

R E M E M B R A N C E D A Y C O N C E R T

Elgar: *The Music Makers & The Spirit of England*

PLUS *Serenade for Strings*

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society
with the RTWCS Orchestra – leader Jane Gomm
Conductor: Rebecca Miller, RTWCS'
new Musical Director

**The Assembly Hall Theatre
Tunbridge Wells TN1 2LU
Sunday November 11th 2012, 3.00pm**

Programme £2.00

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

For further information about the Society visit our website
www.rtwcs.org.uk

Programme

Serenade for Strings, Op. 20

The Spirit of England, Op. 80

The Fourth of August; To Women; For the Fallen

INTERVAL – 15 MINUTES

The Music Makers - Op. 69

Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

Programme notes

Serenade for strings in E minor, op 20

For string orchestra, in three movements:

Allegro piacevole - Larghetto - Allegretto

Although not formally published until 1892, the *Serenade* is believed to be a reworking of a suite Elgar had written some years earlier, before he had firmly set his sights on a career as a composer. Apart from the *Wand of Youth* suites, it is therefore probably the earliest of his compositions to survive into the standard repertoire. Certainly, it has a youthful charm while at the same time displaying indications of the skills Elgar developed as he progressed towards musical maturity. It is reportedly the first of his compositions with which he professed himself satisfied.

The opening bars of the first movement will be familiar to most, particularly to listeners to a classical music station which uses it as introductory music. It is however the central *Larghetto* which is generally accepted as containing the finest and most mature writing. The work remains among the most frequently performed of all his music.

The Spirit Of England, op 80

A cantata for soprano, full choir and orchestra.

Dedicated to: "The memory of our Glorious Men, with a special thought for the Worcesters"

Laurence Binyon, the noted war poet, worked in the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. The head of department, Sir Sidney Colvin, was a good friend of Elgar. When, late in 1914, Binyon published his collection of war poems, *The Winnowing Fan*, Colvin suggested to Elgar that he should compose a war requiem which captured the spirit of Binyon's poems.

Elgar was deeply affected by the suffering caused by the First World War and readily accepted Colvin's idea, selecting three of Binyon's poems – *The Fourth of August*, *To Women* and *For the Fallen* – to set to music. Elgar had not progressed very far, however, when he met Cyril Rootham, director of music at St John's College, Cambridge. To Elgar's consternation, Rootham revealed that he too was setting *For the Fallen*, and, moreover, for Elgar's own publisher, Novello.



Edward Elgar

Elgar recognised the dilemma facing him. *For the Fallen* was to be the climax of his work and he could not contemplate recasting it to exclude the poem. Yet by continuing, he would invite inevitable comparisons between the two settings, accusations of capitalizing on another composer's ideas, and Rootham's displeasure. Elgar prevaricated until prevailed upon by Colvin and others to proceed with his original plan.

This was not the end of Elgar's problems. Elgar felt a lingering debt of gratitude to the German nation for championing his early works, most notably *The Dream of Gerontius*, and he found it hard to set some of the harsher words in *The Fourth of August*. This led to the second and third parts being completed and premiered in May 1916 when the first part was still some way from completion. Eventually Elgar found the resolve to continue, taking the work through to completion one year later.

Although *The Spirit of England* has never gained the popularity or status of the major choral works that preceded it, in musical terms, though considerably shorter, it is their equal. In addition to his normal practice of drawing on sketches jotted down some years earlier, Elgar also included quotations and parodies of phrases from *The Dream of Gerontius*. Written at a time when the nation might have expected some rousing patriotic tunes in the mould of the *Pomp and Circumstance* marches, Elgar demonstrated remarkable restraint, capturing well the sadness and desolation of war without becoming maudlin. It is an underrated piece, a precursor of the introspective chamber works that soon followed.

The Music Makers, op 69

A cantata for contralto, full choir and orchestra, based on the poem Ode by Arthur O'Shaughnessy.



The Music Makers is frequently criticised on two counts. Firstly, Elgar took as his libretto a poem by Arthur O'Shaughnessy whose works were then in fashion but now seem curiously dated. And secondly, Elgar includes a number of quotations from his earlier works (*Sea Pictures*, *The Dream of Gerontius*, *The Enigma Variations* and both *Symphonies*), leading to accusations that the work lacks originality and inventiveness.

Both criticisms are ill-founded. Whatever the past and current views of O'Shaughnessy, there is no doubting that Elgar felt a strong affinity with the words of the poem, identifying himself with the 'dreamer of dreams' in the first line of the poem. And accepting the autobiographical links Elgar saw in the work, what should be more natural than that he should recall his earlier career through a series of quotations from those works.

Fortunately, the public does not slavishly follow the critics. The work achieved an immediate popularity, receiving frequent performances in the years following its composition. And while its initial popularity may have declined somewhat, the work is still performed regularly if infrequently, with the quotations adding a certain novelty value to what is undoubtedly a mellow and heartfelt work.

The words

The Spirit of England

Three poems by Laurence Binyon

Please note that this piece is in three movements; please reserve any applause until the end of the third movement (For the Fallen).

The Fourth Of August

Now in thy splendor go before us,
Spirit of England, ardent eyed,
Enkindle this dear earth that bore us,
In the hour of peril purified

The cares we hugged drop out of vision,
Our hearts with deeper thoughts dilate.
We step from days of sour division
Into grandeur of our fate.

For us the glorious dead have striven,
They battled that we might be free.
We to their living cause are given;
We arm for men that are to be.

Among the nations noblest chartered,
England recalls her heritage,
In her is that which is not bartered,
Which force can neither quell nor cage.

For her immortal stars are burning;
With her, the hope that's never done,
The seed that's in the Spring's returning,
The very flower that seeks the sun.

She fights the fraud that feeds desire on
Lies, in lust to enslave or kill,
The barren creed of blood and iron,
Vampire of Europe's wasted will....

Endure, O Earth! and thou, awaken,
Purged by this dreadful winnowing-fan,
O wronged, untameable, unshaken
Soul of divinely suffering man.



*Merchant seaman
William Jones, killed
aboard RMS
Lusitania when she
was sunk by a
German U-Boat on
7th May 1915.
Grandfather of
Muriel Thatcher,
RTWCS Alto.*

To Women

Your hearts are lifted up, your hearts
That have foreknown the utter price.
Your hearts burn upward like a flame
Of splendor and of sacrifice.

For you, you too, to a battle go,
Not with the marching drums and cheers
But in the watch of solitude
And through the boundless night of fears.

Swifter, swifter than those hawks of war,
Those threatening wings that pulse the air,
Far as the vanward ranks are set,
You are gone before them, you are there.

And not a shot comes blind with death,
And not a stab of steel is pressed
Home, but invisibly tore
And entered first a woman's breast

Amid the thunder of the guns,
The lightning's of the lance and sword
Your hope, your dread, your throbbing pride
Your infinite passion is outpoured.

From hearts that are as
one high heart
Withholding naught
from doom and bale
Burning offered
up, – to bleed,
To bear, to break,
but not to fail!

*Capt. J.G. & Mrs Ethel
Huntrods. Wounded at
Passchendaele 1917,
served again in Second
World War. Father of Guy
Huntrods, RTWCS Tenor.*



For The Fallen

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncouth,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They fought, they were terrible, nought could tame them
Hunger, nor legions, nor shattering cannonade.
They laughed, they sang their melodies of England,
They fell open-eyed and unafraid.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.



Harold Stephens (back row), killed aged 18 or 19 whilst serving in France 1914–1918. The scroll at the right commemorates him. His two brothers are also shown – the youngest, at the front, is father of Sylvia Parsons, RTWCS Alto.



Leading Aircraftman Ewart Looker, killed aged 20 when his plane, in which he was wireless operator, crashed on a training mission 29th October 1939. Uncle of Gareth Looker, RTWCS Tenor.



Trooper Dent Greenwood, 1st Royal Tank Regiment, killed in action at Tobruk, 9th July 1942, aged 37. Grandfather of Gareth Looker, RTWCS Tenor.



Major George Danielsen, MBE, The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Killed in action at sea, October 1943. Godfather to Felicity Wilkin, RTWCS Alto.



The Music Makers

Ode by Arthur O'Shaughnessy

We are the music makers
And we are the dreamers of dreams
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;-
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming
Unearthly, impossible seeming –
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore today is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling:
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted
And, scorning the dream of tomorrow,
Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
Ceaseless and sorrowless we!
The glory about us clinging
Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
O men! It must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
Intrepid you hear us cry –
How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

Great hail! We cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and summers,
And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before:
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

Performers

Rebecca Miller – Conductor



Acclaimed by press and audiences as a compelling, insightful and energetic force on the podium, American conductor Rebecca Miller is at home in both the orchestral and choral worlds. Winner of First-prize in the Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition, she has guest conducted extensively in Mexico, including the National Symphony of Mexico, Orquesta Filarmonica del UNAM, and the state symphonies of Yucatan, Sinaloa and Aguascalientes. Rebecca recently served as Resident Conductor of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, where she directed the 'Casual Classics' series, classical, community, education, and cross-cultural and cross-genre performances, and where she was particularly admired for her ability to communicate with audiences of all ages. Previously she was Conducting Fellow with the Houston Symphony.

As guest conductor, Rebecca has performed with the Southbank Sinfonia, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Swan, Fibonacci Sequence, Manson Ensemble, the 'Sounds New' festival in Canterbury, and a composer portrait of Anthony Payne at the BBC Proms. In the US, she has guest conducted the Reno Philharmonic, Chicago College of the Performing Arts, Musiqs Houston,

the Huntsville Symphony, the Bard Festival in New York, the New Asiana Ensemble in Korea, and the Jerusalem Symphony in Israel. This year, Rebecca made a highly acclaimed debut with the Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and is currently a finalist for Music Director of the Santa Cruz Symphony in California.

Previously, Rebecca worked as assistant conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony, Music Director of the Kingston University Orchestra and Chorus, and Music Director of the Sine Nomine Singers. She has released two CDs of world premiere recordings with The New Professionals Orchestra – the first, *Lou Harrison: For Strings* features on the soundtrack of Martin Scorsese's film *Shutter Island*; the second, with Mary King (narrator), contains music by Pulitzer-prize-winner Aaron Jay Kernis, and received an 'Outstanding Recording' award from International Record Review, and 'Recording of the Year' by MusicWeb International.

Rebecca trained as a pianist and soprano at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (Ohio), as a conductor at Northwestern University (Chicago), and was the Junior Fellow in Conducting at the Royal College of Music for two years. She is currently based in London with her two children and her husband, British pianist Danny Driver.

Jane Gomm – Orchestra Leader



Sussex-born Jane studied the violin at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Since leaving college she has been a member of the London Mozart Players, the London Festival Orchestra and the Orchestra of St. Johns and in 1986 joined the City of London Sinfonia.

Jane also directs her own chamber music group, The Ruskin Ensemble and has performed with them at the Edinburgh and Brighton Festivals, the British Embassy in Paris, Number 11 Downing Street and music clubs and country houses throughout the British Isles and the Netherlands.

Fiona Hammacott – Soprano

Fiona won a scholarship to study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama after gaining a 1st Class honours degree in music at Birmingham Conservatoire. She has been the subject of a BBC documentary and has studied with Julian Pike, Robert Dean and Marie McLaughlin.

She has won numerous awards and scholarships, most notably the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, the Ian Fleming award, the Crompton Lied Award and First prize in the John Warner memorial competition.

Fiona was chosen by Kate Rothschild and Ben Goldsmith to be the soloist at their 'wedding of the decade'. A review in The Spectator deemed her performance "worthy of Callas".



Kate Symonds-Joy – Mezzo-Soprano

Kate Symonds-Joy was educated at Cambridge University, where she graduated with a First Class Music degree. She then studied on the Royal Academy Opera course, graduating with a DipRAM and the Charles Norman Prize. She was the winner of the 2011 Thelma King Vocal Award and was awarded the Basil A Turner Prize for her role Bianca in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* for BYO.

Operatic roles include Mrs Herring in Britten's *Albert Herring*, Dorabella, in Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*, Koukouli in Chabrier's *L'Etoile*, the title role in Bizet's *Carmen*, Medea in Cavalli's *Giasone*, Ino in Handel's *Semele*.

Concert work includes Ravel's *Chansons Madecasses*, Rutter's *Feel the Spirit*, Mahler's *2nd Symphony*, Giles Swayne's *Stabat Mater*, Handel arias, a sequence of danced performances of Handel's *Messiah* with Bordeaux Opera, Berlioz' *Nuits d'été*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody*, and Verdi's *Requiem*.

Recent recitals include the Wigmore Hall as part of the Royal Academy Song Circle and 'Cautionary Tales for the Nice and Naughty' in the 'For Crying out Loud' scheme, Schumann Lieder with Malcolm Martineau on the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme, Berio's *Sequenza III* in the Norfolk and Norwich Festival, a recital for the Richard Strauss Society and Haydn's *Arianna a Naxos* in recital for Cambridge University's 800th Anniversary Celebrations. Kate has a keen interest in contemporary music, holding a Tillett Trust Contemporary Music Grant, a Seary Trust Scholarship and recently won the Nonclassical 'Battle of the Bands', a search for the new upcoming performer in contemporary classical music.



Bouquets courtesy of



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Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society singers

Sopranos

Elaine Abbs
Diana Blower
Catherine Burgess
Sylvia Byers
Heather Champion
Susan Chandler
Patsy Dale
Jill Dunstall

Aspen Davidoff
Nina Filby
Elena Gente
Ann Greenfield
Barbara Hazelden
Heather Hemmings
Rosemary Hughes
Eve Johnson

Elena Lewis-Grey
Helen MacNab
Barbara Maw
Anne Metherell
Louise Packham
Michele Palmer
Katie Platts
Pat Prior

Helena Read
Tara Sheehan
Ann Spillman
Clare Summons
Sue Townsend
Audrey Wallin
Catherine Whitlock

Altos

Alisoun Aisher
Margaret Butcher
Pauline Coxshall
Renee deJong
Jean Finch
Joanna Finlay
Peggy Flood
Liz Ford

Eileen Gall
Ruth Gray
Celia Grew
Penny Hamilton
Sharon Harrison
Heather Herrin
Sheila Jones
Tina Lindley

Ailsa McMahon
Shirley Morgan
Shirley Nankivell
Magali Nicole
Melissa Richards
Catherine Rigby
Rosalyn Robertson
Celestine Ryan

Olivia Seaman
Emma Shoreland
Yvonne Spencer
Susan Taylor
Muriel Thatcher
Jane Walters
Felicity Wilkin

Tenors

Maggie Heath
Michael Hope
Guy Huntrods
Garth Looker

Panos Ntourntoufis
Gillian Penny
Wilson Rush

Michael Selway
John Simmons
Alan Spencer

Neil Townsend
John Turner
Derek Watmough

Basses

Gerald Chew
Patrick Connelly
James Duncan
Roy Dunstall
Martin Eastwood

Gavin Grant
David Ham
Robin Heath
Mark Hudson
Trevor Hurrell

David Lyall
David Miller
John Moffat
Malcolm Riley
Eric Scott

John Spary
Clive Steward

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society Orchestra

First Violins

Jane Gomm
Ingrid Sellschop
Nicky Goodwin
Anne Martin
Tim Good
Anna Szabo

Second Violins

Gwyneth Barkham
Rachel Hess
Rachel Ayres
Julia Brocklehurst
Julia Chelell
Shareen Godber

Violas

Martin Fenn
Emily Frith
Lynn Whitley
Jane Taunton

Cellos

Robert Truman
Sonia Smith
Felix Buser
William Bass

Double basses

Robert Hart
Colin Moore
Ingela Weeks

Flutes/Piccolo

Libby Summers
Claire Langford
Sarah Wicks

Oboes / Cor Anglais

Helen Pye
Clare Worth
Christine Geer

Clarinets & Bass

Clarinet

Kate Fish
Alison Sutton
Andrew Muir

Bassoons & Contra-bassoon

Julia Staniforth
Jo Turner
Howard Legge

Horns

Ian Stott
Jason Koczur
Suzie Koczur
Kate Goldsmith

Trumpets

Matt Wells
Joe Sharp
Richard Thomas

Trombones

Alice Yelf
Effie Sparkhall
George Bartle

Tuba

Andrew Kershaw

Timpani & Percussion

Nigel Shipway
Sebastian Guard
Tony Wagstaff

Harp

Anna Wynne

Organ

Chris Harris

The choir



In November 1904 rehearsals began for the **Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society's** first concert, a performance of Brahms' *Requiem*, under the baton of its founder, Francis J Foote, in May 1905. The Society has been staging concerts almost every year for over a hundred years since that inaugural concert. Recent highlights have been the concert to celebrate our Centenary in 2004, when we welcomed the Bach Choir of Wiesbaden to sing with us, many other joint concerts with them, both here and in Wiesbaden and a performance of Haydn's *The Creation* in November 2007 to celebrate the 100th birthday of our distinguished President, Roy Douglas.

The Society continues to flourish as membership and audiences grow and we look forward to a future of many more memorable concerts. If you are interested in joining the choir please email our General Secretary at general.secretary@rtwcs.org.uk.

The Elgar Society

President: Julian Lloyd Webber FRM

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The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Elgar Society for this concert.

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For just £55 for the season, a Friend receives a complimentary ticket for the best seat in the house for all four concerts given in the RTWCS season. This is less than the cost of the same four tickets bought separately for each concert. So not only are you helping to fund the cost of performing some of the greatest pieces from the music repertoire – you can actually save money in the process!

Furthermore, Friends receive periodic Newsletters and have first choice of seats where these are numbered (as in the Assembly Hall Theatre) or can ask for a seat to be reserved where these are not numbered. Many of our audience who regularly attend concerts with a partner or friend buy two Friend Season Tickets but those with just one season ticket can always purchase additional tickets for individual concerts.

Like the majority of arts-based charities, our tickets rarely cover the cost of concerts. Some of our Friends add a small donation to the cost of their season ticket but this is entirely voluntary. Anyone wishing to become a Patron is asked to make a donation of £45, bringing the total to £100 per season.

Unless they ask not to be included, the names of Friends and Patrons are listed in our concert programmes in recognition of their support to the society.

Why should you be interested?

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society season runs from November to the following June. Major works carefully selected for their audience appeal are performed in the Autumn (November), the Spring (April) and the early Summer in June. In addition, a popular concert of carols and Christmas music is held in December. Concerts planned for the remainder of 2012/13 season are:–

- The annual Christmas Concert in St. Mary's Church, Goudhurst on Sunday evening, the 16th of December. (The church is always full for this popular event).
- A very special occasion on the 7th April when we join forces with the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra in the Assembly Hall for Beethoven's *9th Symphony*.
- And for our fourth event of the year, a summer concert featuring a performance of Haydn's *Creation*, to be held on 16th June 2013, at The Assembly Hall Theatre.

More information

Anyone who would like more information or would like to become a Friend or Patron is asked to contact Gerald Chew by telephone (01892 527958) or by email (geraldchew@uwclub.net).

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If you would like to sing with the RTWCS, but are not sure, you are welcome to come to an open rehearsal that is being held on Monday, 19th November at 7.30 p.m. at St John's Church hall, when you can see what it is like. Nothing scary, just some Christmas music being rehearsed. Men are particularly welcome.

More information is available from the Secretary, Trevor Hurrell on 07780823104, or visit our website.



Advance concert information

We hope you enjoyed this concert – if so, you may like to be kept informed about our future concerts. Please fill in your details below and return to us and we will send you advance information as it becomes available.

Please send me advance information about RTWCS concerts.

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____ First name _____

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Forthcoming concerts to be given by the choir

A Baroque Christmas Concert

Sunday December 16th, 6.30pm
St Mary's Church,
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To include excerpts from Vivaldi's Gloria and
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Audience and choir carols, with the Mayfield
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Spring Concert 2013

Sunday 7th April 2013, 3pm
The Assembly Hall Theatre,
Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2LU

Beethoven: *9th Symphony (The Choral)*
with the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony
Orchestra



Summer Concert 2013

Sunday 16th June 2013, 3pm
The Assembly Hall Theatre,
Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2LU

Haydn: *The Creation*



Other local concerts

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www.tmc.org.uk

Tonbridge Philharmonic Society

Saturday 24 Nov 2012 at 7.30 pm
Tonbridge School Chapel

Bruckner: *Christus factus est*
Strauss: *Four Last Songs*
Brahms: *German Requiem*
www.tonphil.org.uk

Mayfield Festival Choir

Sunday 25 Nov 2012 at 7.30 pm
St Dunstan's Church, Mayfield

Choir with Primavera Chamber Ensemble
and soloists from the RAM

Handel: *Coronation Anthems*
Mozart: *Missa Brevis (Sparrow Mass)*
Schubert: *Mass No. 2 in G*
www.mayfieldfestivalchoir.org