

The
ELYSIANS@30

PSALMFEST
2016





Psalmfest 2016

The Elysian Singers have been singing for 30 years, and are celebrating with a whole year of song! Through ten concerts we will showcase the enormous variety of styles, periods and genres that we love to perform: and to link the whole programme together, have undertaken to include at least one setting from each of the 150 Psalms. After all, the Psalms are the single most comprehensive source of sung poetry in existence, and one which has been drawn on by almost every composer of the last 500 years. From Russia to America, and from Estonia to Italy; in languages from Hebrew to Hungarian and from Finnish to French; by composers from Byrd to Bernstein, and from Monteverdi to MacMillan; and from unaccompanied miniatures to symphonic masterworks: here is music to uplift, challenge, inspire and celebrate!



English Contemporary Psalm Settings

Saturday 13 February

7.30pm

St Peter's

Eaton Square

Glories of Early English Music

Sunday 22 May

6.30pm

St Lawrence

West Wycombe



Masters of the Baroque

Saturday 16 July

7.30pm

St James

Piccadilly



Music for Holy Week

Monday 21 March

7.30pm

St Paul's

Covent Garden

From Lasso to MacMillan

Saturday 18 June

7.30pm

Kelvinside Hillhead Church

Glasgow



Choral Masterpieces of Germany & Austria

Sunday 25 September

3.00 pm TBC

Moot Hall, Colchester Town Hall
Colchester

ROMAN
RIVER
MUSIC

Messiah

Sunday 4 December

6.00 pm

St Peter's Church
Petersham

From East to West

Saturday 15 October

7.30pm

St James
Piccadilly

The Atlantic Connection

Saturday 26 November

7.30pm

St Paul's
Knightsbridge

Symphonies of Psalms

Saturday 28 January 2017

7.30pm

St John's
Smith Square





English Contemporary Psalm Settings

St Peter's, 199 Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AL

13 February 2016, 7.30pm

We kick off with an array of English Contemporary Psalm Settings, honouring the choir's commitment to music by living composers; from Joseph Horovitz (now 90) to the choir's own Dan Rollison (still only 28!). The choir has a particular connection to the two biggest works: Malcolm Singer's 'Songs of Ascent' was written for the Elysian Singers in 1994, and the choir gave the London premiere of Tarik O'Regan's 'Dorchester Canticles' in 2005. Alongside such names as Nicola LeFanu and Howard Goodall are the younger generation, such as Thomas Hewitt Jones and Mark Fleming. Where better to start than a setting of Psalm No.1 by Cheryl Frances-Hoad!

Tickets: £15 and £10 concessions

www.wegotickets.com



Music for Holy Week

**St Paul's Covent Garden, Bedford Street,
London, WC2E 9ED**

21 March 2016, 7.30pm

Five centuries of penitential psalm settings from all around Europe: from France to Estonia, from Italy to Denmark. Mini-masterpieces by Mendelssohn ('Hear my Prayer') and Arvo Pärt ('An den Wassern zu Babel') rub shoulders with English choral favourites by Purcell and Howells. And a few surprises such as music by an 17th century Italian nun, Margarita Cozzolani, and Lichtenstein's most famous composer, Josef Rheinberger.

Tickets: £15 and £10 concessions

www.wegotickets.com



Glories of Early English Music

Wycombe Arts Festival

St Lawrence, West Wycombe

22 May 2016, 6.30pm



William Byrd (born c.1540) and Henry Purcell (born 1659) are arguably the two greatest English composers before 1900: and we celebrate their contributions to the choral repertoire in a selection of their psalm settings, including Purcell's 'Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes' and Byrd's 'Domine, quis habitat'. Added to the mix is music by other 16th-century English composers, including examples of Tallis' famous tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter.

Go to www.wycombeartsfestival.org for information about ticket prices



From Lassus to Macmillan

West End Festival

**Kelvinside Hillhead Church,
Saltoun Street, Glasgow G12 9AR
18 June 2016, 7.30pm**



The music in this concert of psalm settings falls broadly into two parts. On the one hand, we present music by non-English composers of the British Isles, headed by the choir's new patron Sir James MacMillan, and including C.V. Stanford and John Joubert. On the other, we celebrate 400 years of European sacred music from the early mastery of Lassus, Gesualdo and Gabrieli to the utterly individual Francis Poulenc.

Go to www.westendfestival.co.uk for information about ticket prices



Masters of the Baroque

St James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

16 July 2016, 7.30pm

Sacred music in the Baroque period was performed on a grand scale, and we present superb examples of the art from England, Germany, France and Italy. We begin in Versailles, where Dumont and his more famous successor Lully composed 'Grands Motets' for the French court in the 17th century. We move on to Handel's anthems for Royal and princely occasions in England, and Vivaldi's Venetian Vespers, before returning to Paris where Telemann made his only visit from Germany in 1737 and composed his own 'Grand Motet'.

Tickets: £15 and £10 concessions

www.wegotickets.com



Choral Masterpieces of Germany and Austria

Roman River Festival

**Moot Hall, Colchester Town Hall,
High Street, Colchester CO1 1PJ**

25 September 2016, 3.00pm TBC

ROMAN
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MUSIC

From the 17th-century Schütz to the 19th-century Bruckner, the German-speaking lands produced some of the most impressive and enduring psalm settings in the repertoire: including such well-known pieces as Mozart's 'Laudate Dominum' but also some rarities such as a Hebrew setting by Schubert. The crowning glory is Bach's motet 'Singet dem Herrn' but he is well supported by fellow Leipzigers Heinrich Schein and Felix Mendelssohn.

Go to romanrivermusic.org.uk for information about ticket prices



From East to West

St James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

15 October 2016, 7.30pm

We spread our wings to encompass Orthodox, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish psalm settings, on a journey from Finland to Spain, via Lithuania, Russia, Hungary, Italy and France. Highlights include movements from the 'All-Night Vigil' by Rachmaninoff and Rautavaara, Monteverdi's 'Beatus Vir' and the unique Hebrew settings by his colleague Salomone Rossi. And we are proud to give the first performances of the winning entries from our Composition Competition.

Tickets: £15 and £10 concessions

www.wegotickets.com



The Atlantic Connection

**St Paul's Knightsbridge, 32a Wilton Place,
London SW1X 8SH**

26 November 2016, 7.30pm

We begin with some wonderful 17th- and 18th-century English settings by William Lawes, Maurice Greene and William Boyce, before listening to the tradition of metrical psalms cross the water to America. Music by Charles Ives, Ned Rorem and Eli Tamar represent the more sophisticated American repertoire, before we return to two English masterpieces by Samuel Wesley ('In exitu Israel') and Jonathan Harvey ('I love the Lord').

Tickets: £15 and £10 concessions
www.wegotickets.com



Messiah: excerpts

St Peter's, Church Lane, Petersham TW10 7AB

4 December 2016, 6.00pm

Handel's great oratorio needs no introduction, save to mention that sets no fewer than six psalms!

Go to www.achurchnearyou.com/petersham-st-peter/ for further details



Symphonies of Psalms

St John's, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HA

28 January 2017, 7.30pm

Our journey concludes with the greatest of the 20th-century settings of the Psalms. Elgar's two complete psalms 'Give unto the Lord' and 'Great is the Lord' are rarely heard in their full orchestral setting, and are well supported by rarities by Vaughan Williams and Holst. No Psalmfest would be complete without Bernstein's ever-popular 'Chichester Psalms': and what better way to end than with Stravinsky's masterpiece, 'Symphony of Psalms' and its deceptively ecstatic setting of Psalm 150.

Go to www.sjss.org.uk for information about ticket prices



The Elysian Singers of London

The Elysian Singers of London is one of the UK's leading chamber choirs. Known for its adventurous programming, the choir performs in and around London and has recorded many widely acclaimed CDs. The Elysians pride themselves on combining high performance standards with a friendly atmosphere.

Founded in 1986 by Matthew Greenall, the group quickly developed an interest in contemporary music, giving world premières by a number of composers including John Tavener who, from 2002 until his recent death, was the choir's Patron. Matthew was succeeded as music director by Sam Laughton in 2000.

Recent world premières include a performance of Sir John Tavener's Monument to Beethoven at the Royal Festival Hall (2014), John Habron's Salve Regina (2008), and Exile Lamentations (2009) a commission by Paul Stanhope. The choir regularly performs at venues such as St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. John's Smith Square, and participates in festivals across the country. In January 2012 the choir sang in the Royal Festival Hall foyer as part of the Southbank's Festival of Death.

In 2004 the Elysians released a CD of music by James MacMillan, 'Cantos Sagrados', which received 5-stars from BBC Music Magazine. TV and radio highlights include the first broadcast performances of Henryk Górecki's Miserere and Three Lullabies on Radio 3, appearances with Lesley Garrett, and the finals of the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition. The choir performed live on Radio 3's 'In Tune' in 2011, introducing the première of their latest commission, 'Timepieces' by Ian Stephens, and their CD, 'The Spirit of Christmas Present'.

The choir's latest CD 'Timepieces' was released in 2014 and presents works that the choir has commissioned or premièred. In 2015 the upper voices of the choir made their debut performance at the BBC Proms, providing the offstage chorus for Holst's The Planets with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. We are delighted that Sir James MacMillan has recently agreed to become the choir's patron.





Sam Laughton

Musical Director

A former organ scholar at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where he read music, Sam now juggles dual careers as a barrister and musician. He is also the Director of the Craswall Players, the Chiltern Camerata, and the Speen Festival. He is in demand as a guest conductor, working with such orchestras as the Oxford Sinfonia, Kensington Chamber Orchestra, Kew Sinfonia, Orchestra of the City, Crendon Chamber Orchestra and Trinity Camerata. As a keyboard player he has also worked with the groups as varied as Oxford Philomusica, the Joyful Company of Singers, English National Opera and Garsington Opera.



Composition Prize 2016

Composers are invited to submit music for unaccompanied choir and may set some or all of the words of one of the following psalms: 53, 56, 83.

The jury panel to select the three winners will comprise:

- The choir's patron, composer **Sir James MacMillan CBE**.
- Baritone and composer, **Roderick Williams**.
- Our musical director, **Sam Laughton**.
- Novello & Co Ltd representative, **Dan Rollison**.

The prizes include:

- your works being performed in London by the Elysian Singers at our concert on 15 October at St James Piccadilly
- cash prizes of £250, £150, and £50
- the possibility of being published, by

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The deadline for submissions is 29 February 2016 and details and rules are available on our website.



For more information and full programme listings, please visit our website.

www.elysiansingers.com



The Elysian Singers



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Registered Charity 1095739.
Patron: Sir James MacMillan.

