

# Rutter - Magnificat Stravinsky - Symphony of Psalms Bernstein - Chichester Psalms

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society with the Salomon Orchestra

Conducted by Rebecca Miller

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# **Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society**

Programme for 29th April 2018 at 3pm

### John Rutter - Magnificat

- 1 Magnificat anima mea
- 2 Of a Rose, a lovely Rose
- 3 Quia fecit mihi magna
- 4 Et Misericordia
- 5 Fecit potentiam
- 6 Esurientes
- 7 Gloria Patri

Interval (20 Minutes)

### Igor Stravinsky - Symphony of Psalms

I - Exaudi orationem meam. Domine

II - Exspectans exspectavi Dominum.

III - Alleluia, Laudate Dominum

# **Leonard Bernstein - Chichester Psalms**

I - Psalms 108 & 100

II - Psalms 23 & 2

III - Psalms 131 & 133

**RTWCS** choir with Ellie Partridge - soprano Sean Yap - Countertenor Salomon Orchestra - leader Tara Persaud

# Conducted by Rebecca Miller

**Associate Conductor - Jamie Sperling** Rehearsal Accompanist - Craig Hudson

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# **PROGRAMME NOTES**

John Rutter: Magnificat



The passage from St. Luke (Chapter 1, verses 46-55) known as the Magnificat - a poetic outpouring of praise, joy and trust in God, ascribed by Luke to the Virgin Mary on learning that she was to give birth to Christ - has always been one of the most familiar and well-loved of scriptural texts, not least because of its inclusion as a canticle in the Catholic office of Vespers and in Anglican Evensong. Musical settings of it abound, though surprisingly few of them since J.S. Bach's give the text extended treatment. I had long wished to write an extended Magnificat, but was not sure how to approach it until I found my starting point in the association of the

text with the Virgin Mary. In countries such as Spain, Mexico and Puerto Rico, feast days of the Virgin are joyous opportunities for people to take to the streets and celebrate with singing, dancing and processions. These images of outdoor celebration were. I think, somewhere in my mind as I wrote, though I was not fully conscious of the fact until afterwards. I was conscious of following Bach's example in adding to the liturgical text - with the lovely old English poem Of a Rose and the prayer Sancta Maria both of which strengthen the Marian connection, and with the interpolated Sanctus (to the Gregorian chant of the Missa cum jubilo) in the third movement, which seems to grow out of the immediately preceding thought et sanctum nomen eius. The composition of Magnificat occupied several hectic weeks early in 1990, and the première took place in May of that year in Carnegie Hall, New York.

Programme note provided by John Rutter, May 2011. Made available by Making Music.



# DINING

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# Igor Stravinsky: Symphony of Psalms



The Symphony of Psalms was the outcome of a commission that Stravinsky received in 1930 from Serge Koussevitzky, at that time the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, to mark the orchestra's 50th anniversary. Although it was intended for Boston, the work in fact received its first performance in Brussels on 13 December 1930, with Stravinsky's friend Ernest Ansermet directing the Brussels Philharmonic. Kossevitzky and the Boston Symphony gave the US première six days later.

The piece is profoundly spiritual and stemmed from Stravinsky's own recent religious reawakening. In the mid-1920s he went through a personal crisis that culminated in his return to the Russian Orthodox Church in 1926 after a gap of some 26 years. That same year, he attended the celebrations in Padua marking the 700th anniversary of St.

Anthony of Padua and, while there, he had a deeply moving religious experience. Some of the religious works that he wrote after this event – namely the creed and the Ave Maria – set Old Church Slavonic texts. But for the Symphony of Psalms he drew on the Latin of the Vulgate. Even so, the whole ethos of the work is Eastern Orthodox. It has what David Ewen has called the "primitivism of early Christian art", and the critic Paul Rosenfeld wrote that it reminded him of "mosaics in a Byzantine church".

The work consists of three movements played without a break. The first is a setting of verses 13 and 14 of Psalm 38 (in the Vulgate numbering) or Psalm 39 in the Hebrew bible. The second movement sets Verses 2-4 of Psalm 39. and the third sets the whole of Psalm 150. Stravinsky explained his reason for calling the work a Symphony by stating that "the order of the three movements presupposes a 'periodic' scheme and in this sense realizes a 'symphony'. For a periodic scheme is what distinguishes a 'symphony' from a collection of pieces with no scheme but one of succession, as in a suite."

In its original form, the work was scored for choir and orchestra without clarinets, violins or violas. Stravinsky called specifically for children's voices to take the upper parts, but accepted that, where children were not available, adult female sopranos and altos should be used instead. Stravinsky revised the

Symphony of Psalms in 1948, and his son Svyatoslav later produced a version for choir and piano duet.

The work opens with a preludelike section in which Stravinsky's predilection for rhythm is immediately apparent. An accompaniment of flowing decorative figurations is punctuated irregularly by urgent E minor chords. The choral singing of the psalm is led out by the altos, chanting a melody comprising basically only two notes (E and F) a minor second apart. This interval proves to be a defining characteristic of the whole movement. The chorus sings out its lines mainly in slow block chords (with passing notes) over a busy, running accompaniment. Stravinsky described this first movement as "the prayer of the sinner for divine pity".

The second one, which he described as "the recognition of grace received", is a double fugue, one subject assigned to the accompaniment, characterized by wide leaps, the other to the chorus, less angular in structure but complementing the first perfectly.

The final movement is a "hymn of praise and glory". It begins with a slow Alleluia that leads straight into an allegro full of quirky rhythms. After an instrumental section, the choir enters with the word "Laudate" ("Praise ye"). This final movement is an almost hypnotic dance. Towards the end we hear an echo of the introductory Alleluia, and the work finishes on a radiant chord of C major.

Programme notes by William Gould, June 2001. Provided through Making Music.

#### First Movement:

Exaudi orationem meam, Domine, et deprecationem meam: auribus percipe lacrimas.

Ne sileneas, quoniam advena ego sum apud te et peregrinus, Sicut omnes patres mei Remitte mihi Priusquam abeam et amplius non ero

#### Second Movement

Exspectans exspectavi Dominum, et intendit mihi.

Et exaudivit preces meas, et eduxit me de lacu miseriae et de luto faecis. Et statuit super petram pedes meos, et direxit gressus meos.

Et immisit in os meum canticum novum, carmen Deo nostro. Videbunt multi, et timebunt, et sperabunt in Domino. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and my supplication: give ear to my tears Be not silent: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner as all my fathers were.

O forgive me, that I may be refreshed, before I go hence, and be no more.

With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and he was attentive to me. And he heard my prayers, and brought me out of the pit of misery and the mire of dregs. And he set my feet upon a rock, and directed my steps.

And he put a new canticle into my mouth, a song to our God. Many shall see, and shall fear: and they shall hope in the Lord.

#### **Third Movement**

Alleluia. Laudate Dominum in sanctis ejus; laudate eum in firmamento virtutis ejus.

Laudate eum in virtutibus ejus; laudate eum secundum multitudinem magnitudinis ejus.

Laudate eum in sono tubae...
Laudate eum in tympano et choro;
laudate eum in chordis et organo.
Laudate eum in cymbalis
benesonantibus; laudate eum in
cymbalis jubilationis.

Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum! Alleluia.

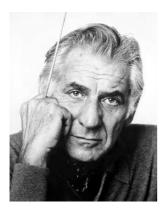
Alleluia. Praise ye the Lord in his holy places: praise ye him in the firmament of his power.

Praise ye him for his mighty acts: praise ye him according to the multitude of his greatness. Praise him with sound of trumpet Praise him with timbrel and choir: praise him with strings and organs.

Praise him on high sounding cymbals: praise him on cymbals of joy: let every spirit praise the Lord! Alleluia.

English translation based on Douay-Rheims (Catholic) bible.

### Leonard Bernstein: Chichester Psalms



Leonard Bernstein occupies an important place in American music as conductor, pianist and composer, a triple career he pursued with flamboyant vigour throughout the five decades of his professional life.

As a composer, Bernstein was best known for his stage musical *West Side Story* (1957). He also produced the scores of several other shows for both stage and screen, notably the great Gene Kelly movie *On the Town* (1949). But he was more than a populist. He produced three powerful symphonies, a sparkling opera on the subject of Voltaire's *Candide* and a very unconventional *Mass*, among other works. It is rather misleading to classify his compositions as either popular or serious, since his overall style is both deeply American and

very eclectic. It draws on the influences of Stravinsky and - no doubt partly via his teacher Aaron Copland - of traditional and popular sources and in particular it owes much to the song styles of American musicals. Yet most of his large-scale non-theatrical works deal with religious themes and include settings of Biblical or liturgical texts.

The *Chichester Psalms* were commissioned by the Very Rev Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester, for the 1965 Southern Cathedrals Festival. The work was written with an all-male choir in mind, and the first performance of this version was given In Chichester Cathedral on 31 July 1965. However, the world première had already taken place on 15 July in New York, with the composer conducting the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and a mixed choir.

The work consists of three movements, each an affirmative setting of the original Hebrew text of one complete psalm, together with one or more verses of a second psalm. The piece is

always performed in Hebrew: Bernstein never sanctioned an English translation; the English words below are those in the authorised King James Bible.

I. The first movement begins with a short introduction in the form of a slow yet forceful chorale-like setting of Psalm 108 verse 2:

עוּרָה, הַנַּבֵל וִכְנוֹר; Urah, hanevel, v'chinor! ַ אָעִירָה שָׁחַר. A-irah shaḥar

Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

The main part of this movement is an exuberant and joyful setting of Psalm 100 in seven-four time. At the end an instrumental interlude and a short section or four solo voices lead to a resounding coda.

הַרִיעוּ לַיהנַה, כַּל־הַאַרֵץ. Hari'u l'Adonai kol ha'arets. עבדו אַת־יִהוַה בְּשֹׁמְחַה; Iv'du et Adonai b'simḥa בֹּאוּ לְפָנִיו, בִּרְנָנָה. Bo'u I'fanav bir'nanah. בער בי יהוה, הוא אַל הִים: Du ki Adonai Hu Elohim. הוא־עַשַׂנוּ, ולא (וַלוֹ) אַנַחָנוּ Hu asanu v'lo anaḥnu. עמוֹ, וצ' אן מַרְעִיתוֹ. Amo v'tson mar'ito. ב אוּ שָעַרֵיו, בַּתוֹדָה Bo'u sh'arav b'todah, ָםצַר תִיו בַּתְהַלָּה; Hatseirotav bit'hilah, הודו־לוֹ, בַּרְכוּ שְׁמוֹ. Hodu Io, bar'chu sh'mo. ;י־טוֹב יְהנָה, לְעוֹלֶם חַסְדּוֹ; Ki tov Adonai, l'olam ḥas'do, עד־ד ר וַד ר, אַמוּנַתוֹ. V'ad dor vador emunato.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He is God. It is He made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His court with praise. Be thankful unto Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good; His mercy everlasting And His truth endureth to all generations.

II. The second movement begins with a setting of the first part of Psalm 23 for alto solo, followed by the sopranos and altos in canon. The music is recognisably that of the composer of West Side Story. Its "bluesy" feel signals the influence of American popular music. Yet Bernstein is careful to direct that it be sung "without sentimentality" by a boy or an alto representing David.

This gentle music, which is in three-four time, is suddenly interrupted by an agitated and menacing setting for tenors and basses of the first four verses of Psalm 2. This angry music is in common time, and yet Bernstein contrives to combine these two elements as the upper parts ioin in to sing the remainder of psalm 23.

יהוָה ר' עִי, ל' א אֱחְסַר. Adonai ro-i, lo eḥsar. בָּנְאוֹת דָּשֵׁא, יַרְבִּיצְנַי; Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini, על מי מְנְחוֹת יְנַהַּלְנִי. Al mei m'nuḥot y'nahaleini, נְפִּשִׁי יִשׁוֹבֶב; Naf'shi y'shovev, יַנְחֵנִי בְמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק, Yan'ḥeini b'ma'aglei tsedek, לַמַעַן שָׁמוֹ. L'ma'an sh'mo.

גם כּי־אַל Gam ki eilech בגיא צַלְמֵוֶת, B'gei tsalmavet, ל א־אִירָא רַע Lo ira ra, ני־אַתַּה עַמַּדי; Ki Atah imadi. (שַּבְטָרֵ וּמִשְׁעַנְתָּרָ Shiv't'cha umishan'techa יָנַחֶמֶנִי. Hemah y'naḥamuni.

נְמָה, רָגְשׁוּ גוֹיִם; Lamah rag'shu goyim וּלְאָמִים, יֵהָגוּ־רִיק. Ul'umim yeh'gu rik? יתַיצְבוּ, מַלְכִי־אָרֵץ Yit'vats'vu malchei erets, :ורוֹזְנִים נוֹסְדוּ־יַחַד: V'roznim nos'du yaḥad . על־יִהנָה, וַעַל־מִשִּׁיחוֹ Al Adonai v'al m'shiho. נְנַתְּקָה, אֶת־מוֹסְרוֹתֵימוֹ; N'natkah et mos'roteimo,

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk Through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff, They comfort me. Psalm 2 Why do the heathen rage,

And the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His anointed. Saying, let us break their bands asunder, נושליכה ממנו עב תימו. V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo. And cast away their cords from us.

יוֹשֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם	Yoshev bashamayim	He that sitteth in the heavens
ישְחָק: אֲד נָי,	Yis'ḥak, Adonai	Shall laugh: the Lord
יִלְעַג־לָמוֹ.	Yil'ag lamo!	Shall have them in derision!  Psalm 23
תַּצְר ֹדְ לְפָנֵי, שֻׁלְחָן	Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan	Thou preparest a table before me
ָנֶגֶד צֹ רְרָי;	Neged tsor'rai	In the presence of my enemies,
,דִּשַּׁנְתָּ בַשֶּׁמֶן ר ֹאשִׁי	Dishanta vashemen roshi	Thou anointest my head with oil,
כּוֹסִי רְנָיָה.	Cosi r'vaya <u></u> .	My cup runneth over.
אַךְ, טוֹב וָחֶסֶד	Ach tov va <u>h</u> esed	Surely goodness and mercy
יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי;	Yird'funi kol y'mei <i>ḥ</i> ayai	Shall follow me all the days of my life,
וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהנָה,	V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai	And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
לָא ֹרֶךְ יָמִים.	L'orech yamim.	For ever.

**III.** The final movement begins with an extended instrumental prelude based on the music of the opening chorale of the whole work, and on a rising motif that forms the basis of much of the subsequent setting of Psalm 131.

As in the opening movement, the rhythm of this setting uses an asymmetrical time signature (in this case bars of ten beats divided into two halves of five). Yet the mood is quite opposite to the exuberance of Movement I, and carries the direction "peacefully flowing". Much of the choral writing is in two parts, the upper voices answering the lower. At the end, after a short section for soprano, bass and alto soloists, the opening chorale of the first movement returns, this time slowly and quietly, set to the first verse of Psalm 133. The mood is one of awe and resignation.

		Psalm 131
יָהנָה,	Adonai, Adonai,	Lord, Lord,
ל`א־גָבַה לְבִּי	Lo gavah libi,	My heart is not haughty,
ָוְלֹ א־רָמוּ עֵינֵי;	V'lo ramu einai,	Nor mine eyes lofty,
וְלֹ א־הָלַּכְתִּי,	V'lo hilachti	Neither do I exercise myself
בָּגְד ֹלוֹת וּבְנִפְלָאוֹת	Big'dolot uv'niflaot	In great matters or in things
מְמֶנִי.	Mimeni.	Too wonderful for me to understand.
אָם־ל א שָׁוִיתִי,	Im lo shiviti	Surely I have calmed
וְדוֹמַמְתִּי	V'domam'ti,	And quieted myself,
נַפְשִׁי: כְּגָמֻל, עֲלֵי אִמּוֹ;	Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,	As a child that is weaned of his mother,
בַּגָּמֻל עָלַי נַפְשִׁי.	Kagamul alai naf'shi.	My soul is even as a weaned child.
יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֶל־יְהנָה יַחַל	Yahel Yis'rael el Adonai	Let Israel hope in the Lord
מֵעַתָּה, וְעַד־עוֹלָם.	Me'atah v'ad olam.	From henceforth and forever
		Psalm 133
הָנֵה מַה־טוֹב,	Hineh mah tov,	Behold how good,
וּמַה־נָּעִים	Umah na'im,	And how pleasant it is,
שֶׁבֶת אַחִים	Shevet ahim	For brethren to dwell
גַּם־יָחַד.	Gam yaḥad. Amen	Together in unity.

Programme notes adapted from those provided by Making Music (original author unknown)

# CONDUCTOR

# Rebecca Miller



Photo: Richard Haughton

California-born conductor Rebecca Miller has earned an international reputation for her compelling, insightful, and energetic presence on the podium. Acclaimed for her sophisticated music making and evocative command of varied composers and styles and for her ability to communicate with audiences of all ages, she has guest-conducted the London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, London Mozart Players, BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Salomon Orchestra, and at the BBC Proms, and she recently made her debut with the Nashville Symphony as part of the League of American Orchestra's

prestigious 'Bruno Walter National Conductors Preview'. She is currently Principal Conductor of the Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia, Associate Conductor of the Southbank Sinfonia, Conductor at the Royal Academy of Music's junior department, and Director of Orchestras at Royal Holloway University.

Engagements in 2017-18 include several performances with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, recording and performance projects with BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and debuts with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra (New York), New Haven Symphony Orchestra (Connecticut), National Youth Orchestra of Scotland. In November 2017, she made her debut with the Uppsala Chamber Orchestra, and was immediately re-invited for two further engagements with the orchestra in 2018-19.

Rebecca's discography includes eight CDs: with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (CPE Bach/Signum/2015 Gramophone Award shortlist), BBC Concert Orchestra (Henry Hadley/Dutton Epoch), and two with the Royal Northern Sinfonia (Haydn Symphonies/ Signum, Bristow/New World Records). Her 2017 CD with the BBC Scottish Symphony (piano concertos by Amy Beach, Dorothy Howell and Cecil Chaminade for Hyperion Records' Romantic Piano Concerto series) was chosen as Editor's Choice for Gramophone Magazine, and was shortlisted for a 2017 Gramophone Award. Her most recent release, containing concertos by Aaron Jay Kernis with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Joshua Roman & Paul Neubauer for Signum, was released in January 2018.

Rebecca has guest conducted in the US with the Houston Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, Reno Philharmonic, Bakersfield Symphony, Santa Cruz Symphony, Chicago College of the Performing Arts, Bard Music Festival, Huntsville Symphony, Williamsport Symphony, and Musiqa Houston, and with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in Israel. As a First-prize winner in the Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition, Rebecca has conducted throughout Mexico, including repeated engagements with the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional and Orquesta Filarmonica del UNAM, with the state orchestras of Yucatan, Aguascalientes, and Sinaloa.

Rebecca is passionate about her work with young musicians - she has worked with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and of Great Britain, the Chicago College of the Performing Arts, as well as with the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela (Teresa Carreño),

much to the acclaim of its founder José Antonio Abreu. She is Conductor at the Royal Academy of Music's junior department, and is Director of Orchestras at Royal Holloway University of London, where she has built the orchestral programme to unprecedented heights; there, she started an orchestral scholarship programme, initiated a side-by-side programme with the London Mozart Players, secured high-profile engagements (including being Music Director of a side-by-side with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Temple Church Choir, 'Magna Carta 800 at Runnymede' in the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth and 4000 dignitaries and honoured guests) and founded a groundbreaking initiative called 'Music +' which aims to build bridges through music through interdepartmental projects and to inspire interdisciplinary research.

From 2007 to 2010 Rebecca was Resident Conductor of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, where she directed her own series, the 'Casual Classics', and conducted subscription, pops, education, family, and community concerts, and led award-winning annual performances of Handel's 'Messiah'. From 2005 to 2007, Rebecca was the LAO's 'American Conducting Fellow' of The Houston Symphony, leading the symphony's entire series of family, classical, and education concerts. Rebecca holds a Bachelor's degree in Piano from Oberlin Conservatory, a Master's in Music in Conducting from Northwestern University, and served for two years as the Paul Woodhouse Junior Fellow in Conducting at London's Royal College of Music.

# A Farewell and Expression of Appreciation to Rebecca

This concert will mark the end of six wonderfully rewarding Seasons for RTWCS. Rebecca took her first rehearsal with us on September 3rd 2012. At that time Rebecca promised us what she hoped would "be an inspiring and fulfilling musical journey!" The society feels that this promise has been amply fulfilled, and also of course rather sad that this particular part of the Society's journey is ending.

Rebecca has conducted us at 16 concerts, including some of the larger scale renowned choral works such as Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, Bach's moving *St Matthew Passion* and monumental *Mass in B minor*. Her London connections enabled us to engage some fine orchestras, including the London Handel Orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia, and the Salomon Orchestra whom we welcome today. She also introduced us to some talented singers for our often demanding solo performances as well as internationally acclaimed instrumentalists such as her pianist husband Danny Driver and the violinist Chloë Hanslip.



As well as feeling sad to bid au revoir to Rebecca we are also glad that she has the chance to move on to further success in fresh challenges and adventures. We send our warmest good wishes for her new ventures.

### **SOLOIST**

# Eleanor Partridge



Eleanor graduated from Royal Holloway, University of London in 2017 with a first-class degree in Music. At Royal Holloway, Eleanor was a soprano in the distinguished Chapel Choir, maintaining a busy schedule of services four times a week alongside weekly lunchtime concerts, as well as taking part in The Sixteen's training programme, Genesis Sixteen 16/17. Eleanor has recorded three CDs with Royal Holloway, toured much

of Europe and eastern USA, and sung for Royalty twice. Their latest CD, Ola Gjeilo's Winter Songs under Decca (which reached No.1 in the UK Classical Charts), features her as a soloist, and Eleanor is making increasing appearances on BBC Radio 3 and 4 with various choirs.

This year Eleanor is pursuing a career in professional singing, and is taking part in St Martin-in-the-Fields' Choral Scholarship programme alongside the National Youth Choir of Great Britain's Fellowship Programme, and has taken part in a number of concerts with the world-renowned Tenebrae Choir, most recently for their Residency at St John's Smith Square in Holy Week. She is enjoying increasing solo opportunities, recently performing the solos in Haydn's *Little Organ Mass* and Mozart's *Liteniae Lauretanae* at St John's Smith Square, extracts from Bach's *B Minor Mass* in St Martin-in-the-Fields and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* in Exeter Cathedral.

Eleanor is honoured to have been asked back to sing for the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society Summer Concert in June.

# THE SALOMON ORCHESTRA

The Orchestra celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2013. It was founded in 1963 by the conductor Nicholas Braithwaite and a group of his contemporaries. He was the regular conductor and when he left to work abroad Andrew Davis took over. 'Nicky' has always made occasional returns and he was especially welcomed back for the 50th Birthday concert.

The orchestra has been recognised for many years as London's finest fully non-professional orchestra. Talented and passionate amateur musicians from a wide variety of occupations are invited to play in each series. They range from long-standing players to new young members (some even following or joining their founder parents!)

Three concerts a year are promoted at St John's Smith Square. For many years now each has a different conductor with a short concentrated series of rehearsals. Working in this way maintains freshness, vitality and commitment. The orchestra has worked with artistes in the early years of their professional careers (more recently Robin Ticciati, Nicholas Collon and Guy Johnston). Many now are well-known internationally, including conductors Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Mark Elder and Martyn Brabbins.

In the early years programmes were built around the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, as befitted the name 'Salomon' (the impresario who persuaded Haydn to visit England). However,



Salomon Orchestra rehearsing with Rebecca Miller in St. John's Smith Square.

Photo Alex King

within a few years a more challenging repertoire was being undertaken and the orchestra grew to full symphonic size, opening up the opportunity to perform music beyond the repertoire of many amateur orchestras, and under conductors who often would have an affinity with particular works.

In 1990 the Orchestra was awarded an Enterprise Award by the Performing Rights Society for its initiative in promoting the performance of contemporary music. Examples of this include Giles Swayne's *The Song of Leviathan*, (commissioned in 1988 to celebrate the Orchestra's 25th Anniversary), works by Tippett, Messiaen, John McCabe, John Pickard and John Adams. In May 2000 John McCabe was welcomed back as soloist in Rawsthorne's Second Piano Concerto and the October concert in 2008 celebrated his 70th birthday year with a performance of his *Symphony 'Edward II'*. November 2013 saw the Orchestra move to Cadogan Hall for the 50th Anniversary Birthday concert. The programme opened with Richard Strauss's *Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare*, followed by some of his songs and *Till Eulenspiegl*. Shostakovich's monumental *Leningrad Symphony* concluded the evening.

In addition to its own regular series at Smith Square the Orchestra performs with several choral societies. In 1999 they played Mahler's Symphony No. 8 conducted by Martyn Brabbins (the Orchestra's President) at the Royal Festival Hall where they were joined by the combined forces of the Huddersfield Choral Society, Crouch End Festival Chorus, Finchley Children's Music Group and a distinguished group of soloists.

Salomon Orchestra has visited Cheltenham on several occasions, three of which were all-day events during the Festival in which Martyn Brabbins conducted all the symphonies of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Dvořák. The 'Beethovenathon' was repeated with the LSO Chorus and soloists at the QEH in July 2010. In June 2016 the Orchestra enjoyed a Conductors' Masterclass at the Royal Academy of Music where they were the 'guinea pig' for four young conductors working on Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, overseen by Brabbins. Earlier, in April, it made its first visit to accompany the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society conducted by Rebecca Miller in Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*. Two return visits have been made since then. In July 2017 the Orchestra was again 'at Sea', this time in Gloucester Cathedral with Brabbins, Cheltenham and Huddersfield Choral Societies, and it is looking forward to meeting him again at another students' Masterclass next month at the RCM, working on Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*.

### **LEADER**

# Tara Persaud



Tara Persaud began studying traditional lrish folk music on the violin at the age of six, before taking up classical studies a year later. She attended Royal Holloway, University of London, where she read German and Music (BA Hons) and then German Culture (MA), and where she also led all of the university ensembles and performed several solo recitals.

She was a member of a number of youth orchestras including the London Schools' Symphony Orchestra, Young Musicians' Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and the Britten-Pears Orchestra, and has performed with conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle, Meredith Davies, Martyn Brabbins, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Neville Marriner, and Sir Colin Davis.

A keen chamber music performer, Tara has received masterclasses and coaching from Emanuel Hurwitz, Gabor Takács-Nagy and the Fitzwilliam String Quartet, and has performed at several international music festivals including Dartington, Minehead, Aldeburgh, Pontecultura Corsica and Verbier.

As well as leading the Salomon Orchestra, Tara appears as guest leader for, and is a member of, many other amateur ensembles in London. She also works in the music industry, as the Senior Manager for A&R and Business Development at Warner Classics in London.

### **SALOMON ORCHESTRA**

#### Violin 1

Philip Gibson Joanna Pieters Paula Martin Anne Askew Jo Lappin Mike Aldren Catherine Aldren Tim Cattermole

#### Violin 2

John Martin
Anita Beak
Clare Le Fort
Fiona Orford-Williams
Diane Dumas
Jeannie Okikiolu
Alexandra King
Marlena Swiatecka
Diana MacPherson

#### Viola

Liz Ryan Robert Spencer Amelia Halsey Alison Evans Jessica Townsend Roger Harvey

#### Cello

Kate Valdar Tessa Oakley-Watts Ros Laher John Best Nick Warren John Lacy

#### **Double Bass**

Terry Gibbs
Peter Taunton
Robert McFarlane

#### **Flute**

Roy Bell Kirstie Ashdown Stephen O'Hanlon Katharine Oakeshott Hamish Reid

#### Oboe

Janie Shillito

Catherine Smale Nancy Sargeant Rosey Sutton Anna Pyshkin

#### Clarinet

Roy Simpson Graham King

#### **Bassoon**

Colin Beak Richard Sheldon Nick Bradshaw Jonathan Burton

#### Horn

Patrick Clements Anthony Mann Julia Jones Mark Andrews

#### Trumpet

John Hackett Phil Kerby Mike Collins Andrew Quinn

#### Tuba

David Young

#### **Trombone**

Nick Morris Simon Astridge Alison Knight

#### Timpani

David Coronel

#### Percussion

James Shires Connor Chambers James Bride Sharon Moloney Ben Brooker

#### Harp

Alexander Thomas Anna Wynne

#### Piano

Jo Lappin

# RTWCS is pleased to report that their Music Director for their next (115th) season will be:

Robyn Sevastos



Robyn Sevastos graduated from Melbourne University with a BMus, with First Class Honours in Performance. She subsequently moved to England to continue her studies, obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Piano Accompaniment at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and a Performance Diploma (ARCM) from the Royal College of Music. She went on to perform extensively as a piano soloist and to coach and accompany a wide range of singers and instrumentalists both in the UK and abroad.

Robyn is currently music director of London Opera Productions, Kentish Opera, the Llantilio Crossenny Festival, Sevenoaks Philharmonic Society, Bromley Philharmonic Choir and is a professor at the Blackheath Conservatoire of Music and the Arts.

Robyn has conducted a large and diverse selection of choral and operatic works. Her extensive operatic repertoire includes operas by Bizet, Donizetti, Humperdinck, Mozart, Puccini, Rossini, Strauss, Sullivan and Verdi. She has also conducted many of the major choral works and countless other smaller gems. Some highlights include performances of Verdi's *Requiem*, *Carmina Burana* at the Fairfield Halls and Bach's *St Matthew Passion* at St Clement Danes church on The Strand in London. Robyn's orchestral programmes have featured internationally renowned artists and she has performed at many of the leading London concert venues including the Royal Albert Hall, the Barbican and the O2 Arena. She has also performed at Kensington Palace and at Sandringham for HRH The Prince of Wales.

# RTWCS ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR

Jamie Sperling



Associate Conductor Jamie Sperling is currently studying for a Masters in Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music with Patrick Russill. He is Musical Director of the Chamber Choir at Goldsmith's, University of London and the Cappella Singers of Upminster, and regularly deputises as Director in churches across London.

Jamie also works as a bass with Voces Cantabiles Music. Jamie previously studied as an undergraduate at Royal Holloway, University of London, where he read Music. He was also a Choral Scholar in the world-renowned Choir of Royal Holloway, with whom he featured on recordings for Hyperion Records and Edition Peters

Sounds, broadcast on BBC Television and Radio, and enjoyed tours to the USA, Canada and all over Europe. Jamie is a committed Christian. He loves sport (especially cricket and rugby), travelling and good coffee!

Jamie has been responsible for leading most of the RTWCS rehearsals this season, and will be conducting our Summer Concert in June at The United Reformed Church, for details see back cover.

### **ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY:**

#### **SOPRANOS**

Elaine Abbs Diana Blower Sylvia Byers

Adriana Capadose

Jill Dunstall Susan Everest Nina Filby

Rosemary Frost Elena Gente

Maggie Hall
Evelien Hurst-Buist

Elena Lewis-Grey
Helen MacNab
Anne Metherell
Daphne Neethling
Louise Packham
Michele Palmer

Viv Reid-Brown
Christine Swindlehurst

Joyce Veysey Jessica Walters Poppy Walters Catherine Whitlock

Yoka Qureshi

Anne Willatt

#### **ALTOS**

Margaret Butcher Beth Breen Pauline Coxshall

Jean Finch Joanna Finlay Liz Ford

Ruth Gray Celia Grew Annette Grev

Heather Herrin

Amanda Jardine-Viner

Pat Jay

Sheila Jones Kim Keeler Ailsa Mcmahon

Margie O'Neil Ginny Osborn Catherine Rigby

Ros Robertson Jenny Selway Yvonne Spencer

Susan Taylor Jane Walters

Jane Walters Felicity Wilkin

#### **TENORS**

Peter Elliott

Richard Hardingham Sharon Harrison Janet Noble Jackie Sanjana

Olivia Seaman

Matthew Secombe Alan Spencer Martin Swindlehurst David Bailey

#### **BASSES**

Nic Vaisey

Gerald Chew Pat Connelly Mike Dowden Glen Goodall Graham Hall David Ham

David Lyall
David Miller
Stephen Pollard
Michael Selway

Nicholas Humphrey

John T Spary Clive M Steward John Veysey Martin Williams

**David Wright** 

# COME AND SING WITH THE RTWCS

We are always delighted to hear from anyone who is interested in singing with us, or in just enquiring about the Society. If you have ever thought about devoting one evening a week to making music as part of a choir, RTWCS could be just the thing for you. We normally rehearse in St John's Church Hall, Tunbridge Wells, each Monday in school term time between 7.30 and 9.30pm, and arrange three or four concerts a year.

For details of all these, and of other events, plus an enquiry form, please visit our website: www.rtwcs.org.uk

# Forthcoming Events in and around Tunbridge Wells



# Mayfield Festival of Music and the Arts



# Tunbridge Wells International Music Competition at The Mayfield Festival

In association with



Mayfield School

The Tunbridge Wells International Young Concerts Artists (TWIYCA) competition for piano, strings and wind players is now referred to as the *Tunbridge Wells International Music Competiton* at the Mayfield Festival, and will take place at Mayfield School. Preliminary rounds start on 2nd May with the finals on 6th May 2018.

Programme of Festival Events from 29th April

Sunday 29 April 7.30pm: Mendelssohn's Last Years – Choral and orchestral concert. Monday 30 April 7.30pm: Frank Sinatra "His Way" – with the Robert Mabermann Trio

Tuesday 1 May 1.10pm: Mayfield School Lunchtime Concert

Tuesday 1 May 7.30pm: Armonico & Oz Clarke Drink to Music (with wine) Saturday 5 May 10.30 for 11.00am: All the world's a stage... (coffee & talk)

Saturday 5 May 7.30pm: Levon Chilingirian (violin) & Ian Fountain (piano) play Mozart and Brahms

Sunday 6 May 8.30am: May Carols from the Parvis Tower

Wednesday 2 May to Sunday 6 May: Tunbridge Wells International Music Competition

Sunday 6 May 10.00am: Festival Mass

Monday 7 May 3.00pm: The Tinkers Bubble Ceilidh Band

Monday 7 May 7.30pm: Oxford Camerata with the Mayfield Consort – War and Peace

Tuesday 8 May 7.30pm: James O'Donnell - The Organist Entertains Wednesday 9 May 7.30pm: Stephen Kovacevich (piano) in Concert

Thursday 10 May 3.00pm; "Poems of Home and Exile" - Jonty Driver and Isobel Dixon

Thursday 10 May 6.30pm; Choral Vespers by Candlelight

Friday 11 May 3.30pm and 8.30 Screenings: Film: Tales of Hoffmann

Saturday 12 May 7.30pm: Onyx Noir – "Easily the classiest brass ensemble in Britain"

Sunday 13 May 10.30am: The Festival Eucharist

Sunday 13 May 7.30pm: Grand French Farewell – Choral and orchestral concert

# For further details of the programme, timings, location and tickets, please visit www.mayfieldfestival.co.uk

Festival Artistic Director Jeremy Summerly writes:

"From Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto at the opening of the festival until the Organ Symphony at the close, Mayfield offers not just something for everybody but everything for everybody. At the heart of the Festival is an international instrumental competition, which guarantees to present performances by the future stars of the classical music firmament: you will have heard them first at Mayfield. Featuring half a millennium of colourful creativity – from early choral music, through wine tasting, to modern jazz, and everything in between – Mayfield 2018 presents the old and the new, the unjustly obscure and the justly celebrated. As the festival careers towards its 50th birthday in 2020, Mayfield proves that 50 is the new 20. Experience and freshness, security and daring, controversy and received wisdom – they're all in the mix. An array of classical instrumentalists and singers, jazz, folk, dance and poetry are all part of the heady cocktail that is Mayfield 2018."



# Orpheus at Trinity — 80th Anniversary — Saturday 12th May 2018

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Orpheus Male Voice Choir aka the Men in Red are back with a fantastic programme for their 80th Anniversary concert – music from shows, folk, traditional, pop, spirituals and classical favourites sung in rich four-part harmonies.

Guest performers from Bennett Music Academy. Fresh from their recent recording of Panini's FIFA World Cup album radio ad, and with Richard Walshaw conducting, the Choir will give you a superb evening.

Tickets £15 (concessions £12) from Trinity Theatre 01892 678678



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Symphony Orchestra



Sunday 7 October 2018
Soloist - Freddy Kempf (piano)
Conductor - Roderick Dunk
Khachaturian - Masquerade Suite
Tchaikovsky - Piano concerto No1
Tchaikovsky - Symphony No 6 (Pathétique)



Sunday 2 December 2018
Soloist - Nicola Benedetti (violin)
Conductor - Roderick Dunk
Bizet - l'Arlésienne Suite No 2
Prokofiev - Violin Concerto No 2
Ravel - Pavane pour une Infante Défunte
César Franck - Symphony in D minor



Sunday 4 November 2018 Soloist - Annette Wardell (soprano) Conductor - Roderick Dunk

Conductor - Roderick Dunk
World War 1 Armistice Commemoration

For Season Tickets contact Gale Smith

For Season Tickets contact Gale Smith on 01892 826196 or E.mail: tickets@rtwso.org
WWW.rtWso.org
WENTING IS a prelitized chair No. 295781

The RTWSO is a registered charity No. 295781

The RTWSO reserves the right to change advertised programmes and artists without notice.



Tickets £22, £24, £27 & £30 (18 or under & students £1)

Plus a £2.00 per ticlest booking fee. or 85 per ricket booking fee online.

\*Tickets are purchased from Cateway, at 8 Grossenor Road, 71N1 2&B.
(open Monday-Friday Sam-Spm)
Tickets can only be purchased at the Assembly Hall Theatre counter on Salengy
from 12 pm to 5 pm and from 90 minutes before a show's advertised start time.

Please visit www. assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or call 01892 530613 / 532072 for more information. Presented in association with the Assembly Hall Theatre

# Royal Tunbridge Wells CHORAL SOCIETY

# More culture at a lower cost

Support the Society and enjoy preferential treatment by becoming a Friend or Patron. 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. Please consider becoming a Friend or Patron to help us to close this gap.

Friends are currently asked to pay a minimum of £70 pa and have the right to a free ticket and choice of any seat in the house for all our concerts. This amounts to only a few pounds more than the cost of the best seat price for all four concerts and 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  $\mathfrak{L}100$  and  $\mathfrak{L}200$ , whilst those contributing over  $\mathfrak{L}200$  are classed as Gold Patrons. They have the same privileges as Friends, but Gold Patrons receive two free tickets per concert rather than one.

Friends and Patrons also receive periodic Newsletters and are invited to attend choir members' social events. Unless they ask not to be included, their names are listed in our concert programmes in recognition of their support.

Applications to become a Friend or Patron can be accepted at any time by contacting: Gerald Chew: Telephone: 01892 527958 or e-mail: geraldchew26@gmail.com

We do hope that anyone who regularly attends the Society's concerts and values the contribution the Society makes to music in Tunbridge Wells will consider becoming a Friend or Patron, or simply make a donation. The Society is a registered charity (no: 27331) and donations can be treated as "gift aid".



# **CONCERT FOR A SUMMER EVENING**



Sunday 24th June at 6 pm at Tunbridge Wells United Reformed Church

100th anniversary of death of C.H.H. Parry

Haydn: The Heavens are telling (from The Creation)

Mozart: Laudate Dominum

Organ solo

Mendelssohn: Hear my prayer

Parry: I was glad

Vaughan Williams: Songs from Five English folk songs

Songs for solo soprano Stanford: The bluebird Parry: Blest pair of sirens

With: Craig Hudson (piano and organ) and Eleanor Partridge (soprano)

**Conducted by Jamie Sperling** 

For further details see www.rtwcs.org.uk

Advance notice of our special

# Remembrance Day Concert

Assembly Hall Theatre at 3pm on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Commemorating the centenary of the Armistice ending the first world war.

This concert will be dedicated to the memory of our late president, Guy Huntrods.

The programme will include:

Ralph Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem.

conducted by Robyn Sevastos

Further details will be announced on our website: www.rtwcs.org.uk