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# *A Spring Concert of Beautiful Italian Choral Music*

**Verdi:** La Forza del Destino (Overture)

**Verdi:** Four Sacred Pieces

**Puccini:** Messa di Gloria

Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society with Salomon Orchestra

**Conducted by Robyn Sevastos**

**Soloists: John Findon, Håkan Vramsmo**

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**Programme for 14th April 2019 at 3pm**

**Giuseppe Verdi**

Overture to *La Forza del Destino*  
*Quattro Pezzi Sacri* (Four Sacred Pieces)

- 1 *Ave Maria*
- 2 *Stabat Mater*
- 3 *Laudi alla Vergine Maria*
- 4 *Te Deum*

Duet from *La Forza del Destino*

— *Interval* —

**Giacomo Puccini**

*Messa di Gloria*

John Findon – *Tenor*, Håkan Vramsmo – *Baritone*

The Salomon Orchestra, leader – Nick Hardisty

**Conducted by Robyn Sevastos**

**Rehearsal accompanist – Craig Hudson**



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## Programme Notes



### Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)

Verdi was born in 1813, the son of a humble innkeeper in Le Roncole village roughly halfway between Milan and Bologna. Much of his early musical education came from the organist in nearby Busseto Cathedral, and impressed by his talent, local music-lovers financed his further training and he went on to study at La Scala in Milan. There he became immersed in the operatic idiom and commenced a long career in opera writing. His first opera, *Oberto*, was performed at La Scala in 1839 when Verdi was 26 years old. However, his next efforts were failures, no doubt influenced by the tragic death of his new wife and two young children.

However, his third opera *Nabucco* performed at La Scala in 1842 established Verdi as a national figure. The soprano role in the premiere was sung by Giuseppina Strepponi who eventually became Verdi's second wife.

In all, he composed 28 operas, about a dozen of which remain as favourites in the repertoire of the world's opera houses. Verdi became the dominant figure in Italian opera and was one of those composers who set the supreme standards by which many judge the art of opera. Verdi also had interests outside Italy, in particular French, Spanish, German and English literature and dramatic traditions and used librettos influenced by authors throughout Europe. However, he was at heart a country man and although he travelled much and became rich, he was most content when back home working on his land and property in his home village of Le Roncole near the Po valley. He died in 1901.

Verdi did write non-operatic work, but his instrumental pieces and songs are thin on the ground; his Requiem is the most well known; but his *Quattro Pezzi Sacri* are less often performed, parts of which are unquestionably in an operatic style.

### ***Overture to La Forza del Destino***

Verdi composed his middle period opera *La Forza del Destino* (*The Force of Destiny*) to a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based on an 1835 Spanish play *Don Alvaro* by Ángel de Saavedra y Ramírez de Bañquedano, 3rd 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 lover. As befits the opera's title and content, the music is by turns brooding and turbulent, striking and dramatic.

# Quattro Pezzi Sacri (Four Sacred Pieces)

1. *Ave Maria* (unaccompanied)
2. *Stabat Mater* (chorus and orchestra)
3. *Laudi alla Vergine Maria* (unaccompanied 4-part female chorus)
4. *Te Deum* (chorus and orchestra)

The *Quattro Pezzi Sacri* were published in 1898, but the *Ave Maria* and the *Stabat Mater* were completed much earlier. The *Ave Maria* was omitted in the first performances which took place in Paris and Turin in 1899, the latter conducted by the young Arturo Toscanini.

The *Ave Maria* is based on an 'enigmatic scale' which had been published in an Italian music magazine; Boito, the librettist of *Otello* and *Falstaff*, had challenged Verdi to use it. The result is a somewhat unorthodox harmonic idiom which brings Verdi, to a certain extent, in line with late Liszt and even with Debussy's innovations. In spite of its external inspiration the *Ave Maria* is not to be dismissed as a mere experiment: it fits in with the other *Pezzi Sacri* and especially with the *Laudi*.

Verdi took the text of the *Laudi* from the last canto of Dante's *Paradiso*. His setting conveys a celestial vision. It has a certain reticence; climaxes are used sparingly, and the music seems to float with unearthly weightlessness. A few passages recall Desdemona's prayer.

The *Stabat Mater*, a more extensive piece, achieves conciseness by avoiding any repetition of words. Here the style is more dramatic, and the music conjures up the vista of a Pietà. The passages which refer to the Crucifixion and the Day of Judgement evoke echoes of the *Requiem*, and the vision of Paradise generates an ultimate climax.

The *Te Deum* is Verdi's last composition, the work of an octogenarian. It is undoubtedly the greatest of the four pieces, summing up with supreme maturity much of the essence of his creative achievement.

Like Holst, Verdi begins with traditional plainchant, followed by utterly subdued invocations. Into these, the *Sanctus* bursts in chords of overwhelming majesty. In its conciseness, this awe-inspiring setting surpasses by far that in the *Requiem*. The lyrical theme which ensues, first in the orchestra, seems akin to many a tune from the operas, a 'typical Verdi', yet it is by an almost incredible metamorphosis, derived from the plainchant.

The abrupt juxtaposition of powerful climaxes and quietly devout passages continues throughout the work, and everything is treated with the same conciseness which Verdi had reached in his last and greatest two operas. This juxtaposition of contrasts is maintained to the very end where the choir's final outburst is denied the last word: this comes only with the quietest of orchestral postludes.

## Four Sacred Pieces

### 1 AVE MARIA

*Ave Maria gratia plena, Dominus tecum.  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus et benedictus  
fructus ventris tui Jesus. Sancta Maria,  
Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus  
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.*

### 2 STABAT MATER

*Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Juxta crucem lacrymosa,  
Dum pendebat Filius.  
Cujus animam gementem  
Contristatam et dolentem  
Pertransivit gladius.*

*O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater unigeniti.  
Quae moerebat et dolebat  
Pia Mater, dum videbat  
Nati poenas inclyti.*

*Quis est homo qui non fleret,  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?  
Quis non posset contristari  
Christi Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?  
Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Jesum in tormentis  
Et flagellis subditum.  
Vidit suum dulcem Natum  
Moriendo desolatum  
Dum emisit spiritum.*

*Eja, Mater, fons amoris,  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac ut tecum lugeam.  
Fac ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum Deum,  
Ut sibi complaceam.*

Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou amongst women and  
blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy  
Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The grieving Mother stood weeping beside  
the cross,  
While her Son was hanging there.  
Her mourning soul,  
Compassionate and suffering  
Was pierced as by a sword.

O how sad and afflicted  
Was that blessed  
Mother of the only begotten!  
How she sorrowed and grieved,  
The devoted Mother, while she watched  
The agonies of her glorious child.

Who is the man who would not weep  
If he should see the Mother of Christ  
In such great distress?  
Who would not be saddened  
If he should behold the Mother of Christ  
Suffering with her only Son?  
For the sins of his people  
She saw Jesus in torments,  
And subjected to the scourge.  
She saw her sweet child,  
Dying, forsaken,  
While he gave up his Spirit.

Oh mother, fount of love,  
Make me feel the strength of thy grief  
so that I may mourn with thee.  
Make my heart burn  
with love for Christ, my God,  
so that I may please Him.



*Sancta Mater, istud agas,  
Crucifixi fige plagas  
Cordi meo valide.*

*Tui Nati vulnerati,  
Tam dignati pro me pati,  
Poenas mecum divide.*

*Fac me tecum pie flere  
Crucifixo condolere,  
Donec ego vixero.  
Juxta crucem tecum stare,  
Et me tibi sociare  
in planctu desidero.*

*Virgo, virginum praeclara  
Mihi jam non sis amara,  
Fac me tecum plangere.  
Fac ut portem Christi mortem,  
Passionis fac consortem,  
Et plagas recolere.*

*Fac me plagis vulnerari,  
Fac me cruce inebriari  
Et cruore Filii.  
Flammis ne urar succensus  
Per te, Virgo, sim defensus  
In die judicii.*

*Christe cum sit hinc exire  
Da per matrem me venire  
Ad palmam victoriae  
Quando corpus morietur  
Fac ut animae donetur  
Paradisi Gloria.  
Amen*

Holy Mother, do this for me,  
fix the wounds of thy crucified Son  
deeply in my heart.

Share with me the pains  
of thy wounded Son,  
who deigned to suffer so much for me.

Make me weep with thee and share  
the agony of the crucified.  
As long as I live.  
I wish to stand with thee  
beside the cross and join thee  
in thy weeping.

Oh Virgin, peerless among virgins,  
do not be hard to me,  
let me weep with thee.  
Grant that I may bear Christ's death,  
give me a share in His passion,  
thinking of His wounds.

Grant that I may be wounded by His wounds,  
intoxicated by His cross,  
and by the blood of thy Son.  
Be nigh to me, O Virgin, lest in flames I burn  
and die,  
In his awful judgement day.

Christ, when thou shalt call me hence,  
Be thy mother my defence,  
By thy cross my victory  
While my body here decays  
may my soul thy goodness praise  
Safe in paradise with thee.  
Amen.



### 3 LAUDI ALLA VERGINE MARIA

*Vergine madre, figlia del tuo Figlio  
Umile ed alta più che creatura  
Termine fisso d'eterno consiglio*

*Tu se, colei che l'umana natura  
Nobilitasti sì che'l suo Fattore  
Non disdegno di farsi sua fattura*

*Nel ventre tuo si raccese l'amore  
Per lo cui caldo nell'eterna pace  
Così è germinato questo fiore*

*Qui se' a noi meridiana face  
Di caritate e giusto intra i mortali  
Se di speranza fontana vivace*

*Donna se' tanto grande e tanto vali  
Che qual vuol grazia è a te non ricorre  
Sua disianza vuol volar senz'ali*

*La tua benignità non pur soccorre  
A chi dimanda ma molte fiate  
Liberamente al dimandar precorre  
In te misericordia in te pietate  
In te magnificenza in te s'aduna  
Quantunque in creatura è di bontate.*

Ave. Ave.

O Virgin Mother, Daughter of thy Son,  
Lowliest and loftiest of created stature,  
Fixed goal to which the eternal counsels run

Thou art that She by whom our human nature  
Was so ennobled that it might become  
The Creator to create Himself His creature.

Thy womb was made a shelter to rekindle  
Thy love whose warmth within eternal peace  
Quickened the seed of this immortal bloom:

High noon of charity to those in bliss,  
And upon earth, to men in mortal plight,  
A living spring of hope, thy presence is.

Lady, so great thou art and such thy might,  
The seeker after grace who shuns thy knee  
May aim his prayer, but fails to wing the flight

Not only does thy succour flow out free  
To him who asks, but many a time the aid  
Fore-runs the prayer, such largesse is in thee.  
All truth, all mercy are in thee displayed.  
And all munificence; in thee is knit  
Together all that's good in all that's made.

All hail! All hail!

*Translation Dorothy Sayers & Barbara Reynolds*

### 4 TE DEUM

*Te deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur,  
Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur.  
Tibi omnes Angeli, tibi coeli et universae  
Potestates.*

*Tibi Cherubim et Seraphim incessabili voce  
proclamant; Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli et terra majestatis gloriae tuae.  
Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus,  
Te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus.  
Te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus  
Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur  
Ecclesia.  
Patrem immensae majestatis,  
Venerandum tuum verum et unicum Filium,*

We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee  
to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee,  
the Father everlasting. To thee all angels cry  
aloud, the Heavens and all the powers therein.

To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do  
cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy  
glory. The glorious company of the Apostles  
praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the  
Prophets praise thee. The noble army of  
Martyrs praise thee.  
The holy Church throughout all the world doth  
acknowledge thee.  
The Father of an infinite majesty;  
Thine honourable, true and only Son;



*Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum,  
Tu Rex gloriae, Christe.  
Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.  
Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non  
horruisti Virginis uterum.*

*Tu, devictor mortis aculeo  
aperuisti credentibus regna coelorum*

*Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes in gloria Patris  
Judex crederis esse venturus,  
Te ergo quaesumus tuis famulis subveni quos  
pretioso sanguine redemisti;*

*Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis in gloria numerari.  
Salvum fac populum tuum Domine, et benedic  
haereditati tuae,  
Et rege eos et extolle illos usque in aeternum.  
Per singulos dies benedicimus te.  
Et laudamus nomen tuum in saeculum et in  
saeculum saeculi.  
Dignare, Domine, die isto sine peccato nos  
custodire*

*Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri. Fiat  
misericordia tua, Domine, super nos  
quemadmodum speravimus in te. In te Domine  
speravi; non confundar in aeternum.*

Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.  
Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ, thou art  
the everlasting Son of the Father,  
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man,  
thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of  
death, thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven  
to all believers. Thou sittest at the right hand of  
God in the glory of the Father. We Believe that  
thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore  
pray thee, help thy servants, whom thou hast  
redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints, in  
glory everlasting.  
O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine  
heritage.  
Govern them and lift them up forever.  
Day by day, we magnify thee.  
And we worship thy name, ever world without  
end. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day  
without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon  
us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our  
trust is in thee. O Lord in thee have I trusted; let  
me never be confounded.

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## Giacomo Puccini 1858 – 1924

Unlike inkeeper's son Verdi, Puccini was born into a large musical family. He was brought up in Lucca where the Puccini family had established a local musical dynasty. His great-great-grandfather, also named Giacomo was maestro di cappella of the Cattedrale di San Martino in Lucca – a position held by family members for some 124 years.

He was aged about 18 when he saw a performance of Verdi's *Aida* in nearby Pisa. His thoughts turned to opera. He went to Milan to study at the conservatory with a grant from Queen Margherita. Like

Verdi, his early operas were not a great success, but he went on to compose what became and have remained some of the world's most popular operas including *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*.

Although firmly rooted in the Italian operatic style of the 19th century, Puccini lived well into the 20th century and his later operas moved away from his Italian roots. He was known for developing the *verismo* style, a post-Romantic operatic genre with its origins in an Italian literary movement of the same name. The *verismo* literary movement sought to portray the world with greater realism, with subject matter such as the lives of the poor, that had not generally been seen as a fit subject for literature or music.

Whilst Verdi retired to a quiet rural environment when not working, Puccini apparently revelled in hunting pursuits and in the joys and opportunities of the newly-invented motor car! He, his wife, son and chauffeur were seriously injured in night-time car accident in 1903. Although he recovered, Puccini subsequently suffered from various health problems which affected his work. He finally died of throat cancer in 1924 before finishing his final opera *Turandot* which was completed by Franco Alfano based on the composer's sketches.

## Messa di Gloria

At the age of 14, Puccini followed in the family tradition and became organist at the family church of San Marino in Lucca, thus establishing his credentials as a church musician. Very soon, however, he became interested in the orchestra and began to write quite ambitious works for that medium. Some four years later, he completed his *Mass in A flat*, known as the *Messa di Gloria*, Puccini composed the Mass as his graduation exercise from the *Istituto Musicale Pacini* in his home town of Lucca. It had its first performance there on 12 July 1880.

Strictly speaking, the piece is a full Mass, not a true '*Messa di Gloria*' (which contains only the Kyrie and Gloria and omits the rest). It is a surprisingly mature work and already shows evidence of his unmistakeable style.

Opening with a contemplative introduction for strings alone, the *Kyrie* proceeds with a wonderful lyricism and melodic invention. With barely a pause for breath, the chorus launches into the *Gloria* in the key of C major, with an exuberant tune which reappears twice during the course of the movement. A dramatic *Laudamus te* for the chorus is followed by a magnificent operatic aria for the tenor soloist on the words *Gratias agimus tibi*. One of the most exciting moments of the piece comes with the basses in unison singing *Qui tollis peccata mundi*, a memorable tune worthy of Verdi. The movement ends with a glorious fugue for the chorus on *Cum Sancto Spiritu*.

The *Credo* begins straight away with the chorus singing a martial unison melody in C minor. The text continues to receive dramatic word-painting with surging interjections from the orchestra until the transition to *Et incarnatus est*. This quiet chorus with tenor solo is followed by the *Crucifixus*, a suitably tragic bass aria in G minor, leading to an urgent orchestral introduction to *Et resurrexit* for chorus. The mood changes to firm optimism for *Et unam sanctam* and a steady dance in 6/8 time for *Et vitam venturi* brings the movement to a close.

The *Sanctus* begins rather lamely until *Pleni sunt coeli* which is punctuated by loud interjections from the orchestra. The *Benedictus* is given to the baritone soloist, followed by a repeat of the *Hosanna* which is a mere six bars long. In the *Agnus Dei* both soloists alternate with the chorus to give us a moment of reflective prayer. With a final lyrical duet and a hushed final phrase from the chorus on *Dona nobis pacem*, the work comes to a close.

*Adapted from note provided by Janet Lince, 1998*  
*All programme notes provided through Making Music to which RTWCS is affiliated*



The text is that of the standard Latin Mass divided into five movements:

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Speed Indication</b>	
1 Kyrie	Kyrie eleison	Larghetto	
2 Gloria	Gloria in excelsis Deo	Allegro ma non troppo	
	Et in terra pax	Andante	
	Laudamus te, benedicimus te	Andante	
	Gratias agimus tibi	Andante sostenuto	Tenor solo
	Gloria in excelsis Deo	Tempo I	
	Domine Deus	Andante sostenuto	
	Qui tollis peccata mundi	Andante mosso	
	Quoniam tu solus sanctus	Maestoso	
	Cum Sancto Spiritu	Fugue (Allegro)	
3 Credo	Credo in unum Deum	Andante	Tenor solo
	Et incarnatus	Moderato	
	Crucifixus	Adagio	Baritone solo
	Et resurrexit	Allegro	
	Et in Spiritum Sanctum	Tempo I	
	Et unam sanctam catholicam	Larghetto	
	Et vitam venturi saeculi	Andantino	
4 Sanctus	Sanctus	Andante	
	Benedictus	Andantino	
5 Agnus Dei	Agnus Dei	Andantino	Tenor, Baritone

# The performers

## Robyn Sevastos – Conductor



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.

In addition to the Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society, 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 even performed at Kensington Palace and at Sandringham for HRH The Prince of Wales.

## John Findon – Tenor



John studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) under Kathleen Mckellar Ferguson and is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (GSMD) Opera Course taught by John Evans, where he was supported by Help Musicians UK and the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

Operatic performances include: Alfredo in *La Traviata* (Fife Opera); First Armed Man (cover) *Magic Flute* (RCS); 2nd Soldier in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (RCS); Bardolfo in *Falstaff* (RCS); Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'amore* (Brent Opera); Don José in *Carmen* (EPOC); Jean in *The Cunning*

*Peasant* (GSMD); Shepherd 2 (role)/Apollo (cover) *Orfeo* (GSMD/ROH); Lemminkainen (cover) *Swanhunter* (Opera North); Leandro *Le Donne Curiose* (GSMD); Sir Philip in *Owen Wingrave* (BYO); Count Vaudemont in *Iolanta* (GSMD); Vasilli in *Mavra* (GSMD); Huon in *Oberon* (GSMD); *Das Lied Von der Erde* with Valencia Philharmonic; Januarie in *The Tale of Januarie* (GSMD/ROH).

In the 2017 season John was a Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Opera (GFO/GTO) where he performed the roles of Player 2 *Hamlet*; Officer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Giuseppe (cover) *La Traviata*. Current and upcoming engagements include: Second Jew in *Salome* (Opera North); Major Domo to Faninal (cover) *Der Rosenkavalier* (GFO); Monostatos in *Magic Flute* (Opera North); Sergeant Johnny Strong (cover) *Jack the Ripper* (ENO); The Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* (ENO/Regent's Park); First Armed Man/First Priest (cover) *Magic Flute* (GFO).

## Håkan Vramsmo – Baritone



Born in Sweden, Håkan Vramsmo studied singing at Malmö Musikhögskola, Sweelinck Conservatorium and Conservatoire de Metz with Udo Reinemann and with Mitsuko Shirai and Hartmut Höll's Liedclass in Karlsruhe. After moving to London he subsequently graduated from Guildhall School of Music and Drama with distinction.

Håkan has subsequently appeared at major venues and festivals including the BBC Proms' opening night, Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Stuttgart Liederhalle, Sibeliusacademin, Aldeburgh, Bath and Cheltenham.

He has also appeared with the Hebrides Ensemble, Carducci Quartett, Gabrieli Consort, Sharoun Ensembles, BBC Symphony, Jerusalem, City of Birmingham, Bournemouth, English Chamber, Wroclaw, Zagreb, Barcelona, Gothenburg, and Malmö Symphony Orchestras. Conductors he has sung under include Martyn Brabbins, Paul McCreech, Leonard Slatkin, Sir David Willcocks, Sakari Oramo and Leon Botstein.

He has frequently recorded for BBC, *Private Joe* by Panufnik for Polish radio, *B-Minor Mass* on Signum Records and Elisabeth Maconchy's opera *The Departure* for Chandos Records.

He has sung 30 operatic roles including creating Axel in Meredith's *Tarantula in Petrol Blue*, Carl in Coleridge-Taylor's *Thelma* and Pascoe in Huw Watkins' *In the Locked Room*.

## The Salomon Orchestra

Salomon 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, including the children of founder members. The orchestra was founded in 1963 by the conductor Nicholas Braithwaite and a group of his contemporaries. He was the regular conductor and when eventually he left to work abroad Andrew Davis took over.

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.



Photo: Alexandra King

In the early years programmes were built around the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, as befitted the name 'Salomon' who was the impresario who persuaded Haydn to visit England (and no relation of the Salomons family of the local Salomons estate). However, 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), works by Tippett, Messiaen, John McCabe, John Pickard and John Adams.

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.

In April 2016, Salomon Orchestra made its first visit to Tunbridge Wells to accompany RTWCS singing Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* under conductor Rebecca Miller. They have since returned to accompany us singing Handel, Dvořák, Bernstein, Rutter and Stravinsky.

This will be their fourth visit to us, and they are again warmly welcomed.



# Salomon Orchestra

## Violin 1

Nick Hardisty - Leader  
Heather Bingham  
Deborah Dowe  
Catherine Aldren  
Mike Aldren  
Paula Martin  
Jo Lappin  
Anne Askew

## Violin 2

John Martin  
Ailsa McIntyre  
Sonja Nagle  
Emily Adlem  
Eloise Hammond  
Diane Dumas  
Jeannie Okikiolu

## Viola

Robert Spencer  
Alison Evans  
Olivia Vander Elst  
Diana Clements  
Freya Plummer  
Roger Harvey

## Cello

Kate Valdar  
Clare Elliott  
Richard Apley  
Nick Warren  
John Lacy

## Double Bass

Penny Halnan  
Susan Moss  
Clare Larkman

## Flute

Chris Wyatt  
Katherine Oakeshott  
Libby Summers

## Oboe

Kevin England  
Andrew Radley

## Clarinet

Alan Maries  
Catherine Allen

## Bassoon

Tim Pigden  
Nick Bradshaw

## Horn

Keith Maries  
Paddy Clements  
Charles Clark-Maxwell  
Fred Shaub

## Trumpet

John Hackett  
Phil Kerby  
Cathy Gough

## Trombone

Simon Astridge  
Julia Kiggel  
Alison Knight

## Tuba

David Young

## Timpani

Jon French

## Percussion

Tony Summers

## Harp

Alexander Thomas

## Keyboard

Craig Hudson



## Is Walking Netball for you?

Walking netball is a slower version of the game designed so that anyone can play it regardless of age or fitness level.

**Tuesdays 11:30 to 12:30 | Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre**

**Contact Sibylla [hello@crowboroughnetball.com](mailto:hello@crowboroughnetball.com) | 07931 980377**

# ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY:

## **SOPRANOS**

Elaine Abbs  
Diana Blower  
Felicity Brown  
Sylvia Byers  
Val Crichton  
Jill Dunstall  
Charlotte Eliades  
Nina Filby  
Rosemary Frost  
Elena Gente  
Maggie Hall  
Evelien Hurst-Buist  
Pippa Ives  
Eve Johnson  
Elena Lewis Grey  
Helen MacNab  
Anne Metherell  
Daphne Neethling  
Louise Packham  
Michele Palmer  
Eileen Phillips  
Ann Spillman  
Christine Swindlehurst  
Audrey Wallin  
Jessica Walters  
Poppy Walters  
Catherine Whitlock  
Anne Willatt

## **ALTOS**

Margaret Butcher  
Beth Breen  
Lydia Beadsworth

Diana Churchill  
Pauline Coxshall  
Catherine Dorman  
Joanna Finlay  
Liz Ford  
Kasia Fox  
Linda Goodhart  
Celia Grew  
Annette Grey  
Pat Jay  
Sheila Jones  
Jane Lewis  
Ailsa McMahon  
Miranda Mortimer  
Margie O'Neil  
Ginny Osborn  
Catherine Palmer  
Stephanie Rhodes  
Catherine Rigby  
Ros Robertson  
Jane Selley  
Maggie Slater  
Yvonne Spencer  
Susan Taylor  
Muriel Thatcher  
Jane Walters  
Moira Webber  
Felicity Wilkin

## **TENORS**

Peter Elliott  
Richard Hardingham  
Sharon Harrison  
John Holt

David Miller  
Janet Noble  
Stephen Pollard  
Olivia Seaman  
Alan Spencer  
Martin Swindlehurst  
Nick Vaisey  
Richard Walmsley

## **BASSES**

Brian Akery  
Martin Camus-Smith  
Gerald Chew  
Patrick Connelly  
Mike Dowden  
Roy Dunstall  
Robert Fenn  
Gavin Grant  
Glen Goodall  
Chris Gutteridge  
Graham Hall  
David Ham  
Nicholas Humphrey  
Keith Ives  
John Kemp  
David Lyall  
Adrian Rhodes  
Eric Scott  
Michael Selway  
John T Spary  
Clive M Steward  
Martin Williams

## **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](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)

# **Forthcoming Events in and around Tunbridge Wells**

## **Tonbridge Music Club**

**Saturday 4th May at 6.15 pm  
in Big School, Tonbridge School**

**Tasmin Little (violin) & Andrey Gugnin (piano)  
with pre-concert talk**

**Johannes Brahms: *Sonatensatz*  
Sergei Prokofiev: *Sonata in D major*  
Ralph Vaughan Williams: *The Lark Ascending*  
Richard Strauss: *Sonata*  
Karol Szymanowski: *Notturmo e Tarantelle*  
for details and tickets see [www.tmc.org.uk](http://www.tmc.org.uk)**

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## **Mendelssohn's Elijah**

**Sunday 5th May at 7.30 pm  
in St Dunstan's Church, Mayfield**

**Mayfield Festival Choir with the Ripieno Players and  
soloists from the London Conservatoires,  
conducted by Jeremy Summerly**

**Tickets: online at [www.mayfieldfestivalchoir.org](http://www.mayfieldfestivalchoir.org)  
or from Lambert and Foster, tel 0333 666 3366**

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## **Orchestral Concert**

**Saturday, 18 May 2019, at 7:30 pm  
in St Peter & St Paul Church, Tonbridge**

**Rimsky-Korsakov – *Symphonic Poem Sadko*  
Prokofiev – *Violin Concerto No 1*  
Tchaikovsky – *Symphony No 5***

**details and on-line tickets through [www.tonphil.org.uk](http://www.tonphil.org.uk)**

## 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 £100 and £200, whilst those contributing over £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: 273310) and donations can be treated as "gift aid".

### Orpheus at Trinity concert 11 May 2019

Orpheus Male Voice Choir and students from Bennett Memorial School at Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells at 7.30pm.

Great music of all types.

Tickets £15 and £12 from Trinity Theatre, 01892 678678.



Orpheus at the BBC Studios

# CONCERT CALENDAR 2019/2020



**Howard Shelley**

**29 September 2019 3.00pm**

**Howard Shelley** Piano  
**Roderick Dunk** Conductor

**Dvořák:** Slavonic Dances Op46 (1,2&8)  
**Rachmaninov:** Piano Concerto No 2  
**Shostakovich:** Symphony No 1



**Amy Harman**

**3 November 2019 3.00pm**

**Amy Harman** Bassoon  
**Barry Wordsworth** Conductor

**Tchaikovsky:** Swan Lake Suite  
**Weber:** Bassoon Concerto  
**Schumann:** Symphony No 3 (Rhenish)



**Opera Gala**

**2 February 2020 3.00pm**

**Susanna Gaspar** Soprano  
**Cátia Merso** Mezzo  
**Jung Soo Yun** Tenor  
**Richard Morrison** Baritone  
**Roderick Dunk** Conductor



**Martin James Bartlett**

**1 March 2020 3.00pm**

**Martin James Bartlett** Piano  
**Roderick Dunk** Conductor

**Copland:** Appalachian Spring Suite  
**Ravel:** G Major Piano Concerto  
**Brahms:** Symphony No 4



**Thomas Gould**

**5 April 2020 3.00pm**

**Thomas Gould** Violin  
**Barry Wordsworth** Conductor

**Bizet:** Jeux d'enfants  
**Barber:** Violin Concerto  
**Massenet:** Méditation (from Thaïs)  
**Beethoven:** Symphony No 6 (Pastoral)



**Mozart & Bruckner**

**3 May 2020 3.00pm**

**Roderick Dunk** Conductor

**Mozart:** Symphony No 40  
**Bruckner:** Symphony No 7

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

For Season tickets contact

Gale Smith, RTWSO, 7 Beech Hurst, Pembury, Kent TN2 4DU.

Tel 01892 826196 or Email: [tickets@rtwso.org](mailto:tickets@rtwso.org)

[www.rtwso.org](http://www.rtwso.org)

**ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS  
Symphony Orchestra**

The RTWSO is a registered charity No. 295781



# Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

presents



## MUSIC from the SHOWS

Including songs from

Les Miserables, West Side Story, My Fair Lady and  
Guys & Dolls

and featuring music by

Andrew Lloyd-Webber and Rogers & Hammerstein

**Sunday 30th June 2019 at 6:30**

Tunbridge Wells United Reformed Church  
1, Mount Ephraim, TN4 8AE

For more details and tickets please visit  
[www.rtwcs.org.uk](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)

Royal Tunbridge Wells  
**CHORAL  
SOCIETY**  
[WWW.RTWCS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.RTWCS.ORG.UK)

(RTWCS is a Registered Charity number 275311)