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**Sidcup Symphony
Orchestra**

Leader: Lindsay Leighton

**A Celebration of Nature
Bexley RSPB Group
40th Anniversary Concert**

Conductor

James Ross

Violin

Abigail James

**7.30 p.m., Saturday 11th May 2019
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup**

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The orchestra gratefully acknowledges the support of the Friends of the orchestra.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

The RSPB is the country's largest nature conservation charity, inspiring everyone to give nature a home. Together with our partners, we protect threatened birds and wildlife so our towns, coast and countryside will teem with life once again. We play a leading role in BirdLife International, a worldwide partnership of nature conservation organisations.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is a registered charity: England and Wales no. 207076.



Local Groups

These are community-based groups that promote the aims and objectives of the RSPB in the local community. They are set up when there are sufficient RSPB members in an area to make a viable group. They must have a suitable leader and treasurer, as well as a committee and sign a local group constitution and agreement. The Bexley Local Group, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in March 2019, aims to provide a comprehensive programme of events to interest its 3,500 members and the wider public, as well as widen their understanding of wildlife and in particular ornithological issues locally, nationally and in the international sphere. We also aim to raise funds for the RSPB to support our local nature reserves and other national and international conservation projects. The RSPB was proud to acknowledge the £200,000 we have donated over the past 40 years.

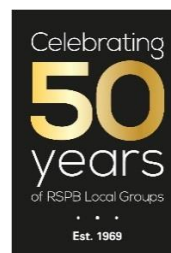
Information about the RSPB Bexley Group can be found at <https://www.rspb.org.uk/groups/bexley/> or contact Group Leader Stuart Banks stuartbans@hotmail.co.uk

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Bexley
local group



PROGRAMME

Josef Haydn (1732 – 1809)

Introduction: *The Creation*



Haydn was born in the Austrian village of Rohrau, which in 1732 was on the border between Austria and Hungary. Neither of his parents was particularly musical, though his father enjoyed folk music and taught himself to play the harp. Josef's musical ability became apparent when he was very young. At the age of six, he moved from Rohrau to live with a more musical relative in the nearby town of Hainburg. He soon came to the attention of the choirmaster of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, Georg von Reutter, and joined that choir in 1740. It is evident that his childhood was not entirely happy: he was separated from his parents on his move to Hainburg; in both Hainburg and Vienna, he was often hungry and not always clothed properly. Nevertheless, his skills as a musician developed and by 1753 had composed his first opera.

In the eighteenth century, it was essential for any musician to receive patronage from the aristocracy. After periods of employment in various households, Haydn became Kapellmeister (music director) to the Esterházy family and moved with the family to Eisenstadt and later to the new palace of Esterháza in rural Hungary. Working in such a remote location meant that Haydn had to develop his musical style with little influence from other musicians.

Haydn composed his oratorio, *The Creation*, in 1797/8. It was first performed in Vienna in March 1799. Tonight, we hear the introduction to the first part of the oratorio. The score refers to the introduction as "The representation of chaos". This will lead directly to:

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958) Overture: *The Wasps*



Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in Down Ampney in Gloucestershire, the son of the local vicar. His parents were reasonably wealthy and were able to employ a nurse to assist with the raising of their three children. When his father died in 1875, the family moved to his mother's family home, Leith Hill Place in Surrey. He had his first piano lessons when he was five, but didn't really take to the instrument and was much happier when he started violin lessons the following year. He was educated at Rottingdean Preparatory School, Charterhouse School, the Royal College of Music and Trinity College, Cambridge. His musical style is strongly influenced by English folk music into which he did a lot of research.

In 1909, Vaughan Williams composed the incidental music for a production of Aristophanes' play *The Wasps* at Trinity College, Cambridge. The overture is quintessentially English in character and has nothing to do with ancient Greece. The only connection with wasps is the buzzing in the opening section.

Poetry reading – *The Skylark* by John Clare, read by Ralph Todd

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958) *The Lark Ascending*
Solo violin, Abigail James

The Lark Ascending was inspired by a lengthy poem of the same name by George Meredith. The orchestral version was first performed in June 1921. The solo violin can be seen as the lark of the title. It is one of the most popular pieces of English music and is rarely out of the top five pieces in the Classic FM annual Hall of Fame poll.

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Ottorino Respighi (1879 – 1936) Suite, *The Birds*

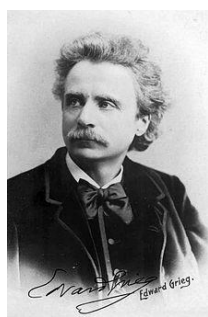
Prelude
The dove
The hen
The nightingale
The cuckoo



Ottorino Respighi was born and educated in Bologna. His father gave him his first violin and piano lessons and eventually he studied violin and viola at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna. At the Liceo, he also studied composition and the history of music. He studied orchestration with Rimsky-Korsakov while he was playing viola in the orchestra of the Russian Imperial Theatre in St Petersburg in 1900. His most famous compositions, *The Fountains of Rome* and *The Pines of Rome* clearly demonstrate his mastery of orchestration. Although he is best known for his orchestral pieces, he also wrote several operas and chamber music.

The suite, *The Birds*, was composed in 1928. It is based on pieces of music composed or collected in the 17th and 18th centuries. The Prelude, which will be familiar to some from its use as the signature tune for the BBC series “Going for a Song” between 1965 and 1977, is based on music by Bernardo Pasquini (1637 – 1710). The dove uses music by Jacques de Gallot (c. 1625 – c. 1695). The hen is based on one of Rameau’s (1683 – 1764) harpsichord pieces. The nightingale is based on a folksong transcribed by Jacob van Eyck (1590 – 1657). The cuckoo, like the prelude, is based on music by Pasquini. In fact, the music that opened the prelude returns to finish the suite.

INTERVAL during which refreshments will be served. (Please help us to defray our costs by making a contribution.) There will also be a grand draw for raffle prizes – please buy lots of tickets!



Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907)
Suite No. 1, Op. 46

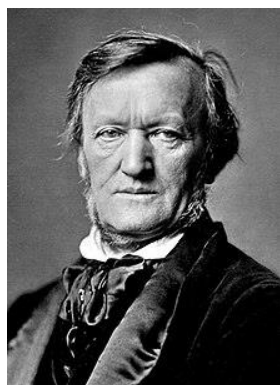
Morning from *Peer Gynt*

The Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg was born in the city of Bergen. His great-grandfather was Scottish and settled in Norway in the late eighteenth century. The Scottish version of the surname would have been “Greig”. The family was very musical and Grieg received his first piano lessons from his mother. Grieg’s uncle by marriage, the violinist Ole Bull, recognised a special talent in young Edvard and arranged for him to study at the Leipzig Conservatory of Music.

In 1874, Ibsen asked Grieg to write some incidental music for his play, *Peer Gynt*. The play is based on a Norwegian fairy tale in which the eponymous hero travels through much of Europe and North Africa – or does he only dream it all? *Morning* forms the prelude to Act IV of the play, which opens in Morocco.

Richard Wagner (1813 - 1883)

Forest Murmurs from *Siegfried*



Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig, the son of a clerk in the local police service. His father died when he was only six months old and he was brought up as the stepson of his mother’s second husband, Ludwig Geyer. Geyer loved the theatre and passed that love on to his stepson. It was Geyer who took the young Wagner to a performance of Weber’s *Der Freischütz*. This experience had a lasting effect on Wagner as both dramatist and composer. He only started to study music in his teens after deciding that he wanted to set one of his plays to music. His earliest compositions, including his first opera, *Die Feen*, were strongly influenced by Weber, Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer. Eventually, he developed a unique style that involved

much use of what came to be known as leitmotifs, musical motto themes that represented characters, places or other plot devices.

The opera *Siegfried* forms the third part of cycle of four operas known as The Ring of the Nibelung. The story of the opera, and indeed of the whole cycle, is too complicated to précis here. Suffice it to say that in Act 2, the eponymous hero is in an enchanted forest and is frustrated at not being able to understand what a wood bird seems to be trying to tell him. He had been told that the sight of a dragon would teach him what fear is. Of course, he has no fear and kills the dragon. When he licks the dragon’s blood from his hand, he finds he can now understand the wood bird. Forest Murmurs provides an impression of the forest and includes much birdsong from the woodwind. Some of the Ring Cycle’s leitmotifs also appear.

Poetry reading – *The Firebird* (Russian Lore) by Terry L Sledge, read by Stuart Banks

Igor Stravinsky (1882 - 1971)

Suite from *The Firebird* (1919)

Introduction - The Firebird and her dance -
The Firebird’s variation -
The Princess’s round dance -
Infernal Dance of King Kaschei – Lullaby -
Finale



Stravinsky was born in St Peterburg, the son of one of the principal basses in the Mariinsky Opera. He studied music from an early age but his family wanted him to go into the law. After graduating in Jurisprudence at the University of St Petersburg, he was able to start studying music full-time in 1902. His composition teacher was Rimsky-Korsakov. Following his three early ballets, “The Firebird”, “Petrouchka”

and “The Rite of Spring”, Stravinsky became one of the most sought-after composers of the 20th century. He eventually settled in the USA and died in New York. He was buried on the island of San Michele in Venice, close to the man who commissioned the early ballets, Sergei Diaghilev.

In 1909, Diaghilev, commissioned the composer Lyadov to compose the music for a ballet to be called *The Firebird*. Despite having been given plenty of time, Lyadov had not even put pen to paper a mere six weeks before the scheduled premiere. Diaghilev withdrew the commission and had to find a suitable alternative composer. Fortunately for Stravinsky, Diaghilev had heard an early short orchestral work by the composer and decided to take a gamble by commissioning the ballet from him. The rest, as they say, is history!

The ballet is based on a Russian fairy tale in which a prince meets a princess who has been transformed into a bird by the evil magician, Kashchei. She tells him that the spell, which affects several other princesses as well as her, can only be removed if Kashchei’s soul is destroyed. Kashchei’s soul is to be found in an egg that the prince finds and destroys. He and the ex-Firebird are united and, of course, live happily ever after. The suite, prepared by Stravinsky in 1919, consists of a series of extracts from the full score played in the order in which they appear in the ballet.

Programme notes © Richard Morris



Abigail James is a versatile violinist who is passionate about performing. She is currently studying with Charles Stewart at the Purcell School for Young Musicians. She has performed as a soloist at weddings and other private functions, as well as playing with various orchestras. She is the leader of the Purcell Symphony Orchestra, the Philomel Orchestra, the Prism Ensemble and the Sound Image and Movement Orchestra. In September she will start studying with Simon Blendish at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

In addition to her musical activities, Abigail is also a dancer and choreographer and an enthusiastic tennis player.



James Ross studied at London’s Southbank International School and won scholarships to Harrow School in London and Christ Church at Oxford University, where he studied Modern History and Music, and wrote his doctorate on French Opera, Politics and the Press was awarded Oxford’s prestigious Sir Donald Tovey Prize. He studied violin and viola, gaining extensive orchestral and chamber music experience, and was a 1998 BBC Philharmonic Conducting Competition finalist. Since then he has conducted in seventeen countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and North America. UK performance credits include The Royal Festival Hall, Royal Albert Hall, St John’s Smith Square, Symphony Hall Birmingham, several state occasions in Westminster Abbey for Queen Elizabeth II, and Oxford’s Sheldonian Theatre, where he conducted Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony for its 350th anniversary concert. In the UK he is music director of Sidcup Symphony Orchestra, Haslemere Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Welwyn Garden City Orchestra and Chorus, and Bridgnorth Sinfonia.

Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Welwyn Garden City Orchestra and Chorus, and Bridgnorth Sinfonia.

He has conducted over 1,000 works including the complete symphonies of Beethoven, Brahms, Dvorak, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Tchaikovsky, operas by Bizet, Britten, Janáček, Mozart, Puccini, Tchaikovsky, Verdi and Wagner, and ballet scores by Bartók, Debussy, Glazunov, Ravel, Satie and Stravinsky. Singers with whom he has worked include Sir Thomas Allen, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, Olga Borodina, Danielle de Niese and UK National Opera Studio.

As a contemporary music conductor, first performances include collaborations with City of London Sinfonia and Arts Council, and at London's Saatchi Gallery with Philharmonia Orchestra members, Piccolo Teatro Milan and for the Center for Contemporary Opera in New York. Other projects include working on Longborough Festival Opera's Wagner *Ring* cycle, for Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings in Sri Lanka and Malta, with Purcell and Chetham's Schools, Royal Academy of Music and Royal Over-Seas League.

James Ross is also a director of classical music consultancy Ulysses Arts, which provides strategic advice, due diligence, label services to venues, orchestras, soloists and record companies. Clients include Apple, Deutsche Grammophon, the Berlin Philharmonic, L'Orchestre de Paris, New York's 21C Media Group, The Julliard School, The Barbican Centre and Afghanistan National Institute of Music.

As a guest speaker, James Ross has been invited to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France; he has taught at Oxford University and contributed to books and journals, especially on French music and culture. He has helped raise over £1 million performing for charities, including conducting English National Ballet at London Guildhall in aid of Save The Children's work with refugees from Syria. He is a Fellow of the UK Incorporated Society of Musicians, a member of the US Conductors Guild and League of American Orchestras.

www.james-ross.com

www.facebook.com/james.ross.conductor

Sidcup Symphony Orchestra

1st Violins

Lindsay Leighton (Leader)
Janet Newis (Assistant leader)
Hazel Burnie
Marisol Hillier
Pam White
Angela Holman
Aaron Mather
Hannah Patrick

2nd Violins

Lauren Reed
Sue Hook
Ruth Ayling
Norman Hamblyn
Sam Ansell
Julie Hodgkinson
Jane Rackham

Basses

Tony Barber
Karl Josef Kemper
Paul Bailey

Piccolo

Tony Holcroft

Flutes

Susan McLeod
Tony Holcroft

Oboes

Jackie Smyth
Annette Morley
Annette Wightman

Horns

Lisa Ridgway
Andrej Lipkin
Simon Jelley
Derryck Nasib

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Elliot Gooch
Derek Cozens

Trombones

William Morley
James Graham
Josh Barber

Tuba

Michael Philpot

Colin Foan

Violas

Catriona Cooper
David Burnie
Karen Hubbard
Richard Longman

Cellos

Hilary Wood
Richard Morris
Chris Burnie
Patricia Warren
Simon Hubbard
Eily Glynn
Janet Sears

Cor anglais

Annette Wightman

Clarinets

Diana Hughes
Frankie Lynn
Terry Heard

Bassoons

Ruby Collins
Sue Rayner

Timpani

David Coronel

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Vilhelm Patrick Skabardis
Adam Payn
Amanda Coverdale

Harp

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There are vacancies in all string sections, and, selectively in some brass and woodwind sections. Enquiries from new players are always welcome. We rehearse at Bird College, 27 Station Road, SIDCUP, DA15 7EB on Thursday evenings from 7.30 until 10.00. If you are an experienced orchestral musician and are interested in getting more information about joining the orchestra, please email sidcupsymphonyorchestra@gmail.com or phone David Burnie on 020 8850 1170.



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Forthcoming Concerts

Saturday 6th July 2019, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup

Schubert	Rosamunde Overture
Butterworth	Six songs from A Shropshire Lad (John Bowen, tenor)
Beethoven	Symphony No1

Saturday 26th October 2019, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup

Sibelius	En Saga
Shostakovich	Cello Concerto No. 1
Franck	Symphony

Saturday 4th January 2020, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup

Rimsky-Korsakov	<i>Capriccio Espagnol</i>
Lyadov	The Enchanted Lake
Borodin	Polovtsian Dances
Britten	Matinées Musicales
Delius	A Walk to the Paradise Garden
Verdi	Grand march from <i>Aida</i>
J Strauss II	Acceleration Waltz
J Strauss I	Radetzky March

Saturday 14th March 2020, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup

Gershwin	An American in Paris
de Falla	Nights in the Gardens of Spain
Debussy	La Mer

Saturday 9th May 2020, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Church Road, Sidcup

Weber	<i>Jubel</i> Overture
Clara Schumann	Piano Concerto
Brahms	Symphony No. 2

Tickets: 020 8300 3268 / 01322 557 458

The Bexley RSPB Group and the Sidcup Symphony Orchestra would like to express their thanks to the following sponsors for their support of tonight's concert.

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Thanks also to the donors of tonight's raffle prizes – all profits will go towards the £10,000 fund-raising target which will be donated to the RSPB South East England

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Simon Ginnaw – Exploring the Wild

Norman McCanch (Ecologist, Artist and Illustrator)

Members of RSPB Bexley Local Group

Thanks are also due to all the local businesses and organisations who displayed publicity for this concert.

Why not become a Friend of the orchestra?

The annual subscription is £8 (min.) for single membership or £12 (min.) for joint membership. This entitles you to one or two tickets (respectively) at a reduced rate for each of our concerts, advance information via the SSO Newsletter, and the opportunity of buying tickets before the general public.

Cheques made payable to Sidcup Symphony Orchestra should be sent to:
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