



There is
Light At
the End
Of Every
Tunnel.
Keep Moving
- All You
Need is
A Little
Faith

Orchestrate



Building a State of Readiness... Rehearsals are back under way

It is hard to believe that it was in February 2020 that we performed our last, memorable concert for our President's Annual Concert with Luke Jones as our guest soloist. The last 16 or 17 months have been the most challenging we have endured in our lifetime, and it has been a resolute lesson that we shouldn't take all things for granted. We have all missed social interaction with family and friends during the pandemic and, as the restrictions are being eased, performance is once again on the horizon. Chester Philharmonic performed their first concert of 2021 in Chester Cathedral last Saturday. It was a different sort of experience with limited numbers and enjoyable all the same. The Storyhouse open air theatre in Grosvenor Park is proving to be highly successful through an extended season. They serve to remind us that live performance is a stimulating, engaging experience and is something we have all missed whether we are performers or audience members. We are seeing a number of ensembles reopen their concert halls and invite audiences (in limited numbers) back for live performances in England. Yes indeed, there is nothing like a live performance and whilst we have been grateful for technology which enables virtual performance, somehow it seems to be a colourless, empty experience and is surely hard for the artists to give of their absolute best. Seeing fans back for the tennis has been motivational for the players.

We are glad to report that some members of the Orchestra are back in rehearsals and a concert programme for our 53rd year has been planned. We share this in the diary section of this newsletter. As a high-level overview, we are making plans for our first concert on Sunday November 28th which will be a family concert of popular seasonal and film music with Mark Lansom conducting. Our President's Annual Concert on Sunday 27th February 2022 will bring the ever-popular Dvorak's New World Symphony No 9 to the stage. In May (date has yet to be finalised) we will welcome back Leon Bosch with the programme featuring Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition'; the season will conclude on Saturday 16th July 2022 with Richard Howarth conducting Shostakovich's 'Gadfly Suite'.

At the present time, we remain unsure on how the logistics/protocols for the concerts will work; evidence currently is that concerts are performed without an interval and therefore shorter in length than usual. We will continue to monitor the situation and be in a better position to work out how best to handle the concert arrangements nearer the time. Our expectation is that they will progressively ease as we continue to learn to live with the virus and it is to be hoped that by the middle of next year, we can start to experience a more normal concert experience.

Our President, Maria Hinfelaar has sent a special message for us

"As the Honorary President of Wrexham Symphony Orchestra, I have sorely missed our live performances in the past 16 months. The last live concert was on February 29th, 2020, hosted at my University in the William Aston Hall which is the usual venue. The dark clouds of the pandemic were already becoming visible at that time, but little did we suspect that they would disrupt our lives for so long. We can now carefully begin to think about live concerts again, in the not too-distant future.

We have of course been able to enjoy listening to music from our own collections at home or find digital recordings of live performances on various media. But there is nothing like the real thing – sitting in an auditorium, a far larger space than your living room, letting the sounds wash over you and watching the musicians on stage. That is the true experience of attending a live concert, and nothing can replace it. It is good for personal well-being, and it creates memories. How many people would be able to recall and describe the exact moment when they listened to a CD at home, or (the more contemporary method) found something on the YouTube Music channel and cast it to their device? Would you still talk about that particular experience to friends several weeks later? But a real concert sticks in your mind because the visuals and audio are so much more intense and immersive. They stay with you for a long time.

May those days return soon! I look forward to the first live WSO concert whenever we are able to welcome the orchestra back and we will value it all the more because we have missed the experience for so long."

WSO Concert Diary – 53rd Concert Season

Please note: All concerts subject to the Covid 19 Situation

Sunday November 28 th , 2021 William Aston Hall 3.30pm	Sunday February 27 th , 2022 William Aston Hall 3.30pm	Saturday July 16 th , 2022 William Aston Hall 7.30pm
<p>Family Concert</p> <p>Programme A selection of popular Christmas and Film Music</p> <p>Conductor Mark Lansom</p> <p>Soloist: TBC</p>	<p>President's Annual Concert</p> <p>Programme Dvorak: Symphony No. 9 (New World Symphony)</p> <p>Conductor Stephen Threlfall</p> <p>Soloist TBC</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: WE ARE STILL FINALISING THE DATE OF OUR CONCERT FOR MAY 2022</p>	<p>Music for a Summer Evening</p> <p>Programme Shostakovich: The Gadfly Suite</p> <p>Conductor Richard Howarth</p> <p>Soloist TBC</p>

Chairman Matthew Ellis shares a personal insight about the power of music

'Music is, in my opinion, the most important and, often, overlooked arts we have. It's part of our everyday life, whether you realise it or not. From the hooks you hum from adverts or TV themes to the music you hear at our concerts; music is a huge part of most people's lives. It gives a soundtrack to our lives and positively impacts mental health, cognitive function, education, physical health, and many, many more aspects of our lives.

Attending live events is an especially important part of our enjoyment of music, but more so with our concerts at the William Aston Hall. We are almost a family – taking our concerts as an opportunity not just to hear the fruits of the orchestra's labour, but to catch up with friends, reconnect with acquaintances and remember and mourn those no longer able to come. I have missed mingling in the foyer and musing with former members, work colleagues and friends, seeing familiar faces and being excited at seeing new ones for the first time, hoping they'll soon become "new" friends of the Orchestra!

It has been seventeen months since we last performed, and it's been the hardest seventeen months we have faced as a group but there are signs of hope and new tendrils of growth sprouting from the bed of COVID. We have been able to play together, in a limited way (strings only for now!) for a few weeks and I can honestly say that the joy and excitement shown by those who have been able to play has brought tears of joy to my/our eyes. It's been wonderful and, hopefully soon, we will be able to rehearse fully, with wind, brass, percussion and, most importantly, the Horns. It then won't be too long before we are able to welcome you all to see us again and share in our joint experience of making and enjoying live music. Thank you for your loyalty and support over the last 16 months or so during the pandemic. We hope that you and your families have kept well during the pandemic and on behalf of the members of the WSO, we wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer'.

You can find out more about the orchestra from its website www.wrexhamorch.co.uk and Facebook pages. Please search for Wrexham Symphony Orchestra. We also have a Twitter feed @wrexhamorch. We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions about our concerts and events. Please either speak to one of us at a concert or send them in an email to wrexhamso@gmail.com. You can also write to us at 11 Eaton Avenue, Handbridge, Chester CH4 7HB.