

# SUMMER ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

**Aeolian Sinfonia of North London - Thursday 26th June 2025, 8pm**

Our Lady's Hall, Our Lady Help of Christians Parish Centre, Falkland Road, Kentish Town, London NW5 2XT

## **Peter Warlock (1894–1930), arranged by Jane Thomas: *Capriol Suite***

The *Capriol Suite* is a set of dances composed in 1926, originally for piano duet but later scored for string and full orchestra. The melodies are based on tunes in Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchésographie* (1588), a manual of Renaissance dances addressed to a fictitious pupil named Capriol. Peter Warlock was an authority on Elizabethan and Jacobean music under his real name of Philip Heseltine. Each of the six movements has a distinct mood and style.

1. Basse-Danse in D minor (*Allegro moderato*), is a stately, rather sombre court dance, in which the feet were kept low (*en basse*), gliding over the floor in a dignified striding motion. The same eight-bar phrase is subjected to instrumental and harmonic contrasts, with a little variation at the end. There is also some syncopation and hints of hemiolas.
2. The slow, even more solemn G minor Pavanne (originally 'Padovana', from Padua) (*Allegretto, ma un poco lento*) consists of a simple melody over a drum beat, with a final dramatic *rallentando*.
3. The Tordion (*Con moto*) is a lively French dance in 6/4 time consisting of five steps with a jump on the sixth beat. Pizzicato and staccato create a light, playful mood over five short sections.
4. The Bransle (from French *branler* = to sway) (*Presto*) was danced with dancers linked together in a circle or line, moving first to the left, then to the right, gradually shifting to the left. Often performed at country weddings and accompanied by the dancers singing, it remained popular into the 17th century. This exciting *presto* movement races along with a middle section in the major key.
5. The lyrical *Pieds-en-lair* in G major and 9/4 time (*Andante tranquillo*) is inspired by the galliard, but is much gentler.
6. *Mattachins* in F major in brisk duple time (*Allegro con brio*) is a sword dance traditionally performed by men. Warlock portrays the clashing swords brilliantly.

## **Sergei Rachmaninov (1873–1943): *Vocalise*, Op 34, No 14 (orchestrated by the composer)**

*Vocalise* is the last in a series of 14 romantic songs by Rachmaninov. Composed in 1915, three years after the first 13, it is without words. 'What need is there for words when you can convey everything better and more expressively with your voice?', he said. It was dedicated to Antonina Nezhdanova, the star coloratura soprano of the Moscow Grand Opera, who gave the premiere the following year. By then, Rachmaninov had produced an orchestral version to be conducted by his friend and virtuoso string player, Serge Koussevitzky. It is now known that Koussevitzky had performed 'Vocalise' on the double bass in December 1915. The beautiful melody, evoking the difficulty and sadness of life expressed in Russian songs, has led to its popularity and countless instrumental arrangements. Tonight's violin soloist **Elizabeth Ann Binks** studied at the Guildhall School of Music and was awarded the AGSM and the Salzmänn Scholarship. She has worked with many top UK professional orchestras, and has led the Virtuosi of London. She regularly plays violin concertos at Morley College.

## **Georges Bizet (1838–1875): *Symphony in C***

*Allegro vivo; Adagio; Allegro vivace; Allegro vivace*

This symphony was written within a month in 1855 at the age of 17 when Bizet was a student at the Paris Conservatoire. It strongly resembles the work of his teacher, Charles Gounod. This may explain why the work was unknown and neither performed nor published during his lifetime. Rediscovered in 1933, it was premiered in Basel two years later, published and quickly became part of the Romantic repertoire. It is now considered to be clearly superior to the work of his teacher, in fact an astonishing achievement for such a young person.

The first movement opens with a sprightly little 3-note theme. This is then followed by a lyrical melody introduced by the oboe. These themes are developed until a long crescendo heralds the recapitulation, followed by a short coda.

The exquisitely beautiful slow movement begins with a brief introductory passage, recalling the rhythmic figure with which the symphony opened. Then the haunting oboe solo begins, followed by a slow, flowing string melody. Next there is a fugal string section based on the introductory figure, before the oboe melody returns in the recapitulation, heard over pizzicato and fugal string elements.

The scherzo opens like a Scottish jig. This tune is then used as counterpoint for the second subject, another soaring string melody. The trio sections begin with a noticeable drone bass. The woodwind play variants of the opening theme over a string harmonic base.

The finale begins with light and frantic work by the strings, followed by a march on brass and woodwind. A lyrical episode is played first by the strings, later on the woodwind. These themes alternate until the recapitulation and the final exuberant ending.

**Franz Lehár, (1870–1948): *The Merry Widow*, Selection (arranged H M Higgs / Dan Godfrey)**  
*Polonaise; Allegretto moderato; Allegretto; Allegro; Allegro moderato; Allegretto; Tempo di Valse, Tempo di Marcia; A Piacere; Tempo di Valse; Allegro vivace; Allegretto; Allegretto moderato; Più lento; Allegretto; Valse moderato; Tempo di Valse lente; Tempo di Marcia; Presto.*

*Die Lustige Witwe* (The Merry Widow), is an operetta by the Austro-Hungarian composer Franz Lehár, and the librettists Leo Stein and Viktor Léon. It owes its origin to a comic play, *L'attaché d'ambassade* (the Embassy Attaché), by Henri Meilhac, premiered in Paris in 1861 and a subsequent German adaptation. The story concerns a rich widow, whose countrymen attempt to keep her money in the principality by finding her the right husband, a Count. The operetta was premiered in Vienna in 1905. After a few shaky weeks at the box-office, it ran for 483 performances. It quickly became both an international success with performances all over Europe and in five different languages in Buenos Aires, and a commercial success inspiring merchandise from corsets to chocolate. Further adaptations followed for ballets, films and a novel. Themes from the operetta, of which perhaps the best known is 'The Merry Widow Waltz', appeared in a Shostakovich symphony, a Hitchcock film and a Samuel Beckett play. The selection consists of many short sections changing in key, time and tempo.

This evening's music should finish before 9.15pm. At the end of the concert, please stay for refreshments and to meet the performers. We are very grateful to Father Allan, Liliana and Our Lady Help of Christians Church for hosting us, to Richard and Rose from SankTus for publicity and refreshments, to Nigel Brockmann for managing the orchestra's finances, to Liz Valentine for writing the programme notes, to Segun Adetunji, Daniel Davis, Fumiko Mihara, Bronwen Taylor, Liz Valentine and others for helping to fix extra instrumentalists, and to various members of other local orchestras and the wider music community for their help in putting on this concert.

Please, please, before you leave, give a **paper** donation to the **SankTus Welfare Project**, which provides essential help to homeless and vulnerable people, the elderly and those with support needs in the local community. The cost of providing these valuable services has recently risen sharply. You can make a cash donation in the hall before you leave, or send a donation using the instructions found on the website [sanktus.org](http://sanktus.org)

**Aeolian Sinfonia of North London**, active for many years, was conducted for most of these by the late Roy Budden, who founded the orchestra at least sixty years ago as the Kensington Sinfonia. Known as one of North London's friendliest orchestras, we rehearse on Thursday evenings during school term time. If you know of anyone who would like to join us, we always need string players, and often extra woodwind and brass. Future concerts will be listed at [aeoliansinfonia.com](http://aeoliansinfonia.com) - send us a message via the site and ask to be added to our mailing list.

#### **Violin 1**

Elizabeth Ann Binks (leader)  
Donna Chapman  
Margot Hodgkinson  
Fumiko Mihara  
Peng Nian  
Mariko Yamamoto  
**Violin 2**  
Malcolm Allison  
Jasmine Ali  
Gita Croft  
Piyarat Martin  
Cornelia Maynard Smith

#### **Viola**

Segun Adetunji  
Chris Ebulu  
John Rokos  
Bronwen Taylor  
Henry Walker  
**Cello**  
Simon Hewitt  
Dave Jenkinson  
Jude Olabanji  
Ruth Williams  
**Bass**  
Emmanuel Adeshina

#### **Flute**

Liz Valentine  
Katri Yates  
**Oboe / Cor anglais**  
David Williamson  
Nick Murray  
**Clarinet**  
Nick Charles  
Nigel Brockmann  
**Bassoon**  
Bryan Ogilvie  
Naomi Perry

#### **Horn**

Daniel Davis  
David Claydon  
**Trumpet**  
Tristan Boldy  
Ben Wong  
**Conductors /**  
**Timpani**  
Keith Bramich  
Charlotte Harber

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