

Live music at St James celebrates island's youth

Elgar, Beethoven, Britten - and Dennis Burns - all help the Guernsey Symphony Orchestra mark the bicentenary of St James

GUERNSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S upcoming concert, *A Celebration of Youth*, plans to do just that - celebrate the youth of Guernsey.

'The GSO is for Guernsey, for the community, and youngsters are part of the community and so is St James. The concert is part of the celebrations of St James's bicentenary, which will see many events over the year,' said Tim Wright, chairman of the GSO management committee and head of brass and percussion for the Guernsey Music Service.

Sponsor of the concert Credit Suisse has set aside seats for students taking A-level music from the Grammar School, Ladies' College and Elizabeth College - among the latter are Harvey Falla, 17, who plays double bass and viola, Jonathan Charmley, 16, Toby Glass, 19, piano, and Finlay Wilkes, 17, trumpet.

'The concert will be great as we'll get to hear Beethoven's *Eroica* played live,' said Harvey.

'It's not a set work for A-level but it's part of the course.'

'This will be great opportunity to see how it's done at a semi-professional level,' said Toby.

'And academically, it'll be very interesting as we'll see how all the instruments work together,' said Jonathan.

Returning as guest conductor will be long-time friend of the orchestra Ewa Strusinskas.

As well as *Eroica*, the concert will feature Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* and Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, starring guest narrator Dennis Burns.

'It's a really nice piece. I looked at it and thought straight away I'd like to do it.

This will be the first time I've worked with the GSO and I feel a little out of my comfort zone.

The *Guide* was commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 1945 for a film to familiarise young people with the instruments of the orchestra. The text spoken by Dennis was written for the film by Eric Crozier.

'I love performing at St James,' said Dennis. 'I was here only last week singing *Shake, Rattle and Roll*.'

Stephen Ainsworth, chairman of the St James 200th Anniversary Committee, said he was looking forward to the concert and to the rest of the year's celebrations at St James.

'We've deliberately opened up the programme, so as well as classical music we have had Rebecca Ferguson and Nessi Gomes, which was a recent sell-out. In October we'll have *Sound at St James*, an all-ages music festival over two whole days. Everywhere you go in the building there will be live music and celebrating.'

◆ **A Celebration of Youth with Guernsey Symphony Orchestra is at St James on Saturday 24 March at 8pm. Tickets are £15, £12.50, £10, students half price and £6 restricted view and are available at www.guernseytickets.gg and at the box office on 711361.**

A Celebration of Youth: Back row, left to right: Students Finlay Wilkes, Harvey Falla, Jonathan Charmley and Toby Glass.

Front row, left to right: Stephen Ainsworth, chairman of the St James 200th anniversary committee, Liz Willcocks, director of music at Elizabeth College, Tim Wright, chairman of the GSO management committee and head of brass and percussion for the Guernsey Music Service, and guest narrator Dennis Burns. (20875288)

