

Total performance time: approximately 120 minutes, including an interval of 20 minutes

Suffolk Youth Orchestra

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Millie Wood leader

John Paul Jennings conductor

Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)

Little Suite for Orchestra No.1, Op.53 (1948)

10'

- i. Prelude: Maestoso*
- ii. Dance: Larghetto*
- iii. March: Allegro con brio*

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Four Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes, Op.33a (1943)

17'

- i. Dawn*
- ii. Sunday Morning*
- iii. Moonlight*
- iv. Storm*

INTERVAL

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakoff (1844–1908)

Scheherazade, Op.35 (1888)

48'

- i. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship*
- ii. The Story of the Kalendar Prince*
- iii. The Young Prince and the Young Princess*
- iv. Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman*

Malcolm Arnold is known for his fine film scores, most famously *The Bridge on the River Kwai* and a quartet of *St Trinian's* comedies. The film-composer's hallmarks of brevity, of capturing a mood in an instant and the ability to wring endless variety from a single idea is encapsulated in this delightful suite. Written – appropriately – for the inaugural concert of the National Youth Orchestra, it comprises a prelude that comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, a gently bucolic country dance, and a raucous march.

A pugnacious, tormented fisherman, the idealistic schoolmistress he wants to marry, gossips, do-gooders, errant clergymen, spiv, magistrate and pub landlady – **Benjamin Britten's** opera *Peter Grimes* is crowded with many memorable characters. Perhaps the most important role of all is taken by the North Sea. Its sounds and ever-shifting moods permeate the opera, reflecting the human characters' states of mind; these musical scene-changes propel the action as effectively as any solo aria or chorus. At dawn we hear a tugging eddy of a melody for violins and flutes, persistent but irregular breakers in the form of frothy arpeggios for clarinets, viola and harp, with brass and lower strings providing gentle surges from the murky, slate-grey depths. On a sunny Sunday morning the villagers go about their business (many of them seemingly late for church judging by the energetic hustling trumpet and string riffs); the sea glitters, church bells clang. The sea by moonlight has a restless feel – hidden currents, ominous brass laced with spiky woodwind and xylophone interjections – perhaps the sudden unpredictable slap of wave against hull. The thrilling, terrifying storm has us cowering under its onslaught – how feebly inadequate is the thin strip of shingle that lines the Suffolk coast when faced with the forces of wind, rain and tide. This music was written less than a decade before the catastrophic east-coast floods of 1953.

The sea also features prominently in **Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakoff's** symphonic suite, which is bookended by an ocean voyage and a shipwreck. It is inspired by Arabian Nights, the ancient folkloric tales of Egypt, India and Persia that include legendary characters such as Sinbad, Ali Baba and Aladdin. The sultan's wife – Scheherazade of the title – entertains her monstrous husband over a succession of long nights with her skilful storytelling to avoid the fate of her predecessors, whom the sultan has had executed. She recounts Sinbad's adventures, the mischievous derring-do of a charming, roguish prince, of royal romance, wild festivals and a perilous shipwreck. The music is heady with the atmosphere of the Middle East. The composer avoided a precise 'programme' for the work, describing it as a 'musical kaleidoscope' of images. However, there are two constants to listen out for: the leader's violin solos that punctuate each movement, representing Scheherazade, fearful, fragile, beguiling; and the ferocious opening unison theme in the lower brass – perhaps the musical imprint of the angry, threatening sultan. Whilst the violin spins an ever-more intricate web of enchantment, the sultan's music is transformed almost immediately into the rolling swell of the ocean and later into whirling dances. The work ends with a benign version of the sultan's theme intertwining with his wife's violin melody in a radiant resolution. The sultan has softened. Scheherazade has saved herself.

Suffolk Youth Orchestra

The flagship of Suffolk County Council's extensive programme of youth music opportunities, the Suffolk Youth Orchestra (SYO) is a full symphony orchestra of approximately 60 players aged between 13–22 years old. It is amongst the finest of its type in the UK. As well as appearing in prestigious venues at home, including annual performances in Britten Pears Arts' Summer at Snape, SYO has toured extensively, giving performances to critical acclaim throughout Europe. The annual European concert tour programme has seen the orchestra perform in countries including: Belgium, the Czech and Slovak Republics, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland and Spain.

Violin 1 Millie Wood (leader), Lily Fisher, Joshua Foreman, Georgia Gamba, William Johnson, Arthur Pettitt, Maggie Russell Hoare, Acer Smith, Giles Smith, Angela Tait

Violin 2 Lily Connell, Zoe Findlay, Naomi Gibbs, Emma Gregory, Oliver Laxton, Joseph Lewis, Helena Pascalides, Laure Reaville, Nikita Wong

Viola Kitt Simms, Theodora Todd

Cello Tilda Albery, Sylvie Barnard, Leo Bloor, Elsie Connell, Sam Crawley, Jasmine Gamba, Jessica Lawson, Malcolm Loggie, Annabel Marsden, Eva Mawson, Yasmine Moll, Alexander Pascalides, Imogen Stanbury, Sebastian Todd, Bella Wood

Double bass Annabelle Whittle

Harp Lilianna Travasso

Flute Phoebe Adams, Evelyn Cook, Katy Wilson, Abigail Woodhouse

Oboe Ellen Hall, Elysia Hargreaves, Jamie Holland

Clarinet Ben Gorham, Alfred Hopkins, Magnus Whitfield

French Horn Eloise Bozwood-Davies, Elena Jarrett, Elizabeth Palmer, Josephine Palmer, Samuel Pigram

Trumpet William Botwright, Harrison Klass, Katie Lucking, Niamh Willis

Trombone Morgan Barber, Gabriella Parkes, William Sutton, Jessica Tee

Tuba Richard Stevens

Percussion Thomas Cross, Joe Rowland

Millie Wood

Millie Wood is currently studying for her GCSEs at Farlingaye High School. Her passion for the violin started at four years old, when she asked for a pink violin for Christmas! She started in chamber ensembles and orchestral playing at primary school and in the County Youth Music Service. She continued her education, attending regular ensemble-training weeks at Pro Corda at Leiston Abbey from the age of seven, where she also learnt the viola. Millie is a member of Farlingaye's Sinfonia and plays in a further duo with her sister and in a string quartet with her peers.

She currently studies with Rebecca Scott-Smissen and is taking her diploma this summer, while also working towards grade 7 piano. Millie has a passion for a vast array of musical genres. At the moment she would like to study Music and French at university with a view to working in the music industry.

When not playing the violin Millie is learning to DJ and mix, plays golf and is a keen cricket-player for Melton Ladies. She enjoys the gym, sailing, skiing and baking, along with family dog walks.

John Paul Jennings

American conductor John Paul Jennings has quickly emerged onto the scene as a young conductor of note. As a guest conductor, he enjoys a regular relationship with the East Anglia Chamber Orchestra. He was featured in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's Emerging Conductor Showcase in 2022 and conducted the Orchestra of English National Opera in a masterclass with Martyn Brabbins. Other highlights include assisting Toby Purser and the Philharmonia Orchestra, and Mark Wigglesworth and Lang Lang with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He also assisted on the UK premiere of Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers* with Opera della luna.

He was the James Horner Scholar at the Royal College of Music, from which he graduated with distinction. He was resident music scholar of the Robert Anderson Trust, as well as recipient of the Trust's first-ever Special Award. He studied with Toby Purser, Howard Williams and Peter Stark, and has participated in masterclasses with Antonio Pappano, Roger Norrington, Rafael Payare, Colin Metters, and Jac van Steen.

Future engagements include debuts with Hampstead Garden Opera for Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, the Colne Philharmonic, and Lavenham Sinfonia, as well as continuing his highly successful tenure with Suffolk Youth Orchestra.