

## A New Lease of **Life in the Forest** for sinfonia ViVA!

### Exciting new project brings the music of nature to the performance stage

sinfonia ViVA have teamed up with North West Leicestershire District Council and Orchestras Live to create a collaborative creative music project which will take place during January and February 2009.

**Life in the Forest** will involve workshop leader Jack Ross working alongside a team of sinfonia ViVA musicians to write original pieces with groups of young people from three primary schools, a secondary school and Stephenson College. The participants will use percussion, voices and the instruments they already learn to create a series of songs and instrumental pieces themed around **Life in the Forest**.

The plan is that each of the groups will visit a National Forest site, local to their school or College and take photographs documenting the visit. The students will then present these images to the musicians at the first workshop and they will provide the inspiration for the creative music activities which will take place in the schools.

All of the participants will learn two songs, Bartok's *Oak Trees in the Forest* and popular workshop song *All in a Wood* and these songs will tie each of the pieces created by the groups together. Following a series of intensive creative music sessions, the young people will all come together for a massed joint rehearsal, during which they will bring all their pieces together with *Oak Trees in the Forest* and *All in a Wood* to create one large collaborative piece.

The final day will see the young people meeting the 24-piece Orchestra and conductor (and ViVA core player) Nic Fallowfield so they can rehearse as one large ensemble prior to presenting a performance to friends, family and the general public at the Hermitage Leisure Centre on Wednesday 4 February 2009. The performance will begin with sinfonia ViVA performing works including Respighi's *La Primavera* from Trittico Botticelliano, Bartok's *Romanian Dances*, Stravinsky's *Three Dances* from *A Soldier's Tale*, Copland's *Hoedown*, Barber's *Adagio* and Britten's *Soiree Musicales*. The 150 participants will join with the Orchestra for the second half of the performance during which they will premiere their newly created piece alongside sinfonia ViVA. It promises to be a real spectacular!

Trevor Pendleton, North West Leicestershire District Council portfolio holder said: "We are very excited about the forthcoming concert with sinfonia ViVA. They are a national Orchestra based in the East Midlands who provide classical concerts and outreach activities that make live orchestral music accessible to all. It is a wonderful opportunity for the children of the schools and young people from the college to be part of this project."

Tickets priced at £5.00 and £3.00 for concessions, are available from the Hermitage Leisure Centre on 01530 811215 and Ashby Tourist Information Centre on 01530 411767.

The project has been generously supported by Rolls-Royce plc, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Community Foundation, The National Forest, North West Leicestershire District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Find Your Talent, Orchestras Live, Arts Council England and sinfonia ViVA.



sinfonia ViVA said goodbye to Jon Ashford-Smith last month after a very successful time working as our Head of Development. In his place, we welcome aboard **Andrea Carver** to the post of Acting Head of Development. Andrea brings considerable business experience to the role and is ready to get stuck into the task, saying: "I look forward to contributing to sinfonia ViVA's ongoing growth and development."



Chief Executive Peter Helps commented: "Jon did a sterling job (literally!) during his time with us, and Andrea steps into the breach at a very challenging time when fundraising, the life blood of the Orchestra, has never been so important or so difficult.

"We all look forward to working with her in ensuring a bright future for the organisation."

**Head's  
Up!**

ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND

## in concert



## January 2009

Tuesday 27th Jan

Assembly Rooms, Derby 7.30pm

Tickets: £17 to £26 Box Office 01332 255 800 [www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-01-27-derby.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-01-27-derby.shtml)

### ▶▶ Something Old, Something New

**Mendelssohn: Symphony No.1**

**Nico Muhly: New Commission**

**Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No.1**

**Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E minor, Op 64**



Photo: Marco Borggreve

We combine traditional and new music in brilliant style in tonight's programme with sinfonia ViVA and Principal Conductor **André de Ridder** and the remarkable **Antje Weithaas** (violin), one of the most sought-after soloists and chamber musicians of her generation.

This evening's programme features two works by Mendelssohn spanning the composer's orchestral symphonic output. The concert opens with the Symphony No.1, composed in 1824 when he was just 15, his first symphony for a full orchestra, which came on the heels of no less than 12 symphonies for strings alone produced over the previous three years. Next, as part of sinfonia ViVA's **Orchestral Shorts** series of new commissions, we have a brand new short piece by the ground-breaking 28 year-old American composer and keyboardist Nico Muhly. Muhly has worked with artists as diverse as Philip Glass and Bjork, and tonight's world premiere promises to be an exciting one. He describes the new piece thus: "Eager Music is a very fast piece of music that attempts to fit as much material in its short three minutes as possible. Two different sets of material explicitly collide in the middle: insistent, athletic strings and aggressive, discordant brass and winds. The timpani acts as a sort of cruel schoolmistress, slowing everybody down with a series of foot stomps."

The Austrian composer Arnold Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No.1 was premiered in 1907, an unconventional work produced at a time when public acceptance of his compositions was rather variable, and shortly before his pieces were to become even more experimental in structure. Finally, we return to Mendelssohn and the Violin Concerto in E minor Op 64, his final orchestral work, for which 6 years passed from its original composition until its premiere in 1845. Nevertheless, it was an instant success and has since become a much-loved part of the standard repertoire for both concert-goers and accomplished violinists the world over.

Supported by Rolls-Royce plc, Derby City Council, Derby LIVE, Orchestras Live and Arts Council England.

## February 2009

Sun 1st February

Curve, Leicester 7.30pm  
Box Office: 0116 242 3595

Tickets: £8 Under 18s; £16 Groups of 15+, Over 60s, 18-26 year olds; £19 Standard  
[www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-01-leicester.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-01-leicester.shtml)

### ▶▶ sinfonia ViVA with Antje Weithaas

**Mendelssohn: Symphony No.1**

**Albarn: New Commission 1 (World Premiere)**

**Albarn: New Commission 2 (World Premiere)**

**Beethoven: 'Coriolan' Overture Op 62**

**Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E minor, Op 6**



Photo: Marco Borggreve

sinfonia ViVA's debut visit to Curve, Leicester combines traditional and new music in brilliant style in tonight's programme with Principal Conductor **André de Ridder** and, for her second concert of the year with the Orchestra, **Antje Weithaas** (violin).

The concert opens and ends with two works by Mendelssohn, spanning the composer's orchestral symphonic output in this the 200th anniversary year of his birth. The evening commences with his Symphony No.1, composed in 1824 when he was just 15, his first symphony for a full orchestra, which came on the heels of no less than 12 symphonies for strings alone produced over the previous three years. We end the evening with Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor Op 64, his final orchestral work, for which 6 years passed from its original composition until its premiere in 1845. Nevertheless, it was an instant success and has since become a much-loved part of the standard repertoire for both concert-goers and accomplished violinists the world over. In between, as part of sinfonia ViVA's **Orchestral Shorts** series of new commissions, is the world premiere of two works by Damon Albarn of Blur, Gorillaz and Monkey fame. Writing of Monkey's premiere in The Observer, Kitty Empire enthused that: "Albarn's score not only convinces, it delights... You can hear Damon's distinct melodic sense and favourite chord progressions throughout...". The programme also features Beethoven's energetic Coriolan Overture of 1807, composed during a period in Beethoven's life which saw a mass of creativity (between 1803-1808) in which he wrote in every genre. It was not actually composed for a performance of the Shakespeare tragedy, but for a revival of a production by one Heinrich Joseph von Collin, a Viennese lawyer and friend of Beethoven.

Supported by Curve, Orchestras Live, The PRS Foundation and Arts Council England.

Weds 4th February

Hermitage Leisure Centre, Coalville 7.00pm

Tickets: £5 (£3 Concessions) from Hermitage Leisure Centre on 01530 811215 and Ashby Tourist Information Centre on 01530 411767  
[www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-04-coalville.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-04-coalville.shtml)

## Life in the Forest

Featuring:

Jack Ross, Music Workshop Leader

Nic Fallowfield, Conductor

sinfonia ViVA

Participants from North West Leicestershire

Life in the Forest will see approximately 150 young people from across the education spectrum in North West Leicestershire joining forces with sinfonia ViVA to present a collaborative evening of music.

Young people from St Clare's Catholic Primary School, Ibstock Junior School and Special Unit, Whitwick St John the Baptist School, Ibstock Community College and Stephenson College will work closely with music workshop leader Jack Ross and a team of sinfonia ViVA musicians to create a series of original pieces themed around Life in the Forest. The workshops will be inspired by visits by the young people to local National Forest sites as well as a range of orchestral repertoire which sinfonia ViVA will perform in the final concert.

Following the creative music workshops the participants will come together for a massed rehearsal at the Hermitage Leisure Centre where they will bring all their pieces together to create one large work. On 4 February the young people will rehearse with sinfonia ViVA prior to giving their joint performance to an audience of friends, family, guests and the general public.

The project has been supported by Rolls-Royce plc, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Community Foundation, The National Forest, North West Leicestershire District Council, Leicestershire County Council, Find Your Talent, Orchestras Live, Arts Council England and sinfonia ViVA.



Sat 7th February

Stamford Arts Centre 8.00pm

Ticket details from the Box Office 01780 763203

[www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-07-stamford.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-07-stamford.shtml)

## sinfonia ViVA with Claire Bradshaw

Ravel: Introduction & Allegro

Berlioz (arr. Matthews): Nuits d'été

Dvorak (arr. Hertl): Serenade in D minor

Bizet (arr. Tarkmann): Carmen (excerpts)

sinfonia ViVA's Leader and Artistic Director **Benedict Holland** is at the helm and is joined by the terrific **Claire Bradshaw** (mezzo-soprano) for tonight's concert with sinfonia ViVA as we tour through beautiful works by Ravel, Berlioz, Dvorak and Bizet.

Ravel's 1905 **Introduction & Allegro** was written as a commission for a firm of harp manufacturers as part of the promotion of the pedal harp, a newly innovated version of the instrument that was being marketed. He dedicated the piece to the head of the company. Somewhat overlooked by the composer himself, the warm and engaging piece has remained one of his lesser known works, possibly because of the huge success he was to find with later compositions. Berlioz song-set **Nuits d'été; (Summer Nights)** was written in 1840-1, though orchestration of individual songs continued over the next 15 years. The composer may



originally not have intended the songs as a connected series, but this they subsequently became, joined by their shared exploration of the themes of passion and sorrow as expressed in the poetry of Théophile Gautier upon which they were based. The version by David Matthews being performed tonight is for a chamber orchestra of flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, harp and solo strings and was specially commissioned by sinfonia ViVA. Dvorak's career was in its ascendancy when in 1878 he composed the **Serenade in D minor**, which received its first performance with the composer conducting in Prague during the winter of that year. The version we hear most often today is the 20th century revision of the work done by František Hertl. And finally, to a selection of excerpts from the German composer and oboist Andreas N. Tarkmann's ensemble arrangement of Bizet's incomparable opera **Carmen** - Introduction and habañera, Flower Song, Prelude to Act 4, Seguidilla and the Toreador Song.

Fine music from the finest musicians. A treat not to be missed!

Supported by Orchestras Live and Arts Council England.



If you currently receive our newsletter by post and would like to change to getting it by email, please email us at [info@vivaorch.co.uk](mailto:info@vivaorch.co.uk) to make the change

Weds 18th February

Lincoln Drill Hall 7.30pm

Tickets: £11, £9 (£7 Students) Box Office 01522 873894 [www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-18-lincoln.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-18-lincoln.shtml)

## ||| sinfonia ViVA in Lincoln

Grieg: Holberg Suite

Bach: Concerto for Two Violins in D minor (BWV 1043)

Arnold: Concerto for 2 Violins and Strings, Op.77

Schubert (arr. Mahler): Death and The Maiden



sinfonia ViVA returns to Lincoln Drill Hall with a feast of popular classics. The Orchestra, with Director / Soloist **Benedict Holland**, is joined by ViVA violinists **Nic Fallowfield** (left) and **Philip Gallaway** (below). Tonight's concert has a strong emphasis on the excellence and beauty of strings.



Photos: Marco Borggreve

The nationalistic Edvard Grieg's 1884 **Holberg Suite** was written as a result of a commission to mark the bicentennial of fellow Norwegian philosopher and writer Ludvig Holberg. In its original form, he scored it for piano duet, but within a year had reworked the composition scoring it for string orchestra. It is this beautiful second incarnation of the work with its stature and elegance which has since become a firm favourite. Bach's **Concerto for Two Violins in D minor** (BWV 1043) was composed between 1730-31 and represents one of the finest late Baroque era examples of meticulous interplay between the two instruments. The virtuosic Malcolm Arnold, whose compositional talent famously and successfully extended into film music over 100 times, also wrote several more traditional classical works intended for the concert hall - among them, the **Concerto for 2 Violins and Strings, Op.77**. Schubert wrote the **String Quartet No.14 in D minor, 'Death and The Maiden'** in 1724, based upon one of the songs he had composed some years earlier. The instrumental version was not published until after his death, and it was a full 70 years after Schubert wrote the original that Mahler produced the orchestral arrangement performed tonight, and which has which became so popular.

Always keenly anticipated by Lincoln audiences, don't miss this chance to immerse yourself in the music of sinfonia ViVA.

Supported by Lincoln Drill Hall, Orchestras Live, Lincoln City Council and Arts Council England

Sat 21st February

Royal Concert Hall Foyer, Nottingham 11.00-12.00, 1.30-2.30pm and 3.00-4.00pm

Tickets: Adults and Children £5 Box Office: 0115 989 5555 [www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-21-nottingham](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-21-nottingham)

## ||| The Beanbag Proms: *Scuttle! Wriggle! Buzz!*



Frequently sold-out long in advance of the performances, The Beanbag Proms are a chance for the very young and their carers to share terrific music together - and have some fun along the way! Musical maestro Alasdair Malloy leads this enchanting and entertaining hour which will excite and enthrall your child in a relaxed and comfortable setting.

Each concert includes:

**Participation elements - including actions and playing instruments**

**Dancing**

**Singalong**

**Stories**

**Performances**

At the end of the performance there will also be an opportunity for children to have a close look and touch (gently!) the instruments used during the performance. So join Beanie Bear's gang and enjoy a magical musical adventure that your children will be talking about for a long time to come. Please note: Parents must remain in the foyer area with their children throughout this performance. Video or audio recording of this performance is strictly forbidden. Photographs may be taken at the end of the performance. Please also note that the programme of music is subject to change and alteration. Places are limited for each performance and will be sold on a first come first served basis.



Supported by Arts Council England, Nottingham City Council, Orchestras Live and the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham. ViVA would like to acknowledge the generous support of John Lewis, Nottingham, The Whitaker Charitable Trust, Helen Jean Cope Trust, D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust and the JN Derbyshire Charitable Trust.



Are your contact details correct?

Please let us know if your postal or email address changes so that we can continue to send you the newsletter.

Tues 24th February

Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham 7.30pm  
Tickets: £9 to £30 Box Office 01159 989 5555

[www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-24-nottingham.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2009-02-24-nottingham.shtml)

## The Mendelssohn Effect

**Wagner: Siegfried Idyll**

**Mendelssohn: Concerto in D minor for Violin and Piano**

**Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No.3**

**Mozart: Symphony No.39**

Over the course of the calendar year 2009, the 200th anniversary of Mendelssohn's birth, sinfonia ViVA will be looking at this composer's most popular and some less familiar masterworks, alongside other German composers affected by religious conflicts, social marginalisation and emigration: Bach, Schoenberg, Weill and Wagner.

Returning as piano soloist tonight is the terrifically talented **Lauma Skride** who is joined by her virtuosic sister and performing partner **Baiba Skride** as violin soloist for this programme of Mendelssohn and Wagner with sinfonia ViVA conducted by Principal Conductor **André de Ridder**.



Wagner's **Siegfried Idyll** was composed as a birthday gift to the composer's second wife Cosima to celebrate the birth of their eponymous son Siegfried in 1869. Though humble in origin, the significance of the work was such that elements of the Idyll were to resurface in the subsequent 1876 opera Siegfried, the third of the four operas that comprise Der Ring des Nibelungen. On to Mendelssohn's wonderfully evocative **Concerto in D minor for Violin and Piano**. Composed in 1823 initially as a small scale work, Mendelssohn subsequently added further orchestration and developed the piece to its final form. After its initial performances, the work remained unperformed for over 100 years until it was rediscovered in the mid 20th century. Each of Bach's six Brandenburg Concertos - written between 1718 and 1721 and commissioned by and dedicated to the nobleman Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg - is for a different combination of instruments. **Brandenburg Concerto No.3** is for strings alone and has only two movements; the first strong and energetic, the second less dramatic, though equally quick. **Mozart's Symphony No.39** was written along with two others in a period of just six weeks in the summer of 1788 - the three together comprising the composer's last symphonic works. Produced during a time of personal challenge caused by a decline in his popularity and consequent financial stringency, this is a complex and enigmatic piece of shifting moods, its ending memorably dramatic.

Supported by Arts Council England.

Photos: Marco Borggreve

March 2009

Weds 4th March

Assembly Rooms, Derby 7.00pm

Tickets: £6 Full Price, £3.50 Concessions, £10 \*Family Ticket (\*conditions apply - ask Box Office for details)  
Box Office: 01332 255800

[www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2008-03-04-derby.shtml](http://www.vivaorch.co.uk/concert-2008-03-04-derby.shtml)

## Romeo and Juliet

**Featuring:**

**sinfonia ViVA**

**James Redwood, Music Workshop Leader**

**André de Ridder**

**1623 Theatre Company**

**Participants from across Derby**



Shakes in the City: Romeo and Juliet will see 100+ young people from across the education spectrum in Derby joining forces with sinfonia ViVA to present a collaborative evening of music and words.

Composer and workshop leader James Redwood and participants from Becket Primary School, Bemrose Community School, Derby College and the University of Derby join sinfonia ViVA for this electrifying performance in which the Orchestra with Principal Conductor André de Ridder perform excerpts from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet ballet score. The performance will be totally collaborative with Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet being interspersed with new pieces created by the participants in response to the Prokofiev during a series of creative music workshop sessions.

ViVA will also be teaming up with the 1623 Theatre Company to bring a spoken-word and theatrical performance element to this exciting project. This project is forming part of Shakes in the City, an innovative programme of live performances, film and community workshops across Derby to celebrate the work of William Shakespeare during Spring 2009 - read the press release for more details.

A lively, collaborative evening of music and words – not to be missed!

Supported by Rolls-Royce plc, Derby City Council, Orchestras Live, Derby LIVE, sinfonia ViVA and Arts Council England.

## ||| Tarradiddle

**Featuring:**  
 sinfonia ViVA  
 Tim Steiner, Music Workshop Leader  
 Carole Copeland, Director  
 Participants from across Chesterfield

Young people from The Pomegranate Youth Theatre, its Playwriting Group and Newbold Community School will join forces with workshop leader Tim Steiner and musicians from sinfonia ViVA to present Tarradiddle a collaborative evening of music and words to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Civic Theatre in Chesterfield.

A series of new spoken word pieces have been commissioned from the Pomegranate Playwriting Group and young people from the Pomegranate Youth Theatre will rehearse these pieces, which will feature solo voices as well as choral speaking from the chorus.

Alongside this process, Tim Steiner and musicians from sinfonia ViVA will return to Newbold Community School (following the success of the Transitions project in 2007) and will work closely with young musicians from the school to create original music to accompany some of the newly commissioned spoken word pieces.

The theatre and music participants will come together to rehearse their material together prior to giving a collaborative performance alongside sinfonia ViVA and professional actors at the Pomegranate Theatre on Monday 16 March 2009 as part of the Pomegranate New Playwriting Festival 2009.

Experience the energy and enjoyment of young people, professional musicians and actors performing together in this concert of words and music!

Supported by Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Orchestras Live, sinfonia ViVA and Arts Council England.



## ORCHESTRAL SHORTS

**sinfonia ViVA's Principal Conductor André de Ridder on the start of the series, and things yet to come...**



**André de Ridder:** *This project is a fascinating one as it was set up to fulfill many different purposes but keeps developing new facets and possibilities as a partly virtual, partly real dialogue evolves between the pieces and their respective composers. It was important for us to set a discourse in motion about the nature of "short pieces" and its existing forms, especially in the pop genre, and not just limit the composers and say "you can't write more than three and a half minutes."*

*The first pieces have been very successful: we have performed one already, **Uri Gaine's Motormouth** (an energy-bursting, sort of be-bop Schoenbergian expressionist wonder) and workshopped two more, **Judith Weir's** contribution (an ambient, quiet gem of a piece) and yet a new surprising twist in **Damon Albarn's** output (a mini suite of two contrasting orchestral interludes).*

*Completing the list will be a line up of composers from a wide range of backgrounds, that's characterised by a mixture of pedigree, talent and open-mindedness that is becoming a trademark of sinfonia ViVA's new artistic direction. The pieces can take different roles, being performed separately - as concert openers or encores or in bunches - before receiving an integral performance at a special occasion in 2010. They will be recorded in stages for web-stream and an eventual album consisting of all the pieces commissioned.*



Photos: Marco Borggreve

## The Chief Points



### Peter Helps on a new facility for the new year to help you enjoy your favourite concert music again

First off - Happy New Year! I hope you had a great Christmas and that 2009 has started well for you.

I know it started *very well* indeed for a number of you, as you were with us at our **The Scottish Connection** concert on New Year's Eve at the Royal Concert Hall in Nottingham. What a fun evening we all had! Thank you if you sought me or other members of the ViVA staff out on the evening to give us your feedback, or if you were amongst those who completed a random sample feedback form, or who visited our website to leave feedback there. In fact, if you haven't, why not visit the website and let us know what you thought? While there, you might like to read some feedback from attendees at many of our other concerts across the region too.

On the subject of the website, this leads me nicely on to telling you about a new development which has gone live in recent weeks. We have teamed up with classical music retailer **Naxos** to give you a brand new facility on the *sinfonia ViVA* site. From now on, when you browse to the webpage of a forthcoming concert, beside the title of some of the pieces in the programme list you will notice a 'Play' button enabling you to listen to a 30 second sample of that piece selected from one of the many thousands of

recordings in the Naxos catalogue. If you like what you hear and would like to buy the Naxos recording, there's also a 'Buy Album' button which takes you to the *sinfonia ViVA* - Naxos affiliate site (powered by Naxos) where you can make the purchase.

That's not all. We are aware that many of you might attend the concert first and only decide some time later that you would like to investigate buying the music you heard - but the concert webpage isn't there any more as the date has passed. To help you, we will be starting off a 'depository' of the links to Naxos recordings of these past pieces so that you can still find the information you need to enable you to buy and enjoy the music.

As well as listening to Naxos artists playing the pieces that you've heard *sinfonia ViVA* perform in concert, there's also going to be the opportunity to hear recordings of *sinfonia ViVA* itself over the coming months. All 10 of our **Orchestral Shorts** pieces are going to be recorded and will be made available for you to hear - and download for free if you wish - from our own website. More about *that later...*

**Peter Helps**

## In Review:

by Mike Wheeler

### *sinfonia ViVA* with Ruth Palmer

Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham  
Tuesday 18th November 2008

**How many more** gifted young violinists are out there lining up to make their mark? The latest to come my way is Royal College of Music graduate Ruth Palmer, who joined *sinfonia ViVA* for the Barber Concerto. Her undemonstrative stage manner belies both a formidably accurate technique and real expressive warmth. The poise and elegance of her playing was underpinned by a rich tone that made the lyrical writing of the first two movements sing out, while the perpetual-motion finale was delivered, by both soloist and orchestra, with needle-sharp precision.

Barber was paired with Beethoven, as part of *ViVA*'s series of concerts under the title 'Beethoven in New York'. The evening opened with a taut, powerful



Ruth Palmer

Photo: Jochen Braun

account of the Coriolan Overture while, after a quietly compelling performance of Barber's Adagio, it ended with Symphony No 5.

Like Coriolan, this was a reading that went for drama. Making the pauses in the opening bars very brief indeed, *ViVA* and conductor André de Ridder plunged headlong into the turmoil. Tempos throughout were swift but with no sense of rush. A convincing case, in terms of the music's proportions, was made for restoring the third movement repeat that Beethoven originally planned but then cut.

Sonically, too, the performance was full of interest: minimal vibrato kept the sound clear and lean. Violas and cellos at the start of the second movement produced some wonderfully burnished tone. In the ghostly staccatos of the third movement's final section *ViVA* brought out sonorities that must surely have caught Berlioz' attention, while its re-appearance in the middle of the finale had an air of almost gleeful malevolence.

**Mike Wheeler**

### ViVA receives funding from Derby City Council and Arts Council England

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*sinfonia*



Principal Conductor  
André de Ridder