

Concert Season 2008/09

Music Director Michael Lloyd
Patron Peter Donohoe



"one of the best non-professional orchestras in the land"



A word from our Patron

Peter Donohoe writes ...

Orchestras, whether they consist of unpaid highly enthusiastic amateur players or paid professionals, are, along with choral societies, music societies, festivals, brass bands, and a whole myriad of musical activities, about community pride. Indeed, they as important to local pride as a football or cricket team, an art gallery or a theatre.



These long-standing traditions give visitors a sense of the different characters of the areas in which they take place, whilst being fully aware of the wider artistic world in which they operate. How increasingly important the latter is in these days of instant global awareness – something that the arts world must face daily, and recognises very readily. What is sometimes more easily forgotten is the importance of the individual character of any arts organisation to a particular area. This is what makes one community different to another.

The importance of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra to the city of Birmingham and the wider Midlands is extraordinary. Its artistic achievements over many years have been consistently on such a high level that it has rightly been described as 'one of the best non-professional orchestras in the land'. Given the supremely high standard of amateur music-making in the UK that has traditional been the envy of the world, this is a rare accolade. It makes it something that Birmingham should be particularly proud, and it is extremely rewarding for me to realise just how wonderfully it is supported by local audiences and sponsors.

For a musician who makes his living from performing such as myself, the existence and achievements of an organisation such as the BPO is particularly rewarding. It means that musical culture is extremely healthy amongst people who work in other fields. This is to me what the word 'culture' really means - not that people go in their droves to highly spectacular huge-scale events given by internationally lauded superstars, but that they genuinely support their locally produced artistic ventures, and help them go from strength to strength.

I am very proud to be associated as patron of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, and look forward to a continuing long-term relationship in many forms over the coming years.

Our new season ...

Welcome to the 2008-09 season of concerts by the BPO. New to the BPO are Daniele Rosina, well-known to Birmingham as a conductor, Thomas Gould, a young violinist of great promise, and Anna Osyvanikova, winner of the Birmingham Conservatoire's Ludlow Philharmonic Prize, an award long associated with the BPO. We welcome each of them, and hope this is the start of a long association. Music Director Michael Lloyd naturally remains the mainstay of our season. We're also pleased to be working once again with Eduardo Vassallo, Richard Laing, Michael Seal, Martin Cousin and St. Peter's Collegiate Church Choir, and pleased to be helping once more to support the fine work of the Birmingham Community Foundation with our Christmas Concert. To find out more, read on...

Concerts

2008/09



Michael Lloyd

Music Director and Conductor

Michael Lloyd first conducted the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra in 1985, and became Music Director and Principal Conductor in 1994.

Born in Worcestershire, he studied at the Birmingham School of Music, the University of East Anglia and the Royal College of Music, concentrating on piano accompaniment. In 1972 he joined Scottish Ballet as company pianist and it was with this company that he made his professional conducting debut. Michael moved to Stuttgart to continue his operatic conducting, also working regularly as Associate Chorus Master for the Stuttgart Philharmonic Vocal Ensemble, South German Madrigal Choir and South German Radio Chorus.



Photo: Sophie Baker

From 1985 to 2003 he was a member of the music staff at English National Opera, becoming Assistant Music Director and later Senior Resident Conductor. He conducted regularly for the Company, both new productions and revivals in a wide variety of repertoire.

In addition to teaching regularly at the Opera Schools of the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music, he has conducted at all the major venues in London, Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and also in Japan and Korea. Since 1994 he has been a regular visitor to New Zealand, where he has conducted opera, ballet and concerts.

In 2006 he was appointed advisor to the Opera Genesis project at the Royal Opera House. From November 2006 until June 2008 he was Musical director of the new production of *The Sound of Music* at the London Palladium. During the summer and autumn of 2008 he will be conducting *Romeo and Juliet* (Prokofiev) and other works by Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky and Berlioz with Royal New Zealand Ballet.

Who are the BPO?

Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded in the early years of the second world war to raise money for war charities, the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra received its present title in 1941. It retained its vigour at the cessation of hostilities and remains one of the country's leading large non-professional symphony orchestras, drawing its members from all walks of life throughout the West Midlands. For most of its members music is a form of relaxation, but for others it is a stepping-stone in their musical careers. The BPO enjoys close links with both the Birmingham Conservatoire and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and is affiliated to Making Music (formerly the National Federation of Music Societies).

The Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra is a registered charity, number 500654.

Visit our website - www.bpo.org.uk



Our Guest Conductors

Daniele Rosina

Born in 1979, Daniele Rosina began his musical studies in Bournemouth. In 1997 he gained a place at Birmingham Conservatoire, studying clarinet with Michael Harris and conducting with Andrew Mogrella and Edwin Roxburgh. As a student, Daniele conducted all the major ensembles, including performances with Symphony Orchestra at the Bromsgrove Festival and Symphony Hall, Birmingham. He worked extensively with the Conservatoire's Composers' Ensemble, giving many first performances of student works. Daniele was appointed a conducting tutor at Birmingham Conservatoire in 2005 and at the University of Birmingham in 2006. He regularly conducts concerts and workshops at both institutions.



Future engagements include Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* with South Coast Opera, Handel's *Semele* with Operamus and a concert of works by Adès, Boulez and Berio at Birmingham Conservatoire and London's Purcell Room as part of the Jewish Music Institute's Festival of Music.

Michael Seal



In 1996, Michael Seal conducted his first concert with the Birmingham Philharmonic and has conducted them yearly in performances to great acclaim in venues such as Lichfield, Shrewsbury, Leominster, Walsall and Birmingham. In May 2005, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra announced it was to appoint Michael Seal as its Assistant Conductor, the first in its history. Michael had conducted the CBSO in a number of performances previously, and impressed audiences, critics and the Orchestra alike when he stood in for the CBSO's Music Director, Sakari Oramo, at extremely short notice in December 2004. Michael Seal has also worked with Orquestra Filarmonica de Buenos Aires, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Future engagements include repeat visits to the Birmingham Schools Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Philharmonic and Sinfonia of Birmingham. He also has concerts with the CBSO in Aldeburgh, London, Manchester and Malvern in 2008 and 2 concerts with the CBSOYO Summer Academy in August 2008. Michael will also conduct the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra twice in 2008/9.

Richard Laing

Richard Laing is one of the most exciting and versatile young conductors in Britain today. He is Music Director of Operamus, The Midland Sinfonia, Lancashire Youth Orchestra, Leamington Chamber Orchestra and Worcestershire Symphony Orchestra, and a frequent guest conductor with Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Chandos Symphony Orchestra and professional ensembles around the UK. He is highly sought after as a leader of orchestral and choral workshops across the country, and has conducted in France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria and the Czech Republic. Richard studied conducting as Sinfonia Viva Scholar at the Birmingham Conservatoire, winning the Postgraduate Prize, and at Dartington on a Foyle Foundation award. He now works as a conductor and coach at the Birmingham Conservatoire and has conducted productions with Operamus, Kent Opera, Birmingham Conservatoire Opera and Dartington Festival Opera. He has also lectured on opera and on film at universities in the USA and Australia.



Concerts

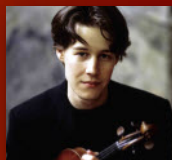
2008/09



Our Soloists

Thomas Gould (Violin)

Chosen by the Evening Standard as a rising star of 2008, Thomas Gould enjoys a busy and varied career as soloist, recitalist and orchestral leader. Highlights from his list of engagements this year include recitals in the Wigmore Hall and Holywell Music Room, concerto performances with Orchestra da Camera, London Contemporary Orchestra, Bath Philharmonia, Birmingham Philharmonic and Manchester Concert Orchestra, and appearances in the Devizes, Tresanton and Hampstead & Highgate Festivals. Thomas also maintains a strong profile in London's orchestral life as leader of Aurora Orchestra and Manning Camerata, and co-leader of Britten Sinfonia.



Photos of Thomas Gould
by Sussie Ahlburg

Martin Cousin (Piano)



Martin Cousin is now regarded as one of the most dynamic pianists of his generation, having been awarded 1st Prize at the 2005 Ettore Pozzoli International Piano Competition and Gold Medal at the 2003 Royal Over-Seas League Music Competition. He appears regularly at the major London musical venues such as Wigmore Hall, the South Bank, Barbican Centre as well as Birmingham's Symphony Hall and Manchester's Bridgewater Hall. He has performed as concerto soloist with the London Philharmonic, Halle, Royal Philharmonic and BBC Concert orchestras. Martin's hands are also featured on the big screen in the Oscar-winning film "Shine", for the scenes involving Rachmaninov's 3rd Concerto.

Anna Ovsyanikova (Violin)

Anna Ovsyanikova was born in St. Petersburg, Russia into a musical family in 1986. She began studying the violin at the age of six. In 1994 she was offered a place at the Special Musical School for gifted musicians of St. Petersburg State Conservatory. In 2005 Anna was granted a full scholarship to study at Birmingham Conservatoire, where she is presently going on to her fourth year. She studies with Rimma Sushanskaya. In 2008 she won the Ludlow Philharmonic Concerto Prize at the Conservatoire.



Eduardo Vassallo (Cello)



Eduardo J. Vassallo was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He studied the cello initially with Nicolas Finoli and chamber music with Ljerco Spiller. Since 1989, Eduardo Vassallo has been principal cellist of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He is also one of the founding directors of the Birmingham Ensemble (a chamber group drawn from the ranks of the CBSO), and also teaches at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. He is invited regularly to guest lead the Philharmonia, the Royal Philharmonic, London Philharmonic Orchestras and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.

Martyn Jones (Narrator)

Martyn Jones has been a member of the BPO since 1978 and the principal Horn since 1997. His personal highlights including a night of Wagner, performing all Mahler symphonies and appearing with the BPO as a vocalist with the renowned group Opus 5. He is very involved in the Birmingham amateur dramatic scene and, when the weather permits, enjoys a round of golf or three.



Visit our website - www.bpo.org.uk



Series 1

Romantic Favourites

A programme of favourites from the Romantic era, including Sibelius' magnificent concerto, Schubert's best-known symphony and Dvořák's most ambitious orchestral work. Featuring the BPO début of conductor Daniele Rosina.

Glinka:

Overture, Ruslan and Ludmila (6')

Sibelius: *

Violin Concerto in D minor * (32')

Schubert: **

Symphony No 8 in B minor (Unfinished) (25')

Schubert: **

Ballet Music from "Rosamunde" (10')

Dvořák:

Symphony No 7 in D minor (38')

Conductor:

Daniele Rosina

Solo Violin:

Thomas Gould *

Sutton Coldfield Town Hall:

Monday 6th October, 7.30 pm

Promoted by Sutton Coldfield Philharmonic Society

All Saints Church, Broseley:

Sunday 12th October, 7.30 pm

Promoted by All Saints Church PCC

Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham:

Sunday 19th October, 7.30 pm

* Sutton Coldfield only

** Not Sutton Coldfield

Series 2

Serenade for Strings

The strings of the BPO get a rare chance to shine by themselves. Elgar's gentle serenade sets the scene for Britten's vivid settings of Rimbaud, while Vaughan Williams explores a world of contrasting sonorities in his rich Fantasia. Finally Tchaikovsky shows a lighter side of his personality in his masterful serenade.

Elgar:

Serenade for Strings (12')

Britten:

Les Illuminations (22')

Vaughan Williams:

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (16')

Tchaikovsky:

Serenade for Strings (30')

Conductor:

Michael Lloyd

Solo Soprano:

TBA

Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham:

Sunday 7th December, 7.30 pm

Artrix, Bromsgrove:

Saturday 13th December, 7.30 pm

Concerts

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Two Special Events Series 3

Birmingham Community Foundation Christmas Carol Concert

Seasonal cheer for all the family.

Programme to include

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker (Excerpts)

Blake: The Snowman

Rimsky-Korsakov: Polonaise (Christmas Eve)

Anderson: Christmas Carol Suite; Sleigh Ride

A selection of Christmas Carols

Conductor: Michael Lloyd

Narrator: Martyn Jones

The Choir of St Peter's Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton *Peter Morris, Director*

Town Hall Birmingham:

Wednesday 3rd December, 8.00pm

Promoted by Hyder Consulting in association with the Birmingham Community Foundation



Viennese New Year

A traditional programme of favourites for the New Year.

Elgar: Serenade for Strings

Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings

J Strauss II: Thunder and Lightning Polka; The Blue Danube; Tales from the Vienna Woods; Emperor Waltz

J Strauss II and E Strauss: Pizzicato Polka

J Strauss I: Radetzky March

Conductor: Michael Lloyd

Sutton Coldfield Town Hall:

Sunday 25th January, 7.30 pm

Promoted by Sutton Coldfield Town Hall Users Ltd.

East meets West

The BPO welcomes back Michael Seal, who will conduct two highly-contrasted works. Gershwin's cheerful concerto reflects the jazz and blues background of its creator, successfully integrated into a 'serious' format. Shostakovich's dramatic and turbulent fourth symphony was for many years a lost work, since he withdrew it before performance, perhaps in fear of his own life. Fortunately both the composer and his symphony survived Stalin's terror to tell the tale later.

Gershwin:

Piano Concerto in F major (32')

Shostakovich:

Symphony No 4 in C minor (65')

Conductor:

Michael Seal

Solo Piano:

Martin Cousin

Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham:

Sunday 15th February, 7.30 pm

Tewkesbury Abbey:

Saturday 21st February, 7.30 pm



Series 4 The BPO Environmental Prom

A celebration of the environment in all its forms, combined with favourites from the Last Night of the Proms.

Grofé: Sunrise; On the Trail (Grand Canyon Suite) (14')

Mussorgsky: Night on Bare Mountain (11')

Respighi: Pines of Rome (22')

Vaughan Williams: The Lark Ascending (15')

New work for choir and orchestra*

Falla: Ritual Fire Dance (El Amor Brujo) (4')

Wood: Fantasia on British Sea Songs (8')

Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance March No 1 (6')

Parry: Jerusalem (3')

J Strauss II: Thunder and Lightning Polka (3')

Conductor:

Michael Lloyd (Birmingham)

Richard Laing (Leominster)

Solo Violin:

Anna Ovsyanikova

Community Choirs of Birmingham*

Priory Church, Leominster:

Sunday 19th April, 7.30 pm

Promoted by the Leominster Festival

Symphony Hall, Birmingham:

Sunday 26th April, 7.30 pm

Promoted by CIWEM in association with WaterAid and the Birmingham Community Foundation.



* Birmingham only

Series 5 Don Quixote and Other Stories

A welcome return to the BPO for Eduardo Vassallo, who takes centre stage in Strauss's musical retelling of Cervantes' classic tale of knightly chivalry. Rachmaninov's work, after Böcklin's painting, depicts a journey to the world across the River Styx, while Holst's ballet music is from a comic opera which is a satire on Wagnerian pretensions.

Holst:

Ballet Music, The Perfect Fool (12')

Rachmaninov:

The Isle of the Dead (24')

R Strauss:

Don Quixote (42')

Conductor:

Michael Lloyd

Solo Cello:

Eduardo Vassallo

Priory Church, Leominster:

Sunday 14th June, 7.30 pm

Promoted by the Leominster Festival

Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham:

Sunday 21st June, 7.30 pm

Concerts

2008/09



Ticket Prices and Booking Details

Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham

Tickets £13 (£10 concessionary, £8 students/children), Tel 0121 303 2323, or book online via www.birminghamboxoffice.co.uk*, or direct from the orchestra (www.bpo.org.uk).

* (£1 postage and administration charge for online bookings).

Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

October 6th only - Ticket prices £15 (£15 students/children).

Contact Robert Mathieson, Tel 0121 373 1779.

January 25th only - For tickets and other information contact Bill Stableford, Tel 0121 308 4126.

All Saints Church, Broseley

Tickets £10 (£7 under 16), Tel 01952 882647 or 01952 882504.

Town Hall Birmingham

Tickets £25 and £20, tel 0121 322 5560, or email christmasconcert@bhamfoundation.co.uk.

For further information, visit www.bhamfoundation.co.uk/newsfs.html.



Artrix, Bromsgrove

Tickets £13 (£10 concessionary, £8 students/children), Tel 01527 577330, or book online via www.artrix.co.uk.*

* (£1.50 postage and administration charge for online bookings).

Symphony Hall Birmingham

Tickets prices on application. Tel 0121 780 3333 or book online via www.necgroup.co.uk/visitor/symphonyhall*,

* (£1 postage and administration charge for online bookings).



Tewkesbury Abbey

Tickets £13 (£10 concessionary, £8 students/children), from the Abbey Shop. Tel 01684 276655 or 01684 856148.

Priory Church, Leominster

April 19th only - Tickets £10 (£5 under 16), Tel 01568 611553.

Not available from the Festival Box Office.

June 14th only - Tickets £10 (£5 under 16), Tel 01568 611190, or from the Festival Box Office at 12 Buttercross Arcade, Leominster HR6 8BN.

Tickets for all concerts are usually available direct from the orchestra.

For enquiries, please email tickets@bpo.org.uk.

All programme timings are approximate.

Programme details and ticket prices may be subject to change without notice. E&OE.

Visit our website - www.bpo.org.uk



Visit our Website ...

www.bpo.org.uk

... for news, reviews, concert dates and ticket information, profiles, photos, and much more - now including a blog where you can get in touch with your views.

- **What did you think of our last concert?**
- **What would you like us to play next season?**
- **Are you interested in joining the orchestra?**
- **Would you like to sponsor or support the orchestra?**
- **Would you like to advertise in our programmes?**



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**SUPPORTING & CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC**

The Birmingham
Community Foundation
would like to thank the
Birmingham
Philharmonic Orchestra
for its generous support
of our cause over the
past four years.

During 2007/2008 the Foundation
distributed over £3.7 million in
grants to 944 local community /
grass roots projects.

In Birmingham there are literally
thousands of groups all doing
valuable work to improve the
quality of life for people facing
disadvantage - our mission is to
improve the quality of life for the
communities in Greater
Birmingham; helping people to
help themselves!

This years **Christmas Carol Concert**
(organised in association with Hyder
Consulting (UK) Ltd) will take place
on **Wednesday 3rd December 2008**
at 8 pm at the Town Hall, Birmingham.

Tickets cost £25 and £20 with all
proceeds going to the Birmingham
Community Foundation

For more information please visit:
www.bhamfoundation.co.uk/newsfs.html

Or contact:

Birmingham Community
Foundation
Nechells Baths
Nechells Park Road
Nechells
Birmingham B7 5PD

tel 0121 322 5560

fax 0121 322 5579

email team@bhamfoundation.co.uk

Registered charity number:1048162

Company registration number:3083289

birmingham
community
FOUNDATION
targeting communities in need



Giving our Community a brighter future





The BPO, with the City of Birmingham Choir and friends, performing Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony at Town Hall Birmingham in April 2008.

The Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra

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Kings Heath, Birmingham,
West Midlands
B14 7DU

T 0121 689 2835

E info@bpo.org.uk

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If you would like to hire the BPO to perform or to discuss any aspects of our future plans and programmes, please contact our Concert Manager on the email above.

Programme design by Chris Bertram

"one of the best non-professional orchestras in the land"