

The Guide

Eastbourne Symphony offers summer concert

Music Phil Hewitt

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The Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra's summer concert programme treads new ground this year with the Concertino for Harp by Germaine Tailleferre.

The winner of the orchestra's annual Young Soloist Competition, harpist Aisha Palmer, is the soloist, and she will also be playing in Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet. 22-year-old Aisha is in the final year of her undergraduate degree in music at the Royal Academy of Music where she is a scholar. Her Welsh heritage plays an important role in her performances and she likes to promote compositions written by Welsh composers when she can, she says.

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra conductor Graham Jones said: "Tailleferre studied with Ravel whose influence is evident in the Concertino. This is a new work for the ESO which is refreshing, given that we have more than 150 concerts to our name. All concerts are archived on our website (www.eso.org.uk). While we always have an eye to popular repertoire which has good audience appeal, it's always invigorating to tackle something different, particularly for the players. Concerti with winners of competitions are chosen after much discussion, and the rest of the programme is built around the concerto. Hence we aren't able to decide on programmes until we know who the winners are of both competitions we deal with and have had some discussions with them."

Wagner's Meistersinger Overture, Rachmaninov's Vocalise and Sibelius's Karelia Suite make up the rest of the ESO's 152nd concert. Graham is particularly fond of the Karelia Suite: "I remember it as the theme tune to ITV's This Week when I was a boy growing up in Norfolk so I guess it has stuck in my memory. It was in the programme of our very first concert in January 1980, and we have performed it only four times more which is not bad if you think that we have been going for over 40 years during which time we have played a huge variety of other repertoire. We last played Romeo and Juliet in 1986 so that is long overdue."

Graham emphasises the importance of one of the key aims of the orchestra which is to promote young musi-

cians: "This is done through the orchestra's own annual Young Soloist Competition (now in its 35th year) which takes place in January and February, and also the local Norah Sande Award which is a solo piano competition and takes place this year on July 8 and 9 in Eastbourne's Birley Centre. Both winners have the opportunity to play a concerto in one of our concerts as part of their prize. The ESO has been very touched recently by a legacy from its first president in the 1980s, John Crawshaw, who sadly passed away recently and which sets up funds to further help young musicians." The concert starts at 7pm on Sunday, June 25 in St Saviour's Church, Eastbourne. Tickets: WeGotTickets (£14); Reid & Dean, 43-45 Cornfield Road, BN21 4QG; (£14) and on the door.



Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra conductor Graham Jones

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