

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

AN EVENING AT THE OPERA

Assembly Hall Theatre

Saturday 10th May at 7.30pm

RTWCS Chorus and Orchestra

leader Jane Gomm *with*
Simona Mihai (*soprano*)
Luis Gomes (*tenor*)

Conducted by Rebecca Miller

Programme £2

Royal Tunbridge Wells
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Programme

Orchestra	Verdi	<i>Overture to La Forza del Destino</i>
Chorus	Purcell	<i>Final Chorus from Dido and Aeneas</i>
	Puccini	<i>Selections from La Bohème:</i>
Tenor		<i>Che gelida manina</i>
Soprano		<i>Sì, Mi Chiamano Mimi</i>
Duet		<i>O Soave Fanciulla</i>
Chorus	Wagner	<i>Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin</i>
Tenor	Verdi	<i>La donna è mobile from Rigoletto</i>
Soprano	Massenet	<i>Je marche sur tous les chemins from Manon</i>
Tenor	Puccini	<i>E lucevan le Stelle from Tosca</i>
Chorus	Verdi	<i>Brindisi from La Traviata</i>
INTERVAL		
Orchestra	Bizet	<i>March of the Toreadors from Carmen</i>
Chorus	Verdi	<i>Chorus of Scottish Refugees from Macbeth</i>
Soprano	Puccini	<i>O mio Babbino Caro from Gianni Schicchi</i>
Chorus	Leoncavallo	<i>Bell Chorus from Pagliacci</i>
Tenor	Verdi	<i>Questa o Quella from Rigoletto</i>
	Puccini	<i>Nessun Dorma from Turandot</i>
Chorus	Verdi	<i>Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves from Nabucco</i>
Soprano	Puccini	<i>Vissi d'arte from Tosca</i>
Duet	Verdi	<i>Un di, felice from Traviata</i>
Chorus	Borodin	<i>Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor</i>

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Programme Notes



Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901) Overture to *La Forza del Destino*

As one of the pre-eminent Italian opera composer of the 19th century, Verdi needs little introduction, and his music features prominently in tonight's programme. Although his earliest operas were not generally acclaimed, over his long life he grew into a national hero in Italy. Appropriately, tonight's concert begins with one of his great orchestral overtures – pent-up drama intermingled with poignant, memorable melodies so typical of Verdi.

The opera *La Forza del Destino* (The Force of Destiny) was composed to a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based on an 1835 Spanish play *Don Alvaro* by Angel de Saavedra Ramírez de Banquedano, Duke of Rivas. The opera's first performance was given right at the other end of Europe, in the Imperial Theatre, St. Petersburg, on 10 November 1862. The opera, set in Spain and Italy during the 18th century, tells the tragic tale of two lovers torn apart by circumstances.

It's a story not unlike that of Romeo and Juliet, but in this version only the Juliet figure dies, stabbed by her vengeful brother, who has himself been mortally wounded by her brother. As befits the opera's title and content, the music is by turns brooding and turbulent, striking and dramatic.



Henry Purcell (1659–1695) Final Chorus – from *Dido and Aeneas*

Purcell's life was tragically short, but he is acknowledged as one of the greatest English composers of all time. He was organist at Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal – composing much ground-breaking and enduringly popular music for the church and stage.

The composition of his chamber opera *Dido and Aeneas* forms a very important landmark in the history of English dramatic music.

It was written to a libretto furnished by Nahum Tate, and probably first performed in 1689. The plot of the opera is based on Virgil's *Aeneid*; after escaping from Troy, Aeneas and his companions are washed ashore at Carthage, North Africa. Aeneas becomes romantically involved with Dido, the queen of Carthage, forgetful of his destiny, which is to travel to Italy and found Rome.

The final chorus is sung following Dido's hauntingly beautiful lament, as her lover Aeneas obeys the gods and sails away for Italy – Dido laments her inevitable fate and the chorus bids their farewells.

Dido

*When I am laid in earth,
May my wrongs create
No trouble in thy breast;
Remember me,
but ah! forget my fate.*

Chorus

*With drooping wings you Cupids come,
To scatter roses on her tomb.
Soft and gentle as her heart
Keep here your watch, and never part.*

Giacomo Puccini (1858 – 1924)

Arias and Duet from *La Bohème*

Puccini succeeded Verdi as the most popular composer of Italian opera; he wrote over a dozen between 1884 and 1924.



La Bohème was the last he composed in the 19th century, and soon became a great success. It remains Puccini's most popular opera and a worldwide favourite. A fine example of *verismo*, in which low-life, squalor, love and death come to the fore, the libretto by Giacosa and Illica sets the scene on Christmas Eve, in a Paris garret in the Latin Quarter. Four students, Marcello, a painter, Rodolfo, a poet, Colline, a philosopher and Schaunard, a musician, are revealed cold and hungry in the shabby room. Three of them leave for the Café Momus, leaving Rodolfo to finish the article he is writing. There is a knock at the door and Mimi asks for a light for her candle. There is love at first sight. Both their candles are again blown out by the draughts and when Mimi finds she has dropped her key they search for it in the darkness. Their hands touch, and Rodolfo sings the great aria *Che gelida manina* (Your tiny hand is frozen). Mimi then introduces herself: 'Sì. Mi chiamano Mimi' – 'Yes, they call me Mimi'; they realise they have fallen in love with each other, and both sing the duet 'O soave fanciulla' – 'Oh loveliest of maidens'.

Adapted from a note by John Dalton – programme note supplied through 'Making Music'

Richard Wagner (1813–1883)

The Bridal Chorus from *Lohengrin*

Wagner is probably Germany's most important and influential opera composer. *Lohengrin* was composed in 1850, the third of his so-called 'romantic operas', and is set in 10th-century Antwerp. It tells the story of the romance between Elsa of Brabant and the knight Lohengrin.



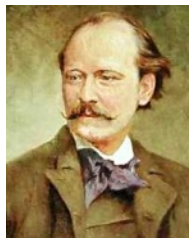
The use of this march to accompany the entry of the bride in modern wedding ceremonies is not really appropriate given its place in the opera. The chorus is actually sung by the women at the wedding party *after* the ceremony is finished and as they accompany the heroine Elsa to the bridal chamber. Furthermore, beset by sorcery and other machinations, the marriage between Elsa and Lohengrin is an almost immediate failure!

Tenor aria – *La donna è mobile* from Verdi's *Rigoletto*

Rigoletto is a four-act tragic opera based on Victor Hugo's play, *Le Roi s'amuse*. It centres upon the dissolute Duke of Mantua, his court jester Rigoletto, and Rigoletto's precious daughter Gilda. It was first produced in Venice in 1851.

Act 3 opens with the Duke's cynical aria *La donna è mobile* ('woman is fickle'), in which he declares the infidelity and fickle nature of women.

Verdi was well aware he had composed a memorable tune. He maximised the aria's impact by revealing it to the cast and orchestra only a few hours before the premiere, and forbidding them to sing, whistle or even think of the melody outside of the theatre! The opera was a great success and *La donna è mobile* was sung in the Venice streets the next morning.



Jules Massenet (1842–1912)

Soprano aria – *Je marche sur tous les chemins* from *Manon*

Massenet was a French composer who was at the height of his popularity at the turn of the last century. *Manon* is his most popular and enduring opera and has maintained an important place in the repertory since its creation in 1884. It is the quintessential example of the charm and vitality of the music and culture of the Parisian Belle Époque. The story is based on *L'histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* by the Abbé Prévost. The opera contains a remarkable portrait of Manon, as she grows from wide-eyed innocence to guilty womanhood.

Manon is on her way to a convent when she is tempted to join the social set, and is wooed by various admirers, but falls in love with des Grieux. However she is later persuaded to accept an offer from the nobleman De Brétigny, having become the sort of Parisian socialite she dreamed about earlier. But characteristically, she doesn't look back, and sings the aria '*Je marche sur tous les chemins*' – 'I walk on every street', which is worded proudly in the present tense, a statement of fact, not achievement.

Tenor aria *E lucevan la stelle* from Puccini's *Tosca*

Tosca was composed in 1900 and the story of the love between Tosca and the artist Mario Cavaradosi, it is set in Rome during a period of political unrest in 1800. The devout Tosca meets Cavaradosi as he works on a painting in the chapel of the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome. But the police chief, Baron Scarpia finds cause to condemn Cavaradosi to death.

'*E lucevan le stelle*' ('And the stars were shining') is from act 3 and is sung by Cavaradosi, while he waits for his execution on the roof of Castel Sant'Angelo. The aria is introduced by a sombre clarinet solo. The start of the melody (heard in outline earlier in the act, as the sky lightens and the gaoler prepares for the execution) is repeated on the lines '*O dolci baci, o languide carezze*' ('With sweetest kisses, tenderest caresses'), and also restated in forte in the closing bars of the opera, as Tosca jumps from the ramparts.

Chorus: Brindisi – from Verdi's *La Traviata*

A *Brindisi* is a toast – or drinking song – often found in Italian opera and in this case set at the beginning of *Traviata* in the salon of the notorious courtesan Violetta, and led by her admirer and tragic hero Alfredo.

Alfredo bids us to drink '*Libiamo, libiamo*' – and the chorus respond '*Ah! Libiam, amor, fra' calici più caldi baci avrà*' (Ah! Let's drink, and the love of the chalices will make the kisses warmer). Violetta responds '*Godiamo, c'invita, c'invita un fervido accento lusinghier*'. (So enjoy; a keen and flattering voice invites us!) – and the chorus echoes the sentiments.

INTERVAL - 20 minutes

Georges Bizet (1838–1875)

March of the Toreadors from *Carmen*



Carmen was first performed in Paris in 1875, but it was not a great success; sadly Bizet died a few days later and never knew of its subsequent popularity. The opera, written in the genre of *opéra comique* with musical numbers separated by dialogue, tells the story of the downfall of Don José, a naïve soldier who is seduced by the wiles of the fiery Gypsy, Carmen. José abandons his childhood sweetheart and deserts from his military duties, yet loses Carmen's love to the glamorous toreador Escamillo, after which José kills her in a jealous rage.

This orchestral piece is the backing to the dramatic entry of the Toreadors in Act 2.

Verdi – Chorus of Scottish Refugees – from *Macbeth*

In this scene from the opening of act IV of the opera, *Patria oppressa* ('Oppressed' or 'Down-trodden country') the refugees of Scotland gather near Birnam Wood to lament the losses caused by Macbeth's tyrannous ascension to the throne. This scene depicts the misery of the people of Scotland, and the reason for Macduff's pledge to seek revenge for the suffering of the Scottish people.

The overwhelming feeling of oppression from death and despair is communicated through this patriotic lamentation.

Soprano aria – *O mio babbino caro* from Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*

Gianni Schicchi is a one-act comic opera composed in 1917/18. The libretto is based on an actual incident that took place in 13th-century Florence and mentioned in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

O mio babbino caro (Oh my beloved father) is sung by Lauretta after tensions between her father Schicchi and the family of Rinuccio, the boy she loves, have reached a breaking point that threatens to separate her from Rinuccio. It provides an interlude expressing lyrical simplicity and single-hearted love in contrast with the atmosphere of hypocrisy, jealousy, double-dealing, and feuding in the medieval Florence of Puccini's only comedy.

The notes are edited or paraphrased versions of synopses taken from the Penguin Opera Guide and various other sources – including 'Making Music'.



RTWCS is affiliated to 'Making Music' – (previously known as the National Federation of Music Societies), an organisation which supports amateur music groups of all kinds throughout the UK.

The organisation was founded in 1935 at the instigation of the composer Sir George Dyson (1883–1964) who was its first Chairman and President. Sir George conducted RTWCS in 1943/4 and later became the society's President.



Leoncavallo (1857– 1919)

Bell Chorus from I Pagliacci (The Clowns)

Ruggiero Leoncavallo was a master of *verismo* opera, and *Pagliacci* is one of his best-loved works. Its principal characters are members of a troupe of players who travel around performing to the Italian peasantry. Much is made of the contrast between the comic characters the principals must play, and the dark emotions of their real lives.

The troupe put on a performance, actually a 'play within a play', which takes place in the remote village of Montalto, Calabria, which was Leoncavallo's birthplace. The Bell Chorus is in fact a diversion from the main plot. It is sung by the village audience when the show is interrupted by the church bells tolling for Vespers, '*Din, don – suona vespero*' as they disperse to the church or the tavern. This cheerful chorus is carefully placed to provide much-needed lightness – against the darker themes being played out, and gives the audience a momentary emotional respite with its charming 'din don' motif.

We shall be singing an English version of this chorus

Tenor aria – *Questa o quella* – from Verdi's *Rigoletto*

Another famous aria from *Rigoletto* – again sung by the Duke of Mantua, this time from the opening of act 1. At a ball in his palace, the Duke sings of a life of pleasure with as many women as possible: '*Questa o quella*' ('This woman or that').

Tenor aria — *Nessun Dorma* from Puccini's *Turandot*

The opera is set in China and involves Prince Calaf, who falls in love with the cold Princess Turandot. To obtain permission to marry her, a suitor has to solve three riddles; any wrong answer results in death. Calaf succeeds in correctly answering the riddles, but Turandot is unwilling to fulfil her part of the bargain. He offers her a chance of release by challenging her to guess *his* name by dawn. Turandot forbids anyone to sleep until the prince's name is discovered.

That night Calaf is alone in the moonlit palace gardens. In the distance, he hears Turandot's heralds proclaiming her command. '*Nessun dorma*' – none shall sleep.

This aria, sung by the great Pavarotti, became embedded in the mass culture of the day after its adoption by the BBC as theme music for the televised FIFA Italian World Cup in 1990.

Verdi – Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves – from Nabucco

It was while he was working on his second opera, *Un giorno di regno*, that Verdi's wife died. That opera, given in September 1840, was a flop and he fell into despair and vowed to give up musical composition forever. However, his friend Merelli persuaded Verdi to write *Nabucco*, and its opening performance in March 1842 made him famous. It is believed that it was the words of the famous *Va, pensiero* chorus that inspired him to write music again.

Va, pensiero, known in English as the *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves*, is from the third act of *Nabucco* (Nebuchadnezzar). The opera follows the plight of the Jews as they are assaulted, conquered, and subsequently exiled from their homeland by the Babylonian king. The biblical record of the events is used as background for a romantic and political plot.

The chorus was inspired by Psalm 137 – '*By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down*' which has been variously set to music.

Soprano aria – Vissi d'arte from Puccini's Tosca

Vissi d'arte ('*I lived for art*') comes from act 2 of the opera and is sung by Tosca herself as she contemplates her fate. She laments that her beloved, the artist Mario Cavaradossi, is at the mercy of Baron Scarpia and wonders why God has seemingly abandoned her.

Although Scarpia appears to agree to spare Cavaradossi, his threatened execution is carried out. In the final scene of act 3, Tosca wreaks her revenge by killing Scarpia and jumps from the castle walls to a certain death.

Duet: Un di, felice, eterea – from Verdi's La Traviata.

Alfredo sings of his uncontrollable love for the dying Violetta, while she – aware of her fate – tells him to forget her.

Chorus: Polovtsian Dances – from Borodin's, Prince Igor

First performed in 1890 after Borodin's death, this epic opera is set in 12th century Ukraine where the weak Prince Igor is beset with Polovtsians invaders, who are Cumans – Turkish tribes – led by Khan Konchak. The principal theme has many popular adaptations, and is used in the musical '*Kismet*', Julio Iglesias's *Quiéreme* in his album *Emociones*, and even a hip-hop variant amongst many others.

There are two distinct themes in this chorus; one being the well known song, which is a lament of the Russian prisoners – captives and slaves of Polovtsians – who sing of the loss of freedom and their homeland. This beautiful song is then interrupted by a change to a faster, more urgent tempo, building up to a chorus sung by the Polovtsian captors themselves - singing the praises of Khan Konchak who relishes the fruits of combat. The lament then returns, but is again interrupted by a *presto* which reverts to the theme praising the Khan, with the chorus finishing with an exhortation to dance.

We shall be singing a very free English translation of the original Russian.



Rebecca Miller – RTWCS Music Director

Conductor Rebecca Miller is acclaimed as a compelling, insightful and energetic force on the podium. Highly regarded for her sophisticated music making and command of varied composers and styles, she is also praised for her ability to communicate with audiences of all ages.

In January 2014, she made her debut with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, performing in a live recording CPE Bach's symphonies for Signum Records. In March she conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall in a live concert broadcast on Radio 3. Later this year, she is due to perform with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and at the Proms.

First Prize winner in the fourth Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition, Miller has guest conducted the Orquesta Filarmónica de la UNAM (the oldest symphonic ensemble in Mexico City), the London Sinfonietta, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra (Israel), the Houston Symphony and Reno Philharmonic Orchestra (USA), and at The Bard Music Festival (New York). In 2012 she made her much acclaimed debut with the Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and is a regular conductor with the South Bank Sinfonia in London.

From 2007 to 2010 Rebecca Miller was Resident Conductor of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in New Orleans, and previously was Conducting Fellow of the Houston Symphony. She has released two CDs, including the award-winning 2011 disc for Signum Records featuring the world-premiere recording of Aaron Jay Kernis' *Goblin Market*. Born in California, Rebecca Miller completed her studies in piano at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. She studied conducting at Northwestern University and at the Aspen Music Festival, and was the Paul Woodhouse Junior Fellow in Conducting for two years at London's Royal College of Music.



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. With these orchestras she has toured Europe, Nigeria, Australia and South America.

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. She also leads improvisational workshops with children of all ages and cultural backgrounds and gives concerts in hospices, hospitals and residential homes.

Simona Mihai – soprano

A recent graduate of the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Romanian born Simona Mihai has been praised by critics as being 'a knockout, pure, in full command of the taxing vocal line', 'remarkably expressive' and 'acting with consummate artistry' (*The Stage*, *Metro* and *Sunday Telegraph*).

In 2009, she made her Royal Opera House debut and has since sung there under Sir Charles Mackerras, Antonio Pappano, Ingo Metzmacher and Robin Ticciati. Her operatic engagements have included leading roles for Glyndebourne Festival, Glyndebourne on tour, BBC Proms, Teatro Massimo, Palermo, Teatro Municipal de Santiago, and Academia di Santa Caecilia, Rome.

In the 2010–11 season, Simona's engagements included her Austrian debut singing Adina L'elisir d'Amore at Salzburg's Landestheatre with the Mozarteum Orchestra, Pousette Manon with the Royal Opera House on tour in Japan and Mendelssohn Symphony No.2 with the Camerata Salzburg.

Future engagements include her debut in La Scala Milan as Manon and a new production of *Peter Grimes* and Musetta in *La Bohème* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. A committed and enthusiastic recitalist Simona has performed at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Royal Danish Theatre, Copenhagen; Queen Elizabeth Hall; Buxton Opera House; Edinburgh International Festival; Brighton Festival and Bath Festival; Birmingham Symphony Hall; the Philharmonic Hall in Liverpool; Fairfield Halls, Wigmore Hall; St John's Smith Square and Cadogan Hall and in Italy, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Poland, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden and the US.

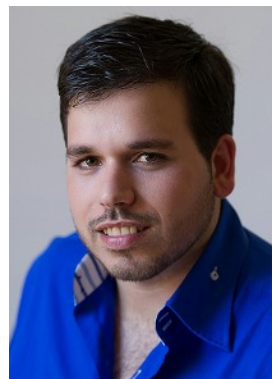
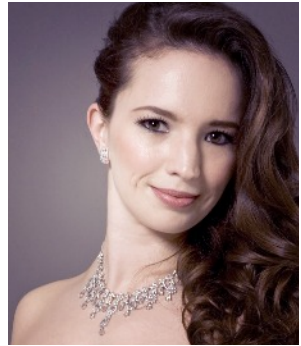
Ms Mihai trained in the UK where she attended the European Opera Centre, the Royal College of Music, London and the Benjamin Britten International Opera School as a Queen Mother Scholar. She was awarded the Rosemary Bugden Junior Fellowship and the David Bowerman Junior Fellowship at the RCM and is a Samling Foundation Scholar. Simona is the recipient of numerous singing prizes including first prize at the Takasaky International Competition in Japan (1996); the Kathleen Ferrier Bursary for Young Singers; the National Mozart Competition; the Miriam Licette Prize and the Maggie Teyte Scholarship (in both 2003 and 2004); the Joaninha Trust Award and the Clonter Opera Prize.

Luis Gomes - tenor

Portuguese tenor Luis Gomes is currently a member of the prestigious Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House. Luis studied at the National Opera Studio and Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he graduated (MMus in Performance) with distinction under the tuition of Rudolf Piernay.

Luis is proudly a Samling Scholar since November 2012 and was also selected to participate at the Georg Solti Accademia di Belcanto in 2012 where he attended master classes with Richard Bonygne, Dennis O'Neill and Angela Gheorghiu.

Luis enjoys a busy performance schedule, having sung in such countries as Portugal, France, Italy, Latvia, England, Scotland and Wales.



Performance highlights include Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* in Rome with the St. Cecilia (c. Antonio Pappano), Wigmore Hall Samling concert featuring Sir Thomas Allen and Malcom Martineau, debut at the Barbican Hall in a BBC concert (c. Ryan Wigglesworth), première of *My Fatal Plurality* at the Wigmore Hall, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Barbican Theatre (c. Stephen Barlow) and his debut at the Gulbenkian Foundation concert hall in Lisbon this December (c. Michel Corboz).

In August 2009 Luis sang to more than 30,000 people at the biggest Opera Gala ever to take place in Portugal, Festival de Música do Avante with Ginásio Opera Orchestra, under the direction of Kodo Yamagishi.

His concert repertoire includes Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Gounod's *St Cecilia Mass*, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, J.S. Bach's *St John's Passion* (Arias) and Cantata 191, Mozart's *Mass in C minor* and *Requiem*, Verdi *Requiem*, Haydn's *The Creation*, Schubert's *Mass in Eb* and *Intende Voci*.

Operatic experience includes, 4th Esquire in *Parsifal* at the Royal Opera House, Tottono in *I Gioielli della Madonna*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* (cover) at Opera Holland Park, Leandro in *La Spinalba* (cover), Beppe Rita, Fenton in *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, George in *Our Town* at the Silk Street Theatre (GSMD), Snout in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Barbican theatre, and Jenik in *The Bartered Bride* for British Youth Opera at the Peacock Sadler's Wells theatre for which he was awarded the Basil A Turner Prize. Recently Luis won the Bruce Miller/Gulliver Prize.

Future plans includes Pong in *Turandot*, Gastone in *La Traviata*, *Lampionaio* in Manon Lescaut, Le Chevalier (cover) in *Les dialogues des Carmelites* at the Royal Opera House this season and Mozart *Requiem* at Winchester Cathedral.

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Frances Clack
Julia Atkinson
Julia Chellel

Viola

Charlie Cross
Ariane Alexander
Lynn Whitley
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Lawrence Durkin
Bill Bass

Double Bass

Robert Hart
Ingela Weeks

Flute

Libby Summers

Oboe

Helen Pye

Clarinet

Shelley Phillips
Andrew Muir

Bassoon

Julia Staniforth

Horns

David Clack
Tom Bettley

Trumpet

Alex Cromwell
Miles Maguire

Trombone

Mike Kent-Davis

Timpani

Sebastian Guard

Percussion

Nigel Shipway

Harp

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Jean Finch
Joanna Finlay
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Liz Ford
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David Gook
Sharon Harrison

Guy Huntrods
Gareth Looker
Peter Mace

Leith Murgai
Peter Rosling
Olivia Seaman

John Simmons
Alan Spencer
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Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society*



The majority of arts based charities depend on voluntary financial support. Our singing members pay an annual subscription which roughly covers our overheads but the income from the sale of tickets is rarely enough to cover the cost of hiring the concert hall and paying for the orchestra and soloists.

Becoming a Friend or Patron helps us to close the gap and at the same time guarantees a preferential choice of a 'best seat in the house' for our Autumn, Christmas and Spring concerts. Friends and Patrons also receive periodic Newsletters, and are invited to attend choir members' social events.

Friends are currently asked to pay a minimum of £70 pa and receive all the benefits listed above. This amounts to only a few pounds more than the cost of the best seat price for all three concerts but in most cases also allows the Society to claim a Gift Aid refund from HM Revenue and Customs.

Patrons are those supporters who feel they would like to donate a little more than the basic Friends subscription. Silver Patrons are those who make a contribution between £100 and £200, whilst those contributing over £200 are classed as Gold Patrons. Gold Patrons receive two free tickets rather than one.

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.

Sponsors are particularly valued; normally local commercial entities, they are invited to contribute to the costs of staging concerts in return for exposure on all our publicity material - including posters, flyers, programmes, and our website. Although we have some guidelines, terms are flexible and negotiated with individual sponsors. Sponsors for this season have included Burfields House Wealth Management, John Lewis at Home and Fenwick Elliott. We can also offer advertising space in our programmes; rates are negotiable - especially for smaller local businesses.

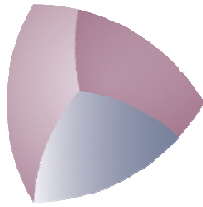
RTWCS is a registered charity - no 273310.

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 to geraldchew@uwclub.net.

If you know or represent a company or organisation that may be interested in becoming a Sponsor, or willing to place an advertisement in a future programme, please contact our publicity officer Melissa Richards by email to publicity@rtwcs.org.uk.

Further information is on our website www.rtwcs.org.uk.



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Contact Penelope Sillitoe –
penelope.sillitoe@creaseys.co.uk or 01892 546546

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Tunbridge Wells
Kent
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ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

President

Roy Douglas

Vice President

Derek Watmough MBE

Music Director

Rebecca Miller

Rehearsal Accompanist

Anthony Zerpa-Falcon

Patrons

Sir Derek & Lady Day

Mr M Hudson

Mr G Huntrods CBE

Mrs W Roszak

Mr W Rutherford

Friends

Mrs J Finch

Mrs E Gale

Mr I Hughes

Mrs P Maxwell

Mrs L McCarthy

Mr L Morris

Mr. P Rosling

Mr & Mrs D Seaman

Mrs Y Spencer

Our 111th season will commence
with a performance of Elgar's
choral masterpiece: –

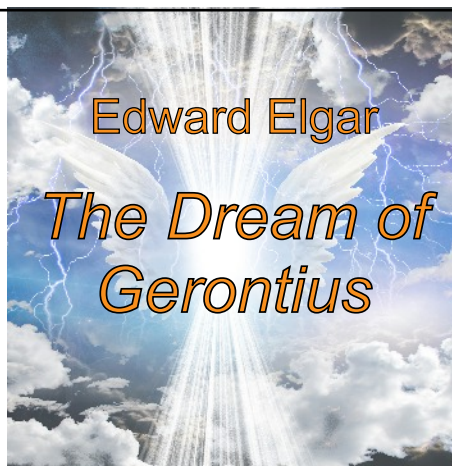
The Dream of Gerontius

on Remembrance Sunday
9th November 2014 at 3 pm

Assembly Hall Theatre – Tunbridge Wells

Royal Tunbridge Wells
**CHORAL
SOCIETY**

conductor
Rebecca Miller



Interested in singing with RTWCS? – Why not give us a try!

We welcome enquiries from potential new members of the society, whether experienced or not. We do not hold auditions, and we always give newcomers the opportunity to join one or two rehearsals before deciding whether they wish to become a member.

If you wish to give us a try, please telephone our registrar (Olivia Seaman) on 01892 863760 or the general secretary (Trevor Hurrell) on 07770 823104.

Alternatively visit the membership section of our website:

www.rtwcs.org.uk