

Dacorum Symphony Orchestra

Saturday 28th February 2009
Berkhamsted School, Berkhamsted

The exultant note struck by the overture informed the whole of the solo piece – the Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major Op. 58 by Beethoven. This, one feels, is Beethoven at his most virile and self-confident. When he composed it in 1805-6, he was in his thirties and at the height of his powers, already with an acclaimed record of achievement behind him, but well before his tragic deafness cast its lengthening shadow over the later years of this supreme artist. Beethoven himself gave the first two performances of the concerto, the first at a private concert given in March 1807 at the palace of his patron, Prince Lubkowitz, the second – the public première – in December 1808 in Vienna in the Theater an der Wien.

It was with keen anticipation that we all looked forward to the solo performance by Rachel Fryer. Rachel gave a virtuoso performance, with nicely judged phrasing, with uninhibited power where appropriate, and delicacy of touch where required. A review in the May 1809 edition of Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung stated that “this concerto is the most admirable, singular, artistic and complex Beethoven concerto ever.” Quite a challenge, which this brilliant young artist rose to with aplomb!

Review by Philip Worth, <http://www.dacorumso.org/>