



the
University of
Cambridge
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Michaelmas Concert 2003

“**M**usic is enough for a lifetime – but a lifetime is never
enough for music.”
— Sergei Rachmaninov

Pyótr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Overture ‘Romeo & Juliet’

Sergey Rachmaninov
Piano Concerto no. 2

piano – Sunil Manohar
cond. Stephen Lawrence

Jean Sibelius
Symphony no. 2
cond. Mark Galtrey



Trinity College Chapel
Sunday 23rd November – 8:30 pm
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the **University of Cambridge**
Philharmonic Orchestra
presents:

Pyótr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Fantasy-Overture “Romeo & Juliet”

Sergey Rachmaninov
Piano Concerto no. 2 in c minor, op. 18
piano — Sunil Manohar
cond. Stephen Lawrence

* interval *

Jean Sibelius
Symphony no. 2 in D major, op.43
cond. Mark Galtrey



Pyótr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1843 — 1893) **Fantasy-Overture “Romeo & Juliet”**

This fantasy overture was the first big orchestral work by Tchaikovsky to make its mark. He was staying in Moscow in the summer of 1868 and made the acquaintance of the leader of the “Young Russian School”, the composer Balakirev. During a walk together, Balakirev drew Tchaikovsky’s attention to the rich material for music that lay in the tragedies of Shakespeare. Tchaikovsky became enthusiastic about the idea, and soon began work on the composition.

Balakirev followed the progress of the composition intently, and even sent Tchaikovsky sketches for themes. The work, which was dedicated to him, was first performed in March 1870, with great success.

Tchaikovsky rearranged the work in the summer of that year, and it was then played to mixed receptions in most European countries. The work received its final form in 1879. No programme is provided in the score, but it is not difficult to discover what the different motifs are meant to describe. The theme at the beginning leads our thoughts to Friar Laurence, who marries the lovers. The subsequent turbulent *allegro* section describes the feud between the Montague and Capulet families (it was for this part that Balakirev gave a first sketch for the motif).

A theme recalling Tchaikovsky’s song ‘None but the weary heart’, first played on the cor anglais and later on the oboes and flutes, represents the love scene between Romeo and Juliet in the garden of the Capulets.

The conclusion (or epilogue) is introduced by chords on the harp. The love-theme of the song re-appears, but somewhat changed. Juliet has discovered too late the lifeless body of her lover by her side, and takes her own life.

Sergey Rachmaninov (1873 — 1943) **Piano Concerto no. 2 in c minor, op.18**

1. Moderato
- ii. Adagio sostenuto
- iii. Allegro scherzando

In 1897, Rachmaninov’s first symphony was premiered in Moscow. He was 24, and already recognised as a rising young pianist and composer. The event was eagerly anticipated by press and public — but it was a disaster. The symphony was badly played, and was slammed by the critics. (It is always easy to blame the composer.)

Rachmaninov was stunned, and in despair tore up the only score. It was never played again in his lifetime. This shock completely destroyed his confidence; he wrote no music for the next three years, and neither a successful concert trip to London nor a request from the London Philharmonic Society for a concerto was enough to pull him out of a deep depression.



He turned to alternative medicine (nothing is new!) and to a well-known hypnotist, one Dr. Nikolai Dahl, for help. Rachmaninov explained it later thus: “I heard the same hypnotic formula repeated day after day, while I lay half asleep in Dahl’s study. ‘You will begin to write your concerto... You will work with great ease... The concerto will be of excellent quality...’ It was always the same, without interruption. Although it may sound incredible, this cure really helped me. At the beginning of the summer I began to compose. The material began to grow, and new musical ideas began to stir within me.” And when the concerto was finished in 1900, Rachmaninov gratefully dedicated it to Dr. Dahl. One hopes Dr. Dahl appreciated it, since the resulting concerto is Rachmaninov at his best, and remains one of the most popular of all piano concertos. It is in three movements, of roughly equal length.

The first movement opens with deep bell-like chords on the piano, leading into a big but solemn tune on the whole orchestra. The melody spreads its wings wide, and the piano weaves accompaniment round it. A big orchestral climax is answered by a serious little phrase on the violas, and leads into a second theme for the piano, which rises and falls like an arch. Both themes are developed, and then the opening theme comes back on full orchestra, this time with a brilliant martial accompaniment for the piano. The second theme comes back too, this time on solo horn. The movement ends with a sudden burst of rhythmic energy.

The slow movement is so lovely that descriptive words are unnecessary. The tracery of piano decoration around the woodwind solos is exquisite. Apart from a brief burst of fireworks from the piano in a cadenza towards the end of the movement, this is nostalgic dreaming of great beauty.

The finale alternates a fast, light and spiky theme, which appears first, with a slower long and sinuous melody, typically Rachmaninov, similar in shape to the second theme of the first movement. This first appears on the violas of the orchestra. The faster tempo returns, and the soloist joins in a passionate development. The viola theme comes back on the brighter violins, a big climax works up and, after a brief cadenza, soloist and orchestra together blaze out the big second theme, followed by a whirl to a brilliant conclusion.

Jean Sibelius (1865 — 1957) **Symphony no. 2 in D major, op.43**

- i. Allegretto
- ii. Tempo Andante , ma rubato
- iii. Vivacissimo – Lento e suave
- iv. Allegro moderato

Sibelius began work on his Second Symphony while on a trip to Italy in the summer of 1901. His friend and supporter Axel Carpelan had raised funds specifically to allow him to travel and compose, and many commentators have observed that the Second is Sibelius’ “warmest”-sounding symphony, perhaps inspired by the Mediterranean climate. His letters back to Carpelan suggest that southern climes were certainly proving a fruitful source of inspiration; he wrote about a proposed symphonic poem based on the Don Juan legend, and later a four-movement symphonic poem to be entitled “Festivals”.



None of these works was completed; instead Sibelius took the music planned for them back to Finland and transformed them into a new symphony. It was premiered in Helsinki in March 1902 and was an overwhelming success, all four performances being sold-out — the Finnish public immediately saw it as a patriotic epic. It caused a considerable stir even beyond Finland and by 1905 had been performed in London and Berlin, remaining the most popular and frequently-played of Sibelius' symphonies.

Reasons for its popularity are not hard to find: the warmth of orchestral colouring, the memorability of the themes (particularly the magnificent opening melody of the finale) and of course the tremendous emotional crescendo throughout the entire symphony, culminating in the triumphant coda of the last movement. More formal explanations for the symphony's success, however, have tied successive commentators into knots — the originality of Sibelius' musical construction techniques, particularly in the first movement, defy easy analysis. Where, for example, are the first and second subject groups of the opening Allegretto? Sibelius presents successive motifs; the throbbing string chords of the opening, the folksy woodwind counter-subject, the recitative for unaccompanied unison strings, the bold cadential figure in wind and later full orchestra, preceded by string scales; each of these, and the chord progressions and motifs between them, is dismantled, recombined, and then built towards the climax of the movement, stormy and then triumphant; before the movement is simply taken to pieces and the material restated again in a new order, closing on the calm repeated string chords with which it began. However it works, it succeeds. The Tempo andante is no less unconventional; its main theme is taken from an abandoned "Don Juan" project, although the "Northern" atmosphere here is perhaps more intense than anywhere else in the symphony — a low drum-roll and pizzicato bass introduction immediately set a dark mood. The movement builds through numerous tempo-changes to a powerful and craggy brass climax; in response to a query from Carpelan Sibelius spoke of it as having "a spiritualised development". The scherzo, *Vivacissimo*, follows a more conventional layout. The poignant oboe melody of the trio section, with its nine repeated B flats, evokes folk music without quoting it; Sibelius follows the example of Beethoven's Seventh in having the trio repeated twice. After the second repeat he follows Beethoven's Fifth in composing a bridge passage which builds into the great opening melody of the Allegro moderato finale. Even here the music continues to grow and develop; the opening notes of this melody are first heard hidden in the texture of the bridge passage, and even after the finale proper commences the theme is heard in its entirety only on its second statement. Trumpet fanfares give the music a victorious character, but there is not yet a clear run to the final triumph; a long, lamenting second-subject over a swirling ostinato slows the movement twice; some commentators have suggested that these passages reflect Sibelius' mourning after the recent death of his sister-in-law Elli Jarnefelt. Momentum is gradually regained, the major key returns and the symphony broadens to a majestic and exultant close.

Violin 1:
Chris Phelps
Anja Maier
David Welchew
Emily Valentine
Fan Yang
Francesca Sanjana
Hok-Him Poon
Jon Jowett
Jonny Evans
Lydia Gibson
Mair Thomas
Marie Almond
Nicola Gardner
Sirichai Chongchitnan
Sophie May

Viola:
Matt Toms
Avanti Perera
Emma Sheard
Ian Williams
Naomi Brown
Simon Smith
Sinéad Smith
Stephen Rolph

Double Bass:
David Sim
David Valinsky

Flute:
Adrienne Erickcek
Arron Walthall
Ben Gray
Caroline Earp
Caroline Krauter
Claire Pike
Francesca Griffin
Janet Cottrell
Jenny Howie
Katharine Hubbard
Katherine Bridge
Katherine Wilde
Louise Hartigan
Monica Yarham
Sarah Reynolds
Stephanie Harper
Vicki Wright

Bassoon:
Alice King
Philip Potter
Robert Davis

Horn:
Alex Williams
Hannah Roscoe
Jonathan Monroe
Peter Lumsdaine

Percussion:
Jon Storey
Matt Ives

Violin 2:
Ambika Talwar
Benjamin Drew
Charlotte Kingston
Curtis Rogers
Helena Brown
John Apps
Katharina Emthaus
Katie Barber
Laura Harrison
Marsilius Mues
Mei-ching Lee
Philippa Somodi
Susan Cox
Susan Kendall

'cello:
Richard Owen
Alison Stanley
Chloe Alaghband-Zadeh
Ella Hinton
Gail Hayward
Helen Eburah
Jack Westwood
Katharine Lodge
Rebecca Gibbard
Sarah Ashurst-Williams
William Hare
Zoe Hayward

Clarinet:
Annie Weeks
David Holland
James Browne
James Newton
Jo Kingston
John Aldridge
Nigel Rawlins
Paul Ryland
Rachel Howcroft
Robin Stein
Sebastian Cassel

Oboe:
Clare Kirkpatrick
Elizabeth Tidy
Gabrielle Heffernan
Maria Borovik
Sarah Kendall
Soon Gweon
Vicki Rainsley

Trumpet:
Barney Samson
Becky Collis
Ismini Pells
John Biggins
Tom Pullman

Trombone:
Jonathan Cameron
Anthony Green
Ben Greenhalgh
Edward Sanjana
Rob Richards

Mark Galtrey is a fourth year Natural Scientist at Selwyn College. He took up the 'cello aged six in response to a request at school, and now enjoys solo, chamber and orchestral playing. His concerto debut was at the Philharmonic Hall in Liverpool, and performances since include the world premiere of Robert Steadman's Cello Concerto. He studies with Peter Worrall and has participated in masterclasses with Colin Carr, Alexander Boyarsky, David Dolan and the Endellion Quartet. He sings with Laudibus and the National Youth Choir, was a choral scholar at Selwyn, and played the Elgar 'cello concerto with UCPO last year. Last term also saw Mark's conducting début with UCPO in West Road. Outside of music, Mark enjoys water polo and playing squash and enjoys following Liverpool FC.

Stephen Lawrence is an ex-computer programmer turned musician, an ex-oboist turned violinist, singer and conductor, and an ex-atheist turned pantheist: he believes in 'psi' and that we are all 'in' our bodies but not 'of' them, to quote a well-known prophet. He occasionally consents to conducting opera, but can quite easily be induced to teach you how to sing. He stood as the Green Party candidate in the 2001 General Election, and also stood several times in front of the Guildhall as part of CamPeace's peace vigil to protest against the bombing of Afghanistan. He follows the continuing research into the phenomena of "Cold Fusion" and "Zero-Point Energy" as possible solutions to the global energy crisis and global warming. He is also interested in the confluence of spirituality and sub-atomic physics, theoretically and from the practical point of view of parapsychology research. When he is not doing any of the above he is probably either cooking Indian meals or meditating.

Sunil Manohar's passion for music was initially sparked when he took up piano lessons at the age of seven. Since then he has regularly performed at local music festivals, winning best performance awards at Portsmouth Music Festival twice, aged 14 and 17; and he achieved grade 8 distinction at the age of 15. He made his concerto debut at the age of 16, performing Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with his school orchestra. Since then he has performed Cesar Franck's *Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra* in Trinity Chapel, and Rachmaninov's *Second Piano Concerto* in Portsmouth Cathedral, and last term he was jointly awarded the Edith Leigh Prize for piano playing at Trinity. During his school days, Sunil developed a love of accompanying and performing chamber music on the piano, and frequently acted as a rehearsal repetiteur. As repetiteur, he has worked with Dorset Opera for the British premiere of the Hungarian opera *Hunyadi Laszlo*, and is currently working towards a performance of *The Magic Flute* at the ADC next term.

Sunil also plays the organ and at the moment is studying under David Sanger. His interest in the organ was originally inspired by his days as a cathedral chorister at Portsmouth. After completing his time as Cantoris Head Chorister, he took up the post of organ scholar at St Peter's, Petersfield for two and a half years, accompanying and conducting the parish choir. He gave a recital of organ works of J.S.Bach in the Royal Garrison Church on 11th September last year,

raising £700 for the New York Firefighters' Fund and a Kidney Dialysis Appeal.

Sunil is also an experienced orchestral player and enjoys working with many orchestras as a clarinettist. As a regular member of the University of Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra, he has played principal clarinet in Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No.4* and Rachmaninov's *Second Symphony*. He has recorded CDs with the Cathedral Choir and his school, and with various choirs and orchestras he has toured America, Italy, Austria, Spain, France and Estonia. He has performed with several local orchestras at home, including Havant Symphony Orchestra, and Solent Symphony Orchestra, the Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra, and Cosham Brass Band. Over the last year at Cambridge he has discovered the joys of conducting as co-director of the Trinity Players. In January he undertook the formidable role of chorus master for the UCP performance of Beethoven's glorious *Ninth Symphony*, and last term he conducted Bach's *Orchestral Suite No.3* in UCP's baroque concert.

Inspired by an interest in jazz, he has taught himself to play the saxophone and enjoys playing in big bands; he has even been known on occasion to attempt playing jazz piano with various trios and quartets.

One of Sunil's strongest musical passions is for composition, particularly of chamber music. Among his publicly performed works are two choral pieces, as well as a string quartet, piano quintet, clarinet quartet, and several pieces for solo piano. His favourite genres of music are many and varied, from early choral music by Purcell and Bach to Russian piano music and orchestral music (hence tonight's repertoire).

When not filling his time with music, Sunil pursues scientific interests, studying Mathematics at Trinity College.



UCPO is a fun, friendly student-run orchestra which welcomes players of all abilities. We hold a concert once a term and aim to present classical music in a fun and unpretentious way. If you're interested in joining, whether you're new to Cambridge or not, please check out the website <www.ucpo.org.uk> for more information. We welcome non-University members as well as undergrads, grad students and staff — e-mail the webmaster <webmaster@ucpo.org.uk> or membership secretary <membership@ucpo.org.uk> if you'd like to know more.