

Bromsgrove Concerts Newsletter

31 January 2017

Our future

Despite the difficult funding situation for all the arts, Bromsgrove Concerts are determined to continue to give people in this part of the world the regular opportunity to hear outstanding and enriching live performances of chamber music of all kinds. We realise that our traditional audience is getting older, so we know we have to encourage younger people to come and explore what we have to offer. Increasingly people search the web and engage with social media to find out what's on, so Chris Cooke is adapting the website to be friendlier to smartphone users, and we will be working with marketing experts so that Bromsgrove Concerts has a greater online presence. As part of this approach, we are collaborating with our artists to link with their websites and online recordings, so that you can get a taste of their performances and the works they will be playing before the concert. You will soon start finding these links on our website www.bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk. More plans are in the pipeline to increase our ticket sales, but word of mouth is still the best way to encourage people to give our concerts a go, so please spread the word. Meanwhile, we will explore with Artrix the possibility of an earlier start time for evening concerts, or of moving some of the concerts to a Sunday afternoon. We'd be glad to have your views about this via email (chair@bromsgrove-concerts.org.uk) or through discussion with a committee member

Beethoven Quartetfest

We were delighted that this event was such an outstanding success on all levels – from the inspired playing of the Dante Quartet to the fascinating range of talks and the smooth organisation. The weekend attracted people who go to festival events as their 'thing' and they came from all over the country. Bromsgrove Concerts members and a few other local people committed themselves to the weekend, and many others visited performances as they were able. Our CD stall did well, and we tried our best to encourage those who live not too far from Bromsgrove (for example, in Birmingham) to give our concerts a go.

Shostakovich Weekend dates

Jennie McGregor Smith and Jim Page, who took the initiative to promote the Beethoven weekend, have now decided to hold another Quartetfest in two years' time, when the Dante Quartet will tackle the Shostakovich quartets. So put the date in your diaries now – 26–28 October 2018.

Young Musicians' Showcase – 26th February at 3.00pm

Please remember that this concert is on a Sunday afternoon at 3.00pm at Artrix. This year we have teamed up with the Bromsgrove Young Musicians' Platform for younger performers. This is an off-shoot of the Bromsgrove International Music Competition. We have invited the winning flautist from the competition to appear in the showcase, as well the prize-winners from the piano, cello and violin sections. Previous Showcase events have been really inspiring occasions for the young performers and the audience alike, so what could be better for a Sunday afternoon live music experience? We look forward to seeing many of you at Artrix on 26th February.

Bromsgrove International Music Competition Prize-winner's Recital

This concert, on Friday, 30th June 2017 at 7.30pm, is sponsored by Bromsgrove Concerts as its contribution to Bromsgrove Festival. This is another date for your music diary.

Toby Hughes, the double bassist, won the competition in 2016. He astounded the audience at the Finals concert with his mastery and musicianship on this instrument. His recital is sure to be a fascinating one, exploring an instrument not often heard in solo recital. Full details will be in the Bromsgrove Festival programme.

Current season

We've already had some excellent concerts in the first half of the season and we still have a great variety of music to come. Mark Bebbington's recital on 3rd February is raising a lot of interest with the first public performance of a new work by Robert Matthew-Walker, as well as Beethoven's Appassionata sonata.

Mark will be the first guest on BBC Radio 3's In Tune programme on Wednesday, 1st February, at about 4.30pm. He will be talking about the Matthew-Walker piece and giving its première performance. If you miss it live, you can catch a repeat in the iPlayer <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08c2xyj>. The composer will also be tuning in to hear.

The Young Musicians Showcase takes place on 26th February.

The violin duo Retorica (10th March) will explore the less frequently heard repertoire for two violins in a wide-ranging programme from the 18th to the 20th century.

The season closes in style on 7th April with the Britten Oboe Quartet (Nicholas Daniels, oboe, and members of the Britten Sinfonia) in a lovely programme ranging from Mozart to Richard Rodney Bennett.

Next season – provisional information

Plans are already in hand for the 2017/18 programme, with a return visit on 9th February 2018 from Leon McCawley (piano) who will be playing Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert and Hans Gal. We have also booked the Ensemble DeNote for the concert on 17th November 2017. They will bring their fortepiano with them and play on period instruments in a programme of Haydn and Mozart, including an arrangement of Mozart's Gran Partita K 361. We will open the season on 29th September 2017 with the Castalian Quartet, who won 3rd prize at the 2016 Banff Competition. It is planned that they will play Haydn Op 76 No 6, Beethoven Op132 and the Quartet ('Ainsi la nuit' – 'Thus the night') of 1976 by Dutilleux.

We will send you more dates and programme details as they become available.