



South East London Orchestra



**Sunday 25th November 2012,
at 4pm**



Conductor: David Smith

Welcome to the second concert in South East London Orchestra's debut season.

After our first concert in September we felt like we were on our way and that the community in the local area was with us as well. We were overwhelmed with the welcome for that debut performance, and we look forward to building on those links in the months and years ahead.

This is a concert of masterpieces – the two pieces in the first half being very close to each other in terms of age, yet taking vastly different journeys and sounding wholly original. Dvorak's Seventh Symphony – commissioned back in 1885 by London's own (now Royal) Philharmonic Society – may not be as widely known as his glorious ninth, but is in itself a true masterpiece, both thrilling and touching.

We hope you enjoy the performances and will be back to hear us again in February for our next concert. Do get in touch and let us know what you think, or if you have pieces you'd love your local orchestra to play.

David Smith
Music Director

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Programme:

Mendelssohn - Hebrides Overture

Schubert- Symphony No. 8 in B minor, 'Unfinished'

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Dvorak - Symphony No. 7 in D minor

Conductor: David Smith



David enjoys working with a number of ensembles in London, programming pieces from unusual corners of the repertoire, alongside the great classics. In addition to his work with SELO, he is Music Director of the City of London Symphonic Winds and of Barnes Concert Band.

He also regularly conducts London Repertoire Orchestra and has worked as guest conductor with many orchestras in London and across the South of England, including Brent Symphony Orchestra, Kingston Philharmonic, Sidcup Symphony and South Bank Symphony (now Sinfonia Tamesa). Concert venues have included Trinity College of Music, Hampton Hill Playhouse, the Landmark

Arts Centre, Teddington, and St James's Park, as part of The Royal Parks series.

Work abroad has involved concerts at the Chopin Academy in Warsaw, Poland, and in Italy as part of the International Festival of European Youth Orchestras.

David studied Music, and subsequently Musicology, at the University of Southampton, where his tutors included David Owen Norris and Michael Finnissy. He studied conducting with Robin Browning and Denise Ham. Alongside his conducting career and trombone playing, David works as a marketing director in the music industry.

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Alan studied music in Huddersfield in the 1980s, where he was taught by Herbert Whone, immersing himself in as much contemporary music as possible, and over the years has worked closely with composers such as Witold Lutoslawski, Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Maxwell Davies, John Cage and Michael Tippett.

He began freelancing following a year at The National Centre for Orchestral Studies (based at Goldsmith's College) and early engagements included extra work with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a short stint in the original Miss Saigon production in the West End. Playing mostly around the South East, other career moves such as joining the army, classroom music teaching and testing financial software have always been flexible enough in allowing time to continue musical pursuits.



Leader: Alan Titherington

After 22 years, Alan is also the second longest-serving member of the Dartington Festival Orchestra and has been privileged to have worked with some of the most respected and influential orchestral conductors, including Diego Masson, Charles Groves, Vernon Handley, Edward Downes, Richard Hickox, Ilan Volkov and Jiří Bělohlávek. A recent highlight of the Dartington years was a performance of Haydn's 'Creation' with Sir Charles Mackerras on his first visit to the Summer School in almost 40 years.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
The Hebrides Overture, Op 26 (1829–1832)

There are many pieces of music that depict the forces of nature – we ‘hear’ a sunrise in Nielsen’s Helios Overture, a storm in Beethoven’s sixth symphony, and the sea in Debussy’s masterpiece La Mer. Mendelssohn, on a European tour, came to England and Scotland in 1829, and in a letter written whilst in the Inner Hebrides, he wrote: ‘In order to make you realize how extraordinarily the Hebrides have affected me, the following came into my head there.’

What ‘followed’ were the first few bars of what we now know as the opening of this orchestral overture. It is one of the clearest evocations of the sea in orchestral music, setting the scene for a piece that takes in rumbling storms and moments of pure stillness, where we the listener float peacefully, waiting for the next wave. Like the symphony that will follow in this concert, it also contains one of the greatest melodies of its time.

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Franz Peter Schubert (1797-1828)
Symphony No 8 in B minor, D759, ‘Unfinished’ (1822)

I: Allegro moderato
II: Andante con moto

In 1822, symphonies had four movements. This norm carried on for decades to come, though it would later be blown apart by pieces such as Messiaen’s Turangalila-Symphonie (10 movements), Shostakovich’s Fourteenth Symphony (11 movements) and Sibelius’s Seventh (the mere one movement that contains so much).

So for Franz Schubert to leave a major work ‘unfinished’ was quite unusual. It has long been thought that the work genuinely was unfinished, according to its original design, rather than half of it being lost. There was a sketch of a third movement but Schubert seemingly did not complete it. And when you hear these two movements performed there is such balance that the piece feels entirely complete. It doesn’t need any more.

The first movement is tragic, beginning with unnerving strings and mournful woodwind. The stunning second theme is in a major key, sounding happier, more contented, and is thought to be ‘consoling’ in its nature. The music develops and twists, ending in turmoil. The balance of the symphony mentioned above comes from the nature of the second movement – similar in pace to the first, but serene, calm – reverential. It is a lyrical, radiant counterpart to its tragic companion.

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Interval
Please join us for refreshments.

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Anton Dvořák (1841-1904)

Symphony No. 7 in D Minor, Op. 70 (1884-1885)

I: Allegro maestoso

II: Poco adagio

III: Scherzo – Vivace

IV: Finale – Allegro

The Royal Philharmonic Society is currently preparing to celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2013, and continues to be an important body for the promotion of classical music today. They are using Beethoven as poster boy for the anniversary, as the most significant of all their commissioned pieces has to be his ninth symphony – known throughout the world and anthem of the European Union since 1985.

In amongst the RPS's significant commissioning legacy lies Dvorak's seventh symphony. Dvorak had been well received in England already, and wrote that 'my new symphony ... must be such again as to make a stir in the world.' It was premiered in 1885 in St James's Hall, and gave its English audiences a potent mixture of classical formality, Czech character, and high drama.

The dark, tense first movement is full of immense possibilities – from the very opening you sense that something significant is ahead. The great drive of the music is given extra pushes by accelerando instructions late on, leading to a staggering climax, which then echoes away. After this dramatic first movement, the lyrical second is simplicity itself, to begin with. This noble music is built on a selection of themes that are passed between the instruments of the orchestra, and even – when repeated in the concluding recapitulation section – played in a different order, a daring move for the time.

The dancing Scherzo is Dvorak at his most vibrant. There is fantastic counterpoint – simultaneously played lines of music that are rhythmically independent of each other and use of cross-rhythms. There are six beats in each bar, which can either be divided into two groups of three, or three of two. Dvorak plays with this tension to give great energy to a dance that truly reflects his Czech heritage. A more serious mood returns, however, in the final movement, opening with a tragic outpouring. A Slavonic march and a contrasting lyrical melody carry us along, before an impressive coda section ends this superb symphony, written for London audiences, in grand fashion.

Programme notes © South East London Orchestra

Performers:

First Violin:

Alan Titherington
Bonnie Pal
Francis D'Alquen
Jenny Brown
Emily Rayment

Second Violin:

Anthony Fawkes
Ambroise Desplechin
Peter Clyde

Cello:

Rebecca Sackman-Smith
Eleanor Whitworth-Jones
Sarah Gentry
Olivia West

Viola:

Eleanor Beamond-Pepler
Alison Evans
Stephen Cadywold

Double Bass:

Liz Hollowood
Karl-Josef Kemper
Terry Heard

Flute:

Hanna Barriga
Sarah Harington Hawes

Oboe:

Catherine Smale
Micheal Clegg-Butt

Clarinet:

Sarah Witherington
Charlotte Woolley

Bassoon:

Peter Harris
Val Currie

Trumpet:

Nathaniel Rodwell
Benjamin Wong

French Horn:

Natalie Cole
Gill Bird
Matthew Sackman
Brian Newman

Trombone:

Alison Bowyer
Trevor Wharton
Neil Bennett

Timpani:

David Coronel

Next Concert Details:

Date & Time: Saturday 23rd February 2013, at 4pm

Programme:

Elgar: Dream Children

Debussy: Children's Corner

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, 'Italian'

Keep an eye on our website and updates for the venue!

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Fancy a pint?

We have an area booked at the Oakhill pub on Bromley Road, please join us for a celebratory drink after the concert.

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Thanks must be given to David Smith, Charlotte Woolley, Hanna Barriga, Sarah Harington Hawes, Anthony Fawkes, Natalie Cole and Alan Titherington, for their ongoing support and excellent organisational skills.

Thanks additionally to the Parishes of St Barnabas and St Edmunds Churches, for allowing us to use their wonderful churches and halls.



For your Christmas Diaries ~

St Barnabas Christmas Services

- 22nd December at 4:30pm – Festive Outdoor Christmas Market
- 22nd December at 6:30pm – Christmas Carol Concert
- 24th December at 5:00pm – Children's 'Messy' Crib Service
- 24th December at 11:30pm – Midnight Mass
- 25th December at 10:00am – Christmas day service



For more information please visit their website at
www.stbarnabasbeckenham.org

