

Holst A 150 Celebration

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

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Andrew Manze *conductor*

Leader of the Orchestra Thelma Handy

Town Hall, Main Hall

Saturday 13 July

Gustav Holst	St. Paul's Suite for String Orchestra	13'
Gustav Holst	A Fugal Concerto	9'
Gustav Holst	Two Songs without Words, op.22	9'
Ralph Vaughan Williams	English Folksong Suite	10'
	Interval	
Mozart	Symphony No. 41 in C major, K.551, "Jupiter"	31'

About the Programme

'Gustav Holst was a great composer, a great teacher and a great friend' writes Holst's close confidant and musical contemporary Ralph Vaughan Williams. Throughout his life, Holst championed the arts – from the concert hall to youth and amateur music making across Britain, and delivered an interpretation of English musical expression. This programme explores the rich catalogue of Holst's work and that of his musical world, as a tribute to the composer during his 150th anniversary year.

St. Paul's Suite for String Orchestra is one work of many Holst wrote for the St. Paul's Girl's School in Hammersmith. Holst took up a teaching position in the school in 1905, and remained as their director of music until his death in 1934. This period of Holst's life saw the creation of many of his cherished middle to late works, including *The Planets* Suite. The opening *Jig* serves as the perfect introduction to today's concert, sporting a brisk and lively folk-inspired melody in 6/8. Movement 2 (*Ostinato*) continues this sense of rhythmic drive with an ostinato quaver figure that continues throughout the movement, crossing between 3/4 and 2/4 time. A reflective *intermezzo* follows and the suite concludes with an arrangement of *The Dargason* from his Second Suite for Wind Band. There is an element of genius in its technical simplicity, being written for a youth orchestra, while still providing a sense of depth and musical interest.

Holst's **A Fugal Concerto** follows, an early emergence of Neoclassicism and written following Holst's *A Fugal Overture* in 1922. The piece was conceived while en route to America, and following a traumatic medical incident for Holst., Holst evokes the music of J.S. Bach with the first movement including clear allusions to the Brandenburg concertos in its string writing.

Holst's final item in this programme is his **Two Songs without Words, op.22**. Written in 1906, towards the end of what can be considered his early period, various elements of Holst's style can be heard. The first *Song* 'Country Dance' opens with a lilting pentatonic melody on solo clarinet, before joining an expansive string and woodwind texture. The second song *Marching Song* is led with a triumphant lower string theme, repeated almost verbatim by the

woodwinds and brass, before the appearance of a secondary theme on soaring violins. Theme A is explored with new accompaniments and tonalities for the remainder of the piece before a triumphant conclusion.

English Folk Song Suite by Holst's contemporary Ralph Vaughan Williams follows – a three-movement work originally written for wind band and incorporating folk tunes from across England. A rendition of 'My Bonny Boy' is sandwiched between two marches - 'Seventeen Come Sunday' and 'Folk Songs from Somerset', demonstrating Vaughan-Williams' excellent command of English folk tunes into new and exciting forms.

The concert concludes with Mozart's **Symphony No.41 "Jupiter"**, Mozart's final symphony. The piece takes a standard classical form. Perhaps the most well-known aspect of this major work is the iconic main theme of the fourth movement consisting of just four notes - C D F E, reminiscent of Aquinas' 'Pange Lingua' plainchant melody. The symphony concludes with a five-voice fugue, combining and interweaving all the themes together.

Programme notes written by Oliver Picken (winner of RPS Young Classical Writers Prize)

Artist Biographies

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

The award-winning Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra. The origins of the Orchestra's concert series date back to the formation of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society by a group of Liverpool music lovers in 1840.

The Orchestra is central to Liverpool's cultural offering, Liverpool Philharmonic being the largest music organisation in the region. The Orchestra gives over sixty concerts each season in its home, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, as well as concerts in venues across the UK. They have also toured in Asia, Europe, and the USA. Liverpool Philharmonic has long been an ambassador for Liverpool and Merseyside through an extensive touring schedule, and have most recently completed their third tour of Japan with the renowned pianist, Nobuyuki Tsujii.

Liverpool Philharmonic premieres and commissions more music than any other UK orchestra, with over 150 works premiered and commissioned in the last ten years. In recent seasons, the Orchestra has given world premiere performances of major works by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir John Tavener, Karl Jenkins, Stewart Copeland, Michael Nyman, Michael Torke, Nico Muhly, James Horner, and Sir James MacMillan alongside works by Liverpool-born and North-West based composers. The Orchestra give regular broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 and *Classic fm*, and over 600,000 people in 92 countries listen to Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra recordings each month on Spotify, more than any UK orchestra outside London. The Orchestra and Hindoyan also feature on several Medici.tv broadcasts with soloists including Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Sonya Yoncheva and Nobuyuki Tsujii.

Andrew Manze *conductor*

Andrew Manze is widely celebrated as one of the most stimulating and inspirational conductors of his generation. His extensive and scholarly knowledge of the repertoire, together with his boundless energy and warmth, mark him out. He has been Chief Conductor of the NDR Radiophilharmonie, Hannover, since September 2014 and his contract has recently been extended until summer 2023. In the 2018/19 season he was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

In great demand as a guest conductor across the globe, Manze has long-standing relationships with leading orchestras that include the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Camerata Salzburg, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. He is also a regular guest at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York City. Recent and upcoming guest conducting highlights include engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Concertgebouw, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic and the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé and Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Manze is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music, Visiting Professor at the Oslo Academy, and has contributed to new editions of sonatas and concerti by Bach and Mozart, published by Bärenreiter, Breitkopf and Härtel. He also teaches, writes about, and edits music, as well as broadcasting regularly on radio and television. In November 2011 Andrew Manze received the prestigious 'Rolf Schock Prize' in Stockholm.