

## **Philharmonia Orchestra Video Podcast: November**

### **Jill Crowther: Philharmonia Oboe**

This is the Philharmonia Orchestra video podcast. Welcome to my kitchen! Today you'll be following me around, taking a look at a fairly typical day for me, and generally getting in my way. I'm off to London fairly soon. We've got a rehearsal in a couple of hours at the Royal Festival Hall. Then, after a quick break I will be playing in the concert, which will include *The Planets* by Holst. You'll be able to see some of this at the end of the podcast. But first, November sees two concerts celebrating the life of Dennis Brain. Here is David Whelton...

### **David Whelton: Philharmonia Orchestra Managing Director**

Dennis Brain was the most famous, most accomplished horn player of post-war generation in the country, and joined the Philharmonia Orchestra when it was established by Walter Legge after the war. The orchestra was formed of absolutely the crème de la crème of British musicians of the day and the most prominent of those was Dennis Brain and he established the horn section of the Philharmonia as being absolutely peerless. We are incredibly lucky in the Philharmonia to have musicians who are also composers, and Tim is one of the very finest among them. So we felt in the context of this special programme that it would be a great opportunity to commission Tim to write.

### **Timothy Jackson: Composer and Philharmonia Horn**

Well the plan is as it stands at the moment, to try to get four music college students, one from each of the London Colleges (so the Royal Academy, the Royal College, Guildhall and Trinity) to come together for the first time to make a brand new section, and to talk with them about all kinds of issues about playing a horn, not as a soloist but specifically within a section.

### **Mark Wood: Horn Masterclass Student of the Royal Academy of Music**

It will be good experience because often you turn up to do a concert and you will be sitting down with horn players who you haven't ever played with before.

### **Laurence Davies: Philharmonia Joint Principal Horn**

I mean you do get people come in that we have had on trial for instance for third or fourth horn jobs that are completely out of the question. They have no idea how to play in a section.

### **Nick Branston: Horn Masterclass Student of the Royal College of Music**

Things like tuning, and knowing where you are in a chord are things that I'm not very good at....

### **James Handy: Philharmonia Fifth Horn**

Ideally you are looking for perfect ensemble, matched dynamics, and matched sound.

### **Laurence Davies**

I think there is more about playing as a section actually, more so than working out how to play together. I think that is going to be the idea of what someone can learn from this. I think that is the idea of doing a masterclass.

### **James Handy**

I think it will be useful for us as well.

### **Laurence Davies**

It would actually! It certainly would.

### **Abbie Pullman: Horn Masterclass Student Trinity College of Music**

We were given two movements in advance to look at, the third one we had to sight-read today. In fact, that was towards the middle of the rehearsal so by then so we weren't nervous anymore. We played through little sections of the piece trying to work things out with the solo horns and with us and getting it to fit together, and then ran the piece.

### **Isobel Timms: Philharmonia Community & Education Administrator**

So do you think they all rose to the challenge?

### **Timothy Jackson**

Absolutely! All four of them were brilliant! It was interesting to see how their style of playing adapted through the session. The very first few things that we did were definitely by four individual players, and then gradually they became more of a unit. In fact, what was really interesting was watching the way that their sounds started to blend more. Obviously, as a musician your own sound is your most personal thing and playing as a soloist you can please yourself, but as soon as you start playing in a section you have to start to adapt that sound to what is going on around you. To have four different students from four different colleges, four different teachers, four different ways of playing to suddenly have to produce the sound, I was really pleased with how quickly they adapted into that.

### **David Whelton**

This concert is really unmissable. It is special for us because it is a special anniversary celebrating this country's greatest horn player to which we owe so much. It is the Philharmonia horn section, which is second to none in the world, it

is a new commission by one of our most gifted composers and it is a fantastic programme. You have just got to be there!

### **Jill Crowther**

So, I have made it to the Festival Hall and the stage has been set, and in about half an hour we are going to be rehearsing for this afternoons concert. Looking to the future, let's see what November has in store.

The fruits of Tim Jackson's labour come to light, at the Dennis Brain anniversary concerts with a programme including horn concertos by Mozart, Haydn and Strauss in the Royal Festival Hall and The Bedford Corn Exchange.

Leif Segerstam brings a selection of popular programmes featuring Tchaikovsky, Sibelius and Mozart for performances in Leicester on the 11th, followed by concerts in Bath on the 17th, and Canterbury on the 18th.

Other London concerts this month at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall feature artists including Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Janine Jansen, Stéphane Denève and Nikolai Lugansky.

With repertoire including Mahler's powerful *Sixth Symphony*, Tchaikovsky's popular *Piano Concerto No. 1* and one of the most popular 20th-century choral works - *Orff's Carmina Burana*.

Nicholas Lugansky plays Tchaikovsky at the Royal Festival Hall on the 15th of the month. Conducted by Stéphane Denève the programme also includes Prokofiev and Rachmaninov.

Mikhail Pletnev's concert on 29th November at the Royal Festival Hall is sold out but why not hear the same programme at the Fairfield halls, Croydon on 27 November.

Thank you for joining me this month and I hope you will join us next month when we will be hearing from Andras Schiff about performing Schubert and we will be following percussionist Pete Fry. I hope you've enjoyed this podcast, but I have really got to get on stage – enjoy the concert!