



Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra

# Newsletter

Issue no.40

October 2015

## Next Concert:

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015, 8.00pm**

**Our Lady & St. Michael's Church,  
Abergavenny**

**Conductor: Dennis Simons**

- Wagner – Flying Dutchman Overture
- Sibelius – Violin Concerto  
Soloist: Cristian Grajner De Sa
- Mendelssohn – Symphony No. 3  
(Scottish)

### Cristian Grajner De Sa



Photo by David @ Peoples Portraits

Cristian began his musical education at the age of seven on both the violin and piano. Shortly after he was awarded the Leverhulme scholarship to study at the Junior Royal Academy of Music in London and then the Arthur Lyons scholarship where he studied with the French virtuoso violinist, Maurice Hasson. Cristian has enjoyed performing in many prestigious concert halls in the UK and abroad, including the Wigmore Hall, St James Piccadilly, St Martin in the Fields, Kings Place, and The Guildhall in Windsor as well as the Leeds International Music Festival and performances as part of the Aldeburgh Festival.

Cristian has appeared on BBC television as a string finalist in the BBC Young Musician of Year 2012, he was the youngest violinist to have reached the final of the Royal Overseas League Competition in London, 2014, and competed as a semi-finalist in the 2015 Windsor International String Competition.

Cristian has been invited to play to many violinists, most notably Olivier Charlier, Virgine

Robilliard, Sylvia Rosenberg, and he works regularly with Tasmin Little and Maxim Vengerov.

Cristian plays an 1800 Gagliano violin kindly on loan from the Royal Academy of Music.

## New Musical Director



**Dennis Simons** has been with us as a conductor since September and has been well received – so much so that we have elected him as our new MD. He was “delighted”

with the decision and is looking forward to raising our musical profile as well as our standard of musicianship.

Dennis was a professional violinist before turning to conducting: he was founder Leader of the Alberni String Quartet; Co-Leader of the London Philharmonic Orchestra; Leader of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra; solo violinist on three continents and did over 20 solo broadcasts for the BBC.

As a professional conductor he was Music Director and Conductor of the orchestras of Saskatoon (1993-97), Shreveport (1996-2003), and from 2002 - 2012, Music Director and conductor of North Dakota's Minot Symphony Orchestra. He was also a guest conductor with the Toronto Symphony and the Victoria Symphony; in the USA, Europe and Australia.

We are privileged to have Dennis working with us and we hope to learn much from him.

These is what he has to say about the forthcoming concert:

*“I am excited. I have been conducting the Abergavenny Symphony Orchestra for nearly two months as guest conductor and am now the*



*new Music Director. I have been enjoying myself enormously getting to know and working with all these fine musicians who are very special people.*

*And what a lot to enjoy. Our next programme on November 22 is a wonderful selection of some of the very finest works in our orchestral repertoire. We have perhaps the most arresting opener for any programme ever: the Flying Dutchman of that colossus Richard Wagner, who so perfectly conveys in music the excitement and fear of this famous and ancient ghostly story of the sea.*

*For many people, the Sibelius violin concerto is the finest concerto every composed. From the pen of that master, Jean Sibelius, is a work of virtuosity, incredible beauty and excitement that evokes the spirit of Finland. We are very fortunate to have the exciting young violinist Cristian Grajner De Sa as violin soloist.*

*We, as music lovers, are the richer as a result of Mendelssohn's travels to Scotland where he was inspired to compose two of his most famous works: The Hebrides Overture and the symphony which completes the programme. The magnificent 'Scottish' Symphony is dedicated to Queen Victoria and is indeed a work worthy of a Queen!*

*I look forward to meeting you all [Friends of the Orchestra] on November 22!"*

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## Children's Concert

The venue of the children's concert has been changed and it will now be held in King Henry VIII School. It will have a winter theme to it and the aim is to make it as fun as possible for the audience, so we are encouraging the children to come dressed in their 'Frozen' costumes or Christmas jumpers; offering for them to play along with the percussion section in 'Troika'; encouraging them to waltz to the Skaters' Waltz and to dance to The Nutcracker. Tianyi Lu will be conducting and we hope that the event will help raise awareness of our organisation as well as introduce classical music to a wider audience, which is why entry will be free. Please help us spread word of this concert to ensure a good audience.

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## Membership News

Our thoughts are with Sally and Phil Roberts who will not be playing with us this year due to Phil having to take things much easier prior to having a series of three operations. Sally's work is also keeping her incredibly busy so it's understandable that a Sunday evening rehearsal commitment is now too much. We may or may not see Sally on our concert day in November but we wish her and Phil well. They have been a major asset to the orchestra and will be much missed.



## Calendar

### Children's Concert:

Sunday 13th December 2015, 4:00 – 5:00 pm  
King Henry VIII School, Abergavenny.

Conductor: Tianyi Lu

Programme:

- Emile Waldteufel – The Skaters' Waltz
- Prokofiev – Troika
- Medley of music from the film 'Frozen'
- Tchaikovsky – Excerpts from The Nutcracker

### Orchestral Workshop:

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm  
Clarence Hall, Crickhowell

Conductor: Dennis Simons

Shostakovich – Symphony no. 10

### Spring Concert 2016:

Sunday 17th April 2016, 8:00 pm  
Our Lady & St Michael's Church, Abergavenny.

Conductor: Tianyi Lu

Programme:

- Dvorak – Cello Concerto
- Soloist – Rosie Biss
- Dvorak – Symphony No. 8

### Summer Concert 2016:

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016, 8:00 pm  
Our Lady & St Michael's Church, Abergavenny

Conductor: Dennis Simons

Programme: TBA