

Sunday 21 June 2015
Symphony Hall

**Dresden Philharmonic perform
Mendelssohn and Brahms**



Welcome



I'm delighted you could join us at Symphony Hall for this afternoon's concert by the Dresden Philharmonic in the Birmingham International Concert Season. Michael Sanderling will lead the orchestra through an evening of masterworks and it's a pleasure also to welcome Arabella Steinbacher as soloist in Mendelssohn's evergreen Violin Concerto.

Still to come this Season is Opera North's concert staging of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* (Symphony Hall, 5 July) - the perfect introduction if you're new to Wagner and the perfect encore if you followed Opera North's *Ring Cycle*. On 4 July at Town Hall, we have the chance to hear the cream of a new generation of young musicians as they compete in the final of the Brant International Piano Competition. And finally, expect the incredible as the National Youth Orchestra and Mark Elder perform Mahler's Ninth Symphony on 7 August at Symphony Hall.

The Birmingham International Concert Season brings the very best international musicians to you in two spectacular halls – Town Hall and Symphony Hall. We believe that music has the power to transform and change lives, to entertain and uplift, to create shared experiences and to educate. We connect half a million people to music through a dynamic and varied concert and education programme at Town Hall and Symphony Hall – managed jointly by the registered charity Performances Birmingham Limited – and in the wider community.

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Andrew Jowett OBE
Chief Executive, Town Hall and Symphony Hall

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Sunday 21 June 2015

3pm

Symphony Hall

Birmingham
International
Concert Season
2014/15

Dresden Philharmonic perform Mendelssohn and Brahms

Michael Sanderling conductor

Arabella Steinbacher violin

Dresden Philharmonic

Beethoven	Overture, <i>Egmont</i> , Op 84	9'
Mendelssohn	Violin Concerto in E minor, Op 64	26'
<i>Interval of twenty minutes</i>		
Brahms	Symphony No 4 in E minor, Op 98	39'

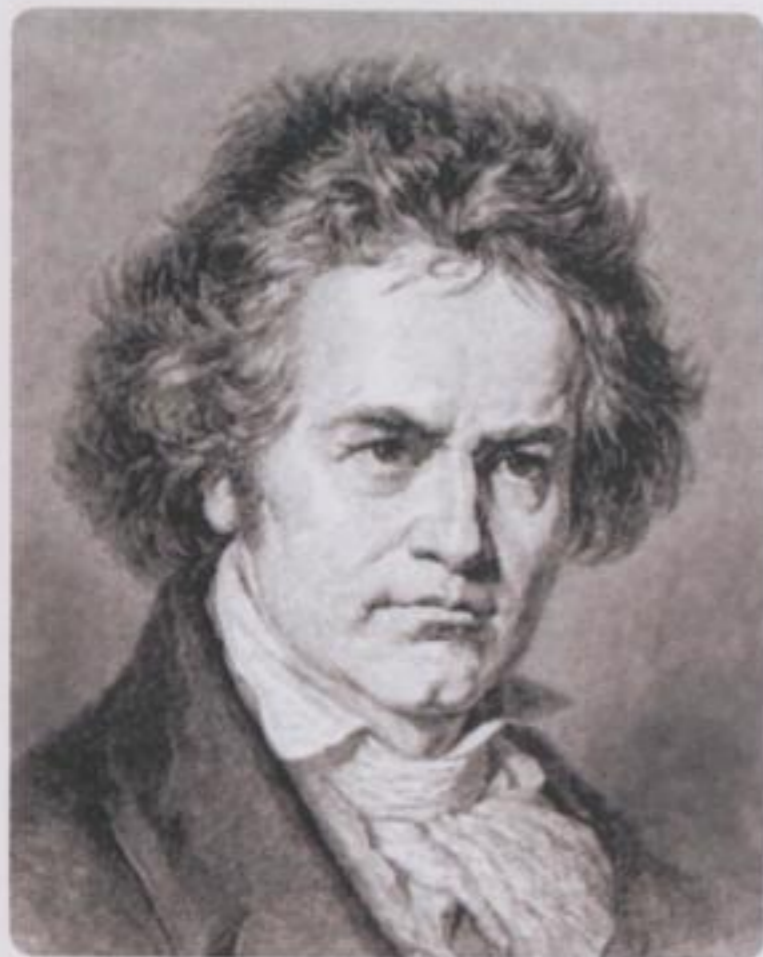
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Please note the above timings are intended for guidance only

Town Hall and Symphony Hall is enormously grateful to Mrs Julian Blackwell for her generous support of the Birmingham International Concert Season

To ensure that everyone enjoys this performance, please make sure that you switch off your mobile phone and please note that photography and recording are not permitted. Any noise (such as whispering and coughing) can be very distracting – the acoustics of the Hall will highlight any such sound. If you use a hearing aid, please make sure that you have switched your hearing aid to the "T" position and adjusted the volume level appropriately.

Programme Notes



Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770-1827)

Overture, *Egmont*, Op 84

Count Egmont (1522-1568), the Flemish nobleman who lost his life after incurring the enmity of the Spanish Duke of Alba, is the central figure of Goethe's play of the same name. He is still remembered as a national hero and Beethoven, responding as was his wont to an anti-tyrant theme, composed incidental music for a production of the play in Vienna in 1810. There are nine numbers in his score including two songs, the words for which come virtually verbatim from Goethe's original text.

The Overture begins with a slow and dramatic introduction whose music, it has been suggested, represents a cry for help from an entire down-trodden nation. The mood of turmoil continues into the main *allegro*, where plunging downward phrases on the cellos answered by agitated violins reaches a powerful climax and is succeeded by a passage of string chords giving the effect of someone knocking (as effective in its way as the opening 'fate' motto of the

Fifth Symphony). There is a short development section but the recapitulation is soon reached. When the 'knocking' theme recurs it ends in discord, there is an anguished response from the violins and a sudden expectant silence. The soft sustaining chords that follow perhaps suggest Egmont's death, but then distant strains hinting at the rebirth of the cause of liberty begin to swell and soon the whole orchestra (with the piccolo adding a new note of excitement) is implying that triumph over tyranny cannot be far away.

Programme note Lyndon Jenkins



Felix Mendelssohn

(1809-1847)

Violin Concerto in E minor Op 64

- I *Allegro molto appassionato*
- II *Andante*
- III *Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace*

The composer Felix Mendelssohn and violinist Ferdinand David were close friends. They were of the same age, born in Hamburg, and both were infant prodigies. In 1836 Mendelssohn was appointed conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and he immediately urged that David

be offered the post of leader. This was agreed, David accepted and remained in this position until his death. He was to exert great influence upon the musical life of Leipzig.

The idea of Mendelssohn composing a violin concerto for David was first mentioned in a letter of July 1838, when even the key signature was stated, and while working on the Concerto Mendelssohn continually sought David's advice. The Concerto was completed in 1844 and sent to David on 16 September. Small alterations continued to be made, up to the first performance which was given in the Gewandhaus on 13 March 1845. Mendelssohn was not in Leipzig at this time and the conductor of the premiere was Niels Gade. The Concerto was a great success: it was repeated at one of the first concerts of the next season, on 20 October 1845, with Mendelssohn himself conducting.

The nineteenth century German repertoire of violin concertos is dominated by those of Beethoven, Brahms, Bruch and Mendelssohn. The first two are weighty, while the latter two have consistently enjoyed enormous popularity with both audiences and violinists. The reasons for this are several: both contain memorable themes, combine lyricism and virtuosity with seeming ease, and balance simplicity and refinement. The Mendelssohn Concerto in particular achieves great subtlety of atmosphere, and looks to the future with several compositional innovations. The first of these appears immediately in the passionate first movement, marked *Allegro*, with the solo violin proclaiming the initial theme of the movement in E minor over a simple accompaniment. This is followed by a brief but urgent transition to the gentler second subject, initiated by the woodwinds. After the development comes the cadenza, more traditionally placed between the recapitulation and coda. In the recapitulation itself the

orchestra plays the main theme with the soloist accompanying with musical figures first heard in the cadenza. The second subject reappears in the minor key to great effect. After a passionate coda, a quiet transition is made to the second movement.

The slow movement, marked *Andante*, is highly typical of Mendelssohn's numerous and popular 'Songs without Words'. Composed in three part song form, it combines the immediately appealing lyricism for which these works were famous with a sense of serenity that makes it stand out from similar movements in Mendelssohn's two piano concertos and Third Symphony, the 'Scottish'. The coda in particular combines beauty and simplicity. A short bridge passage leads immediately to the final movement.

This is the lightest of the Concerto's three movements. In it Mendelssohn combines great deftness of touch with high-spirited virtuosity. Constructed in sonata form, and written in E major, it dashes forward constantly with great strength. A quiet counter-melody in the different key of G major brilliantly adds contrast to the onward rush, which brings the work to a joyous conclusion.

Interval of twenty minutes

For a glossary of terms used in today's programme, please see page 8

Programme Notes



Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

Symphony No 4 in E minor Op 98

- I *Allegro non troppo*
- II *Andante Moderato*
- III *Allegro giocoso*
- IV *Allegro energico e passionato*

Strange things happened to the symphony during the course of the nineteenth century. Berlioz and Liszt gave its movements literary titles and freely married it to the tone poem. Wagner in his maturity never wrote a symphony and believed that he had absorbed its essential qualities into the texture of his music dramas. The results were original and beautiful. But in opposition to this trend arose Brahms, who felt that something important in the great tradition of music had been lost. He bent his life's work towards the restoration of what he saw as the main line, stemming from the giants of the past, and epitomised by Beethoven. A part of this task was the recreation of the symphony as a monumental, self-contained form in the classical tradition.

By the very nature of this task, as Brahms saw it, it could not be approached lightly. An early effort

turned into the massive and dramatic First Piano Concerto. Not until he was forty-three, in 1876, did he produce his First Symphony, the splendour of which caused it to be described, jokingly yet admiringly, as 'Beethoven's Tenth'. The following year came the more genial and lyrical Second Symphony. Six years then elapsed before the Third Symphony appeared, with its engaging combination of earthy, folk-style melodies and autumnal sadness. Then in 1885 came the monumental Fourth Symphony. Probably of all the four works, it best sums up what Brahms was aiming at, in turning the old great formal tradition to the deepest romantic expressive uses.

The affecting 'sighing' theme, played by violins and echoed by woodwinds, that opens the first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, was drawn by Brahms from one of Beethoven's most introspective works, the slow movement of the Op 106 piano sonata. A dramatic conflict is set up by the second theme group, with its brilliant fanfares from horns and woodwinds, followed by a grand, soaring theme from the cellos. Two moods are thus put into opposition, and Brahms alternately develops the second theme group and the first, then moves with gathering force and power to the great climax which takes place in the very closing pages, or coda, an affirmative transformation of the reflective opening theme.

Notable in the movement, as indeed throughout the Symphony, are the subtle cross-rhythms which straddle barlines, and which give the music a richness of texture and turbulent inner life. In his orchestral colour Brahms seeks to create not sharp contrasts, but a subtly changing balance of strings, woodwinds and brass, like the innumerable degrees of light and shadow through which Rembrandt realises the underlying monumental structure of his great paintings.

The slow movement, *Andante moderato*, begins with horns, soon joined by the other woodwinds

over pizzicato (plucked) strings, in a theme that has the slow lilt of dance music carrying a heavy weight of sadness. The violins come to the forefront with a long, singing melodic line of beautiful serenity. A stormy climax builds up, with triplet figures peeled out by the full orchestra, and then the triplet motif is transformed into a hauntingly lovely melody for the cellos. One of the great moments in this movement comes near the close, when this same consoling melody is taken up and expanded upon by the full string section.

The boisterous third movement had justly been called the only 'true scherzo' in the Brahms Symphonies. In its amiable and vigorous nature it is akin to a robust folk song. The last movement, is one of the greatest examples of Brahms's 'groundbreaking conservatism'. He adapted the old baroque form of the chaconne,

or passacaglia – a set of variations over a short theme in the bass. The basic theme of eight notes is announced by brass, woodwind and drums in eight mighty chords. It is present as the foundation of all the subsequent thirty variations and coda. But unlike the use of the form a century and two before Brahms, here the theme is so absorbed in the harmonic texture, and in melodies which are subtle variants of its basic shape, to the point that often the listener feels, rather than hears, its presence. This is especially so in the reflective middle section of the movement, with its plaintive flute solo, followed by awesome trombone chords. And, as in the first movement, the conclusion is a powerful and confident transformation of the opening theme.

Programme notes by
David Patmore except where stated

Friday 7 August 2015

7.30pm

Symphony Hall

Sir Mark Elder and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain

Programme includes:

Mahler Symphony No 9



Photo: J Alden

The National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain isn't just the largest symphony orchestra in the UK; it's one of the most virtuosic, and every one of its concerts is a gala occasion, supercharged with energy and emotion. So imagine the sensation of hearing Mahler's Ninth Symphony performed by these 170 exceptional performers, under the inspirational direction of Sir Mark Elder.

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Glossary

Allegro	fairly fast and lively
Cadenza	an opportunity for solo display
Scherzo	a sprightly movement often, but not always, in 3/4 or 6/8 time. There is generally a contrasting central trio section after which the scherzo is repeated
Sonata form	<p>a compositional structure employed particularly in first movements of works such as sonatas, string quartets and symphonies. It consists of three main elements:</p> <p>Exposition in which the main ideas are stated, sometimes following an introductory passage. There are usually two themes known as the first and second subjects, linked by a bridge passage. The exposition is sometimes repeated.</p> <p>Development the themes of the exposition section are developed, often quite substantially, and often running through a sequence of different keys.</p> <p>Recapitulation the exposition is restated, sometimes in a modified form, and the movement may conclude with a <i>coda</i>.</p>
Three part song form	a ternary form with a main section played at the beginning and end, and a contrasting central section
Tone poem	also known as a Symphonic Poem, the term was coined by Liszt to describe a single movement symphonic work often based around a literary or historical theme.

Biographies



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Michael Sanderling conductor

Born and educated in Berlin, Michael Sanderling is one of the most highly sought-after conductors of his generation. Many engagements with leading orchestras and a highly successful artistic collaboration with the renowned Dresden Philharmonic have earned Sanderling an international reputation as a conductor. Michael Sanderling opened his tenure as Principal Conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic at the beginning of the 2011/12 season and will continue in this capacity through to the 2018/19 season. He was previously Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Kammerakademie Potsdam from 2006 to 2010.

Michael Sanderling has conducted many of the world's leading orchestras, among them Zurich's Tonhalle Orchestra, the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the Munich Philharmonic, the Staatskapelle Dresden,

Bamberg Symphony, the Radio Symphony Orchestras of Stuttgart, Munich, Cologne, Hamburg, Leipzig and Hannover, the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra and the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra. He conducted the highly praised new production of Sergei Prokofiev's monumental *War and Peace* at the Cologne Opera.

In addition to several return engagements, in 2015 and 2016 he will be making his conducting debuts with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Vienna Symphony, the NHK Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

Michael Sanderling is devoted to working with talented young musicians. He was Principal Conductor of the Deutsche Streicherphilharmonie for several years and most recently has worked with Germany's Bundesjugendorchester, the Jerusalem Weimar Youth Orchestra, the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie and the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra.

In addition to late Romantic symphonic works, he also focuses on the works of Shostakovich and repertoire from the Classical period. As a champion of New Music, he has given many premiere performances of works by contemporary composers.

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Biographies



Photo: Peter Rigaud

Arabella Steinbacher

violin

German violinist Arabella Steinbacher has firmly established herself as one of today's leading violinists on the international concert scene, performing with the world's major orchestras. The New York Times reports that she plays with, 'Balanced lyricism and fire - among her assets are a finely polished technique and a beautifully varied palette of timbres.'

Ms Steinbacher's career was launched in 2004 with an extraordinary and unexpected debut in Paris, when she stepped in on short notice for an ailing colleague and performed the Beethoven Violin Concerto with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France under Sir Neville Marriner. Her diverse and deep repertoire includes more than thirty concertos for violin. In addition to all of the major concertos of the Classical and Romantic period, she also performs those of Barber, Bartók, Berg, Glazunov, Szymanowski, Hindemith, Hartmann, and Sofia Gubaidulina's *Offertorium*. Among her numerous recording honours are 2 ECHO-Klassik Awards (considered

to be the German equivalent of the Grammy) Les Chocs du Mois from *Le Monde de la Musique*, and two German Record Critics Awards as well as the prestigious Editors Choice Award from Gramophone magazine.

Arabella Steinbacher records exclusively for PentaTone Classics. Her first CD on that label, released in autumn 2009, included Dvořák's Violin Concerto in A Minor and Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No 1, as well as Dvořák's Romance in F Minor, with the Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin led by Marek Janowski. Her latest CD of Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky Violin Concertos, with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under Charles Dutoit, was released in June 2015.

Recent seasons have included performances with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, Orchestre et Opera National de Montpellier, Orchestre de Paris, returns to the San Francisco Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra, as well as her Cleveland Orchestra debut. In April 2011 she made her Carnegie Hall debut with the conductor-less Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and her subscription debut with both the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, as well as her debut at Maggio Musicale in Florence under Zubin Mehta and her debut with the Israel Philharmonic. In August 2009 Arabella Steinbacher made her much-anticipated debut at the BBC Proms at Royal Albert Hall with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra led by Jonathan Nott.

Born in Munich in 1981 to a German father and a Japanese mother, Arabella Steinbacher began studying the violin at the age of three. In 2001, she won the sponsorship prize of the Free State of Bavaria and in the same year she was awarded a scholarship by the Anne-Sophie Mutter Foundation. Arabella Steinbacher currently plays the 'Booth' Stradivari (1716) generously provided by the Nippon Music Foundation. Arabella Steinbacher is represented by Tanja Dorn, IMG Artists.



Dresden Philharmonic

Upon being founded in 1870, the Dresden Philharmonic brought a new spirit to the city's public music culture with its performances at the Gewerbehaus-saal. The orchestra remains true to this tradition today. As the city's orchestra, the Dresden Philharmonic is conscious of its obligation to a diverse audience.

In addition to its classical-romantic core repertoire, the Dresden Philharmonic has always been open to performing contemporary compositions. The orchestra continues this trend today with recently commissioned works from Sofia Gubaidulina, Rodion Schtschedrin, Gija

Kancheli, and Michael Nyman.

Noteworthy conductors and soloists regularly gave guest performances with the Dresden Philharmonic: Johannes Brahms, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Antonín Dvořák and Richard Strauss came to conduct their own works. In later years this included artists like Hermann Abendroth, Eduard van Beinum, Fritz Busch, Eugen Jochum, Joseph Keilberth, Erich Kleiber, Hans Knappertsbusch, Franz Konwitschny and Arthur Nikisch.

In recent times the orchestra has worked with guest conductors such as Marc Albrecht, Dennis

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Biographies

Russell Davies, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Kristjan Järvi, Michail Jurowski, Dmitri Kitajenko, Yakov Kreizberg, Sir Neville Marriner, Wayne Marshall, Kurt Masur, Ingo Metzmacher, Andris Nelsons, Markus Poschner, André Previn, Karl-Heinz Steffens, Yuri Temirkanov, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Sebastian Weigle, Simone Young and Lothar Zagrosek.

Regular guest appearances by soloists such as Rudolf Buchbinder, Julia Fischer, Kirill Gerstein, Matthias Goerne, Vadim Gluzman, Martin Grubinger, Håkan Hardenberger, Michaela Kaune, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Daniel Müller-Schott, Fazil Say, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet have also enriched the orchestra's repertoire.

In 1909 the Dresden Philharmonic became one of the first German orchestras to perform a concert tour in the United States. Since then concert tours have taken the Dresden Philharmonic to the major music centres of Europe, the Americas and Asia. Michael Sanderling, Principal Conductor since 2011/2012, will lead the Dresden Philharmonic this season on tours to the United States, to Japan and to the leading Central European music centres including Cologne, Munich and Vienna.

Orchestra List

First Violins

Ralf-Carsten Brömsel*
Wolfgang Hentrich*
Dalia Schmalenberg
Heide Schwarzbach
Christoph Lindemann
Marcus Gottwald
Antje Becker
Johannes Groth
Alexander Teichmann
Annegret Teichmann
Juliane Ketschau
Thomas Otto
Eunyoung Lee
Sophie Keiter
Elgita Polloka
Jens-Joachim Muth**

Second Violins

Markus Gundermann*
Michael Dinnebier* **
Denise Nittel
Reinhard Lohmann
Viola Marzin
Steffen Gaitzsch
Heiko Seifert
Andreas Hoene
Andrea Dittrich
Constanze Sandmann
Jörn Hettfleisch
Susanne Herberg
Christiane Liskowsky
Susanne Goldmann

Violas

Christina Biwank*
Beate Müller
Steffen Seifert
Steffen Neumann
Heiko Mürbe
Hans-Burkart
Henschke
Andreas Kuhlmann
Joanna Szumiel
Harald Hufnagel
Friederike Flemming
Henriette Mittag
Kasumi Matsuyama**

Cellos

Matthias Bräutigam*
Ulf Prella*
Petra Willmann
Thomas Bätz
Karl Bernhard von
Stumpff
Clemens Krieger
Daniel Thiele
Alexander Will
Merlin Schirmer
Hans-Ludwig Raatz**

Double Basses

Benedikt Hübner*
Olaf Kindel
Norbert Schuster
Bringfried Seifert
Thilo Ermold
Donatus Bergemann
Matthias Bohrig
Ilie Cozmatchi

Flutes

Karin Hofmann*
Mareike Thrun*
Birgit Bromberger
Götz Bammes

Oboes

Johannes Pfeiffer*
Undine Röhner-Stolle*
Guido Titze

Clarinets

Hans-Detlef Löchner*
Fabian Dirr*
Dittmar Trebeljahr

Bassoons

Philipp Zeller*
Ulrich Hermann* **
Michael Lang
Mario Hendel

Horns

Michael Schneider*
Tino Bölk* **
Friedrich Ketschau
Johannes Max
Dietrich Schläp
Carsten Gießmann

Trumpets

Andreas Jainz*
Csaba Kelemen
Björn Kadenbach

Trombones

Matthias Franz*
Joachim Franke
Dietmar Pester

Timpani

Stefan Kittlaus* **
Oliver Mills

Martin Bülow
Executive Director

Alexandra MacDonald
*Personal Assistant to
the Principal Conductor*

Almut Placke
Orchestra Operations

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