

King John Orchestra Concert
Sunday, 25th November 2018, 7.00 pm

PROGRAMME

Conductor – Chris Jessop

Hamish MacCunn (1868-1916), Concert overture, *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, Op. 3



*Land of the heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood...*
Walter Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*

Hamish MacCunn was born in Greenock, but moved to London in 1883 to study at the Royal College of Music. Despite his move south, he championed Scottish folk music and musical culture throughout his life, and much of his work reflects that Scottish heritage. This is particularly noticeable in his most famous work, *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, written when he was just eighteen.

The piece is reminiscent of other nineteenth-century Scottish-influenced works such as Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*, and in particular Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, but with the difference that, unlike them, his early years were spent in Scotland itself.

The piece presents a view of the Scottish landscape that is as romantic and proudly nationalistic as the works of Walter Scott, from which it takes its title. The brooding opening theme, suggestive of the mountains of Scotland, begins in the cellos and features characteristic jagged 'Scotch Snap' rhythms; this develops into the noble and lyrical main theme. A horn solo reprises the music of the opening theme with a rather uncertain air; over a pedal note in the lower instruments, the intensity and speed of the music gathers, leading to a stormy section as the floods are unleashed. The final recapitulation of the main theme burst with all the pride and love for the Scottish landscape that MacCunn clearly felt throughout his relatively short life.

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934), *The Wand of Youth Suite No. 1*, Op. 1a

1. Overture 2. Serenade 3. Minuet (Old Style) 4. Sun Dance 5. Fairy Pipers 6. Slumber Scene 7. Fairies and Giants



According to his mother, Elgar was of a nervous and sensitive disposition as a boy, and unlikely to join in the rough-and-tumble of family games with his six siblings. Instead, when they wrote plays to perform for the grownups, his contribution was to write the music.

As a seasoned composer in 1907, he revisited the music he had written when ten years old, and developed it, with only minor changes, into two suites that include the play's characters and some of the stage directions.

Suite No. 1 opens with a light and energetic overture (featuring an impassioned and typically Elgarian theme), followed by a lyrical serenade. The stately, old-fashioned minuet in the third movement is given the stage direction 'The old people enter', which presumably represents Elgar's parents, although they were only in their forties at the time!

The fourth movement is a spirited Sun Dance. In the fifth movement, "Two fairy pipers pass in a boat and charm [the children] to sleep'. This is followed by the tender and gentle Slumber Scene, scored for strings only.

The final movement represents a complete change of mood, with the low instruments marching along like the heavy footsteps of the giants, contrasting with the swirling scales and flourishes of the wind and upper strings, representing the fairies.

It is the successful evocation of so many different moods, along with the combination of childlike simplicity and attractive melodies with the musical craftsmanship of thirty years' experience, that gives the piece its enduring charm.

--Interval--

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904), Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60

1. *Allegro non tanto* 2. *Adagio* 3. *Scherzo (Furiant): Presto* 4. *Finale: Allegro con spirito*



The numbering of Dvořák's symphonies is famously confusing; the symphony that we will perform tonight was published as number 1, even though it was preceded by the one published as number 3, which we now know as number 5! Despite this uncertainty, we can be sure of the fact that it was commissioned by Hans Richter, the conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic.

Perhaps to cater for Viennese audiences, who at the time valued Germanic qualities, Dvořák combined his own personal folk-influenced style with German musical forms and influences. The form, key, structure, scoring, mood, compositional technique and tempo of the symphony shows the influence of works by Brahms and Beethoven, as well as drawing on Viennese dances and Czech folk songs and musical forms.

The first movement is in sonata form, and opens with a cheerful main theme that provides much of the material for the movement. The lyrical Adagio that follows is in rondo form, and consists entirely of a beautiful meditation on a single theme.

The gentle mood of the movement is swept away by the driving intensity of the Scherzo, with its shifting rhythms characteristic of the Czech dance form the *Furiant*. The much gentler less rhythmically insistent Trio provides a calmer interlude, before the movement rushes full tilt to its conclusion with a return of the *Furiant*.

The primary theme in the last movement is an inversion of the primary theme of the first, giving the symphony a cyclical feel. After a quiet start, the movement develops in good-natured and festive fashion. At the coda, the full orchestra drops out to leave the violins to present a new, fragmented version of the main theme, with syncopated rhythms; gradually the full forces return and the work comes to a majestic close.

THE KING JOHN ORCHESTRA – KJO

www.kingjohnorchestra.org.uk

Conductor - Chris Jessop

Chris Jessop has been Musical Director of the King John Orchestra since 2010. He has previously conducted the Orlando Singers of Cambridge, Swavesey Community Choir, St Ives Choral Society and the Addenbrooke's Musical Society, and has also been the Choral Director of the Huntingdonshire Philharmonic Society. Repertoire conducted includes Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Handel's *Samson*, *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*, and Elgar's *Spirit of England* and *The Music Makers*. He has been a GP partner at Cromwell Place Surgery, St Ives, since 1996.

Our Players

The KJO was founded in 2006 by parents of King's College School and quickly expanded to include parents from St John's and anyone else who would like to join us. We welcome anyone who would like the opportunity to play in an orchestra: no particular connection with the schools is necessary. There are no auditions and anyone is welcome to join until a section is full, but to enjoy it you will need to be (or have been at some point!) at least Grade 6 standard. We rehearse fortnightly on Monday evenings during term time. We have some vacancies in the strings and brass sections at the moment. If you are interested in playing, please use the contact form on the website at <http://www.kingjohnorchestra.org.uk/aboutjoining.html>, and we will get in touch.

Violin 1

Laurence Drake (Leader)
Frances Baxter
David Cope
Julian Edge-Partington
Alexandra Hayes
Susanne Hilger
Joanne Newton
Rebecca de Rafael
Rosamund Williams

Violin 2

Heather Sutcliffe
John Bungay
Joanna Cargill
Nick Ebbutt
Fiona Gabrielczyk
Sheila Hunter
Anthea Millar
Kit Stoner
Ann Winterborn

Viola

Sarah Steed
Catriona Ball
Josh Healey
Mary Kasanicki
Mary Reid

Cello

Fiona Cornish
Giles Barton-Owen
David Carruthers
Jonathan Chapter
John Cheney
Helen Clayton
Charlotte Sale
Ursula Wolff

Double Bass

Carol Patton
David McQuarrie

Flute 1

Robert Gardiner

Flute 2

Lucinda Czernin
Alice Garnett

Piccolo

Alice Garnett

Oboe

Philippa Elloway
Alan Jackson
Mary Jane O'Sullivan

Clarinet

Penny Barton
Wendy Fray
James Loudon

Bassoon

Jonathan Gadsby
Paul Sackin

Horn

Chris Rogers
Sachiko Rocca
Holly Baker
Susan Fairley

Trumpet

Rory Gordon

Trombone

Peter Gough
Jim Rowley

Bass Trombone

Liz White

Tuba

Robert Sansom

Timpani

Kate Wishart

Cymbals

Julian Edge-Partington

OUR CHARITY TONIGHT

This year at our KJO concert we are supporting Cambridge Children's Charity Foundation.

Cambridge Children's Charity Foundation is a vehicle for giving back locally. We are a group of local people who have come together because we have a common interest and passion to support local charities that offer help to children and young people who live locally here in Cambridge.

CCCF is our response to the ongoing challenge that local children's charities face to raise funds to help with their core costs. Young people are facing disadvantages - living in poverty and coping with disability and every setback in between - and there are wonderful small charities and voluntary groups that know how to support them, understand the difficulties in their everyday lives and have the skills and expertise to make a difference, without big marketing machines, with lean business models, often struggling with core running costs yet still managing to deliver impressive outcomes in their defined communities.

As local parents with children enjoying the privileges that this rarefied city affords, this is a great opportunity to give back to the local community.



Please support generously!

And finally, special thanks to:

Katherine Firth for the poster illustration

John at Ryecroft Data for printing services

Michael Holiday and The Perse School for instrument loan

The staff of King's, St John's and the Perse Schools for all their support and encouragement

Robert Ziegler, our Patron for his continued enthusiasm and support