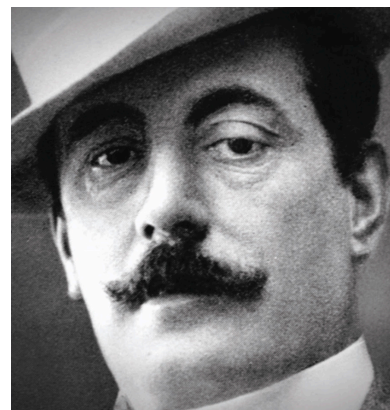


COMMUNITY NEWS - Tuesday 16 January 2024

IPSWICH ARTS ASSOCIATION with CHRIS GREEN

He liked fast cars, he liked fast speedboats, and he liked – well, with women that was his undoing. I am talking about the Italian composer, Giacomo Puccini. He died in 1924 by which time his ascendancy in the musical world was assured but his personal reputation was tarnished by an affair which never happened. If you want to know more, then you have a few days still to sign up for the open half-day workshop being organised by Trianon Music Group on Saturday 3 February. The workshop will be part talk by me but also a sing through of one of Puccini's most neglected masterpieces- his setting of the *Messa di gloria*. He wrote little church music despite the fact that his father and grandfather played a significant role in the musical life of their local church. Instead, he concentrated on opera and now one can hear pieces like *Nessun dorma* being sung at big events. But there is more to Puccini than that. Visit the Trianon [website](#) to book, but the cut off date is this coming weekend.

Puccini is so well served by recordings that present his great operas such as *Madama Butterfly*, *Tosca* or *La Boheme*. But a new CD presents a very different “take” with orchestral arrangements of melodies from these operas plus a few of his purely orchestral works. Carlo Rizzi conducts the Welsh National Opera Orchestra in this collection, with the conductor having been responsible for creating the various opera suites they perform. Recorded over a two-day period in December 2022 in Cardiff, this newly released album, *Puccini – Symphonic Suites* – provides plenty of opportunities to sing or hum along with some of the world's greatest tunes (Signum SIGCD 778).



*Giacomo Puccini - a composer in the fast lane.
Credit: Public domain*

Whilst on the subject of singing, I recently received a notice from the Britten-Pears Foundation to say that the date for a Singing Day to be led by John Rutter has been changed, It was scheduled for 17 February at Snape Maltings and is now to be 24 February. Booking is open and registration costs £25 with concession for under 30s.

On Saturday 20 January Onyx Brass come to town. They will be performing a programme for the Ipswich Chamber Music Society in the Great School, Ipswich School. Their programme has not only great variety from baroque to contemporary music but music by composers who have

had a great association with me over many years, although sadly both have died. The Onyx programme includes the *Leiston Suite* (a work I have never heard) by Imogen Holst (the first president of Trianon), and Quintet No 1 by Malcolm Arnold (the third President of Trianon). There is music by Bach and Handel in this programme which should brighten up the winter's evening. It starts at 7.30pm.



Onyx Brass, appearing in Ipswich. Credit: Nadsa Concerts.

If intimate music interests you, then a lunchtime concert by the Isla String Quartet on Friday 26 January may be to your liking. They perform at the Jubilee Hall in Aldeburgh at 12 noon, as part of the spring series of Britten-Pears lunchtime concerts. The quartet comprises students from the Royal Academy of Music and has been recently created with its members having taken part in an advanced string coaching session. They will be playing music by Haydn, Shostakovich and a new work by Caroline Shaw, *Plan and Elevation*.

The Ipswich Institute has announced a number of new evening courses being held in the spring. Although they started last week, I reckon there is still time to join by phoning David Stainer on 01473 253992 or emailing education@ipswichinstitute.org.uk

If you have a story to share with other organisations, please email IAA chairperson, Professor Chris Green at: cjc.green@talktalk.net
