

The Royal Tunbridge Wells  
Choral Society



***RALPH VAUGHAN  
WILLIAMS***  
*1872-1958*

**Sunday 10th November 2002  
at 3 pm**

**Programme £1**

## TODAY'S SOLOISTS

### **Martin Palmer (Violin)**

Martin is very much a local musician, being born and bred in Horsham and educated at Ardingly College. He has a busy professional schedule playing with the English National Ballet Orchestra, the Broadwood String Quartet and various other freelance engagements such as the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. However, Martin finds time to take part in the, as he views it, more enjoyable local music-making. In this respect he is leader of the Mid Sussex Sinfonia with whom he has performed 'Lark Ascending' several times, including on the Orchestra's tour last year of France and Belgium, with Derek Watmough at the stick! Martin also enjoys directing from the fiddle, performances of Baroque repertoire with local ensembles. In 2001 Martin took up a post teaching Violin at his old school, Ardingly. His violin is a French "De Comble" of 1756 which is making a good recovery after major surgery performed by Mr Warner Titterton of Brighton!

### **Yvette Bonner (Soprano)**

Winner of the Emmy Destinn Award for Young Singers 2000, Yvette Bonner studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where she was awarded the Blyth-Buesst Operatic Prize. Operatic engagements have included Flora, *The Turn of the Screw* for the Buxton Festival and Welsh National Opera, Yniold, *Pelléas et Mélisande* and Jennie Hildebrand, *Street Scene* for English National Opera, Zerlina, *Don Giovanni* in concert under Sir Colin Davis, Esmeralda, *The Bartered Bride* and Hermione, *Die Aegyptische Helena* for the Royal Opera, Semele, *Die Lieber der Danaë*, the First Maid, *Die Aegyptische Helena* and Emmie, *Albert Herring*, a role which she went on to record for Collins Classics, for Garsington Opera, Jennie Hildebrand in Francesca Zambello's production of *Street Scene* for Houston Grand Opera on tour in Berlin and The Shepherd Boy, *Tannhäuser* for Opera North. Yvette Bonner made her BBC Proms début this Summer as the Boy in *Master Peter's Puppet Show*. Her concert repertoire further includes the C P E and J S Bach *Magnificats*, *Elijah*, the Monteverdi *Vespers 1610*, the Mozart *Coronation Mass* and Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony*. She recently sang and recorded Emmie, *Albert Herring* with the City of London Sinfonia under Richard Hickox, sang Tina, *Flight* for the

Flanders Opera and the title-role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the Académie Européenne de Musique at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, created the title role in *Alice in Wonderland* (Alexander Knaifel) with the Netherlands Opera and returned to the Royal Opera for further performances as Esmeralda *The Bartered Bride*. Future engagements include the J S Bach *Magnificat* with the English Chamber Orchestra and further performances in the title-role in *The Cunning Little Vixen* on tour with the Académie Européenne de Musique.

### **Jonathan Gunthorpe (Baritone)**

Jonathan Gunthorpe, who read English and Russian at Leeds University, furthered his studies at the Royal College of Music and the National Opera Studio, where he was sponsored by Welsh National Opera. He made his Royal Opera début as Angelotti, *Tosca* in February 2000 and is currently singing Nachtigall, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* there. His operatic repertoire further includes Mr Noye, *Noye's Fludde* with the Northern Sinfonia and Sinfonia 21, Coyle, *Owen Wingrave* and Mozart's *Figaro* at the Royal College of Music, Pluto, *La Descente d'Orphée* and Aeneas *Dido and Aeneas* for the Early Opera Company, Basilio, *l'amore industrioso* for Opera Holland Park, Rocheford, *Anna Bolena* and Vaudemont *Les vêpres siciliennes* for Chelsea Opera Group, Polyphemus, *Acis and Galatea* for the Gabrieli Consort and Colas, *Bastien und Bastienne* at the Schwetzingen Festival. Concert engagements have included performances at the BBC Proms, the Turku, Lufthansa and Perth Festivals and engagements with the Darmstadt Hofkappelle, the Apollo Chamber Orchestra, the Britten Sinfonia, English Chamber Orchestra, Ex Cathedra and the London Mozart Players at venues such as the National Concert Hall, Dublin, the Barbican Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall, St John's Smith Square, St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Snape Maltings, Westminster Abbey and Birmingham, Durham, Exeter, Lichfield, Lincoln, Rochester and St Albans Cathedrals. Radio engagements have included *Easter Glory* and *Friday Night is Music Night* and his recordings include music by Lalande for Hyperion. Future engagements include the J S Bach *Magnificat* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, *Messiah* with the Apollo Chamber Orchestra and further performances of *Zaide* on tour with the Classical Opera Company.

## IN WINDSOR FOREST

This cantata is a suite of five choral pieces which Vaughan Williams chose and in part rearranged in 1931 from his second opera, *Sir John in Love*, first performed in 1929. The texts are not all from the 'Falstaff' plays and indeed some are not from Shakespeare at all. The songs are as follows:-

### 1. The Conspiracy ('Sigh no more, ladies')

The famous lines on the infidelity of men are entrusted to a chorus of women (who else?) but the men will be gratified to remember that they come from 'Much Ado about Nothing'.

### 2. Drinking Song ('Back and side go bare')

This is a natural reply to the foregoing by the men à la folksong. The words are by John Still.

### 3. Falstaff and the Fairies ('Round about in a fairy ring-a')

This is a musical enactment of the entrapment and punishment by pinching. The "fairies" have two dances, one stately, one animated, but they are interrupted - "But stay" (sing the men) "I smell a man of middle earth", and in a moment the pinching begins.

### 4. Wedding Chorus ('See the chariot at hand')

The clearing of the air enables the course of true love to run smoothly at last to the beautiful words of Ben Jonson 'so soft, O so sweet is she'.

### 5. Epilogue ('Whether men do laugh or weep')

The words, from Campion and Rosseter's Book of Airs, lead to a conclusion unmistakably akin to the end of Verdi's 'Falstaff' "There is nothing underneath the sun, in true earnest done ... And the world is but a play".

## THE LARK ASCENDING

### Romance for Violin and Orchestra

Though composed in 1914 The Lark Ascending had to wait until 1921 for the first performance with Marie Hall playing the solo and Adrian Boult conducting.

This enchanting piece shows the contemplative vein of Vaughan Williams at his best. It is a fine vision of nature evoking a particular type of softly undulating, gentle English landscape. There is also something folkish about the music, but this is not surprising, for Vaughan Williams found his most personal language through the study of folk-music. The main source of inspiration of this intensely lyric piece, however, is a poem by George Meredith quoted by Vaughan Williams at the head of the score.

He rises and begins to round,  
Of many links without a break,  
He drops the silver chain of sound,  
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake.

For singing till his heaven fills,  
'Tis love of earth that he instils,  
And ever winging up and up  
Our valley is his golden cup,  
And he the wine which overflows  
To lift us with him as he goes.

Till lost of his aerial rings  
In light, and then the fancy sings.

George Meredith

*These programme notes were prepared with the assistance of the Making Music (NFMS) Programme-Note Bank.*

## **INTERVAL**

### **A Sea Symphony (Symphony No 1)**

The early works of Vaughan Williams show little evidence of that unmistakable personal idiom which is so recognisable to music-lovers. He began to develop his individual style in his thirties, with "Songs of Travel", "A Norfolk Rhapsody" and "Toward the unknown Region"; then came the work which established him as an important composer of remarkable originality.

A SEA SYMPHONY was first performed at the Leeds Festival in 1910, conducted by the composer. He was then thirty-eight, and had spent seven years working on it. Walt Whitman's words deal with the sea in varying moods and aspects, the ships, and the men who sail in them. But there is also a more philosophical meaning: man sailing on the sea of life, and the voyage of his soul to its ultimate destination.

**Roy Douglas**

#### **1. A Song for All Seas, All Ships**

Behold, the sea itself,  
And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships;  
See where their white sails, bellying in the wind, speckle the green and blue,  
See, the steamers coming and going, steaming in or out of port,

See, dusky and undulating, the long pennants of smoke.  
Behold, the sea itself,  
And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships.

Today a rude brief recitative,  
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-signal,  
Of unnamed heroes in the ships - of waves spreading and spreading far as the eye can reach,  
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,  
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,  
Fitful like a surge.  
Of sea-captains young and old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,  
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never surprise nor death dismay,  
Picked sparingly, without noise by thee, old ocean, chosen by thee,  
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest the nations,  
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,  
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

Flaunt out, O sea, your separate flags of nations!  
Flaunt out visible as ever the various flags and ship-signals!  
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul of man one flag above all the rest,  
A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man elate above death,  
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates,  
And all that went down doing their duty,  
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains young and old,  
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave sailors,  
All seas, all ships.

## **2. On the Beach at Night Alone**

On the beach at night alone,  
As the old mother sways her to and fro singing her husky song,  
As I watch the bright stars shining, I think a thought of the clef of the universes and of the future.  
A vast similitude interlocks all,  
All distances of place however wide,  
All distances of time,  
All souls, all living bodies though they be ever so different,  
All nations, all identities that have existed or may exist,  
All lives and deaths, all of the past, present, future,  
This vast similitude spans them, and always has spanned,  
And shall forever span them and compactly hold and enclose them.

### 3. (Scherzo) The Waves

After the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,  
After the white-gray sails taut to their spars and ropes,  
Below, a myriad, myriad waves hastening, lifting up their necks,  
Tending in ceaseless flow toward the track of the ship,  
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely prying,  
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous waves,  
Toward that whirling current, laughing and buoyant with curves,  
Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced the surface,  
Larger and smaller waves in the spread of the ocean yearnfully flowing,  
The wake of the sea-ship after she passes, flashing and frolicsome under the sun,  
A motley procession with many a fleck of foam and many fragments,  
Following the stately and rapid ship, in the wake following.

### 4. The Explorers

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,  
Covered all over with visible power and beauty,  
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,  
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,  
Below, the manifold grass and waters,  
With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,  
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

Down from the gardens of Asia descending,  
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,  
Wandering, yearning, with restless explorations, questionings, baffled, formless,  
feverish, with never-happy hearts that sad incessant refrain - *'Wherefore unsatisfied  
soul? Whither O mocking life?'*

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?  
Who justify these restless explorations?  
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried out,  
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.

After the seas are all crossed,  
After the great captains and engineers have accomplished their work,  
After the noble inventors,  
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,  
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

O we can wait no longer,  
We too take ship O Soul,  
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,  
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,

Amid the wafting winds (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O Soul),  
Caroling free, singing our song of God,  
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

O Soul thou pleasest me, I thee,  
Sailing these seas or on the hill, or waking in the night,  
Thought, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,  
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,  
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,  
Bathe me, O God, in thee, mounting to thee,  
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O thou transcendant,  
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,  
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them.  
Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,  
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,  
But that I, turning, call to thee O Soul, thou actual me,  
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,  
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,  
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.  
Greater than stars or suns,  
Bounding O Soul thou journeyest forth;  
Away O Soul! hoist instantly the anchor!  
Cut the hawsers - haul out - shake out every sail!  
Sail forth - steer for the deep waters only,  
Reckless O Soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,  
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,  
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.  
O my brave Soul!  
O farther, farther sail!  
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?  
O farther, farther, farther sail!

**Walt Whitman**



## **MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR**

### ***Sopranos***

Angela Bell  
Elizabeth Bell  
Diana Blower  
Deborah Bruce  
Susan Chandler  
Catherine Crockford  
Aileen Cunningham  
Sara di Marzio  
Jill Dunstall  
Joyce Eckett

Sue Ellman  
Janet Higbee  
Audrey Hodges  
Andrea Holt  
Sheila Jones  
Helen MacNab  
Mary Marshall  
Barbara Maw  
Chloe Murray  
Miriam Penn

Eileen Phillips  
Kathy Phillips  
Dawn Purves  
Winnie Roszak  
Carol Smith  
Margaret Smith  
Esme Sanger  
Muriel Thatcher  
Johanna Thorpe  
Elizabeth Webb

### ***Altos***

Claire Bigwood  
Jenny Burgess  
Joanna Butler  
Margaret Butcher  
Claire Cooper  
Pauline Coxall  
Diana Dale  
Moira Davidson  
Sheila Day  
Barbara Diamond  
Patricia Felix  
Jean Finch

Joanna Finlay  
Peggy Flood  
Hazel Fox  
Eileen Gall  
Alice Gill  
Ruth Gray  
Jean Heritage  
Caroline Lewis  
Jane Lewis  
Pat Maxwell  
Caroline McCann  
Shirley Nankivell

Lynn Otto  
Sylvia Parsons  
Gillian Penny  
Fiona Reynolds  
Olivia Seaman  
Sue Smith  
Yvonne Spencer  
Audrey Stuart Black  
Heather Styles  
Celia Sumner  
June Talbot

### ***Tenors***

Elizabeth Carr  
Derek Day  
Wilmarc Ellman

John Holt  
Guy Huntrods  
Aiden Lee

Frances Lee  
Len Lee  
Alan Spencer

### ***Basses***

Michael Barker  
Clive Brock  
Roy Dunstall  
Richard Gosling

Gavin Grant  
David Ham  
Niel Hare  
Michael Holcroft  
Vernon Jolly

David Penn  
Cyril Rogers  
Eric Scott  
Eric Smith  
Clive Steward

# ***MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA***

## **VIOLIN 1**

Martin Palmer (Leader)  
Kitty Loveridge  
Frances Clack  
Sally Brooke-Pike  
Bridget Hirst  
Karen Hoy  
Jane Gomm

## **VIOLIN 2**

Shereen Godber  
James Shenton  
Anne McWatt  
Muriel Parker  
Caroline Price  
Julie Atkinson  
Caroline Veall

## **VIOLA**

Jenny Moore  
Jane Taunton  
Lynne Whitley  
Philippa Kings  
Bill Ball  
Margaret Wilson

## **CELLO**

Chloe Allman-Ward  
Valerie Haynes  
Rosemary Lee  
Miriam Evans  
Ruth Boswell  
William Bass

## **DOUBLE BASS**

Colin Moore  
Oliver Springett  
Simon Taunton  
Nicki Christianson

## **HARP**

Pauline Rogers

## **FLUTES**

Michael Hirst  
Libby Summers

## **PICCOLO**

Libby Summers

## **OBOE**

Helen Pye  
Isabel Pearce

## **COR ANGLAIS**

Isabel Pearce

## **CLARINET**

Jane Rhind  
Stephen Rhind

## **BASSOON**

Nathaniel Harrison  
Kastrina Russell

## **HORN**

David Clack  
Keith Franklin  
Chris Gibbs

## **TRUMPET**

Jeremy Clack  
John Hutchins  
William Cooper

## **TROMBONE**

Alice Kinloch  
Effie Sparkhall  
Martin Nicholls

## **TUBA**

Stephen Wassall

## **TIMPS/PERCUSSION**

Francis Beuttler

# *Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society*

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**For further information about the Society visit [www.rtwcs.org.uk](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)**

## FORTHCOMING CONCERTS BY THE SOCIETY IN 2002-3

**Sunday, 15th December at 6.30pm Carol Concert**  
**at St Mary's Church, Goudhurst**

A very popular Christmas event at a beautiful venue, for the whole Family to listen to and take part in some of the best Christmas music.  
Tickets £6 Adults £2.50 Children from Roy Dunstall on 01590 211814 or on the Door

**Sunday, 13th April 2003 at 3 pm Spring Concert**  
**at the Assembly Hall**

A performance of two well-loved works - Fauré's *Requiem* and John Rutter's *Magnificat*, as well as the orchestral version of Ravel's lovely *Pavane pour une infante défunte*.

### OTHER LOCAL CONCERTS

**Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**  
**Sunday 1st December at 3 pm at the Assembly Hall**  
Music by Tchaikovsky, Haydn and Bellini.  
Soloist: Nicholas Daniel (oboe) Conductor: Neil Thomson

**Green Room Music Club**  
**Sunday 24th November at 3 pm at Trinity Theatre**  
The Hinves Concert - music by Vivaldi, Fontana, M Rossi, Corradini, Turini, Corelli, Purcell and Biber.  
Andrew Manze (violin), Rachel Podger (violin), Alison McGillivray (cello) and Gary Cooper (harpsichord).

**Tonbridge Music Club**  
**Saturday 30th November at 8 pm at West Kent College, Tonbridge**  
Angela Hewitt (piano) plays *Four Préludes* by Messiaen, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* by Ravel and *The Goldberg Variations* by Bach.  
**Box Office 01732 838698**

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society is a member of the NFMS ("Making Music") and is a Registered Charity No. 273310.