of the traditional melody associated with it. The complete melody occurs intact only in the first verse; it is a little changed in the second; and it returns again for the last verse but with the tempo broadened, particularly so towards the very close of the work.

For the text I have drawn largely from that in the Oxford Book of English Ballads with here and there a modification towards the version used by Cecil Sharp in his 'Folk Songs from Somerset', where the tune is found in probably its most familiar form – the form I use here.

I have imagined the chorus seated throughout and the soloist, if acoustic conditions allow, standing behind the orchestra but apart from the chorus, without any air of formality, or apparent consciousness of his (or her) own importance. Although a contralto voice could justifiably sing the solo part – indeed there is support for this idea in some of the verses – yet a baritone is needed here for other reasons.

The first three movements are mainly constructed on the conventional symphonic plan, but with recurring thematic material, particularly those parts which are derived from phrases in the original air. The moods and ideas underlying the work arose out of this ballad and its tune, while the Introduction itself (of which the themes are structural to the entire work) owes its conception to the impression left upon the mind of the general shape and outline of those very trees 'so high' which loom up all around in the imagined landscape amid which this simple country tragedy is set.

P.A.S.H.

*(Preface printed by permission of Oxford University Press)*

### THE TREES SO HIGH

All the trees they do grow high,  
The leaves they are so green,  
The day is past and gone, my love,  
That you and I have seen.

It is cold winter's night, my love,

When you and I must bide alone  
The pretty lad is young  
And a'growing.

In a garden as I walked,  
I heard them laugh and call;

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'Midst five and twenty gallants there  
My love exceeded all.

O the wind on the thatch,  
Here and I alone must weep:  
The pretty lad is young  
And a'growing.

O father, dear father,  
Great wrong to me is done,  
That I should married be this day  
Before the set of sun.

At the huffe of the gale,  
Here I toss and cannot sleep:  
Whilst my pretty lad is young  
And a'growing.

My daughter, dear daughter,  
If better be, more fit,  
I'll send him to the court awhile,  
To point his pretty wit.

But the snow, snow-flakes fall,  
O and I am chill as dead  
Whilst my pretty lad is young  
And a'growing.

## Violin Concerto

Moeran 1894 - 1950

Allegro moderato

Rondo vivace

Lento

Moeran's Violin Concerto was his last main work before his tragic death when he drowned in Ireland in 1950. He was at the peak of his powers as a composer, his extraordinary gift for searching chromatic harmony having been developed and refined in a number of smaller works, especially those for unaccompanied chorus. But with his great Symphony and Sinfonietta behind him, his

approach to form was constantly developing, and by the time he reached the Violin Concerto he had absorbed his two major formal influences, those of Vaughan Williams and Sibelius. The Violin Concerto had an early success. It is a real concerto, demanding not only a virtuoso technique from the soloist, but a deep insight into Moeran's highly personal language. It therefore wins advocates only amongst violinists who are complete musicians, rather than just clever fiddlers.

The first movement begins with a falling phrase on the strings which is to be used in this movement and the last as a sort of recall to the soloist after his many excursions with the principal themes. And, in fact, the soloist is never allowed to play this particular snippet of tune, only commenting on it once in the introduction to the first movement, and supplying the same answer to it at the very end of the same movement. Before that occurs, however, the soloist launches a very lyrical melody which is the first subject, and the moment he has supplied his answer to the introductory tune, sets off on a repeated semiquaver decoration of the first subject, which is now given by different instruments. A short cadenza leads to the second subject group, the first part of which is a beautiful repeated note melody given out at different registers by the soloist, and the second part a lyrical dance where the orchestra and soloist have equal parts. The full orchestra tutti which ends this section leads directly to the development and recapitulation of both the main subject groups, a device often used to great effect by Moeran's friend, Bax, in his symphonies. The second movement has the classical form of the Rondo, and is both an orchestral and soloistic tour de force. Indeed, so brilliant is it that it is amazing it has not been taken up and used as a violin virtuoso's show piece. After a brilliant introduction from the orchestra, the soloist moves away with a jig which turns itself quickly into a leaping tune. All sorts of variations occur in the length of this Rondo and all owe their colour and inspiration to the Irish nature of the original tune. By contrast, the last movement is meditative in the extreme. Something of the same form is adopted here as with the first movement: a short introductory phrase on the strings, leading to a soaring lyrical one from the soloist. Then, as in the first movement, comes a cadenza-like passage for solo clarinet and the solo violin; the first phrase that was heard on the strings is now

expanded and at last the soloist begins what must be the main theme of the movement. It immediately begins developing, and after the manner of Sibelius, constantly changes the shape, register and harmony, until it melts imperceptibly into the first phrase that we heard at the beginning of the work. Once again the soloist comments but does not repeat the phrase, and gathers the whole orchestra together to build the climax of the work against beautiful harmony from the brass, pointing out that there is nothing more to be said. This work is in its first two movements brilliantly alive, and in the last, lyrically meditative. Regularly played, it could bring great satisfaction to music-lovers the world over.

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## INTERVAL

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### Symphony No.4 in F minor Vaughan Williams 1872 - 1958

Allegro  
Andante moderato  
Scherzo: Allegro molto  
Finale con epilogo fugato: Allegro molto

The First Symphony of Vaughan Williams was choral, the Second a deeply personal view of London in all its moods and evocations and the Third designated 'Pastoral'. The Fourth had no title, yet although it is a work which seems to be concerned with purely musical issues with that "logical continuation" in composition which so exercised the mind of the symphony's dedicatee, Arnold Bax, there can be no doubt that this work is concerned at least in three of its movements with moods which are bitter, violent, and at times desolate. Conceived in 1932, it was first performed in 1935, and the story goes that after one performance conducted by the composer himself, he said as he came off the platform, "If that is modern music, I don't like it!". However, this remark, as so many of the composer's, can be taken with a pinch of salt. There seems no doubt that he had considerable regard for a work which makes no concessions at all to a public which wants its composers to ingratiate themselves. It cannot be a coincidence that a work so tense and so full of violence and anger was conceived at a time when certain European states were using

force openly and proudly to gain their ends, and advocating such force not much later to involve the whole continent, and since Vaughan Williams held that no artist should be cut off in an ivory tower but should indeed live in the world, it is not surprising that some of his music has to do with the violent times through which he lived.

The first movement begins with dissonances which move from one to another, the clashes quickly projecting an angry mood. Motif after motif follow one another in this introduction, but eventually give way to a long cantilena on the strings, still tormented however by accompanying chords which show great contrariness about where their main beat is. The development uses derivations of all the material so far heard: all the motifs from the introduction and the cantilena pitted against one another in a score littered with accents and lines of emphasis. A viciously upward thrusting motif turns out to be the strongest of all in the introduction and contributes most to the final part of the development. There is a formal recapitulation of the cantilena before the *lento* coda which closes the movement. Here the widespread string registration of the Pastoral Symphony, so at odds with the earlier acrid frame of mind ends the movement on a question mark. The second movement is perhaps the easiest to accept of the four. An *Andante moderato* which at first, at least, poses few problems. It is in binary form with a tiny solo flute cadenza dividing the two halves. This little cadence for the flute is expanded at the end of the movement as if it had tried to bring the movement to an end earlier, and now was insisting that the real work of the day recommence. The two halves of the movement have become increasingly tormented but never resolved, and it is only as one looks back that one realises that each of the themes has started life back in the first movement, usually with the upward thrusting figure from the introduction.

In that introduction had been a "flutter" figure, starting with four notes gradually played in quicker rhythm. The scherzo is a constant fight between the upward thrusting figure and the "flutter" one, the "flutter" one is even ironed totally into a tune which has five repeated notes before it is allowed to move away. It is brilliantly orchestrated and would be almost too much to take but for the introduction of the trio on bassoon, trombone and tuba. This has been called an elephant-

ine dance, and is developed just long enough to make the recapitulation of the scherzo an effective contrast. Both the "flat" and the climbing motifs in simple form, the one on lower strings and timpani, the other on higher strings and woodwind, constitute the coda of this brilliant movement and lead directly into the finale, which is itself a very concise sonata movement, the main subject of which is underpinned by one of Vaughan Williams's "oompah" basses. Yet, as it proceeds, this movement shows themes which declare a direct relationship with the main material of the first movement. Before the fugal epilogue and even before the recapitulation there is a short *lento*, reminiscent of the one at the end of the first movement, which again forces us to reflect through the ghastly quiet chording of the strings on the terror and anguish of the music we have experienced. An epilogue with Vaughan Williams is used in the same way as it is in the symphonies of Bax, to whom this one is dedicated, namely as a coda to the whole symphony, not just the last movement. The brass blaze out the "flat" tune. It is not a strict fugue which enfolds on this material because always there is thrusting through from below a climbing motif. The different versions of both ideas are recapitulated more and more savagely, until the word 'feroce' appears in the score, and this propels the music in a great surge into the restatement of the first bars of the whole symphony. With the utmost savageness the work is ended by grinding repeated chords and then one low-pitched derisory crash.

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**SATURDAY 13 NOVEMBER**

Methodist Hall, Guildford at 7.30 p.m.  
Guildford Philharmonic Society Members'  
Evening

Omega Guitar Quartet

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**SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER at 3.00 p.m.**

Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra  
Guest Leader: Bernard Partridge.

Overture 'The Magic Flute' – Mozart  
Sinfonia Concertante in E flat for violin  
and viola (K.364) – Mozart  
Symphony No.1 in C minor – Brahms

Carl Pini – violin  
Csaba Erdelyi – viola  
Vernon Handley