



Orpheus Singers



THE GRAND ROMANTICS Programme

£1

Saturday 6th May 2017 at 7.30pm
St Catherine's Church, Ventnor PO38 1SW



Orpheus Singers

We're 25!

Our 2017-18 season marks our silver jubilee. The first Orpheus Singers concert was given on 28th November 1992 with just 14 choir members – some of whom are still singing with us today.

We will be celebrating this milestone with a special Anniversary Season, starting with our Advent Concert on 25th November in which we plan to include some music performed at that first concert. The Season will culminate with a grand celebration concert in summer 2018.

To keep in touch with this exciting programme join our mailing list - or better, become a Friend of Orpheus and celebrate with discounted tickets and advance booking.

Visit our website for more details:

www.orpheussingers.org.uk



Orpheus Singers

THE GRAND ROMANTICS

Bruckner – Os justi and Ave Maria

Schubert – Psalm 23

Mendelssohn – Der Jäger Abschied

arr. Brahms – Gaudeamus Igitur

Brahms – Geistliches Lied

Mendelssohn – Ave Maria and Hear my Prayer

INTERVAL

Brahms – Liebeslieder Walzer

Rheinberger – Abendlied

Michèle Brock and Meryll Spong - piano duet

Philip Fryer - conductor

Anton Bruckner (1824 – 1896) Os justi

The Austrian composer Anton Bruckner composed this setting of Psalm 37 in July 1879, in honour of the Feast of St. Augustine, celebrated on 28 August. Bruckner was a devout Roman Catholic and the motet *Os Justi* was first performed in a monastery near Linz, where he grew up. It is a polyphonic setting, written strictly in the Lydian mode, in which the scale begins on the note F, but with no accidentals. The closing bars are a unison plainsong setting of **Alleluia**.

*The just man in his heart shall see wisdom from the Lord,
His tongue will ever speak judgement and righteousness.*

*God's statutes rule in his heart as a just law: his footsteps shall not falter,
Sure is his way. Alleluia.*

Ave Maria

This is a 7-part setting of The Angelic Salutation '**Hail, Virgin Mary**' which Bruckner composed in 1861, whilst organist at Linz. The motet begins simply enough, first with hushed female voices in three parts, followed by the male voices in four parts. Then comes a powerful climax for the full choir on the words **Sancta Maria, mater Dei**.

*Hail, Virgin Mary, most highly favoured: God's grace is with thee:
Thou art greatly bless'd, above all womankind,*

And blest is he whom in thy womb thou bearest, Jesus.

*O holy Mary, God's pure mother, pray for us sinners,
now and when earthly life is ended. Amen.*

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828) Gott ist mein Hirt (Psalm 23) D706

In December 1820 Schubert set this beautiful German version of 'The Lord is my Shepherd' for four sisters to sing at a soirée in Vienna (SSAA). Moses Mendelssohn (grandfather of Felix) had translated the text of the well-known psalm. The piano takes a prominent role throughout, playing a pulsating triplet figure. This delicate, ethereal music has been described as the 'music of angels'.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847) Der Jäger Abschied op.50/2

This is a four-part male voice setting (TTBB), of the Hunters' Farewell to the Forest. (**Lebe wohl, du schöner Wald**). The text is taken from verses by Joseph von Eichendorff. As befits anything to do with hunting and forests, the original accompaniment was for horns and trombone.

Gaudeamus Igitur 'So let us rejoice' arr. Brahms

Another setting for TTBB of a light-hearted student song, often sung at graduation ceremonies. The text may have originated in a Latin manuscript from 1287. Humorous, ironic, often parodied, and not unconnected with the consumption of alcohol! Brahms made this arrangement, and first used it as the final climax to his Academic Festival Overture in 1880.

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897) Geistliches Lied op.30

Written in 1856 for voices and organ, this **Sacred Song** is Brahms' earliest accompanied choral work. It is a very clever and accomplished 4-part double canon, conceived as an exercise in counterpoint. The tenors follow the sopranos in one thread, whilst the basses follow the altos in another. The mood is serene and lyrical, giving a foretaste of the music in his later Requiem (1867). The text is by Paul Fleming (1609 – 1640).

Let no sad thoughts oppress thee, distress thee

Fear nothing, trust God's own will, and be thou still, my spirit. (etc)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847) Ave Maria op.23/2 and Hear my Prayer

Set for 8-part choir with keyboard accompaniment and published in 1830, this version of Ave Maria opens with a lilting tenor solo, interspersed with passages for the full choir. Later, **con moto**, the male voices take the lead with **Sancta Maria, mater Dei**, whilst the sopranos and altos have a pleading refrain on **Ora pro nobis**. Eventually the first theme returns, increasing in intensity with the words **benedicta tu in mulieribus**. A hushed Ave brings the piece to a close.

Solo tenor – Mitch Jones

Hear my Prayer, written in 1844, is probably the best known of Mendelssohn's smaller choral works. It is a setting of a version of Psalm 55 for soprano solo and chorus and is in two parts. The first, mainly for the solo voice, is a kind of extended **recitative**, whilst the second, **O for the Wings of a Dove**, is the **aria**. The choral repetitions in the first section are used to emphasise the text, and later become the background to the well-loved conclusion.

Solo soprano – Kelly Wavell

INTERVAL

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897) Liebeslieder Walzer op.52

We shall now hear a set of 18 Love Song Waltzes in the style of the **Ländler**. This is Brahms in a much more light-hearted mood than many of us are accustomed to hearing, influenced by Schubert's **German Dances**, which he had recently been editing. They were completed in 1869 in Vienna, with Brahms and his beloved Clara Schumann giving the first performance. The score describes the work as for 'Piano 4 hands and voices ad libitum'. The lyrics are taken from G.F. Daumer's **Polydora** collection of folk songs and love poems (not the greatest poetry, it has to be said). However, Brahms makes the most of them, creating a delicious sequence of songs which explore every facet of love. There is passion, melancholy, devotion and simple story-telling, all of which have an immediate appeal. The piano duet accompaniment adds an irresistible lyricism to the music; its pervasive waltz rhythms may even get us dancing in the aisles!

Solo soprano – Kathy Howells

Josef Rheinberger (1839 – 1901) Abendlied op.69/3

A contemporary of Brahms, Rheinberger was an organist and composer who lived and worked for most of his life in Munich. This **Evening Song** is set for seven-part unaccompanied choir, and brings our concert this evening to a fitting close.

Bide with us, for evening shadows darken and the day will soon be over.

Lord, bide with us.

Liebeslieder Walzer Translation by Emily Ezust

1. Rede, Mädchen

*Speak, maiden, whom I love all too much,
who hurled into my once aloof heart,
with only one glance,
these wild, ardent feelings!*

*Will you not soften your heart?
Do you wish to be chaste
and remain without sweet bliss,
or do you want me to come to you?*

*To remain without sweet bliss -
I would never make such a bitter penance.
So come, dark-eyes,
come when the stars greet you.*

2. Am Gesteine rauscht

*Against the stones the stream rushes,
powerfully driven:
those who do not know to sigh there,
will learn it when they fall in love.*

3. O die Frauen!

*O women, O women,
how they melt one with bliss!
I would have become a monk long ago
if it were not for women!*

4. Wie des Abends schöne Röte

*Like the evening's lovely red,
would I, a poor maiden, like to glow,
to please one, one boy -
and to then radiate bliss forever.*

5. Die grüne Hopfenranke

*The green hops vine,
it winds along the ground.
The young, fair maiden -
so mournful are her thoughts!*

*You - listen, green vine!
Why do you not raise yourself
heavenwards?*

*You - listen, fair maiden!
Why is your heart so heavy?*

*How can the vine raise itself
when no support lends it strength?
How can the maiden be merry
when her sweetheart is far away?*

6. Ein kleiner, hübscher Vogel

*A small, pretty bird took flight
into the garden -
there was fruit enough there.
If I were a pretty, small bird,
I would not hesitate -
I would do just as he did.*

*Malicious lime-twigs
lurked in that place;
the poor bird could not escape.
If I were a pretty, small bird,
I would have hesitated,
I would not have done that.*

*The bird came
into a pretty girl's hand,
and it caused him no pain,
the lucky thing.
If I were a pretty, small bird,
I would not hesitate -
I would do just as he did.*

7. Wohl schön bewandt war es

*Quite fair and contented
was I previously with my life
and with my sweetheart;
through a wall, yes, through ten walls,
did my friend's gaze recognize me;
But now, oh woe,
if I am with that cold boy,
no matter how close
I stand before his eyes,
neither his eyes nor his heart notices.*

8. Wenn so lind dein Auge mir

*When your eyes look at me
so gently and lovingly,
you chase away every last anxiety
that troubles my life.*

*The lovely glow of this love -
do not let it disappear!
No one else will ever love you
as faithfully as I.*

9. Am Donaustrande

*On the banks of the Danube
there stands a house,
and looking out of it
is a rosy-cheeked maiden.*

*The maiden is very well-protected:
ten iron bolts
have been placed on the door.*

*But ten iron bolts are but a joke;
I will snap them
as if they were only glass.*

10. O wie sanft die Quelle

*O how gently the stream
winds through the meadow!
O how lovely it is
when Love finds Love!*

11. Nein, es ist nicht auszukommen

*No, there's just no getting along with
people;
they always make such poisonous
interpretations of everything.
If I'm merry, they say I cherish loose urges;
if I'm quiet, they say I am crazed with love.*

12. Schlosser auf, und mache Schlösser

*Locksmith - get up and make your locks,
locks without number;
for I want to lock up all the evil mouths.*

13. Vögelein durchrauscht die Luft

*The little bird rushes through the air,
searching for a branch;
and my heart desires a heart, a heart
on which it can blessedly rest.*

14. Sieh, wie ist die Welle klar

*See how clear the waves are
when the moon gazes down!
You who are my love, you love me back!*

15. Nachtigall, sie singt so schön

*The nightingale, it sings so beautifully
when the stars are twinkling.
Love me, my beloved heart,
kiss me in the dark!*

16. Ein dunkeler Schacht ist Liebe

*Love is a dark shaft, a dangerous well;
and I, poor man, fell in.
I can neither hear nor see,
I can only think about my bliss,
I can only moan in my woe.*

17. Nicht wandle, mein Licht

*Do not wander, my light, out there
in the field!
Your feet, your tender feet, would get
too wet, too soft.
All flooded are the paths there, and the
bridges, so amply there did my eyes weep.*

18. Es bebet das Gesträuche

*The bushes are trembling;
they were brushed by a little bird in flight.
In the same way, my soul trembles,
overcome by love, pleasure and sorrow,
as it thinks of you.*

MICHÈLE BROCK

Accompanist

At the age of 11, Michèle was awarded a Junior Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music, where she studied for 7 years, followed by 3 years at Trinity College London, studying with the Hungarian pianist Joseph Weingarten.

She completed her studies at London University, Institute of Education, and has worked as a music teacher for many years, then Advisory music teacher for the Isle of Wight for 11 years.

Now in semi-retirement, Michèle is a piano teacher, accompanist and conductor of 2 choirs.

MERRYL SPONG

Accompanist

Merryl started learning piano at the age of 7 and then the flute when she was 11.

Although she decided not to pursue a musical career she has enjoyed a lifetime of playing, mainly as an accompanist for dancers, singers, instrumentalists, amateur musical theatre and opera groups.



Orpheus Singers

Sopranos

Karen Cave, Judy Cleeve, Kathy Howells, Judith Hunt, Margaret Jackson, Janet Jones, Frances Porter, Natascha Skeet, Liz Wason, Kelly Wavell, Frances Yunnie

Altos

Kath Ash, Shirley Brown, Olga Budden, Deborah Coeshott, June Cox, Jo Hardy-Bishop, Lizzie Hutchinson, Marilyn Lansley, Toni Rogers

Tenors

Graeme Burnett, Peter Hyde, Mitch Jones, Harald Schenk, Richard Wilkins, Alan Wiles

Basses

Norman Cave, Andy Chilton, Gordon Ellis, Sandy Hunt, John Matthews, John Miles, Toby Wallis

PHILIP FRYER

Conductor

Philip started his musical education on the violin, and changed to voice in the late '60s. Encouraged by John Aldis and John Whitworth, he took lessons with Suzanne Green and sang with The Taverner Consort, the Westminster Singers and Gothic Voices.



He was invited as a founder member of the Choir of the Academy of St Martin in the fields. With them, he enjoyed over 20 foreign tours, singing in Hong Kong, Carnegie Hall, the Philharmonie, Berlin and the Lincoln Centre under Sir Neville Marriner.

Latterly, Philip studied with Anthony Rolfe Johnson. He has sung with the Temple Church Choir, the Choir of St George's Chapel, Windsor, and has sung solos for Andrew Parrott, Sir David Willcocks, and Sir John Eliot Gardiner. He has toured Holland, Belgium and Turkey with Paco Peña, and with him recorded Missa Flamenca.

Orpheus Singers would like to thank the Friends of Orpheus
for their invaluable support:

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Mr & Mrs Alan Burnett	Mrs R Matthews	Mrs P Wallace
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Miss Pam Dana	Mr & Mrs S M J Peskett	Mr J W Yunnie
Mr & Mrs D Edwards	Miss B A Philpott	
Mrs Sally Fairall	Miss M Pinfold	<i>And others who wish to remain anonymous</i>
Mr Sandy Hunt	Miss Olive Rashid	
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To find out more about the Friends of Orpheus visit
www.orpheussingers.org.uk/friends-of-orpheus

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Orpheus Singers

Saturday 25th November 2017, 7.30pm
St. Mary's Church, Brighstone PO30 4QH

Music for Advent

Including:

Britten A Ceremony of Carols

Charpentier Messe de minuit pour Noël

Saturday 3rd March 2018, 7.30pm
St Catherine's Church, Ventnor PO38 1SW

Spring Concert 2018

Saturday 9th June 2018, 7.30pm
Christ Church, Totland PO39 0ES

Summer Concert 2018

Sunday 14th May, 7.30pm
Quay Arts, Newport

Flute and Piano Recital

Siobhan Cosgrove - Flute, Richard Wilkins – Piano

Music by Bach, Poulenc, Rutter and Debussy

Saturday June 17th, 7.30pm
All Saints Church Gurnard

Tritone Singers

Summer Concert

Saturday 13th May, 7.00pm
St. John the Baptist Church, Ryde PO33 1BP

Ryde Chorus

Haydn: The Seasons



Orpheus Singers

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