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PHILHARMONIC

1996 / 1997 SEASON



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GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC

The Guildford Philharmonic, a professional orchestra of 75 players, is at the heart of music-making in the south east, with a huge repertoire extending from the 17th century to the present day. Its main concert season runs from September to May in two venues: the Civic Hall, Guildford, and Guildford Cathedral; and as well as this it gives concerts throughout London and the south of England in a number of venues which include Kenwood Park, Royal Festival Hall, King's College Cambridge, St George's Chapel Windsor, and the cathedrals of Winchester, Chichester, and Canterbury.

As well as the more mainstream orchestral concerts, the orchestra is involved in a wide range of educational projects, both in schools and concert halls, involving young composers, instrumentalists and singers.

The young Chinese conductor En Shao was appointed Principal Conductor in 1995, following in the illustrious footsteps of Crossley Clitheroe (who founded the orchestra in 1944), Vernon Handley, Sir Charles Groves and Sir Alexander Gibson. With En Shao, the orchestra continues its work of attracting new audiences for all types of classical music, and of blending the traditional and familiar with the new and challenging.

The orchestra is funded and promoted by Guildford Borough, with assistance from the South East Arts Board, South East Music Trust, the Musicians' Union, and the Friends of the Philharmonic. It is grateful to corporate sponsors, both local and national, and looks forward to many more such mutually beneficial relationships in the future.

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL
SATURDAY 8 MARCH 1997 at 7.30pm



GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC

Principal Conductor: EN SHAO
Associate Leaders: Hugh Bean, John Ludlow

THE RUSSIAN TRADITION

Rachmaninov *The Bells*

INTERVAL (5 minutes)

Rimsky-Korsakov Suite from *The Golden Cockerel*

Tchaikovsky Overture Solennelle 1812

ELENA VOZNESENSKAYA (soprano)


ROWLAND SIDWELL (tenor)

ANATOLI SAFIULIN (bass)


GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

EN SHAO (conductor)

This concert is sponsored by **BORAX** 
and forms part of the Guildford International Music Festival


All concerts in the current season are funded by  Guildford Borough

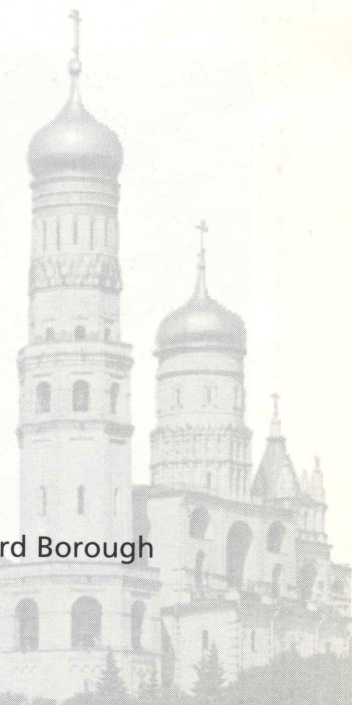
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At its UK headquarters in Guildford, Borax Europe Limited, in conjunction with its sister company in California, engages in mineral research, process technology development and product innovation, operating the world's leading borate laboratories. Borax Europe is also responsible, with its American partner, for marketing borates worldwide.

While Borax's mining operations have inevitably been based on the geographical location of borate deposits, the company has been British since its foundation nearly one hundred years ago, in 1899.

The company moved from its London headquarters to its present site on the Surrey Research Park in November 1994, simultaneously re-locating its research and development laboratories from Chessington, so that all the operations are now on one site in a purpose-built office and laboratory facility.

Borax Europe is delighted to be associated with Guildford's Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, and the International Music Festival.



The Moscow Kremlin



EN SHAO

En Shao was born in Tianjin, China, in 1954. He started to play the piano at the age of four, and the violin at five. In 1966 he was forced to stop his music studies for four years because of the Cultural Revolution. Gradually, however, he was able to return to these studies, and by the age of 18 was working as a composer, pianist and percussionist with a local orchestra. After graduating from the Beijing Centre Music Conservatory, he became second Principal Conductor of the Chinese Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Central Philharmonic Orchestra of China and the National Youth Orchestra.

He came to England in 1988, having been awarded the Lord Rhodes Fellowship at the Royal Northern College of Music. In 1989 he won the Sixth Hungarian Television International Conductors' Competition, resulting in engagements with the Hungarian Radio Orchestra and State Symphony Orchestra. In January 1990 he became Associate Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic, a post created specially for him. From 1992-1995 he was Principal Conductor of the Ulster Orchestra, with whom he made his Proms debut in August 1995. He is now Principal Guest Conductor of the Euskadi Orchestra in Spain. This is his second season as Principal Conductor of the Guildford Philharmonic.

In the UK, En Shao has worked with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Orchestras, The Northern Sinfonia, the Royal

Liverpool Philharmonic, the Hallé and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. He made his London debut with the London Symphony Orchestra in 1992, and with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 1994.

En Shao has completed four major tours with the ABC orchestras in Australia. He has worked with the Toronto Symphony, the Colorado Symphony, and the Vancouver Symphony; and with the National Symphony Orchestra in Johannesburg. Future engagements include visits to Australia, the United States, Scandinavia and the Far East.

His next concert with the Guildford Philharmonic is at the Civic Hall on Saturday 5 April at 7.30pm in a programme of music entitled *The Spanish Connection*, which includes Rodrigo's Guitar Concerto and de Falla's Dances from *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

En Shao has a wide range of interests including Chinese cooking, contemporary interior design and architecture, ballet and jazz. He takes a particular interest in environmental issues.



ELENA VOZNESENSKAYA

Elena Voznesenskaya was born in Russia in 1964. She graduated from the Musical

Academy of the Urals in Ekaterinburg in 1995 where she had attended the class of Professor N. Golychev, a People's Artist of the USSR.

In 1993 she won First Prize in the Russian Song and Romance Competition at Nizhny Novgorod and was a laureate of the first Open Competition for young Russian Opera Singers at Tiumen.

Elena Voznesenskaya was twice finalist in the Toulouse competition (1994 and 1996) and since 1995 she had been principal soprano of the Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Ekaterinburg.

Her repertoire includes Tatiana (*Eugene Onegin*), Violetta Michaela (*Carmen*), Adina (L'Elisir d'Amore), Marfa (*The Tsar's Bride*), Marguerite (*Faust*), Leonora (*Il Trovatore*) and Mimi.

Tonight is her British debut.



ROWLAND SIDWELL

Rowland Sidwell started training for a professional career in his late thirties after he had sung for Barry Rose for many years in both Guildford Cathedral and St Paul's Cathedral choirs.

He was appointed Principal Tenor with English National Opera in the 1982/83 season after a

year at the National Opera Studio. His first major role was Dimitri in *Boris Godunov*. The following season his roles included Pinkerton in *Madam Butterfly*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute* and Florestan in *Fidelio*.

For Glyndebourne he sang Florestan in their revival of *Fidelio* with the touring company. His roles at ENO included Erik (*Flying Dutchman*), Andrei (*Mazeppa*), Florestan, Alfredo (*Die Fledermaus*) and Canio (*I Pagliacci*).

On the concert platform he has sung with the Hallé Orchestra and the Scottish National Orchestra, and in London he sang *The Bells* and *Gerontius* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in broadcasts for BBC Radio 3. He has sung Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* with the Holst Singers and Fauré's *Requiem* with the Holst Chamber Choir. He has worked with such distinguished conductors as Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, James Loughran, Mark Elder and James Lockhart.

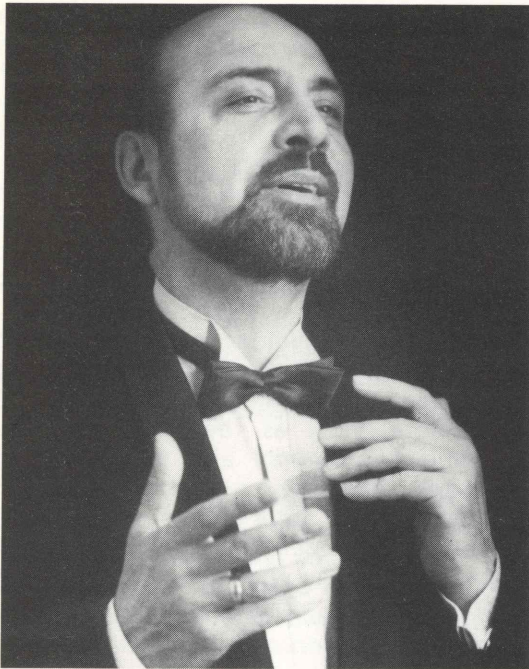
Rowland Sidwell has recorded the role of Riccardo in Verdi's *Oberto* for the BBC, and he has sung with Simon Estes in a recording of operatic arias. He has recently sung Canio for Castleward Opera in Northern Ireland, and Mozart's *Requiem* in Paris and Rouen.

He researched various singing techniques with maestri in Italy and the U.K. and now teaches singing here in Guildford.

ANATOLI SAFIULIN

Anatoli Safiulin was born in Russia and trained at the Gnessin Institute in Moscow. He is acclaimed as a champion of Russian music, particularly that of Mussorgsky, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, Rimsky-Korsakov and Shostakovich, and has given the premieres of works by many leading Russian composers including Denisov, Gubaidulina and Schnittke.

He is regularly invited to international music festivals including the Edinburgh Festival, the Prague Spring Festival and the White Nights of St Petersburg. He has worked with such distinguished conductors as Mariss Jansons, Lazarev, Rozhdestvensky, Masur and Penderecki.



Anatoli Safiulin's UK appearances have included performances with the Scottish National Orchestra and the City of London Sinfonia. In February 1995, he performed the Knight's Monologue from *The Miserly Knight* by Rachmaninov with the Novosibirsk Orchestra in Leeds, Northampton and at the Royal Festival Hall. With the pianist Nikolai Demidenko, he performed the complete Mussorgsky song-cycles in St John's Smith Square and at the 1995 Verbier International Festival.

He returned to the Royal Festival Hall in February last year for a performance of Rachmaninov's *Spring Cantata* with the Philharmonia Orchestra, and this work and *The Bells* were recorded for Carlton Classics.

GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

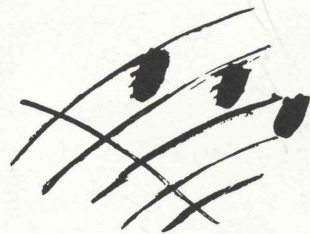
The Guildford Philharmonic Choir was formed by Guildford Borough in order to perform the major choral repertoire with the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra. As well as performing well-known choral works, the choir specialises in 20th-century, particularly British, music. It has recorded Gerald Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality* with the Guildford Philharmonic

and Patrick Hadley's *The Trees So High* with the Philharmonia Orchestra, both recordings conducted by Vernon Handley.

The choir has worked with many eminent conductors, and as well as giving concerts in Guildford, it visits other British cities. Guildford is twinned with Freiburg, and in 1990 the choir joined forces with the Freiburger Bachchor in Freiburg Munster, and then in November 1993 gave an outstanding performance of Britten's *War Requiem* with them under Neville Creed.

The choir's Chorus Director is Jeremy Backhouse, who was appointed to the post in January 1995 and who is also conductor of the Vasari Singers with whom he has made several notable recordings. The choir's new President is Sir David Willcocks, this country's most distinguished choral conductor.

The choir's next major concert with the Guildford Philharmonic is on Saturday 3 May 1997 in Guildford Cathedral in performances of Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* and Ninth Symphony (*Choral*). If you would like more details about singing in the choir, please telephone: 01932 221918.



The tiered choral staging in use tonight has been purchased by the Association of Surrey Choirs, of which the Guildford Philharmonic Choir is a Founder Member, with the generous help of the Foundation for Sport and the Arts, PO Box 20, Liverpool L13 1HB. For information about the availability of the staging to other Cathedral users, please contact the Administrator, Bill Evershed, at Guildford Cathedral Offices, Stag Hill, Guildford GU2 5UP, tel: 01483 565287.

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

During the 1890s Rachmaninov became a celebrated figure in Russian musical life. His first opera, *Aleko*, was staged at the Bolshoi Theatre when he was just twenty years old, and other compositions built upon this early triumph. However, in 1897 his *Symphony no. 1* suffered a disastrous failure at its first performance, with the result that he suffered a nervous breakdown which made creative work impossible, until his self-confidence was restored some three years later thanks to the efforts of the hypnotherapist Dr Nikolai Dahl.

In gratitude Rachmaninov dedicated the hugely successful *Piano Concerto no. 2* to Dr Dahl, for his career had been rebuilt and his creative powers restored. The first decade of the century proved busy indeed: composing took place alongside conducting – which included the directorship of the Bolshoi – and a developing role as a virtuoso pianist.



Rachmaninov

Just before the 1917 Revolution, Rachmaninov left Russia, never to return. Having severed his links with his past, he had no choice but to embark on a new career, and he therefore gave priority to his new life as a concert pianist. He built a remarkable reputation which persists to this day: to the extent, indeed, that the true nature of his achievement is often misunderstood.

Although Rachmaninov composed relatively little during these years in Europe and America, the compositions he did complete, such as the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and the *Symphonic Dances*, indicate no decline in his powers. These later works serve also to confirm his essentially Russian romantic spirit, for he was the true heir of Tchaikovsky.

THE BELLS Choral Symphony, opus 35

1. *The Silver Sleigh-Bells: Allegro ma non tanto*
2. *The Golden Wedding Bells: Lento*
3. *The Copper Alarm Bells: Presto*
4. *The Mournful Iron Bells: Lento lugubre*

Rachmaninov based his choral symphony on Constantin Balmont's free translation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Bells*. In common with other romantic composers he was preoccupied with the workings of Fate, and therefore these poems held a special fascination for him. They concern the four aspects of human life – birth, marriage (love), terror and death – as symbolised by four kinds of bells: silver, gold, brass and iron.

Rachmaninov admitted a certain preference for taking creative inspiration from external factors: 'In my own composition I am greatly helped if I have in mind a book which I have recently read, a beautiful picture or a poem. I try to make my music speak simply and directly that which is in my heart at the time I am composing. If there is love there, or bitterness, or sadness, or religion, these moods become part of my music.'

The imageries evoked by the four sets of bells proved to be a potent source of inspiration, since their collective symbolism provided that large scale integration of contrasts which is implied by the title symphony. Rachmaninov uses his assembled forces with resourceful imagination in order to characterise the natures of the bells, believing that the symbolism was highly significant: 'The sound of church bells dominated all the cities of Russia that I knew: Novgorod, Kiev, Moscow. They accompanied every Russian from childhood to the grave, and no composer could escape their influence.'

In addition to three soloists and chorus, *The Bells* calls for a large orchestra, including six horns as well, significantly, as various instruments which have bell-like connotations: glockenspiel, triangle, gong, celesta, harp and piano (upright piano). Much of the composition was done in Rome during the spring of 1913, though the orchestration was only completed later in the year after his daughter's illness had forced Rachmaninov to return to Russia. He noted how, once he had begun the project, inspiration had flowed rapidly: 'Nothing helps me so much as solitude. In my opinion it is only possible to compose when one is alone and there are no external disturbances to hinder the calm flow of ideas. These conditions were ideally realised in my flat on the Piazza di Spagna.'

Rachmaninov dedicated *The Bells* to 'Willem Mengelberg and his Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam', but they encountered delays in preparing it, and the first performance was directed by the composer himself, in St Petersburg on 30th November 1913.

The first movement, *The Silver Sleigh Bells*, is scored for tenor solo, chorus and orchestra. The initial rhythmic idea is strongly characterised, largely because it is so expertly scored, and the mood thus generated pervades the whole movement save for the coda. The entry of the solo tenor is especially memorable, a dramatic stroke which surely resulted from Rachmaninov's considerable experience as a conductor in the opera house. The closing

bars, in line with the poem's priority of peacefulness, deploy longer and more lyrical phrases.

The *Mellow Wedding Bells* are evoked in the lyrical slow movement, at tempo *Lento*. Here the scoring is for soprano solo, chorus and orchestra, and the mood is one of an idealised happiness, with music which is sensuous rather than festive. The orchestral textures are more delicate than those found elsewhere in the work, while the main theme is a subtle transformation of what might be termed Rachmaninov's motto, the medieval *Dies Irae* plainchant.

The *Loud Alarm Bells* of the third movement require chorus and orchestra alone: no solo voice is used. The music is distinctive and colourful, while the complex textures and rhythmic changes, which contribute so much to the drama and excitement, are extremely challenging for the performers. Sir Henry Wood, who in 1921 conducted the first British performance, described this movement as 'certainly the most difficult vocal score I have ever seen'. The choral writing, however, is not in itself particularly elaborate, but the orchestration could hardly be more dramatic and the rhythmic drive is frankly irresistible.

The finale, *The Mournful Iron Bells*, is a dark *Lento lugubre* for bass solo, chorus and orchestra. Heavy, syncopated rhythms dominate the atmosphere, as do instruments playing in their lowest registers. The funeral atmosphere is set by the extended melody of the cor anglais; the movement's model would seem to be its equivalent in Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique Symphony*. The music moves through turbulent developments towards a peaceful, resigned conclusion, the imagery concerned with an essentially private lamentation: 'There is neither rest nor respite, save the quiet of the tomb.'

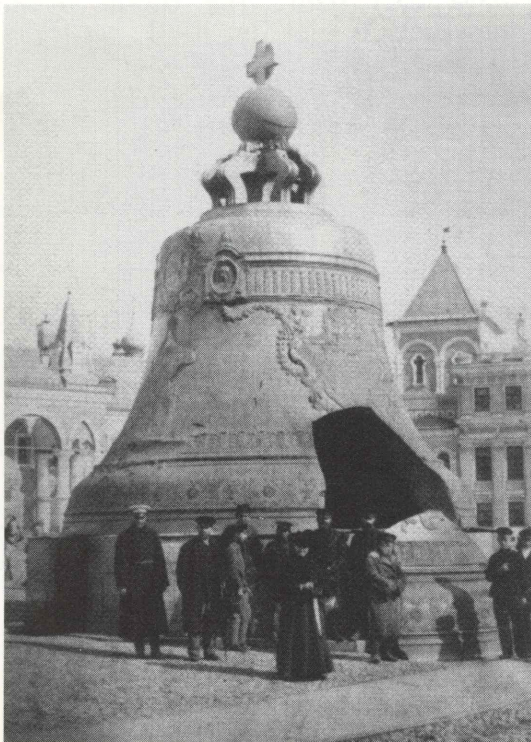
Towards the end of his life, Rachmaninov wrote of *The Bells*: 'I worked on this composition with feverish ardour; and it remains of all my works the one I love the most.'

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On 10th February 1913 the explorer Robert Falcon Scott and his two companions, who were attempting to return to base after having reached the South Pole, were found dead. In Britain the suffragette leader Emmeline Pankhurst was jailed for three years for inciting arson, while later in the year women in Norway were granted equal electoral rights. The Second Balkan War ended with the signing of the treaty of Bucharest, though politics throughout the region remained volatile.

Among the new works of literature were Bernard Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion*, Alain Fournier's *Le grand Meaulnes* and D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, while the new musical compositions included Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, Elgar's *Falstaff* and James Monaco's *You made me love you*.

© Terry Barfoot



The Great Bell of Moscow

THE BELLS

Russian Poem by K. Balmont adapted from the "*The Bells*" by E.A. Poe.

The Silver Sleigh-Bells

Tenor and Choir

Listen. The sleighs are flying past in line.

The little bells are jingling,
with their light silvery sound they sweetly
torment our hearing.

Tenor

With their singing and their ringing they speak
of oblivion.

Tenor and Choir

Oh how clearly,
like the tuneful laughter of a child.

Tenor

in the clear night air
they are saying that after days of delusion
comes revival,
comes enchanting delight, the delight of a
tender dream.

Tenor and Choir

The sleighs are flying past in line,
the little bells are jingling.
The stars listen as the sleighs, flying away in
the distance, speak;

Tenor

and listening to them they sparkle,
and dreaming, and shining, they exhale
perfume into the heavens,
and with flickering radiance,
with silent charm,
together with the ringing, together with the
singing, they speak of oblivion.

The Golden Wedding Bells

Soprano and Choir

Listen to the holy summons to the wedding,
the golden summons.

Soprano

How much tender bliss there is in this youthful
song!

Choir

Listen to the summons to the wedding.

Soprano

Through the calm night air,
like some-one's eyes watching and gleaming,
through waves of melodious ringing they gaze
at the moon.

From the inviting wondrous cells
full of fantastic gaiety
flashes of light fly out, rise and fall.
Now dimming, now glowing,
they drop their bright gaze to the future,
where slumbers the serenity of tender dreams
heralded by the harmony of the golden bells.

Choir

Listen to the holy summons to the wedding,
the golden summons.

The Copper Alarm Bells

Choir

Listen! The alarm bell howls,
like the groaning of a brazen hell.
These sounds in wild torment repeat the tale
of horrors.
As if praying for help
they hurl the cry straight into the night,
straight into the ears of the dark night.
Every clang,
now longer, now shorter,
proclaims its fear.
And so great is their fear,
so terrible each cry,
the peals are torn asunder, unable to be heard.
They can only beat, writhe and shriek,
can only cry for mercy
and towards the blazing pile
address their wails of grief.
Meanwhile the raging fire,
both unheeding and tumultuous,
burns on.
Now out of the windows, now along the roof,
it leaps upward, higher and higher,
as though saying:
I wish
to soar, to blaze, to touch a moonbeam,
or die, or immediately right up to the moon I
will fly.
Oh, the alarm bell,
if you could only turn back
this horror, this flame, this spark, this sight,
this first sight of the fire
which you now proclaim with your crying,
with your wailing and your howling.
But now there is no salvation for us,
everywhere seething flames,
everywhere terror and confusion.
Your clanging,
a discord of wild sounds,
proclaims our danger.
Confused calamity now swells, now ebbs like
the tide.

Our hearing acutely catches the waves in the
changing sounds,
now ebbs, now sobs, the brazen groaning surf.

The Mournful Iron Bells

Baritone and Choir

The funeral knell is heard,
a long toll.
The dream of a bitter life is ended.

Baritone

The sounds of bitter sorrow are heard, the
dream of a bitter life is ended.
The iron sound proclaims the funeral grief.
And involuntarily we tremble,
from our pleasures we hasten away.

Baritone and Choir

And we sob, we remember that we too will
close our eyes.

Baritone

The unvarying monotone of this distant cry,

Baritone and Choir

the solemn funeral knell,
like a moan,
sorrowful, angry,
and mournful,
swells into a long boom.

Baritone

It proclaims that a sufferer is sleeping the
eternal sleep.
In the bell-tower's rusty cells
the knell, for the just and unjust,
menacingly repeats
that upon our hearts will lie a stone, that our
eyes will close in sleep.
The funeral torch flares,
from the bell-tower some-one shouts, some-
one speaks loudly,

Baritone and Choir

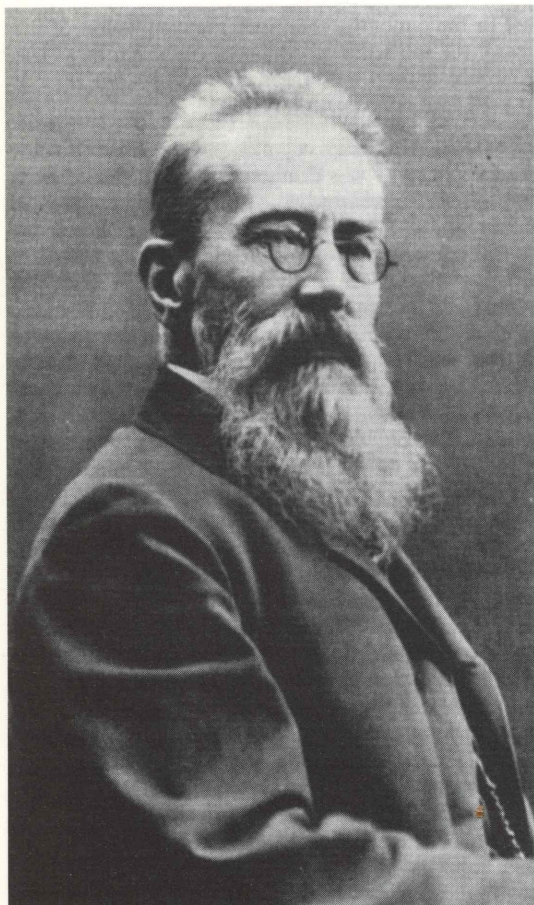
some-one dark is standing there.
And he laughs loudly, and he thunders,
and he drones,
he leans towards the bell-tower,
the echoing bell swings,
the echoing bell sobs,
it moans in the silent air.

Baritone

The echoing bell sobs,
it moans in the silent air,
and slowly proclaims the peace of the grave.

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV (1844-1908)

Rimsky-Korsakov enjoyed two highly successful careers. As an officer in the Imperial Russian Navy he travelled the world, visiting a host of exotic locations: the Mediterranean, New York and South America, and even Gravesend. But his first love remained music, and during his long voyages he constantly wrote down musical ideas for later use. In his early twenties he was given encouragement by Mily Balakirev, and he became a close friend of Mussorgsky. With César Cui and Alexander Borodin these composers became known as The Five, a group who raised the profile of the nationalist Russian style.



Rimsky-Korsakov

At the age of twenty-seven Rimsky was astonished to be offered the post of Professor of Composition and Instrumentation at the St Petersburg Conservatory. He accepted, although still officially on the naval payroll. For the remainder of his life music was the centre of his life. As a creative artist and teacher he became enormously influential and gained an international reputation.

Rimsky, with his remarkable ear for orchestral colour and texture, was particularly adept at creating exotic imageries in sound. The most celebrated of his works is the orchestral suite *Scheherazade*, but his series of richly colourful operas was certainly his most substantial achievement.

Suite: THE GOLDEN COCKEREL

1. *King Dodon in his Palace*
2. *King Dodon at the Battlefield*
3. *King Dodon with the Queen of Shemakha*
4. *Marriage Feast and the Lamentable End of King Dodon*

Although he completed his final opera before his death in 1908, Rimsky-Korsakov did not live to see it in performance. The premiere was delayed by problems with the censor, for these were politically troubled times in Russia, and any work of art which lampooned authority was inevitably viewed with suspicion.

Pushkin's original story was a fairy-tale about 'the mighty Tsar Dadon, ruler of a realm that shall be nameless', and although Rimsky's librettist, Modest Bielsky, changed the name to that of King Dodon, the character remained the same: a pleasure-seeking, incompetent aristocrat, quite incapable of maintaining equable relations with anyone. No wonder the censor objected.

The magic fairy-tale world of the opera inspired Rimsky to compose some of his most colourful orchestral music, which



Peter the Great

translates most effectively into concert suite form. While the movement titles give a clear indication of the relationship to the stage action, in truth it is not essential for the listener to link this richly colourful music to anything beyond itself.

The important musical references are heard immediately: a muted trumpet call signifying the Golden Cockerel's warning, a sinuous theme on muted cellos representing the Queen, and a quasi-oriental arabesque figure which rises and falls over shifting harmonies, personifying the Royal Astrologer. The latter pair of ideas proves to be extremely flexible as the music proceeds, in the suite as in the original opera.

The second movement is particularly atmospheric, taking music from the introduction to Act 2 of the opera. On a cold winter's day Dodon leads his ragged army in response to the Golden Cockerel's warning. But he falls under the spell of the beautiful Queen of Shemakha, whose seductive dance enslaves him. In the third movement the imagery also evokes Dodon's grotesque attempts to dance himself, as preparations are made for his return with the Queen as his bride.

The music of the wedding feast abounds in brilliance and colourful splendour, but the celebrations are cut short by the Cockerel's shattering cry. Now the Astrologer claims the Queen for himself, as payment for his services rendered thus far. Dodon refuses outright, killing the Astrologer with a thrust of his sword, whereupon the Cockerel swoops upon the King and kills him with a single peck of his golden beak.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Following the abortive uprising in the aftermath of the disastrous Russo-Japanese war, Russia was in a state of political crisis. Agrarian reforms had failed to improve social conditions, and soon the Tsar was forced to take repressive measures in order to control a restive population.

The Anglo-Russian convention on Persia and Afghanistan aligned Russia with France and Britain, effectively creating the matching of powers which remained in position when war broke out seven years later. Meanwhile, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire continued, with Bulgaria unilaterally declaring independence and Austria annexing Bosnia.

© Terry Barfoot.



PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Graduating in 1865, Tchaikovsky joined the staff of the new Moscow Conservatoire, and his creative muse developed rapidly, as did his romantic preoccupation with Fate, 'the power of destiny that forbids us to be happy'.

The 1870s were years of remarkable creative fertility, with such masterpieces as the operas *Vakula the Smith* and *Eugene Onegin*, the ballet *Swan Lake*, and the *Third* and *Fourth* symphonies. But these were also years of crisis. Against his better judgement and in contradiction of his homosexuality, Tchaikovsky married Antonina Milyukova, and the resulting tensions and separation were immensely painful to him: he even attempted suicide by walking up to his waist in the icy river water.

It was at this time also that Tchaikovsky began his remarkable relationship with his patroness, Nadezhda von Meck. Her generosity allowed him to concentrate on composition, but at her request, they communicated only in writing - some 1100 of their letters have survived. Tchaikovsky was at the height of his powers, aged fifty-three, when he died in the autumn of 1893. His *Symphony no. 6, 'Pathétique'*, which he described as 'the best thing I have ever done', had been triumphantly received just a few days before his death, in what can only be described as 'suspicious circumstances', when he deliberately drank unboiled water during a cholera epidemic.

OVERTURE SOLENNELLE '1812', opus 49 (choral version)

In order to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Tsar Nicholas I in 1882, an 'All-Russian Art and Industrial Exhibition' was staged in Moscow, the equivalent of Britain's 'Great Exhibition' of 1851. Nikolai Rubinstein, the Director of the Moscow Conservatory,

assumed responsibility for the musical side of proceedings, and he repeatedly pressed his friend and colleague Tchaikovsky for a contribution in the form of a new composition.

The type of piece which was required was clear from the outset, since the Exhibition was timed to coincide with the completion of the Cathedral of the Redeemer, which had itself been built to commemorate the 'Patriotic War' of 1812, when the Napoleonic invasion of Russia had been repelled. The *Ceremonial Overture '1812'* was composed in November 1880, shortly after the well-known *Serenade for Strings*. Tchaikovsky intended that the *Overture* should be performed in the open air, and following the tradition of other military celebrations in music, such as Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory*, he used a full orchestra with the addition of much percussion, bells, cannon and military band.



Napoleon

The *Overture* is admirably paced to achieve maximum effect. The slow introduction uses the Russian hymn '*God Preserve Thy People*', which gives way to the main body of the work, based on the stirring imagery

of the Battle of Borodino. Here Tchaikovsky mixes together the various ingredients with remarkable skill. Alongside his original material, there are Russian folksongs, liturgical chants and the national anthem, set against the French imagery of the *Marseillaise*. And as the excitement builds to fever pitch, the theatrical element is added in the form of frequent bangs and explosions which make for a formidable climax, a veritable triumph of Russian nationalism.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On 20th May 1882 the St Gotthard Tunnel opened, the first railway tunnel through

the Alps. In retaliation for anti-European violence in Egypt, a British fleet bombarded Alexandria, and at the battle of Tel el-Kebir Sir Garnet Wolseley's army defeated the Egyptian rebels. On the evening of his arrival in Dublin, the new secretary of state for Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, was assassinated in Phoenix Park.

The essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson and the poet Henry Longfellow died, and the actress Lily Langtree made her debut in New York City.

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The Icon of St. Sergius, patron saint of Russia

GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

EN SHAO – *Principal Conductor*

First Violins

John Ludlow
Maurice Cavanagh
Sheila Beckensall
Helen Allport
Peter Newman
Alex Suttie
Avril MacLennan
Fiona McNaught*
Phillip Augar
Rosemary Van Der Werff
Ginny Wray
Anthony Short

Second Violins

Nicholas Maxted Jones
Rosemary Roberts
Andrew Bernardi
Peter Hembrough
Rachel Hess
Christopher Horner
Timothy Wilford
Ruth Dawson
Catherine Belton
Ruth Knell
Nick Levy

Violas

John Meek
John Graham
Anne Rycroft
Jean Burt
Paul Appleyard
Michael Newman
Pat Humphries
Ellen Jackson

Cellos

Douglas Cummings
John Stilwell
Julia Walker
John Kirby
Duncan Moulton**
Nicholas Boothroyd
Bob Dent

Basses

Maurice Neal
Peter Hamilton Box
Kate Saxby
David Jones
John Gray

Flutes

Kate Hill
Alexa Turpin
Debbie Davies

Piccolo

Simon Hunt

Oboes

Vicky Walpole
Neil Black
Juliet Lewis

Cor Anglais

Janice Knight

Clarinets

Hale Hambleton
Victor Slaymark
Anton Weinberg

Bass Clarinet

Stephen Pierce

Bassoons

Michael Chapman
Anna Meadows
Peter Bennett

Contra Bassoon

Tim Mallett

Horns

Kevin Elliott
Alison Taylor
David Clack
Claire Lintott
Martin Heppell
Peter Widgerly

Trumpets

Gareth Bimson
John Young

Cornets

Simon Ferguson
Bill Stokes

Trombones

John Edney
David Hissey

Bass Trombone

Martin Nicholls

Tuba

Stephen Wick

Timpani

Roger Blair

Percussion

Christopher Nall
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Harp

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JOHN HURSEY

It is with great regret that we announce the untimely death of John Hursey, who was one of our long-serving members of the 'cello section.

He had a distinguished career playing for many years in the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra plus a short period with the BBC Symphony Orchestra before embarking on the arduous side of playing in the pit for several well-known London shows culminating in seven years with *Miss Saigon*.

His first love, however, was always the piano as he studied this noble instrument for five years at the Royal Academy of Music before going to Bournemouth. When a concert included a piano concerto, one often felt him playing the solo part as well as the 'cello line.

He was also an excellent artist, especially drawing birds, butterflies or some favourite spot in his beloved Dorset, and many of us were fortunate in receiving a personal Christmas card featuring one or other of these subjects.

He could be the life and soul of many a gathering and his laughter was infectious. He was indeed a lovely colleague to have in the section.

His favourite composer was always Mozart and he used to say that his happiest year was when the registration of new cars was 'K' and therefore he was able to put his intellect and memory in gear and sing the opening tutti of the appropriate number.

He will be sorely missed.

John Stilwell

GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

Sopranos

Jacqueline Alderton
Kathleen Aldridge
Joanna Andrews
Noreen Ayton
Penny Baxter
Sally Bayton
Mary Broughton
Viv Chamberlin-Kidd
Elaine Chapman
Sandra Docker
Angela Hand
Susan Hinton
Barbara Lack
Judith Lewy
Margaret Mackie
Jacqueline Norman
Susan Norton
Robin Onslow
Margaret Parry
Jessica Pires
Rosalind Plowright
Susan Ranft
Gillian Rix
Joan Robinson
Maureen Shortland

Dawn Smith
Judy Smith
Kathy Stickland
Carol Terry
Enid Weston
Tessa Wilkinson
Christine Wilks
Elisabeth Willis
Lucinda Wilson
Frances Worpe

Altos

Marion Arbuckle
Mary Anne Barber
Sally Bailey
Iris Ball
Evelyn Beastall
Iris Bennett
Tamsin Bennetts
Jane Brooks
Jean Brown
Barbara Buck
Juliet Butler
Amanda Clayton
Mary Clayton
Valerie Edwards

Celia Embleton
Mandy Freeman
Rebecca Greenwood
Liz Hamilton
Ingrid Hardiman
Jo Harman
Pamela Harman
Carol Hobbs
Sheila Hodson
Joy Hunter
Helen Lavin
Kay McManus
Christine Medlow
Mary Moon
Brenda Moore
Jean Munro
Sue Oldroyd
Nikki Paige
Anne Philips
Lesley Scordellis
Catherine Shacklady
Gillian Sharpe
Prue Smith
Rosemary Smith
Jana Stepankova
Hilary Trigg

Jorien van Gulik
June Windle
Maralyn Wong

Tenors

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Peter Chantler
Colin Cook
Douglas Cook
Bob Cowell
Leslie Harfield
Charles Martin
Roy Rashbrook
Andrew Reid
Chris Robinson
John Trigg
John Turner
Maggie van Koetsveld
Jeni Young

Basses

Peter Allen
Peter Andrews
Roger Barrett
John Britten
John Burrows-Watson

Norman Carpenter
Walter Chattaway
Neil Clayton
Rodney Cuff
Philip Davies
Michael Dawe
Simon Doran
Michael Dudley
Terence Ellis
Geoffrey Forster
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Nick Gough
Peter Herbert
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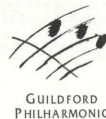
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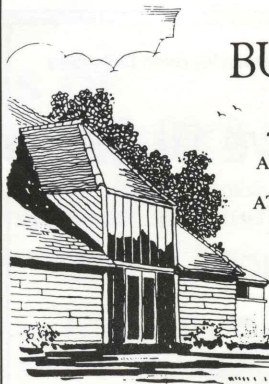
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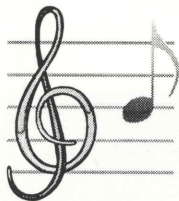
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EN SHAO

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