

Hexham Orpheus Choir

Directed by

Mark Edwards

at

St. Andrew's Church, Corbridge

Michael Haynes: Organ

Mozart: Coronation Mass

Kodaly: Missa Brevis &

Esti Dal

Lauridsen: O Magnum Mysterium

7.45pm Saturday 14th March

**making
music**

*Hexham Orpheus
60th Anniversary*



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Hexham Orpheus Choir

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www.hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

A Message from our Chairman – Chris Little

You join us at a particularly exciting time for the choir. Firstly, 2015 is the Choir's 60th Anniversary year. Formed in 1955, as a registered charity, we aim to encourage the enjoyment, participation and performance of choral music and it is rewarding to be able to celebrate 6 decades of choir history. If that weren't enough, we are also very excited to introduce to Hexham audiences our new Director of Music, Mark Edwards. I am sure you will join us in offering Mark a warm welcome to Hexham and Tynedale. Mark comes to us with a wealth of experience and an impressive and growing reputation. Hexham Orpheus Choir has developed in its ambition to sing great and often challenging choral works. At the same time, we maintain our policy of being a non-auditioned choir, making sure that singing great music is as accessible as possible. Mark's experience and style make him an ideal Director to set us on our way to our next 60 years! As always, we welcome new members and if you would like to find out more, don't hesitate to speak to a choir member or get in touch. We hope you enjoy the concert.

Our 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 also have sung for various local charities and are available for private functions. New members will find a warm, friendly group with a busy social calendar.

Sopranos

Claire Arnold
Sarah Barker
Carolyn Below
Evelyn Blenkinsop
Geraldine Coombes
Judi Cornforth
Elspeth Christie
Nicola Davison
Jill Dexter
Pip Emler
Ann Firth
Rosemarie Herdman
Marilyn Hunter
Margaret Huntington
Anne Kearney
Annette Marlowe
Sarah Jane Palmer
Bronya Read

Basses

Ann Reed
Hannah Reynolds
Nuala Rose
Maeve Selby
Carolyn Vasey
Carrie Winger

Barry Bates
Paul Berry
Julian Boyfield
John Crawford
Robert Firth
Nick Lord
Keith Mallinson
Tony May
John Rose

Tenors

John Barker
John Below
Malcolm Chainey
Tim Grew
Sue Kent
Chris Little
Peter Vasey

Altos

Marion Bates
Lou Baxter
Jennifer Britton
Pamela Brooks
Wendy Busby
Jay Casson
Sheila Dance
Rita Howell
Vivien Hubcock
Claire Huddleston
Mary Ilingworth
Anita Jeffries
Louise Khazaee
Linda Lord
Val Mallinson
Jenny McKay
Jenny Myles
Liz Nesbit
Rachel Ogilvie
Susan Paterson
Pat Rose
Janet Storrie
Jean Wilks



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) – Mass in C Major: 'Coronation'. K. 317

1. Kyrie
2. Gloria
3. Credo
4. Sanctus
5. Benedictus
6. Agnus Dei

Of the sacred works that Mozart composed in Salzburg few are as well known or as popular as the Mass in C K. 317. In 1779 Mozart returned from his disastrous trip to Paris and, partly out of material necessity and also to please his father, he took up a position in the Archbishop's service in Salzburg. He was to "unbegrudgingly and with great diligence discharge his duties both in the cathedral and at court and in the chapel house, and as occasion presents, to provide the court and church with new compositions of his own creation". At the first opportunity Mozart fulfilled this demand, composing the mass for the Easter Day service on 4th April 1779.

This mass in C major is a short mass, Missa brevis, rather than a fuller Missa solemnis. There is some debate as to when the mass was first performed and for whom it was written. King Leopold II in Prague 1791 and Emperor Francis I of Austria in 1792, hence its popular title of 'coronation' mass. For a long time it was thought to be associated with the pilgrimage church of Maria Plain on the outskirts of Salzburg, where a statue of the Virgin Mary was crowned each year. However, it was probably first composed for the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg and performed on Easter Sunday at the city's Cathedral.

Certainly the music itself is celebratory in nature, and would have fitted a coronation or Easter Day service perfectly. The soloists are continually employed either as a quartet, in pairs or in solo lines that contrast with the larger forces of the choir. The most stunning examples are the central hushed section of the Credo, and later when the Hosanna section of the Benedictus is well under way, the quartet begins the piece again, seemingly in the wrong place! Perhaps the most obvious reason for the mass's popularity in Prague in 1791/2 was the similarity between the soprano solo Agnus Dei and the Countess's aria *Dove sono* from Figaro which had been so successful there in the 1780s.

Morton Lauridsen (1943-) – *O Magnum Mysterium*

Lauridsen, an American composer, educator and performer was awarded the US National Medal of Arts in 2007 for his composition of radiant choral works combining musical beauty, power and spiritual depth that have thrilled audiences worldwide.

This beautiful unaccompanied piece dates from 1994. Of it, the composer says: "For centuries, composers have been inspired by the beautiful *O Magnum Mysterium* text depicting the birth of the new-born King amongst the lowly animals and shepherds. This affirmation of God's grace to the meek and the adoration of the Blessed Virgin are celebrated in my setting through a quiet song of profound inner joy."

Zoltan Kodály (1882-1967) – Missa Brevis

1. Introitus
2. Kyrie
3. Gloria
4. Credo
5. Sanctus
6. Benedictus
7. Agnus Dei
8. Ite, Missa est

In common with a number of early 20th century composers, Kodály's based much of his music on national folksongs and dances. In addition to the *Missa Brevis*, Kodály produced two other major choral works, *Psalmus Hungaricus* (1923) and the *Te Deum* (1936), as well as numerous part songs.

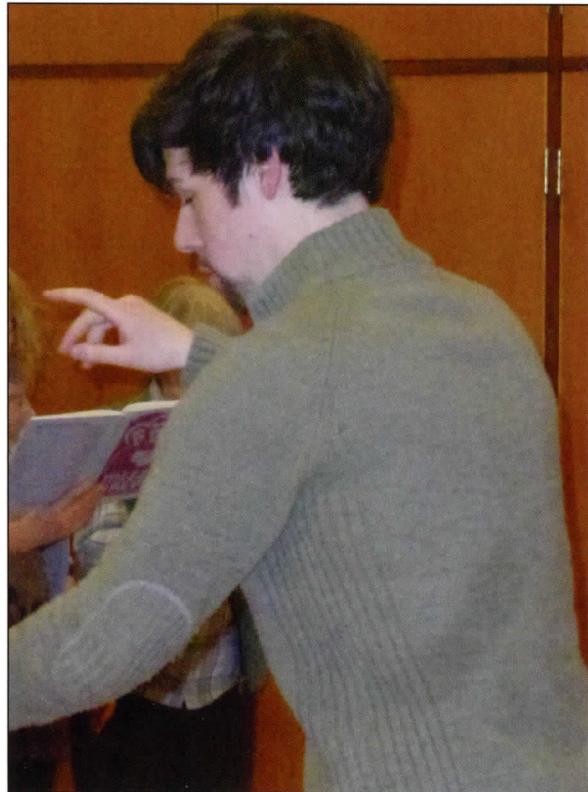
He remained in Hungary during the Nazi occupation. Early in 1945 Red Army troops finally overcame the German forces who had been occupying the city of Budapest. The surviving civilian population emerged from where they had been sheltering during the seven weeks of non-stop bombing and shelling, to find large parts of the city destroyed. Kodály was caught up in this carnage, taking refuge in the cellar of the Budapest Opera House where, somewhat improbably, the *Missa Brevis* was composed. It was not an entirely new piece, but a re-working of the composer's purely instrumental *Organ Mass* of 1942. First performed in the cloakroom of the Opera House, the *Missa Brevis* later received its official première at the 1948 Three Choirs Festival in Worcester. After the war he became one of the leading figures in the development of music education in Europe.

The regular parts of the Mass – *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* – are framed by two short movements for solo organ: *Introitus* and *Ite, Missa Est*. The work's distinctive character arises largely from Kodály's modal harmony and folksong-inspired melodies, coupled with a lyrical romanticism.

Zoltan Kodály – Esti Dal

Kodály had an abiding love for the folk songs he collected, and his preservation and dissemination of them was perhaps his greatest gift to the Hungarian nation. The lovely setting of *Esti Dal* is one of Kodály's finest arrangements. In it, a forlorn stranger prays to God to grant him rest and respite from the weariness of his wanderings.

As I lay down for the night by the edge of the woods,
I pull my blanket up to my chin.
I put my hands together,
Thus imploring you, my good Lord
My Lord, grant me a place to stay,
For I've grown tired of wandering,
Of hiding,
Of living in a foreign land
My Lord, grant me a good night
Send me your blessed angel
To give courage to the dreams in our hearts.
My Lord, grant me a good night



Conductor – Mark Edwards MMus

The Choir would like to welcome Mark as our new conductor.

Originally from Edinburgh, Mark trained as a percussionist before taking up conducting and receiving an MMus with Distinction from Newcastle University, studying with conducting teacher Professor Eric Cross. Mark is pleased to have studied and worked with many great musicians including: Philippe Bach, Rodolfo Saglimbeni, Denis McCaldin, Philip MacKenzie, Christopher Gayford and Edwin Roxburgh. Mark has also conducted many ensembles including: The Amadeus Orchestra, St Michel Strings, Newcastle University Symphony Orchestra, Northumberland Orchestral Society and Tyneside Chamber Orchestra. Mark also works as a workshop leader for Streetwise Opera. In the last two years Mark has worked with the Royal Northern Sinfonia in premier performances of local composers' works, including performances in Hall One and Hall Two at Sage Gateshead.

Recent highlights include performing at the Royal Albert Hall and Symphony Hall (Birmingham); a live broadcast for BBC 3's 'In Tune' programme; Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances* and Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 5*. 2014 also included works such as Mozart *Requiem*, Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto* and Rachmaninov *Symphony No.2*. 2015 will include, Mahler *Symphony No. 1*, Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem* and Dvořák *Cello concerto*. Mark has participated in International conducting masterclasses which include studying with Sasha Mäkilä in Finland, Dr László Norbert Nemes at the Kodály Institute (Hungary) and this summer will study with Sian Edwards in Dartington.

He is currently director of music for Northern Praeclassica, Felling Male Voice Choir, Sage Gateshead Male Voice Choir, Hexham Orpheus Choir and Newcastle Sinfonietta. Mark also works as a percussionist for various orchestras, bands and is also one half of the north east jazz duo PianoVibes.

NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS MADE VERY WELCOME

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

If you are tempted to join us, please feel free to come along to a rehearsal, or contact us for more information on
info@hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

- **Cogito Books** for their continued support and sponsorship;
- **Singing Babies** for provision of refreshments and assistance with fundraising;
- **Allegretto Music** for their support.



Organist – Michael Haynes MMus

Michael is *Director of Music* at St Chad's College, Durham and *Assistant Organist* at Newcastle Cathedral.

Previously he was *Director of Music* at Hexham Abbey for 11 years, where he founded a Girl's Choir and a Chamber Choir in addition to running the Boy's and Men's Choir. During his tenure Michael recorded a solo CD on the renowned Phelps Organ as well as undertaking many choral concerts, tours, broadcasts and recordings.

In his earlier days Michael studied at Birmingham Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Music, holding the Organ Scholarship at St Alban's Cathedral and gaining the FRCO and CHM diplomas. Subsequently he worked at Winchester College, Clifton College, Roedean School, and then The University Church in Cambridge as *Director of Music*.

Michael recently completed an MMus at Newcastle University, and is often engaged as a recitalist, accompanist, adjudicator, examiner, choral conductor, and teacher of piano and organ. Venues for organ recitals to date have included numerous Cathedrals, King's College Cambridge, Westminster Abbey, Germany and the USA.

OUR FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Saturday 27th June 2015
at 7.30pm

Trinity Methodist Church Hall

*A soiree of
lighter music*

Saturday 5th December 2015
at 7.30pm

Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham

*Brahms
Requiem*

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