

An illustration of a young boy with dark hair, wearing a dark vest over a grey long-sleeved shirt and dark shorts, standing in a grassy field. He has a shocked expression, with his hands near his face. Behind him is a large, grey, shark-like monster with a single eye and sharp teeth, holding a blue object with white droplets in its mouth. The background features a large tree, a bright yellow sun, white clouds, and a small house with a red roof and a window. The London Firebird Orchestra logo is in the top right corner.

London
Firebird
Orchestra

Firebird for Schools

PROGRAMME

Thursday 30 June 2022

St George's Hanover Square



Hello boys and girls!

Welcome to 'Firebird for Schools' - a special concert for schoolchildren presented by the London Firebird Orchestra here at St George's Church in Hanover Square! We are delighted to have you with us today for an afternoon of magical orchestral music. We've got an exciting programme in store designed to help you enjoy hearing a full orchestra play live. So sit back, relax and enjoy the show!

Marc Corbett-Weaver

Artistic Director
London Firebird Orchestra



Programme

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture to The Marriage of Figaro K.492

Sergei Prokofiev

Peter and the Wolf, Op.67

Michael Thrift *conductor*

Ian Hislop *narrator*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Overture to The Marriage of Figaro K.492

The overture is played at the beginning of Mozart's opera, the Marriage of Figaro, before the curtain rises.

It prepares the audience for the story that is to follow, which is a light-hearted comedy but with some serious parts.

The character of this music reflects the fast pace and funny antics of the characters in the story of the opera.

The music begins with a whispered pianissimo section – meaning very quiet.

This is followed by a loud and grand musical theme.

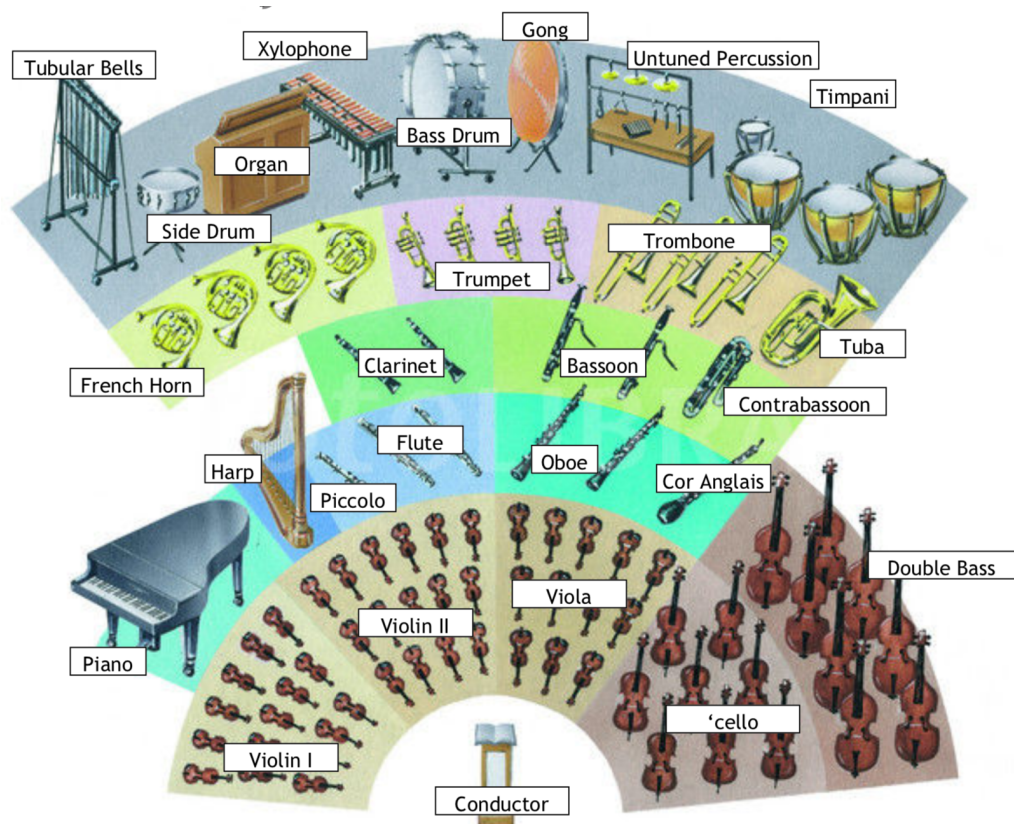
The music then develops into a series of contrasts between louder and quieter themes.

Notice how the music, quite is played fast, creates a sense of humour, fun and anticipation, along with whispered plots and secrecy.



Introducing the orchestra

Here is a picture showing all the instruments in a full size symphony orchestra. Have a close look at the instruments in this afternoon's concert and see how many you can spot:



And here are all the musicians playing in this afternoon's concert. See how many you can spot!

Conductor

Michael Thrift

Narrator

Ian Hislop

Leader

Elliot Bougant

Violin I

Sherry Shen

Michelle Kolesnikov

Ana Lavinnia Vlad

Ugne Zuklyte

Esther Zaglia

Violin II

Pietro GenovaGaia

Adriana Cristea

Greta Bommarito

Amy-jo Gilbert

Rebeca Lazar

Viola

Beatrice Slocumbe

Paul Fitzgibbon

James Cullen

Cello

Chian Chian Hsu

Rebecca Jansen

Beste Basci

Bass

Noah Daniel

Flute

Sofia Castillo

Oboe

Richard Lines-Davies

Clarinet

Nelson Sinclair-Strong

Bassoon

Francesco DiMatteo

Horn

Henry Wright

Bertille Cascio

Kiersten Gustafson

Trumpet

Alex Brain

Trombone

Henry Newton

Timpani

Charlie Hodge

Percussion

Will Miles



Sergei Prokofiev

Peter and the Wolf, Op.67

The Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev wrote this music as a “symphonic fairy tale for children”. The narrator tells a story, while the orchestra illustrates it.

Peter lives in his grandfather’s house in a forest clearing. One day, Peter goes out into the clearing, and leaves the garden gate open. The duck that lives in the garden walks through the gate, to go for a swim in a nearby pond. The duck starts arguing with a little bird, about which is better – flying or swimming. Peter’s cat creeps up on them quietly. The bird, warned by Peter, flies to safety in a tall tree, and the duck swims safely to the middle of the pond.

Peter’s grandfather sees what is happening and is angry with Peter for being outside in the meadow alone. “Suppose a wolf came out of the forest?” – he says. “Boys like me are not afraid of wolves” – says Peter. His grandfather takes Peter back inside and locks the gate.

Soon after, a big wolf comes out of the forest. The cat runs up a tree, but the duck, who has jumped out of the pond, is caught by the wolf and swallowed up.

Peter fetches a rope and climbs over the garden wall into the tree. He asks the bird to fly around the wolf’s head to distract him, while he lowers a noose and catches the wolf by his tail. The wolf struggles to get free, but Peter ties the rope to the tree and the noose only gets tighter.

Some hunters, who have been following the wolf, come out of the forest ready to shoot him, but Peter gets them to help him take the wolf to a zoo in a victory parade that includes himself, the bird, the hunters leading the wolf, the cat, and his grandfather.

In the story’s ending, the listener is told: “If you listen very carefully, you’ll hear the duck quacking inside the wolf’s belly, because the wolf in his hurry had swallowed her alive.”



Conductor

Michael Thrift

In 2022 Australian-British conductor Michael Thrift continues his long-standing relationship with the London Firebird Orchestra, having conducted them during the past several seasons. In addition to today's concert, Michael will lead two concerts later in the season, as well as workshops with the University of Middlesex, and work with the winner of Firebird's Young Composer Award.

In addition to his symphony work, Michael is a fervent conductor of opera. In 2014 he joined the team at Fulham Opera for Verdi's *Falstaff*, returning to lead Puccini's *Il Tabarro* in 2015. Since then, he has conducted the revival of *Falstaff*, as well as new productions of Verdi's *Simon Boc- canegra* and Don Carlo, and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. This year Michael will lead a new Production of Strauss' seldom-performed *Die Ägyptische Helena* with Fulham. For Ormond Opera, he has conducted Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and Bizet's *Carmen*.

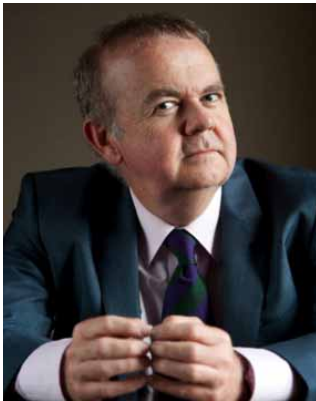
In 2017, Michael conducted several works at the Blue Danube Opera Conducting Competition at the Rousse State Theatre, Bulgaria, leading the company's forces in Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* and Saint-Saens *Samson et Delilah*. Elsewhere,

Michael has lead productions of Wagner's *Parsifal*, as well as performances of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, *Billy Budd*, and Beethoven's *Fidelio*. He will close 2020 with Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

Educated in Sydney, Michael undertook studies in composition at Sydney University, alongside conducting. Notable achievements include winning the Young Composer of the Year Award in 2001 (ASME) and performances by the Adelaide Symphony and the Sydney University Symphony Orchestra. A passionate advocate for new music, he is an active part of the London new music scene.

In 2013, he helped to inaugurate the Composer's Academy at the Cheltenham Festival and has worked with the Dr. K Sextet in both Cheltenham and London. He returns to work with composition students from the University of Middlesex after successful collaborations with them and LFO in 2018 and 2019.

An unabashed love of sci-fi literature provides escapism. Michael regularly lives a vicarious, alternative existence through the Australia cricket team, though his duties to music inevitably snap him back into reality



Narrator

Ian Hislop

Ian Hislop is a writer, journalist and broadcaster. He was educated at Ardingly College and Magdalen College, Oxford. He has been editor of *Private Eye* since 1986.

He is probably best known for his role as a regular team captain on the BBC show *Have I Got News for You*.

Ian Hislop has appeared on BBC Question Time, written and presented documentaries for television and radio about various subjects including the *Patron Saints of the British Isles*, *History of Tax*, *Female Hymn Writers*, *Dr Beeching*, *Victorian Philanthropists*, *Benefit Systems*, *The First World War* and *The Stiff Upper Lip*.

He co-wrote a dramatisation of *The Wipers Times* with Nick Newman, which was nominated for a BAFTA for Best Single Drama of 2014, and won the Best Single Drama Award in Broadcasting Press Guild Awards, 2014. Their new play, *Trial by Laughter*, had a successful UK national tour in 2018/2019.

In 2018, Ian curated an exhibition at the British Museum, *I Object: Ian Hislop's Search for Dissent*.

Thank you

London Firebird Orchestra would like to thank The Hyde Park Place Estates Charity and Alpha Plus group for supporting today's concert



the **Gold Standard** in education