

KINGSTON PHILHARMONIA

Kingston Parish Church
Saturday 10th July 2010
7.30pm

Conductor – Levon Parikian
Leader – Adrian Charlesworth
Piano – Michael Round
Vocals – Tessa Dritchard

Rodgers – Slaughter on Tenth Avenue

Rodgers – I Can't Say No

Rodgers – If I Loved You

Rodgers – Wonderful Guy

Gershwin – Embraceable You

Gershwin – Someone To Watch Over Me

Gershwin – Rhapsody in Blue

———— *Interval* ————

Rodgers – Carousel Waltz

Sondheim – It's the little things you do together

Sondheim – Losing My Mind

Rodgers – Gonna wash that man ..

Sondheim – Send in the Clowns

Gershwin – They can't take that away from me

Gershwin – American in Paris

LEVON PARIKIAN — CONDUCTOR

Levon Parikian studied conducting with George Hurst and Ilya Musin. Since completing his studies, he has pursued a freelance conducting career, and is much in demand as Guest Conductor with orchestras in Britain. He currently holds Principal Conductor posts with several London-based orchestras, and is Principal Conductor of the City of Oxford Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Rehearsal Orchestra. He works extensively with students and youth orchestras, including the Royal College of Music Junior Sinfonia, the National Youth Strings Academy, and Royal Holloway University of London, where he also teaches conducting.



Levon lives in South London and his hobbies include making retaliatory hoax calls to call centres, cycling headlong into bendy buses, and wondering why he came upstairs.

MICHAEL ROUND — PIANO

Born into a musical family, Michael Round is a solo pianist, accompanist, arranger, writer, music editor and occasional conductor. His playing career has ranged from orchestral work with the four London and other orchestras to Palm Court Hotel music in (perhaps appropriately) the Arabian Gulf - plus a short season of excursions to Venice and back, playing piano while being propelled backwards through Europe at over 100 mph on the Orient Express.



As soloist or orchestral pianist Michael has travelled to over 20 different countries (including seven visits to Japan and three to Brazil), and contributed to film soundtracks ranging from the first 'Star Wars' movie to 'Zulu Dawn', 'Return to Oz' and the Canadian feature 'Unlikely Heroes'. He has played extensively in West End theatres and was for a time Musical Director of Bernstein's 'Wonderful Town' with Maureen Lipman, and of Joan Rivers' UK tours (2002-4).

Michael's work as arranger includes orchestrations of Ravel piano pieces, performed in London's Royal Festival Hall under Leonard Slatkin and in Tokyo and Washington D.C. under Vladimir Ashkenazy (who also recorded them with the NHK Symphony Orchestra for the Japan-based Octavia label). He writes regularly for 'Music Teacher', 'International Piano' and other Rhinegold magazines, and is also arranger for, pianist with, and conductor of the St Clements Wind Ensemble (<http://www.gcolville.info/details.htm>), a group founded in 2004 which performs regularly in Germany, London and Edinburgh.

Michael's general interest in the music of Villa-Lobos came to fruition in the composer's birth centenary year of 1987, during which he gave recitals and BBC radio talks. The following year he travelled to Rio de Janeiro (the composer's home town), becoming the only non-Brazilian finalist (and winning second prize) in the International Villa-Lobos Piano Competition.

TESSA PRITCHARD — VOCALS

Tessa has worked in the theatre, tv and film for the last 25 years. Notably she appeared in *Tea With Mussolini* directed by Franco Zeffirelli playing Connie Raynor.



In the West End, theatre performances include Eva Peron in *Evita*, Jemima in *Cats* directed by Trevor Nunn, Diana in the European premiere of *Nine* at the Donmar Warehouse directed by David Leveaux. Other roles include Elsa in the *Sound of Music*, Fraulein Kost in *Cabaret* at the Chichester Festival Theatre; Rachel in *My Cousin Rachel*; Madam N in *Little Hero*, Veronika Wigg at the Edinburgh Festival; Beatrice in *A View From The Bridge*, Arthur Miller; Blanche in *Brighton Beach Memoirs* and Bella in *Lost In Yonkers*, Neil Simon; Vera in *Stepping Out*; Viv Nicholson in *Spend Spend Spend* at the English Speaking Theatre in Frankfurt.

TV credits include *Me and the Girls* starring Tom Courtenay playing Bonnie MacIntyre; *Agatha Christie* in *Agatha Christie Vanishes* for NBCTv, Beth in *Casualty*; Maureen Baker in *Doctors*.

ADRIAN CHARLESWORTH — LEADER

Adrian, tonight's Guest Leader, took up his first Leader's position aged 8 when the Kingston-upon-Thames Music Director, George Steven, invited him to lead the Kingston-upon-Thames Junior Orchestra.



He is now a freelance violinist currently working with a range of ensembles from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to chamber groups, operas, musicals, Big Bands, film backing tracks and last year for the Queen during her 80th Birthday Luncheon. He very recently performed *The Lark Ascending* and *Berlioz's Reverie and Caprice* under the baton of our conductor, Lev. He also teaches violin at St. George's College, Weybridge and Reigate Grammar School, coaches at various summer schools, is on The Board of The Rehearsal Orchestra and has just been appointed to the Kingston Music and Arts Service.

KINGSTON PHILHARMONIA WEB SITE

Visit the Kingston Philharmonia web site on

www.kingstonphil.org.uk

Here you will find information on future concerts, biographies, orchestral news (including a recent wedding), the history of the orchestra, and more.

There is also an on-line questionnaire, relating to the current concert; we would appreciate it if you were to complete this. It will help us in targeting our publicity, planning future concerts, and ensure that you will receive information on concerts and other orchestral activities.

Click on the **Concert Questionnaire** link towards the bottom-left of the home page.

‘Broadway comes to Kingston’

From Broadway to Kingston

Ever since the musical came into being in the early years of the twentieth century, Broadway has been its epicentre and Mecca. Every aspiring composer of music dramas (often little more than a miscellany of songs and dance routines with hardly any plot) wanted – and needed – to get his work performed at a theatre on that fabled avenue, and works that made it there were often exported and became successes in Europe.

Tonight we can enjoy a selection of those Broadway successes – songs from the musicals of Richard Rodgers, Stephen Sondheim and George Gershwin. The programme also includes three more substantial items, two of which – although sharing some of the essence of those songs – belong more on the concert platform than on stage: Gershwin’s ‘Rhapsody in Blue’ and ‘An American in Paris’.

Gershwin: pianist and alchemist

One of tonight’s featured composers is the hugely popular Jacob Gershowitz, the largely self-taught New York pianist and so-called ‘song plugger’ on Tin Pan Alley, all the while harbouring the ambition to become a great ‘classical’ pianist and composer. He even applied to study composition with Stravinsky, Ravel and Nadia Boulanger in Paris! Perhaps fortunately, he was rejected by all three, but had the satisfaction (if posthumously!) of having some of his compositions conducted by Toscanini and Klemperer!

As you will no doubt have guessed, Gershowitz was the patronymic of George, whose father was a Russian Jew who emigrated from St Petersburg to the States in the 1890s. His father changed his name from Gershowitz to Gershvin shortly after his arrival, and George changed it once more to Gershwin when he became a professional musician.

The Gershwins were a musical family, and George started earning his living from music as early as 15. His brother Ira was already becoming known as a songwriter, and the two of them eventually collaborated and wrote some of today’s best known songs and musicals.

On February 12, 1924, a so-called ‘Experiment in Modern Music’ took place in the Aeolian Hall, New York. Band Leader Paul Whiteman staged the second of his

experimental 'classical-jazz' concerts – concerts which he claimed were 'purely educational' and designed to provide 'a stepping stone which will make it very simple for the masses to understand, and therefore enjoy, symphony and opera'. He had asked Gershwin to contribute a concerto-like piece, and Gershwin, who had only a few weeks in which to oblige, later said he was on a train to Boston when the idea of writing 'a musical kaleidoscope of America' came to him. By the time he had reached Boston he had sketched out a pretty clear idea of the sort of piece he was going to write if not its actual musical substance.

Gershwin referred to the piece as his 'American Rhapsody', but the eventual title was suggested by his brother Ira who had just been to an exhibition of Whistler paintings with titles such as Nocturne in Black. Gershwin wrote the piece for two pianos, and it was Whiteman's regular band arranger Ferde Grofé who made the arrangement for jazz band and piano. Gershwin played the solo part himself, apparently improvising some passages which he did not write down till after the performance. The opening clarinet glissando came into being during rehearsal when 'as a joke on Gershwin', Ross Gorman, Whiteman's virtuoso clarinettist, played the opening bar that way. Gershwin liked the idea, and told him to add as much of a wail as possible!

Many different arrangements have been made since then, but it is the one for full symphony orchestra and piano made by Grofé in 1942 which is usually played today, and the one Kingston Philharmonia will be playing tonight.

Gershwin based his piece on the bustle and energy of American life, transmuting that raw material into musical gold. He repeated this winning formula with his second most famous orchestral piece – 'An American in Paris'. This time it was Gershwin's purpose 'to portray the impression of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city and listens to various street noises and absorbs the French atmosphere'. Gershwin actually purchased a set of Paris taxi klaxons to give the piece that special authentic touch!

Gershwin was not one for making grandiose statements about his music, or even music in general. He did, however, once remark that 'True music must reflect the thought and aspirations of the people and time. My people are Americans. My time is today'.

Richard Rodgers: writer of more than 900 published songs and 40 Broadway musicals!

Richard Rodgers was also from a New York Jewish family, but a wealthy one, whose parents took him to see operettas on Broadway when he was a child. While he was at Columbia University he met Lorenz Hart, and the two of them began writing amateur shows. It took five years before they had a real success ('Manhattan', in 1925), but then, throughout the rest of the decade, they had hit shows on Broadway and in London. Lorentz developed health problems in the early 40s and could no longer cope with the pressure, so Rodgers began working with Oscar Hammerstein. Their first musical was the ground-breaking hit 'Oklahoma' (1943) – ground-breaking because it revolutionised the form of the musical: instead of a collection of songs, dances, and comic turns held together by a tenuous plot, Rodgers and Hammerstein created an integrated masterpiece. 'Oklahoma' was followed by 'Carousel' in 1945 and 'South Pacific' in 1949. 'Slaughter on Tenth Avenue' (1936) is something of a curiosity. It is a ballet with music by Rodgers and choreography by the famous George Balanchine of Ballets Russes which occurs near the end of Rodgers and Hart's musical comedy 'On Your Toes'. 'Slaughter' is the story of a hooper who falls in love with a dance hall girl who is then shot and killed by her jealous boyfriend. The hooper then shoots the boyfriend!

Stephen Sondheim: an amazingly versatile talent, from West side Story to Aristophanes

Stephen Sondheim is represented by three items on tonight's programme. Sondheim had a miserable childhood (his father, a distant figure, abandoned him and his mother, and she treated Stephen as if he were to blame for what had happened). Fortunately he met Jimmy Hammerstein, Oscar Hammerstein's son, and Oscar became Stephen's surrogate father. As you might expect, Oscar had a profound influence on Stephen, including taking him through what might be called an apprenticeship in writing musicals! Sondheim's big break came in 1957 when he wrote the lyrics to 'West Side Story' – probably the best known piece he has ever been associated with. 'Company' was written in 1970; 'Follies' in 1971; and 'A Little Night Music' in 1973. 'Send in the Clowns', from the latter, became a hit single for Judy Collins, and Sondheim's only Top Forty hit. Amongst Sondheim's more curious productions is 'The Frogs', a musical version of Aristophanes' comedy – first performed in the Yale University swimming pool in May 1974!

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RAFFLE

The raffle is an important source of much needed income for the orchestra, so please buy plenty of tickets from the table by the main door. The orchestra acknowledges with thanks all those who have so generously contributed to tonight's raffle, in particular:

Bachmanns Patisserie

Garsons Farm

Lorna Lyons

Julie Scotty

Tesco Metro

Portsmouth Road, Thames Ditton

West End Esher

East Molesey

Table arrangement by

Margaret Pattenden

Ardfinnan Crafts,

45 Station Road Thames Ditton

Tel: 020 8398 7659

The orchestra would like to acknowledge the support of **Kingston Arts Council, Mail Boxes Etc.** and would like to thank **AKP Chartered Accountants** for their support in auditing our accounts. They provide continual encouragement and guidance to the orchestra.



OUR NEXT CONCERT

**Kingston Parish Church
Saturday 23rd October 2010
7.30pm**

Works to be performed in the coming season include

**Bartok - Hungarian Sketches
Dvorak - Wood Dove
Shostakovich - Symphony No 5**

**Full details available soon on
www.kingstonphil.org.uk**

1st Violins

Adrian Charlesworth (Leader)
Robert Beattie
Sheila Cochrane
Jill Hollingberry
Dorothea Klinge
Sonja Nagle
Chris Spiers
Dominic Steinitz
Pauline Waghorn
Marton Zempleni
Julie Aherne
Manolis Zarafonitis

2nd Violins

Chris Smith
Sarah Bruce
Catherine Deere
Jane Hicks
Heather Lucas-Brown
Maggie Pattenden
Caroline Phillips
Jackie Steinitz

Violas

Dan Hamm
Liz Allard
Susannah Rang

Cellos

Philip Austin
Charlie Shore
Marguerite Pocock
Hilary Willis
Celia Allaker
Catherine Joseph
Samantha King

Double Bass

Terry Gibbs
Ed Babar

Harp

Tamara Young

Flutes

Robin Berg
Catherine Black
Laura Beardsmore

Oboes

Clare Warren
Meriel Avery
Diana Parsons

Clarinet

Sheena Balmain
Sam Riley
Elliot de Vivo

Bassoons

Jeff Cox
Rebecca Adams

Saxophone

Nick Charles
Nigel Blake
Ken Butcher

Horns

Andrew Osborne
Robin Livermore
Chris Pocock
Chrissie Ranson

Trumpets

Jeremy Neep
Rachelle Bradley
Duncan Evans

Trombones

Andy Grimwood
Gordon Faultless
Steve Clarke

Tuba

Mike Laird

Timpani

Chris Kimber

Percussion

Hannah Beynon
Dan Day
Oliver Blake
Tim Baldwin