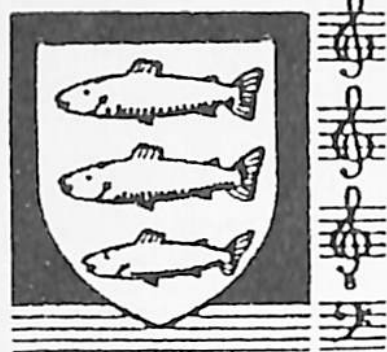




KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

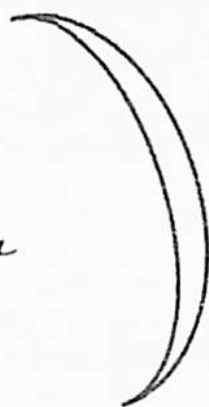
CONDUCTOR: ROBIN PAGE

Gershwin and Friends

PIANIST: HELEN CRAYFORD

Saturday 26th June 1999 at 7.30pm

*Music for
a Summer
Night*



All Saints Parish Church
Kingston-upon-Thames



PROGRAMME £1

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Kingston Choral Society

PATRON:	The Worshipful the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames
PRESIDENT:	Honorary Alderman W James Daly KCHS FICE
VICE PRESIDENT:	Richard Tracey JP
MUSICAL DIRECTOR:	Robin Page MA(Hons) Cantab LRAM
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CHAIR:	Wendy Faulkner
CHOIR SECRETARY:	Sue Brodie
HONORARY MEMBERS:	Mrs A Johnson Miss O Lofts
PROGRAMME EDITOR:	Siân Llewellyn-Thomas
PROGRAMME ASSISTANT:	Anne Miller
ADVERTISING:	Richard Clift

Kingston Choral Society gratefully acknowledges the continuing
financial assistance of
The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Kingston Choral Society is a registered Charity no: 261522

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Friends Scheme

As a supporter of Kingston Choral Society we would like to invite you to become a Friend. In return for a yearly subscription of £15 we offer you:

- priority booking facilities
- advance notification of four concerts a year
- your name as a Friend in all our programmes
- a discount on two tickets per Friend, per concert.

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GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS

The setting for tonight's concert
is the
Aeolian Hall, New York
February 1924

Träumerei	ZeZ Confrey	Piano
Kitchen Tom	Eubie Blake	Piano
Swanee	George Gershwin	Piano
Swanee	George Gershwin	Choir
Rialto Ripples	George Gershwin	Piano
Oh! Lady be Good	George Gershwin	Choir
Oh! Lady be Good	George Gershwin	Piano
S' Wonderful	George Gershwin	Choir
The Man I Love	George Gershwin	Choir
The Man I Love	George Gershwin	Piano
Fascinating Rhythm	George Gershwin	Choir
Fascinating Rhythm	George Gershwin	Piano
Kitten on the Keys	ZeZ Confrey	Piano
Rhapsody in Blue	George Gershwin	Piano

INTERVAL

GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS

Fingerbuster	Willie "The Lion" Smith	Piano
Alligator Crawl	"Fats" Waller	Piano
Carolina Shout	James P Johnson	Piano
Someone to Watch Over Me (1926)	George Gershwin	Choir
Someone to Watch Over Me	George Gershwin	Piano
Three Preludes (1926)	George Gershwin	Piano
Tea for Two (1925)	Vincent Youmans	Choir
Let's Do It (1928)	Cole Porter	Choir
I Got Rhythm (1930)	George Gershwin	Choir
I Got Rhythm	George Gershwin	Piano
Love Walked In	Percy Grainger	Piano
Selections from Porgy and Bess	George Gershwin	Choir

GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS

George Gershwin (1898-1937)

George Gershwin was born on 26 September 1898 in Brooklyn, New York, second son to the immigrant Russian-Jewish family Gershovitz. From the age of twelve Gershwin started piano lessons with local teachers but by 1913 had been taken on by the great Charles Hambitzer. At the age of sixteen, after applying to Irving Berlin for work and being told that he had "too much talent", he became a song plugger in Tin Pan Alley. Gershwin soon turned his hand to composing his own songs, but it was the success of his composition *Swanee*, sung by Al Jolson, that set him on the road to become one of the great show composers of the twentieth century - especially when he collaborated with his brother Ira for the lyrics. Alongside theatre music, he was always working on more classical compositions, such as *Rhapsody in Blue* written at the invitation of Paul Whiteman for a concert in the Aeolian Hall in New York, the *Concerto in F* and, above all, *Porgy and Bess*. He died tragically in Beverley Hills, California, of a brain tumour at the age of thirty-nine.

ZeZ Confrey (1895-1971)

"King of Novelty Rag". Composer/pianist who began by making piano rolls and recordings of his works, which were soon published. His popularity guaranteed star billing at Paul Whiteman's Aeolian Hall extravaganza.

'Eubie' Blake (1883-1983)

Played ragtime in "sporting houses" from before the turn of the century. Formed celebrated vaudeville duo with Noble Sissle, and wrote the first all-black Broadway show *Shuffle Along*. At his 100th birthday party he quipped "if I'd known I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself". He died five days later.

GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS

Wille "The Lion" Smith (1897-1973)

By his mid-teens, he had acquired a formidable reputation as a ragtimer in New York City. His nickname dates from his heroism in the First World War. Between the wars, this colourful personality became one of Harlem's best-known "stride" players.

"Fats" Waller (1904-1943)

A natural humourist with a huge appetite for life, especially food and drink! Recorded his first solos at the age of 20. Died tragically of pneumonia on a train pulling into Kansas City.

James P Johnson (1894-1955)

The "Father of Stride", teacher of "Fats" Waller, but with high classical aspirations. His four-movement *Harlem Symphony* was performed at Carnegie Hall in 1932, but this and other large works were soon neglected. He died disappointed, but his "shouts" live on as among the best ragtime masterpieces.

Cole Porter (1893-1964)

Composer of popular songs, many for musicals such as *Kiss Me, Kate*. Also writer of words to his own songs.

Percy Grainger (1882-1961)

Born Australian, he later became a US citizen. Compete musical maverick, he was equally interested in English folk song, Richard Strauss and George Gershwin, whom he considered a "transcendent genius".

Music brings pleasure and joy
to Kingston
particularly this evening!

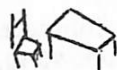
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BIOGRAPHIES

Helen Crayford

At the age of eight, Helen Crayford became the youngest-ever student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (helped by a scholarship from the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths). She went on to take a degree at Cambridge University and a Postgraduate Diploma from the Royal College of Music and, subsequently, won a French Government Scholarship to study in Paris. This resulted in a fascinating year as one of Nadia Boulanger's last private pupils, studying the piano repertoire and attending musical analysis classes.

On her return to London, Helen was soon in demand as a freelance keyboard player for ensembles such as the Orchestra of St John's Smith Square. When not on the concert platform she was active as a coach for major British opera companies (including Covent Garden, English National Opera and Glyndebourne) as well as at the Aldeburgh and Garsington Festivals. As assistant conductor Helen took part in many opera premieres, most notably Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Greek* for the Munich Biennale, ENO and BBC TV. Other television work has included Stewart Copeland's *Horse Opera* for Channel 4 and working as official accompanist for the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition in 1994.

In 1986 Helen devised a series of solo shows, *Rags to Riches*, tracing the history of syncopated piano music from 1890 onwards. Since the debut of the first *Rags to Riches* shows in London and Italy, these one-woman performances have been acclaimed from the Edinburgh Jazz Festival to New York City. The shows have been frequently heard on BBC Radio, and four recordings have been released on the Maxsound label. In April 1998 Helen presented a highly successful show in the Purcell Room to celebrate Gershwin's centenary *Lady, Be Good!*

Recently, Helen has given further performances of the solo show and concertos with the Britten Sinfonia. Highlights of 1999 include her Prom debut with Britten Sinfonia Soloists.

BIOGRAPHIES

Robin Page - Conductor

Robin is based in London where he is the Principal Conductor and Musical Director of Thames Sinfonia, the Purcell Orchestra and Kingston Choral Society. He has also worked with the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus and has made many appearances at the Royal Academy of Music, London, as a conductor and lecturer specialising in the contemporary repertoire and Scandinavian music.

Robin specialises in the Nordic repertoire, giving acclaimed performances of Sibelius and Nielsen symphonies, and conducting the inaugural concert of the UK Sibelius Society in London. He has also given first UK performances of many Swedish works, including such composers as Stenhammar, Rosenberg, Lidholm and Bortz. Recently, Robin travelled to Sweden as guest conductor with the Sundsvalls Kammarorkester.

Robin has strong links with the Baltic States. As guest conductor of the Estonian State Symphony Orchestra he gave the first Estonian performance and broadcast of Elgar's Enigma Variations. He has also performed and broadcast in Poland and Hungary. For many years Robin was principal conductor of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, and he has also conducted the Halle Choir, Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra and the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir, where he is musical director.

Robin has given broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and with the BBC Ulster Orchestra, and has also appeared on BBC Television. Last summer, Robin made a recording with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra.

Robin studied at Magdalen College School, Oxford, Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music, London. He is a visiting lecturer at Kingston University.

BIOGRAPHIES

Kingston Choral Society

Since its formation in 1948, Kingston Choral Society has earned a reputation for concerts of a high standard and for performing a wide range of music. In the current season alone the repertoire has spanned over 350 years. Under the guidance of Robin Page, Kingston Choral Society is not afraid of taking on ambitious projects and, for example, in 1997 performed Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* in Russian. Yet, interspersed with these less well known works, the choir enjoys singing the more familiar favourites of the choral repertoire and as part of last year's fiftieth anniversary celebrations performed Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

The Society has about one hundred members drawn from a wide area of South West London and North Surrey. New members are always welcome. The choir performs four concerts each year, usually in Kingston Parish Church. Rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings at Hollyfield School, Surbiton (term time only). In addition, the Society holds regular social and fund raising events and occasional workshops. If you are interested in joining, we look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to talk to members of the choir in the interval or at the end of the concert. Alternatively, contact the Membership Secretary on 0181-398-3545 for further information.

The first concert of next season is on 6 November with a performance of Handel's Coronation Anthems and Mozart's *Requiem*. Then, as we conclude this century, we will look back to the last and celebrate a "Victorian Christmas" on 11 December. Following a performance of Bach's *St John Passion* at Easter, the climax of next season will be our concert on 17 June 2000 in the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, which will be a celebration of the millennium with a performance of Verdi's rousing and passionate *Requiem*. The Society will be joined by the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir with whom we have enjoyed occasional joint performances in the past. Further details about all these concerts will be available nearer the time from the box office on 0181-977-8665. If you become a Friend of Kingston Choral Society we will send you advance notification of all our concerts: please find further details on page 2 of this programme.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

at Kingston Parish Church



Handel Coronation Anthems

Mozart Requiem

6 NOVEMBER 1999



A Victorian Christmas

11 DECEMBER 1999



St John Passion

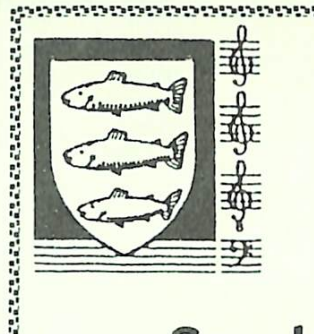
8 April 2000



Verdi Requiem

17 JUNE 2000

Joining the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir
at the Fairfield Hall Croydon



KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

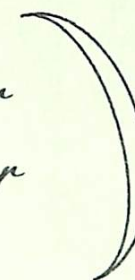
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