

ELGAR

The Kingdom

CONDUCTOR
Neil Ferris

SOPRANO Helena Dix

MEZZO-SOPRANO Jennifer Johnston

TENOR Ben Johnson

BARITONE William Berger

By kind
permission
of the Dean
and Chapter

NQHO

WITH The New Queen's
Hall Orchestra

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL SATURDAY 27 MARCH 2010, 7.30PM

Tickets: £20 (Front Nave)
£15 (Back Nave & West Gallery)
£10 (Students)

Box Office: 01483 444789 (Electric Theatre)

E-tickets: wimbledon-choral.org.uk/tickets

For bookings of parties over 10 people please telephone 020 8605 2266

WIMBLEDON
CHORAL SOCIETY

Elgar ~ The Kingdom

“It is a great piece of choral writing but last night the combination of the fabulous music, the choir so competently in full voice and the thrilling sounds from all over the orchestra, backed up by the organ, just did for me!” - this was a comment made about Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* by a critic last time Wimbledon Choral Society sang in Guildford Cathedral.

Elgar’s *The Kingdom*, which is not often performed, is considered by some as Elgar’s finest oratorio and has many moments of thrilling sounds also; it was intended to be the middle part of a trilogy of oratorios dealing with the foundation and ultimate purpose of the Church - the first part being *The Apostles* and the final uncompleted part being *The Last Judgement*. *The Kingdom* tells the story of the acts of the disciples after Jesus’s ascension; it is written for a large orchestra with a double chorus and semi-chorus, and four soloists. The powerful New Faith theme, which may have provided the inspiration for the popular 1960s song *Softly as I Leave You*, is as stirring as anything Elgar wrote.

The Kingdom is a great work. Essentially of a reflective nature, it is the slow movement, so to speak, of the trilogy. If one passage were to be selected from this work to include in an anthology of moments of supreme felicity of musical expression it might well be the haunting and moving soprano solo, *The Sun Goeth Down*. (Percy Young)

This concert also features the New Queen’s Hall Orchestra: this great orchestra’s revolutionary approach to performance needs to be enjoyed and appreciated across the world, so that great music may once again speak to people everywhere in the human terms anticipated by the great composers especially those of the romantic period. At a time of almost complete conformity, the NQHO’s philosophy is unusual: it restores the balance known to the great Romantics and which is now lost in all other orchestras using modern instruments thus producing the colourful and expressive sounds of an era once thought lost. Of the NQHO Elgar’s Godson and friend, E. Wulstan Atkins (1904-2003) said: “Here were all the subtle orchestral colours that one had remembered and never thought to hear again. We were hearing *The Planets* as I had heard Holst’s music conducted by the composer in the 1920s.” Its players are encouraged to be individuals and to risk the ultimate in expressiveness, creating an atmosphere of rare excitement and insight, and attracts many of London’s finest orchestral musicians.

The choir and orchestra are joined by four talented soloists, one of whom one first prize at the Kathleen Ferrier awards last year, and another who represented Australia in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the Year Awards.

The magnificent setting of Guildford Cathedral with the New Queen’s Hall Orchestra will provide a wonderful opportunity to hear this less well-known work by Elgar, and is clearly a concert not to be missed.

There is ample parking at the Cathedral, which is just off the A3 and well-signed. All seats are unreserved, and the £20 tickets are towards the front of the nave providing the best sound and vision.