

Langtree news

In this edition...

- *Let's hear it from the audience — another poetic triumph from Adrian*
- *Cake from the Chair (see recipe on page 3)*
- *What did Brahms think of Dvorak (and vice versa)?*
- *Do you know anyone who could help Belsize Baroque?*

Notes from the Chair

I hope everyone had a good summer break and enjoyed the glorious weather. Sadly two members left us at the end of last term: Nigel, leader of the second violins and Jane Jackson (double bass). We hope to see them both again in the future. Nigel has promised to come back and play in concerts when possible and Jane says she will return as audience! So it's not goodbye, just au revoir.

After several years of Notes from the Chair I sometimes run out of things to say, so instead I'm giving you a recipe for a cake often consumed at committee meetings. Some of the committee asked for it, so I thought you all might like it. The recipe appears on page 3.

Chris Winch



So, farewell then Nigel; we wish you all the best for life in Warwick. Do come back to see us, there's usually an empty chair at the first desk of seconds...

A reminder from the treasurer

If you do not pay your sub by direct debit we would much appreciate it if you could pay subscriptions at the first rehearsal of term or the following week if you are not able to attend on the 11th. £108 per year or £54 now and £54 in January.

The orchestra now has charitable status so there will be gift aid forms for people to fill in –

this means that we will be able to claim the tax back on any monies paid to Langtree and should also be able to back date this (hopefully). As you may have noticed by now, funds are very low!

Many thanks.

Jane

From the editor

Apologies for autumnal rather than summer offering.

Email me your copy at:

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The Audience

The Wordsworth of the second violins, Adrian King, strikes again

Ron Johnson is a fussy fellow
 Likes his music strong yet mellow.
 Doesn't really like Tom Jones
 And hates the fans who wave their phones,
 Upset by Wagner's sense of honour,
 Never listens to Madonna,
 Can't stand watching late night telly,
 Missed Jools introduce George Melly.
 But one thing makes his senses quiver,
 Always brings a spinal shiver -
 Pianos, when superbly played
 Make pleasure mount and boredom fade.
 He loves the piano's shiny keys
 That Brendel mastered with such ease.
 The pinnacle is reached, he finds,
 When music flows from complex minds;
 And so he savours every note
 His hero Freddy Chopin wrote.
 The whole weekend he plays CDs
 Of waltzes in the minor keys.
 The soloist is Horowitz,
 He simply loves that guy to bits.

One day while shopping for a toaster
 Ron chanced upon a Langtree poster.
 The setting? quite salubrious.
 The programme? much more dubious:
 Before the interval looked 'heady'
 Begged the question - was he ready
 For Bob Schumann or John Brahms,
 Or would they give him sweaty palms?
 Then he noticed, *dolce anno!*
 The second half involved - a piano!
 But Dorchester was far away:
 A taxi? He'd be forced to pay..
 On top of ticket price - that's steep
 The idea almost made him weep.
 All week he wondered, should he go?
 Could he justify the dough?

The choice was made on Friday night
 He said he'd go - he thought he might.
 He gave instructions to the cabbie
 To drop him right outside the Abbey.
 He didn't like enormous space
 The unease showed upon his face
 All buildings like that made him dizzy.
 Distract himself by seeming busy:
 Take a pew, read programme notes,
 Consider what The Church promotes...
 The abbey hushed and Paul appeared.
 Applause *before* conducting? Weird!
 The overture he'd heard before
 And now disliked it even more
 But clapped politely just to show
 His fast-receding vertigo.
 He waited, not without some qualms,
 Whatever would he make of Brahms?
 The symphony seemed quite absurd
 Not a piano to be heard!
 Movement Four had splendid tones
 But rattled Ronald to his bones;
 The music made his ears go squiffy,
 Or was the orchestra just 'iffy'?
 An apple juice then quenched his thirst;
 The interval a welcome burst
 Of silence, after Brahms's best
 Left pounding echoes in his chest.
 Reseated then, he watched the stage
 As Edward Reeve (just half his age)
 Began to play the other Brahms,
 The one that added pianist's arms
 To everything the strings could do
 (With brass and woodwind playing too).
 The weaving themes, the magic tune -
 The concert ended all too soon.
 The taxi home, no sweaty palms
 Ron's brand new hero - now it's Brahms!



Chris Winch's orange and lemon polenta cake

INGREDIENTS

210g butter

210g caster sugar

100g finely chopped almonds

3 large eggs

125g ground almonds

150g ground polenta

1 teaspoon baking powder

Finely grated zest and juice of a large orange

For the syrup

1 lemon

1 orange

100g caster sugar

2 tablespoons Limoncello liqueur (optional)

METHOD

Set oven to 180c/gas mark 5

Line the base of a non stick loose bottomed 20cm cake tin.

Cake

Beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Break eggs into a small bowl and whisk lightly, then add them gradually to the creamed butter and sugar.

Add the chopped and ground almonds.

Stir in the polenta and baking powder.

Add the orange juice and zest.

Spoon mixture into cake tin, bake for 25 mins. then turn heat down to 160c and continue cooking for a further 30 mins.

Leave cake in tin while you make the syrup.

To make syrup

Put the zest and juice of the orange and lemon in a measuring jug then top up to 250ml with water.

Pour this into a saucepan with the sugar.

Boil rapidly until the sugar is dissolved and the liquid is reduced to about 175ml.

Remove from heat and add liqueur (if using).

Spike holes in the top of the cake (still warm in its tin), pour over the hot syrup and leave to cool.



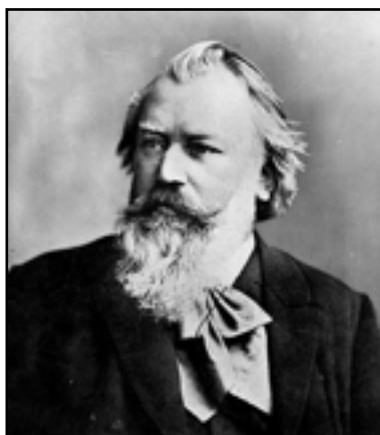
Great way to use up that Limoncello — Here's some I found earlier and I bet there's a bottle lurking at the back of your drinks cupboard.

What features would you like to see in the next issue? Suggestions to the editor please.



Brahms on Dvorak

Since our music recently has included that of Brahms and Dvorak, Nick Kiff has put together a fascinating selection of Brahms's thoughts on Dvorak's music. And Dvorak gets a look in too.



Brahms, looking not dissimilar to Dvorak...

Moravian Duets

Merry, fresh, piquant, pretty' '
To Simrock (publisher) 1877.

Piano Concerto

'easily shaped fantasy'

E Major and D minor String Quartets

'The best a musician can have, Dvorak has, and is also in these pieces'

D Major Slavonic Rhapsody (No 1)

'Oh, that is so musical'

Wind Serenade

'A more lovely, refreshing impression of real, rich and charming creative talent you can't easily have'

Letter to Joachim 1879

String Sextet

'It is endlessly beautiful. I always have the feeling that people don't admire this piece enough. The splendid invention, freshness and sonorous beauty...'

Legends, for piano

'A charming work, and enviable the fresh merry, rich invention'

Carnival overture

'Merry; music directors will be grateful to you'

However (!), it seems that the **B minor Cello Concerto** was unique in Dvorak's output as being the only one which Brahms reckoned the equal of his own work:

'a great and excellent work'
letter to Simrock 1896

All the above Brahms praises without reservation, but not all of Dvorak's work found such favour ...

St Ludmilla (oratorio)

'The text, to be sure, is too silly for me! Miracles! Pure nonsense! Dvorak believes in that, he can do it!'

Eighth Symphony

Too much that's fragmentary, incidental, loiters about in the piece. Everything fine, musically captivating and beautiful – but no main points. Especially in the first movement, the result is not proper'

Hussite Overture

'That piece I hate in manuscript and in print... I would not want to have it published ... I wish Dvorak had not given you the opportunity to do so...'

Vicious indeed, the Hussite overture was one of Dvorak's

rare forays into blatantly nationalist music.

And my own favourite ...

Te Deum

'The Te Deum is no doubt intended for the 'Celebration of the Destruction of Vienna and Berlin by the Czechs' and seems to me well suited for that' !



Dvorak, looking not dissimilar to Brahms...

Dvorak was much more reticent about putting his thoughts down on paper, but we do have this comment on Brahms's

Third Symphony:

'I say without exaggeration that this work surpasses his first two symphonies, if not in greatness and powerful conception then certainly in beauty. There is a mood in it that one does not often find with Brahms! What splendid melodies one finds there! It is pure love, and it does one's heart good... This work is a credit to art, and I congratulate you in advance.'

Letter to Simrock



Arts admin opportunity...

Do you know anyone who might be interested in becoming volunteer concert manager at Belsize Baroque, an orchestra founded by a friend of mine?

www.belsizebaroque.org.uk

You don't have to be knowledgeable about baroque music, you just have to want to get involved and be organised. Although the orchestra is London based, this job can be done from anywhere — I think the previous incumbent lived in Suffolk. Please contact Susan Cooksley if you or someone you know would be interested in speaking with her about this role. It might, for instance, be suitable for a student who wishes to gain experience in arts admin.

Volunteer Concert Manager

Belsize Baroque Orchestra is currently seeking a new volunteer concerts manager. Belsize Baroque is a successful baroque orchestra comprising music students, young professionals, and amateur players. Belsize Baroque performs mostly in central London and with top musical directors. The concerts manager is responsible for the organisation and logistics of concerts. Previous experience isn't necessary as there will be plenty of support from the team. Organisational skills are more important! This is a great opportunity to be involved with a dynamic and welcoming orchestra. If you would like more information about the role please call Susan on 0771 1666270 or email her atVeronese68@hotmail.co.uk

Janita Clamp

From the editor

Thanks to all contributors. The newsletter is nothing without you so please send me photos, poems, articles or ideas for features. If you make Chris's orange and lemon polenta cake then why not take a photo and I'll put it in the next issue.

Looking forward to being inundated with copy for our festive edition...

janita.clamp@btinternet.com

