

The Becker Ensemble

V01: 5 - February 2008

NEWSLETTER

2008 has arrived before we have had chance to catch breath from a busy autumn term of concerts, which culminated with the Christmas concert to a sell-out audience in the Guildhall a few weeks ago.

In 2008 we are planning four concerts in the Guildhall, a 'prom' concert at Ripple and two major concerts in St Mary's Church - the first on 27th June and the second on 21st August.

The 27th June concert will feature a string section of 23 players to play the magnificent 'Metamorphoses for 23 solo strings' by Richard Strauss. Also in the programme will be music by Grieg, Mozart and more.....

The main work in the August concert will

be the Symphony No 7 by Beethoven. Also in the programme will be the Violin Concerto in E minor by Mendelssohn.

It is really quite special that we are able to sustain classical concerts in our corner of Kent. Many other towns would love to have access to this music and many areas have tried and failed because of lack of support and costs. It is therefore timely to thank all our loyal supporters who make this possible.

I often look out from the stage and notice how many new faces are attending the concerts. This is very healthy for the future and long may it continue, so keep spreading the gospel and we look forward to welcoming you to one or more events in 2008.

John Perkins



John Perkins has recently been appointed conductor of The Kent Concert Orchestra, a professional orchestra based in Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre (Bookings for KCO events 01227 787787). His first concert with the orchestra will take place in the Marlowe on 30th August 2008 when the theme is 'Gala Night at The Proms'. This appointment will not affect the on-going Becker series of concerts.

SANDWICH GUILDHALL CONCERT - 22 February 2008

SANDWICH GUILDHALL CONCERT - 11th April 2008

The first of the two Spring 2008 concerts is on 22nd February and will be a string quartet evening with music by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert and Puccini. This is how the Becker Ensemble began back in 1988 and we are often reminded of how much an evening of string quartet repertoire is appreciated by 'Becker Supporters'.



The second concert is on 11th April when the quartet is augmented by the world renowned bassoonist **Roger Birnstingl**. The concert will feature music by Haydn and Beethoven together with the Bassoon Quartet Opus 73 by François Devienne and 'An English Garden' for bassoon and string quartet by Robert Roennes.

Roger first took up the bassoon at the age of fourteen in order to form a family trio, later studying with Archie Camden at the Royal College of Music in London. In 1955 he was with the Philharmonia and Herbert von Karajan touring the United States, (the first of over 20 orchestral tours in the US) and since then has been principal bassoonist of the London Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic and for fourteen years with the London Symphony Orchestra. During this period he played under all the great conductors of the time including Klemperer, Monteux, Munch, Stravinski, Bernstein, Solti, Abbado, Barbirolli and Sir Colin Davis. Roger has recorded the complete wind repertoire of Mozart and Beethoven and all of Schönberg's chamber music with groups such as the London Sinfonietta, the London Wind Soloists and the London Wind Trio. In June 2000 he recorded, with pianist Sam Haywood, a CD of English music for bassoon (An English Serenade) for Sanctus. In 1977 he joined the Suisse Romande Orchestre. Why go to Switzerland from the LSO? you may ask. Well, the mountains may have something to do with this, and indeed Roger has climbed some forty 4000 metre peaks and has skied

cont. on page 2



2008 'PROMS IN THE PARK'

Ripple - 1st August 2008

The Becker Orchestra - Conductor: John Perkins

Tickets are already on sale for The Becker Orchestra 'Prom in The Park' in the grounds of Ripplevale School, just on the outskirts of Deal, on 1st August 2008. This is a wonderful arena for a concert with good facilities and easy parking close to the seating area. Even if you are not keen on outdoor events, please try to tell other who may like to come as we need to build this event into a major outdoor concert which both raises money for charity (last year the RNLI) and makes for a terrific evening of live music.

Tickets priced £12 in advance £15 on the door - (children under 16 years £6)

Ripple 'Prom' tickets (only) hotline: 01304 365525

By Post: Ripplevale School, Chapel Lane, Ripple CT14 8JG

Personality feature: Adrian Smith (viola)



Adrian Smith

Adrian studied music at the Royal Holloway College and Trinity College of Music, London. He has a busy freelance career in London and as a soloist has performed the Bartok Viola Concerto and Hindemith's Trauermisik. As an orchestral musician Adrian has worked with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Adrian has toured the United States, Switzerland and Kazakhstan combining this with work in the Les Miserables and Phantom of the Opera orchestras in the West End. Adrian is also much in demand as a recording session player for both film and TV. Adrian has been a regular member of the Becker Orchestra for the last 5 years.

Did you know?

The core of the Becker Orchestra is The Becker Quartet which was formed by four members of the professional music staff of the Royal Marines School of Music when the School was based in Deal. The name 'Becker' was taken as a tribute to a fellow Professor of Violin at the School Lew Becker who died only a few months before the quartet formed in 1988. Over the years the quartet has expanded to include wind, brass and percussion instruments, incorporating other professional musicians who work with the London orchestras and opera companies, but live, or have connections in the South East. This allows high quality orchestral music to be played through the summer months when our base moves from Sandwich Guildhall to (the very beautiful) St Mary's Church; a 'redundant' church managed by a small team of volunteers and overseen by The Churches Conservation Trust.

www.beckerensemble.com

cont. from page 1 (Roger Birnstingl)

almost the entire length of the Alps. He is professor of bassoon at the Geneva Conservatoire where over fifty players have passed through his hands, many of whom are dispersed among world orchestras. He is now retired from the Suisse Romande, but continues to play and teach.

Concert Ticket Prices

New Season Dates

Sandwich Guildhall Concerts - £10.00
27th June & 21st August 2008 - £15.00

Becker Dates

22nd Feb 08 - Concert Sandwich Guildhall
11th Apr 08 - Concert Sandwich Guildhall
27th Jun 08 - St Mary's Church Sandwich
27th Jul 08 - Becker Ensemble/Oratory Singers - St Paul's Church Canterbury
1st Aug 08 - 'Prom' Ripple
9th Aug 08 - 'Prom' Goodnestone (KCO)
21st Aug 08 - St Mary's Church Sandwich
30th Aug 08 - 'Prom' Marlowe Theatre (KCO)
30th Sep 08 - Young Musician Comp. Marlowe Theatre (KCO)
7th Nov 08 - Concert Sandwich Guildhall
(Sat) 13th Dec 08 - Sandwich Guildhall

The Becker Ensemble

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