



Royal
Tunbridge **W**ells
Choral
Society

SPRING
CONCERT

Sunday 13th April 2003
at 3 pm

Programme £1


**Making
Music**
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF MUSIC SOCIETIES

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society and Orchestra

Leader: Martin Palmer

Conductor: Derek Watmough

TODAY'S SOLOISTS

Maureen Brathwaite (soprano)

Born in London, Maureen Brathwaite studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Johanna Peters. Whilst a student, she won the Capital Radio Anna Instone Memorial Award and the Ian Fleming Award, which enabled her to continue her vocal studies with Suzanne Danco in Florence. She has also undertaken Masterclasses with Sena Jurinac and Shirley Verrett. Her operatic engagements have included *Frasquita Carmen*, *Strawberry Woman Porgy and Bess* and *Fire/Nightingale L'enfant et les sortilèges* for Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Operas, *Leila Les pêcheurs de perles* for Opera Holland Park, *Clara Porgy and Bess* at the BBC Proms and at the Sala Atlantico, Lisbon, *Lily Porgy and Bess* for the Royal Opera, *Sandman/Dew Fairy Hansel and Gretel* for Opera Northern Ireland, *Sandman Hansel and Gretel* for English National Opera, *Despina Così fan tutte* and *Donna Elvira Don Giovanni* for Welsh National Opera, *Pamina Die Zauberflöte* at the Harare International Festival and *Flowermaiden Parsifal* at the BBC Proms and at the Châtelet, Paris. Her wide concert and oratorio repertoire ranges from Mozart's Masses to the Requiems of Brahms, Fauré and Verdi, *Carmina Burana* (Orff), the *Four Last Songs* (Richard Strauss and *A Child of our Time* (Tippett). She has appeared with the BBC Concert orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Lyon, the OSJ, the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra under conductors including Mark Elder, Sir Charles Mackerras and Sir Simon Rattle and with Wayne Marshall as pianist at festivals including Bath, Chester, Harrogate, Oundle and Paunat. Maureen Brathwaite's future engagements include *Adina L'elisir d'amore* for Pegasus Opera, *Missa Solemnis* (Beethoven) for Tonbridge Philharmonic Society, *Messiah* (Handel) for the English Symphony Orchestra and *Gloria* (Poulenc) for St Edmundsbury Bach Choir.

Gavin Carr (baritone)

Gavin Carr began his musical studies at King's College, Cambridge. Following successful débuts at English National Opera and with several of the UK's leading orchestras, and with the commissioning of two major new works written expressly for him - Michael Finnissy's *Not Afraid* and Alison Bauld's *Where Should Othello Go?* - he is fast establishing himself in the front rank of the younger generation of this country's singers. Gavin Carr made his début at ENO in 2000 as Aeneas *Dido and Aeneas* and St Ignatius *Four Saints in Three Acts*, returning as Figaro *The Barber of Seville* opposite Lesley Garrett. His other operatic rôles have included Enrico *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Opéra Nomade, the title roles in *Falstaff* for the Centre de formation lyrique at the Paris Opéra La Bastille and *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (Ullmann) for the European Opera Centre in Belgium and Prague, Tchaikovsky *Shameful Vice* by Finnissy at the Transfigured Night Festival, Sydney, and Curio *Giulio Cesare* for Opera Ireland. Concert engagements include the Aldeburgh, Brighton and Dartington Festivals, King's College, Cambridge, the Snape, Maltings, St John's, Smith Square and Westminster Abbey. He has sung *Messiah* with the Darmstadt Konzertchor and Manoah *Samson* at the International Handel Festival in Halle. He has sung Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Rodrigo's *Ode to Salamanca* and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Brahms' *Requiem* with the City of London Sinfonia, Handel's *Messiah* with the Darmstadt Hofkapelle and at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, Haydn's *Creation* with Manchester Camerata, Mahler's *Das Knaben Wunderhorn* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Orff's *Carmina Burana* for Birmingham Royal Ballet and now appears regularly in oratorio in the major cathedrals throughout the UK. Gavin Carr has sung regularly on BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*, and further radio work includes Christus *St Matthew Passion* for ABC National Radio, Australia, for whom he also premièred Smetatin's *Skinless: Kiss of Angels* with the Elison Ensemble, and for whom he has recorded several recitals. As a keen recitalist, Gavin Carr has studied the song literature with some of the greatest interpreters of the post-war era - Ameling, Cuenod, Danco, Fassbaender, Hagegård, and Vishnevskaya.

MAURICE RAVEL (1875-1937)

Pavane for a Dead Princess

Ravel belonged to the 'young blood' school of composition that pursued the search for a new voice in French music; its members included Fauré, whose composition class Ravel entered at the Paris Conservatoire in 1897, Chabrier, Satie and Debussy. A feature of the school was the attempt at reconciliation between modern and ancient music. Such a feature is a characteristic of the *Pavane for a Dead Princess*, one of Ravel's early works, composed in 1899. In 1910 the composer transcribed the *Pavane* for small orchestra, and it has become one of his most popular works. The pavane was a stately and grave dance measure very popular in the 16th and 17th centuries, and Ravel made it clear that the evocation of times past represented by this work was no funeral piece: his pavane was not in memory of any particular princess but was simply a dance that could have been executed by a princess from a bygone age. Like many of his works, this one originated as a piano piece and the composer often rebuked pianists for playing it too slowly: he insisted that it was the princess who was dead, not the pavane! Moreover he chose the title as much for its sonority as for its meaning. Lastly it was dedicated to a very much alive princess, the Princess de Polignac, a great patroness of the arts.

Ben Brickman

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845-1924) *Requiem*

Originally scored for chamber orchestra and without the *Offertory* and *Libera Me*, Fauré's *Requiem* was first performed in 1888 at a funeral in the Paris church of the Madeleine, where the composer was organist. The version being given today was scored for full orchestra (though possibly not by the composer) and premièred in 1900. 'Requiem' (the opening word of the Latin Mass for the Dead) means 'Rest', and in Fauré's setting, which is intended for liturgical use, the emphasis is on consolation rather than on judgement. The *Dies Irae*, which forms the dramatic centrepiece of the concert *Requiem*s of composers such as Berlioz and Verdi, is restricted by Fauré to its final couplet, the infinitely consoling *Pie Jesu*. This restrained view of the *Requiem* finds an ideal counterpart in the predominantly stepwise melodies and subtle harmonic colouring of Fauré's setting.

Harold Jones

