The Great Enormo

by Michael Rosen, James Morgan and Juliette Pochin

World premiere
Commissioned by Brighton Festival

Michael Rosen narrator
Juliette Pochin soprano

City of London Sinfonia
James Morgan conductor

Sat 4 May 2013, 5.00pm
Brighton Dome, Concert Hall

To celebrate the work of two of Brighton’s leading charities, there will be a collection at the end of the performance for Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival and Rockinghorse Children’s Charity

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Haydn’s ‘Surprise’ Symphony: drawing by Gerard Hoffnung from The Hoffnung Music Festival
The Great Enormo

Morgan Pochin  The Great Enormo
A kerfuffle in B flat for orchestra,
wasps and soprano

INTERVAL

Arnold  A Grand, Grand Overture

Stravinsky  The Firebird, suite

Michael Rosen  narrator
Juliette Pochin  soprano

City of London Sinfonia
James Morgan  conductor

The Steinway concert piano chosen and hired by Brighton Festival for this performance is supplied and maintained by Steinway & Sons, London
The Great Enormo

A kerfuffle in B flat for orchestra, wasps and soprano

Words by Michael Rosen
Music by James Morgan and Juliette Pochin

Michael Rosen narrator (favourite instrument: contrabassoon)
Juliette Pochin soprano (favourite instrument: violin)
James Morgan conductor (favourite instrument: trumpet)
City of London Sinfonia
(the orchestra: they like all instruments)

The Brighton Festival guest director, Michael Rosen, wants to compose a theme tune for Mr Enormo Biggins’s Great Fun Park. The Great Enormo is an amazing new theme park that allows its visitors to travel through time on fantastically fun rides. Michael needs your help to coax, cajole and bully the orchestra into producing a great piece so you can win free tickets to the theme park. As he jumps from the medieval to the jazz age, from the Wild West to intergalactic space, will the viola player get his solo? And who is the soprano who keeps turning up unexpectedly?

The Great Enormo Song

At the Great Enormo your dreams become real
At the Great Enormo what’s real is a dream
We’ll take you to climb a castle in the air
We’ll take you where you’ll hear yourself scream...
The Great Enormo wordsearch

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Can you find 11 words with links to
The Great Enormo?

The answers are at the end of the biographies
A Grand, Grand Overture

Malcolm Arnold was a composer who, in his better moments, enjoyed life to the full; and he found a kindred spirit in the short-lived cartoonist, humorist and tuba player Gerard Hoffnung (1925–59). It was for the first Hoffnung Music Festival at the Royal Festival Hall in London, in November 1956, that Arnold wrote A Grand, Grand Overture. Conducted by the composer, it was the opening item in a programme that also included a Chopin mazurka played by a quartet of tubas, a concerto performed by the great horn player Dennis Brain on a garden hosepipe, Franz Reizenstein’s Concerto popolare for pianist versus orchestra, the slow movement of Haydn’s ‘Surprise’ Symphony with extra surprises, and much else besides.

A Grand, Grand Overture (op. 57) is scored for a standard symphony orchestra augmented by organ (the part was first played by Dennis Brain), four rifles and a quartet of three vacuum cleaners and a floor polisher — originally pitched, as Arnold’s checks with a tuning-fork in the Hoover showrooms had established, in B flat and G. The cleaning quartet and the rifles make their first appearance in the expectant introduction; the cleaners return to accompany two (necessarily quiet) statements of the work’s memorable ‘big tune’, and again towards the end, until the intervention of the rifles.

The title of the piece is a variation on the customary name of ‘Grand Overture’ given to symphonies in the 18th century. It is justified most obviously by the coda, a sustained assertion of ‘the C major of this life’, and indeed of the next — and possibly even of the one after that.

© Anthony Burton
The Firebird, suite
(1919 version)

Introduction
The Firebird’s Dance
The Princesses’ Khorovod
Infernal Dance of King Kashchey
Berceuse
Finale

As Debussy said to the young Stravinsky, after hearing The Firebird, ‘Well, you have to start somewhere’. Thus Stravinsky burst into Paris and history. For all its dry wit, the comment was apropos. Stravinsky, who was 28 when The Firebird had its first performance, had already written a good deal of music, including an amiable symphony (his official op. 1) and a couple of more striking orchestral pieces, but in many respects this was indeed where he began. It was the first of his works to be performed outside Russia, and the first that was generally available until he started to revive his very early compositions relatively late in his long life.

Also — like the imperial Russia in which The Firebird was written and whose richly varied musical culture it commemorated — it was a place from which to move on. Its splendour is that of an arrival: here is Stravinsky, in all his brilliance, his cut and thrust. But that splendour also takes the form of a farewell, to the late Romantic Russia in which Stravinsky had been raised as a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov (whose later music, still very recent, was a potent influence). The firebird — or phoenix, born from flames, a symbol of regeneration — was altogether a fitting subject. Rimsky is there in the fire and the feathers, the highly chromatic harmony and the sumptuous orchestration. But the figure wearing his musical clothes, and moving with a quickened, edgier pulse, is Stravinsky.

The Firebird, though, might never have happened. The impresario Serge Diaghilev had his own reasons for wanting to present himself under the banner of rebirth: this was his second Ballets Russes season in Paris, and he was determined to have a new work. (His 1909 season had been of ballets already in the repertory of the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg or adapted from it.) Michel Fokine, his company choreographer, was the obvious person to create the dance. But who should write the music? Diaghilev was certainly
aware of Stravinsky, who had contributed two arrangements for the conversion of the Mariinsky’s Chopiniana into Les sylphides for Paris in the first Ballets Russes season. But he seems to have gone first to Alexander Tcherepnin, then to Anatoly Lyadov, and only towards the end of 1909, with the opening night little more than six months away, to Stravinsky.

Stravinsky seized his opportunity, producing a 45-minute score of sensational magnificence. Fokine — with the help of Léon Bakst, who designed the Firebird’s vibrant costume — offered the Paris public a dazzling spectacle, featuring Fokine himself as the Tsarevich, his wife Vera Fokina as the Tsarevna and Tamara Karsavina as the Firebird. But Debussy was by no means the only observer to notice the music. Soon it leapt from the theatre pit. Before the year was out Stravinsky had created a concert suite, and it was in this form that his friends back in Russia were able to hear what all the fuss was about. Still, particularly after World War I, the music’s further progress was inhibited by the lavishness of its scoring, and so in February 1919 Stravinsky revised the suite, halving the number of woodwind players needed, streamlining the percussion and reducing the harps from three to one.

In this version, which we hear this evening, the ballet’s short orchestral prelude (featuring string harmonics in glissandos, an effect stolen from Ravel) is followed by the dance with which the Firebird introduces herself, music of rippling chromatic scales and lustrous arabesques appropriate to a fantastic and flighty creature.

The next movement is a khorovod, or round dance, which the Tsarevich sees 13 princesses dancing when he comes upon them in the enchanted garden of the ogre Kashchey: the human characters all prove their Russian blood in music based on traditional dances and folksongs, very much in the tradition of Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky. Then the final three movements present most of the ballet’s close. In the Infernal Dance for Kashchey’s magicked and metamorphosed subjects, stamping rhythms suggest the approach of The Rite of Spring, which the composer was soon to begin. The Berceuse is a lullaby with which the Firebird charms the powers of evil to sleep, again in a distinctly Russian tone. Lastly comes a scene of general rejoicing after the prince has smashed the magic egg that had given Kashchey life: bell sounds, and the deceleration of time into a swinging pattern, create the first of the composer’s concluding apotheoses — a musical type that would echo through his output and still be there 55 years later at the end of his Requiem Canticles. He had, indeed, made a start.

© Paul Griffiths
Léon Bakst's costume design for the Firebird
Biographies

Juliette Pochin

Juliette Pochin studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. After an initial career in opera, she recorded her solo album *Venezia* for Sony/BMG which was named Classic FM’s Record of the Week. She has performed with the Hallé, City of Birmingham Symphony and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras, and has appeared with a wide range of artists, from Simon Rattle to Meatloaf (on ITV’s *Pop Star to Opera Star*). A keen exponent of contemporary music, she performed in the world premieres of Sofia Gubaidulina’s *Canticle of the Sun* with Mstislav Rostropovich at the Barbican, and Ed Hughes’s *The Birds* with The Opera Group at the City of London Festival. As a recitalist she has worked with Graham Johnson and Iain Burnside, with whom she recorded the CD *The Sky Shall Be Our Roof* featuring arias by Vaughan Williams, named Gramophone magazine’s Editor’s Choice. She can also be heard on numerous classical compilation CDs, and on the soundtracks of the *Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars* films. She regularly sings the National Anthem at Wembley, Twickenham and the Millennium Stadiums, and for the last three years she has appeared as the soloist in the BBCs Proms in the Park with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

James Morgan

James Morgan studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was Assistant Chorus Master at English National Opera (ENO) from 1994 to 1998. He subsequently conducted operas at Glyndebourne and for ENO, English Touring Opera and Raymond Gubbay Ltd. He has conducted and recorded with many of the UK’s leading orchestras, including the Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia and London Philharmonic Orchestras. Abroad, he works regularly with the Danish National Chamber Orchestra and City of Prague Philharmonic, and has also made guest appearances with the Copenhagen Philharmonic, Odense Symphony, Flanders Symphony and West Kazakhstan Philharmonic Orchestras. Specializing in contemporary music, he has conducted several world premieres at the Southbank Centre and the Barbican and his repertory varies from Renaissance polyphony to arena pop concerts, with artists as varied as Alfie Boe, Jamie Cullum, Andrea Bocelli, Katie Melua and the BBC Singers, of which he is a regular guest conductor. He recently conducted the 2012 Classical Brits at the Royal Albert Hall, with the London Chamber Orchestra.

Michael Rosen

Born in Harrow, Middlesex, in 1946, Michael Rosen is noted for his work as a poet, performer, broadcaster and scriptwriter. He studied at Wadham College, Oxford, and started his writing career with the play *Backbone*, presented at the Royal Court Theatre in 1969. He subsequently joined the BBC, where he worked on *Play School*, *Schools TV* and radio dramas, and he published his first book, *Mind Your Own Business*, a collection of his own verse, in 1974. His subsequent books include *You Can’t Catch Me*, *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* (winner of the Nestlé Smarties Grand Prize in 1989), *Michael Rosen’s Sad Book*, *Carrying the Elephant: A Memoir of Love and Loss* and *This Is Not My Nose: A Memoir of Illness and Recovery*. Having studied for an MA and PhD, he currently lectures and teaches in universities on children’s literature, reading and writing, and presents *Word of Mouth* on BBC Radio 4. He visits schools throughout the UK with his one-man show — one of the first poets to do so — and has also visited schools throughout the world. As the Children’s Laureate (2007–09), he established the Roald Dahl Funny Prize, awarded to the funniest children’s books of the year. He was made a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2008.
Morgan Pochin
James Morgan and Juliette Pochin met as undergraduates at Cambridge University and have subsequently worked in a huge variety of fields, from television series to UK album chart successes and, more recently, feature films. They began working in television, with credits including the Emmy Award-winning *The Kumars at No. 42* and work with Armstrong and Miller, Harry Enfield and Ian Hislop. Last year their first feature film, *First Night*, starring Richard E. Grant and Sarah Brightman, was released alongside its soundtrack album on Sony Classical, featuring Juliette singing and James conducting. They were the music producers on the film *Quartet*, directed by Dustin Hoffman and released earlier this year. Morgan Pochin’s production and composing credits include five best-selling albums for Decca by Alfie Boe, Katherine Jenkins and Joe McElderry. Their other credits include recordings by Julian Lloyd Webber, Elton John and Robert Plant, and Juliette Pochin’s album *Venezia* for Sony Classical. As orchestrators and arrangers, their credits include scores for BBC, ITV and Channel 4; *Tangier Tattoo* at Glyndebourne; numerous arrangements for Classic FM; and tracks for artists as diverse as Peter Gabriel, Michael Bolton and Katie Melua. In addition to various recording projects, they are currently working on the soundtrack for a new film about the golfer Seve Ballesteros.

City of London Sinfonia
City of London Sinfonia was founded by the late Richard Hickox in 1971. Today it performs throughout London and the UK in venues ranging from traditional concert halls to schools and hospitals, alternative venue spaces and diverse community settings.

Led by its Artistic Director, Stephen Layton, and Principal Conductor, Michael Collins, the orchestra works regularly with world-class artists as well as up-and-coming talent, including, in the last year, Gwilym Simcock, Tim Garland, Polyphony, Hugh Brunt, Roderick Williams and Elizabeth Watts. It performs at all the major London concert halls and venues, as well as in St Paul’s Cathedral and other venues in the City and on its fringes, and is the resident orchestra at Opera Holland Park. A frequent guest at the UK’s major festivals, the orchestra this year performs at the BBC Proms and the Spitalfields Music and Cheltenham Festivals.

City of London Sinfonia’s education and outreach programme, Meet the Music, was one of the first established by a UK orchestra. Last year its musicians spent over 100 days making music with a wide range of groups throughout the country, reaching over 10,000 people.

City of London Sinfonia, photo: Benjamin Harte

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City of London Sinfonia

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Alexandra Wood
Ruth Funnell
Clare Hoffman
Susan Briscoe
Charlotte Reid
Julian Trafford
Anna de Bruin
Sarah Sew
Lucy Waterhouse
Antonia Azoitei

Second violins
Takane Fanatsu
Jessica O’Leary
Julia Watkins
Ted Barry
Helena Ruinard
Rosemary Henbest
Sebastian Rudnicki
Louisa Stonehill

Violas
Rebecca Jones
Triona Milne
Fay Sweet
Margrit Haslar
Amy Stanford
Enrico Alvares

Celllos
Sophie Harris
Anna Mowat
Alexandra Mackenzie
Morwenna Del Mar
Jonathan Few
Penny Bradshaw

Double basses
Paul Sherman
Chris West
Jacqueline Dossor

Flutes
Alison Hayhurst
Jill Carter

Piccolo
Debbie Davis

Oboe
Daniel Bates

Oboe and cor-anglais
Helen McQueen

Clarinet
David Rix

Clarinet and bass clarinet
Derek Hannigan

Bassoon
John McDougall

Bassoon and contrabassoon
Liz Trigg

Horns
Stephen Stirling
Beth Randell
Claire Lintott
Peter Merry

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Nicholas Betts
Alex Cromwell
David Blackadder

Trombones
Dan Jenkins
Amos Miller
Ian Fasham

Tuba
Stephen Wick

Timpani
Tristan Fry

Percussion
Glyn Matthews
Geoff Boynton
Timothy Gunnell

Piano and organ
Alistair Young

Harp
Helen Tunstall

For the performance of The Great Enormo the City of London Sinfonia is joined by students of Brighton & Hove Music & Arts

Violins
Callum Bellairs-Taylor
Julia Palmer

Flute
Tomas Bermejo

Oboe
Orla Byrne

Bassoon
Olivia Garry

Trumpet
Sam Rosenbach

Answers to Wordsearch

CLARINET
TROMBONE
CONTRABASSOON
ROLLERCOASTER
INTERGALACTIC
CONDUCTOR
SOPRANO
PIRATE
MANHATTAN
PICCOLO
VIOLA
Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival

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Producing Brighton Festival each year is an enormous task involving hundreds of people. The directors would like to thank all the staff of Brighton Dome and Festival, the staff team at our catering partners Peyton & Byrne, the staff at all the venues, the volunteers and everyone else involved in making this great Festival happen.

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