



# VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

DDD

8.557276

## Symphony No. 4

Flos Campi

Paul Silverthorne, Viola

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus and Orchestra

Paul Daniel



## Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

### Symphony No. 4 • Flos Campi • Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1

Ralph Vaughan Williams was born in the Gloucestershire village of Down Ampney in 1872, the son of a clergyman. His ancestry on both his father's and mother's side was of some intellectual distinction. His father was descended from a family eminent in the law, while his maternal grandfather was a Wedgwood and his grandmother a Darwin. On the death of his father in 1875 the family moved to live with his mother's father at Leith Hill Place in Surrey. As a child Vaughan Williams learned the piano and the violin and received a conventional upper middle class education at Charterhouse, after which he delayed entry to Cambridge, preferring instead to study at the Royal College of Music, where his teachers included Hubert Parry and Walter Parratt, later Master of the Queen's Musick, both soon to be knighted. In 1892 he took up his place at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read History, but took composition lessons from Charles Wood. After graduation in both History and Music, he returned to the Royal College, where he studied composition with Stanford, and, perhaps more significant, became a friend of a fellow-student, Gustav Holst. The friendship with Holst was to prove of great importance in frank exchanges of views on one another's compositions in the years that followed.

In 1897 Vaughan Williams married and took the opportunity to visit Berlin, where he had lessons from Max Bruch and widened his musical experience. In England he turned his attention to the collection of folk-music in various regions of the country, an interest that materially influenced the shape of his musical language. In 1908 he went to Paris to take lessons, particularly in orchestration, from Ravel. By now he had begun to make a reputation for himself as a composer, not least with the first performance in 1910

of *A Sea Symphony*, setting words by Walt Whitman, and his *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* in the same year. At the outbreak of war in 1914 he enlisted at once in the Royal Army Medical Corps as a private. This was also the year of the *London Symphony* and of his rhapsodic work for violin and orchestra, *The Lark Ascending*. Three years later, after service in Salonica that seemed to him ineffective, he took a commission in the Royal Garrison Artillery and was posted to France. There he was also able to make some use of his abilities as a musician.

After the war Vaughan Williams returned to the Royal College of Music, now as a professor of composition, a position he retained until 1938. In these years he came to occupy a commanding place in the musical life of the country, with a series of compositions that seemed essentially English, the apparent successor of Elgar, although his musical language was markedly different. The war of 1939 brought the challenge of composition for the cinema, with notable scores for *The 49th Parallel* in 1940 and a number of other films, culminating in 1949 in his music for the film *Scott of the Antarctic*, the basis of the seventh of his symphonies. Other works of the last decade of his life included two more symphonies, the opera *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a violin sonata and concertos for harmonica and for tuba, remarkable adventures for an octogenarian.

The immediate cause that led to the start of work on *Symphony No. 4* was a newspaper article describing a 'modern' European symphony, and Vaughan Williams continued work on it intermittently over the following years. At first, as always, he was able to rely on the advice and support of his friend Gustav Holst, who died in 1934 and was never to hear the finished

work. The first performance took place in April 1935, given by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Adrian Boult. It had a mixed reception. Some found in it a reflection of the disturbed conditions of the time, others were critical of what seemed a break with the composer's earlier style. Vaughan Williams himself, as so often with his new compositions, expressed mixed feelings about it. In his *A Musical Autobiography* he admits to borrowing the opening of the symphony from Beethoven's *Symphony No.9*, but has no regrets, stressing that a composer should make sure that what he writes is the right thing to say at that moment. He was later to insist that whatever he had written in the new symphony was certainly what he had meant at the time. The symphony was dedicated to Arnold Bax.

The disturbingly stark opening of the symphony leads to an *appassionato* second subject. The movement eventually reaches tranquillity in the final *Lento*, discord now resolved. Muted brass introduce the *Andante moderato*, followed by the woodwind and then strings, with a violin melody over the plucked notes of the lower strings. Solo oboe, clarinet and bassoon emerge, melodic lines contrapuntally interwoven, with increased prominence for the interval of a fourth, first heard at the outset. After a tense climax the music unwinds, its *Molto tranquillo* conclusion led by the flute. The *Scherzo* offers immediate contrast with its jaunty rhythms, answered in the *Trio*, by the theme for bassoon, double bassoon and tuba, before the *Scherzo* resumes its course. The *Finale* follows without a break, bringing a brass marching accompaniment, and, as in the other movements, motivic reminiscences. The triumphant progress is interrupted by a characteristic hymn-like passage for the strings, before the impetus is restored, leading to the fugal epilogue, its subject announced by trombones and tuba. This is developed, together with other motivic elements from the movement, before the

whole ends in a return to the opening of the whole work.

Vaughan Williams's first *Norfolk Rhapsody*, based on two folk-songs, was written in 1906 and first performed in the same year, later to be revised. Two further rhapsodies, written in the following year, were withdrawn. The sustained notes of muted violins are punctuated by flute and oboe, before the rhapsodic entry of the clarinet, followed by the solo viola, 'freely as if improvising'. The first theme is *The Captain's Apprentice* to which the lively *Bold Young Apprentice* provides a contrast. The work ends in the tranquillity of the Norfolk countryside, where it had started.

Scored for solo viola, small orchestra and wordless chorus, the suite *Flos Campi* (The Flower of the Field) was completed and first performed in 1925, with the great viola-player Lionel Tertis, to whom it is dedicated. The superscriptions to each of the six movements, taken from *The Song of Songs*, indicate the source of the composition, however secular their interpretation. The first movement is prefaced by the words *Sicut Lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias ... Fulcite me floribus, stipate me malis, quia amore languo* (As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters ... Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love). It will be noticed that the words of the Authorised Version of the Bible do not accurately translate the Vulgate, but the published score includes both versions. Oboe and viola intertwine in the bitalon opening, after which flute and viola join together, before the music moves on to a climax, with the entry of the chorus. *Jam enim hiems transiit; imber abiit, et recessit; Flores apparuerunt in terra nostra, Tempus putationis advenit; Vox turturis audita est in terra nostra* (For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land) is a movement of

rhapsodic meditation on the coming of spring. A viola cadenza is continued into the third movement, *Quaesivi quem diligit anima mea; quaesivi illum, et non inveni* ... 'Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem, si inveneritis dilectum meum, ut nuntietis et quia amore langueo' ... 'Quo abiit dilectus tuus, O pulcherrima mulierum? Quo declinavit dilectus tuus? et quaeremus eum tecum.' (I sought him whom my soul loveth, but I found him not ... 'I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him that I am sick of love' ... 'Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee). *En lectulum Solomonis sexaginta fortes ambiunt ... omnes tenentes gladios, et ad bellum doctissimi* (Behold his bed (palanquin), which is Solomon's, three score

valiant men are about it ... They all hold swords, being expert in war) introduces a march, suiting the text. The fifth movement, *Revertere, revertere Sulamitis! Revertere, revertere ut intueamur te ... Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui in calceamentis, filia principis* (Return, return, O Shulamite, Return, return, that we may look upon thee ... How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O Prince's daughter), brings a passionate climax, until finally, with *Pone me ut signaculum super cor tuum* (Set me as a seal upon thy heart) the viola offers a resolution of great simplicity, a theme taken up by the orchestra, leading to the return of the opening, on which the seal is set in conclusion.

**Keith Anderson**

## Paul Silverthorne

Paul Silverthorne is one of the foremost string players in Britain, performing with conductors including Colin Davis, John Eliot Gardiner and André Previn. In addition he holds the principal viola positions with both the London Symphony Orchestra and the London Sinfonietta. He is particularly renowned for his interest in and interpretation of new music and many composers have been inspired to write works for him. Paul Silverthorne has recorded a wide range of repertoire for a number of record companies to much critical acclaim. He is a professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London and also gives many master classes around the world. He plays a viola made by the Brothers Amati in 1620 and on loan to him from the collection at the Royal Academy of Music.

[www.paulsilverthorne.com](http://www.paulsilverthorne.com)

## Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1893 by Sir Dan Godfrey, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra has had among its Principal Conductors some of the finest musicians in the world, including Rudolf Schwarz, Constantin Silvestri, Sir Charles Groves and Paavo Berglund. More recently Andrew Litton raised the orchestra's standards to new levels, crowning its centenary season with a triumphant début tour of the United States in April 1994, followed by Yakov Kreizberg and débuts at the Musikverein, Vienna, the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and Carnegie Hall, New York. In October 2002, Marin Alsop became Principal Conductor, the first woman to hold this title for any British symphony orchestra. The name of the orchestra is internationally known through over three hundred recordings, including the award-winning release of Anthony Payne's sketches for Elgar's *Symphony No.3* with Paul Daniel (8.554719), and the symphonies of Vaughan Williams with the former Chief Guest Conductor Kees Bakels and Paul Daniel for Naxos, and through overseas tours. In addition to its recording and international touring commitments, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to providing orchestral music across the South and West of Britain, with a varied programme of educational and outreach commitments, and makes regular appearances in major festivals and concert-halls throughout the country.

### Paul Daniel

Paul Daniel is widely regarded as one of the most exciting and talented conductors of his generation and is in great demand with both opera companies and orchestras. He appears as a guest conductor with major orchestras throughout the world and became Music Director of English National Opera in September 1997. Before his appointment, he had already worked extensively with the company. Paul Daniel was Music Director of Opera North from 1990 to 1997, where he attracted critical acclaim for his exciting and fresh performances. During his tenure as Principal Conductor of the English Northern Philharmonia, the orchestra of Opera North, he conducted numerous concerts throughout Britain and also took the orchestra to many festivals including Musica in Strasbourg and the Edinburgh Festival. He has made many recordings with the orchestra for major companies and his recording of the Elgar/Payne *Symphony No. 3* with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (Naxos 8.554719) was one of the best selling classical CDs of 2000. He was Music Director of Opera Factory from 1987 to 1990. In February 1998 Paul Daniel received an Olivier Award for outstanding achievement in opera, and in 1999 he received a Gramophone award for his English music series on the Naxos label. He was awarded the CBE in the 2000 New Year's Honours list.

	<b>Symphony No. 4 in F minor</b>	<b>32:10</b>
①	Allegro	8:30
②	Andante moderato	10:10
③	Scherzo: Allegro molto	5:05
④	Finale con epilogo fugato: Allegro molto	8:25
⑤	<b>Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E minor</b>	<b>10:14</b>
	(Stuart Green, solo viola)	
	<b>Flos Campi - Suite for viola, chorus and orchestra *</b>	<b>20:10</b>
⑥	Lento - 'As the lily among the thorns ...'	2:31
⑦	Andante con moto - 'For, lo, the winter is past ...'	3:07
⑧	Lento - 'I sought him whom my soul loveth ...'	2:56
⑨	Moderato alla marcia - 'Behold his bed, which is Solomon's ...'	1:45
⑩	Andante quasi lento - 'Return, return, O Shulamite ...'	3:20
⑪	Moderato tranquillo - 'Set me as a seal upon this heart ...'	6:31

**Paul Silverthorne, Viola \* • Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**  
**Bournemouth Symphony Chorus \* • Paul Daniel**

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The *Fourth Symphony* is one of Vaughan Williams' most dissonant symphonies, and yet one of his most frequently-performed works. Vaughan Williams is normally thought of as a 'pastoral' composer – modal, melodic, and inspired by folk-song – but this symphony marks a high-point for British modernism. William Walton, at that time having troubles completing his own symphony and having been to the rehearsals of Vaughan Williams's 4th, reported glumly to a friend, 'You are about to hear the greatest symphony since Beethoven'. In contrast *Flos Campi* conjures delicate pastoral images with wonderfully atmospheric music ranging from a first section, depicting the poet languishing for love, to life-affirming ecstasy in the finale.

Ralph  
**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS**  
(1872-1958)

- 1-4 **Symphony No. 4 in F minor** 32:10
- 5 **Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E minor** 10:14  
(Stuart Green, Viola)
- 6-11 **Flos Campi - Suite for viola, chorus and orchestra** \* 20:10

**Paul Silverthorne, Viola \* • Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**  
**Bournemouth Symphony Chorus \* (Neville Creed, Chorus Master)**  
**Paul Daniel**

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Cover Picture: *Silver Moonlight, 1880* by John Atkinson Grimshaw (1836-93)  
(Harrogate Museums and Art Gallery, North Yorkshire, UK / Bridgeman Art Library)

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Playing Time  
62:34



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