



# DULWICH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

8th February 2005

NEWS LETTER.

## Dulwich Symphony Orchestra

### Next Concert...

Our next concert is on 18th June at St Luke's, Knights Hill, West Norwood. St Luke's is very near Chatsworth and there is a map on the notice board showing its location. Graham is handing out tickets for sale, and no doubt has another incentive scheme up his sleeve!

Our autumn concert is November 26<sup>th</sup> at the Great Hall of Dulwich College. This is a larger than our usual venue, so why don't you practise selling tickets now?

### Repertoire Suggestions

This term the committee will be collecting your suggestions for future concerts. Everyone can suggest an overture length piece, a concerto like piece and a symphony length piece! The committee will then meet on July 5<sup>th</sup>, with Julian and Paula, and discuss which pieces to schedule next season. The letter to all members, with proposed dates and programmes of concerts, will go out by email to all those who have an email address, and by post to those who don't. This will save the orchestra money, and committee members a great deal of time. So, if you have an email address, or have changed it recently, make sure that Ian has it!

### BLACK FOR THE SUMMER

Following the poll last term the result was exactly 50/50. The committee have therefore decided to leave our concert dress code the same for all concerts for the near future.

### ST CHRISTOPHER'S HOSPICE

Collected £54.25 at our last concert. They will be a regular feature at all our concerts in the foreseeable future, so, as our audiences increase in size hopefully the St Christopher's collections will too! St Christopher's have also kindly agreed to put our concert dates in their news letters.

#### Inside this issue:

Tryptich symphony	2
Review	3
Contact details	4
Committee	4
Membership	4
Competition!	5

## Triptych Symphony

### Creation; Death; Resurrection

**Michael Brooks 2005**

A triptych is a group of three paintings usually, but not exclusively, forming an altarpiece for a Church. The paintings, whilst separate works in their own right, are similar in style but are hinged together. They are normally framed with the same materials. So whilst each painting is a work in its own right, they join to form a greater whole. I think this is a good analogy for a symphony.

The themes for the three movements are creation, death and resurrection. There is no doubt we live in a created universe although we can choose to believe in either a creator, or else a universe which has created itself. There is no doubt that in our universe there is decay and death. For people of many faiths, and for some people who proclaim no faith, the possibility or certainty of resurrection gives meaning, purpose and hope to their existence.

The first movement 'Creation' opens with a unison 'A', to represent alpha or the beginning; but only after the conductor has conducted an empty bar. The empty bar is for purely musical purposes and no further interpretation of whom the conductor may represent is needed! The sequence of the first movement is inspired by the first creation account in the Hebrew Bible [Genesis 1:1 - 2:3]. Each section portrays a day with a different subject and a different Gregorian mode is used. There is a brief pause between each of the passages, which are Light, particles, vibrations and colours [Locrian]; Sky, including a depiction of a storm [Ionian, pentatonic variant]; Land and Plants [Dorian]; Sun, Moon and Stars [Phrygian]; Birds and Fish [Lydian]; Animals and Man, including a fugue which becomes chaotic [Mixolydian] and finally Rest [Aeolian].

The second movement 'Death' commences with a quartet comprising the principal violin, viola and cello players. A second new staccato theme in 5/4 follows later in the movement. The movement explores the death of all creation by interspersing these themes with material from the first movement in which, soon after introduction, the music becomes more dissonant. The movement ends with a flügelhorn solo.

The third movement 'Resurrection' commences with a theme in F# minor first played on the basses which is shared by other instruments as the theme is built upon and developed. Material from the first movement is used to produce a sense of expectation. In the middle of the third movement the basses have a subtly rising motif that introduces the point of resurrection when a major key is used without restraint for the first time in the symphony as a whole. The third movement concludes using two repetitions of this major theme interspersed with material adapted from the first two movements and this comes full circle as it reflect the Hebrew Bible's anticipation of the renewal of all creation.

Composition of this symphony commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 and it was completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2005.

*Michael Brooks*      3<sup>rd</sup> April 2005

Total length 46 minutes

2222 4231 timp perc strings

We will play through Michael's symphony on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

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## Concert review

The latest concert by the Dulwich Symphony Orchestra took place in St Barnabas' Church on March 19<sup>th</sup>, and was very well attended. The audience was rewarded with a varied and interesting programme, played with assurance and panache.

Julian Williamson, the conductor, has the ability to inspire the orchestra to give of their best, ably led as they were by Paula Tysall.

The overture by Wagner, which opened the concert, was a treatment of the Faust legend which was originally destined to be part of a larger work. The slow introduction lead to an explosive *allegro* which explored the interaction of Faust and Mephistopheles with the ominous undertones gradually revealed in the story. The brass and wind sections gave this part the necessary menacing feel, while the strings excelled in the quieter, more contemplative moments. Altogether this is much more like a symphonic poem than just an overture, and it is a pity that it is not heard more often.

The Cello Concerto No. 1 in A Minor by Saint-Saens is a magical work which amply shows the composer's mastery of orchestration and balance. The soloist, Robin Michael, did full justice to the work, playing with both power and delicacy, whilst the orchestra accompanied in a sensitive way. Robin is a "Philip and Dorothy Green Young Concert Artist" and has demonstrated a wide range of music in many countries in his relatively short, so far, professional life. This concerto has some unusual features, in that the three movements merge into one, yet have unifying themes. The contrasts were extremely well managed by both orchestra and soloist, and gave this delightful work a new freshness and appeal.

Dvorak's Symphony No. 5 in F Major provided the second half of the concert, and demonstrates the full range of orchestral effects which gives his music its individuality. His use of folk melodies and dances is well known, although in some cases he wrote original tunes in the folk idiom. All sections of the orchestra had interesting and important parts to play in this symphony, and although very occasionally the brass tended to overwhelm the rest of the players, the overall effect was of capable exuberance. The differences between the four movements were marked with a confidence which comes of careful preparation, and made the whole concert a thoroughly enjoyable experience.

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## Committee members



**Tim, Frances, Ian, Sam, Graham, Louise, Chris and Michael**

## Members and subscriptions

"The standard rate for subscriptions is £50 a term. Concessions are available for those on low incomes; the suggested amount is 50%, i.e. £25. If this is likely to cause any difficulty, please speak to the Treasurer in confidence."

## From an orchestra member...

The Spring 2005 issue of 'The Trombonist' had this quote contributed by Phil Tarrant from the Musical Times of 1920.

"The Catholic mission of Yule Island, Papua, is anxious to introduce brass band playing among the cannibals of the main range where much of their work is done. It is found that brass instruments subdue much of the dangerous energy of these people and supply the excitement and amusement formerly furnished by a headhunting raid."

## Logo competition...

Does anyone have any ideas for the orchestra logo? Please give submissions next term to a committee member. There will be a prize for the winning entry which could involve wine, or home made marmalade!

## End chequebook misery!

If you want to pay your subscription using some new-fangled electronic wizardry rather than writing a cheque, the orchestra's bank details are:

Bank: HSBC Camberwell Green  
Sort Code: 40-02-01  
Account Number: 41421131  
Account Name: Dulwich Symphony Orchestra

Please try to include some sort of identification (such as your name) with the transaction, if possible.

## VENUE MANAGER

For the concert on 19<sup>th</sup> March our venue manger was Annabel Noton. Annabel did an absolutely brilliant job, on a particularly difficult day when it seemed that half of East Dulwich was being dug up!

I'm sure everyone who was there in the afternoon and evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> will have realized how helpful it is to have someone on duty that wasn't playing in every piece. Of course Annabel will be a very hard act to follow, but Frances would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in carrying-out this voluntary position on the 18<sup>th</sup> June, even on a job-share basis. Someone with good organizational skills, preferably who understands how an orchestra operates would be ideal. So if you know anyone who might be interested please ask them. Frances has the job description.

### ARTICLES FOR OUR MAGAZINE

email your contribution, as an attachment, to Chris Burns

at

baxquartet@yahoo.co.uk

or by hand to Mo (violas)

## SUMMER PARTY

Our social this term will be on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> June at Philip's house and garden, 61 Oglander Road, Peckham, SE15. This will be our 3<sup>rd</sup> summer party, which raises money for St Christopher's Hospice. Tickets are £10 from Philip in the violas. Let's have some more live music, like we did last summer! Wind players who would like to play speak to Ian, and string players to Frances Barrett. We can't leave it all to our home grown oboe quartet - now can we?



The Taff Quartet

## Sponsors

This concert Bluthners have provided us with the use of their concert grand. We are delighted that they have made this offer at just the cost of transporting and tuning the instrument - £470.

