

BRISTOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Soloists (Flute): Jane Foister
& Gareth Williams

Conductor: Tim Harrison
Leader: Bob Pinniger

CONCERT PROGRAMME

Friday 5th April 2019 7:30pm

St. Mary Magdalene Church,
Stoke Bishop

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Palladio, concerto grosso for string orchestra

Karl Jenkins (b.1944)

(first movement)

The Welsh composer Karl Jenkins first became known as a jazz and jazz-rock musician, but now composes in a variety of genres, his breakthrough having come with a crossover project, *Adiemus* (begun 1995), and he is now prolific and extremely popular. In 2000 he wrote *The Armed Man: a Mass for Peace*, which has been performed over 200 times in 20 countries. *The Peacemakers* (2012) is another anti-war composition. He was made a CBE in 2010 and knighted in 2015 for services to classical and crossover music.

He claims that *Palladio* (1995) was inspired by Andrea Palladio, the 16th-century Italian architect whose elegant villas can be admired in and around Vicenza, north Italy.

Concerto in C major for two flutes RV533

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

Allegro molto - Largo - [Allegro]

Vivaldi was ordained a priest but did not say Mass after the first two years, owing to a chest complaint. He was nicknamed the "Red Priest" owing to the colour of his hair, sometimes seen in portraits peeping out from under his somewhat eccentric blond wig. For nearly 40 years he taught at a high-class orphanage for girls, the Ospedale della Pietà, in his native Venice, writing what is probably his best-loved composition, the *Four Seasons* violin concertos (1725), for his pupils there.

He became famous throughout Europe as a composer and virtuoso violinist. His staggeringly profuse output of compositions, justly famed for its variety and inventiveness, includes some 500 concertos for a variety of instruments. Tonight's concerto is the only one for two flutes. The second movement is scored for the flutes and continuo, the strings remaining silent; the finale has no marking but is played *allegro*. Here the flutes are more melodic than in the first movement.

Not a man racked by self-doubt, he was known to boast that he could compose a concerto faster than it could be copied out, but it was thanks chiefly to his operas that he became rich and successful. But his popularity waned suddenly as tastes in music moved on; disappointed, he left Venice for Vienna, where he died in poverty and obscurity.

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 BWV 1048 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Allegro moderato - Adagio - Allegro con brio

Amongst Bach's enormous oeuvre, purely orchestral works make up just a small percentage, mostly written during a happy time in his life while he was court Kapellmeister at Cöthen, near Leipzig, where his princely employer was a keen musician. As the Prince, a Calvinist, did not require any religious music, Bach was free to compose instrumental works for his band of some 17 players. The six Brandenburg Concertos, dedicated to a nobleman called the Margrave of Brandenburg, date from this time. They were not performed until much later, and were apparently never paid for!

The Brandenburg Concertos are mainly in the format which later became standard for concertos: fast and fairly weighty first movement, slow and lyrical middle movement, and fast but more playful finale. Each of these concertos is

scored for a different combination of instruments. Most include wind, but no. 3 is just for strings and continuo, with parts for three violins, three violas, three cellos and bass. Unusually, it has virtually no middle movement, just two slow, pensive chords, leading from the vigorous first movement into the dancing finale.

I n t e r v a l

Adagio for Strings op.11

Samuel Barber (1910 – 1981)

Samuel Barber knew from an early age that he was destined to become a composer, in defiance of his parents, a doctor and a pianist, who were much keener for him to become a footballer. He wrote his first composition, a 23-bar piano piece called “Sadness”, at age seven. His *Adagio for Strings* is one of the 20th century’s best-known American compositions. Barber initially conceived it as the second movement of his 1936 string quartet, but subsequently arranged it for string orchestra. He submitted this version of the score for consideration to Toscanini, who returned it some time later without comment; only later did Barber learn that the maestro had been so impressed that he had memorised the entire work. It was premiered on radio, conducted by Toscanini, in November 1938 and reached huge audiences when heard, also on radio, at the funeral of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945. The *Adagio for Strings*, by far Barber’s best-known work, has been a favourite choice for funerals and other solemn occasions ever since.

Serenade in E flat for Strings op. 6

Josef Suk (1874-1935)

Andante - Allegro non troppo e grazioso - Adagio - Allegro giocoso non troppo presto

Suk was the second in a dynasty of four brilliant violinists, all called Josef, the last of whom became an internationally famous soloist – see his obituary (2011) in the Guardian (still available online). Tonight’s Josef Suk was the favourite pupil of Dvořák at the Prague Conservatoire and married his daughter Otilie. He was second violin in the renowned Bohemian Quartet from 1891 to 1933 and taught at the Conservatoire, becoming its director in 1924. His music, which is strongly influenced by Dvořák as well as by Schubert and Brahms, has a delicate lyricism and a wealth of harmonic invention, but is shot through with a deep vein of melancholy; his persistent sense of foreboding was sadly vindicated when Otilie died in 1905, one year after her father, leaving him with an infant son. He never re-married.

The Serenade was composed in 1892 at age 18 while he was still a student at the Conservatoire. Dvořák, concerned at the melancholy character of his earlier compositions, had urged him to “write something cheerful for a change”. This charming work, by turns rhapsodic, frolicsome and tender, was Suk’s response. Perhaps he had just met Otilie....

Jane Foister studied flute at Dartington College of Arts and after graduating began teaching for the local authority at King's school Bruton and Downside school. She has played with various orchestras in the area and now regularly plays with Bristol Concert Orchestra and Cameo. She has also been a part of the pit orchestra for many musicals, also occasionally playing saxophone.

Gareth Williams was brought up in Belfast and began playing the flute and tin whistle in local youth orchestras and folk groups. He played in the Cambridge University Music Society orchestra and was first flute in the university orchestras in London and Liverpool. His career as a doctor took him to Geneva (with its quaintly uniformed wind band, the Harmonie Nautique) and then to Liverpool, where he was first flute in the Crosby Symphony Orchestra for 15 years. As well as classical music with the Quintet, the Bristol Concert Orchestra and the Bristol Chamber Orchestra, he plays jazz (flute and saxes), currently in the Class Act Quartet and the Jenner Jazz Quartet, and has performed in jazz festivals at Southport, Thornbury and elsewhere.

Tim Harrison, originally from Neath, South Wales, came to Bristol University to study music, specialising in composition and orchestration. He achieved a master's degree in performance on the viola at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, and while there formed his own orchestra, Cardiff Camerata, which prided itself on performing neglected music alongside more popular works. He later gained a PGDip with Distinction for his performances with Sinfonia Newydd and the RWCMD Symphony Orchestra. Now living in Bristol and teaching music in a secondary school, he is in demand as a conductor throughout the wider Bristol area.

Bob Pinniger began piano and violin lessons at an early age at the Garjulo School of Music in Bristol. He played in the National Youth Orchestra and became an Associate of the Royal College of Music in 1967. He enjoys playing in small ensembles and performs in concerts at Bristol Music Club. He has given concerts in the Chapel at Tyntesfield the local National Trust property and plays for their various Christmas events. In his other roles, he performs with Bristol Concert Orchestra and is kept busy as Secretary of Bristol Music Club. He has a long history with Bristol Chamber Orchestra, joining when he was 15 years old, and conducting the orchestra between 1992 and 2003.

The **Bristol Chamber Orchestra**, founded in 1963, has several professionally qualified players amongst its members, and gives five or six public concerts a year, occasionally combining with other instrumentalists to perform concertos and chamber symphonies.

Violins: Bob Pinniger, Sarah Beetham, Susan Burdock, Wendy Gillman, Jenny Heathcote, Trevor Jennings, Lisa Orton, Helen Page, Vanessa Pinniger, Celia Skrine, Julia Smyth, Ian Vorley, Erica Wright **Violas:** Sara Rigby, Edna Cause, Catharine Deam, Katrina Fray, Dee James, David Jewell, Joan Sidgreaves **Cellos:** Anne Tyler, Alison Bell, Carolyn Little, Peter Soothill, Catherine Tayler, David Trott **Double bass:** Martin Sanders **Harpichord Continuo:** Clare Griffel

Next concerts of the Bristol Chamber Orchestra:

Friday 28th June

Saturday 29th June

Saturday 23rd November

St Bartholomew's Church, Lower Failand

Parish Church Frenchay

Trinity Henleaze United Reformed Church