



Patron: Sir James MacMillan

**The Elysian Singers
with
The Elysian Festival Orchestra
(Leader: Corinna Ferguson)**

Director: Sam Laughton

Symphonies of Psalms

St John's, Smith Square

7.30pm, Saturday 28 January 2017

THE ELYSIAN SINGERS PSALMFEST

The Elysian Singers have been singing for 30 years, and have been celebrating with a whole year of song. Through ten concerts we have showcased the enormous variety of styles, periods and genres that we love to perform: and to link the whole programme together, have included 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 unaccompanied miniatures to symphonic masterworks: we have sung music to uplift, challenge, inspire and celebrate!

Our journey concludes with some of the greatest of the 20th-century settings of the Psalms, together with two miniatures by Bruckner and Judith Weir. 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 from Vaughan Williams and Holst. No Psalmfest would be complete without Bernstein's ever-popular *Chichester Psalms*: and what better way to end the entire series than with Stravinsky's masterpiece, *Symphony of Psalms* and its limpidly ecstatic setting of Psalm 150.

O, Clap Your Hands Psalm 47

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Composed in 1920, this ceremonial motet combines Vaughan Williams' love of modal harmony with a tight construction owing something to the style of the composer's teacher, Charles Villiers Stanford. Michael Kennedy has commented how apt it is to its purpose of 'filling a great cathedral with joyous sounds'.

O, clap your hands, all ye people;
shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
For the Lord most high is terrible;
He is a great King over all the earth.
God is gone up with a shout,
the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.
Sing praises to God; sing praises.
Sing praises to our King; sing praises.
For God is the King of all the earth.
Sing ye praises, everyone that hath understanding.
God reigneth over the heathen.
God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.
Sing praises unto our King. Sing praises.

Give Unto The Lord
Psalm 29

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Elgar was a self-taught Roman Catholic son of a provincial piano tuner, who aspired to join the 'gentry' class into which Vaughan Williams was born. And despite his deep lifelong personal insecurities, by 1914 he had certainly attained the rank of England's leading composer, with all the outward honours that went with it. This magnificent anthem was commissioned for the 200th Festival of the Sons of the Clergy and first performed in St Paul's Cathedral on 30 April 1914.

Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,
give unto the Lord glory and strength.
Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name;
worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
The voice of the Lord is upon the waters:
the God of glory thundereth,
it is the Lord that ruleth the sea;
The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation;
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty;
the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars.
Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
Yea, the voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire,
yea, the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,
and strippeth the forests bare.

In His temple doth every one speak of His glory.
The Lord sitteth above the water-flood;
and the Lord remaineth a King for ever.
The Lord shall give strength unto His people;
the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.

Offertorium
Psalm 44 vv. 15-16

Anton Bruckner
(1824-1896)

Bruckner had a profound faith in the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. His motets span nearly the whole of his mature compositional career and reflect the melding of a polyphonic technique, derived from the Renaissance masters, with his own chromaticism. This miniature motet was composed in 1861.

Afferentur regi virgines post eam: proximae ejus
afferentur tibi in laetitia et exultatione:
adducentur in templum regi Domino.

*After her shall virgins be brought to the
King: her neighbours shall be brought to
Thee with gladness and joy: they shall
enter the King's palace.*

Psalm 148

vv. 1-14

Judith Weir
(b. 1954)

Solo trombone: Huw Evans

This exhilarating setting, unusually scored for choir and solo trombone, was commissioned to celebrate the 800th Anniversary of the University of Cambridge, and first performed on St Cecilia's Day 2009 by the Choir of Gonville & Caius College. Judith Weir has since been appointed Master of the Queen's Music, following in the footsteps of Elgar.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise Him in the heights.
Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.
Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.
Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.
Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created.
He hath also established them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.
Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps:
Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word:
Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:
Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:
Kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth:
Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children:
Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.
He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his saints; even of the children of Israel, a people near unto him. Praise ye the Lord.

Chichester Psalms

Leonard Bernstein
(1918-1990)

1st movement: Psalm 108 vv. 2, Psalm 100 entire

2nd movement: Psalm 23 entire, Psalm 2 vv. 1-4

3rd movement: Psalm 131 entire, Psalm 133 vv. 1

Solo (2nd movement): Lois Gallagher

Solo Quartet: Jessica Buchanan-Barrow, Ruth Ilton, Nick Richmond-Smith, Ben Driver

"I have a deep suspicion that every work I write, for whatever medium, is really theater music in some way ..." (Bernstein)

Chichester Cathedral has a great musical tradition, going back to its famed organist-composer of the early 17th century Thomas Weelkes. Every summer 1960, the cathedral has joined forces with its neighbours, Winchester and Salisbury to produce the Southern Cathedrals Festival. The Chichester Psalms were commissioned for the 1965 Festival, and dedicated to the Dean, Walter Hussey, that great patron of the arts who had previously commissioned Britten's Rejoice in the

Lamb and Finzi's Lo, The Full Final Sacrifice.

David Dickau has traced several indelible influences on Bernstein's music, all of which are evident in this splendid work: theatre music, jazz and the music of his friend Aaron Copland, a search for philosophical meaning, and of course most pertinently the composer's Jewish heritage. (Bernstein described his father as a "somewhat puritanical, Mosaic-oriented Talmudic scholar".) In fact much of the music of the Chichester Psalms derives from unused material from musical theatre works, including West Side Story.

Bernstein later wrote about this crucial period of his compositional career:

"I spent about two months experimenting with various kinds of nontypical styles. But I threw it all away and wrote Chichester Psalms, which is about the most tonal and baby-simple piece I've ever written. No, I still think the hardest thing for a composer to do in our times is to write a tonal melodic line that doesn't sound stale. That is why I'm very proud of those Psalms. They contain utterly diatonic phrases which, at least to me, sound fresh and moving. That is a great accomplishment for me. I don't have to go and meddle in electronic or serial music in order to satisfy my longing for advancement and I don't think that is the way I can advance music."

I

Urah, hanevel, v'chinar!
A-irah shaḥar

Hari'u l'Adonai kol ha'arets.
Iv'du et Adonai b'simḥa
Bo'u l'fanav bir'nanah.
Du ki Adonai Hu Elohim.
Hu asanu v'lo anaḥnu.
Amo v'tson
mar'ito.
Bo'u sh'arav b'todah,
Ḥatseirotav bit'hilah,
Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo.
Ki tov Adonai, l'olam ḥas'do,
V'ad dor vador emunato.

II

Adonai ro-i, lo eḥsar.
Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini,
Al mei m'nuḥot y'nahaleini,
Naf'shi y'shovev,
Yan'ḥeini b'ma'aglei tsedek,
L'ma'an sh'mo.
Gam ki eilech
B'gei tsalmavet,
Lo ira ra,
Ki Atah imadi.

I

*Awake, psaltery and harp:
I will rouse the dawn!*

*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness.
Come before His presence with singing.
Know ye that the Lord, He is God.
He made us, and we are his.
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
Come unto His gates with thanksgiving,
And into His court with praise.
Be thankful unto Him and bless His name.
The Lord is good, His mercy everlasting
And His truth endureth to all generations.*

II

*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.*

Shiv't'cha umishan'techa
Hemah y'naḥamuni.

Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan
Neged tsor'rai
Dishanta vashemen roshi
Cosi r'vayaḥ.
Ach tov vaḥesed
Yird'funi kol y'mei ḥayai
V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai
L'orech yamim.

Lamah rag'shu goyim
Ul'umim yeh'gu rik?
Yit'yats'vu malchei erets,
V'roznim nos'du yaḥad
Al Adonai v'al m'shiḥo.
N'natkah et mos'roteimo,
V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo.
Yoshev bashamayim
Yis'ḥak, Adonai
Yil'ag lamo!

III

Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai,
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimenu.
Im lo shiviti
V'domam'ti,
Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,
Kagamul alai naf'shi.
Yahel Yis'rael el Adonai
Me'atah v'ad olam.

Hineh mah tov,
Umah na'im,
Shevet aḥim
Gam yaḥad.

*Thy rod and thy staff
They comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me
In the presence of my enemies,
Thou anointest my head with oil,
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
Shall follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever.*

*Why do the nations 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,
And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens
Shall laugh, and the Lord
Shall have them in derision!*

III

*Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty,
Neither do I exercise myself
In great matters or in things
Too wonderful for me to understand.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord
From henceforth and forever.*

*Behold how good,
And how pleasant it is,
For brethren to dwell
Together in unity.*

***** INTERVAL *****

Great Is The Lord

Psalm 48

vv. 1-13

Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Solo: Mike Chambers

Elgar spent much of 1910 composing his Violin Concerto for Fritz Kreisler. Shortly after completing its orchestration in August, he worked at this anthem setting of Psalm 48, and could not prevent its motives echoing those of the Concerto. He then put it aside and did not revive until the spring of 1912, and it was eventually performed (with organ only) in Westminster Abbey on 16 July 1912, at a service commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Royal Society. Elgar proceeded to orchestrate it in February 1913.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness;

beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge.

For, lo! the kings assembled themselves, they passed by together;

they saw, then were they amazed; they were dismayed, they hasted away;

trembling took hold of them there, pain, as of a woman in travail, as with the east wind that breaketh the ships of Tarshish.

As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.

We have thought on Thy loving-kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple:

as is thy name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth; Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

Let mount Zion be glad, because of Thy judgements, let the daughters of Judah rejoice;

walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.

For this God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide: even unto death.

Amen.

Psalm 86

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Solos: Sally de Frates, Stephen Cviic

Holst composed very little religious music as such, probably as a result of his somewhat ambivalent attitude towards the Church. As Julian Haylock points out, Holst found the spiritual aspect enormously appealing, but felt stifled by regimented orthodoxy. His Two Psalms were written in 1912 at a time when the composer's compositional style was undergoing a process of textural and structural refinement, leading towards his masterpiece The Planets of 1914-15. His setting of Psalm 86 is founded on a melody composed or adapted by Louis Bourgeois for the Genevan Psalter of 1543.

Choir:

To my humble supplication,
 Lord, give ear and acceptance;
 Save Thy servant, that hath none
 Help nor hope but Thee alone.

Send, O send relieving gladness
 To my soul opprest with sadness,
 Which, from clog of earth set free,
 Winged with zeal, flies up to Thee.

To Thee, rich in mercies' treasure,
 And in goodness without measure,
 Never failing help to those
 Who on Thy sure help repose.

Heavenly Tutor, of thy kindness,
 Teach my dullness, guide my blindness,
 That my steps Thy paths may tread
 Which to endless bliss do lead.

Soloists:

Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me; for I am
 poor, and needy.
 Preserve my soul, for I am holy: O thou my
 God, save thy servant that trusteth in Thee.

Be merciful unto me O Lord : for I cry unto
 Thee daily.
 Rejoice the soul of Thy servant: for unto thee,
 O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

For Thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive:
 and plenteous in mercy unto them that call
 upon thee.
 Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer: and attend
 to the voice of my supplication.

I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my
 heart: and I will glorify thy Name for
 evermore.

Symphony of Psalms

Part I: Psalm 39 vv. 12-13

Part II: Psalm 40 vv. 1-3

Part III: Psalm 150 entire

Igor Stravinsky
 (1882-1971)

"The more one separates oneself from the canons of the Christian Church, the further one distances oneself from the truth" (Stravinsky, 1930)

Stravinsky had been considering the idea of a psalm-symphony for some time when in 1930 he was commissioned by Serge Koussevitsky to provide a work for the 50th anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Idiosyncratically orchestrated (with a preponderance of wind instruments but no violins or violas), the Symphony of Psalms bears little relation to traditional symphonic form. Inscribed 'to the glory of GOD', Stravinsky insisted that the text should always be sung in Latin, as much for its effect as well as its religious associations. (In fact he had actually started composing the work to a text in Church Slavonic, the language of the Russian Orthodox Church.)

Stephen Walsh has described the Symphony of Psalms as "perhaps the most completely integrated of all Stravinsky's major works and the one which best defines his sense of the spiritual discipline ('habit') and personal effacement of creative work". It is indeed remarkable how a work which so directly articulates the composer's personal faith succeeds in being reconciled at the same time to his aesthetic theory, summarised in his comment that music merely 'expresses itself'.

In its selection of Psalms, the Symphony proceeds from prayer and desolation, through patience and release, to praise and transcendence. The first movement asks God to hear human supplication, and deploys, in Walsh's words "a litany of repetitions punctuated by silences or

breaks which appear to symbolise the ritualistic, 'frozen' character of the musical action". The second opens with a Bach-like instrumental fugue, followed first by a choral fugue and finally the two combined. But it is the long final movement (setting the final Psalm 150) which predominates the work: a slow, seraphic 'Alleluia' leads to an extended Allegro of thanksgiving, before the final praise of God "unfolds in a majestic coda over a hypnotically slow ostinato bass - one of the finest of all Stravinsky's 'apotheosis' endings, the act of praise fixed in music with timeless immobility" (Malcolm MacDonald).

I

Exaudi orationem meam, Domine, et deprecationem meam. Auribus percipe lacrimas meas. Ne sileas.
 Quoniam advena ego sum apud te et peregrinus, sicut omnes patres mei.
 Remitte mihi, ut refrigerer prius quam abeam et amplius non ero.

I

*Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with Thine ears consider my calling: hold not Thy peace at my tears.
 For I am a stranger with Thee: and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.
 O spare me a little that I may recover my strength: before I go hence and be no more.*

II

Expectans expectavi 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, videbunt et timebunt: et sperabunt in Domino.

II

*I waited patiently for the Lord: and He inclined unto me, and heard my calling.
 He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay.
 and set my feet upon the rock, and ordered my goings.
 And He hath put a new song in my mouth: even a thanksgiving unto our God.
 Many shall see it and fear: and shall put their trust in the Lord.*

III

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 timpano et choro,
 Laudate Eum in cordis et organo.
 Laudate Eum in cymbalis benesonantibus,
 Laudate Eum in cymbalis jubilationibus.
 Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.
 Alleluia.

III

*Alleluja.
 Praise God in His sanctuary:
 Praise Him in the firmament of His power.
 Praise Him for His mighty acts:
 Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.
 Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet:
 Praise Him with the timbrel and dance.
 Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.
 Praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals,
 Praise Him upon the loud cymbals.
 Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Alleluja.*

THE ELYSIAN SINGERS

SOPRANO

Jessica Buchanan-
Barrow
Penny Chalmers
Sophie Cleobury
Sally de Frates
Charlotte Dodson
Lois Gallagher
Harriet Gritton
Alice Hamilton*
Soo-Lin Lui
Clare Moriarty*
Liz Nash
Helly Summerly
Anne Taylor
Judith Watts

ALTO

Heather Devine
Jo Dew-Jones
Rosie Edge
Emily Gazzard
Ruth Ilton
Ella Jackson
Georgina Steele*
Lucy Swanson (Grey)
Beth Talbot (Evans)*
Anne Webster **

TENOR

Stephen Cviic
John Hayward
Martin Hurst
Nick Richmond-Smith
Chris Snow
Richard Warren
Tony Zacaroli

BASS

David Benedict
Mike Chambers
Andy Chan
Andrew Daws
Ben Driver
Jonathan Glasspool
Jeremy Hamilton*
Naveen Rajendran
Mike Smith
Alex Sturt* **
Christopher
Whitehouse

ADDITIONAL SINGERS FOR BERNSTEIN AND STRAVINSKY

SOPRANO

Sophie Ayre*
Helen Dickinson*
Sarah Lloyd-Jones
(Dixon)*
Alison Hall*
Hidemi Hatada*
Kate Laughton
Naomi McCarthy
Katie Metcalfe (Jack)*
Joanna Nolan
(Natrass)*
Katie Parker
Rosemary Pitt-
Watson (Thorner)*
Rowena Sudbury*
Henrietta Vercoe
(Cowling)*
Katharine von
Schubert **
Louisa Worssam*

ALTO

Henrietta Bewley*
Harriet Campbell*
Katie Carter*
Cathy Gough*
Emma Franklin
(Haines)*
Catherine Jenkins*
Julia King*
Geraldine Mynors*
Dasha Nicholls*
Eve Poole*
Carola Reul*
Nicky Rodley*
Lucy Swanson (Grey)
Mary Tregellas*

TENOR

Edward Appleton*
Dan Clark*
Ben Finn
James Hooper*
Stephen Jones **
Rob Sawdy

BASS

Nigel Edwards*
Philip Gowman*
Nigel Hall*
David Parker
John Tregellas*
Philip Williams* **
Julian Woodward

***ALUMNUS SINGER**
**** CHOIR &**
ORCHESTRA

THE ELYSIAN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN 1

Corinna Ferguson
Agnes Daniel
Eve Weatherill
Claire Hussey
Carenza Hugh-Jones
Sophie Park
Jane Onojafe
Rob Summers

VIOLIN 2

Ellen Gallagher
Stephen Lustig
Judith Webster
Sian Harrison
Anne Webster
Chris Yate
Philip Williams
John Sanderson

VIOLA

Adam Pearson
Emily Saunders
Leonora Lang
Berry Beaumont
Eleanor Pepler
Catherine Barlen
Lucy Singah
Joanna Livesey

CELLO

Alison Atkinson
Tim Nicholls
Robert Jacobs
Laura Taylor
Mark Galtrey
Matt Reynish

DOUBLE BASS

Dave Ayre
Philip Austin
Flossi Challands
Jess Price

FLUTE

Jemma Bogan
Barbara Young
Laura Sheldon
Katharine
von Schubert
Alex Sturt

OBOE

Elly Hardwick
Ben Simpson
Lorna Neill
Drake Gritton

COR ANGLAIS

Stephen Jones

CLARINET

Huw Robinson
Rebecca Millward

BASSOON

David Burles
Rosemary Moore
Andrew Roberts
Richard Sheldon

HORN

Keith Maries
Gina Fullerlove
Ray Lee
Shona Scott

TRUMPET

Rob Horrocks
Vicky Boyle
Giles Taylor
Colin Danskin
John Hackett

TROMBONE

Nick Young
Harry Brown

BASS TROMBONE

Alison Knight

TUBA

Malcolm Peach

TIMPANI

Chris King

PERCUSSION

Kim Sargeant
Hugh Loughton
Roger Griffin
Rob Summers
Cicely Balston
Ben Hamilton

PIANO

Julian Allwood
Mark Brafield

HARP

Gabriella Jones
Elin Samuel

ORGAN

Mark Brafield

(with grateful thanks to Anne Webster, orchestra fixer extraordinaire)

DIRECTOR: SAM LAUGHTON

A former organ scholar at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where he read music, **Sam Laughton** now juggles dual careers as a barrister and musician. He is musical director of The Elysian Singers, with whom he has made frequent appearances on radio and television, and made a number of acclaimed commercial recordings. He is also the Director of the Craswall Players, the Chiltern Camerata, and the Trinity Camerata. 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.

THE ELYSIAN SINGERS

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 and relaxed 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 Baroque, Romantic and 20th Century masterpieces 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 a 5-star rating from BBC Music Magazine. Reviewing 'Songs of the Isles', the choir's 2009 Bantock release, the same publication spoke of the Elysians' 'young, fresh-toned voices, brightly attentive to text'. 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 its latest commission, *Timepieces* by Ian Stephens, and their CD, 'The Spirit of Christmas Present', released on Meridian. The Elysian Singers' latest CD 'Timepieces' was released on Meridian in 2014 and presents works that the choir has commissioned or première. 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.

LEADER: CORINNA FERGUSON

Cory divides her time between working as a lawyer, playing the violin and being a mum. Having begun learning the violin by the Suzuki method, Cory later studied with Kathryn Hardman and Christopher Hiron. She was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and in 1997 led the National Youth Chamber Orchestra. Cory was an instrumental award-holder at Cambridge University and after graduating worked as a freelance violinist in Bristol for a time, including leading the Brandon Hill Chamber Orchestra, where she has recently returned as guest leader, and performing with local groups such as the Bristol Ensemble. She now lives in South East London and has led the Kensington Chamber Orchestra since 2010.

TROMBONE: HUW EVANS

Huw Evans is a London based trombonist currently studying towards his Master's degree at the Royal Academy of Music under the tutelage of Matthew Gee and Mark Templeton. While studying he has worked with the orchestra of Welsh National Opera and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Alongside his studies he has taken part in masterclasses with internationally renowned brass musicians Jorgen van Rijen, Zoltan Kiss, Weston Sprott and Christian Lindberg.

Huw has a keen interest in contemporary music as he has performed notorious pieces for trombone on many occasions including Berio's *Sequenza V*. Last summer Huw took part in London Sinfonietta's Academy course which brings together talented musicians with a similar interest in contemporary music. Huw also has a teaching position as a trombone tutor at King's College London. Last October Huw managed to come first place in the John Solomon brass prize held at the Royal Academy of Music. Huw's studies are generously supported by Mischcon de Reya and the Countess of Munster trust.

Prior to his time in London, Huw studied with Roger Cutts at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where he was offered an orchestral placement with the Welsh National Opera for a year. Huw is also a member of Cardiff based trombone quartet 'Bone Appétit'. The quartet performs regularly and has performed on BBC radio 3, Classic FM live and appeared on a documentary on channel 4 for the hit Disney film 'Frozen'.

BIRTHDAY MESSAGES:

We are honoured to have worked and collaborated with some world-class musicians over the years, and are thrilled to have received the following birthday messages:

Sir James Macmillan (Patron): *Many happy returns to the inspiring Elysian Singers on their 30th anniversary. It has been a delight getting to know this ensemble over the years, and their performances of my music have been very special. It was wonderful to welcome them to Cumnock in Ayrshire last year for one of our Upbeat-To-The-Tryst events. I hope this celebratory year is a great success.*

Matthew Greenall (Founder): *When the Elysian Singers was started up, in what now seem very distant days, it was as a way of keeping contact with friends, exploring some unusual corners of the choral repertoire and with the unpretentious ambition of generally having a good time whilst doing some half-decent singing. Never did we think that a group of this longevity would be born, that would give so many memorable concerts, commission so much new work, make recordings and broadcasts, bring so many people (and relationships!) together and generally give pleasure and reward over such a period of time. Credit to all those who have played a part, as singers, conductors, committee members, funders and supporters, in making this achievement possible. Looking forward in expectation to the years of good singing and inventive programming ahead, with every good wish to the Elysians for a successful 30th anniversary event.*

Judith Weir (Master of the Queen's Music): *Congratulations and thanks to the Elysian Singers and Sam Laughton. Your programmes are a model of curiosity, adventure and tradition. It's always a pleasure to know that such a wide range of music is being lovingly sung and presented to an enthusiastic public. Thirty years' worth is a considerable musical achievement, good luck in the coming years and please keep doing it!*

Andrew Hugill: *Congratulations to the Elysian Singers on 30 years of wonderful performances! Their abilities to cope with almost any musical demands were amply demonstrated when they painted their tongues green and squatted to execute the opening 'frog chorus' of my composition 'Les Origines humaines'. But this was surpassed by the sheer beauty and precision of their singing throughout the piece in a range of styles, from medieval to modern, from many-voiced motets to overtone elucidations. This is the very definition of 'virtuoso'.*

Ian Stephens: *An excellent choir reaches a fine milestone: one score and ten, and counting! Well done Sam and the Elysians for your sustained commitment to new music over the years – and, of course, for your splendid singing.*

Mark Fleming: *What a wonderful choir; keeping standards consistently high, and championing new work and old, holding their own with pro groups. All power to Sam & co. for the next 30 years!*

Jeremy Summerly: *I've always tremendously enjoyed conducting the Elysians - we get such good results together. And it's where I met my wife, so our beautiful daughter is yet another great Elysians result!*

John Upperton: *Congratulations to the Elysian Singers and all success for the future. It is an innovative choir for whom I've been guest soloist on many occasions; I've had the opportunity to sing new and interesting repertoire under the wonderful guidance of Sam. I'm very grateful to have been a part of their history.*

Bernard Hughes: *I was delighted to win the Elysian Singers' Composition Prize in 2016, and loved their energetic and dramatic performance of my setting of Psalm 56. I would like to wish the Elysian Singers a happy 30th birthday and many more years of wonderful music-making to come.*

Cheryl Frances-Hoad: *Congratulations to the Elysian Singers for 30 years of singing, and all 150 psalms. I am so honoured to have been part of this adventurous, year-long programme. Best wishes for the future!*

Thomas Hewitt Jones: *Sending very best wishes to the wonderful Elysians on this, the final concert in their Psalmfest series. What a musically-rich cornucopia! I look forward to following the choir's future concerts during the rest of 2017 and beyond.*

Tarik O'Regan: *Happy 30th Birthday! When I was just starting to make my living writing music full time, you helped me on my way by commissioning 'Bring Rest, Sweet Dreaming Child' in 2004. I'll always treasure that vote of confidence you gave me. You've done the same for many composers over the years through your commissioning, recording, and general championing of new music. On behalf of all composers, I thank you and wish you many more years of wonderful music-making.*

Nicola LeFanu: *Very best wishes to the Elysian Singers on their 30th anniversary. Please go on from strength to strength! I loved your performance of my 'The Little Valleys' and I hope to work with you all again soon.*

And finally Director, **Sam Laughton** writes:

Congratulations to the Elysian Singers on reaching their 30th Birthday! Since taking over from founder Matthew Greenall in 2000, it has been a privilege and a delight to lead the choir in such a wide variety of musical adventures. Highlights have included working closely with composers such as Sir James MacMillan, Sir John Tavener, Tarik O'Regan and Jonathan Harvey; giving many live performances on BBC Radio 3 and at the Royal Festival Hall and Royal Albert Hall; and exploring choral masterpieces and lesser-known repertoire with equal enthusiasm, intelligence and panache. Here's to the next 30 years!

ELYSIAN SINGERS MARRIAGES

It seems music really is the food of love for the Elysian Singers!
Congratulations to the many couples who have met through the choir and subsequently married. Here are some of their stories ...



Five Mystical Songs introduced us to each other in 1986. Fast-forward to the Elysians tour to the Czech Republic in 1992; romance blossomed, and we married five years later with many Elysian friends providing the music. Let All the World in Every Corner Sing!
Mary Tregellas and Ben Driver



We got married in April 1991 and our wedding was memorable for many reasons – including power cuts and snow – but also for the music at our wedding which was provided by many of the choir members. Somewhat against the odds, we’ve kept singing throughout the last 25 years, but look back fondly to our time with the Elysians.
Nigel and Ali Hall

We met in 2007 when Jeremy came to guest conduct The Elysian Singers in a concert – also at St John’s, Smith Square - during Sam’s sabbatical after the birth of his twins. We got engaged seven years later and married in 2015. Our daughter Effie was born later that year. We still perform together on a regular basis (and will always be grateful to Kate and Sam for having twins!)

Jeremy and Helly Summerly



Katie and I first got together about a year after I joined the Elysians, and got married a year after that, with several Elysians singing at our wedding. Thanks Elysians! Despite having two small children we’ve continued to have a regular Elysians date night where we meet up for a relaxing evening of sight-reading contemporary choral works.

David and Katie Parker

COMING UP NEXT ...

Sun, Moon, Sea and Stars

25 MARCH 2017 7.30PM, ST PAUL'S COVENT GARDEN, LONDON WC2

Classic and modern choral settings of poetry on nature, love & spirituality

Vaughan Williams: Three Shakespeare Songs

Ronald Corp: Dover Beach

*with works by Tavener, Chilcott, Chydenius, Coleridge-Taylor & Bantock
and featuring Paul Mealor's 'Wherever you are'*

The great poets of the English language (from both sides of the pond) have inspired many composers over the last 100 years. In this concert we feature examples by William Shakespeare, Matthew Arnold, Lord Byron and Anne Brontë, as well as the Americans Henry Longfellow, Sara Teasdale and Mary Austin. From the Edwardian part-songs of Coleridge-Taylor and Bantock, we move to the famous Shakespeare settings by Vaughan Williams. Beautiful and deeply serious works by John Tavener and Ronald Corp sit alongside the deliciously catchy and jazzy songs of Bob Chilcott and his Finnish counterpart Jussi Chydenius: and we finish with a bona fide No.1 hit, 'Wherever you are', originally written by Paul Mealor for the Military Wives Choir.

The glories of Bach and Handel

7.30 pm 8 JULY 2017, DORE ABBEY, ABBEYDORE

7.30 pm 13 JULY 2017, ST JAMES PICCADILLY, LONDON

with the Craswall Consort

GF Handel Overture: Samson

JS Bach Cantata BWV 62

"Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland"

GF Handel As pants the hart

GF Handel Let God arise

JS Bach Cantata BWV 1

"Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"

Christmas Concert

7.30 pm 19 DECEMBER 2017, ST PAUL'S COVENT GARDEN

If you've missed any of the previous concerts, here's a snapshot of what we've achieved over the course of the last year of Psalmfest:

PSALMFEST FACTS & FIGURES...

Works by 90 composers:

JS Bach, Beatch, Bennett, Bernstein, Billings, Boyce, Britten, Bruckner, Byrd, Child, Cole, Cozzolani, Cui, Dowland, Dumont, Elgar, Farrant, Fleming, Frances-Hoad, A Gabrieli, G Gabrieli, Gesualdo, Gibbons, Goodall, Greene, Guerrero, Handel, Harvey, Hassler, M Haydn, Henley, Hewitt Jones, Holloway, Holst, Horovitz, Howells, Hughes, Ives, Joubert, Kent, Kodaly, Lassus, W Lawes, LeFanu, Leighton, Lully, MacMillan, Mendelssohn, Merulo, Monteverdi, Morley, Mouton, Mozart, Nielsen, O'Hara, O'Regan, Parsons, Pärt, Peerson, Poulenc, Praetorius, Purcell, Pye, Rachmaninoff, Rautavaara, Rheinberger, Rollison, Rorem, Rossi, Schein, Schubert, Schütz, Seager, Sermisy, Singer, Stanford, Stephenson, Stravinsky, Sweelinck, Tallis, Tamar, Telemann, Thiman, Vaughan Williams, Viadana, Vivaldi, Weir, S Wesley, SS Wesley, White

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And 5 world premieres

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*We are grateful to the support of The Elgar Society and their sponsorship of
tonight's concert*

THE ELYSIANS@30

The Elysian Singers are members of Making Music.

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music**

If you would like to join the Elysian Singers' mailing list, please write to Richard Warren, 20 Downs Road, Beckenham BR3 5JY or email mailinglist@elysiansingers.com
www.elysiansingers.com