Music Night Sunday 20 July 17h15 for 17h30

PROGRAMME NOTES

PART I: ORCHESTRAL SPLENDOUR

獺 1812 Overture Finale

Composer: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1880)

Orchestra: Hallé Orchestra

Conductor: Sir Mark Elder

Venue: Royal Albert Hall (notably performed at the BBC Proms 2004)

Programme Note:

Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture is one of the most spectacular and instantly recognizable works in the orchestral repertoire. Written in 1880 to commemorate Russia's defence against Napoleon's invading Grande Armée in 1812, the overture is a vivid musical narrative of conflict, resilience, and triumph.

The music grows in intensity, capturing the chaos and drama of battle, before culminating in a thrilling finale with cannon fire, ringing bells, and a jubilant peal of victory.

In this memorable performance at the Royal Albert Hall, Sir Mark Elder leads the Hallé Orchestra through the overture's sweeping drama, with the venue's acoustics amplifying the grandeur of Tchaikovsky's vision. The performance features pyrotechnic effects in place of real cannon fire, adding to the spectacle and excitement for the audience. Sir Mark Elder's dynamic interpretation highlights both the lyrical beauty and the explosive power of the score, making for an electrifying concert experience that celebrates both musical artistry and historical storytelling.

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra

Composer: Benjamin Britten (3:11)

Orchestra: English Chamber Orchestra or London Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Simon Rattle (2008)

Programme Note:

Benjamin Britten's The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra is a vibrant showcase of orchestral color, written in 1945 to introduce listeners to the instruments of the orchestra. Britten uses a theme by Henry Purcell, first played by the full orchestra, then explored by each section; woodwinds, brass, strings, percussion, before culminating in a grand fugue. The piece is both educational and exhilarating, making it a perennial favorite for audiences of all ages.

of An American in Paris (Last Three Movements)

Composer: George Gershwin (12:00)

Orchestra: hr Symphony Orchestra Frankfurt

Conductor: Andrés Orozco-Estrada

Programme Note:

Gershwin's, An American in Paris is a jazz-infused orchestral portrait of a young American's adventures in the French capital. The last three movements burst with the sounds of bustling streets, car horns, and Parisian romance, blending classical form with jazz rhythms. Gershwin's score captures the energy and optimism of the Roaring Twenties, offering a musical postcard from a bygone era.

PART II: BROADWAY & HOLLYWOOD MAGIC



My Fair Lady (1964)

Lyrics and Composer: Lerner & Loewe (4:37, 4:06)

Orchestra: Warner Bros. Orchestra

Conductor: André Previn

Soloist: Audrey Hepburn (Eliza Doolittle, on screen); Singing voice: Marni Nixon

(dubbed vocals)

Programme Note:

My Fair Lady is a beloved musical adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion. The 1964 film starred Audrey Hepburn, whose singing was famously dubbed by soprano Marni Nixon to meet the demanding score. With unforgettable songs like "I Could Have Danced All Night," the film's lush orchestration and witty lyrics have charmed audiences for generations.

Gigi (1958)

Lyrics and composer: Lerner & Loewe (2:37)

Orchestra: MGM Studio Orchestra

Conductor: André Previn (film soundtrack)

Soloist: Maurice Chevalier

Programme Note:

Set in turn-of-the-century Paris, Gigi is a sparkling musical about love and coming of age. Maurice Chevalier's warm, knowing voice brings charm to songs like "Thank Heaven for Little Girls." The film's score, by Lerner and Loewe, won the Academy Award for Best Original Score and remains a delightful evocation of Parisian elegance.

Man of La Mancha

Lyrics and Composer: Darion & Leigh (3:22)

Orchestra: Concertgebouw Orchestra

Conductor: Not specified

Soloist: Bryn Terfel

Programme Note:

Inspired by Cervantes' Don Quixote, Man of La Mancha is best known for its stirring anthem "The Impossible Dream." With music by Mitch Leigh and lyrics by Joe Darion, the musical explores the power of idealism and imagination. Bryn Terfel's commanding baritone brings gravitas to this timeless tale of hope and perseverance.

A Show Boat

Lyrics and composer: Hammerstein & Kern (5:16)

Orchestra: Show Boat Orchestra

Conductor: Victor Young (historic recordings)

Soloist: William Warfield

Programme Note:

Show Boat revolutionized American musical theatre with its integration of music and drama. Jerome Kern's sweeping melodies and Oscar Hammerstein's poignant lyrics tackle themes of love and prejudice. "Ol' Man River," sung by William Warfield, is a haunting reflection on endurance in the face of hardship.

West Side Story (1961)

Lyrics and composer: Sondheim & Bernstein (6:06)

Orchestra: MGM Studio Orchestra (film)

Conductor: Johnny Green (film soundtrack)

Soloists: Natalie Wood (Maria), Richard Beymer (Tony); Singing voices: Marni

Nixon (for Wood), Jimmy Bryant (for Beymer)

Programme Note:

A modern retelling of *Romeo and Juliet*, *West Side Story* set Shakespeare's tragedy amid New York's street gangs. Bernstein's electrifying score and Sondheim's lyrics capture the hope and heartbreak of young love. In the film, Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer's singing was dubbed by Marni Nixon and Jimmy Bryant, ensuring the music's soaring demands were met.

√ The Sound of Music (SING-ALONG!)

Lyrics and composer: Rodgers & Hammerstein (2:22)

Orchestra: 20th Century Fox Studio Orchestra (film)

Conductor: Irwin Kostal (film soundtrack)

Soloist: Julie Andrews

Programme Note:

The Sound of Music is the story of the von Trapp family's escape from Nazi-occupied Austria, immortalized by Julie Andrews' radiant performance. Songs like "Do-Re-Mi" and "Edelweiss" have become sing-along favorites, celebrating the joy and resilience of music in troubled times

🗞 intermission 🗞

PART III: CLASSICAL TREASURES

Romeo and Juliet (Balcony Scene)

Composer: Prokofiev (4:54)

Orchestra: Royal Opera House Orchestra

Soloists: Natalia Osipova and David Hallberg

Conductor: Barry Wordsworth (Royal Ballet)

Programme Note:

Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* ballet score is a masterpiece of 20th-century music, capturing the passion and tragedy of Shakespeare's lovers. The Balcony Scene is

especially magical, shimmering with longing and hope as Romeo and Juliet declare their love under the stars-

Waldstein Sonata (Third Movement)

Composer: Beethoven (9:03)

Soloist: Daniel Barenboim

Programme Note:

Beethoven's *Waldstein Sonata* is a tour de force of the piano repertoire. The third movement, with its radiant themes and dazzling virtuosity, exemplifies Beethoven's revolutionary spirit and his ability to turn the piano into an orchestra in miniature.

🐽 Kinderscenen (Von Fremden Ländern)

Schumann — Martha Argerich (2:01)

Soloist: Martha Argerich

Programme Note:

Schumann's *Kinderszenen* ("Scenes from Childhood") is a series of poetic miniatures evoking the innocence and wonder of youth. "Von Fremden Länder und Menschen" ("Of Foreign Lands and Peoples") opens the set with a gentle, song-like melody that has become one of Schumann's most cherished tunes.

La Campanella

Composer: Franz Liszt (4:33)

Soloist: Evgeny Kissin

Programme Note:

Liszt's *La Campanella* is a dazzling showpiece for the pianist, inspired by a theme from Paganini. The piece is famous for its bell-like effects and technical fireworks, demanding both delicacy and bravura from the performer.

Valse Triste

Composer: Jean Sibelius (3:45)

Soloist: Alexandre Kantorow

Programme Note:

Sibelius's *Valse Triste* ("Sad Waltz") is a haunting miniature, originally composed for a play. Its bittersweet melody and wistful atmosphere evoke memories of love and loss, making it one of Sibelius's most popular works.

The Choral Fantasy

Composer: Beethoven (4:06)

Orchestra: Berlin Philharmonic

Conductor & Soloist: Daniel Barenboim

Programme Note:

Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* is a joyful fusion of piano concerto, choral ode, and symphonic finale. Often seen as a precursor to his Ninth Symphony, it brings together orchestra, chorus, and soloists in a jubilant celebration of music's unifying power.

GRAND FINALE

Rock Around the Clock (SING-ALONG!)

Lyrics and composer: Freedman & Myers (2:11)

Soloist: Bill Haley and His Comets

Programme Note:

"Rock Around the Clock" is the song that brought rock and roll to the mainstream, topping charts in the 1950s and becoming an anthem for a generation. Bill Haley and His Comets' recording is irresistibly energetic and a perfect way to end the evening on a high, inviting everyone to join in and "rock around the clock".