



HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR

Present

MOZART & HAYDN

at Hexham Abbey

With performances of

Harmoniemesse, Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

Salve Regina and Ave Verum Corpus.



7:30pm Saturday, 13th April 2013

Hexham Orpheus Choir

Registered Charity no. 514942

www.hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk



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5 St. Mary's Chare, Hexham NE46 1NQ, Tel: 01434 602 555

SPRING CONCERT, 13TH APRIL 2013

Salve Regina in G minor Joseph Haydn

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae

Eja ergo, advocata nostra

Et Jesum ... leading to O clemens

Serenade in G major: Eine Kleine Nachtmusik Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Allegro

Romance

Minuet and Trio

Rondo: Allegro

Motet: Ave Verum Corpus Mozart

INTERVAL AND REFRESHMENTS

Harmoniemesse (Wind-band Mass) Haydn

Kyrie

Gloria

Credo

Sanctus

Benedictus

Agnus Dei, leading to Dona Nobis Pacem

Haydn may have composed the 1771 *Salve Regina* in gratitude for his recovery from ill health. The text of the Antiphon is an appeal to the mercy of the Virgin Mary, cast as an intermediary between her Son and sinful mankind. It was thus natural for the composer to choose a grave style. The music has an air of restrained beauty with many examples of word-painting – the descent to low, dark harmonies at “this vale of tears” and the colouring given to Mary’s “sweetness” (O dulcis virgo Maria), for example. The work was originally scored for strings with solo organ, but tonight is played with oboes and bassoons.

The Faber Pocket Guide to Mozart lists tonight’s two works as part of the Top Ten of his compositions in popular estimation. *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, written in 1787, must be the most famous serenade ever written. “Its virtues are utter simplicity, memorability and perfect balance” is Nicholas Kenyon’s comment in the Faber guide. *Ave Verum Corpus*, written four years later, is a short, perfectly-formed motet for the newly-restored feast of Corpus Christi, and the last finished church work in the composer’s output.

In December 1802, Haydn was given an early Christmas present by his princely employer, Nicholas Esterházy. “To my First Wine Steward ... since I have decided to issue to my Kapellmeister Haydn a gratis annual amount of six Eimer of table wine ...” This alcoholic reward was almost certainly the Prince’s recognition of the success of the *Harmoniemesse* earlier that year. It was the sixth and last of a series of Masses that he had ordered for his wife’s “name-day”, a religious birthday celebrated on the feast-day of the saint whose Christian name one shared. Maria Josepha Esterházy’s day was September 8th, the feast-day of the Virgin Mary.

This Mass was Haydn’s last finished composition. He was 70, and tired by the completion of *The Seasons*, his third major oratorio. He had confessed to Nicholas that he was “labouring wearily on this new mass” and anxious whether he would “ever receive any applause because of it”. Nevertheless it was a triumph and more than amply reflects his famous observation that when he thought of God his heart leapt for joy and that he couldn’t help his music doing the same. A “Harmonie” was a Wind-band, and the nickname reflects the size and prominence of the woodwind section in this piece. The military fanfares at the opening of the Dona Nobis Pacem also reflect the ever-presence of war (with Napoleon’s France) during this period.



Glenn Davis, Conductor and Musical Director

Glenn has been involved with choral music all his life since singing in the Ripieno choir in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at the age of 12. His serious choral conducting began in 1979 with the founding of the (coast-based) Priory Singers. He took over the Hexham Orpheus Choir in 1998, and under his leadership the choir has gone from strength to strength. Recent concerts have included Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, *Requiems* by Duruflé and Brahms, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Goodall's *Missa Aedis Christi*, and Handel's *Messiah*. He has benefitted most of all from the training given by Simon Halsey at Canford in the 1980s, and by keenly observing the professionals who train and conduct the Northern Sinfonia Chorus with which he sings bass.



Mary Houlton, Soprano

Originally from Lincolnshire, Mary moved to the North East six years ago to study music at Newcastle University. During this time, Mary has studied singing with vocal tutor Poppy Holden. Singing highlights whilst at university include an opera collaboration between Newcastle University and the Northern Stage Theatre in an Opera Double Bill of Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* and Weill's *Mahagonny Songspiel*. Most recently, solo work includes Poulenc's *Gloria*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Allegri's *Miserere* and Fauré's *Requiem*. As well as solo engagements, Mary also enjoys singing in a number of vocal ensembles including most notably The Northern Sinfonia Chorus based at The Sage Gateshead with whom she sang in the world premiere performance of James MacMillan's *Credo* at the BBC Proms 2012. Mary is a participant of the Samling Foundation Academy 2012.



Gail Davies, Alto

Born and brought up in Scotland, Gail studied music at the University of Nottingham before relocating to the North East to work at The Sage Gateshead. It was as a student that Gail's interest in singing really took hold. She gained a Choral Scholarship at St Barnabas Cathedral in addition to singing in all the University vocal ensembles. Gail has worked with many high-profile conductors, including Thierry Fisher, Nicholas McGegan, Simon Halsey and Mario Venzago, and appeared in opera performances alongside Magdalena Kožená, Lisa Milne, Christopher Maltman and Roderick Williams.

Recent solo performances include Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, and Allegri's *Miserere* conducted by Stephen Cleobury. Gail's interest in contemporary music has led her to work with American composer David Lang on performances of *The Little Match Girl Passion*, *Statement to the Court*, and the world premiere of his 40 part motet *I Never*.

A founder member of Voices of Hope, an exciting new chamber choir from the North East, Gail has recently appeared with them live on Radio 3 in addition to performances at The Sage Gateshead and King's Hall, Newcastle University.



Alex Banfield, tenor

Since graduating from the University of Leeds, Alex has been based in the North East studying under tenor Austin Gunn and Graeme Danby. He has been singing in local recitals and concerts whilst singing regularly as a Lay Clerk for Newcastle Cathedral Choir. He has been soloist in concert performances of Stainer's *Crucifixion*, Bach's Cantata *Aus der Tiefen*, *Christmas Oratorio*, Mondonville's *De Profundis*, Mozart's *Missa Brevis in D Major*, *Coronation Mass*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Léhár's *The Merry Widow*, and Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*. He was also a member of the first Samling Academy course where he worked with inspirational teachers and students. Last year he was a bursary student of Dartington International Summer School with James Gilchrist and Lee Bisset, and NORVIS early music summer school. He was also part of an Avison ensemble masterclass under Benjamin Zander. Currently Alex is pursuing a career as a professional tenor and is about to accept a conservatoire offer for postgraduate vocal performance to begin this September.



Nick Forbes, Bass

Nick started singing with Durham County Youth Choir. In 1991 he won the Durham County Composition Championship for his setting of Blake's *The Tyger*. He sang with Cambridge University Music Society under Stephen Cleobury while studying, and joined the bass section of the Northern Sinfonia Chorus on his return to the North East in 1997. He has sung with the Chorus ever since, performing with artists and soloists including Simon Halsey, Thomas Zehetmair, Nicholas McKegan, Sir Roger Norrington, Christopher Maltman, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Sir Thomas Allen (during Samling Opera's semi-staged productions of *Così fan Tutti* and *Don Giovanni* at the Sage Gateshead). Nick also travelled with the Northern Sinfonia and Chorus to perform at the Hong Kong International Arts Festival in 2009. More recently, he sang with a smaller group within the choir in a performance of David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion*, and has performed as a soloist in performances of Hummel's *Mass in E Flat* with Jesmond Choral Society, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with the 'Sing Together' choir at the Sage under Simon Fidler, and Stanford's *Songs of the Fleet* with Newcastle Bach Choir and Eric Cross. Nick has also given a number of solo recitals performing 20th Century English repertoire. He was awarded an MA in Music by the Open University in 2010, and is currently studying with Poppy Holden, Head of Vocal Studies at Newcastle University.

THE CHOIR

As a non-auditioned choir, the Orpheus encourages people of differing musical backgrounds and levels of musical skill to meet in order to perform classical choral music.

We have sung works ranging from the Renaissance to the late twentieth century. We give three major concerts each year, performing in Hexham's Abbey and high school, as well as churches throughout the region. In addition, Christmas carol-singing (sometimes in a formal concert, but also *al fresco*) is a standard activity. We have sung for various local charities and are available for private functions.

This year we also made our film debut! The choir was invited to appear in the film *A Song for Marion*, released in cinemas early in 2013. The film was about members of a choir which took part in a choral competition. We appeared very briefly as one of the other competing choirs.

New members are always made very welcome, and will find a warm, friendly group with a busy social calendar.



We rehearse at Trinity Methodist Church, Beaumont Street, Hexham NE46 3LS, on Wednesday evenings in school term-time, 7.30pm to 9.30pm.

The annual membership fee is £65. If you are tempted to join us, please feel free to come along to a rehearsal, or contact us for more information at info@hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

Sopranos

Claire Arnold
Marion Bates
Carolyn Below
Elspeth Christie
Judi Cornforth
Pip Emler
Rosemarie Herdman
Frances Hughes
Margaret Huntington
Meg McCaldin
Laura Preston
Bronya Read
Ann Reed
Jay Thacker
Carolyn Vasey

Altos

Jennifer Britton
Wendy Busby
Sheila Dance
Liz Dixon
Davina Dwyer
Rita Howell
Anita Jeffries
Louise Khazae
Linda Lord
Jenny McKay
Liz Nisbet
Rachel Ogilvie
Janet Storrie

Tenors

John Below
Malcolm Chainey
Tom Frost
Chris Little
Peter Vasey

Basses

Barry Bates
Paul Berry
John Crawford
Robert Firth
Nick Lord
Tony May
Owen McArdle
Don Macleod

Conductor and Musical Director:
Glenn Davis

Assistant Conductor:
Paul Berry

Rehearsal pianist:
Margaret Huntington

(List of singers correct at time of going to press)

THE ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Julia Boulton (leader)
Ann-Britt Hedley
Charlotte Howes
Sue Innes
Kathryn Wakefield
Michael Walton
Karen Wigham

VIOLAS

Jill Blakey
Edgar Senior

CELLOS

Peter Richardson
Clarke Slater

BASS

Tony Abell

FLUTE

Brian Stewart

OBOES

Judith Rousseau
Vicky Bates

CLARINETS

Caroline Roberts
John MacKenzie

BASSOONS

Andy Jakob
Phil Noble

HORNS

Dave Milner
Maria Robinson

TRUMPETS

Mike Walton
Ray Gill

TIMPANI

Mark Edwards

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Hexham Abbey; Cogito Books, our principal sponsor; and Corbridge Pianos and Core Music, for professional support.

OUR NEXT PERFORMANCE

Summer Concert, Saturday June 29th 2013, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Church, Corbridge. The programme will include Vaughan Williams' Serenade to Music, songs by Bob Chilcott, and North Country Songs arranged by Percy Lovell.