



Royal
Tunbridge Wells
Choral
Society

Mendelssohn
Brahms

Overture : Ruy Bias
Song of Destiny

Carl Orff
CARMINA BURANA

Musical Director and Conductor

Derek Watmough

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

Orchestra

Stoke Brunswick School Choir

Leader : Martin Palmer

Programme 50p

3.00 pm

Sunday April 18th 1999

OUR SOLOISTS

Helen Meyerhoff

Soprano

Jeremy Huw Williams

Baritone

Robin Morrish

Counter Tenor

Stoke Brunswick School Choir

Ragazzi Chorus

Musical Director and Conductor :

Sue Barber

Accompanist :

Sue Harvey

Helen Meyerhoff

Soprano

Born in Lincolnshire in 1974, Helen studied with the distinguished contralto Norma Proctor until, at the age of 18, she won a scholarship to study opera and vocal technique at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. Enabled by major scholarships she has also taken part in master classes at the Britten-Pears School.

Helen has gone on to pursue a career as a concert artist and recitalist and has given solo performances with many leading orchestras and ensembles including London Musici, the Martel Ensemble, the Goldberg Ensemble and the The Orchestra of the Golden Age. Her operatic career includes solo performances in the Aldeburgh Festival and live on BBC Radio 3.

Future plans include solo performances at the Oxford Contemporary Music Festival, concerts with the London Welsh Male Voice Choir in both London and Bethlehem and a tour of the Middle East with the critically acclaimed ensemble Chamber Domaine.

Jeremy Huw Williams

Baritone

Born in Cardiff, Jeremy Huw Williams studied at St. John's College Cambridge, at the National Opera Studio and with April Cantelo. He made his operatic debut with the Welsh National Opera as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*.

He has performed at a great number of London and international venues including several recitals at the Festival Hall and Purcell Room. Roles in the 1999 season include Escamillo in *Carmen* for Welsh National Opera and Choregos in *Punch and Judy* for Music Theatre Wales. In 1999/2000 he will also sing Olivier in *Capriccio*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* and Shchelkalov in *Boris Godunov*, all for L'Opera de Nantes.

Jeremy has many recordings on disc including Vaughan-Williams *Five Mystical Songs* and Watson's *O' Captain* with the London Philharmonia Chorus.

Robin Morrish

Counter Tenor

After education at Lancing College and King's College Cambridge where he was a choral scholar in the world famous Choir, Robin went into the teaching profession at The King's School Canterbury then Marlborough College, Wiltshire. He is now Head of Strings and in the English Department at Tonbridge School.

Meanwhile Robin has pursued his musical career as a singer and violinist. He sings in the Monteverdi Choir under John Eliot Gardener and is currently leader of the Sinfonia of Arun (Arundel , Sussex) . He is also Musical Director and Conductor of the Tonbridge Philharmonia Society.

Stoke Brunswick School Choir

The Stoke Brunswick School Choir is made up of 30 children aged 8-13 years. In recent years the Choir has received considerable acclaim and is now recognised as one of the outstanding Youth Choirs of Britain.

In April 1998 the Choir attended an International Choir Festival which was held on the Island of Rhodes, Greece and was awarded a silver medal. The choir was featured on BBC television on Christmas Day in the Sainsbury Choir of the Year Competition, having reached the semi-final.

The children are performing five songs in the first half of our programme today and sing the Ragazzi chorus in Carmina Burana in the second half.

Sue Barber : *Director of Music*

Sue studied piano and organ at the Royal College of Music. After wide teaching experience Sue went to Stoke Brunswick in 1982. She is a member of the British Kodaly Academy and The Voices Foundation and regularly gives workshops and teaching demonstrations.

Sue Harvey : *Accompanist*

Sue studied piano at the Guildhall School of Music with Cimbro Martin and then James Gibb. Subsequently she formed a piano-duo with her then husband Paul Harvey. She retired from professional life to bring up her three sons and has made teaching, chamber music and accompanying her career.

MUSICAL NOTES

Overture : Ruy Blas Mendelssohn

Mendelssohn showed early musical talent and gave his first public performance at the age of nine. The following year he entered the Singakademie in Berlin and began to compose. In his early twenties he travelled widely in Europe including nine visits to England.

The overture Ruy Blas was written in 1839, the year after Victor Hugo's play of the same name had been produced. Mendelssohn apparently disliked the play and wrote his overture purely as incidental music with no dramatic connection. He would, in fact, have preferred to have given it the title of the pension fund for whose benefit it was written!

The overture opens with dramatic chords followed by a flowing allegro theme. A violent transition theme leads to a second subject, first played staccato and then repeated in a low-pitched cantabile. An energetic theme brings the Overture to a brilliant triumphant end.

Song of Destiny Brahms

Friedrich Holderlin's poem *Song of Destiny*, is unrelentingly pessimistic. It contrasts the tranquil contentment of the after life with mankind's lot on earth, where, the poet says, he is condemned to wander restlessly and hopelessly. This pessimism was foreign to Brahms' nature and he decisively contradicts Holderlin's philosophy by ending the work with a repetition, for the orchestra only, of the first E flat section but, on its reappearance, in the even brighter key of C major.

The programme notes for this publication were provided by the Programme Note Bank of the National Federation of Music Societies.

Stoke Brunswick School Choir Programme

Winds	L. Kuzmenko
Syahamba	Zulu Trad. arr. D. Rao
Deep River	Trad. Spiritual
Clear The Line	Amer. Trad. arr. M. Goetze
Sanctus	Edward Gregson

Interval

Carmina Burana Carl Orff

Carl Orff was born into a musical family. He wrote his first music at the age of 16 and a full scale choral work the following year. By the mid 1920s he had developed an interest in musical education and the results can still be seen in our schools today with the new tuned and untuned percussion instruments he created. *Schulwerk*, published in 1930, demonstrates his growing obsession with primitive and evocative rhythms. This, with his preference for simple, formal melody, converges in *Carmina Burana*. Orff took his text for *Carmina Burana* from a manuscript discovered in 1803 in a Bavarian monastery of pieces by 12th and 13th century wandering students, written variously in Latin, Middle High German and Old French. It is full of vitality and life, anger, splendidly earthly desires, revolt against the rigidity of medieval times, parody and lusty enjoyment of life. Some dislike *Carmina Burana* for its frank rejection of counterpoint, development, and all but the most rudimentary harmony, its use of simple, repetitive or declamatory rhythms and motifs. Others like it for these very reasons, and for the sheer animal vivacity and thrust of its ostinato phrases and motor rhythms, for its variety of percussive

effects, both instrumental and vocal, and for its racy and often salacious text.

Within a frame work appealing to Destiny (*O Fortuna*) the work is a cycle and progression of three parts.

The first (*Primo Vera*) celebrates the return of spring, the joys of nature and the rising of the sap in trees and man and the promise of love.

The second (*In Taberna*) develops from an inner anger and frustration, through the pleasures of gambling, to a rumbustious drinking song - *bibunt omnes* - rejoicing in the delights of wine and the tavern.

The third (*Cours d'Amour*), dealing with love from where the first left off, builds up from the general presence of love - *amor volat undique* - with ever increasing passion and excitement to the more particular and personal - *totus ardeo* - and to the magnificent climax of *totam tibi subdo me*. After a triumphal paeon - *Ave formosissima* - the work finishes as it began, with an appeal to destiny, underlining the ceaselessly turning wheel of life and fortune.

The order of items is as follows:

PORTUNA IMPERATRIX MUNDI

(Fortune, Empress of the World)

- 1 O Fortuna, velut luna
- 2 Fortune plango vulnosa

PRIMO VERA (In Springtime)

- 3 Vera tota facies
- 4 Omnia sol temperat
- 5 Ecce gutturo

UF DEM ANGER (On the Lawn)

- 6 Dances
- 7 Floret silva nobilitas
- 8 Chramer gig die varwe mu
- 9 Swaz hie gat umbe
- 10 Were diu werlt alle man

IN TAVERNA (In the Tavern)

- 11 Betuana meritus
- 12 Ojim iaceo coactum
- 13 Rgo sum ahhaa
- 14 In taberna quando sumus

COURS D'AMOURS

(The Court of Love)

- 15 Amor volat undique
- 16 Dies, nos et omnia
- 17 Stetit puella
- 18 Citra mea pectora
- 19 Si parum puellina
- 20 Veni, veni, venias
- 21 In trutinis mentis dubia
- 22 Tempus est incandum
- 23 Dulcissime

BLANZIFLOR ET HELENA

- 24 Ave formosissima

FORTUNA IMPERATRIX MUNDI

(Fortune, Empress of the World)

- 25 O Fortuna, velut luna

Forthcoming Concerts

Sunday November 28th 1999

Assembly Hall

at 3.00pm

Millennium Gala Concert

Opera Solos and Choruses

Saturday April 16th 2000

Assembly Hall at 7.30pm

Elgar: The Kingdom

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Roy Douglas

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Joyce Stredder

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If you would like to become a Patron and support the Society, please contact the Treasurer, Roy Dunstall, on 01580 211814 or the General Secretary, Michael Webb, on 01892 528241

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society is a member of The National Federation of Music Societies and is a registered charity no. 273310.