

## Jenny Whitby - Tour to Cologne with CUMS Symphony Orchestra

July 2016

Thanks to the generous funding given to me by Pembroke College I was able to accompany the Cambridge University Music Society Symphony Orchestra (CUMS SO) on their summer tour to Cologne. I play the flute and piccolo, and have been a member of CUMS SO for the last two years. I was excited for the tour as it allowed me to play some of my favourite classical works and increased my orchestral experience. The repertoire was *The Tempest* by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov's *Symphony No.2*, which we had previously played under the baton of John Wilson, a conductor who performs regularly at the proms.



In preparation for the tour the orchestra spent 2 days rehearsing in London before departing for Cologne. This allowed us to work in depth on the repertoire with our conductor Joel Sanderson. Once we had travelled across to Cologne, the orchestra played three concerts. Our first was in the Trinitatiskirche, an evangelical church in Cologne. Like the following two concerts it was a free event, which allowed many local residents to come and experience a symphony orchestra and music that they might not have heard before. Although we did do an extended rehearsal before the concert I still found some time to explore Cologne. It was a very interesting city as many parts suffered a large amount of destruction during the Second World War. This meant there were very sharp contrasts in architecture throughout the city. One building that famously withstood the bombings was Cologne Cathedral. Its gothic architecture and enormous size has made it a World Heritage Site and it is said to be the most visited tourist attraction in Germany. From inside you can climb a long flight of stairs up one of the towers, the top of which offers great views over Cologne.

Our second concert in Germany was in Andernach, which is an hour away from Cologne. We played in a small but beautiful Christuskirche in the heart of the town. The audience there really seemed to appreciate the music and gave us a standing ovation at the end of the concert. During the day I enjoyed visiting the village market and wandering down the narrow traditional streets. Our final concert was in Bonn University Hall. This was the most spacious and professional venue we played in and the orchestra sounded superb. Bonn is famous for being the birthplace of Beethoven and during our time off I visited his house. This has been turned into a museum and contains the largest Beethoven collection in the world including documents, manuscripts and Beethoven's own instruments. Having played many of Beethoven's symphonies as well as his piano sonatas, it was really inspiring to see the original manuscripts of pieces that are now so well known and loved.

Overall I had a brilliant time touring with CUMSSO and would like to thank Pembroke College again for the funding they provided to make the trip possible.