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SELO
SOUTH EAST LONDON
Orchestra

MUSIC DIRECTOR: DAVID SMITH
SOLOIST: JESSICA GILLINGWATER

SUNDAY 10th APRIL 2022

www.southeastlondonorchestra.com

WELCOME

David Smith, Music Director

For this afternoon's concert, we are going back to Vienna at the turning point of the 19th- and 20th-centuries.

It was a time of great cultural development, the old order mixing with the new. And it was a time of empires, with cataclysmic European conflicts around the corner. In the middle of this exciting time, the visual arts, literature, architecture, dance and music were all feeding off one another and pushing at new boundaries.

All three of the composers featured today were parts of this cultural melting pot. Following his studies at the Vienna Conservatory, the Bohemian Mahler's professional life was established through his conducting roles in the city. The younger man, Berg – born in the city and lived there most of his life – attended Mahler's concerts and was inspired by his song cycles. His passion for Mahler was such that, after the Viennese premiere of Mahler's Fourth Symphony, Berg was amongst a group that surged backstage, and he came away with Mahler's baton, apparently preserving it is a precious relic!

Today's elder statesman, Johannes Brahms, was Hamburg-born, but lived and worked for decades in Vienna until his death. The gravitational pull of this cultural hub was immense, and in the world of classical music, the results have remained a huge part of the regular repertoire.

This term we have greatly enjoyed working with both mezzo-soprano Jessica Gillingwater and leader Mario Basile in preparation for today's performance. They have brought wonderful insights and inspiration to us all!

Thank you for supporting us today, and we look forward to seeing you again at a future concert.

THE ORCHESTRA

Flute

Jenny Sutton
Sarah Harington Hawes

Oboe

Catherine Smale
Andrew Radley
(cor anglais)

Clarinet

Charlotte Woolley
Phil Broadey
Chris Jeffery (bass
clarinet)

Bassoon

Claire Goddard
Val Currie
Ethel Livermore
(contrabassoon)

Horn

Andy Currie
Steph Jeffery
Rosie Merriman
Benedict East

Trumpet

Ben Whalley
Katherine Mason

Trombone

Thomas Woodcock
Richard Tighe
Hywel Jones

Violin I

Mario Basilisco
Mike Bradburn
Phillip Curry
Claire Rutland
Russ Anderson
Heather Hall
Matthew Burgess

Violin II

Louise Esaias
Penny Davies
Pam Orchard
Keith Hide
Lily Rose Wallace
Catherine Parkinson
Tracey Duncan
Geraldine Lowery
Soraya Sanatian
Rosamund Sykes

Viola

Lucy Stephenson
Maeve Lynch
Jayro Viapree
Hannah Gostling
Sam Bamert
Stephen Blows
Hywel Williams

Cello

Hilary Wood
Tony Albuquerque
Richard Thorn
Philippa Bradburn
Debbi Steele

Double bass

David Wright
Morven Main
Martin Gulliford

Timpani and Percussion

David Coronel

Harp

Louisa Duggan



BIOGRAPHIES



David Smith

Music Director

David is passionate about conducting contemporary music alongside the more recent 20th-century music and the great masterpieces of the classical repertoire.

David is the founding Music Director of South East London Orchestra. He was Music Director of City of London Symphonic Winds (2011-2017) and has been a regular guest conductor with London Repertoire Orchestra, many orchestras across the south of England and in London. As an instrumentalist David has extensive experience as an orchestral trombonist and timpanist, with rare forays into the world of the double bass.

He read Music and a Masters in Musicology at the University of Southampton, where his tutors included David Owen Norris and Michael Finnissy. He studies conducting with Robin Browning, and previously studied with Denise Ham.

When not conducting, David is a senior manager at ABRSM (the exam board of the Royal Schools of Music), overseeing all of the support for their music examiners. Away from all this, he supports the England cricket team, bakes strictly to the recipe, and enjoys debating small details with his two young children.



Mario Basilisco

Leader

Mario was born in London and began his musical studies at the age of seven with his father on the flamenco guitar. In 1991 he was a finalist in the BBC Young Guitarist of the Year. After receiving a scholarship to study at the Centre for Young Musicians, he went on to study the violin at Trinity College of Music where he completed his Bachelor of Music (Honours) Degree. He then received further scholarships to pursue a postgraduate diploma, graduating from the class of Michael Boehmann.

Mario studied conducting with Peter Stark and was coached and participated in master classes with members of the Amadeus, Chillingirian, Vellinger and Wihan string quartets as well as the pianists Yonty Solomon and Ian Burnside. As a violinist, Mario was a finalist in the 2002 Vera Kantrovich Solo Bach Competition and in 2003 won the first prize in both the Barbirolli String Quartet Competition and the Cavatina Trust Chamber Music Competition.

Mario has given solo and chamber music recitals throughout London and the UK. He freelances and guest leads symphony and chamber orchestras throughout London, and is also the leader of The Wandsworth Symphony Orchestra.

JESSICA GILLINGWATER

Mezzo-soprano

London-born mezzo-soprano Jessica Gillingwater studies with David Pollard and is a member of the BBC Singers. Recent performance highlights include the role of Lavinia in the Errollyn Wallen's *Dido's Ghost* with Dunedin Consort at Buxton International Festival, Bernstein's *Jeremiah* Symphony with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at Saffron Hall, Duruflé's *Requiem* with Stephen Cleobury and the BBC Concert Orchestra at King's College Cambridge and *Mrs Noye* in Britten's *Noye's Fludde* with Martyn Brabbins at Southwark Cathedral.

Jessica also has a keen interest in contemporary music and has recently performed Boulez's *Le Marteau Sans Maître* and Ligeti's *Aventures* and *Nouvelles Aventures* with the Psappha Ensemble at Hallé St Peter's. Jessica has recently established an online song recital series, "Proud Songsters", with colleagues from the BBC, highlights of which have included Elgar's *Sea Pictures*, Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* and Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*.

Jessica's oratorio repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, Elgar's *Apostles* and *Dream of Gerontius*; Bach's *Passions* and *B Minor Mass*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater* and Verdi's *Requiem*.

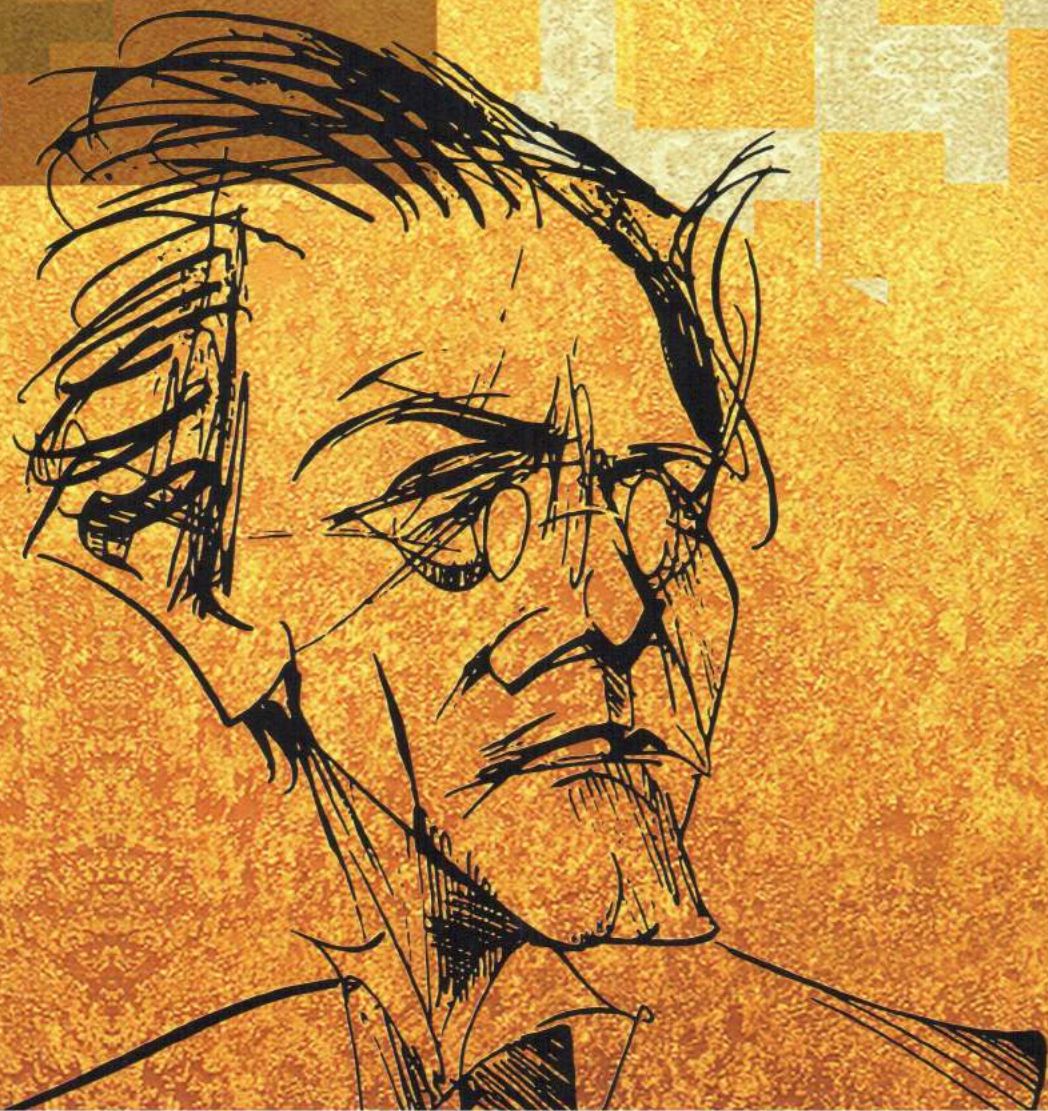
Jessica also performs regularly with ensembles including Dunedin Consort, Exaudi, Solomon's Knot, The Marian Consort, Alamire and The Choir of the Enlightenment.



GUSTAV MAHLER

(1860–1911)

Blumine (1884)



Mahler was in his early twenties when he embarked on a career that would combine conducting and composing, soon after the completion of his studies at the Vienna Conservatoire and the University of Vienna.

In 1884, while he was assistant conductor at the Royal Theatre in Kassel, a city in central Germany, he began work on his First Symphony. Earlier that year, he had composed seven pieces of incidental music for a performance of Scheffel's play, *The Trumpeter of Säkkingen*, where *Blumine* (meaning 'flower' or 'flora') accompanies the scene in which the trumpeter serenades his beloved across the Rhine. The inspiration for *Blumine* may have been the soprano Johanna Richter whom Mahler was deeply in love with at the time; he certainly thought highly enough of the piece to incorporate it as one of the five movements in the original version of his first symphony when it was completed in 1888.

Perhaps the opening of *Blumine* was too reminiscent of the chorale melody that adorns the fourth movement of Brahms's First Symphony. Or it could have been the mixed reviews of the symphony's first three performances that led Mahler to begin questioning the structure of the symphony. Whatever the reason, he removed *Blumine* when revising the symphony for its fourth performance in 1896 and never performed it again.

In 1966, a manuscript of Mahler's First Symphony including the *Blumine* movement – believed to have been salvaged by one of his former students at the Conservatoire – was discovered in the Osborn collection at Yale University and the movement received its modern-day premiere the following year at the Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk, more than 70 years after it was last performed.

The piece opens with a gentle, heartfelt trumpet melody before moving into a melancholic central section that incorporates a number of instrumental duets: oboe with double basses, horn with violins, and flute with cellos. The opening trumpet melody then returns to lift the mood before the strings and harp bring the piece to a peaceful conclusion.

ALBAN BERG

[1885–1935]

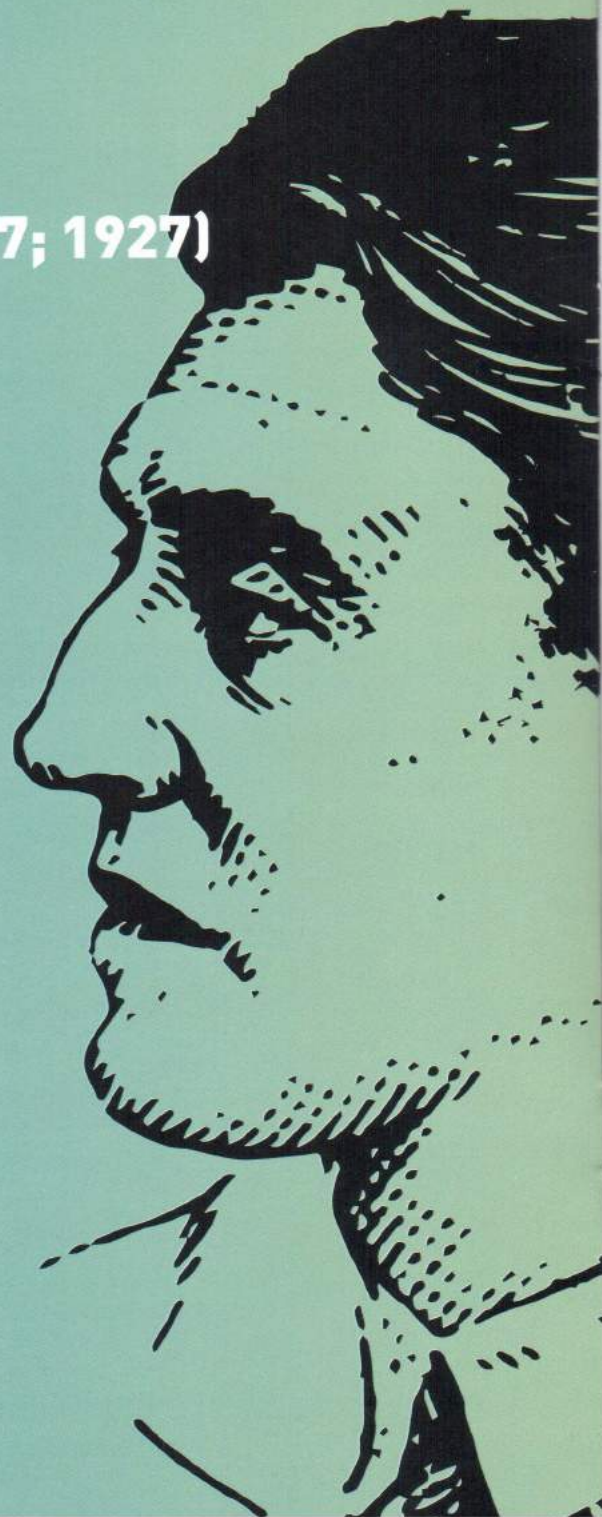
Seven Early Songs (1905–08; 1917; 1927)

Early in their careers, both Mahler and Berg composed songs for voice and piano. Later, Mahler was a prolific writer of orchestral songs, and Berg – being a devotee of the older composer – would have known these songs well.

The songs as presented here are twice revised from their original versions for voice and piano. In the early 1900s Berg was studying with Arnold Schoenberg, and three of the songs were first performed in a concert of music by Schoenberg's students. In 1907 Berg became aware of the much-admired singer Helene Nahowski, who later became his wife, and sent her the manuscript of a love song. To celebrate this ten-year anniversary in 1917, Berg revised a selection of ten songs, including all seven from this work.

Returning after a further ten years to rework them for voice and orchestra, Berg was much more established with successes to his name, including his first opera *Wozzeck*. He went beyond simply orchestrating the songs; he revised sections of melody and changed structures, all with the aim of creating a unified cycle. He transposed several of the songs to unify the keys, and changed the order several times to balance the moods of the songs.

The full orchestra is used in the first and seventh songs, creating the outer 'framework'. The second, fourth and sixth use a reduced orchestra, and the third and fifth just a section of the orchestra each. The whole cycle is harmonically extremely rich, with extraordinary musical sensuality to reflect the themes running through each song. In a final sign of the depth of feeling behind this piece, Berg dedicated it to 'Meiner Helene'.



Nacht**Carl Hauptmann**

Dämmern Wolken über Nacht und Tal.
Nebel schweben. Wasser rauschen
sacht.

Nun entschleiert sich's mit einem Mal.
O gib acht! gib acht!

Weites Wunderland ist aufgetan,
Silbern ragen Berge traumhaft groß,
Stille Pfade silberlicht talan
Aus verborg'nem Schoß.

Und die hehre Welt so traumhaft rein.
Stummer Buchenbaum am Wege steht
Schattenschwarz – ein Hauch vom
fernen Hain
Einsam leise weht.

Und aus tiefen Grundes Düsterheit
Blinken Lichter auf in stummer Nacht.
Trinke Seele! trinke Einsamkeit!
O gib acht! gib acht!

Schilflied**Nikolaus Lenau**

Auf geheimem Waldespfade
Schleich' ich gern im Abendschein
An das öde Schilfgestade,
Mädchen, und gedenke dein!

Wenn sich dann der Busch verdüstert,
Rauscht das Rohr geheimnisvoll,
Und es klaget und es flüstert,
Daß ich weinen, weinen soll.

Und ich mein', ich höre wehen
Leise deiner Stimme Klang,
Und im Weiher untergehen
Deinen lieblichen Gesang.

Die Nachtigall**Theodor Storm**

Das macht, es hat die Nachtigall
Die ganze Nacht gesungen;
Da sind von ihrem süßen Schall,
Da sind in Hall und Widerhall
Die Rosen aufgesprungen.

Sie war doch sonst ein wildes Blut,
Nun geht sie tief in Sinnen;
Trägt in der Hand den Sommerhut
Und duldet still der Sonne Glut
Und weiß nicht, was beginnen.

Das macht, es hat die Nachtigall
Die ganze Nacht gesungen;
Da sind von ihrem süßen Schall,
Da sind in Hall und Widerhall
Die Rosen aufgesprungen.

Night**Carl Hauptmann**

Clouds loom over night and valley.
Mists hover, waters softly murmur.
Now at once all is unveiled.
O take heed! take heed!

A vast wonderland opens up,
Silvery mountains soar dreamlike tall,
Silent paths climb silver-bright
valleywards
From a hidden womb.

And the glorious world so dreamlike pure.
A silent beech-tree stands by the wayside
Shadow-black – a breath from the distant
grove
Blows solitary soft.

And from the deep valley's gloom
Lights twinkle in the silent night.
Drink soul! drink solitude!
O take heed! take heed!

Reed song**Nikolaus Lenau**

Along a secret forest path
I love to steal in the evening light
To the desolate reedy shore
And think, my girl, of you!

When the bushes then grow dark,
The reeds pipe mysteriously,
Lamenting and whispering,
That I must weep, must weep.

And I seem to hear the soft sound
Of your voice,
And your lovely singing
Drowning in the pond.

The nightingale**Theodor Storm**

It is because the nightingale
Has sung throughout the night,
That from the sweet sound
Of her echoing song
The roses have sprung up.

She was once a wild creature,
Now she wanders deep in thought;
In her hand a summer hat,
Bearing in silence the sun's heat,
Not knowing what to do.

It is because the nightingale
Has sung throughout the night,
That from the sweet sound
Of her echoing song
The roses have sprung up.

Traumgekrönt**Rainer Maria Rilke**

Das war der Tag der weißen
Chrysanthemem, –
mir bangte fast vor seiner Pracht ...
Und dann, dann kamst du mir die Seele
nehmen
tief in der Nacht.

Mir war so bang, und du kamst lieb und
leise, –
ich hatte grad im Traum an dich gedacht.
Du kamst, und leis wie eine Märchenweise
erklang die Nacht ...

Im Zimmer**Johannes Schlaf**

Herbstsonnenschein.
Der liebe Abend blickt so still herein,
Ein Feuerlein rot
Knistert im Ofenloch und loht.

So! – Mein Kopf auf deinen Knie'n. –
So ist mir gut;
Wenn mein Auge so in deinem ruht.
Wie leise die Minuten ziehn! ...

Liebesode**Otto Erich Hartleben**

Im Arm der Liebe schiefen wir selig ein.
Am offenen Fenster lauschte der
Sommerwind,
und unsrer Atemzüge Frieden
trug er hinaus in die helle Mondnacht. –

Und aus dem Garten tastete zagend sich
Ein Rosenduft an unserer Liebe Bett
Und gab uns wundervolle Träume,

Träume des Rausches – so reich an
Sehnsucht!

Sommertage**Paul Hohenberg**

Nun ziehen Tage über die Welt,
gesandt aus blauer Ewigkeit,
im Sommerwind verweht die Zeit.
Nun windet nächstens der Herr
Sternenkränze mit seliger Hand
über Wander- und Wunderland.

O Herz, was kann in diesen Tagen
dein hellstes Wanderlied denn sagen
von deiner tiefen, tiefen Lust:

Im Wiesensang verstummt die Brust,
nun schweigt das Wort, wo Bild um Bild
zu dir zieht und dich ganz erfüllt.

Crowned with dreams**Rainer Maria Rilke**

That was the day of the white
chrysanthemums –
Its brilliance almost frightened me ...
And then, then you came to take my soul
at the dead of night.

I was so frightened, and you came
sweetly and gently,
I had been thinking of you in my dreams.
You came, and soft as a fairy tune
the night rang out ...

In the room**Johannes Schlaf**

Autumn sunshine.
The lovely evening looks in so silently,
A little red fire
Crackles and blazes in the hearth.

Like this! – With my head on your
knees. –
Like this I am content;
When my eyes rest in yours like this,
How gently the minutes pass!

Ode to love**Otto Erich Hartleben**

In love's arms we fell blissfully asleep.
The summer wind listened at the open
window,
and carried the peace of our breathing
out into the moon-bright night. –

And from the garden a scent of roses
came timidly to our bed of love
and gave us wonderful dreams,
ecstatic dreams – so rich in longing!

Summer days**Paul Hohenberg**

Days, sent from blue eternity,
journey now across the world,
time drifts away in the summer wind.
The Lord at night now garlands
star-chains with his blessed hand
across lands of wandering and wonder.

In these days, O heart, what can
your brightest travel-song say
of your deep, deep joy?
The heart falls silent in the meadows'
song.
words now cease when image after image
comes to you and fills you utterly.

JOHANNES BRAHMS



(1833–1897)

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN F (1883)

- I Allegro con brio**
- II Andante**
- III Poco allegretto**
- IV Allegro - un poco sostenuto**

Six years after completing his Second Symphony, Brahms composed his Third in 1883 at Wiesbaden, and its premiere was performed by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra that year.

Brahms drew on his experience of composing other orchestral works in this period to produce a symphony that was compact yet complex, and highly personal. It was generally popular, although its perceived 'modernity' provoked a walk-out by some at the Boston premiere in 1884. Today it is a favourite of many, and the third movement melody has entered popular culture, being the basis for numerous film scores and popular songs.

The first three chords are topped by the notes F – A flat – F, which are derived from Brahms' personal motto, F A F (*Frei aber froh* – Free but happy). Commentary on his own work was unusual for the highly reticent Brahms. However, this musical cypher does seem to reflect the idea of turbulence and tranquillity coexisting; the A flat (rather than A natural) heralds the major-minor conflict which underlines most of the symphony.

A passing phrase in Schumann's Rhenish Symphony is recalled in the descending violin theme at bar three. Variants of this 'Rhenish' theme and the initial three-note motto recur throughout and impart a high degree of unity to the work, which was also innovative: a moderate-tempo waltz replaces the traditional fast scherzo, and all movements end quietly; almost unprecedented at the time.

The motto and the 'Rhenish' theme are the germinating ideas of the first movement, along with a lilting second theme introduced on clarinet and bassoon. The first section ends in turbulent mood before being repeated. Tension begins to increase in the development as the second theme rushes forward in the minor. Phases of relaxation are gradually replaced by dramatic surges accompanied by massive brass chords, before the movement winds down to its serene F major conclusion with a reprise of the 'Rhenish' theme.

The second movement opens with a chorale-like melody from clarinet and lower strings, evoking a pastoral scene before the arrival of eerie repeated chords. Upper and lower strings interweave a melancholic second theme so that two moods, cheerful and sombre, seem to compete until an impassioned violin melody brings this emotionally charged movement to a close.

A lyrical, bitter-sweet minor-key waltz played by the cellos launches the third movement, before contrasting material in the middle section, accompanied by delicate syncopation and arpeggio figures. The initial melody returns, this time richly orchestrated.

The finale begins with a harmonically unstable theme with sudden eruptions, and is followed by a recall of one of the second movement themes and then a new, heroic theme on cellos and horn. The darker mood of the opening takes over, with repeats of the aggressive outbursts, and tumultuous string triplets racing over brass chords. Cross-rhythms and harmonic progressions abound as the development surges towards its stormy climax. A mysterious coda starts with muted violas and recalls previous main themes in turn. Shimmering violin figurations conclude the symphony in F major – the harmonic tussle having been won – in a mystical, twilight atmosphere.

WE ARE RECRUITING!

We are always on the look out for new members and have specific vacancies in upper strings and brass. There is no audition process, so if you're roughly around Grade 8 standard (even if you haven't played for a while...!) and are interested in getting involved, we'd love to hear from you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SELO wishes to extend our sincere thanks Terry Davis for the design, production and printing of the programme, fliers and season leaflets.

Programme notes by Tony Albuquerque (Mahler), David Smith (Berg) and Morven Main (Brahms).

Berg translations © Richard Stokes, author of The Book of Lieder, published by Faber, provided courtesy of Oxford Lieder (www.oxfordlieder.co.uk)

More details about the orchestra, our concerts, how to buy tickets and much more can be found at our website, or via our social media links.

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NEXT CONCERT

Sunday 26th June 2022 at 4pm

St Michael and All Angels, Beckenham

Kendall The Spark Catchers

Britten/Matthews Movements for a Clarinet

Concerto with soloist **Nicholas Shipman**

Shostakovich Symphony No. 9

WHERE WE ARE

Concerts

St Michael and All Angels, Beckenham

121 Ravenscroft Road, Beckenham, BR3 4TN

Rehearsals

Christ Church

1A Christ Church Road, Beckenham, BR3 3LE

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