

George Corbett is an academic Scholar reading English at Trinity College. As concerto soloist and conductor George has performed in the Amsterdam and Hague conservatories, with the Arad Philharmonic while on tour to Romania, and with Chetham's Symphony Orchestra at the Bridgewater Hall and Royal College of Music. He has won the *Ida Carrol*, *Musicas* and *Hattori* prizes, and was national string finalist in the BBC Young Musician of the Year 2002.

In Cambridge he has conducted a number of orchestral concerts and operettas, including most recently a fully staged run of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the ADC, and a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* in Trinity Chapel. Last year he directed The Trinity Singers, and this year conducts UCPO, CUSO, and is an assistant conductor of CUMS. Over the summer he enjoyed conducting a very successful CUMS tour to Hungary, performing a programme including Dvorak's Symphony no.9 at the Great Hall of the Museum of Ethnography, and at the Duna Palace, Budapest.

This coming Thursday he will conduct Schubert's B minor 'unfinished' symphony with CUSO, and, on Saturday 4th December, Sibelius' Symphony no.2 with CUMS 2. Next term he is particularly looking forward to working on Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto with CUMS and Clare Hammond, and Mahler's Symphony no.4 with CUSO. He is co-chairman of CUOS, voted 'the most innovative society of the year' by Procter and Gamble, and is particularly proud of the new Opera Recital Series set up by the committee this year.

Born in Stellenbosch, South Africa, **David Earl** moved to London when he was 19 and has since lived there, and in Oxford and Cambridge. He spent four years at Trinity College of Music studying piano and composition, and while still a student broadcast live on Radio 3 and gave the first of a number of recitals at Wigmore Hall and the Purcell Room. His concerto repertoire includes the Viennese classics, many from the 19th century and several from the 20th. Amongst the latter are the Piano Concertos of John Joubert and Arthur Bliss, both of which he studied with the composers. Amongst the conductors he has worked with are Walter Susskind, Piero Gamba, Maurice Handford and Christian Badea.

David's compositions include concertos for piano, violin, cello, and a two-piano concerto; choral settings of George Herbert and Wordsworth (*Intimations of Immortality*); chamber and solo piano music. Among five commissioned ballet scores are *Cheri*, premiered by The Scottish Ballet at the 1980 Edinburgh festival, and a full evening *Macbeth*, first given by Ballet de Santiago in 1991. Current projects include a new piano concerto, and an opera based on the conversion to Buddhism of convicted murderer Frankie Parker.

Mark Galtrey has been conducting UCPO since 2002. Before that he was variously a Materials Science undergraduate at Selwyn College, a part-time professional singer, BBC Young Musician of the Year semi-finalist on the 'cello and a recreational waterpolo player. He is now studying for a PhD on the quantum physics of blue LEDs and still supporting Liverpool FC.

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943) Piano Concerto no.3 in D minor (op.30)

i. Allegro ma non tanto *ii. Intermezzo: Adagio* *iii. Finale (Alla breve)*

A performance of Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto always excites an added aura of anticipation, and so it should. The concerto requires an unparalleled combination of technical wizardry, physical stamina, and depth of musical vision. Even the work's dedicatee, Josef Hofmann, considered by Rachmaninov the greatest pianist of the day, never attempted it, and many 'top names' of today have never performed the work in public. The two first performances were given by the composer in New York in 1909, the first conducted by Walter Damrosch, the second by Gustav Mahler (whom Rachmaninov spoke very highly of, stating that he was the only conductor worthy of being classed with Nikisch).

However exciting Rach 3 can be when read 'in the musical theatre of the mind', its muscularity demands a performative context. The physicality of getting around the notes is part of their music, and the pilgrimage that a pianist undergoes in learning it takes him into the very nerves and sinew of the pianist-composer. Rachmaninov, from an early age, was singled out for his ability to improvise at the piano, and much of the music sounds like it emanated from the 'feel' of the instrument. Thus in the second movement, *Intermezzo*, the piano enters after the orchestral tutti opening and within six bars the tonality has shifted; the A major key centre is left behind through a complex web of chromatic lines, and the music melts into two bars of D^b major arpeggios, the key for all the slow thematic material played by the piano in this movement. Thus the D^b major core of the music is framed by the fast scherzo section and two orchestral tuttis in A major. D^b major may be a strange key for a work in D minor, but 'feels' right on the piano; it uses all five black keys, and is the most fluid scale on the piano.

Rachmaninov maintained that the first theme of the concerto 'created itself' and, once heard, it is very difficult to sing the first couple of notes without hearing the rest. The musicologist Joseph Yasser has drawn attention to the theme's startling connection to the Russian monastic chant 'Thy tomb, O Saviour, soldiers guarding'. The young Rachmaninov had visited the monastic churches of the Novgorod region of Russia, and such a chant could have been so absorbed by Rachmaninov that in later life it 'came of itself'. As compelling in these

opening bars is the rhythm of the orchestra. The syncopated upper strings give an eerie unrest to the opening, while the dotted rhythm in the lower wind and strings, and timpani, is a fundamental compositional building block of the whole work. Thus the second subject, first heard in the solo piano, grows out of this rhythm. Indeed at times the whole concerto seems to be 'writing itself' out of this rhythmic fragment, and if you ever find yourself losing a sense of the structure you have only to listen for this motif to be drawn back into the evolving form.

But the organic growth and motivic variation are matched by recurring themes within the structure of each movement, and within the macro-structure of the whole. Thus the double return of the first subject both before and after the major cadenza plunges the work back into the eerie doubt of the opening. The dominance of the theme is felt even in the middle of the third movement into which, along with the second subject, it is re-contextualised. Similarly the motivic dotted rhythm propels the work to its conclusion, which brings together the material of the movement into an unstoppable momentum of sheer compositional and pianistic virtuosity.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Symphony no.9 in C major, 'The Great' (D.944)

i. Andante – Allegro ma non troppo

ii. Andante con moto

iii. Scherzo. Allegro vivace – Trio

iv. Finale. Allegro vivace

On New Year's Day 1837, Robert Schumann went to Vienna to visit the graves of Beethoven and Schubert, whose stones were separated by only two others. On his way home, he visited Schubert's brother, Ferdinand and was allowed to see for the first time the collection of Schubert's manuscripts found after his death. There, among the piles, lay a heavy volume of 130 pages, dated March 1828 at the top of the first sheet. The manuscript, including the date and a number of corrections, is entirely in Schubert's hand, which often appears to have been flying as fast as his pen could go. The work, a symphony in C, Schubert's last and greatest, had never been performed.

Schumann knew a work of genius when he saw one, and he quickly sent it off to the director of the Gewandhaus concerts in Leipzig, where Mendelssohn conducted the first performance on March 21, 1839. Although Schumann later said that it "was heard, understood, heard

again, and joyously admired by almost everyone," the truth is that this great symphony was very slow to gain acceptance. When just the first two movements were programmed in Vienna later that year, an aria from 'Lucia di Lammermoor' was wedged between them to soften the blow of so much serious music. Performances planned for Paris and London in the early 1840s were cancelled after irate orchestra members refused to play such difficult music. The main objections - apart from the difficulty - were to the length of the work and the incessant rhythmic patterns that drive the whole work. But now we see that Schubert is constantly inventive: weaving together melodic fragments and slipping effortlessly from one key to another, while relying on this rhythmic heartbeat to keep the music alive.

The first movement opens with a distant horn call, opening into a lush introduction, majestic and tender by turns. The music builds and then releases into a sparkingly energetic Allegro, rhythm driving all its energy. The opening horn returns triumphant at the close, revealing how it had been woven throughout the movement all along. The slow movement cycles between tender elegy, fierce outburst and absolute contentment. Each time a section returns, new layers are added to the texture and the moods intensify. The fragmented final bars tell us that Schubert has found no rest from his struggle here. The Scherzo is all energy: aggression alternating with cheek, force with lightness. The trio is a perfect Viennese waltz with its tongue firmly in its cheek, an all too brief respite before the return of the Scherzo, which plunges headlong into the Finale.

It was this last movement that attracted most criticism from contemporary audiences, and it is true that the competing dotted rhythm and triplets from the opening outburst continue their contest unabated to the very last bar. But if we stand back from the music and it carry us along, we realise that this is just the current on which the real music sails along, with countless different themes running one into another with pausing for breath. The music is relentless and effortless at the same time, and for once Schubert seems joyous and untroubled throughout. Towards the end, the orchestra insistently repeats four hammer-like chords, to be answered each time by a fanfare. The Austrian conductor, Josef Krips once said that this was Schubert knocking on the door of heaven. I like to think that with this music he finally found his way in.

The
University of Cambridge
Philharmonic Orchestra
presents:

Rachmaninov
Piano Concerto no. 3
piano: David Earl
cond. George Corbett

interval

Schubert
Symphony no. 9, 'The Great'
cond. Mark Galtrey

Violin 1
Claire Stead
Fan Yang
Francesca Sanjana
Ho-Wan To
Racah Aurelien
Richard Brown
Saajan Chana
Sirichai Chongchitnan
Tudor Dimofte

Cello
Alison Stanley
Beatrix Li
Ben Yielding
Ella Hinton
Helen Eburah
Naomi Adey
Peter Man
Rebecca Gibbard
Sarah Priestley
Yasemin Hazine
Zoe Hayward

Oboe
Charlotte Haskins
Sarah Kendall
Stefan Fraczek
Vicki Rainsley

Bassoon
Alice King
Jim Minter
Philip Potter

Horn
Peter LeFanu Lumsdaine
Jonathan Monroe

Violin 2
Ashleigh Bridges
Camilla Mortimer
Chris Phelps
Claire Massen
Davia Krubasik
Emmy Goodby
Gina Owens
Haibo E
Helena Warrington
Kathryn Loxley
Paul Hamelinck
Sarah Irving
Sophie Matthews
Susan Cox

Flute
Anya Crocker
Cath Fischl
Charlotte Williams
Claire Pike
Harriet Johnston
Jenny Andrews
Kate Berry
Katharine Hubbard
Monica Yarham
Paul Smith
Philip Howie
Rachel Crane
Sarah Reynolds
Yosuke Matsumiya

Trumpet
John Biggins
Martin Bennett
Tom Pullman

Percussion
Matt Ives
Caroline Wolfson

Viola
Aidan Brown
Akiko Yano
Alison Beresford
Dagmar Motsch
Hugh Warrington
Lara Davenport
Martin Kleppmann
Naomi Brown
Rachel Clements
Simon Smith

Double Bass
Jacob Head
Mike Shield

Clarinet
Alex Hassan
David Holland
Emily Caddick
James Browne
John Aldridge
Judith Schmidt
Kate Browne
Katy Morgan
Matt Thomas
Nigel Rawlins
Mihai Swift
Paul Ryland
Robin Stein

Trombone
Edward Sanjana
Fiona Salisbury
Jonathan Cameron
Julian Fell
Rob Richards

Tuba
Alastair Currie

UCPO is a fun, friendly student-run orchestra which welcomes players of all abilities. 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.



Our sister orchestra, the **University of Cambridge Philharmonia**, will be performing on **Saturday 27 November** (next weekend) at **8pm** in **Sidney Sussex College Chapel**. The programme will include

- Mendelssohn 'Hebrides' Overture
- Glière Horn Concerto
- Beethoven 'Pastoral' Symphony

with Jean-Luc Wietor on horn and Daniel Francis and Katharine Hubbard conducting; more at <www.srcf.ucam.org/ucpo/baby.shtml>

the **University
of Cambridge
Philharmonic
Orchestra**

presents...



Rachmaninov
3rd Piano Concerto

Schubert
Symphony no. 9 'The Great'

8pm
West Road Concert Hall
Sunday, Nov. 21
2004