

ENTERTAINMENT

An American Christmas with the JSO

By Sue Le Ruez

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A 'BEAUTIFUL and moving' performance by a young violinist was one of the highlights of the Jersey Symphony Orchestra's 2016 Christmas concert staged at Fort Regent on Sunday.

Elliot Samphier, 2013 PWC Jersey Young Musician of the Year and now studying at the Royal Northern College of Music, enthralled his audience with his playing of Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto, Op 14 (1939).

JSO president Richard Thomas thanked him for playing a wonderful work in this way. 'It was a beautiful and moving performance,' he said, adding that Elliot was now a key member of the violin team and the fact that he was playing at the concert as soloist was a tribute to all his teachers over the years.

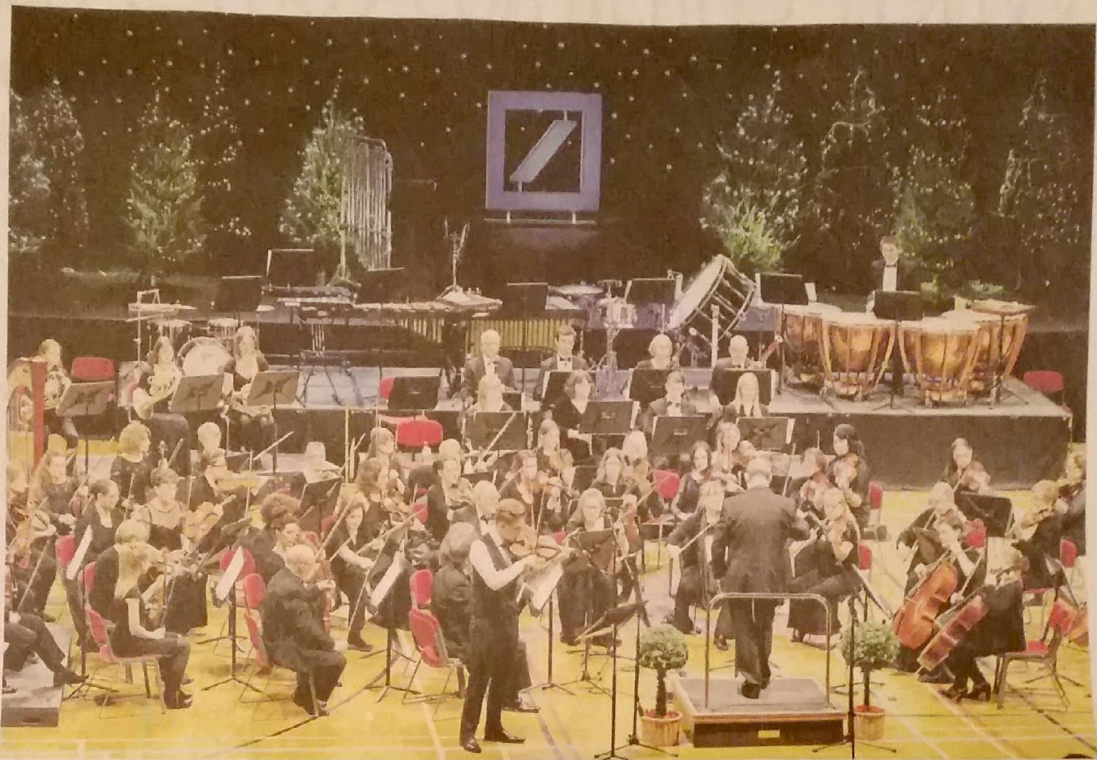
Elliot's performance was the second in a programme of music by 20th-century composers put together for an evening titled An American Christmas which also included a performance by the FCJ School choir.

Under guest conductor Peter Robinson the orchestra began with Appalachian Spring (1945) by Aaron Copland, who was one of the first composers to find an American voice for his music. Originally written as a ballet for a small orchestra, it was first performed in 1944, but the music was so popular that Copland reworked it the following year into a piece for full orchestra.

The second half of the concert opened with The Chairman Dances - a Foxtrot for orchestra (1985) - by John Adams, who is among those who uses minimalist techniques in his music.

The programme continued with Morton Gould's Serenade of Carols (1949) before the young choir of FCJ School, under the direction of Steven Thomas, assisted by Jo Rentch and accompanied by Helen Thomas, proved that all their rehearsing had been worthwhile with their singing of The Gift Goes On and Born on Christmas Day.

Christmas at the Movies Medley, arranged by Bob Krogstad and including themes from Miracle on 34th Street, A Christmas



Story and the Nightmare Before Christmas, was a popular concluding piece before the audience were invited to raise the roof with their singing of Christmas carols.

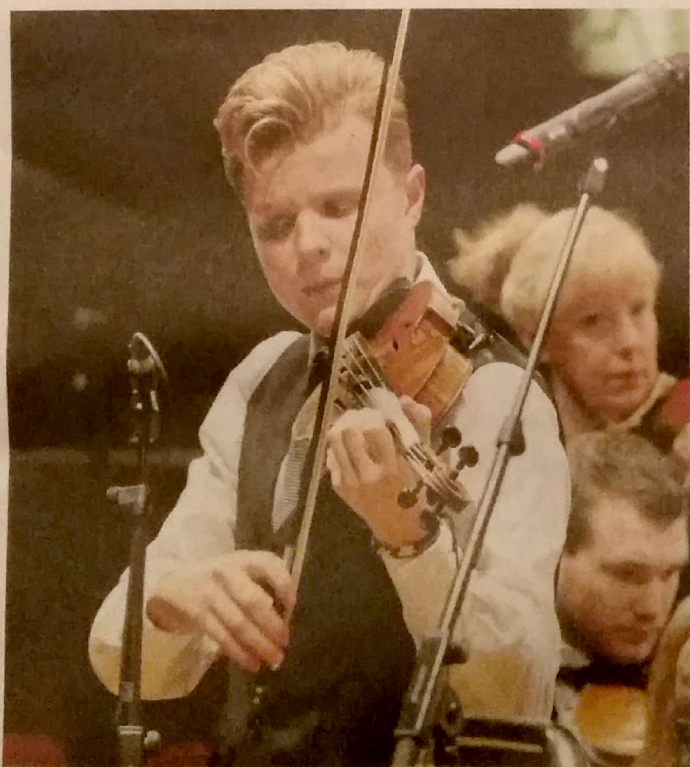
Mr Robinson thanked everyone for being 'a very warm and attentive audience' and said that he hoped they had enjoyed the concert as much as the orchestra had enjoyed performing it.

Earlier Mr Thomas thanked main sponsors Deutsche Bank for their continued support of the orchestra, which is made up of both local and visiting players, and explained that the bank's chief executive, Andreas Tautscher, had unfortunately been unable to attend because of the travel disruption as a result of fog.

Jersey Symphony Orchestra on stage at Fort Regent for their American-themed Christmas concert (16965191)
Pictures: TONY PIKE



Woodwind and brass in full flow (16965207)



Elliot Samphier gave a moving performance of Barber's Violin Concerto (16965205)



Guest conductor Peter Robinson (16965195)