

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

GALA MATINÉE CONCERT

**OPERA ARIAS
&
CHORUSES**

**Sunday 28th November 1999
Assembly Hall,
Tunbridge Wells**

3.00pm

Programme £1

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Musical Director and Conductor

Derek Watmough

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society Orchestra

Leader: Rita French

Musical Director and Conductor:
Derek Watmough



Derek is a Yorkshireman who studied classical languages and, later, music at the University of Durham. As a teenager he played a violin in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and a European tour with them in 1955 inspired him to travel as often as possible and to speak, however falteringly, a few European languages. He held teaching posts at the Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe, at the Skinners' School in Tunbridge Wells (where he remembers the renowned conductor Richard Hickox as a chubby, rosy-cheeked son of a local vicar) and, finally, at Beacon Community College in Crowborough, since when he has devoted his time to a large number of musical activities in the area and elsewhere.

His first concert as Conductor of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society in 1973 included Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*. Since then he has been conductor of the Mid-Sussex Sinfonia and occasional conductor of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra. Derek is also well-known as a pianist with the Sussex Camerata and with the Little London Trio who perform music in venues in Sussex.

For many years he has written reviews for the Kent and Sussex Courier and for the Green Room Music Club and this type of writing is something he particularly enjoys.

Presenter:
Robert Hardcastle



We are delighted to have Robert with us today. A past Chairman of the Choral Society, he has a wealth of musical knowledge and experience.

In 1959 he founded Discourses Ltd and in an 'All About Music' series worked with Julian Lloyd Webber, Jack Brymer, Peter Katin and James Blades. Now Chairman of The Friends of Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra he edits their newsletter and that of the Green Room Music Club. He is the author of a recent study of the life and operas of Giuseppe Verdi.

SOLOISTS

Fiona O'Neill - Soprano

One Fine Day: Madame Butterfly - Puccini
Cats Duet - Pearsall

Fiona studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. Her Operatic roles include: Gerda (Fennimore and Gerda), Frasquita (Carmen), Musetta (La Bohème), Adele (Die Fledermaus) and Papagena (Magic Flute) for English National Opera; Salome for Edinburgh Festival; Violetta (La Traviata), Antonia/Olympia/Giulietta (Tales of Hoffman) for Mid Wales Opera; Madame Butterfly for Crystal Clear Opera; Donna Anna (Don Giovanni) for English Touring Opera; Lakmé for University College Opera; Louise for Morley College; and Mimi (La Bohème) for Castleward Opera.



In Concert she has appeared with the Philharmonia Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, London Symphonietta, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, RPO and the Israeli Symphony Orchestra. She has appeared as Anna Freud in Blue Vienna at the Hampstead Theatre; Cathy in Wuthering Heights and as Baby Doll at the Royal National Theatre. Film work includes Miranda in BBC TV's 'Vampyr' which was awarded Prix d'Italia and Classical Music Award. Recordings include Vampyr, Nine and Simply Opera.

Shelagh Squires - Mezzo Soprano

Che Faro: Orfeo - Gluck
Cats Duet - Pearsall

Shelagh began her studies at the Guildhall School of Music after winning a scholarship and county major grant. After graduation she joined the Phoenix Opera Company under the direction of Joan Cross and Ann Wood and subsequently the Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas.

She has been a principal mezzo with the English National Opera since 1972 and has sung a wide and varied repertory of roles in that time including: Annina (Der Rosenkavalier), Sorceress (Dido and Aeneas), Thisbe (La Cenerentola), Emilia (Otello), Filippyevna (Eugene Onegin), Herodias (Salome), Ulrica (Masked Ball), Ottavia (Coronation of Poppea), Mrs Sedley (Peter Grimes), Margret (Wozzek), Mercedes (Carmen) - in Earls court and in Japan - and Jezibaba (Rusalka).



As well as her many performances in this country, her career has taken her overseas, singing in Vienna, Japan, North America - including the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, and in Norway at the Bergen International Music Festival. Shelagh has lived in Tunbridge Wells since 1970 and studies with Josephine Veasey.

Bjorn Arvidsson - Tenor

Recitative and Cavatina: Faust - Gounod

Born in Stockholm, Bjorn Arvidsson began his career as an actor. He then studied singing at the Sundsgarten near Malmo before joining the Stadsteatern where he sang for two years. He completed his studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Laura Sarti.

Since graduating, he has build up a wide repertoire in opera and concert. His roles have included Rememdada Carmen, Ferrando Così fan tutte and Rodolfo La Bohème for Travelling Opera, Nemorina L'elisir d'amore for Bernini Opea and Opera Omnibus, Edgardo Lucia di Lammermoor and Hoffmann The Tales of Hoffmann for Pavilion Opera, Rene The Count of Luxembourg for D'Oyly Carte Opera, Beppe I Pagliacci and Don Ottavio Don Giovanni for Opera Holland Park, Tamino Die Zauberflote at the Liverpool Play House, Rodolfo for First Act Opera and Kentish Opera, Crusoe in Robinson Crusoe for British Youth Opera, Count Almaviva in The Barber of Seville for Opera Project, Alfredo La traviata for Co-Opera, Ireland, and the Mahagonny Songspiel for Muziektheater, Antwerp.



Recent highlights have included Macheath The Beggar's Opera at the Theatre de Caen, recoding Second Soldier L'Incoronazione di Poppea with Welsh National Opera for BBC TV, First Armed Man Die Zauberflote at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, Oedipus Rex at the Bloomsbury Theatre, London, and Evangelist St John Passion at St Mary's, Warwick.

David Kirby-Ashmore - Baritone

Largo Factotem: Barber of Seville - Rossini

Catalogue Aria: Don Giovanni - Mozart

David was awarded a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music. In addition to recitals and concerts in major London venues including the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Purcell Room, St John's Smith Square and the National Portrait Gallery, David's career has taken him all over the world including Hong Kong, Indonesia and the USA. He has taken principal roles with English and Welsh National Operas and in Europe, including Figaro (Le Nozze di Figaro) in Austria and Schaunard (La Bohème). Most recently he has performed as Masetto (Don Giovanni) for Opera de Nantes and made a world tour, including Singapore and Malaysia, in the title role of Rigoletto. Other roles include Papageno, Dandini, Figaro (Le Nozze di Figaro and Il Barbiere di Siviglia), Dr Bartolo (The Barber of Seville), Escamillo (Carmen), Sharpless (Madam Butterfly), Onegin, and Balstrode (Peter Grimes).



David has appeared at many of the major British Festivals including Bath, Buxton, Nottingham and Kings Lynn. Other concert venues include The Queen's Hall in Edinburgh and The National Arts Club in New York. His wide repertoire of Oratorio and concert works includes Bach's St John and St Matthew Passions, Handel's Alexander's Feast and Messiah, the Requiems of Mozart, Brahms and Fauré, Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony and Orff's Carmina Burana.

Members of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society Orchestra

Violin 1

Rita French
James Shenton
Frances Clack
Felicity Smith
Sally Brooke-Pike
Julia Dalby
Cynthia Eraut
Caroline Price

Violin 2

Anita Buser
Mary Findlay
Muriel Parker
Katherine Condon
Karen Wintle
Andrew Condon
Amanda Rupp
Anne McWatt

Viola

Jenny Moore
Jane Taunton
Lynne Whitley
Anne Rycroft

Cello

Chloë Allman-Ward
Valerie Haynes
Rosemary Lee
Roger Wintle
Sarah Stuart-Pennink
Juliet Dammers

Double Bass

Oliver Springett
Simon Taunton

Piccolo

Clare Bentley

Flute

Patrick Taggart
Ian Audsley

Oboe

Helen Pye
Sue Purton

Clarinet

Jane Rhind
Stephen Rhind

Bassoon

Sheila Wyver
Will Ward

Tuba

Stephen Wassall

Horn

David Clack
Pat Stevens

Trumpet

Jeremy Clack

Trombone

Alan Gout
Martin Nicholls

Timps/Percussion

Catherine Fish
Francis Beuttler

A Brief History of The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

The Choir was formed in 1904 by Mr Francis Foote, ARAM, a very flamboyant character. He was the sole conductor for nearly forty years and was also responsible for planning concerts and engaging the musicians, using his considerable charm to get the best - although money was not always forthcoming, which led to his downfall in 1942! A Committee was set up under the chairmanship of John H Johnson and for a few years the Choral Society combined with the Symphony Orchestra, the conductors being first George Weldon and then John Hollingsworth.

Through both World Wars the Choir managed to keep going in spite of difficulties. After the Second War there were several changes in conductors. Dr H May and then Trevor Harvey were the directors for a reasonable period of time and it was Dr May who introduced us to Opera when we performed the concert version of Aida in 1962. Under Trevor Harvey we were invited to sing at a Robert Mayer Concert at the Royal Festival Hall.

For three years in the early 1970's Myer Fredman, Head of Music Staff at Glyndebourne and who was living in Tunbridge Wells, became our Musical Director and Derek Watmough was his Assistant. Myer conducted the November Concerts while Derek was responsible for Carols and the Spring Concerts. The Spring Concert of 1973 was a most enjoyable experience when we were joined by the Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra to perform, among other works, Belshazzar's Feast by Walton. When Myer left for Australia we had no hesitation in asking Derek to be our Musical Director.

In the last fifty years the Choir has had occasional Guest Conductors: Sir Adrian Boult, who came twice, Sir Charles Groves and Richard Hickox (a pupil of Derek's) are among them. However, the high point of the Choral Society's career was between 1949 and 1951 when on three occasions we joined the Bach Choir and others on Good Friday at Glyndebourne to sing Bach's St Matthew Passion under Dr Reginald Jacques, David Willcocks' predecessor. Kathleen Ferrier was among the very distinguished line up of artistes.

A full history of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society is to be found in Mary Standen's book '90-' on sale in the foyer price £3 (£3.50 by post) or give Mary a ring on 01892 822048

About Singing Opera Choruses

John Rutter says in the Preface to his 'Opera Choruses' (OUP): "Opera has in recent years been winning new and wider audiences, whose appetite and interest is by no means confined to performances in the opera house". A hundred years ago the repertoire of choral societies would normally include opera. More recently famous extracts from operas have been used for events involving massed crowds of people, which has undoubtedly increased public interest in and enjoyment of operatic music. The difficulty for choral societies wishing to put on programmes of opera has been in assembling all the music from the different operas for use by their singers.

To help solve this problem, John Rutter has collected and edited a selection of opera choruses which will widen the scope of choral concerts for the greater enjoyment of singers and audience alike. The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society has chosen the music for today's concert from this book.

PROGRAMME

Procession & Chorale Choir	Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg	Wagner
Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves Choir	Nabucco	Verdi
Prayer Soloists and Choir	Moïse	Rossini
Chorus of Enchanted Islanders Choir	Alcina	Handel
Dido's Lament & Final Chorus Mezzo Soprano and Choir	Dido and Aeneas	Purcell
Largo Factotum Baritone Soloist	Barber of Seville	Rossini
One Fine Day Soprano Soloist	Madame Butterfly	Puccini
Waltz Scene Tenor and Baritone Soloists with Choir	Eugene Onegin	Tchaikovsky

INTERVAL - 15 minutes

Anvil Chorus Choir	Il Trovatore	Verdi
Che Faro Mezzo-Soprano Soloist	Orfeo	Gluck
Villagers Chorus Choir	Guillaume Tell	Rossini
Catalogue Aria Baritone Soloist	Don Giovanni	Mozart
Recitative & Cavatina Tenor Soloist	Faust	Gounod
Habanera Mezzo Soprano and Choir	Carmen	Bizet
March of the Toreadors Choir	Carmen	Bizet
Cats Duet Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano Soloists		Pearsall
Triumphal Scene Soloists and Choir	Aida	Verdi

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Accompanist: Wilmarc Ellman

Sopranos

Margaret Audsley
Betty Batchelor
Angela Bell
Elizabeth Bell
Jane Bishop
Deborah Bruce
Linda Chattell
Susan Chandler
Stella Crawford
Aileen Cunningham
Christine Dewey
Jill Dunstall
Joyce Eckett
Sue Ellman
Marcia Feley
Cecilia Hare
Barbara Hazelden
Joan Hever
Janet Higbee
Pippa Hillen
Audrey Hodges
Andrea Holt
Diana Hutcheson
Eileen Jefferson
Jenny Jessup
Sheila Jones
Helen MacNab
Mary Marshall
Barbara Maw
Jenny Mitchley
Margaret Mortimore
Eileen Phillips
Kathy Phillips
Winnie Roszak
Esme Sanger
Carol Smith
Mary Standen
Lorna Stroud
Muriel Thatcher
Johanna Thorpe
Audrey Wallin
Elizabeth Webb
Janita Wigan

Altos

Hildegard Baker
Claire Bigwood
Anita Crofts
Elizabeth Crusoe
Moira Davidson
Sheila Day
Jean Finch
Joanna Finlay
Nicola Fletcher
Doreen Flint
Peggy Flood
Hazel Fox
Eileen Gall
Ruth Gray
Annette Grey
Mary Guy
Jean Heritage
Caroline Lewis
Jane Lewis
Pat Maxwell
Ailsa McMahon
Shirley Nankivell
Mary Norton
Janette Olley
Sylvia Parsons
Larissa Robson
Deborah Runtling
Jane Scholes
Olivia Seaman
Mandy Smallwood
Yvonne Spencer
Shamila Sperryn
Celia Sumner
June Talbot
Barbara Tattersall
Sarah Weller

Tenors

Rupert Agutter
Malcolm Beresford
Elisabeth Carr
Jonathan Cox
Derek Day
Wilmarc Ellman
John Harding
John Holt
Aidan Lee
Frances Lee
Leonard Lee
Peter Mace
Alan Spencer
Gerald Thirkell
Toby Thompson
Tom Walter
Michael Webb

Basses

Chris Bacon
Peter Bal
Toby Barratt
Michael Barker
Adrian Berendt
Mike Dowden
Roy Dunstall
Richard Gosling
David Ham
Niel Hare
Michael Holcroft
Mark Hudson
Guy Huntrods
Vernon Jolly
Mark Rees
Cyril Rogers
Georg Schultz
Eric Scott
John Spary
Clive Steward
Frank Woolley

If you enjoy singing - why not come and sing with us?

*Rehearsals are held on Mondays at 7.30pm
in St John's Church Hall, Tunbridge Wells*

Contact: Mary Standen - 01892 822048

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Saturday 15th April 2000

Assembly Hall at 7.30pm

Elgar: The Kingdom

Sunday 12th November 2000

Assembly Hall at 3pm

Rossini: Petite Messe Solonnelle

Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra

Sunday 5th December 1999

Sunday 6th February 2000

Sunday 5th March 2000

Sunday 2nd April 2000

All these concerts will be held at 3pm at the Assembly Hall

Green Room Music

Sunday 16th January 2000

Sorrel String Quartet

Sunday 20th February 2000

Jarvic Walton - Cello

Daniel Grimwood - Piano

Sunday 19th March 2000

Benjamin Frith - Piano

All these concerts will be held at 3pm at the Trinity Arts Centre

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

<i>President</i>	Roy Douglas
<i>Vice President</i>	Geoff Stredder
<i>Musical Director and Conductor</i>	Derek Watmough
<i>Honorary Life Members</i>	Len Lee
	Joyce Stredder

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***If you would like to become a Patron and support the Society, please contact the Treasurer,
Roy Dunstall- 01580 211814 or the General Secretary, Olivia Seaman - 01892 863760***