

SUMMER CONCERT IN AID OF SANKTUS

Aeolian Sinfonia of North London - Thursday 2nd July 2026, 8pm

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

(Louis Joseph) Ferdinand Hérold (1791-1833), *Zampa*: Overture

Ferdinand Hérold, born in Paris of Alsatian descent, was a highly regarded eighteenth-century French composer, who died of tuberculosis at the age of 42. A master of comic opera, he also wrote ballet music, orchestral symphonies and piano pieces. *Zampa, ou La fiancée de marbre* (The Marble Bride), is a post-revolutionary comic opera in three acts, with a complex plot of melodrama, seduction and the supernatural. Zampa is a pirate who jilted a young maid called Alice. Later, while about to marry the beautiful but unwilling Camille, he comes on a marble statue of Alice constructed after she had died from a broken heart and puts an engagement ring on its finger in jest but the statue comes to life and drags him down to his death beneath the sea. The opera was first performed in Paris at the Opéra Comique in 1831 and in London at the King's Theatre two years later. It became extremely popular over the next few decades, in Germany and Italy as well as France. It was revived at the Opéra Comique in 2008. The overture is one of Hérold's best known works and a standard piece of the orchestral light-classical repertoire. Its rapidly changing *tempi* and textures herald the drama and variety of the ensuing opera. Note in particular the lovely rhapsodic clarinet solo (played tonight by Nick Charles). Berlioz rather unkindly complained that the work consisted of four or five motives borrowed and stuck one after the other without any real link. What do you think?

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), *Symphony No 2 in D major, Op 73*

*Allegro no troppo; Adagio non troppo; Allegretto grazioso (quasi andantino);
Allegro con spirito*

Brahms composed his second symphony in a couple of months in the summer of 1877 at Pörtlach am Wörthersee in southern Austria. This peaceful summer resort and lakeside town provided him with an inspiring natural retreat. His first symphony had taken over 20 years to write. Structurally complex and deeply expressive, his second symphony forms a bridge between classical and romantic genres. An apparent optimistic serenity hides an underlying tense foreboding. Premiered in Vienna in December under Hans Richter, it met with immediate success and has remained the most popular of Brahms's four symphonies.

It begins with a simple three-note melody in the low strings taken up by the horns, a theme central to the whole symphony, subject to various transformations. Horns, woodwinds and strings play a serene melody. This is followed by a muffled drum roll and dirge on the trombones, indicating a change of mood, threatening the pastoral idyll. The second main theme, introduced by the violas and 'cellos, is a variation on 'Wiegenlied', known as Brahms' Lullaby, written for one of the children of his beloved Clara Schumann.

The second much more sombre movement in B major opens with a beautiful melody played on the 'cellos, with a counter melody in the bassoons. The second theme, introduced by the woodwinds, is in 12/8, as is also the penultimate section. The movement is characterised by instability, with switches between major and minor modes.

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The third movement, a scherzo in G major, is much more light-hearted. It begins with a lilting oboe solo, actually a transformation of the basic three-note theme, accompanied by pizzicato 'cellos. Brahms incorporates folk-like melodies, in line with the nineteenth-century movement of musical nationalism (compare Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*). Peaceful, elegant waltz-like sections are interrupted by two rhythmically and metrically contrasting *Presto* sections at double tempo, the first introduced by the strings in 2/4 time, the second in 3/8 time.

The Finale, returning to the original key of D major, 'bursts forth with unbridled joy', as one commentator puts it. Filled with buoyant rhythms, triumphant brass fanfares and an exhilarating sense of forward movement, it ends with a triumphant blaze of trombones in their highest register, providing an exultant and uplifting finish.

This evening's music should finish well 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 Elizabeth Ann Binks for leading the orchestra and providing violin bowings, to Nigel Brockmann for managing the orchestra's finances, to Liz Valentine for writing the programme notes, to Charlotte Harber for conducting the *Zampa* Overture and organising extra publicity and to various members of this and other local orchestras and the wider music community for their help in putting on this concert.

Please, please, before you leave, give a generous **paper** donation to **SankTus**, 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

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 - 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
Chrissie Potter
Pamela White
Mariko Yamamoto

Violin 2 :

Jasmine Ali
Richard Allan
Rohan Arambepola
Gita Croft
Piyarat Martin
Fumiko Mihara

Viola :

Segun Adetunji
John Rokos
Richard Stanley
Henry Walker

Cello :

Jude Olabanji
Rose Russell
Ruth Williams

Bass :

Emmanuel Adeshina
Paul Martin

Flute / Piccolo :

Liz Valentine
Helen Barrett
Oboe :
David Williamson
Sara Ho

Clarinet :

Nick Charles
Nigel Brockmann

Bassoon :

Bryan Ogilvie
Dan Sowood

Horn :

Daniel Davis
Matthew Horn
Anna Wood
David Claydon

Trumpet

Tristan Boldy
Ben Wong

Conductors /

Timpani :

Keith Bramich
Charlotte Harber