



C A M D E N
S Y M P H O N Y
O R C H E S T R A

Autumn Concert



Conductor: Levon Parikian
Leader: John Crawford
Piano: Samantha Ward

Saturday 23rd November 2013 at 7.30pm
St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Tickets: £10 / £8 concessions. Programme: £1.

Camden Symphony Orchestra is a registered charity, number 1081563.

Camden Symphony Orchestra

Welcome to our autumn concert – and our first concert since we became Camden Symphony Orchestra. We're delighted to be performing once again with Samantha Ward, one of the most exciting pianists of her generation - Samantha played John Ireland's piano concerto with us in March 2012 and returns tonight for Brahms' first piano concerto.

Camden Symphony Orchestra has been a mainstay of musical life in north London for more than thirty years with around sixty regular players. Under our Musical Director Levon Parikian we seek to combine the familiar staples of the classical and romantic repertoire with less well-known and more challenging works. Founded as Camden Chamber Orchestra in 1980, we rebranded in 2013 to reflect better our size and repertoire. CSO rehearses on a weekly basis and performs three major orchestral concerts a year. Since 2008 we have also performed regularly with Islington Choral Society.

Recent concert programmes have included symphonies by Beethoven, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky, concertos by Britten, Delius and Prokofiev and a concert of stage and screen music. The orchestra has performed a number of operas, and with Islington Choral Society we have performed a wide range of choral works by composers including Bach, Brahms, Elgar, Handel and Verdi.

While we pride ourselves on our friendly, inclusive environment, we take our music-making seriously. We are always pleased to hear from musicians interested in joining us. For more information about the orchestra, please visit www.camdenso.org.uk.



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www.camdenso.org.uk

Camden Symphony Orchestra is affiliated to Making Music which represents and supports amateur choirs, orchestras and music promoters.



Verdi – ***Prelude, Aida***

Brahms – ***Piano Concerto No 1***

Soloist: Samantha Ward

~ Interval ~

*Please join us for refreshments during the interval,
which will be served at the back of the church.*

Dvořák – ***Symphony No 8***

*Please ensure that mobile phones, pagers, digital watch alarms and other
electronic devices are switched off during the performance.*

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) – *Prelude, Aïda*

Verdi's ambition was to study at the Conservatory of Milan, but he was refused a scholarship on the grounds of being too old and apparently lacking in talent. When he was 25, his opera *Oberto, Conte di San Bonifacio* premiered at La Scala. Many operas followed such as *Aïda*, *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata* and he soon became world famous.

Some opera audiences believe that *Aïda* was written for the opening of the Suez Canal. In fact, Verdi had been asked to compose an ode for the opening of the canal, but declined on the grounds that he did not write "occasional pieces". The opera premiered in 1871 and won instant acclaim. It went on to win accolades in Europe and its popularity has never waned since. The solemn and pensively beautiful *Prelude to Aïda* was said to be Verdi's answer to his critics who claimed "he lacked mastery in counterpoint". Verdi originally wrote the brief orchestral *Prelude*. He composed an overture as an alternative but later decided to keep the *Prelude* as he found the overture pretentious.

Aïda is an opera of massive scale, both visually and musically. Set in Egypt, it recounts the tragic love story of a soldier, *Radamès* and an Ethiopian slave girl, *Aïda*. The story unfolds against a political and military background. In the 1860s, after an extraordinary archaeological find, an Egyptologist claimed to have found the authentic story. An Egyptian soldier Radamès falls in love with Aïda. It ends tragically for both: Radamès entombed alive for treasonous cavorting; Aïda by her own hand over the death of her true love.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) – *Piano Concerto No 1 in D Minor, Opus 15* *I Allegro maestoso - II Adagio - III Rondo*

Brahms has an elusive quality that can be at odds with the impression of majesty evoked by his orchestral music. He was 20 years old when Schumann described "his genius for a new generation". Yet having arrived early on the scene, Brahms was a late bloomer who matured over decades. The composer reinvigorated and gave new life to traditions he inherited by developing an expressive and emotional musical language inspired by extra-musical sources.

His *Piano Concerto No 1* started life in 1854 as a symphony but it wasn't published or finished in this form. Brahms sketched the work in a two-piano arrangement but abandoned it, using the material later in the first movement of this concerto. Early performances were failures but Brahms made revisions until his audience gave it the reception it deserved.

The first movement, in extended sonata form, is of vast proportions and exhibits great imagination; furious trills in the first theme; an unexpectedly calm entrance of the soloist; development of thematic ideas that connect and provide underlying unity. There is no *bravura cadenza*, but instead a serene solo. The *Adagio* counterbalances the force preceding it with a meditative calm and elevating slow movement. A series of exchanges between orchestra and soloist leads to an exquisite cadenza. The exhilarating third movement has great contrast; a gypsy like, free spirited theme; the shadowy mood lifts and a new light emerges; themes are interwoven amongst one another with great imagination. The *Rondo* offers two cadenzas which build the concerto to its joyful finale and fiery conclusion.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) – *Symphony No 8 in G, Opus 88*

I Allegro con brio - II Adagio – III Allegretto grazioso - IV Allegro ma non troppo

Dvořák's first four symphonies were not published until after the last five, which were originally published (though not in chronological order) as numbers 1 to 5. When Dvořák's complete works were catalogued, renumbering occurred to match the order of composition. The G major symphony thus started life as No 4 but is now recognised as No 8.

In terms of popularity, this symphony is second only to the "*New World*" *Symphony No 9*. In his *Symphony No 7*, Dvořák had attempted to write "a symphony which will shake the world". *Symphony No 8*, by contrast, is of Bohemian nature awash with lyrical melodies from Dvořák's rural homeland. The composer completed this work in 1889 and conducted its premiere in Prague, 1890. It was published two years later. A typical performance lasts around thirty-six minutes, making it one of Dvořák's shorter symphonies.

The first movement opens with a melancholy expressive melody for the cellos and woodwind. The musical argument is easily followed; the first theme played by the flute, the second by flute and clarinet over an accompaniment of triplet figures in the second violins. Both are in a cheerful optimistic vein. The slow movement has bird song and rustic revelry. It consists of a pastoral theme to which material is added to depict charming country scenes. The movement ends in a tender pianissimo. An amiable Bohemian scherzo with a lilting waltz-like trio follows. The finale is a set of variations on a jovial childlike Czech theme. The variations vary widely in character, tempo and volume whilst the music remains cheerful and grand. The movement has a stirring trumpet fanfare which is echoed by the timpani. Its tempo quickens and the movement builds to an exciting climax for full orchestra, bringing this delightful symphony to a thunderous conclusion.

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Samantha Ward – *Piano*

British pianist Samantha Ward has performed extensively around the UK and in Europe and has appeared on British television and radio several times. In October 2007, she gave her solo debut recital at London's Wigmore Hall and has given other solo recitals in St Martin in the Fields, St John's Smith Square, St David's Hall Cardiff and Manchester's Bridgewater Hall, as well as concert halls around Europe. In February 2013, Samantha was invited to become a Bluthner Artist and is a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

She has won first prize in numerous competitions; Making Music Philip & Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artists in 2004; Beethoven Society of Europe's Intercollegiate Piano Competition, Hastings International Concerto Competition, Sir Philip Ledger Prize for the best Mozart or Beethoven Concerto in 2006; Worshipful Company of Musicians' Maisie Lewis Young Concert Artists Fund Award in 2007. Her debut recital at St John's Smith Square, 2009 was recorded by 'Slow Down London' for their 2010 festival. In 2010, Samantha was shortlisted for a 'Woman of the Future' Award in Arts & Culture in association with Shell and as a result, she gave an interview for *Stylist* Magazine in 2011.

Samantha was awarded a fellowship from the Guildhall School of Music 2007/8, where she studied under Joan Havill and received an award from the Musicians' Benevolent Fund for her postgraduate studies. She previously studied with Leslie Riskowitz and Alicja Fiderkiewicz. Samantha was recently awarded a scholarship from the Dartington International Summer Festival where she took part in master-classes with Stephen Bishop-Kovacevich.

In 2011, Samantha recorded both solo and duet albums of Hans-Gunther Heumann's 'The Classical Piano Method' (with Maciej Raginia) for Schott Music Publishers. In 2012, she recorded the piano works of Rory Freckleton. Other recent engagements include recital and concerto engagements around the UK, and the first public performance since the 19th Century of the Dora Bright *Piano Concerto* with the Morley Chamber Orchestra in 2012.

In August 2013 Samantha launched and inaugurated *Piano Week*, a festival and summer school for pianists held at Bangor University. The festival consisted of recitals, concerts and master-classes given by internationally acclaimed artists as well as the festival participants. *Piano Week 2014* takes place in Bangor from 10-15 August 2014 (www.pianoweek.com).

Levon Parikian – Conductor

Levon Parikian studied conducting with George Hurst and Ilya Musin. Since completing his studies he has pursued a freelance career, and is much in demand as Guest Conductor with orchestras in Britain. He currently holds Principal Conductor posts with several London-based orchestras, is Principal Conductor of the City of Oxford Orchestra, and Artistic Director of The Rehearsal Orchestra. He has worked extensively with students and youth orchestras, including the Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra, National Youth Strings Academy, Royal College of Music Junior Sinfonia, and at Royal Holloway, University of London, where he also teaches conducting. In 2012 Levon conducted the UK premiere of Armen Tigranian's opera *Anoush* with London Armenian Opera. His first book *Waving, Not Drowning* was published in 2013 and is an entertaining insight into the conductor's world (www.wavingnotdrowningbook.com). Levon has been one of our regular conductors since 2000, and our Musical Director since 2004.

John Crawford – Leader

John Crawford has been our leader since September 2006. He received his early musical training in Sheffield, but later was able to study with Molly Mack at the Royal Academy of Music through the help of the National Youth Orchestra. He won a Foundation Scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he studied with Leonard Hirsch. After further study in Vienna and Siena, John joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra. A growing interest in teaching led to his appointment as principal violin teacher at the Keski-Pohjanmaan Conservatory in Finland. John now combines a busy performing life with teaching at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, the Purcell School and the Royal College of Music Junior Department. He is also a qualified teacher of the Alexander Technique, and has had a lifelong interest in freedom of movement for musicians. He works regularly as an adjudicator, and leads the Forest Philharmonic and Ernest Read Orchestras as well as CSO.

Camden Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

John Crawford (Leader)
Robbie Nichols
David Divitt
Alexandra Bowers
Jonathan Knott
Stacey Lupton
Kate Fern
Antonia Denford
Fiona Patterson
Jennifer Norton
Mark Denza
Sarah Too

Violin II

Sheila Hayman
Josh Hillman
Gemma Nelson
Marion Fleming
Susie Bokor
Diana Frattali-Moreno
Jo Wilson
Calvin Graham
Rebecca Ho
Yvonne Spark
Kat Brendel
Vincent Wang

Viola

James Taylor
Andrew Robinson
Joanna Dunmore
John Broad
Freya Holland-Maxwell
Tom Lowenstein
Sarah Dewis
Lindsay Jones

Cello

Susan Delgado
Jane Brett-Jones
Denis Ribeiro
Sally Isaacs
Robert Aitken
Hermione Calvocoressi
Antje Saunders
Kate Nettleton

Double Bass

Mark McCarthy
Sara Dixon
Lewis Tingey
Nina Harries

Flute

Amanda Lockhart Knight
Isobel Colchester

Oboe

Kevin England
Helen Robinson

Clarinet

Sheena Balmain
Debbie Shipton

Bassoon

David Robson
Zoe McMillan

Horn

Ed Dorman
John Isaacs
Michael Slater
Jeremy Rayment

Trumpet

Tim Milford
David Badger

Trombone

Paul McKay
Clare Jenkins
Geraint Evans

Tuba

James Dimelow

Timpani

Gerard Rundell

Forthcoming Concerts

Saturday 14th December 2013 at 7pm

St Alban The Martyr, Holborn, London, EC1N 7RD

Concert with Islington Choral Society

Britten – St Nicholas

Bernstein – Chichester Psalms

Mathias – Ave Rex

Join us as we accompany Islington Choral Society for a festive choral concert.

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Saturday 22nd March 2014 at 7.30pm

St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Smetana – Vltava

Prokofiev – Violin Concerto No 1 (soloist: Fenella Humphreys)

Janáček – Jealousy

Sibelius – Symphony No 6

Join us back here at St Cyprian's for our spring concert which opens with Smetana's tone poem evoking the sounds of one of Bohemia's great rivers. We're delighted to be welcoming back the outstanding violinist Fenella Humphreys to perform Prokofiev's first violin concerto. The second half of the concert opens with a tension laden overture by Janáček and continues with one of Sibelius' symphonic masterpieces.

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For further information about these concerts, including ticket details, visit:

www.camdenso.org.uk