

GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL CONCERTS 1978/79

*Guildford
Philharmonic
Orchestra*



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CIVIC HALL, GUILDFORD

SUNDAY 18 MARCH at 3 p.m.

Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra

Leader: HUGH BEAN

Helen Walker

Soprano

Susan Kessler

Mezzo soprano

Adrian Thompson

Tenor

Stephen Varcoe

Baritone

John Forster

Harpsichord continuo

Philharmonic Choir

Vernon Handley

This concert is promoted by Guildford Borough Council with financial support from the South East Arts Association.

Helen Walker

Helen Walker was born in Tunbridge Wells in 1952 and in 1971 became a student at the Guildhall School of Music, studying first with Joyce Newton, then with Noelle Barker.

She has performed extensively in recitals and oratorio, including concerts in St. Paul's Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey, recitals in the Fairfield Hall and Wigmore Hall and has appeared as soloist at the Royal Festival Hall.

She was winner of the Susan Longfield Competition, the Ricordi Prize for Opera, and the Tunbridge Wells Green Room Club Competition for Young Concert Artists. Recently, she became the winner of two newly-founded awards: The Glyndebourne Touring Opera Singer's Award and the South East Arts Young Musicians Platform.

Since leaving college in July 1976, Helen has sung with the John Aldiss Choir, Kent Opera, and both the Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Opera. She has broadcast on B.B.C. Radios 3, Medway, Brighton and Oxford, has recorded as soloist with the London Philharmonic Choir, and appeared on Southern Television's 'Music in Camera' programme.

When professional engagements allow, she uses a grant awarded by the Royal Society of Arts together with the Glyndebourne award to study with Hans Hotter in Munich.

Susan Kessler

Susan Kessler was born in Sydney, Australia, where she studied with Marjorie Walker. She came to London in 1973 to further her studies with Erich Vietheer and Geoffrey Parsons. Later that year she was awarded a scholarship from the Goethe Institute to further her language study in Germany, and also was the recipient of scholarships from the Arts Council of Great Britain and the Australian Council for the Arts. She returned to Germany in 1975 to study with Gerhard Husch.

She made her debut at the Wigmore Hall in 1975. In 1976 and 1977 she gave solo recitals at the Purcell Room which were sponsored by the Kirckman Society, and she has been invited by the society to give another recital in November of this year.

Miss Kessler was a prizewinner in the Benson and Hedges Gold Award for Concert Singers in 1977 at Aldeburgh, and was a Leeds National Musicians Platform Recitalist the same year.

Last year Miss Kessler returned to Australia for performances in Tippett's "The Midsummer Marriage" at the Adelaide Festival of Arts, and to record recitals for the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Adrian Thompson

Adrian Thompson is rapidly establishing himself as one of the outstanding tenors of the younger generation. He was educated at Wandsworth School, where as a member of the famous choir he gained much valuable experience, notably as 'The Captain' in Britten's vaudeville "The Golden Vanity", which was recorded for London Weekend Television.

In 1973 he went to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he studied with Duncan Robertson and Celia Bizony and successfully completed the graduate course in 1976. He then joined the opera course for a year studying under Vilem Tausky. After his appearance as 'Florindo' in Wolf-Ferrari's "The Inquisitive Women", The Times described Mr. Thompson as a 'mellifluous tenor'.

Adrian Thompson has already become established in the concert and oratorio field and has appeared as a soloist throughout the country. He has appeared at the Aldeburgh Festival, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and St. John's Smith Square, and his engagements have included performances of the St. John Passion in Manchester Cathedral early this year, the St. Matthew Passion at the Tilford Bach Festival, "The Dream of Gerontius" at Southwark Cathedral and in London with the Goldsmiths Choral Union.

In 1977 he sang with Kent Opera and was invited to join Glyndebourne Festival Opera for both the festival season and the Glyndebourne Touring Company's season. He now studies with Ian Partridge.

Stephen Varcoe

Stephen Varcoe was born in Cornwall and educated at King's School, Canterbury, and King's College, Cambridge, where he sang in the choir as a choral scholar. While at Cambridge he featured as a soloist with the King's Choir on television, radio and records. After graduating, he continued his studies at the Guildhall School of Music, and was for two years a member of the very successful vocal group, The Scholars. He is now a freelance concert singer studying with Helga Mott.

Stephen was awarded one of the three 1977 Gulbenkian Foundation Music Fellowships, which are awarded to help promising young musicians establish themselves.

Apart from his work as a recitalist on radio and the concert platform, Stephen Varcoe travels widely to perform in oratorio around this country and abroad. After a performance of the "St. Matthew Passion" in London, 'The Times' critic wrote: "Mr. Varcoe was impressive in the bass arias; he has a voice of lovely quality and the artistry is all there".

Philharmonic Choir

The Philharmonic Choir is the larger of the two choirs under the conductorship of the Musical Director, who acknowledges with thanks the help he has received in training the choir from Kenneth Lank, Assistant Conductor, and accompanists Linden Knight and Patricia Wood. The Choir made its first recording in 1973 with the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra: "Intimations of Immortality" by Gerald Finzi, and in 1976 recorded Hadley's "The Trees So High" with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Vernon Handley

Vernon Handley was born in Enfield, North London, and he studied at Balliol College, Oxford, and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He is now one of the busiest British conductors, working regularly with all major London and regional Orchestras.

Since 1962 he has been Musical Director to the Municipality of Guildford where he has developed the Guildford Philharmonic into a professional body of major importance, and he conducts the Proteus Choir with singers all aged under thirty, as well as the larger Philharmonic Choir. He has made several records with both the Orchestra and Choirs.

In the recording field, he has currently over a dozen recordings in the catalogue for four major recording companies and with a repertoire ranging from Finzi, Vaughan Williams and Tippett to Tchaikovsky, Faure and Saint-Saens. Recently released is Dvorak's 'New World' Symphony with the Philharmonia on the new Enigma label, various modern pieces on the Lyrita label, and for Thames TV he recently recorded Vaughan Williams's ballet Job with the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

His future schedule includes concerts with the LPO, Philharmonia, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and with most of the major regional orchestras. He will be making further recordings for Enigma, Lyrita and Classics for Pleasure, and will also be working with the BBC Northern and Welsh Symphony Orchestras.

In spite of his crowded schedule, Vernon Handley still manages to escape to his Gloucestershire home for a period every year to work on enlarging his already immense repertoire and to follow his keen interest in ornithology.

Mass in B Minor Bach 1685-1750

In 1733, after long and patient efforts to induce the Leipzig Town Council to improve the conditions un-

der which he had to provide the Church music, Bach petitioned the King of Poland, who was also the Grand Duke of Saxony and held his court in Dresden, for the status of Court Musician, hoping that the dignity of such a title would influence the Town Council. As an act of grace he decided to compose a special mass for the Grand Duke, a result of which was the great B minor Mass, which, however, was not completed until 1738. With his petition Bach sent the parts of the Kyrie and the Gloria. At first Bach was not favoured with the royal patronage for which he was seeking, but after a number of applications, in 1736, he obtained the title of Court Composer.

Owing to the interruption in the composition of this work, it is probable that Bach never contemplated all the movements being sung together, and in talking nowadays of the greatness of the work it is as well to understand that this greatness lies in some parts of the work, but not necessarily in others.

It has often been remarked that the B minor Mass has an all-embracing spiritual range and appeal. Apart from the great expressiveness of the music itself, this is probably due to the fact that this essen-

tial part of the Catholic service has been treated in the simple style of a composer in the Lutheran tradition. The great Bach authority, Albert Schweitzer, has pointed out that "some of the splendid and brilliant chief choruses have quite a Catholic tinge. Yet in the other movements we get the same subjective, intimate spirit as in the cantatas, which we may regard as the Protestant element in Bach's religion. The sublime and the intimate do not inter-penetrate; they co-exist side by side; they are inseparable from each other like the objective and the subjective in Bach's piety."

"Bach," says Charles Sanford Terry, "was, in fact, an incorrigible romanticist, extraordinarily sensitive to literary suggestion, easily inspired to pictorial illustration, and as rapidly moved to give it musical expression, not infrequently irrelevantly to his libretto as a whole. In his use of the orchestra, as Sir Hubert Parry points out, Bach, like Handel, hardly crossed the threshold of that art, and did little to exploit or contrast the qualities of orchestral tone. His pigments are idiomatic rhythms rather than tonal contrasts."

KYRIE

CHORUS

Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy upon us.

DUET (Soprano and Alto)

Christe eleison

Christ have mercy upon us.

CHORUS

Kyrie eleison

Lord have mercy upon us.

GLORIA

CHORUS

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Glory to God on high, and on earth peace to men of goodwill.

AIR (Soprano)

Laudamus te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te.

We praise thee, we bless thee; we worship thee; we glorify thee.

CHORUS

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

We give thanks to thee for thy great glory.

DUET (Soprano and Tenor)

Domine Deus, rex coelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe altissime; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ most high; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.

CHORUS

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us; Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.

AIR (Contralto)

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us.

AIR (Bass)

Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.

For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most high.

CHORUS

Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

With the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

INTERVAL

CREDO

CREDO

Credo in Unum Deum.

I believe in one God.

CHORUS

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

DUET (Soprano and Contralto)

Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitem, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula; Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero; genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de coelis.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father, before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven:

CHORUS

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.

And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

CHORUS

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est.

And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried.

CHORUS

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris, et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos, cujus regni non erit finis.

And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven; and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

AIR (bass)

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simuladoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam.

And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets. And one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

CHORUS

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum

SANCTUS

CHORUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloriâ ejus.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of his glory.

CHORUS

Hosanna in excelsis.

AIR (Tenor)

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

AGNUS DEI

AIR (Contralto)

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

CHORUS

Dona nobis pacem.

Grant us thy peace.

SATURDAY 7 APRIL at 7.45 p.m.

Overture 'Othello' – Dvorak

Fugal Concerto for Flute, Oboe and Strings – Holst

Symphony No.2 in minor – Rachmaninov

Henry Messent, Flute

James Brown, Oboe

THURSDAY 12 APRIL at 7.30 p.m.

LEAS CLIFF HALL, FOLKESTONE

Fanfare for the Common Man – Copland

Piano Concerto No.3 – Rachmaninov

Symphony No.2 in B minor – Borodin

John Lill, Pianoforte

Vernon Handley – Conductor

“GUILDFORD PHILHARMONIC ON THE MOVE”

Tuesday February 27th saw another appearance in Gravesend of the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra. This was the third occasion that the Orchestra had appeared at the Woodville Hall and because of the success of these Concerts it is hoped that a regular series will be launched next season in which the Guildford Philharmonic will be a prominent feature.

The Concert comprised of music by Mozart, Beethoven, Butterworth and Dvorak with the brilliant young British pianist Andrew Haigh as soloist in Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto. The large audience gave a warm and enthusiastic reception for the Orchestra's performance and we look forward very much to our next visit to Gravesend.

Now that the Orchestra is establishing itself as the regional orchestra of the South East it is also visiting certain venues on a regular basis, one of these being Folkestone. Folkestone's classical concert series for 1979/80 at the Leas Cliff Hall consists of eight concerts, with the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra appearing twice. April 12th sees the opening concert of the season when the Guildford Orchestra with Vernon Handley conducting will be joined by the distinguished British pianist John Lill who will perform Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto. Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" and Borodin's Second Symphony will also be included in this concert. May 5th and 6th sees the Guildford Philharmonic appearing in Eastbourne and Ashford, performing Rachmaninov's Second Symphony and the soloist in Beethoven's First and Third Piano Concertos will be the Hungarian born pianist Peter Frankl.