



## Chairs' Letter

Dear Members,

Happy New Year to you all! The Autumn term was as busy as usual for our talented performers and also for us, as we took over the reins from Catherine Hamilton as joint chairs of the Music Society. We would like to say a huge thank you to Catherine for the incredible hard work she has put into HSMS over the last six years: two years as treasurer and four years as chair. She has transformed the Society into the well-oiled machine it is today. We wish Catherine the best of luck and are extremely pleased that she will be around for a while longer to pass on all her knowledge to us newbies.

Our AGM and Autumn Committee meeting was preceded by a drinks reception for all members and we were very pleased to welcome new member Andrew Brixley-Williams to the committee on this occasion. We were delighted that Will Thomas, George Wright and Oskar Jones were able to provide some music to set the scene, and it was also lovely to have all the Hampton music staff and Mr. Woods (Assistant Head) in attendance to provide valuable input

during our meetings. Please do look out for another drinks reception later this year!

Events last term included the joint school musical, *Anything Goes*, the St Cecilia's Day Dinner, the New Boys' Concert and the wonderful Christmas Concerts, as well as the first year trip to the Classical Spectacular supported by the Music Society. We hope you will enjoy reading reviews of these events and more on the following pages. Some of the highlights to look forward to this term are the Rock Concert, Junior Musical, Jazz Café and the Joint Choral Society Performance in March, which will include a work composed by our own Mr. Donald. Dates for these performances and more can be found in the yellow music diary, enclosed.

Finally, our thanks go to all members who support the work of the Music Society by taking on committee roles, helping behind the bar and reviewing concerts. As ever, we would love to hear from other members who would like to get more involved.

With all good wishes for a happy, healthy and musical 2018.

**Bernadette Banks and Janet Wood, Joint Chairs**

## NEW BOYS' CONCERT

As a new member of Hampton School, the New Boys' Concert was as new to me as it was to the many performers who took part. In the splendid surroundings of the Hammond Theatre, the audience was treated to a veritable feast of music – just what was needed on a cold November evening! The musicians were drawn from the First and Third Years, and the standard of music-making was exceptionally high. The evening began with *Attitude*, both by name and nature, as Aitor McConnell played this jazzy piano piece with aplomb. Aitor was the first of many pianists to perform, with both halves of the concert ending on the piano. Daniel Morgan closed the first half with a sensitive and expressive interpretation of Chopin's *Nocturne in C Sharp Minor*, and James Abrahart rounded off the evening with Miguel Astor's *Adriana*, transporting us to sunnier climes. For the most part, boys had chosen to perform classical repertoire, but the second half of the concert opened with two excellent electric guitar performances from Abhishekdev Ramesh and Zac Dowlatsahi. Zac ably demonstrated use of the loop pedal, much to the delight of the audience! It was great to hear so many boys playing the violin, and all the performances were impressive. Thomas Bainbridge demonstrated his command of the instrument with a fluent and confident rendition of the 1st Movement of Vivaldi's *Concerto*



Thomas Bainbridge

*in G Major*. Each half of the concert also featured a singer: Oliver Donald sang Brahms' *Dein Blaues Auge* beautifully, and Theo Brixey-Williams gave a wonderful performance of *Caro Mio Ben* by Giordano. All in all, a fantastic evening filled with brilliant performances. The future of Music at Hampton School is in excellent hands!

**Mrs. Elizabeth Esser**

## ANYTHING GOES

The Lady Eleanor Holles production of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* was the most recent of a long tradition of joint school musicals, and it certainly did not fail to live up to the high standard of productions from years past. The musical contains three storylines, which take place aboard an ocean liner bound from New York to London. Primarily, we follow Billy Crocker (Jonny Fryer) – the assistant to Elisha Witney (Will Priddis), a wealthy New York businessman – who when meeting his boss on the boat, sees Hope Harcourt (Ana Martin), with whom he'd fallen in love after spending a night of passion together three months earlier. However, Billy is surprised to discover that Hope is aboard the ship with her fiancée Lord Evelyn Oakleigh (Dylan Evans-Hutchison). This chaos is furthered by Reno Sweeney (Alice Norrington) a famous singer who, at the beginning of the show, professes her love for Billy. We also follow the romantic side plot of Elisha Witney's pursuit of Mrs Evangeline Harcourt – Hope's mother, and the comic duo of Public Enemy no. 13, Moonface Martin (Flo Guy) and her trusty sidekick Bonnie (Paradis Farahati).

After Hope's *'I get a kick out of you'*, in which she professes her love for Billy, and in the process sending shivers down the spines of the audience members, it becomes pretty clear that she will end up leaving the dork, Evelyn. However, the true resolution comes when Lord Evelyn tells Reno that she has brought out his inner gypsy and that he finds her quite delightful. This confession was delivered through the medium of a hilarious song in which Dylan Evans-Hutchison stole the show – leaving the audience in hysterics.

Throughout the show, we enjoyed spectacular dance and music for which special mention must go to Petrina Tate and Miranda Ashe respectively. Special mention must also go to the band who, under the skilful direction of Mrs. Ashe, brought real panache to the musical – it is safe to say that the experience would not have been quite the same without all of their hard work. Another superb show, in the safe hands of their excellent director, Dr. Tait. Well done to everyone who took part from both schools, including those who worked hard backstage to bring this brilliant performance to life.

**Edward Owens/Mr. Donald**



## CLASSICAL SPECTACULAR

On Thursday the 16th of November, a group of 85 First Year- and 14 Third Year pupils went on a trip to see the Classical Spectacular at the Albert Hall, the most popular classical music show in the UK. As spaces were limited, I was overjoyed when I found out that I had secured myself a ticket.

On the day, we headed to the staff dining room after school, where we snacked on a sandwich, caramel wafer, packet of crisps and a bottle of water. Then there was a quick register before we were on our way.

Enough about the preparations that took place before the show! The Classical Spectacular was an amazing experience. Some of the most famous classical pieces, including: *Swan Lake*, *The Dying Swan*, *Hornpipe*, *Land of Hope and Glory* and the *Blue Danube Waltz*. Every piece was either accompanied by electrifying multi-coloured laser displays, or soft, swirling patterns of light, or sometimes alternated between the two. Tremendous planning must have gone into the event as every detail was perfect, enough to satisfy the greatest perfectionist's soul. The last piece initially seemed quite long and many of us were beginning to get sleepy – but of course, that was intended!

Suddenly the cannons (which, unnoticed, had been wheeled into the top of the hall) went off at the same time with a colossal noise. This was Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*! The music was fierce and rousing, with the cannons firing at regular intervals and fireworks wheeling along the walls and through the air. The lasers were more frantic than ever, the music reached a huge crescendo and everyone was transfixed. When the *Overture* finally ended, sparks flying over the stage, the audience was breathless and full of excitement. Throughout the evening we all enjoyed the classical aspect of the performance, but this finale was where the 'spectacular bit' came through. The presenter took a huge bow and we all cheered and clapped for a long time.

**Sagar Nair, 1J**

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT 1

The Christmas season began in style with this well balanced concert featuring a variety of Hampton's excellent ensembles as well as the First Year Choir. The Brass Quintet kicked off the evening with a polished performance of *The Joy of Christmas*. This medley opened with a dazzling fanfare that moved smoothly into a number of well known Christmas favourites, all of which were performed with tremendous flair and keen sense of ensemble. The next item was the *Carol of the Bells* performed by the Boys' Choir, directed by Elizabeth Esser. This small group of boys sang this well loved carol beautifully; its magical quality capturing the Christmas spirit so well. The guitar ensemble then gave a stunning performance of *Sunny* by Bobby Hebert. This excellent group exhibited some very tight ensemble playing that resonated beautifully throughout the theatre. The Concert Orchestra then provided a change in mood by first playing *Highlights from the Star Wars Saga* followed by a jazz-style rendition of *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. The first half of the concert concluded with the Hampton Sinfonia playing the *Toreador's Song* and the *March* from Bizet's *Carmen*. These wonderful toe-tapping melodies were performed with conviction, showing a good balance between all the elements of the group.

Having enjoyed delicious mince pies and mulled wine during the interval, we returned to be greeted by the First Year Choir. As always, the boys filled us with delight, kicking off with an enthusiastic performance of *The Holly and the Ivy*. This was followed by another dynamic performance of *Be our Guest* from *Beauty and the Beast*. Congratulations to Mrs. Esser for her excellent direction of this this supersize group!

The Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Roland then took to the stage with a powerful performance of *Montagues and Capulets* from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* that showed excellent interaction



between all the elements of the orchestra and conveyed the drama of this movement convincingly. This was then followed by a superb performance of Malcolm Arnold's *Tam O'Shanter Overture* directed by Iain Donald. This incredibly atmospheric piece provided a wonderful vehicle to show off every section of the orchestra, as well as wonderful solos from Tom Morrison on the trombone and Anthony Wang on the piccolo. The evening concluded with the customary raffle and the audience joining the orchestra in singing the final carols.

**Celia Hottinger**

## MUSIC FOR YOUTH PROM

This year the fantastic Voices of Lions, directed by Mr. Iain Donald, managed to secure a place to sing at the Music For Youth (MFY) Proms 2017 at the Royal Albert Hall. The MFY's ethos is that all young musicians should be given the opportunity to participate in high quality musical activity, and throughout the year a range of diverse musical ensembles audition for a place to perform over the three- night spectacular.

The programme that Voices of Lions was involved in on November 15th, included an Academy Jazz Band, Carnival Crew, Slide Ensemble (of trombones), and a Symphony Orchestra. '*A red, red rose*' by Eric William Barnum was the song performed, and to be standing on the historical

stage surrounded by an enthusiastic audience must have been an incredible feeling. The dynamics, sound and atmosphere created by the Lions was perfectly blended and completely self-directed, so even if the singers were nervous this was not at all evident.

Voices of Lions also joined the Warwick School Choir on stage to sing '*Lux Noque*' a piece composed by young musician, Sam Young. They were also involved in the finale when all involved sang '*Shine the Light Bright*', a special commission by composer, Peter Letanka.

Thanks must go to Mr. Donald once again for initiating, organising and facilitating this wonderful experience for all the singers.

**Caroline Jones**



## ST CECILIA'S DAY CONCERT

This year's concert departed from its usual format, with the first session taking place in the School Hall allowing for performances from some of the school's organists. The evening opened with Nicholas Dibb-Fuller (trumpet) and Felix Elliott and their confident performance of a movement from a *Concerto for Trumpet and Organ* by Albinoni. Alfie Askham followed this with the final movement of Dupré's *Le tombeau de Titelouze* – a work subtitled "seize chorals faciles et de moyenne difficulté", this expansive movement obviously wasn't one of the "chorals faciles". Nicholas Dibb-Fuller then returned to to the organ with J S Bach's reflective chorale prelude *O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde groß*. Finally, Felix Elliott performed his own organ composition - an impressive and virtuosic *Toccata*.

The audience then moved to the Hammond Theatre for the second session which opened with the first of two baritone songs, Nicholas Stoner singing *Sonntag* from Brahms' *Fünf Lieder* (Op. 47), beautifully complemented by Vaughan Williams' *Whither must I wander?* from *Songs of Travel*. This was followed by more Brahms, with Stephon Umashangar performing his beautiful *Intermezzo for Piano* (Op. 118 No.2). Next, violinist Dylan Evans-Hutchison gave us even more romantic intensity with the second movement of Smetana's *Aus der Heimat*. The evening's second baritone, Jasper Newbold opened with a delightful performance of Schubert's song *Die Forelle*, contrasting this with *Stars* from Claude-



Alfie Askham, Nicholas Dibb-Fuller and Felix Elliott

Michel Schönberg's *Les Misérables*. Then, as one can never have enough Brahms, Joel Banerjee captured the dynamic emotional range of the third movement from his *Violin Sonata in A major* (Op. 100). Why Brahms didn't compose a sonata for trombone we shall

never know, but his omission was to be rectified by Danish composer Axel Jørgensen, with his *Romance* (Op. 21), here sensitively performed by Thomas Morrison to round off the evening's second set.

Any consumption-induced torpor in the second interval was quickly dissipated with George Wright's opener for the third session – an energetic rendition of John Pratt's *Drum Corps on Parade*. This was followed by Patrick Ardill's accomplished performance of the first movement of J S Bach's *Violin Concerto in A minor* (BWV 1041). Next was Fred Spence with the evening's final outing for Brahms, his *Intermezzo for Piano* (Op. 116, No.6), drawing out the reflective quality of this late work. If the idea of a tuba concerto appears novel, the first movement of Edward Gregson's dispels any such misapprehension by including a musical quotation from Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Tuba Concerto* (the composer helpfully highlights this in his programme notes for the piece). Edward Butler gave a lively performance of the first movement, *Allegro deciso*.

Next was Jolivet's *Fantaisie Impromptu for Saxophone* which, with its reflective opening section suggested that we were in for a typically French instrumental sonata. However, jazz soon took over in the syncopated and blues-inflected allegro, with Oskar Jones ably and musically handling the piece's technical challenges. Following this we heard another mid-twentieth century French work - Poulenc's *Clarinet Sonata* - and Thomas Knollys captured the sharp contrast between the second movement, a haunting *Romanza*, and the dramatic *Allegro con fuoco* third movement. After this frenetic outburst from Poulenc, we were brought back to a calmer state of being with William Thomas's performance of *Oblivion*, a coolly laid-back tango from the master of the form, Astor Piazzolla.

Many thanks to Mr. Jones, who once again gave seemingly indefatigable service as accompanist.

Dominic Knollys



Will Thomas

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2

Heaven - 'eating pate de fois gras to the sound of trumpets'! Tonight's celestial concert was appropriately prefaced by the crisp Brass Quintet in the foyer. The Brass Band, under Dr. Ward, then opened on stage. The crisp staccato and florid solos of Rimmer's 'Cossack' were taken to a whole new level in Cooper's 'Enter the Galaxy', a Brass Band contest piece demanding virtuosity from every section, with sparkling constellations of tuned percussion, step-out soloists, flourishes and fanfares. Never mind fois gras, this was brass on Red Bull!

Up next, Mr. Roland's Swing Band, playing 'A Big Band Christmas II', a medley of festive tunes delivered with style and panache, a great tenor sax solo and spirited renditions of 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town' to round it off.

The Clarinet Ensemble had worked incredibly hard with their director, Joanna Estall to achieve their near-flawless togetherness. Performing without a conductor they moved as one, with fantastic blend in both Grundman's 'Caprice for Clarinets' and in the toe-tapping syncopations of Scott Joplin's 'The Easy Winners'.

The Chamber Choir's vivacious a cappella performance of Randy Newman's witty 'Short People', under Mrs. Oldfield's direction, was enjoyable aurally and visually. The choir married great vocal blend with precise counterpoint and showmanship. The number ended with one of the 'short people' held aloft as a final coup de theatre.

The Chamber Orchestra under Elisabeth van Ments' direction produced a delightful performance of Corelli's 'Christmas Concerto'. Special mention here to the two concertino violinists, Patrick Ardill and Joel Banerjee, who brought great commitment to the work's intricacies. The *Concerto* ended memorably with the lilting peacefulness of the *Pastorale ad libitum*.

The first half finished with the unbridled jazz-funk energy of Decoy Brass. The nine-strong line-up of brass, sax and drums produced a vast sound, handling the complex rhythmic interplays and prodigious vitality of both pieces with self-assured virtuosity. Thrillingly soaring solos from Will Thomas on trumpet (who also arranged both numbers in the set) were matched by first-class trombone and tenor sax playing from Tom



Symphony Orchestra

Morrison and Thomas Knollys, with George Wright providing fabulously determined and on-point drumming.

The second half opened with memorable performances from the Symphony Orchestra. Finzi's 'Eclogue' for Piano and Strings, conducted by Mr. Donald, was written in the later 1920s. With its title referring to a classical pastoral poem, the piece is characteristic of Finzi's often elegiac style. Soloist Alfie Askham conveyed an excellent sense of the composer's voice, handling the gently introspective piano solos with great sensitivity and control. The dark, bittersweet closing section seemed to speak of Finzi's early losses; of his father, all of his brothers and of his composition teacher, Ernest Farrar, who died in the Great War. Yet the piece ends with a single major chord; a sudden, sweet ray of light that seems to offer hope.

The final performances – Prokofiev's 'Montagues & Capulets' from Romeo & Juliet, and Malcolm Arnold's leery portrayal of *Tam O'Shanter*, have both already been reviewed, so I'll just leave you with a small excerpt from the Robbie Burns poem that inspired Arnold:

"The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;  
The piper loud and louder blew;  
The dancers quick and quicker flew;  
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,"

Andrew Brixley-Williams



## RECREATING LIVE AID

At the beginning of the summer holiday my daughter spotted a tweet from Hampton Old Boy Brian May, looking for people with 'big hair' for a film. She sent in a photo of me and I was duly surprised to get an email calling me to a costume fitting in Holborn. As I walked into the film production offices I was confronted by a large screen showing Queen's legendary Live Aid performance, and I realised that this was what they were going to be filming and I was suddenly desperate to get a part.

Watched by millions of people all round the world, their Live Aid performance established Queen as the greatest live rock band in the world, capable of entertaining an entire stadium, which was a rare thing in 1985 especially in the UK. In addition, Brian May, producer of the film for which I was auditioning - '*Bohemian Rhapsody*' - is one of the greatest rock guitarists of all time. This was a unique opportunity and, as electric guitar tutor at Brian May's old school, I felt compelled to get involved. I was cast as an onstage roadie.

The costume designer dressed me in a fetching 1980's safari suit with flower-patterned pockets. They also cut my hair into a mullet and I was ready for action!

Filming took place on Bovingdon Air Field, Hemel Hempstead. The Live Aid stage had been recreated in painstaking detail, including the backstage area of the old Wembley Stadium. The Queen Live Aid set was 20 minutes long and included the following Queen classics:



*Bohemian Rhapsody*; *Radio GaGa*; *Hammer to Fall*; *Crazy Little Thing Called Love*; *We Will Rock You* and *We Are The Champions*. The band came on stage at 6:40pm on 13th July 1985 and performed the most impressive and important concert of their lives.

Brian May visited the set during the first day of filming also brought the guitar he actually played at Live Aid to be used for the filming (and, yes, I did get to play it!). Rami Malek, best known for playing the leading role in the TV hit series, *Mr Robot*, was cast as Freddie Mercury - probably the hardest job in the world. Freddie was a one-off and possibly the greatest frontman of all time. Rami had to learn and execute every stage move that Freddie made during the Live Aid set. A choreographer was on set to make sure that he performed every move Freddie had made back on that scorching hot July day back in 1985. *Bohemian Rhapsody* was being directed by Bryan Singer, best known for directing *The Usual Suspects* and the *X-Men* films.

It took two weeks to recreate Queen's Live Aid set, shooting from 6am to 8 or 9pm every day. The actors learnt how to play all the guitar and drum parts and mimed along to the original recording of Queen at Live Aid. Towards the end of the filming they performed the entire concert without stopping with hundreds of cheering extras replicating the crowd. It was awesome!

Later on, backstage, I watched how the CGI Computer Specialist turned 500 extras into an audience of 72,000 in the old Wembley Stadium. This was the closest you could get to the real thing without going back in time. At times I got goosebumps as I watched the actors and massive production crew recreating one of the greatest moments in rock history. I am very proud to be guitar teacher at the school which Brian May once attended.

Alex Pym

### Please Listen:

An interesting BBC Radio 3 programme exploring the impact of music on the memory: BBC - Why Music? The Key to Memory

[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05gsvks](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05gsvks)



## News and Information...

To keep updated with the wealth of musical performances and achievements from Hampton boys please look to the following for up to date information and images between now and the next edition of the newsletter: [www.hamptonschool.org.uk/music](http://www.hamptonschool.org.uk/music)

Music Department can be found on twitter @Hampton\_Music and as a webpage <http://twitter.com/HamptonSchool>



### Editor's Note

I would like to thank all the contributors to this edition. Please note that we have not included the regular '*10 Minute Interview*' this time in order to fit in Mr. Pym's (Guitar Teacher at Hampton) exciting recount of participating in a forthcoming film about Queen's Live Aid Performance, being produced by former Hamptonian, Brian May. Apologies also that we are not able to publish the results of the latest ABRSM practical exam results in the newsletter as the ABRSM has, due to essential quality control checks, delayed their release.

Caroline Muller

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