

Today is the last day of this year's Festival - I really can't believe it! I am sure we would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make this festival such a success the committee, the Friends who have helped at the various concerts, the hosts, etc. etc. etc. but there is one person who deserves a big '**Thank You**' for all he has done to give us this festival - our Artistic Director Gordon Back. He has brought us amazing musicians once again. Some have been renowned for many years including our patron Llŷr Williams and our president Sir Karl Jenkins, but he has also introduced us to some amazing new talent including the unforgettable Christian Li!!! So, thank you Gordon, we are all looking forward to next year!

The work of the committee doesn't stop; on Friday we have our first planning meeting for next year. In it we will review this year's festival. We will look at any things that haven't gone as smoothly as we would like, and we will try to ensure, as best as we can, that next year any issues are resolved.

So, thank you for all your support, it has been lovely meeting so many of you again this year, and we hope to see you all again next year!

But before then we have tonight's Gala Concert to celebrate Sir Karl Jenkins' 75th Birthday. As I mentioned on Thursday, this is another sell-out and we are expecting nearly 600 people in the audience, plus orchestra, choir and soloists! However we will not be expecting as many as are anticipated for the Stereophonics concert in Singleton Park and there we have a slight problem! Getting to St Mary's on Saturday shouldn't be a problem in that Mumbles Road and Gower Road through Sketty should still be open. However, De la Beche road will be one-way, Llewellyn Street and Lewis Street will be one way and Brynmill Lane will be closed.

So there shouldn't be too many problems getting there, apart from extra traffic, but please allow extra time to get there and parking.

Going home will be a different problem, Mumbles Road and Gower Road will both be closed from 10 - 11.45pm. Therefore, if you need to go to the west of the city or south Gower, you will need to go a different way home. I have been told that the Swansea City website has full details.

We have now had a number of entries to the Maestro's Quiz. If you haven't sent in your answers yet, entry closes at midnight today and we hope to be able to announce the winner sometime tomorrow.

Now for the final time for this year.....over to the Mumbling Maestro of Mumbles

"Music makes one feel so romantic – at least it gets on one's nerves - which is the same thing nowadays" - Oscar Wilde

If you're a film fan you could certainly be forgiven for thinking that classical music is the trademark of villains. It accompanies the thoughts and actions of so many wrong uns - you know - the mad geniuses and the serial killers etc. For instance: Norman Bates (played by Anthony Perkins) practices the *Moonlight sonata* in *Psycho II*. Sociopath Lou Ford (played by actor Casey Affleck) relaxes to Richard Strauss throughout *The Killer Inside Me*. Alex Forrest (Glenn Close) in *Fatal Attraction* plots her revenge whilst listening to *Madame Butterfly*. In the BBC's *Sherlock*, Moriarty (Andrew Scott) has Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie* on his iPod as he steals the Crown Jewels. Baroque music in particular seems to satisfy the cravings of a deranged mind. In *Schindler's List*, a Nazi officer pauses to play a bit of Bach on a piano while his troops massacre everyone in sight. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins) waves a bloodied cudgel like a conductor's baton to the *Goldberg Variations* in *The Silence of the Lambs*.

All this is nothing new - even the James Bond films are full of examples. In *Moonraker* we meet the bad egg Hugo Drax (Michael Lonsdale) inside his palatial chateau, seated at a magnificent grand piano playing Chopin. The villainous Karl Stromberg (Curd Jurgens) in *The Spy Who Loved Me* listens to Mozart's 21st Piano Concerto as his underwater fortress 'Atlantis' rises from the waves and he savours Bach's *Air on the G String*, while feeding bits of person to his pet shark. In *Quantum of Solace*, Spectre (the baddies) choose a live performance of *Tosca* as the venue to discuss the overthrowing of a drugs cartel.

In many films, the concert hall itself serves as a venue for skulduggery. In *The Untouchables*, Al Capone (Robert De Niro) learns that his gang murdered Jim Malone (Sean Connery) during a performance of *Pagliacci*. For *The Godfather: Part III*, the final string of assassinations occur while Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) attends *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Josephine Conway McKenna (Doris Day) saves a foreign prime minister from a balcony-box sniper at the Royal Albert Hall in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and in *Mission Impossible - Rogue Nation*, Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) thwarts an assassination plot during a performance of *Turandot* (the weapon is disguised as a bass flute). So, as you sit there savouring the performance and enjoying Sir Karl's magnificent music, just glance around - who knows what's going on in the minds of the audience. Is that flautist playing a real instrument, what dramas are unfolding all around you?

On that note - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all my readers!!

Mumbling Maestro of Mumbles