



THE RHONDDA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PRESENTS

Scheherazade

RUSLAN AND LYUDMILA
OVERTURE

RHAPSODY ON A THEME
OF PAGANINI

SOLOIST/ UNAWDYDD
ROB MARSHALL

7PM DECEMBER 7 RHAGFYR

2019

BBC HODDINOTT HALL, CARDIFF



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Special thanks go to the Friends of the RSO whose contributions help to subsidise student members of the orchestra and to secure its future development. If you would like to find out more about how to become a Friend of the RSO, please talk to a member of the orchestra or visit our website.

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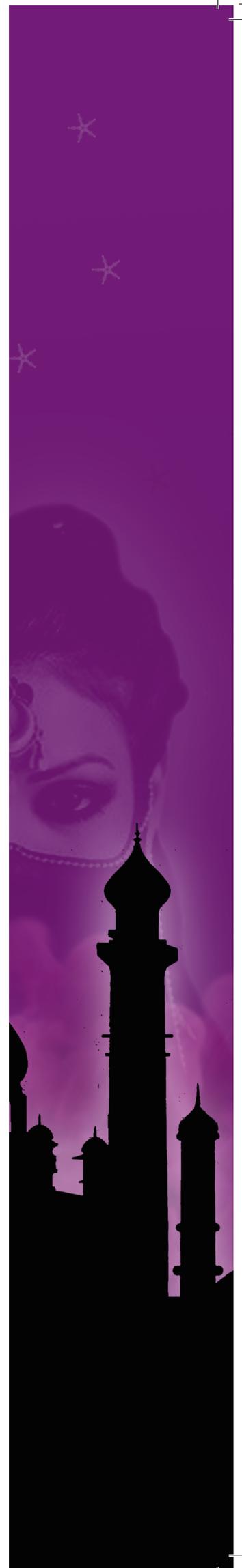
The Rhondda Symphony Orchestra

The Rhondda Symphony Orchestra was formed in Tonypany in 1968 by our now-President Jeff Lloyd and gave its first concert in 1970. We are therefore probably the oldest amateur orchestra in Wales and today we draw musicians from across South East Wales. We rehearse weekly at Y Pant School, Pontyclun, and perform three or four concerts each year, in venues across South Wales, with a broad repertoire from classical to jazz. RSO has a playing strength of about sixty, with our members ranging from their teens to their eighties; some are keen amateurs, some teach music and some are semi- or ex-professionals, but we all share the same passion - bringing live performance of the world's greatest music to our local communities.



Cerddorfa Symffoni'r Rhondda

Ffurfiwyd Cerddorfa Symffoni'r Rhondda yn Nhonypany yn 1968 gan ein Llywydd presennol, Jeff Lloyd a chyflwynodd ei chyngerdd cyntaf ym 1970. Felly, rydym yn fwy na thebyg y gerddorfa amatur hynaf yng Nghymru. Heddiw rydym yn denu cerddorion o ar hyd De ddwyrain Cymru. Rydym yn ymarfer yn wythnosol yn Ysgol y Pant, Pont-y-clun, ac yn perfformio tair neu bedair o gyngherddau'r flwyddyn, mewn lleoliadau ledled y de, gyda repertoire eang o'r clasurol i jazz. Mae tua 60 o aelodau gydag ystod oedran o bobl ifainc yn eu harddegau i aelodau yn eu hwythdegau. Mae rhai yn amaturiaid awyddus, rhai yn athrawon sy'n dysgu cerddoriaeth a rhai yn lled-neu gyn-weithwyr proffesiynol. Ond yr un yw'r angerdd - dod â pherfformiad byw o gerddoriaeth fwyaf y byd i'n cymunedau lleol.



Edward John - Musical Director



Edward John was born in Swansea and educated at Olchfa Comprehensive School and Cardiff University. He presently teaches brass with Rhondda Cynon Taf Music Service and works with trainee student music teachers at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

As a trumpet player, he was taught by Brian Buckley, and progressed through the West Glamorgan County Youth system, culminating in becoming a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and the first ever principal cornet of the National Youth Brass Band of Wales. He was also a finalist in the TSB Welsh Young Musician of the Year. Edward has since played with all the major amateur orchestras in South Wales, as well as the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

As a conductor, he has enjoyed a huge range of experiences over many years. He has directed the Glamorgan Chamber Orchestra and Neath Opera Group at Craig-y-Nos, as well as musicals for Newport Venture Players, Carmarthen Youth Opera and his own school. He has had the unique experience of conducting performances of Bernstein's West Side Story for all three of these companies. He has also conducted Swansea Philharmonic Choir in performances of Britten's War Requiem and Carl Orff's Carmina Burana.

Edward has played concerti with RSO in 2000 and 2016 and has been a member of the orchestra for many years before taking up the baton as the orchestra's conductor. Recent programmes have included Beethoven's 3rd and 5th Symphonies, Stravinsky's Firebird and Holst's The Planets.

Ganwyd Edward John yn Abertawe, cafodd ei addysg yn Ysgol Gyfun Olchfa a Phrifysgol Caerdydd. Mae wrthi'n dysgu offerynnau pres gyda Gwasanaeth Cerdd Rhondda Cynon Taf ac yn gweithio gydag athrawon y dyfodol ym Mhrifysgol Ffropolitan Caerdydd.

Brian Buckley oedd ei athro trwmpeid, fe gynyddodd drwy system Ieuenctid Sir Forgannwg, a mynd yn aelod o Gerddorfa Ieuenctid Cenedlaethol Cymru, a phrif gornedwr Band Pres Ieuenctid Cenedlaethol Cymru. Roedd hefyd yn derfynwr yng nghystadleuaeth Cerddor Ifanc Cymreig y Flwyddyn TSB. Mae Edward wedi perfformio gyda holl brif gerddorfeydd amaturaidd de Cymru, yn ogystal â Cherddorfa Genedlaethol Gymreig y BBC a Cherddorfa Ffilharmonig Lerpwl.

Fel arweinydd, mae wedi mwynhau llawer o brofiadau amrywiol dros nifer o flynyddoedd. Roedd yn gyfarwyddwr ar Gerddorfa Siambwr Morgannwg a Grŵp Opera Nedd yng Nghraig-y-Nos, yn ogystal â sioeau cerdd gyda Chwaraewyr Menter Casnewydd, Opera Ieuenctid Caerfyrddin, a'i ysgol ei hun. Cafodd y profiad unigryw o arwain perfformiadau o West Side Story gan Bernstein i'r tri chwmni hwn. Mae hefyd wedi arwain Côr Ffilharmonig Abertawe wrth iddyn nhw berfformio Offeren Rhyfel Britten, a Carmina Burana gan Carl Orff.

Perfformiodd Edward concerti gyda ChSRh yn 2000 a 2016, ac mae wedi bod yn aelod o'r gerddorfa am sawl blwyddyn cyn derbyn y baton a mynd yn arweinydd. Mae rhaglenni diweddar wedi cynnwys 3ydd a 5ed Symffoni Beethoven, Firebird gan Stravinsky, a'r Planedau gan Holst.

Rebecca Sian Goss - Leader

Rebecca Sian Goss, began violin at aged 10 and made swift progress while having lessons with Wendy Jenkins and Mansel Hughes in West Glamorgan.

At age 14 she started having lessons with Simon Weinmann of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Under his expert tuition Becci was accepted into the National Youth Orchestra of Wales as a 1st violinist and was awarded a music scholarship to study 'A' levels at Repton School in Derbyshire.

Whilst at Repton School, Becci gained extensive solo, chamber and orchestral experience, leading the school orchestra, performing several concerti, also having a master class with Kenneth Sillito.



Becci then studied music at Goldsmiths' College, University of London. In her final year she was co-leader of the University of London Orchestra under the direction of Mark Shanahan, and Leader of the Goldsmiths' College Symphony Orchestra for the final concert under the baton of Edward Gregson

A few years later Becci completed her teacher training and has been a peripatetic upper strings teacher in Bridgend County since 1999 (except for a few years' living in America). She has regularly tutored in various County Youth Orchestras and Ensembles and whilst overseas, she volunteered at local schools assisting in their Strings Programmes.

Becci chose to put orchestral playing on hold whilst raising her two children, but has returned to it in more recent years. She became a member of RSO in 2015 and was honoured to be invited to lead the orchestra in 2016.

Dechreuodd Rebecca Sian Goss, chwarae'r feiolin pan yn 10 oed ac fe wnaeth ddysgu'n gyflym iawn wrth gael gwersi gyda Wendy Jenkins a Mansel Hughes yng Ngorllewin Morgannwg.

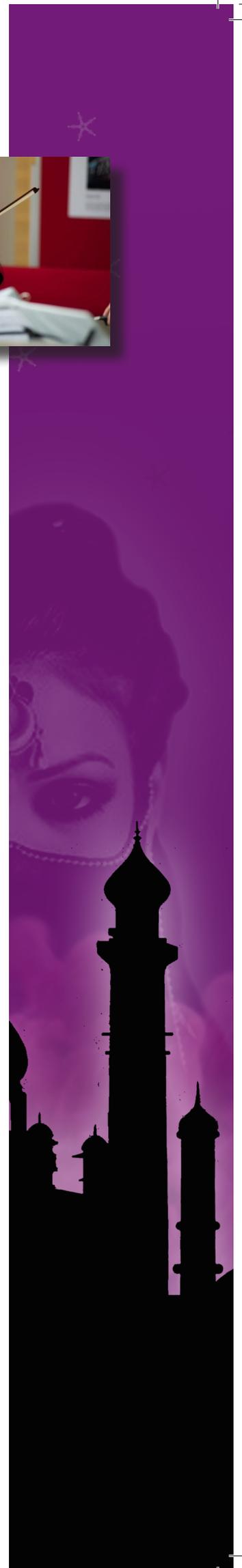
Yn 14 oed dechreuodd gael gwersi gyda Simon Weinmann o Gerddorfa Genedlaethol Gymreig y BBC. O dan ei hyfforddiant arbenigol derbyniwyd Becci i Gerddorfa Ieuencid Cenedlaethol Cymru fel y feiolinydd 1af a derbyniodd ysgoloriaeth cerddoriaeth i astudio pynciau lefel uwch yn Ysgol Repton yn Swydd Derby.

Tra yn Ysgol Repton, cafodd Becci brofiad helaeth fel unawdydd, profiad o chwarae mewn siambr a cherddorfa. Cafodd gyfle i arwain cerddorfa'r ysgol, perfformio sawl concerto, a hefyd cael dosbarth meistr gyda Kenneth Sillito.

Aeth Becci i astudio cerddoriaeth yng Ngholeg Goldsmiths, Prifysgol Llundain. Yn ei flwyddyn olaf roedd yn gyd-flaenwr Cerddorfa Prifysgol Llundain o dan arweiniad Mark Shanahan, ac Blaenwr Cerddorfa Symffoni Coleg Goldsmith ar gyfer y cyngerdd olaf dan arweiniad Edward Gregson.

Ychydig o flynyddoedd yn ddiweddarach cwblhaodd Becci ei hyfforddiant athrawon ac mae bellach yn athro peripatetic llinynnau yn Sir Penybont-ar-Ogwr ers 1999 (heblaw am rai blynyddoedd lle'r roedd yn byw yn America). Mae'n tiwtora yn rheolaidd mewn cerddorfeydd ieuencid sirol ac ensembles amrywiol a tra roedd dramor, gwirfoddolodd mewn ysgolion lleol gan eu cynorthwyo gyda'u rhaglenni llinynnau.

Dewisodd Becci gael hoe fach o'r chwarae cerddorfaol er mwyn codi ei dau blentyn, ond mae wedi dychwelyd i'r chwarae yn y blynyddoedd diwethaf. Daeth yn aelod o Gerddorfa Symffoni'r Rhondda yn 2015 a chafodd y fraint o gael ei gwahodd i fod yn flaenwr y gerddorfa yn 2016.





The
ABO Musicians



First Violin

Elizabeth Bryan
Branwen Evans
Claire Garcia
Becci Goss *
Noreen Harris
Nick James
Ruth Jones
Sophie Jowett
Rhianwen Lewis
Richard Pegg
Anna Roberts

Second Violin

Niamh Fish
Nicole Gravenor
Nia Honeybun
Sijbrigje Hood
Wendy Jones *
Derek Mascall
Sheila Nurse
Joanna Rees
Jane Roberts
Mair Roberts
Kate Wilde

Viola

Oliver Bown
Catherine Bright
Gareth Davies
Lewis James
Andrew May
Claire Popp
Gareth Tudor *

Cello

Will Davies
Bethan Ford
Georgia Goss
Elen James
Bronwen Thomas
Jemma Wells *
Mark Wells

Double Bass

Katey Day
Connie Francis
Paula Gardiner
Liam Hill
Jeff Ryan *

Flute

Jim Evans
Isabelle Harris
Viv John *
Bethan Rees

Oboe

Sian Crossan
Elin Howard *

Clarinet

Chris Beadsworth
Clare Sandford *

Bassoon

Lucy Millership
Karyn Phelps *

French Horn

Edwin Mead
Colin Preece
Branwen Thistlewood
Carolyn Thistlewood *

Trumpets

Richard Hood *
Phill Picton

Trombone

David Edwards
Joseph Edwards
Chris Kipling *

Tuba/ Tiwba

Bryn Kipling *
Aled Thistlewood

Timpani & Percussion

Fay Jones
Sam Jowett
Harriet Maine
Joshua Pegg
Gill Ridout *
Ewan Thomas

Harp

Aisha Palmer

Denotes section principal *

Ruslan and Lyudmila Overture

Mikhail Glinka (1804 -1857)

Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1842) is a fantasy opera based on Pushkin's epic fairy tale poem of the same name. Glinka conceived of the work in 1836, and initially intended to collaborate with Pushkin; unfortunately, however, the writer was killed in a duel early in 1837, and Glinka had to begin composing without a libretto. A text for the opera was eventually provided by Valerian Fyodorovich Shirkov, with minor contributions from several other writers and the composer.

Glinka finally completed *Ruslan and Lyudmila* in March 1842, and the opera premiered on 27 November of the same year at the Bolshoi Theatre in St Petersburg. It was not received with any great enthusiasm, however, due to its complicated score and slow pace. Within a few years it had disappeared from the St Petersburg stage entirely, a victim of the new public craze for Italian opera, and it was never performed in full during the composer's lifetime. It has nevertheless come to be regarded as perhaps the quintessential Russian Romantic opera – 'the Tsar of operas', in Tchaikovsky's estimation.

Ruslan and Lyudmila's effervescent overture is by far the most famous and frequently performed part of the work today, but was actually the last section of the opera to be written, during final rehearsals. The overture is in sonata form (exposition – development – recapitulation) and introduces musical ideas heard later in the story, which depicts the rescue of Lyudmila (a princess) by Ruslan (a knight) from the evil Chernomor (a sorcerer-dwarf). The opening section frames the opera with music taken from the concluding marriage scene, including the forceful chords and scurrying string scales of the opening bars, and the exuberant primary theme which ensues. The more lyrical and warm secondary theme – played by bassoons, violas, and cellos – derives from material in Ruslan's extended Act II aria, when he sings of his love for Lyudmila.

The overture's coda briefly introduces the darkly magical music associated with Chernomor, through a loud, descending whole-tone scale in the lower strings and trombones. *Ruslan and Lyudmila* was the first Russian work to feature this scale, and Glinka's association of it (and chromaticism more generally) with evil and the supernatural would prove influential on later Russian composers such as Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky. This glimpse into darkness does not last long, however, and the overture speeds to a boisterous, sparkling conclusion.



Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Sergey Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

Rachmaninov composed Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini on the shores of Lake Lucerne during the summer of 1934, 'working literally from morn to night' to complete the work. The first performance was given on 7 November 1934 in Baltimore, with the composer as pianist and Leopold Stokowski conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. The Rhapsody was an instant, sweeping success with audiences, and has since become a staple of the concert repertoire.

Rachmaninov's Rhapsody presents twenty-four variations on the melody from the final piece of Niccolò Paganini's 24 Caprices for Solo Violin (1802-17). This celebrated tune had previously inspired composers such as Schumann, Liszt, and Brahms. Paganini (1782-1840) was an infamously virtuosic performer – the fiendish complexity of his compositions led to rumours that he had sold his soul to the devil in exchange for preternatural musical ability – and Rachmaninov's homage offers a suitably challenging showpiece for soloist and orchestra, albeit for piano rather than violin.



The Rhapsody begins somewhat unconventionally, with a brief, gripping introduction followed by a skeletal first variation rather than the anticipated main theme. This first variation exposes the simple harmonic underpinnings of Paganini's complex tune, which will be explored to its full potential in the subsequent variations. The caprice theme (see above) is then stated by the violins – fittingly, perhaps, given Paganini's own instrumental preference. The next four variations build in intensity and intricacy, before a more relaxed Variation 6, which incorporates a couple of mini cadenzas for the piano.

In the slow and sombre Variation 7, the piano introduces a secondary theme which Rachmaninov was fond of quoting in his works, and which perhaps here nods towards Paganini's alleged Faustian pact: the 'Dies Irae' from the Gregorian Mass for the Dead. The mood turns ever more sinister over the next few variations, which focus on the 'Dies Irae' and dazzlingly highlight Rachmaninov's capacity for leading familiar melodies into strange territory.

Variation 11 provides some much needed respite, with a spacious, almost improvisatory transition into a tentative D minor minuet in Variation 12. The briefly peaceful mood is soon interrupted, however, by the belligerent allegro posturings of Variations 13 and 14, the latter of which features a brass fanfare created from an upside-down version of Paganini's tune. In Variation 15, the orchestra subsides briefly, and the piano offers up a playful, quicksilver solo.

Variation 16 signals a transition into darker territory, with a new key of B-flat minor, chromatic piano lines, and eerie oboe and violin solos. The creeping, foggy atmosphere intensifies in Variation 17; Paganini's theme is reduced to a simple outline in the brass and woodwind, and rolling piano triplets meander through a variety of tonal areas. The harmony eventually floats up to D-flat major – a key far removed from the Rhapsody's A minor home – and the triplets metamorphose into the tranquil accompaniment figure for the famous Variation 18, which emerges like a shaft of sunlight in the gloom.

Variation 18 stands out as an unabashedly lyrical moment within the Rhapsody's often complex, 'modern' idiom. In the words of musicologist Charles Fisk, it seems like 'a memory or a dream': 'it is as if Rachmaninov is revisiting... not only a lost time and place, or a lost love, but – more concretely – a lost musical style'. The variation's impassioned melody is actually a major-key inversion of Paganini's original theme, which Rachmaninov worked out in the mid-1920s, nearly ten years before the final composition of the Rhapsody. Rachmaninov apparently recognised the instant appeal of this tune, declaring 'this one is for my agent'!

Following Variation 18's quiet, contemplative conclusion, Variation 19 punctures the dream-like atmosphere and launches the work into its final episode with a return to the opening key of A minor. The next few variations incessantly build in energy, with breakneck piano work and orchestral interplay. Following a short cadenza and pause at the end of Variation 22, there is a musical disagreement between soloist and orchestra to begin Variation 23, with the piano presenting the caprice tune in A-flat major, before being brought back into line as the orchestra resumes curtly in A minor.

The final two variations offer an especial challenge for the soloist; Rachmaninov purportedly nicknamed the final variation the 'Crème de Menthe', since he required the drink before performances to settle his nerves about playing it! The 'Dies Irae' makes a strident final appearance as the Rhapsody cascades towards an apparently emphatic conclusion; Rachmaninov closes the piece in unexpectedly mischievous fashion, however, when the piano chimes in with a quiet final cadence to steal the orchestra's thunder.



Scheherazade

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

During the winter of 1887, while he was completing the late Alexander Borodin's opera, *Prince Igor*, Rimsky-Korsakov struck upon the idea of composing an orchestral piece based on the stories of *The One Thousand and One Nights*, the collection of Middle Eastern folk tales that had become popular in Europe during the 1800s. Rimsky-Korsakov finished his work the following summer, and *Scheherazade* – titled in honour of the *Nights*' storyteller – premiered in Saint Petersburg on 3 November 1888, with the composer himself conducting. *Scheherazade* has become Rimsky-Korsakov's most popular work, and is emblematic of his talent for spectacular orchestration and sumptuous melody, as well as his taste for projecting certain ideas about 'the Orient' – that is to say, the Middle East.

Rimsky-Korsakov's version of the *Nights*, following its source material, is unified by a framing story: the cruel Sultan Shahryar, convinced of the faithlessness of all women, takes a new bride every night only to have her executed at dawn, until one, Scheherazade, saves herself and wins the Sultan's heart by telling stories. In his memoirs, Rimsky-Korsakov insisted that his *Scheherazade* was not meant to provide an exact portrayal of any particular tale in the *Nights*; instead, he allows the listener freedom of interpretation.

The programme I had been guided by in composing *Scheherazade* consisted of separate, unconnected episodes and pictures from *The Arabian Nights*, scattered through all four movements of my suite ... I meant these hints to direct but slightly the hearer's fancy... All I had desired was that the listener, if [they] liked my piece as symphonic music, should carry away the impression that it is beyond doubt an oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairy-tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other.

The descriptive titles now associated with the movements were in fact suggested to Rimsky-Korsakov by his fellow composer Anatoly Lyadov – although Rimsky-Korsakov later eliminated even these names from his score.

First Movement: 'The Sea and Sinbad's Ship'

Scheherazade opens with an immediate introduction to the conflicting themes of its two central characters: the stern Sultan is depicted through a formidable, dissonant fortissimo theme played by full orchestra, while the isolated and enchanting Scheherazade is characterised by a sinuous solo violin melody. Scheherazade's 'voice' is accompanied by harp, a 'magical' sound which evokes the ancient tradition of bards accompanying themselves on a stringed instrument.

Scheherazade then conjures images of Sinbad's adventures on the sea. A barcarole lilt in the cellos accompanies a swelling, chromatic melody in the violins, with staccato punctuation suggesting the crashing of surf. Over the course of the movement, tumultuous and grandly orchestrated 'sea' sections alternate with more delicate passages for solo instruments, which are perhaps suggestive of calmer waters or Sinbad's island dalliances. The sea music is in E major, since Rimsky-Korsakov was a synesthete and apparently associated this key with a deep, dark blue. It is possible that this depiction of Sinbad's vast ocean was also inspired by Rimsky-Korsakov's time in the Russian navy.

Second Movement: 'The Story of the Kalandar Prince'

Scheherazade's violin line opens the second movement to introduce a new story, the tale of the Kalandar Prince who disguises himself as a whirling dervish in search of wisdom. The movement takes the form of a loose theme and variations, with the Prince's pensive yet nimble 3/8 theme initially heard in the bassoon. Its improvisatory melody is embellished with

grace notes and drone harmonies, perhaps to suggest a traditional Arabian pipe instrument. The theme is passed around the woodwind, before it enters the rest of the orchestra when the Prince sets out on his journey.

The second movement also features more animated, march-like passages, which are interwoven with suggestions of the Sultan's theme. Rimsky-Korsakov opined that 'one might see a fight' in these sections, while a later passage which employs fluttering woodwinds and pizzicato strings might imply the appearance of 'Sinbad's mighty bird, the Roc'.

Third Movement: 'The Young Prince and the Young Princess'

The sensuous third movement recounts an unidentified love story from the Nights. A slow, tender opening waltz theme aptly depicts noble characters falling in love, while fast, arcing scales first heard in the woodwind add 'oriental' flavour. After an early London performance of Scheherazade, prudish critics wondered whether these flirtatious figures might scandalously depict kissing!

Scheherazade's theme returns in the middle of the movement, as if she has paused for a moment to comment on the story. Her solo violin then blends with the lovers' theme, and the movement builds to a passionate orchestral climax, before closing in quieter, playful fashion. Perhaps the Victorian press were onto something, after all...

Fourth Movement: 'Festival at Baghdad'

The finale opens with an angry dialogue between versions of the Sultan's and Scheherazade's themes, before Scheherazade tries to appease Shahryar by describing the vibrant energy of the festival at Baghdad. Her restless depiction of the carnival recaps some of the themes from the preceding movements, and provides a kaleidoscopic sense of closure to Rimsky-Korsakov's interpretation of the Nights.

After the wild spectacle of the festival, there is a return to the sea music of the first movement to depict a storm and shipwreck. The orchestral tempest builds to a crescendo with crashing percussion, tumbling strings, and whistling woodwinds, before a frightening bitonal crash depicts a ship (perhaps Sinbad's) striking against rocks and sinking. Once the storm subsides, Scheherazade finally wins over the Sultan, and her solo violin soars above his pacified theme. The finale fades away to nothingness to bring Scheherazade's magical tales to a close.





Robert Marshall - Soloist

Robert Marshall from Swansea studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with Rosalie Armstrong, Julian Jacobson, and Mikhail Kazakevich; and also with Irina Zaritskaya at the Royal College of Music, and privately with Leslie Howard in London. He also participated in numerous master classes with pianists such as David Owen Norris, Vanessa Latache, Bernard Roberts, Michael Ponti, and Alexander Torradze. After appearing in a master class with Alexander Torradze he was invited to study on a concert artist's course at the University of Indiana in the United States, but due to funding problems he was unable to take up the offer.

Whilst a student at R.W.C.M.D. he was appointed to the post of orchestral pianist with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and the National Youth Wind Orchestra of Great Britain which took him on national tours. He also had much success in competitions including twice being recipient of the John Thomas (Merthyr Tydfil) award – the highest award for college pianists, Lawrence Davies memorial award and in 1994 he became the first piano student to win the coveted R.W.C.M.D. Concerto competition. He performed twice with the college orchestra as soloist – in 1992 he played Saint-Saens "Carnival of the Animals" with the College Chamber Orchestra, and after winning the concerto competition he gave a highly acclaimed performance of Liszt's first concerto with the College Symphony Orchestra at St David's Hall in Cardiff.

Since then Robert has been in considerable demand as soloist and has played with most of the orchestras in Wales including, Welsh Philharmonic, Cardiff Philharmonic, Welsh Chamber, National Chamber Orchestra of Wales, Mumbles Symphony, Festival Orchestra of Wales, Rhondda Symphony Orchestra and the Classical Fanfare Orchestra. He has worked with many eminent conductors such as Tadakki Otakka, Christopher Adey, Adrian Leaper, Mark Shanahan, Owain Arwel Hughes and Elgar Howarth. Concerto performances include Grieg, Liszt, Schumann, Rowley, Shostakovich (No. 2), Prokofiev (No. 1), Beethoven (No's. 1, 3 and 5), Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" and Richard Addinsell's "Warsaw Concerto" – which he first performed in a special concert to celebrate the 50th anniversary of V.E. Day, with the RSO.

Other solo performances include festivals dedicated to the composers Bartok, Stravinsky, Brahms, Schubert and Chopin, also Swansea, Margam, Neath, Carmarthen and Cardiff festivals. He has performed throughout the UK, and international recitals in France, Italy, Germany, Finland, Spain, Belgium and Denmark.

Returning to live in Swansea in 1997, Robert was appointed the post of Musical Director to the Swansea branch of the Welsh National Youth Opera, and also spent time as Musical Director with Llanelli Youth Theatre – conducting musicals including Sondheim's "Assassins" and Rogers and Hammerstein's "King and I".

In June 2001 with Violinist Matthew Jones, he gave the World Premiere of "Cantus Insolitus" for violin and piano by World-renowned composer Karl Jenkins, and he promotes music by Welsh Composers whenever possible – having performed Daniel Jones Bagatelles for Piano both in Wales and Denmark.

In the world of pop music he has performed with singer Bonnie Tyler whom he regularly works with as a coach, the band "Dirty Fingers" and has also performed with and entertained many celebrities including Sir Anthony Hopkins, Joe Calzaghe, Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones and David Emmanuel. TV appearances include Noson Lawen and Heno, as well as numerous radio broadcasts.

Robert currently lives in Swansea and apart from playing as a soloist and chamber musician; he has built up an outstanding reputation as an accompanist, having worked with many instrumentalists and singers from the United Kingdom and abroad for concerts, examinations, competitions and auditions. This has led to many invitations as a guest accompanist with many of the South Wales Choirs and has played with the Dunvant, Treorchy, Swansea, Morriston Rugby Club Male Voice as well as The Calfara singers, Swansea Bach Choir Gower Chorale and Penclawdd Choirs. He also plays with the Welsh Millennium Trio, The Gower Trio and the Awelan Ensemble. He has been an adjudicator for the Urdd National Eisteddfod, Piano tutor for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, Musical Director for "Lighthouse" Theatre Company, a member of the "Millennium Awards Fellowship", the UK Sibelius Society and also the executive committee of Swansea Festival of Music and the Arts.

Astudiodd Robert Marshall, sydd o Abertawe, yng Ngholeg Brenhinol Cerdd a Drama Cymru gyda Rosalie Armstrong, Julian Jacobson, a Mikhail Kazakevich; a hefyd gydag Irina Zaritskaya yn y Royal College of Music ac yn breifat gyda Leslie Howard yn Llundain. Bu hefyd yn cymryd rhan mewn nifer o ddsbarthiadau meistr gyda Phianyddion fel David Owen Norris Vanessa Lartache, Bernard Roberts, Michael Ponti, ac Alexander Torradze. Ar ôl ymddangos mewn dosbarth meistr gydag Alexander Torradze gwahoddiwyd ef i astudio ar gwrs cyngerdd artist ym Mhrifysgol Indiana yn yr Unol Daleithiau, ond oherwydd problemau ariannu nid oedd yn gallu manteisio ar y cynnig.

Tra'n fyfyrwr yn y Coleg Cerdd a Drama fe'i benodwyd i swydd pianydd cerddorfaol gyda Cherddorfa Genedlaethol Ieuencid Cymru a'r National Youth Wind Orchestra of Great Britain ac aeth ar nifer o deithiau cenedlaethol. Cafodd lawer o lwyddiant hefyd mewn cystadlaethau gan ennill ddwywaith, Gwobr John Thomas (Merthyr Tudful) – y wobwr uchaf i banyddion coleg, Gwobr Goffa Lawrence Davies ac yn 1994 daeth yn fyfyrwr piano cyntaf i ennill y Cystadleuaeth Concerto yn y Coleg Cerdd a Drama. Perfformiodd ddwywaith gyda cherddorfa'r coleg fel unawdydd – yn 1992 chwaraeodd Saint-Saens "Carnival of the Animals" gyda Cherddorfa Siambr y Coleg, ac ar ôl ennill y gystadleuaeth concerto rhoddodd berfformiad clodwiw iawn o concerto cyntaf Liszt gyda Cherddorfa Symffoni'r Coleg yn Neuadd Dewi Sant yng Nghaerdydd.

Ers hynny mae Robert wedi cael ei alw sawl tro i fod yn unawdydd ac wedi chwarae gyda'r rhan fwyaf o'r cerddorfeidd yng Nghymru gan gynnwys, Philharmonic Cymreig, Philharmonic Caerdydd, Siambr Cymru, Cerddorfa Siambr Genedlaethol Cymru, Symffoni'r Mwmbwls, Festival Orchestra of Wales, Cerddorfa Symffoni'r Rhondda a'r Gerddorfa Ffanffer Glasur. Mae wedi gweithio gyda llawer o arweinwyr blaenllaw fel Tadakki Otakka, Christopher Adey, Adrian Leaper, Mark Shanahan, Owain Arwel Hughes ac Elgar Howarth. Mae ei berfformiadau Concerto yn cynnwys Grieg, Liszt, Schumann, Rowley, Shostakovich (Rhif 2), Prokofiev (Rhif 1), Beethoven (Rhif 1, 3 a 5), "Rhapsody in Blue" Gershwin a Richard Addinsell yn "Warsaw Concerto" - a berfformiodd gyntaf mewn cyngerdd arbennig i dathlu 50fed pen-blwydd diwrnod V.E. gyda'r RSO.

Mae perfformiadau unigol eraill yn cynnwys gwyliau cerddorol ar gyfer y cyfansoddwyr canlynol: Bartok, Stravinsky, Brahms, Schubert a Chopin, a hefyd gwyliau cerddorol yn Abertawe, Margam, Castell-nedd, Caerfyrddin a Chaerdydd. Mae wedi perfformio ledled Prydain ac yn rhyngwladol yn Ffrainc, yr Eidal, yr Almaen, y Ffindir, Sbaen, Gwlad Belg a Denmarc.

Daeth yn ôl i fyw yn Abertawe yn 1997, ac fe'i penodwyd yn Gyfarwyddwr Cerdd i gangen Abertawe o Opera Ieuencid Cenedlaethol Cymru, a threuliodd amser hefyd fel Cyfarwyddwr Cerddorol gyda Theatr Ieuencid Llanelli - yn cynnal sioeau cerdd gan gynnwys "Assassins" gan Sondheim a "King and I", Rogers a Hammerstein.

Ym mis Mehefin 2001 gyda'r feiolinydd Matthew Jones, perfformiodd am y tro cyntaf erioed "Cantus Insolitus" ar gyfer y ffidil a'r piano gan Karl Jenkins, y cyfansoddwr byd-enwog, ac mae'n hyrwyddo cerddoriaeth gan gyfansoddwyr Cymreig pryd bynnag y bo hynny'n bosibl. Mae hefyd wedi perfformio Bagatelles Daniel Jones ar gyfer piano yng Nghymru a Denmarc.

Ym myd cerddoriaeth pop mae wedi perfformio gyda'r gantores Bonnie Tyler, ac mae yn gweithio gyda hi yn rheolaidd fel hyfforddwr, y band "Dirty Fingers" ac mae hefyd wedi perfformio gyda diddanu llawer o enwogion gan gynnwys Syr Anthony Hopkins, Joe Calzaghe, Michael Douglas, Catherine Zeta-Jones a David Emmanuel. Mae ymddangosiadau ar y teledu yn cynnwys Noson Lawen a Heno, yn ogystal â darllediadau radio niferus.

Ar hyn o bryd mae Robert yn byw yn Abertawe ac ar wahân i chwarae fel unawdydd a cherddor siambr; Mae wedi magu enw da eithriadol fel cyfeilydd, ar ôl gweithio gyda llawer o offerynwyr a chantorion o'r Deyrnas Unedig a thramor ar gyfer cyngherddau, arholiadau, cystadlaethau a chlyweliadau. Mae hyn wedi arwain at lawer o wahoddiadau fel cyfeilydd gwadd gyda llawer o gorau De Cymru ac mae wedi chwarae gyda chôrâu meibion Dynfant, Treorci, Abertawe, Clwb Rygbi Treforys yn ogystal â Chantorion Calfara, Swansea Bach Choir, Chorale y Gŵyr a Chôr Penclawdd. Mae hefyd yn chwarae gyda Thriawd y Mileniwm Cymreig, Triawd y Gŵyr ac Ensemble Awelan. Bu'n feirniad ar gyfer Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yr Urdd, tiwtor piano ar gyfer Cerddorfa Genedlaethol Ieuencid Cymru, Cyfarwyddwr Cerdd Cwmni Theatr "Lighthouse", aelod o "Gymdeithas Gwobrau'r Mileniwm", UK Sibelius Society a hefyd aelod o Bwyllgor Gŵyl Cerdd a Chelfyddydau Abertawe.





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