



Surrey Network

Universities of the Third Age

THE OPERAS OF PUCCINI (1858-1924)

A Study Day on Friday, 12th February 2010

At The Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon (map overleaf)

Tutor - Gowan Hewlett

Puccini is generally regarded as the greatest Italian opera composer of the post-Verdi generation, and perhaps the finest exponent of realistic "verisimo" opera. Using filmed excerpts from a variety of British and international productions of his operas we will consider the reasons for his popularity. We also review Puccini's place among his contemporaries. His subjects were often shocking, not least for their emphasis on emotional reality. His characters use meticulously chosen words while his evocative melodies create particularly memorable sound worlds. The result is superb theatre. We meet the drama of his personal life, the tussles with his librettists, as well as the conviviality of Puccini's life in his native Tuscan countryside.

Programme

- 9.30 Registration
- 10.00 La Boheme (1896)
- 11.00 Coffee / tea
- 11.30 Tosca (1900)
- 12.30 Lunch - Bring your own - tea/coffee available
- 1.30 Madame Butterfly (1904)
- 2.30 Coffee / tea
- 3.00 Gianni Schicchi (1918) and Turandot (1926)
- 4.00 Departure

Recommended Reading

- Opera* - A. Riding & L. Dunton-Downer; Dorling Kindersley 2006
- Puccini and his Operas* - ed. Stanley Sadie; Macmillan 2000
- The Complete Operas of Puccini* - Charles Osborne; Da Cap Press 1981

Tutor

Gowan Hewlett has given talks to U3A audiences since July 2003 including four Study Days at Sussex University and has led a residential 4-day Summer School at Chichester in 2009 (with another confirmed there for 2010). He holds a Certificate in Opera from Sussex University and has enjoyed being a 'super' (non-singing) on stage at Glyndebourne Festival Opera between 1980 to 2008.

To assure your place send the slip below, as soon as possible, with a cheque for £10 (non-U3A guest £12) payable to 'Surrey U3A Network', to Sheila Hill - U3A, 21 Yarm Court Road, Leatherhead, KT22 8NY, 01372 372165, sheilahill@hotmail.com. Enclose a SAE or your e-mail address for confirmation. Fees are not normally refundable.

'Puccini' Study Day 12th February 2010

Please print Confirm by E-mail or enclosed SAE

Title First Name Surname Name of U3A

Address

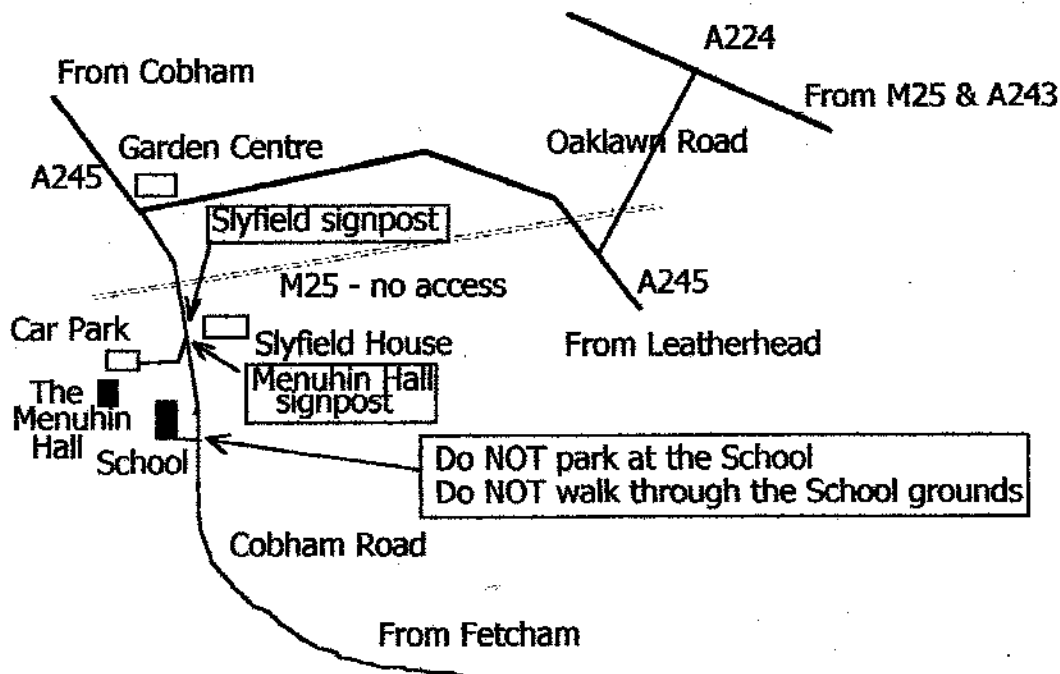
Post Code Telephone E-mail

The Menuhin Hall

Cobham Road
Stoke d'Abernon
KT11 3QQ
TQ 132 579

Telephone 07763 805046 (emergency, on day only)
or Menuhin Hall Office 08700 842020

There is a garden centre, Shoot's Garden Centre (01932 862530), about 800 metres to the north of the Menuhin Hall where light lunches are available. Reservations not required.



The Menuhin School was founded in 1963 in London and moved to its present site in 1964. It has about 66 pupils learning to play stringed instruments and is financed, in part, by the DfES. Lord Menuhin was born in New York on 22nd April 1916 and died on 12th March 1999 in Berlin. His parents had come from Russia. His first public concert was in March 1924 and his first in Europe, in Paris, in 1927. His performance of Elgar's Violin Concerto was recorded at the Abbey Road Studios in 1932. The Hall, designed by Mark Foley, was conceived as a memorial to Yehudi and was handed over to the school on 5th August 2005. The official opening was on 7th January 2006. Yehudi is buried near the stone pillar in front of the Hall. Nearby is an oak which he planted on his 80th birthday. The Hall was first used for U3A Study Days on 14th October 2005 when the Steinway grand piano was used as no other was available.