

Orpington Symphony Orchestra: Job Description for Conductor

Description of vacancy:

Orpington Symphony Orchestra is a small friendly amateur orchestra with around 22 members, performing a wide range of music including concertos with a variety of soloists, young professionals and local talent. For concerts the core membership is supplemented by the engagement of additional players, as required - primarily brass and percussion.

We are looking for a new Conductor from September 2019 with professional orchestral experience, and the ability to enthuse and inspire players in all sections to achieve the highest possible musical standards.

The closing date for applications is **23 August 2019**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

History and Structure

Orpington Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1949. It is a Registered Charity No. 1063477 managed by an Executive Committee acting in an honorary capacity and members are elected yearly at the AGM. The orchestra is a member of the National Federation of Music Societies.

Rehearsals and Concerts

We average approximately 10 Thursdays rehearsals (19.30 – 21.30) a term for each concert, plus a final rehearsal on the afternoon of the Saturday concert. We also hold one /two extended rehearsals per term usually on a Sunday.

Rehearsals take place at Lakeswood Hall, Lakeswood Road, Petts Wood, BR5 1BJ. which is a 5-minute walk from Petts Wood train station. Parking on the forecourt is on a first come first served basis or is unrestricted on most local roads. The hall is not large enough to accommodate a brass section and rehearsals with full orchestra take place at other venues.

The orchestra has established a regular pattern of three concerts a year: December, March, and the final concert of the season, in June.

Our concert venue is All Saints' Church, Bark Hart Road, Orpington BR6 0QD.

Our next concert is booked for 14 December 2019.

Soloists

One concert a year includes a concerto. Our soloists have generally come to us via personal contacts or the website. Recent soloists have included Nelson Sinclair - Strong (clarinet) and Akito Goto (cello).

Ethos

The Orchestra is an inclusive body, with players of good standard and a wide age range with a core of long standing players. The Orchestra's ethos is to provide a medium for amateur players of all ages and backgrounds to flourish. We are also fortunate to have a number of music professionals as members.

We strive to improve our standard both technically and, importantly, musically and are encouraged by the very positive feedback we have received from our audiences and soloists. We are keen to be challenged in terms of repertoire and build on strengths to improve in quality and range of performance – Poulenc's Sinfonietta being a recent challenging departure from our more usual repertoire – greatly enjoyed by the orchestra and our audience. We are looking for a Conductor who can continue to motivate and enthuse, maintain a positive atmosphere in rehearsal and performance, and constructively improve on areas of weakness while always being aware of levels of technical ability and the need for rehearsals to be a place where all players are able to feel comfortable and look forward to attending.

Future plans

We are keen to increase our membership and are looking for a Conductor who will support this. It is encouraging that seven new members have joined in the last year.

We would like to attract horn and trumpet players, rather than use deps for concerts, but recognise our current rehearsal space places limitations on accommodating this and a much larger orchestra more generally. We are looking at whether a larger rehearsal space is available or arranging rehearsals to use a larger space on occasions.

Next season is the orchestra's 70th and the committee are keen to use this milestone as an opportunity to promote and build the orchestra.

The orchestra has the following provisional programme planned for the next concert on **14 December 2019**:

Mozart '*Overture*' from *Le Nozze di Figaro* 5 mins

Delius *2 Pieces for Small Orchestra*

- "*On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*" 8 mins

- "*Summer Night on the River*" 6 min

Beethoven *Symphony No. 4 in Bb Op. 60* 30 mins

We wish to add a piece(s) of the new conductor's choosing to complete the programme.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- To provide the Orchestra with musical direction in order to develop its members and achieve the highest possible musical standards, while ensuring that rehearsals and concerts are an enjoyable experience for all.
- To conduct all concerts as agreed with the Orchestra Committee.
- To conduct all rehearsals, including any sectional rehearsals, or, in exceptional circumstances, to arrange for deputies of an acceptable standard.
- To agree a detailed rehearsal schedule for each concert.
- In consultation with the Orchestra Committee, to help plan and agree an annual programme for the Orchestra ensuring that a degree of challenge, enjoyment and musical development is balanced against ability, affordability and audience appeal.
- To advise on the selection and engagement of soloists to perform with the Orchestra.
- To advise on the longer-term future of the Orchestra and in particular initiatives to increase membership and concert audiences
- To advise on the engagement of any additional players for each concert to supplement the core membership, as required.
- To attend Orchestra Committee meetings when invited by the Orchestra Committee and to provide advice and recommendations on musical matters.
- To attend, in an honorary capacity, the Orchestra's AGM and any special meetings that may be called, and to respond appropriately to any issues raised by members.
- To advise and assist on any other matters regarding the management of the Orchestra, as requested by the Committee.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential

- A track record of recent orchestral conducting experience.
- Able to commit to a minimum of two seasons of conducting.

- A willingness to engage with audiences on concert days as this helps create a welcoming atmosphere
- A good knowledge of the concert orchestra repertoire.
- The ability to enthuse and inspire players in all sections, and to make rehearsals and concerts a rewarding and enjoyable experience.
- Evidence of efficient organisational and preparation skills.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- The ability to work constructively with a committee in managing an orchestra.
- A willingness and ability to collaborate with the Orchestra Committee about ideas for the future direction of the Orchestra including increasing concert audiences and proposing / initiating activities to increase orchestra membership.

Desirable

- Formal conductor training.
- Conducting activity at both amateur and professional levels.
- Demonstrable ability to work well with amateur musicians in particular.

What qualities should the new Conductor possess?

- A sense of humour is vital.
- Enthusiasm, commitment and loyalty
- Empathy with amateur players, and forgiveness when necessary!
- Accept that some players' techniques have limitations, but that everyone strives to play to the best of their ability.

CONTRACTUAL INFORMATION AND EXPECTATIONS

- You will not be an employee of the Orchestra. Rather, you will be engaged on a self-employed basis and therefore expected to account for your own income tax, VAT and Class 4 National Insurance contributions.
- The engagement will be for one year with effect from September 2018. The orchestra's Constitution requires the Conductor is appointed on an annual basis confirmed at the AGM in June.
- Termination of agreement will be on the following basis:
 - (a) Either party may give to the other no fewer than three months' notice of their intention not to renew the agreement.
 - (b) Either party may terminate the agreement immediately if the other commits any serious or permanent breach of these terms; and
 - (c) The Orchestra may terminate your engagement immediately if you are unable to fulfil your duties for 60 consecutive days.
- Remuneration presently consists of a concert fee of £370 per concert day (inclusive of the afternoon rehearsal) and a fee of £80 for each Thursday rehearsal, pro-rata for any extended Sunday rehearsal.
- Remuneration is reviewed periodically in light of the Orchestra's finances
- If you are unable to attend a rehearsal other than because of illness, you must give reasonable notice to the Secretary of the Committee, and must arrange a suitable replacement.
- We also expect our Conductor to contribute to the planning of concert programmes, the rehearsal schedule and to selection decisions about players and soloist.

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

Application process

If you are interested please send your CV with a covering note outlining why you would like to work with us to along with:

1. Link(s) to a video of you conducting if you have these available
2. Suggestions for a piece(s) to complete the provisional programme for the concert on 14 December 2019.
3. Availability to audition on 12 or 19 September 2019.

The Secretary, Orpington Symphony Orchestra, 177A White Horse Hill, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6DH. Email: info@orpingtonsymphonyorchestra.co.uk 0208 851 4502.
Website: www.orpingtonsymphonyorchestra.co.uk

Selection process

A shortlist of three will be invited for audition / interview at a Thursday rehearsal. Provisional dates for auditions are the **12 and 19 September** by agreement. Auditions will last for 30/40 minutes.

Each candidate will be asked to rehearse Beethoven *Symphony No. 4 in Bb Op. 60 – 1st and 2nd movements* . Candidates may use their own scores or use the scores provided by the Orchestra.

Following the auditions, the appointment will be put to a vote of the orchestra members and the new conductor will be appointed immediately.