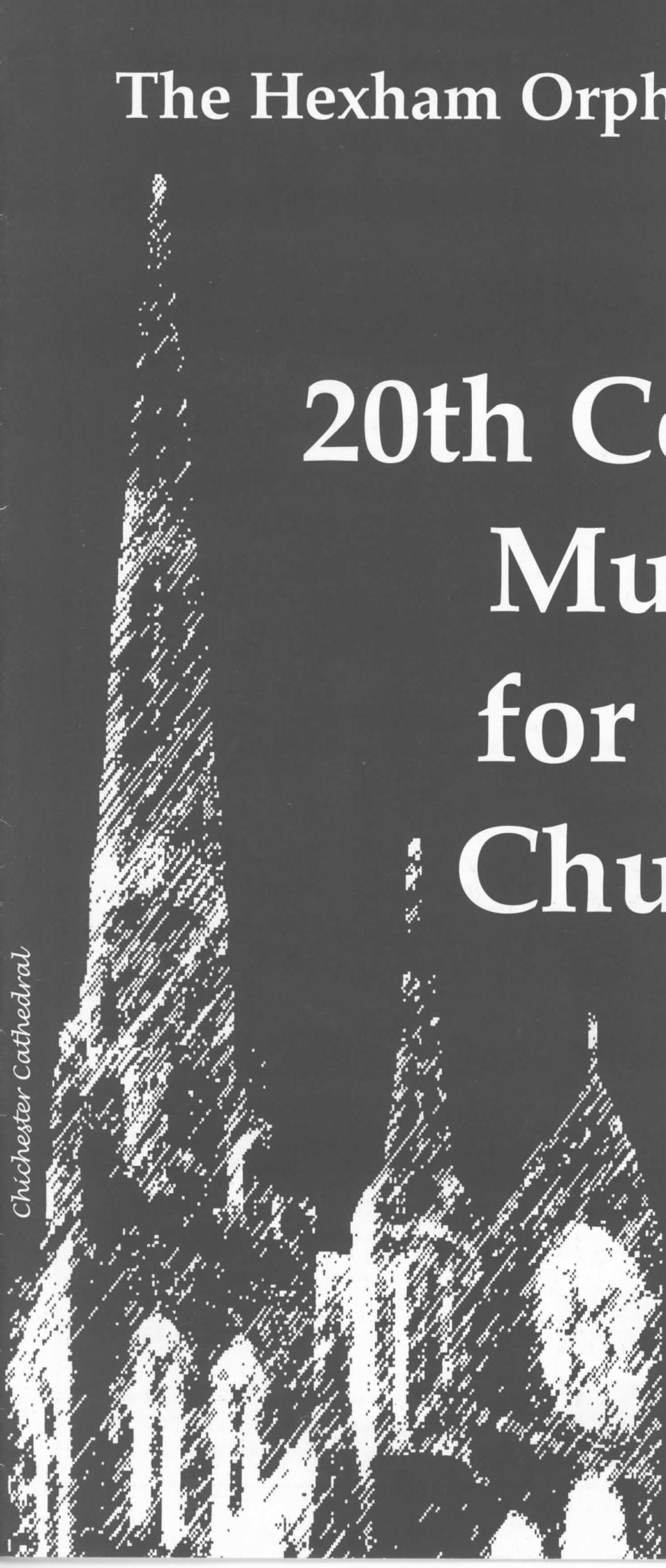


The Hexham Orpheus Choir



20th Century Music for the Church

SATURDAY
17th MAY 2003

HEXHAM ABBEY

PROGRAMME

The Hexham Orpheus Choir

Conducted by Glenn Davis

Rehearsal Accompanist
Margaret Huntington

« Musicians »

Organist: Michael Dutton
Flute: Sally Wood
Harp: Helen Kelly

Cello: Julia Watson
Oboe: Robin Crinson
Percussion: Andrew Booth

Hexham Orpheus Choir would like to thank
Cogito Books
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For their continued support as our Principal Sponsor

« The Choir »

Sopranos

Catherine Allen
Sarah Barker
Evelyn Blenkinsop
Dorothy Booker
Ruth Brownlee
Laura Chadwin
Elspeth Christie
Janet Davies
Pip Emler *
Anne Firth
Dot Gibson
Frances Hughes
Adele Kinsella
Elaine Rigg
Nuala Rose
Lindsey Tweed
Brenda Waton
Carrie Winger

Altos

Margaret Bainbridge
Marie Bridges
Pat Crompton
Sheila Dance
Elizabeth Dixon
Davina Dwyer
Val Hooker *
Anita Jeffries
Margaret Matthews
Lesley Middleton
Dorothy Peters
Bronya Read
Pat Rose
Jean Southwell
Janet Storrie
Catherine Stott
Rachel Ward
Jean Wilks
Roz Woodward

Tenors

John Barker
Malcolm Chainey *
Tom Frost
Tim Grew *
Susan Kent
Peter Nevin

Basses

Richard Dixon
Robert Firth
John Kent
Keith Mallinson
Tony May
Owen McArdle *
Simon Partridge
Peter Stott

* Soloists in Bernstein – Chichester Psalms

Treble Soloists from

The Hexham Abbey Choir

with the help and co-operation of Michael Haynes – Musical Director



For information about future concerts and joining the choir
visit our website at:

www.hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

PROGRAMME

The Choir:

Instrumental Solos

1. Pièce	<i>Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)</i>
Played by Robin Crinson	
2. Elégie	<i>Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)</i>
Played by Julia Watson	

The Choir

INTERVAL

Guest Soloists

Pie Jesu (from the Requiem) *Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)*
Sung by Matthew Belcher, James Padmore and Simon Passmore

The Choir

Requiem *John Rutter (b. 1945)*

1. *Requiem and Kyrie*
2. *Out of the deep* (Cello solo, with choir)
3. *Pie Jesu* (Treble solo, with choir)
4. *Sanctus*
5. *Agnus Dei*
6. *The Lord is my Shepherd* (Oboe solo, with choir)
7. *Lux Aeterna* (Treble solo with choir)

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Vaughan Williams and Jonathan Dove

The tiny introit which opens the concert was written by the 81-year old Vaughan Williams for the coronation service of 1953. Jonathan Dove has written widely for the theatre and the church. Three large-scale Community operas for Glyndebourne, an opera on the death of Princess Diana and scores for theatre productions of *Hamlet* and *Medea* feature among the former, while

Faber Music have published a number of religious works including tonight's anthem, a setting of two prayers by the twelfth-century Saint, Edmund of Abingdon.

Bernstein: Chichester Psalms

Leonard Bernstein occupied an important place in American music as a conductor, pianist and composer, a triple career he pursued throughout his professional life. As a composer he is universally known for *West Side Story* in 1957. However he also produced three symphonies and a most unconventional Mass, among other works. It is perhaps misleading to divide his output rigidly into a "light" and "serious" straitjacket since his overall style is both very American and very eclectic, drawing on serious musicians like Stravinsky as well as popular sources, in particular the song-style of American musicals.

Nevertheless most of larger scale non-theatrical works deal with religious themes. The *Chichester Psalms* were commissioned by an extraordinarily active promoter of artistic life in the Church of England, the Very Reverend Walter Hussey, at that time Dean of Chichester Cathedral in Sussex. (His previous commissioned artists included Benjamin Britten and Graham Sutherland). After Bernstein composed the Psalms during a sabbatical year he took in 1965, the first English performance took place in Chichester Cathedral on 31st July (after a hair-raising "one rehearsal on the day" preparation – quite in the English amateur tradition!)

Number one opens with a noisy, exuberant setting of one verse from Psalm 108, the music then stays in 7:4 for the presentation of the whole of Psalm 100. The first verse (*O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands*) sets the mood for everything that follows. The second movement (to be sung by a treble or male alto) clearly must depict the young David with his harp, singing the opening of Psalm 23. The text is taken up by Sopranos and Altos, but before it can conclude, the Tenors and Basses interrupt with the menace of Psalm 2 (*Why do the nations rage so furiously together*) set to music originally intended for the Sharks and Jets in *West Side Story*. These elements combine (in a very distant reminder of Sullivan's Savoy Opera set pieces?) to the end. The final movement begins with an initially discordant organ prelude which quotes themes from the first two movements before settling down to a gentle tune apt for the words *Lord, Lord my heart is not haughty nor mine eyes lofty*. This "peacefully flows" (the composer's direction) until a short climax for three choir soloists leads to a restatement of the angular theme which opened both the first and third movements, but now set peacefully and quietly.

Rutter: Requiem

Since his joint editorship of the "Carols for Choirs" series with Sir David Willcocks, John Rutter has been extraordinarily prolific and successful as a composer for choral voices on both sides of the Atlantic. This Requiem (dedicated to the composer's father) was first performed in Dallas, Texas, in October 1985. The genesis was European, however, as the composer told us on an extremely successful singing day in Hexham three years ago. He was preparing a new edition of the famous Fauré requiem for Oxford University Press and the experience of handling the Frenchman's original manuscript was inspirational. Like the Fauré it consists of seven movements, neither piece being a complete setting of the Roman Catholic Requiem Mass. Rutter incorporates settings in English of Psalm 130 (*Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord*) and (like Bernstein), Psalm 23 (*The Lord is my shepherd*). He also inserts texts from the Anglican Burial Service, (as a self-confessed admirer of the 1662 Prayer Book) into the *Agnus Dei* and *Lux Aeterna*.

The composer describes his Requiem in this way: " The seven sections of the work form an arch-like meditation on the themes of life and death: the first and last movements are prayers on behalf of all humanity, movements two and six are psalms, three and five are personal prayers to Christ, and the central *Sanctus* is an affirmation of Divine glory."



The Hexham Orpheus choir gratefully
acknowledge the financial support it has
received for this concert by
The National Federation of Music

