

“WHAT’S ON”...

Philharmonia Orchestra
Herbert Blomstedt *conductor*
Martin Helmchen *piano*
The Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
Sunday 28 May at 7.30
Brahms - Piano Concerto No.1
Beethoven - Symphony No.7
£12.25-£30.75; 01227 787787

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Brian Wright *conductor*
Alexander Panfilov *piano*
De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea
Thursday 1 June at 7.30
Rossini - Silken Ladder overture
Fauré - Pavane
Tchaikovsky - Piano Concerto No.1
Dvořák - Symphony No.8
£17-£32; 01424 229111

Rochester Choral Society
Rochester Cathedral
Saturday 24 June at 7.00
CPE Bach - Magnificat
Haydn - Paukenmesse
£15; 01634 401049

Sevenoaks Symphony Orchestra &
Sevenoaks Philharmonic Society
Stag Theatre
Sunday 25 June at 7.30
A Night at the Opera
£15; 01732 450175

Canterbury Orchestra
St Mary's Arts Centre, Sandwich
Saturday 1 July at 7.30
A Maritime Prom
£15; 01227 751196

Maidstone Choral Union
All Saints, Saturday 8 July at 7.30
An Evening in Old Vienna
£12; 01622 726193

MSO's NEXT CONCERT...

Saturday 14 October 2017 at 7.30
Soloist: Savitri Grier *violin*

Shostakovich - Festive Overture
Mendelssohn - Violin Concerto
Rachmaninov - Symphony No.2

REMEMBER US...

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CONCERT TICKETS:

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0333 666 3366 or
mso.ticketsource.co.uk

The Newsletter of
Maidstone Orchestral Society
promoting Maidstone Symphony Orchestra
mso.org.uk

crescendo!

20th May 2017

“In memoriam” ...

This evening's concert is very special for the orchestra. We have chosen to dedicate our performance to the memory of Margaret Chapman, a wonderfully loyal member of our cello section for over six decades, who sadly died in April. If you wish to recognise Margaret's contribution and passing, you might consider a donation to the Heart of Kent Hospice. I'm delighted to welcome James, Margaret's son, and other guests to the concert this evening.

We are always grateful to St John Ambulance for their reassuring presence at each of our concerts. You will find them collecting at the interval and at the end of the concert - please do support them if you can.

Our new website will shortly be going live. As well as providing full details of next season's concerts, the wizardry has been increased so that the site is as easy to use on a phone or tablet as on a laptop or desktop computer. We are indebted to Richard Brown for his freely given time and hosting of the site.

Today, the remainder of this column is given over to Angela Migden's appreciation of Margaret's contribution...

“Margaret, Maggie, Mags or Queen of Hearts, the affectionate name given to her by the MSO cello section, was a truly special lady. Comments from the cello section via our social media group such as “a lovely lady and inspiring person ... a brave and determined lady with such a zest for life ... sparkiest, most fun cellist ... a warm and funny lady always so welcoming and fun” all attest to her remarkable character.

I met Mags when I first joined MSO some forty years ago. Since then, she has been a steady influence on me not only as a musician but as a close friend. Over the past few years, I enjoyed

visiting her every week with my packed lunch, where she had a list of topics to remind her of what to discuss. The list always included her particular interest in MSO and the Friends of Maidstone Orchestral Society. Mags did not let her health get in the way of how she led her life and was always making plans for the future. In her final weeks she still asked for a set of parts for tonight's concert! She even bought a new case with wheels that eased her struggling to carry her cello to the rehearsals and concerts.

Sunday rehearsals are long affairs that require two tea breaks. The cello section always looks forward to the second one because we bring out drinks and snacks. Not tea or coffee for us, but red wine (appropriately disguised in paper cups). This season we upgraded to champagne, with champagne flutes bought specially and Charbonnel et Walker chocolate, courtesy of Mags!

It is a tradition in the section for us to wear glitter for concerts. When applying it on to each other Mags would say “don't get it in the cracks as it will show up my wrinkles!” The one cellist who always declined the invitation (no name mentioned but is of a singularly different gender) conceded at the last concert in Mag's honour.

The last time I saw her in hospital shortly before her passing, I came upon her reading the opening pages of a very thick paperback novel, which I felt sure she was fully intent on finishing. Such was Mag's fortitude and positivity about her condition.

We will be having our usual end of season meal out where we cellists will celebrate Mag's life and raise a glass to toast our Queen of Hearts.”

Angela Migden, Principal Cello, MSO

Peter Colman / MOS Chairman

mso.org.uk   **TICKETSOURCE**
Enquiries: email secretary@mso.org.uk

MSO CONCERT REVIEW...
25th March 2017 / Dr. Brian Hick

This performance was heralded as a Charity Concert in support of the High Sheriff of Kent's charity *Oasis*, managing to combine an evening of wonderful music-making with support for an essential cause - working to end domestic violence and abuse.

The High Sheriff, Mrs Kathrin Smallwood, was present along with a clutch of worthies all wearing their respective chains and badges of office. I hope they enjoyed the event as much as the regular members of the audience for there was certainly a great deal to enjoy.

The evening opened with the overture to Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*. This demonstrated the real strengths of the string section, starting as it does with the second violins and frequently drawing on them to lead. The fluidity and sense of close ensemble across the strings is now exceptionally high as this proved.

Amy Harman was the soloist for Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto K191* and gave us a gently mellifluous interpretation which sat comfortably across the lighter orchestration. Mozart only uses strings, horns and oboes, so that the deeper tones of the bassoon are allowed to flourish by themselves, producing a warm depth of tone in contrast to the brighter sounds of the accompaniment. In the final *Rondo* Mozart leaves the main theme for the soloist until the very end, concentrating instead on a heady cloud of ornamentation which Amy Harman brought off with both skill and charm.

It was a pity that - due to personal circumstances - she was not able to bring

us the original second item, but in the event it was possibly our gain as we experienced one of the finest renditions of *Finlandia* I have heard in many a year. The growling brass brought a sense of menace and fire to the opening and the tymps were splendidly aggressive throughout - much thanks to Keith Price. One could sense the swell of hatred towards the Russians as Finland sought its independence. The great final hymn came across as a sign of thanksgiving in anticipation - this was after all seventeen years before the independence whose anniversary is celebrated this year - and the finale was genuinely thrilling.

If the glories of Sibelius' *Second Symphony* did not quite match the thrill of *Finlandia* it was certainly no reflection on the performance itself. The opening of the first movement may still hark back to Tchaikovsky in its string writing but it soon moves towards a starker voice which we know is pure Sibelius. The biting woodwind and bleakness carry over into the second movement where the sun peeps out occasionally but is as soon lost to sight. It is not until the fury of the third movement that we feel there is some hope - a hope gloriously vindicated in the finale with its soaring flights of brass and a sense that dogged determination will win out in the end - as it did.



Dr. Brian Hick, Editor
larkreviews.co.uk



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