

# **Stroud Orchestra goes from strength to strength**

**Stroud Symphony Orchestra Concert, 30<sup>th</sup> November, Holy Trinity Church**

The internationally renowned soloist Katya Apekisheva totally won over the packed Holy Trinity Church with her commanding performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto No 20 in D minor (K466). Conductor Jonathan Trim and leader John Woodward were on the same wavelength throughout and the whole ensemble brought out the full range of moods from the opening tragic unrest to the fizzing, happy conclusion. Katya Apekisheva integrated Beethoven's cadenza so skilfully that Mozart would surely have loved the remix. In the Romanza she spun long operatic lines which made the Yamaha piano sing.

The title of Elgar's Cockaigne Overture means Cockney and he described it as 'cheerful and Londony'. From the arresting opening, the vivid pictures of London at the turn of the century came alive. Jonathan Trim sensitively blended the orchestral colours and expertly negotiated the frequent tempo changes – a true Elgarian.

Brahms starts his third symphony with some very difficult writing especially for the strings. After a slightly tentative beginning the players soon gained in confidence and all sections of the orchestra contributed to make a rich sound. In the mainly calm second movement, well-balanced woodwind and lyrical lower strings combined effectively. The wistful, reflective and nostalgic mood of the poco allegretto was captured perfectly, with an outstanding horn solo. The whole orchestra rose to the challenge of the extraordinary finale – incisive attack, surging rhythms ending serenely with gossamer-like strings. This orchestra can do it all!

**Peter Harney**