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KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

SUMMER CONCERT

KINGSTON PARISH CHURCH

Saturday, July 18th, 1992

Organist: John Keys
Conductor: Robin Page
Soprano: Lucie Wickham
Alto: Teresa Rose Dutton
Tenor: Martin Corry
Bass: Anthony Cunningham

PURCELL

Come Ye Sons of Art
Voluntary in G (Organ solo)

POULENC

Motets pour un Temps de Penitence
i. Timor et tremor
ii. Tenebrae factae sunt

VIERNE

1st Movement, Symphony No. 2 (Organ solo)

I N T E R V A L*

HANDEL

Israel in Egypt: Plague Choruses

LEIGHTON

Elegy (Organ solo)

BRITTEN

Rejoice In The Lamb

* During the interval, wine and fruit juice will be available. Tickets for wine may be purchased at the door.

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

July, 1992

Programme Notes - by Lawrence Cooke

COME YE SONS OF ART

HENRY PURCELL (1659 - 1695)

An ode was originally a chorus in Greek tragedy but is now considered to be an exalted poem. The late seventeenth century fashion of setting odes to elaborate music for voices and instruments to celebrate private or public festivals marked the start of a form of concert-giving that was to last for several generations. "Come Ye Sons of Art Away" was first performed in April, 1694 for the birthday of Queen Mary, wife of William III. It is the last of six odes set to music for this royal anniversary and reflects Purcell's close ties with the Crown in his position as organist of the Chapel Royal. One senses Purcell is almost forced to simulate an enthusiasm which he does not always feel for such an occasion. Nonetheless the music still displays his power of setting language in song. He betrays a true sense of oratorship by giving accentual values to the words with a fidelity which belongs to good speaking and so emphasises the broad sense of the text. In this way Purcell contributed much to the re-establishment of musical traditions during the Restoration period after the Puritan revolution.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. OVERTURE | |
| 2. ALTO SOLO AND CHORUS | Come, Come ye Sons of Art |
| 3. DUET | Sound the Trumpet |
| 4. SYMPHONY AND CHORUS | Come, Come ye Sons of Art |
| 5. ALTO SOLO | Strike the viol, touch the lute |
| 6. BASS SOLO WITH CHORUS | The day that such a blessing gave |
| 7. SOPRANO SOLO | Bid the virtues, bid the graces |
| 8. BASS SOLO | These are the sacred charms that shield |
| 9. DUET WITH CHORUS | See Nature, rejoicing, has shown us the way. |

Kingston Choral Society - 1992 - 1993 Season

FAURE	Requiem
CHARPENTIER	Te Deum
STANFORD	Songs of the Fleet
BRITTEN	St. Nicholas Cantata
JANACEK	Glagolithic Mass
BACH	Magnificat

Full details in our new brochure - out soon..

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

July, 1992

TIMOR ET TREMOR

AND TENEBRAE FACTAE SUNT

FRANCIS POULENC (1899 - 1963)

The motet is a Roman Catholic choral form which allows for great freedom of expression and can be introduced into the service during miscellaneous ceremonies or professions notably when the offering is collected or when the bread and wine are raised to Heaven. These two motets for unaccompanied chorus form part of a series of four penitential motets. "Timor et Tremor" (number 1) was written in 1939 and concerns a plea to God for mercy during a crisis attack of fear. "Tenebrae Factae Sunt" (number 3) was composed in 1938 and is subtitled "responses to the bells of Easter Saturday". The text is taken from the New Testament at the moment of Jesus' death on the cross when he offers his soul to God. Poulenc belonged to a group of six composers who sought to avoid excessive romantic sentiment in their works. Hence his style, while appearing to be rather plain at times, also displays a gift for spontaneous melodic invention. Witness the excruciating chromatic descent for the sopranos on the word "exclamavit" as Jesus gives up his spirit.

ISRAEL IN EGYPT

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL (1685 - 1759)

Although regarded now as one of Handel's finest works, "Israel in Egypt" met with only limited success when first performed in London in April, 1739. Contemporary public taste preferred solo arias to large scale choruses which predominate in the work. Although the piece is unbalanced because of its emphasis on the choral element it ranks with the Messiah as one of Handel's best oratorios. Surprisingly enough, neither can count as a typical Handel oratorio. The Plague Choruses, which are selected for this concert, form the major component of the first part of the oratorio and depict how the power of God through Moses persuaded a reluctant Pharaoh to let Israel leave Egypt for the Promised Land.

- No. 8: "He sent a thick darkness"
- No. 9: "He smote all the first-born"
- No.10: "But as for his people"
- No.11: "Egypt was glad"
- No.12: "He rebuked the Red Sea".
- No.13: "He led them through the deep".
- No.15: "And Israel Saw".
- No.16: "And believed the Lord".

REJOICE IN THE LAMB

EDWARD BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913 - 1976)

Whereas the church used to be an extensive patron of the Arts, in more recent years this has become a rare occurrence. However Britten was commissioned by St. Matthew's Church in Northampton to write a festival cantata to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its original consecration on September 21, 1892. "Rejoice in the Lamb" was based on some verse by an unbalanced 18th century poet, Christopher Smart, and the resulting piece was finished in 1943. The whole composition, despite its apparently chaotic form, is a song of general praise to God by all created things. These include the poet, biblical figures, flowers and musical instruments, not to mention the poet's favourite cat - and a mouse! It contains ten short sections of appropriate yet very different mood. Number one establishes the main theme and underlines the universality of the worship by its choral parts. The variation of time-schemes in the second section from 7/8 to 6/8 and 9/8 creates suspense and expectation as the catalogue of Old Testament figures is recalled in praise of God. In part seven, syncopations and distorted rhythms along with awkward intervals, emphasise the strife and variation from the norm that the poet experiences in his sufferings. Meanwhile, during the penultimate section, the music captures the vibrant character of the specified instruments yet at the end the atmosphere of peace and serenity is reinforced by the use of the harmonic triad figure. Finally, the last part, which quietly reiterates the central theme of praise, is a repetition of number three and so helps to create a sense of shape to the work. In these ways, the festival cantata for all its disparate components matches the thrilling quality of the words in a manner which makes it both exciting to listen to and great fun to sing.

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|------------------------------|--|
| 1. CHORUS | Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues |
| 2. TREBLE SOLO | For I will consider my cat Jeoffry |
| 3. ALTO SOLO | For the mouse is a creature of great personal valour |
| 4. TENOR SOLO | For the flowers are great blessings |
| 5. CHORUS | For I am under the the accusation with my Saviour |
| 6. RECITATIVE
(BASS SOLO) | |
| AND CHORUS | For H is a spirit |
| 7. CHORUS | Hallelujah |

LUCIE WICKHAM gained an Honours Degree in Music from Bretton Hall College with singing as her principal subject. She is currently studying with Marjorie Thomas and performs regularly in London. Recent performances include Monteverdi's Coronation of Poppea, Verdi's Macbeth (Kentish Opera), the role of Venus in Blow's Venus and Adonis (Opera Restor'd Baroque project) and workshop performances of Mozart's Requiem and as Dorabella in his Così fan Tutte. Lucie sings with the Bach Choir, St. Giles' Cripplegate Church Choir and the London Oriana Choir for which she recently made her solo debut at St. John's Smith Square singing Scarlatti's Stabat Mater.

TERESA ROSE DUTTON graduated from the University of Adelaide with BA degrees in Arts and Music. For several years she was a member of the State Opera of South Australia before being awarded a grant to travel to New York to study. Since coming to England, Teresa Rose has attended the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies. She now lives in London and studies with Diane Forlano. As a recitalist, she has performed in England, Scotland and Australia working frequently in oratorio such as The Messiah, St. John Passion and The Music Makers. Opera performances include The Magic Flute (Opera Lirica at Holland Park Theatre), Dido and Aeneas (Aldeburgh and Tunbridge Wells Festivals) and Eugene Onegin (Surrey Opera). Teresa Rose is also administrator of the Gregynog Festival masterclasses with Anthony Rolfe Johnson.

MARTIN CORRY is a familiar face to Kingston Choral Society having sung with us many times both in the choir and as a soloist. Martin was born in London and won a choral scholarship to the City of London School as a chorister at the Temple Church. After leaving school he continued his musical training under Henry Cummings at the Royal Academy of Music, returning to the Temple Church Choir as a tenor. He has since sung in London and abroad with the London Philharmonic Choir, the London Philharmonia Chorus, the London Symphony Chorus and other major choirs. Martin is a Gentleman of the Choir of the Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace.

ANTHONY CUNNINGHAM is no stranger to Kingston Choral Society audiences. His last engagement with us was for our highly successful performance of the Verdi Requiem at Guildford Cathedral in May. A native of Wigan in Lancashire, Anthony went to Manchester Polytechnic and for more than ten years followed a career as a chartered librarian. He studied singing with John Cameron while following a freelance career in fringe opera, oratorio and work in the light music field. He has worked with English National Opera for several years and currently tours with Music Theatre in Britain and Europe.

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JOHN KEYS makes a welcome return having accompanied Kingston Choral Society for last year's summer concert. His career began at his home town, Chester, where he was assistant organist at the Cathedral. In 1978 he became an organ scholar at New College, Oxford, under Nicholas Danby and Gillian Weir. He continued his studies in Geneva under Lionel Rogg, in 1983 winning the Premiere de Virtuosite. He was shortly afterwards appointed as Director of Music at St. Mary's church, Nottingham. In 1984 he won first prize at the Manchester International Organ competition.

ROBIN PAGE was born in Ipswich and was educated at Magdalen College School, Oxford and Cambridge University. He then studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and continued there as a Professor until 1990. In addition to his work with Kingston Choral Society, Robin is also Musical Director of the Purcell Orchestra, the Thames Symphony Orchestra and the Thames Sinfonia as well as the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra. He is Principal Conductor of the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir. In addition to engagements all over Britain, Robin has recently returned from a highly successful visit to Estonia where he conducted the Estonian State Symphony Orchestra for the first concert performance and recording there of Elgar's Enigma Variations.

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY has been an exponent of the performing arts in the Royal Borough for more than 40 years. Its concerts are based not only on the standard repertoire but also on the lesser known pieces by composers from most musical eras - including this latter part of the century. It began as the Surbiton Oratorio Society - an organisation which evolved from a most successful recital of Handel's Messiah given in 1948. These were the days when Surbiton had a mayor and it was at the request of the incumbent that various church choirs in the area came together for this combined performance. The enthusiasm of the singers and the response of the audience encouraged many of those taking part to repeat their efforts and in 1952, during the Festival of Britain, they performed Elijah, calling themselves the Festival choir. The present name dates from 1985 when it was felt that the title "Kingston Choral Society" reflected more accurately the choir's association with the Royal Borough and its parish church as well as the broadening nature of the concerts. New members are always welcome. We rehearse at Hollyfield School, Surbiton Hill on Thursday nights at 8 O'clock during term time. Our 1992/93 season will include works such as the Faure Requiem, Britten's St. Nicholas Cantata and the Janacek Glagolithic Mass. Full details will be in our new brochure which is due to be published soon. If you would like to sing with us, have a word with any of the members tonight or contact our Membership Secretary, Therese Ayres (Tel: 081 979 2698).

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

July, 1992

SOME BASS THOUGHTS

As you will see from the preceding page, Kingston Choral Society is always looking for new members. It is not that we are hard to get on with but rather because people must obey the changing commitments of work and family.

I joined the choir in 1985 - when it was the Surbiton Oratorio Society. I must confess that the name implied to me a sense of stuffiness; of an elitist and elderly membership. This attitude said more about my prejudices than it did about the choir. In fact, my joining opened an entire new world to me. I cut my teeth on the Britten piece we are doing tonight. This terrified me the first time around but since then I have grown to love... and even understand it! For this is the beauty of choral singing. You can learn so much about music if you put your mind to it and you don't have to be a budding Pavarotti.

Once you have passed our audition, the entire standard repertoire - and more - is there to be tackled. And if, like me, you were at first nervous about actually singing up and tending to wait for the bloke next to you to hit the note, all I can tell you is that confidence grows - and if I can launch myself from an E-natural and ensnare an elusive G-sharp, anyone can. The secret, I have learned, is to listen to what Robin says, to mark the passages causing problems and then to take the music home to study and practice. I know I am much better than when I joined the choir because, for one thing, I recognise far more music now on Radio 3 and in the Radio Times Proms schedule. I have noticed too that in certain drinking circles (pubs as well as wine bars) the subject of choral singing is quite the "in" thing. A chap I've worked with called Spike, on learning of my involvement, was able to quote and explain the entire lustful, juicy contents of Carmina Burana. Some churches, he claimed, regarded the work as immoral and wouldn't allow it to be performed on their premises. Gosh! This was a man who until then, so far as I could remember, had expressed an interest in only two things: fishing and football. On this question of social intercourse, membership of a choral group like ours can be an entree to many things. Our singers often help out other choirs. Some sing with the famous Malcolm Sargent Choir at the Royal Albert Hall. I've sung the Beethoven Choral Symphony at the Royal Festival Hall and recently for a Raymond Gubbay Puccini Concert at the Barbican Concert Hall. There was our Verdi concert last May with the Cantarella choir from Delft and the West Sussex Philharmonic Choir at Guildford Cathedral. And it's not all singing either. Two of our established annual "dates" are the Spring barn dance and Summer barbecue. On an unofficial basis, some of us go walking in the Surrey countryside. For miles. That's almost as exhausting as singing. - BR (second bass, last row).

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

July, 1992

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Kingston Choral Society is grant-aided by the Royal Borough of
Kingston upon Thames.

Society members again wish to record their gratitude to Mary
Fuller for her work as rehearsal pianist.

The cover for this programme was designed by Maurice Moeri of
Design Services (081 643 3595).

Flowers for this evening's performance were provided by Pick of
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Saturday, October 31 at Kingston Parish Church. 7.30 pm.

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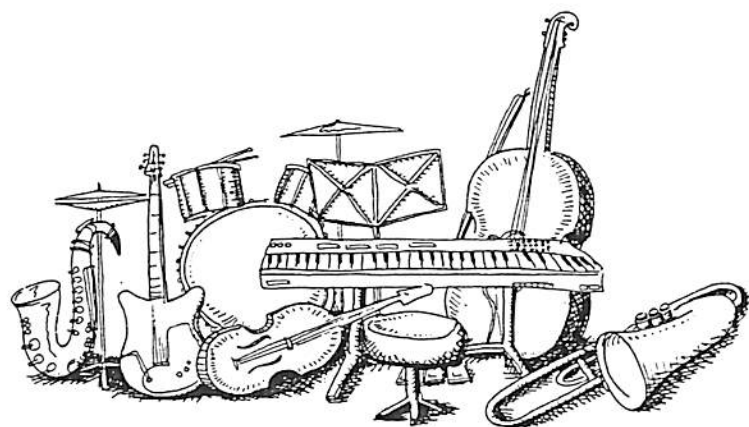
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