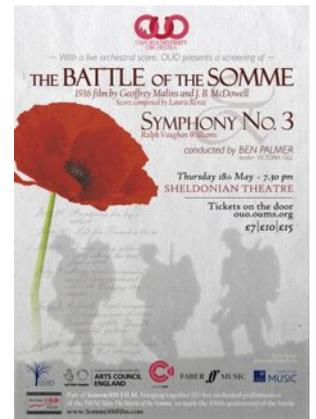


2016-2017 In Brief

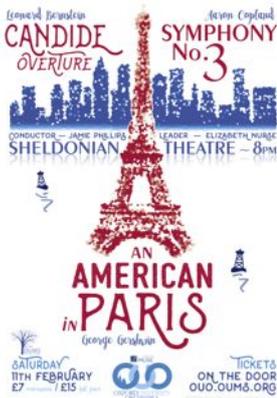


In **Michaelmas 2016** we welcomed **Daniel Harding** back to conduct a concert in support of two charities: Parkinson's UK and the St Peter's, Wolvercote, Organ Appeal. Daniel was joined by international violinist Carolin Widmann for Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor, which was followed by Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique. It was a fantastic opportunity for the orchestra to work with internationally renowned musicians. The concert was a great success raising over £6,500 for the charities. An excerpt of the review is below.

In **Hilary 2017** **Jamie Philips** returned to conduct an all American programme of Bernstein Candide Overture, Gershwin American in Paris and Copland Symphony No. 3. A review can be found at: <http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/feature/11911/oxford-university-orchestra-hilary-term-concert>



For our **Trinity Term 2017** concert we took part in the Somme100 Film Project with conductor **Ben Palmer**, screening the 1916 film The Battle of the Somme with live soundtrack composed by Laura Rossi along with Vaughan-Williams Pastoral Symphony No. 3. The Somme100 Film Project marked the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. Their goal was to have 100 live screenings of the re-mastered film and soundtrack within the centenary year. OUO was Oxfordshire's representative for this project. We were very fortunate to have the composer, Laura, present to introduce the performance by presenting a short slideshow telling of her inspirations for the soundtrack.



We start the next academic year by welcoming back the wonderful **Natalia Luis-Bassa** to conduct a Russian programme of Borodin's Polovtsian Dances, Tchaikovsky's Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture and Prokofiev's magnificent Symphony No. 5. We hope that you can join us for the concert on **Thursday November the 9th**. Tickets are available from our website. Please check our website www.ouo.oums.org and facebook page www.facebook.com/oxforduniversityorchestra for more information. We have launched a new

alumni facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1467252406684348/> so we would encourage you all to join the group and/or our mailing list to find out more about our upcoming concerts and events. We do hope that you can join us for what promises to be another fantastic year of concerts.

Dates for your diary:

<p>Thursday 9th November 2017 <i>Conductor: Natalia Luis-Bassa</i> Tchaikovsky – Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture Borodin – Polovtsian Dances Prokofiev – Symphony No. 5 Sheldonian Theatre – 8 pm</p>	<p>Thursday 8th February 2018 <i>Conductor: Robin Browning</i> Ravel – La Valse Mahler – Symphony No. 5 Sheldonian Theatre, 8pm</p>	<p>Thursday 17th May 2018 <i>Conductor: Robert Hodge</i> Programme to include: Rachamaninov – Symphonic Dances Sheldonian Theatre, 8pm</p>
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Daniel Harding Charity Concert



“From the opening moments of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* Daniel Harding’s ability to bring a piece to life shone through. Not only did he demonstrate superb control of tempi, rubato, and balance, he also gave the orchestra constant signals about the music’s mood. Assistant conductor David O’Neill, who took most of the rehearsals, had clearly rehearsed the orchestra thoroughly, no doubt deserving credit for much of the good phrasing, attention to dynamics, and outstanding level of ensemble, but Harding’s distinctive conducting visibly galvanized the orchestra into playing with real energy on the night.

The orchestra must be given considerable praise for the way they were able to respond to Harding’s every whim. The strings shone particularly in the first two movements (‘Reveries’ and ‘Un bal’), achieving a standard of ensemble, dynamic range, and flexibility not often found in student orchestras, particularly those of this large size. The third movement featured a notable performance from cor anglais player Chloe Barnes, whose playing oozed confidence and class during the opening duet with the offstage oboe (which signifies two shepherds playing to each other across a valley). The brass had (and clearly enjoyed) their moment of glory in ‘March to the Scaffold’, a tune it is impossible not to raise a smile for.



As the Symphony reached its morbid conclusion in the Dance of the Sabbath’s ‘diabolical orgy’ (as Berlioz described it), there was some fantastically garish E-flat clarinet playing from Dan Mort, before an ending so loud that it raised concerns for the wellbeing of the Sheldonian roof.

What came across most strongly at the end of the concert was that the orchestra had, both literally and figuratively, had a blast.



After a first half in which personality seemed to have been sacrificed for technical achievements, the second half was full of vitality and, frankly, more enjoyable than many professional performances. At a time when classical music is increasingly hostile to anything other than technical perfection, it demonstrated the great (and often forgotten) importance of just having fun.”

The full review can be found at:

<https://theoxfordculturereview.com/2016/12/29/review-oxford-university-orchestra-play-mendelssohn-and-berlioz/>

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