

**ROYAL
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
CHORAL SOCIETY
84TH SEASON**

**ASSEMBLY HALL, TUNBRIDGE WELLS
SUNDAY, 8TH. NOVEMBER 1987 at 3.00 pm.**

PURCELL - CHACONY in G MINOR.

VIVALDI - GLORIA.

BRITTEN - CANTATA - St. NICHOLAS.

SOLOISTS: Carol McFetridge - Soprano.
Iwona Januszajtis - Alto.
John Mark Ainsley - Tenor.

Conductor: DEREK WATMOUGH.

Orchestra led by JANE PAMMENT.

Treble voices from SKINNERS SCHOOL conducted by Anthony Starr.

Organ - William Neale. Harpsichord - Wilmarc Ellman.

Boy Soloists in St. Nicholas :-

Alex Ajao - Christopher Neale - Mark Walker.

(St. Barnabas Church Choir.)

Programme 30p.

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

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Chairman:	William Halstead Key
Musical Director and Principal Conductor:	Derek Watmough
Honorary Life Member:	Anthony Smith-Masters

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We are most grateful for the support of Patrons and Vice Patrons, and new ones are always welcome. Please ring or write to the General Secretary, Mr L A Lee, 233 Greggs Wood Road, Tunbridge Wells (Tunbridge Wells 21937).

The Choir rehearses on Monday evenings from September to April. New members are always welcome. There is a simple and private audition. Please contact the General Secretary (as above) in the first instance - we shall be pleased to have you join us.

CAROL McFETRIDGE (Soprano) was born in Surrey, in 1960. Carol trained at the London College of Music where she followed a three-year performer's course under the tuition of Joan Gray. Having gained her FLCM (singer's diploma) and LLCM (flute teacher's diploma) she studied at Trinity College of Music for a further year with Elizabeth Hawes who is her present teacher. Subsequently she took up private study in Dusseldorf under the guidance of Lesley Bollinger-Koll.

Carol has sung oratorio in both England and Germany including Handel's "Messiah", Mozart's "Requiem" and Beethoven's "Mass in C".

In addition to her solo career she has much chamber music experience and presently sings with the "Pro Musica" chorus of London. She took part in the combined concert given in Tunbridge Wells with the Wiesbaden Choir.

IWONA JANUSZAJTIS (Mezzo-soprano) was born of Polish parentage and was educated at Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar School. She studied piano and singing at Trinity College of Music, London. Whilst continuing her vocal studies with David Harper she has taken part in master classes and opera workshops under the direction of Else Mayer-Lismann and with Frederico Davia.

In July she appeared as "Mistress Quickly" with Guiseppe Taddei in the title role of "Falstaff" at the Theatre Royal, Brighton. She has made two recordings as a soloist for the Polish section of the BBC World Service and has appeared in opera and oratorio in London and the provinces, including Tunbridge Wells in June with the Wiesbaden Choir.

Her operatic roles include 'Orfeo', 'Carmen', Dorabella (Cosi Fan Tutte), Isabella (Italian girl in Algiers), Orlofsky (Die Fledermaus), Brangane (Tristan and Isolde).

In January of this year she performed the title role in Britten's 'Rape of Lucretia' for Opera Viva in London. During the recent Camden Festival, Iwona was principal understudy in Kurt Weill's 'Silverlake'. She has been offered the role of Amneris in 'Aida' with the Kentish Opera Group.

JOHN MARK AINSLEY (Tenor) received his early musical training in his home town of Worcester. While a member of Magdalen College, Oxford, he studied with Janet Edmunds and is currently studying with Anthony Rolfe Johnson.

In addition to an active solo career he has performed with many of the leading Early music Ensembles, notably Gothic Voices, London Baroque, the Deller Consort and the Taverner Consort.

He has broadcast on radio and television both at home and abroad and toured throughout Europe, Canada and the USA.

Recent engagements have included appearances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (with Paul Steinitz), the Wigmore Hall (with the Songmakers Almanac) and St John's, Smith Square in London; concerts throughout Great Britain and appearances at the Bruges Festival and Ansbach Bach Festival with Christopher Hogwood and the Academy of Ancient Music.

THERE WILL BE AN INTERVAL AFTER VIVALDI'S "GLORIA"

Harpsichord played by Wilmarc Ellman

CHACONY IN G MINOR

HENRY PURCELL 1659 - 1695

'Chacony' is the 17th Century English spelling of 'chaconne': a stately dance in triple metre nearly always written in the form of variations on a ground bass. In this work it consists of a five-bar measure repeated 44 times. If anybody unfamiliar with the music should be led to expect from this description something, dry, cerebral and academic, it must at once be said that the G-minor Chacony is nothing of the sort. On the contrary, in the framework of this highly formal scheme Purcell succeeds in writing music of a deeply moving emotional intensity. So too did Bach about 60 years later in the great 6-part 'Ricercar' - the last movement of the 'Musical Offering' - working within equally 'academic' constraints (a fugue on somebody else's theme).

It is sad to relate that this noble piece seems to have been 'caviare to the general' in Purcell's lifetime. Although written probably in 1683 it was not published until 14 years later, in 1697, two years after the composer's death.

GLORIA

ANTONIO VIVALDI 1675 - 1741

Vivaldi captures everyone's imagination as a sort of early 18th Century hippy: a wild scruffy red-haired young priest who would dash away in the middle of saying Mass (so the legend goes) to jot down a fugue subject which had just crossed his mind, and who pretty soon fell foul of the Church authorities. In spite of this, and in spite of the amazing output of 400 concertos for which he is chiefly known, Vivaldi did manage to turn out a quantity of church music: there is a quite respectable list of Masses, motets, oratorios and psalm-settings appended to his entry in Grove. Not much of it is heard today but this attractive setting of the 'Gloria' from the Latin Mass in the baroque 'trumpet key' of D major, is one of a small handful of pieces which have gained a secure niche in the choral repertoire.

It is not known for certain whether this 'isolated' section of the Mass was intended for liturgical use or whether it was composed for performance as a concert piece by the girls at the Ospedale della Pieta, the orphanage in Venice where Vivaldi was in charge of the music from 1703 until 1740. The lightweight scoring for oboe, trumpet, strings, soprano and alto soloists and four-part choir is well suited to the typically Vivaldian extrovert exuberance of the music, which is strongly apparent from the very first bar. Where, however, in the 'Qui tollis' section the meaning of the text demands a change of mood, Vivaldi responds with some apt and beautifully expressive chromatic choral writing. The piece ends with a splendid fugal setting of 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' as exhilarating to hear as it to sing.

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| 1 | Gloria in excelsis Deo
(Glory be to God on high) | Chorus |
| 2 | Et in terra pax bonae voluntatis
(And on earth peace to men of goodwill) | Chorus |
| 3 | Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus
te, glorificamus te
(We praise thee, we bless thee, we
adore thee, we glorify thee) | Duet |
| 4 | Gratias agimus tibi
(We give thee thanks) | Chorus |
| 5 | Propter magnam gloriam tuam
(For thy great glory) | Chorus |
| 6 | Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus
Pater omnipotens
(Lord God, heavenly King, God
the almighty Father) | Aria (Soprano) |
| 7 | Domine Fili Unigenite, Jesu Christe
(Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son) | Chorus |

- 8 Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris:
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis; Qui tollis
peccata mundi, miserere nobis
(Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father:
who takes away the sins of the world, have
mercy upon us) **Solo (Alto) and Chorus**
- 9 Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe
deprecationem nostram
(Thou who takest away the sins of the
world, receive our prayer) **Chorus**
- 10 Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere
nobis
(Thou who sittest at the right hand of
the Father, have mercy upon us) **Aria (Alto)**
- 11 Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, Tu solus Dominus,
Tu solus Altissimus Jesu Christe
(For thou alone are the Holy One, thou
alone art the Lord, thou Jesus Christ alone
art the Most High) **Chorus**
- 12 Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris;
Amen
(With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of
God the Father; Amen) **Chorus**

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

1913 - 1976

Britten's compositions covered a wide range from chamber works to film scores but his chief output was vocal including operas, song cycles and choral works. He was very interested in amateur and school performers and his ability to write simple, singable melodies in works for their use made pieces such as St Nicolas very popular.

This cantata was composed in 1948 for the centenary celebrations of Lancing College and the choirs were made up of those from several local West Sussex Schools. The story tells the life of St Nicolas, the fourth century Bishop of Myra in Asia Minor. Little is certain about him so legends grew about him but he was obviously deservedly popular for his compassion and is still recalled today as Santa Claus.

The work is scored for string orchestra, two pianos, organ, a wide variety of percussion instruments as well as tenor solo, two choirs and, when appropriate, audience.

1 INTRODUCTION

The opening movement has an arch-like structure beginning with mysterious regular unison beats, almost like heart beats, and a solo violin rises out of the mists of time until the people of today are heard praying reverently to St Nicolas. Gaining confidence they call upon him to speak. In a vision he answers across the centuries, the heart beats quicken as he points out that the seed of faith is now rekindled after many intervening sacrifices for their freedom of worship. The people implore God's help for greater faith and the movement fades back to the same mysterious opening mood.

2 THE BIRTH OF NICOLAS

Hesitantly, cautiously, a perky, irregular waltz-like tune emerges on strings and pianos as the sopranos and altos tell of the birth of Nicolas whose treble voice promptly rings out God's praises. His rapid growth in stature and grace is chronicled as the various instruments of the orchestra join in. Sainthood is foretold and suddenly the adult voice of Nicolas soars out triumphantly.

3 NICOLAS DEVOTES HIMSELF TO GOD

The next section changes to a mood of contemplation as the Saint tells how his life developed following his parents' death. He observed mankind racked by fear of death, without faith, poverty-stricken. Heartsick and hoping to help, Nicolas sold his goods and lands to give alms but he had no peace until his anger was purged and he begged for humility.

4 HE JOURNEYS TO PALESTINE

Pianos and other percussive instruments sway in accompaniment as tenors and basses set the scene aboard a sailing ship moving gently at sea. Only Nicolas is at prayer ignoring the sailors who jeer at him until he tells them to cease gambling. To their disbelief he prophesies a storm that night and as darkness falls and the captain retires to his quarters, the orchestra whips up a squall. Nicolas swears vengeance on those who mock the Lord and rapidly the squall increases dramatically

until it becomes a violent storm with thunder and flashes of lightning and the crew fear they will perish.

The gallery choir depicts the lightning and the wind howling through the rigging as the crew prepare to abandon ship. In desperation they pray to be saved, at which point Nicolas joins in their prayers. The storm dies down and the original movement of the ship of the water is restored as the exhausted crew fall asleep. Nicolas weeps quietly.

5 NICOLAS COMES TO MYRA AND IS CHOSEN BISHOP

Majestically, the people of Myra summon Nicolas to become their Bishop and he solemnly swears to uphold the faith. The gallery choir describes the various ceremonies of enthronement after which the people enjoin Nicolas to "serve the faith and spurn his enemies"; this exhortation becoming a fugue as if ringing round the cathedral. It culminates in choirs and congregation (audience) combining joyfully in the familiar hymn "All people that on earth do dwell" - the Old Hundredth.

6 NICOLAS FROM PRISON

In complete contrast Nicolas bitterly laments the Roman persecution of the Church; he himself is imprisoned, the people are scattered as in a wilderness and have rejected Christ. Passionately he pleads that they confess their sins and turn to holiness.

7 NICOLAS AND THE PICKLED BOYS

A dismal, inexorable march is heard as the starving masses approach seeking food. In the background the bereaved mothers softly mourn the loss of three young sons. The marchers demand food and jovially sit down to meat, bidding the Bishop join them. The lamentations for the sons increase, the meal progresses till in great agitation Nicolas cries a halt. He summons the three small boys to put on their fleshly garments and the company gaze in awe and wonder as the murdered boys are miraculously restored to life. With alleluias pealing forth the boys appear and join the joyful march.

8 HIS PIETY AND MARVELLOUS WORKS

Beginning in a quiet, reminiscent way, the people tell of the forty years Nicolas was their Bishop, always with them in times of grief and woe, teaching and guiding them by his piety. The character of the music brightens as some of the legends about the Saint are recalled: a captive abroad is rescued; a multitude fed; the honour of three young girls is saved; an execution prevented; the tempest stilled when the Saint walked upon the water; at Nicea Arius a heretical Bishop is struck and Constantine the Great is threatened with anathema. Reciting the legends is the people's way of expressing prayer and praise. More peacefully, they pray that their children for all generations will treasure the Saint's memory.

9 THE DEATH OF NICOLAS

There is the full weight and grandeur of orchestral force as Death summons Nicolas. He replies eagerly, looking on this as his soul's final birth, exchanging Earth's misery for eternal light and grace in Christ's presence. In the background the Nunc Dimittis is heard and as Nicolas willingly yields his soul the final words of the prayer "World without end, Amen" continue into the almost buoyant orchestral interlude, (the soul meeting Christ?). The work ends fairly solemnly as everyone, including the audience, sings the hymn "God moves in a mysterious way" in loving memory of St Nicolas.

DHP

Treble voices from Skinners' School Choir conducted by Tony Starr (Head of Music).

Organ played by William Neale.

PICKLED BOYS - Soloists:

Alex Ajao)	St Barnabas' Church Choir
Christopher Neale)	Tunbridge Wells
Mark Walker)	

THE OLD HUNDREDTH

- 1 All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice!
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell
Come ye before Him and rejoice.
- 2 O enter then his gates with praise,
Approach with joy His courts unto,
Praise, laud and bless His name always,
For it is seemly so to do.
- 3 For why? The Lord our God is good:
His mercy is for ever sure,
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure. Amen

GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY

- 1 God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.
- 2 Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.
- 3 Ye fearful Saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head. Amen



The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the fact that we receive financial support from the South East Arts Association. We also receive guarantees from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

THE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

FUTURE CONCERTS IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL

CAROL CONCERT

13th December 1987

ROSSINI - PETITE MESSE SOLONELLE

27th March 1988