



in excelsis

a celebratory
concert of music for
choir and brass

John Rutter

Gloria

Paul Patterson

Magnificat

C H H Parry - **Blest Pair of Sirens**

John Rutter - **Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Refuge**

William Walton - **Music from Henry V**

Judith Bingham - **The Snows Descend**

conductor - **Neil Ferris**

organ - **Michael Higgins**

with **Brass Adastra**

SATURDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2009, 7.30PM

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL, LONDON SE1

WIMBLEDON
CHORAL SOCIETY

Tickets: £15 (Main Nave),

£10 (Side Nave, limited view), £10 (Students)

Box Office: Tel: 020 8605 2266,

or e-tickets: wimbledon-choral.org.uk/tickets

In Excelsis

The first concert to be conducted by Neil Ferris, Wimbledon Choral Society's new Musical Director, is clearly not to be missed as it stretches the choir's choral repertoire by introducing some unfamiliar works both to choir members and audience alike, and combining it with some old favourites.

Paul Patterson's *Magnificat*, written for brass, percussion and organ, was commissioned by Sir David Willcocks and the Bach Choir. It contains bracing brass fanfares, jazzy rhythms and lush languorous harmonies.

During World War II, Walton was granted leave from military service in order to compose music for propagandistic films, such as Laurence Olivier's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry V* in 1944. For Olivier, Walton delivered one of his finest film scores and the suite heard in the concert will include the stirring *Agincourt Song* and the tender *Touch her soft lips and part*.

John Rutter, who was born in 1945 and a great collaborator with Sir David Willcocks, is a well-known English composer whose choral compositions are numerous and accessible. Rutter's setting of the *Gloria* is based largely on one of the Gregorian chants with which the text is associated. He describes the three movements as '... roughly corresponding to traditional symphonic structure', the mood of the sections being respectively '... exalted, devotional and jubilant by turns'. The use of organ, brass and percussion makes for plenty of Waltonian punch in the outer movements and yet also for a hauntingly ethereal middle section. His new anthem *Lord, thou hast been our refuge* is a setting of verses from Psalm 90, and features a solo trumpeter and organ accompanying the choir.

Parry scored a great contemporary success with the ode *Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887) which established him as the leading English choral composer of his day. The opening words of John Milton's *At a Solemn Musick*, belie the quality of both its powerful verse and its delightful music. Far from being an obscure Victorian curiosity, its noble, masculine treatment of Milton's poetry stands out as a landmark in the development of the English choral tradition.

The choir is delighted to be working with Brass Adastra, an ensemble made up of some of the country's finest brass players. The works by British composers, both familiar and unfamiliar, in the glorious surroundings of Southwark Cathedral will undoubtedly serve to uplift the spirits on a November day.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 19th December 2009, 7pm

Carols for Choir & Audience
St. Paul's Church, Southfields

Saturday 27th March 2010, 7.30pm

Elgar *The Kingdom*
with the New Queen's Hall Orchestra
Guildford Cathedral

Saturday 12th June 2010, 6pm

Music for a Summer Evening
St. John's Church, Waterloo SE1

Monday 14th June 2010, 7.30pm

Quiz Evening
with William G Stewart
Drake House, St. George's Road, Wimbledon