

Saturday 14 March 2026

All Saints' Church, Victoria Terrace,
Leamington Spa

Guest Conductor
Richard Jenkinson

Copland
Fanfare for the Common Man

Rimsky-Korsakov
Overture on Russian Themes

Brahms
Violin Concerto in D major

Beethoven
Symphony No. 7 in A major



Soloist
Callum Smart



Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra
Patrons: Sir John Egan | Peter Donohoe CBE

Chair: Chris Voss
Email: chairman@wso.org.uk

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The WSO has been performing in Leamington since 1940, and as the Leamington Orchestral Society before that. Its players are drawn from all over the county and beyond. The Royal Spa Centre was the orchestra's regular venue following its opening in 1972 with a concert given by the WSO. The orchestra now performs in the Warwick Hall and All Saints Church, Leamington Spa.

Over the years the orchestra has worked with many illustrious soloists such as Janet Baker, Julian Bream, Peter Donohoe, Leon Goossens, Tasmin Little and Nadine Benjamin. Guy Woolfenden, permanent conductor from 1972–2012, succeeded a line of distinguished past conductors, and enhanced the WSO tradition of achieving the very highest musical standard. The orchestra now has Roger

Coull as its Principal Conductor and Paul Leddington Wright as its Associate Conductor.

The WSO is proud of its association with Coventry Cathedral Chorus and the Royal Leamington Spa Bach Choir, with which it has performed several major works, including Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Holst's *The Planets*, Berlioz' *Te Deum*, Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*.

In July 2008 the WSO took part in the prestigious International Church Music Festival at Coventry Cathedral and in March 2009 and May 2012 performed joint concerts in both Warwick & Paris with the Choeur des Prés de Villebon, returning again in 2016 where the orchestra and two choirs were joined by the Coventry Cathedral Chorus.

Our 2025/26 Concert Season

Vaughan Williams • Holst • Bruch • Rachmaninov

Saturday 13 June 2026 7.30pm

All Saints' Church, Victoria Terrace, Leamington Spa, CV31 1AA

Vaughan Williams Fantasia on Greensleeves
Holst Lyric Movement
Bruch Romanze for Viola
Rachmaninov Symphony No. 2 in E minor

Viola Soloist Jonathan Barritt
Conductor Roger Coull



The theme of this concert is celebrating the viola. The viola is a much misunderstood and underestimated instrument, and this concert aims to put that right. The warmth and depth of the viola sound launches this concert in Vaughan Williams' glorious viola-centred *Greensleeves*. We welcome virtuoso Jonathan Barritt to play Bruch's beautiful *Romanze*, and Holst's last work, his *Lyric Movement*.

The 2nd Symphony of Rachmaninov also features some soaring viola melodies within a dramatic overall soundscape. The symphony is often interpreted as a journey through diverse emotions, reflecting a sense of homeland loss and a yearning for a brighter future.



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In memory of Huw Thomas and Sebastian Farrall

Fanfare for the Common Man

This short piece is being played to remember our two percussionists, Huw Thomas and Seb Farrall who both sadly died last year.

Huw Thomas, with the orchestra for 38 years, had been a major contributor both through his reliable and sensitive playing which always kept us on the beat, and bringing together the needed percussion for concerts. He had always been highly committed to the WSO even when held back by illness.

Seb Farrall had played percussion with the Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra since 2020 when he took over from Huw. As well as his strong work with the WSO with his cheerful personality, he was multi-talented and behind a multitude of musical activities in the Midlands.

They have both been greatly missed by their families, the orchestra and the wider music community.



From the Chair

We are delighted to welcome our guest conductor, Richard Jenkinson. Have you ever thought what it takes to be a conductor of an orchestra such as the WSO? Clearly, it is a lot more than waving a baton and controlling tempi. Each conductor will seek to bring her or his own interpretation of each piece in the concert. When you listen today, compare Richard's interpretation of pieces that you know well to others that you may have heard.

A performance is the culmination of a long and careful process that starts much earlier. The conductor's role starts before the first rehearsal, with a deep study of the score. The conductor needs to become familiar with all the intricate detail of any piece as a first step prior to any rehearsal. They may also listen to different recordings to help form the ideas about interpretation.

For all orchestras the main task of a conductor is one that you do not see, the rehearsals. The WSO typically has six rehearsals plus a dress rehearsal on the day of the concert. Rehearsals are central to working with the orchestra both to help them master the music, as well as the new and difficult aspects of the music. There is a need to address each section's dynamics and interaction, and cueing entries. This is a journey for the conductor and orchestra, that by the end will lead to the orchestra's mastery of the music and realising the conductor's interpretation.

The result of all of this is the concert. Sir Thomas Beecham once said: *"At a rehearsal I let the orchestra play as they like. At the concert I make them play as I like"*. The former is not true, but the latter reflects that in the concert the conductor sometimes ups the tempo, though the players may be expecting this. Otto Klemperer once observed: *"A conductor must know how to hold attention. He must be able to lead the players with his eyes and the movements of his hands or baton."*

The conductor, Christoph Eschenbach said: *"Every concert is a highlight of life"*, something we look forward to from the WSO under the baton of Richard.

Chris Voss

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The WSO would like to thank Professor Colin Fink of Micropathology Ltd for his support of this season's concerts.

Programme Notes

Fanfare for the Common Man Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990)

Leonard Bernstein observed, “...like his Biblical namesake he has functioned as the High Priest of American Music, the gentle, but forceful leader and tastemaker...” Copland consciously strove for a uniquely American idiom to embrace the whole range of styles which surrounded American composers.

This work written in 1942, was commissioned by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, who asked ten different composers to provide a patriotic short work. Copland said this work was

from an idea of “a certain nobility of tone, which suggested slow, rather than fast, music...” It is dignified, stirring and very dramatic, opening with a simple percussion rhythm, which leads to an unharmonized trumpet call. More instruments join and the harmony and texture both gradually increase in complexity, until the final flourish, which leaves the listener uplifted. Copland knew the impact of the work, and used a version of the fanfare as the main theme of the last movement in one of his most important works, Symphony No. 3.

Overture on Russian Themes Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 – 1908)

The composers known as the “mighty handful”: Balakirev, Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov opposed the growing trend of intellectualism in music, favouring a return to simpler forms and folk music. In 1871, Rimsky-Korsakov joined the faculty of the St. Petersburg Conservatory as Professor of Practical Composition, bluffing his way through his early years, in time becoming famous as a music theorist, writing a treatise on orchestration which is still used today.

The Overture on Russian Themes was written in 1866. It has three themes, beginning with a slow introduction based

on a famous Russian hymn tune known as ‘Slava (Gloria)’, which is introduced by the French horn. A lively allegro follows introducing the two other themes, one of which, ‘At The Gates’, also appears in Tchaikovsky’s 1812 overture; we hear it first in the violins. The third theme has flashes of decorative piccolo. The three themes are then intertwined and develop and move through several keys. The coda starts with a slower section, echoing the opening of the overture, and then features a grand statement of ‘Slava’ for the whole orchestra, concluding in a mood of lively triumph.

Violin Concerto in D major Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)

Allegro non troppo
Adagio
Allegro giacoso, ma non troppo vivace - poco piu presto

Brahms’ character meant that friendships were never uncomplicated, and there were few people with whom Brahms did not quarrel at some point. One close friend with whom he did eventually fall out spectacularly was the Hungarian violinist Joseph Joachim (1831 - 1907).

Joachim’s hopes for a major work from Brahms were finally realised in 1878 when Brahms completed his *Violin Concerto*;

he left the cadenza unwritten so his friend could write his own; this is now regarded as the standard for the work.

The *Violin Concerto* is laid out in the traditional three movements. The first movement has a double exposition, one for the orchestra and the second led by the violin. The long opening melody has three sections, an eight-bar phrase for the whole orchestra, a melody for solo oboe and a brisker

passage led by the strings. The striking entry of the soloist is followed by a brief reflective moment, before it leads in with a very long melody, interspersed with double stopping over a pizzicato accompaniment. The soloist then reworks their opening melody. A new theme, in a dotted rhythm, emerges and culminates in a cadenza, after which the orchestra briefly concludes the movement.

The slow movement opens with a stunning oboe solo, over a bassoon counterpoint. The violin then meditates on this melody, supported by strings with snatches of woodwind and horns. The whole mood is intimate and tender yet could be interpreted as reflecting the complex, reserved character of Brahms.

Symphony No. 7 in A major Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Poco sostenuto; Vivace
Allegretto
Presto; Assai meno presto
Allegro con brio

Beethoven, himself, famously said that this was one of his best works, and unlike so many works of genius, the audience knew on the spot that this work was great. Beethoven, himself, conducted the première and in the orchestra were some of the luminaries of the musical scene. There are few works by Beethoven so spurred by rhythmic inspiration. It had been largely written in the winter months of 1811 and finished early in 1812, four years after the *Pastoral*. Wagner described the symphony as the “apotheosis of the dance” but it might have been better stated as the apotheosis of rhythm. In each of the four movements Beethoven uses a single rhythmic figure and builds with tremendous strength and accumulation of power.

After dynamic chords the first movement opens with a long, slow introduction that is a perfect example of Beethoven’s skill at creating an atmosphere of expectation out of nothing much more than a few scales, sustained chords, and some melodic fragments. Exchanges of an octave E between strings and wind provide the link with the *Vivace*, a free-flowing melody for flute. Beethoven develops the rest of the movement from an increasingly rhythmic treatment of this theme. Many themes inhabit this movement, all built out of that little dotted rhythm.

The second movement *Allegretto* was encored at the first performance. A simple theme is passed from lower strings to second violins, and placed above a new melody for violins

In the finale, Brahms brings us the gypsy style; the soloist and orchestra lead one another through a lively series of dances, alternating between the fiery and the more relaxed. The final dance whirls away faster than ever before, but the coda opens with an extraordinary chord of B-flat major contrasting sharply with the preceding passage. Having surprised his audience once, Brahms suggests he intends to do so again, as the coda slows down anticipating a reflective ending, before three commanding final chords dramatically end the concerto.

and cellos. Variations in accompanying figures feature strongly in the movement and a fugal passage brings an abrupt climax. A suggestion of the opening march-like tune brings the movement to a close. This movement shows Beethoven’s skill at conjuring up magic out of the simplest of elements.

Dramatic energy unfolds in the *Scherzo*, with sharp contrasts in dynamic adding to the effect. The *Trio* is more spacious with a theme supposedly based on a pilgrim’s hymn.

Sustained power dominates the finale, the music moving from one climax to the next with a number of harmonic twists. The theme has a pattern of semiquaver motifs in the strings, with cross accents in the wind. The triumphant development leads to the coda, bringing yet more energy and exploring new ideas before alighting on a dominant pedal note, accompanied by competing first and second violins and finally coming to a tremendous conclusion.

The final movement jumps right in with an intensity and jubilant ferocity rare even in Beethoven. It relentlessly drives ahead, spurred by the timpani and the horns. If ever there was one movement from Beethoven’s nine symphonies that reminds us of his epochal innovation of rhythm as a fundamental element in musical composition, this is it. It doesn’t take long, dashing to a headlong conclusion that is nothing less than breathtaking.



Richard Jenkinson | Guest Conductor

Dr. Richard Jenkinson is Musical Director of the British Police Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra of St John, Bromsgrove. From 2016-19 he was Music Director of the orchestra and choir of the G.K.T. Music Society at King's College, London and, since September 2017, has been conductor of the Worcestershire Youth Orchestra. He has conducted cycles of the complete Beethoven Symphonies and Piano Concertos culminating with the Ninth Symphony in Worcester Cathedral. Concerts with the BPSO have included performances at Coventry (Saint-Saens Organ Symphony), Gloucester (Elgar 2), Hereford (Elgar Enigma Variations), Ripon (Respighi Pines of Rome and soloist in Elgar Concerto) and Worcester Cathedrals. He also conducts the BPSO each year at their concerts at Beacon Park, Lichfield and Symphony Hall in Birmingham. In May 2019 Richard conducted the BPSO at the Royal Albert Hall in a Gala Concert celebrating the orchestra's 30th anniversary involving fanfare trumpets, troupes of bagpipers and massed choirs from around the United Kingdom which involved over 600 performers.

Richard's musical education began at the age of five when he started to play the cello and was awarded a scholarship by Derbyshire County Council to study with Florence Hooton and William Pleeth. Whilst in the sixth form, Richard began his conducting studies with Michael Salter at Repton School. In 1990 he won a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, studying cello with Raphael Wallfisch and William Pleeth and conducting with Alan Hazeldine. He graduated with Distinction in 1994 and was awarded the Guildhall's coveted Gold Medal for a performance of the Dvořák Cello Concerto in the Barbican. In 1995 he was awarded a top prize at the Vittorio Gui Chamber Music Competition in Italy and was

invited to be part of the Countess of Munster recital scheme. This has led to a very productive partnership with the pianist Benjamin Frith, including recitals at London's Wigmore Hall and South Bank Centre and several recordings. Richard has given concerto performances with the BBC Concert Orchestra, CBSO, Irish Chamber Orchestra and Venezuelan Symphony and has performed the Elgar Concerto in the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London and the Dvořák Concerto in the Dvořák Hall of the Rudolfinum in Prague. In 1995 Richard became principal cello with the Irish Chamber Orchestra and from 1998-2016 he was principal cello with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He has subsequently played as guest principal with BBC Scottish, English Symphony, Halle, Longborough Opera, Opera North, Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Royal Northern Sinfonia.

In 2012 Richard joined the Dante String Quartet and has performed at the Wigmore Hall, King's Place and also given several live BBC Radio 3 broadcasts. The quartet's 'Beethoven journey' was also featured on BBC Radio 4's Today programme. As the cellist of the Dante Quartet he has recorded Kodály's String Quartets for Hyperion, Herbert Howells Quartets for Naxos and Stanford's Complete String Quartets on the Somm label. The quartet has performed several cycles of the complete Beethoven Quartets and toured Japan in 2016. During 2018 the Dante Quartet played a cycle of Shostakovich Quartets and undertook tours of France and Japan. The quartet has subsequently toured in France, South Africa and the USA in 2025.

In 2019 Richard successfully defended his Ph.D. on the music of Zoltán Kodály at the University of Birmingham where he was awarded a Bramall Scholarship. During the covid imposed lockdowns of 2020 he utilised the time to gain Grade 8 and subsequently an ARSM diploma in Singing, which he passed with Distinction. From 2022-24 Richard was Music Director of Opera Worcester in fully staged performances of Lehar's Merry Widow and Strauss Die Fledermaus. He conducted performances of Mozart's Requiem (2024) and Haydn Creation (2025) in France and will return to conduct Carl Orff's Carmina Burana in 2026. Other highlights for the 2026 season include performances of the Dvořák and Walton Concertos, Tchaikovsky Rococo Variations, recitals in France and Holland and conducting the BPSO in Mahler's 9th Symphony.



George Ewart | Leader

George studied with the Hungarian pedagogue Bela Katona. In 1983 he was first prize winner of the Sascha Lasserson International Violin Competition and afterwards gave solo debut recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room.

George has wide orchestral experience playing with the Royal Opera House Orchestra Covent Garden from 1976-81. During his time at the opera, George worked with leading conductors including Carlos Kleiber, Sir Colin Davis, Zubin Mehta, Bernard Haitink and Sir Georg Solti.

George was appointed Principal Violin with the English Symphony Orchestra in 2000; he has performed as soloist with the orchestra and appeared as leader on numerous occasions.

He is currently leader of the Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra, the Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra and New English Concert Orchestra. George plays with Michael Bochmann's Orchestra Pro Anima, often appearing as soloist.



Callum Smart | Violin

Critically acclaimed violinist Callum Smart enjoys an international reputation as a performer, pedagogue, and innovator, praised for the sincerity of his singing line and "utterly convincing" interpretations (BBC Music Magazine).

Smart has appeared as soloist with major orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Halle Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, and the European Union Chamber Orchestra, collaborating with conductors such as Vasily Petrenko and John Wilson. As a recitalist, he performs regularly at leading venues including Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Konzerthaus Berlin, and the Auditorium du Louvre, as well as international festivals including Cheltenham, Dvorak, Menuhin, Mecklenburg Vorpommern, and Malmo.

His most recent album, Transatlantic, reached the top 30 of the UK Classical Charts and earned features as Classic FM and Scala Artist of the Week. Recent highlights include a world premiere at the Archipel Festival (Geneva), concerto performances across the UK and US, a play-directing project with the Indiana University Orchestra, and recital collaborations with Ben Goldscheider and Richard Uttley.

Assistant Professor of Violin at Carnegie Mellon University, Smart previously served as Professor of Violin at the Royal Northern College of Music and also holds faculty positions at Orford Musique, the Benedetti Foundation, and Music Masters. A passionate advocate for accessible music education, he has built an online following of over 60,000 and in 2024 launched Caidenece, the world's first AI-powered practice companion for violinists.

Smart studied at Chetham's School of Music before earning diplomas from Indiana University and the Royal Northern College of Music. He is a winner of BBC Young Musician and a top European prize-winner at the Menuhin Competition. He plays on a c.1730-35 Carlo Bergonzi violin.



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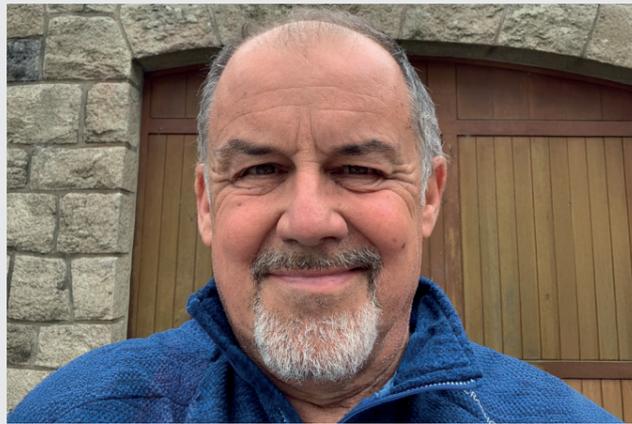
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Player Profile

Peter Wain | Trumpet

The sound of a trumpet can soar over a whole orchestra. How does that happen? "It's all in the mind," says Peter Wain, WSO trumpeter.

A trumpet player needs a good ear, to play in tune, a good breathing style, from the diaphragm, and practised lip muscles (supported by good teeth). The technical skill of instant transposition is also required. Orchestral trumpets are usually in B flat, while the music score is often in C. The actual music may be in any key, so playing the right notes involves continual transposition. But above all this, it is about confidence, to come in, often on a solo line, firmly and accurately. Hesitation doesn't work.

Peter's opportunity to start playing came at school aged 11 when he joined the school band on cornet. He soon switched to trumpet, preferring the wider repertoire possible. He took to it so well that special lessons were arranged with Bram Wiggins at Stowe School. After leaving school, Peter spent two years at the Isle of Ely College in Wisbech, preparing for music college, and he duly went to Birmingham School of Music, as it was then. He studied trumpet with Alan Whitehead, together with conducting and composition. There was a famous day when the College brass band including Peter went to a national brass band competition in the Royal Albert Hall with their piece Volcano, and amazed everyone by coming third, behind only the famous Black Dyke and Cory bands.

On leaving college, Peter spent 2 or 3 years in bands on cruise ships and doing the summer season at Butlins in Skegness – good fun when you are 21, says Peter. He did freelance work with the CBSO and other orchestras, and considered becoming a full-time orchestral player, but the opportunities are so few that he decided to switch to teaching, training as a primary school teacher. Peter prefers primary level, as he finds the pupils more receptive. His teaching career soon blossomed, and within 6 years he was a head teacher. He still made time for music, playing in orchestras including the Cherwell Orchestra organised by former WSO bass player Robert Gilchrist, and conducting Towcester Studio brass band.

A change of direction took Peter in 2000 to a job with BECTA (a government education technology agency),

helping schools adopt new technology. Peter's speciality was training head teachers, which role took him on assignments in Australia and all countries of the UK. After BECTA was wound up in 2010, Peter returned to teaching and new head teacher positions, until he retired in 2018. The retirement is not complete, however, as he became a trustee of Stowe Valley Multi-Academy Trust, coordinating 13 schools in this area.

Peter joined the WSO in 2004, his first performance being in the off-stage band for Belshazzar's Feast. Another highlight was Janacek's Sinfonietta, with its awesome 16 trumpets. Peter recalls one amusing incident after a concert that included Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. The reviewer was so intrigued by the trumpets' flutter tonguing that his report missed any mention of the piano soloist.

Peter's trumpet is an Eclipse, assembled to the player's order from a selection of parts. You might not guess that one differs from the others. Peter calls his trumpet Annie, after his wife.

One other thing about Peter is his work behind the scenes for the WSO as trustee with the role of Webmaster and Social Media Manager. He is driving forwards the Orchestra's website, and other plans are afoot.

With his education work, playing in and helping run the WSO, playing in other orchestras, arranging music and conducting brass bands, Peter is a busy man. The WSO certainly benefits greatly from his involvement.

As described to H. James Hunt



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