

## Cornucopia!



**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023**  
**St Mary's Church, Banbury**

**Programme Free**



# Concert Dates for Your Diary

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## ***Banbury Symphony Orchestra***

### ***Autumn Concert***

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Beethoven - *Egmont Overture*

Finzi - *Cello Concerto*

Soloist – Yoanna Prodanova

Rachmaninoff - *Symphony No. 2 in E minor*

**7.30 p.m. – Deddington Church**

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## ***Banbury Symphony Orchestra***

### ***Christmas Concert***

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

A programme of fun festive favourites!

**4.00 pm - St Mary's Church, Banbury**

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**Tickets from**

**[www.banburysymphony.com](http://www.banburysymphony.com)**

# Programme

## **Elgar - *Concert Overture "Froissart"***

### **Schumann - *Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra***

I – Lebhaft

II – Romanze: Ziemlich langsam, doch nicht schleppend

III – Sehr lebhaft

Soloists – Zachary Hayward , Alex Willett, Jake Parker & Caoime Glavin

## ***Interval***

### **Bruckner - *Symphony No. 4 in Eb "Romantic"***

I Bewegt, nicht zu schnell

II Andante, quasi allegretto

III Scherzo: Bewegt

Trio: Nicht zu schnell. Keinesfalls schleppend

Scherzo

IV Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

# **A message from the chair of Banbury Symphony Orchestra**

## **Welcome to St Mary's Church**

I am very pleased that you have been able to join us for our summer concert here in St Mary's. We have a very exciting concert for you this evening, including the first time that the orchestra has had four orchestral soloists in a single work.

When we received news in 2020 that Richard Hartree, a former player, had sadly passed away, the orchestra committee decided that we would organise a concert in his memory, to celebrate the substantial contributions that he made to the orchestra, not just as a horn player, but also as a past chair and treasurer.

We have therefore put together a programme that we feel that Richard would have enjoyed, with plenty of work for the horn section – particularly in Bruckner's Symphony No. 4 – together with a delightful work by Robert Schumann featuring four horn soloists.

We are delighted that members of Richard's family have been able to join us this evening, and I hope that you all enjoy the music!

Dave Settle

Chair, Banbury Symphony Orchestra

## Richard Hartree

13<sup>th</sup> February 1931 – 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020



Castle setting: Richard Hartree chairman of Banbury Syphony Orchestra plays the French Horn outside Broughton Castle.

Richard was born in Didsbury, Manchester into a musical family. His father, Douglas (Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Manchester) was the conductor of a local orchestra, while his mother Elaine was an accomplished pianist.

After being evacuated to Toronto during the Second World War, Richard returned to the UK in 1944 to attend Bedales School near Portsmouth, where he took up the French horn. After completing his degree in Natural Sciences at Cambridge, he moved to Banbury in 1959 to work for Alcan as a metallurgist.

Richard played in the first public concert of Banbury Symphony Orchestra in November 1961, and was a regular player with BSO until his work took him to Montreal in 1968. After Montreal, Richard worked in Rio de Janeiro before

moving to Vancouver as Alcan's Vice-President of Technology for the Pacific Region, where he played with the North Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

Following his retirement from Alcan, Richard returned to Sibford Ferris and re-joined Banbury Symphony Orchestra in 1992. He served as the orchestra chair for seven years from November 1993, including four years as both chair & treasurer from November 1995. Richard oversaw the appointment of Paul Willett as the orchestra conductor, and devised and wrote a very successful new constitution for the orchestra in 1997.

Richard continued to play with the orchestra until his last concert with us in June 2014. Not long after this, he gave his two horns to the music department at his old school, to complete what he saw as the "full circle".

## Paul Willett – Conductor

Paul Willett is our Conductor and Musical Director. Paul studied violin, singing and piano as a student but his main instrument was the French horn on which he gained his Performance Diploma from The Royal College of Music at the age of 16. He then went on to read music on scholarship at The Queen's College, Oxford, and studied for his teaching certificate in Music and Physical Education at Reading University.

For several years Paul combined teaching and freelance playing. He has given solo recitals and performed concertos throughout the country. He was a member of The Five Winds, a group that performed both at home and abroad, and also on BBC radio. Paul worked as a brass teacher for Oxfordshire Music Service and was director of a Saturday Music School of 200 students.

Paul was the Director of Didcot Sixth Form and whilst he is now mostly retired to concentrate on his music making and



being a 'stay-at-home' dad to his son Alfie, he has continued working as part-time Deputy Headteacher at Didcot Girls' School.

## Claire Walton - Leader

Claire was born in Leicester and started playing the violin at the age of 7, initially out of sibling rivalry! It soon became a significant part of her childhood, successfully auditioning for the Leicestershire School of Music performing in Quartets, Chamber & Symphony Orchestras as she grew up, playing with them across Europe and Russia.

After a 10 year break from playing as her career in IT Supply Chain Strategy for a large Food Manufacturer took off, Claire found she missed the balance that orchestral life brings, not just through playing but also the comradery. She now has the privilege to play not only Banbury Symphony Orchestra but also Leicester Symphony Orchestra, Trinity Camerata and Boston Sinfonia in Lincolnshire. Claire is very honoured to be filling Anna Fleming's footsteps as leader for the Summer Concert.



## Zachary Hayward

Zachary is a Sussex born horn player living in London. Zac is in high demand as a freelancer and works regularly with many of the country's finest orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.

Zac recently completed a masters degree at the Royal College of Music which culminated in a performance of the Konzertstück with Caoime, Jake and Alex in his final recital.

Zac has a passion for trains, an even greater passion for beer and can't pass a church or cathedral without popping in to check out the quality of the vaulted ceiling.

## Alex Willett

Alex is a freelance horn player based in London. Having graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2018, Alex is enjoying a varied career playing extensively with orchestras such as the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra amongst others, and has recently performed as guest principal with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Alex also plays regularly in theatre pits as a deputy in West End shows and with the orchestras of the English National Ballet and the Birmingham Royal Ballet. Last summer Alex was the horn player for

Terry Gilliam's production of Into the Woods in the Theatre Royal, Bath.

Alex is originally from Gloucestershire. As a child, Alex was a trumpet player but made the change when he was given his first horn by his uncle, Paul Willett, the conductor of the Banbury Symphony Orchestra.

## Jake Parker

Jake is a London based freelance horn player. He is a fellow with Southbank Sinfonia for their 2022/23 season, and combines his position with an active freelance career, working with some of the countries leading orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He has additionally performed as guest principal with Britten Sinfonia, Sinfonia Cymru and National Symphony Orchestra. Jake studied at the Guildhall School of Music Drama for 5 years, completing his Masters in 2022.

Having spent his early years in the US, Jake starting playing the horn aged 12, after moving to the UK a few years prior. He is an avid sports fan, and enjoys cycling all over London (when the weather allows!).

## Caoime Glavin

Caoime is a native of Kerry, Ireland and graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2020. She then pursued a postgraduate degree at the Royal College of Music, where she received the Elsie Gertrude Martin

Scholarship. She has been fortunate to play with orchestras such as the Ulster Orchestra, Irish National Opera, English National Ballet, Northern Ireland Opera,

Wild Arts Opera and Firdaus Orchestra, Dubai. In her free time, she enjoys going back to Kerry and spending time with her family's collie cross, Síofraith.





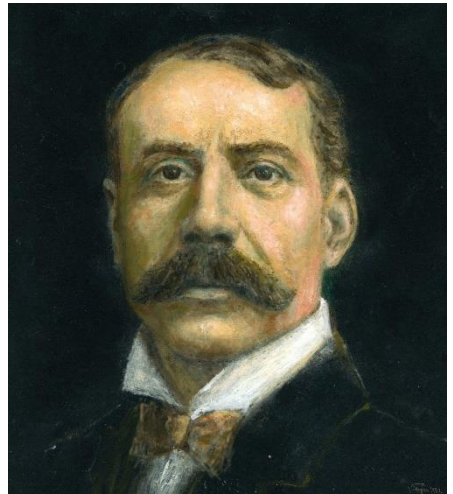
# Elgar

## *Concert Overture*

### *“Froissart”*

Elgar’s public image – the tweed suit, the extravagant moustache, the very image of the establishment country gent – was assiduously cultivated. He did this so successfully that the most popular idea of him today is still the gruff patriot, churning out tunes to wave flags by. The reality was rather different. To be born a Catholic in the provinces was the mark of an outsider in Victorian England. It took years of struggle and disappointment before he achieved his status as England’s foremost composer.

Froissart is an early work. It was commissioned by the Worcester Festival, but actually composed in London. Elgar had moved there with his new wife Alice in 1889 hoping to make his mark, but he struggled to make an impact. He had to commute back to Malvern to earn money teaching the violin, and the arrival of his first child put further strain on his finances. At one stage he was forced to pawn Alice’s pearls. Disillusioned, he retreated to Malvern in 1891, and would not return to London for a decade. Despite these misfortunes surrounding its composition, he retained affection for the piece in later years.



The overture is named for the medieval French writer Jean Froissart. Froissart worked as a merchant and a clerk before he became the court poet and historian to Philippa of Hainault, the consort of Edward III. His Chronicles, written as he travelled round England, Scotland, Wales, France, Flanders and Spain, are one of the most important contemporary records of the period leading up to the Hundred Years’ War.

Froissart’s value as a reliable historian is disputed, but what appealed to Victorian England was his depiction of the values of chivalry. Rather than any specific event, Elgar evokes the spirit of dashing nobility. The score is prefaced with a quotation from Keats that sums up the Romantic enthusiasm for this ideal: “When Chivalry lifted up her lance on high.”

## Schumann

### *Konzertstück for*

### *Four Horns and Orchestra*

The mental illness that afflicted Robert Schumann throughout his adult life reached a crisis point in 1844, when symptoms of insomnia, phobias, exhaustion, paranoia and auditory hallucinations caused his composing to grind to a halt. As he emerged from that particularly deep depression, he found that the flow of music that had once come so naturally could no longer be taken for granted. He later wrote in a diary, "I used to compose almost all of my shorter pieces in the heat of inspiration ... Only from the year 1845 onwards, when I started to work out everything in my head, did a completely new manner of composing begin to



develop."

Schumann rebounded in the coming years, and his "new manner of composing" helped him tackle larger and more complex forms and ensembles. One distinctive project from 1849 was the *Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra*, composed for the top-notch musicians of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, where his late friend Felix Mendelssohn had been Music Director. Schumann crafted this "concert piece" to feature horns with valves, which were just starting to displace natural horns in orchestras around Europe.

The opening movement, marked *Lebhaft* ("Lively"), showcases the agility and melodic range of the new instrument, including passages that reach daringly into the upper limit of the horn's compass. The slow movement takes the form of a *Romanze*, a genre born out of a simple and heartfelt style of vocal music, with the melodies rendered here in sweet harmonies for the horns. In a sign of how far Schumann had come in integrating and unifying his large-scale works, a fanfare-like figure intrudes near the end of the slow movement to initiate a seamless transition into the jubilant finale.

## Bruckner

### *Symphony No. 4 in E $\flat$*

#### *"Romantic"*

It is hard to imagine the Bruckner of legend - morbidly shy, solitary, and insecure - enjoying the acclamation of vast enthusiastic audiences in Paris and London. But that is how he was received in those cities in 1869 and 1871 when he displayed his legendary skill as an organ virtuoso. He had recently been appointed to a professorship in harmony, counterpoint, and organ at the Vienna Conservatory, and had moved to the imperial capital from Linz. He was 44, and very little known in Vienna, even though he had already composed three symphonies and a magnificent body of choral music.

The London success spurred him on to compose with new fire. He began to compose a new symphony every year, with the Fourth (actually the sixth in the series since the first two were never given numbers) begun on January 2, 1874, and completed that November. He himself gave it the title "Romantic," perhaps because it echoes so many features of German Romantic music from Weber and Schumann to Wagner. The Second Symphony was performed in Vienna in 1873, but the Third was still unperformed and the Fourth remained unperformed for some years too. Bruckner always had to contend with

the entrenched hostility of Eduard Hanslick, Vienna's most influential critic, who did everything in his power to keep Bruckner's career in check.

A Fifth Symphony came into being soon after the Fourth, and this too remained on the shelf for many years. Then in 1878, following a disastrous concert in which Bruckner had himself conducted the Third Symphony to a half-empty hall, he decided not to compose a new symphony but instead to revise the Fourth, and although almost all his symphonies underwent revision at some time or other, revisions to the Fourth were more radical than most. He replaced the Scherzo entirely and subjected the Finale to radical revision. The 1880 Finale is in effect a new movement. In its new form the work



was played in Vienna on February 20, 1881, under Karl Richter and was well-received. At a rehearsal for this concert Bruckner gave Richter a small coin, begging him to drink his health with a glass of beer. Richter, touched, kept the coin on his key-chain ever after.

Bruckner's situation did not improve, however, despite growing fame. His later symphonies appeared at wider intervals and all were subjected to revision, sometimes by Bruckner himself, more often by well-meaning but incompetent hands, which has left a legacy of dubious editions and confused sources. The 20th century saw a series of sustained efforts to present Bruckner's works free of the depredations of other editors, and on this foundation he has come to be appreciated as a major symphonist, in the shadow of neither Wagner nor Brahms nor Mahler, but speaking eloquently with his own voice.

Bruckner's symphonic style is broad and leisurely. Haste and condensation play no part in his structures. He lays out his themes one by one and builds upon them in monumental fashion. Despite his enthusiastic admiration for Wagner, he does not call for Wagnerian immensity in his orchestration, confining himself to the size of orchestra that Beethoven had at his disposal, with no percussion and no coloristic instruments such as the harp or the English horn. Nor does he

explore the complex overlapping and combination of themes, as Brahms might. The music progresses step by step, section by section, with cumulative force.

The themes that stand out are, first and foremost, the splendid horn solo that opens the work against a shimmering string background, then a five-note figure (grouped as 2 + 3) that recurs in the Finale. From time to time the brass enter in a solid phalanx, often in direct contrast to passages of lyrical writing in the strings. The second movement, in C minor, has the character of a funeral march alternating with echoes of a German chorale. It builds to a finely judged climax followed by a trail of drum taps leading to silence.

The Scherzo is the apotheosis of hunting music, with the horns in full cry, and its short trio offers gentle rustic contrast as a trio by Haydn or Beethoven might. For the Finale in this version Bruckner introduced a broad descending three-note phrase which follows a somewhat circuitous route, with plenty of contrasting material, to the grand close in which the symphony's beginning is, mightily transformed, also its end.

# Banbury Symphony Orchestra

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Alice Palmer, Claire Walton, Elizabeth Beckett.

Conductor - Paul Willett

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Emma Callery  
Marianne Robinson  
Helen Payne  
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Jason George

## **Percussion**

Jason George

\* - section principal

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Banbury Symphony Orchestra

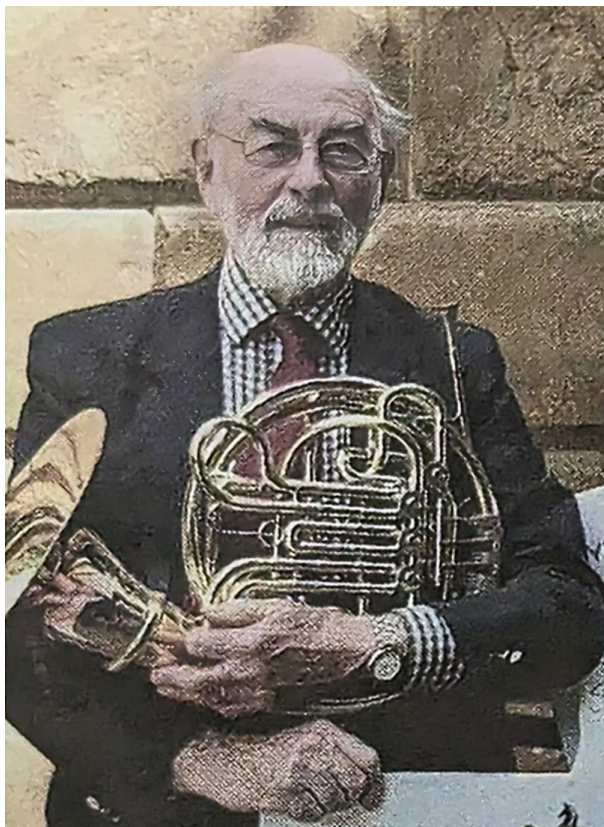


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## Joining the Orchestra

If you play an instrument to a standard of Grade 7 or above and would like to play with the orchestra, find out more by sending us a message using the links above.

All rehearsals take place in Banbury in term time on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.30 pm.



Richard Hartree after his final concert with Banbury Symphony Orchestra in July 2014.

