

Hungerford & District Community Arts Festival 2002

CANTEMUS

Conductor Robert Ascott

with **Tityre**

Music for a Summer's Evening

10 July 2002
St Lawrence's Church
Hungerford


Making
Music
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF MUSIC SOCIETIES

My soul, there is a country
The Blue Bird
Soloist: Alexandra Thompson

Hubert Parry
Charles Stanford

My love dwelt in a northern land
Here is the little door

Edward Elgar
Herbert Howells

Trio Brilliant Op.30

G. Kummer

- i) Allegro non tanto
- ii) Andante
- iii) Vivace

A ce joli Mois
L'hiver sera et l'été variable
Reveci venir du printemps

Clément Janequin
Jacob Arcadelt
Claude Le Jeune

- INTERVAL -

Five flower songs

Benjamin Britten

- i) To daffodils
- ii) The succession of the four sweet months
- iii) Marsh flowers
- iv) The evening primrose
- v) Ballad of green broom

Flute Trio

Alexandre Tchérépnine

- i) Prélude
- ii) Scherzo
- iii) Rêverie
- iv) Dance

Overture to Figaro

Wolfgang Mozart Arr. H. Lea

Calme des nuits

Camille Saint-Saëns

Les fleurs et les arbres

Camille Saint-Saëns

Trois beaux oiseaux du paradis

Maurice Ravel

Soloists: Sheenagh Dornie, Heather Sims, Allan Rostron, Andrew Blake

Ronde (Roundelay)

Maurice Ravel

The audience are invited to show their appreciation in the usual way at the end of each section

The late 19th & early 20th century saw a blossoming of English choral music; however, few of the great composers of the period set their own words to music, turning to English poetry & prose for inspiration.

Hubert Parry (1848-1918) wrote a great deal of music now long forgotten and rarely performed. *My soul, there is a country* (1916), is the first of 6 motets collectively known as the 'Songs of Farewell'. Each motet is based upon 17th and 18th century texts which deal with life's end and the final journey.

Like Parry, **Charles Stanford** (1852-1924) taught at the Royal College of Music. Best known as an influential teacher of such pupils as Vaughan Williams, Holst and Howells, he was also a successful composer, notable for collaborating with the poets whose words he set. We do not know if this is the case with *The Blue Bird* but it is justly famous, a masterpiece created from a mere fragment of verse.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934) composed *My love dwelt in a northern land* in 1890, the year he was commissioned by the Worcester Festival to provide the overture *Froissart*, a landmark early success which shows his ability to create a sense of structural magnitude with even the most modest material.

Regarded as the finest composer of his generation, **Herbert Howells** (1892-1983) served as Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music for more than 60 years. His carol anthem *Here is the little door* is one of a set of three, which were written just after the First World War. The piece uses the words of Frances Chesterton, which describe the arrival of the three kings and the gifts they bear.

Claude Le Jeune (1530-1600) is widely regarded as a master of the chanson. *Reveci venir du printemps*, drawn from of a collection of pieces entitled *Le Printemps*, describes the arrival of Spring.

Clément Janequin (1485-1558) was a prolific composer of chansons with close to 300 to his credit. Although he enjoyed powerful patronage for most of his life, he fell out of favour and eventually died in poverty. His chansons are known for their vitality and use of such extra-musical elements as birdsong and 'cries' of Paris. *A ce joli Mois* describes the joys of the month of May.

A distinguished musician, **Jacob Arcadelt** (1501-1568) grew up under the influence of Josquin and the Belgian School. His early career was spent as a singer at the court of Florence and then the Papal choir. In 1555, he moved to Paris where he spent the rest of his life in the service of Cardinal Charles of Lorraine, Duke of Guise. *L'hiver sera et l'été variable* is drawn from a collection of chansons which Arcadelt published in 1553 and describes how the seasons change but true love remains constant.

Benjamin Britten (1913-76) wrote his *Five Flower Songs* in 1950 for the silver wedding of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst, the owners of Barrington Hall where the English Opera Group had planned to produce *Albert Herring*. In the end the Elmhirsts became backers rather than hosts. Explaining his present, Britten wrote, 'They were written about flowers because they were both amateur botanists.'

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was a gifted pianist, organist, and writer. His most famous piece, *Carnival of the Animals*, was also the piece he most hated, giving instructions that it was not to be played until he was dead. *Deux Chansons* describe the beauty and peace of the world.

Maurice Ravel's *Trois chansons* of 1915 are set to the composer's own poems. They are remarkable both as archaic glimpses back to the French Renaissance chanson, and as the only pieces Ravel ever wrote for chorus. The second chanson, *Trois beaux oiseaux du paradis* is surely a personal statement on the carnage of the First World War, which raged as Ravel wrote. In a surreal vision, three birds of paradise pass by a young woman; the first offers a glance from his blue eyes, the second a kiss, the last presents the bloody heart of her soldier-love. *Ronde* warns girls and boys to avoid the woods of Ormond because they are inhabited by all manner of hobgoblins. The children indeed promise not to go into the woods - but only because the adults have frightened all the scary creatures away!

CANTEMUS was formed in 1999 and is a mixed voice chamber choir based in Newbury. The group's members come from as far afield as Reading, Marlborough and Wantage. In its short existence the group has built up an extensive repertoire of music from the sixteenth century to the twentieth.

Robert Ascott studied choral conducting under James Gaddarn. As a businessman he lived for long periods overseas. He has held organist and choirmaster posts in many cities of the world, including London, New York and Cologne. He is Treasurer of the Herbert Howells Society and lists Bach and Britten among his favourite composers. In addition to his work on the chamber choir repertoire he has conducted opera and stage musicals.

Sopranos	Sheenagh Dernie Alison Jestico Edwina Northam Alexandra Thompson	Altos	Dinny Barker Georgina Seaman Heather Sims
Tenors	David Ramsbottom Allan Rostron Barrie Seaman	Basses	Mike Ananin Andrew Blake Stephen Blinman Ian Haslam

The Choir has limited vacancies in some voices and welcomes applications from singers of an appropriate standard. If you are interested or would like to know about forthcoming Cantemus concerts, please contact Ian Haslam on 01635 820379 or e-mail cantemus.newbury@ntlworld.com

The choir is affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies, which represents and supports amateur vocal, instrumental and promoting societies throughout the UK.

TITYRE, a flute trio comprising Natasha Durham, Joanna Price and David Wirdnam, have been together since September 2001. After nearly 15 years in the Royal Corps Transport Staff Band, David went to Sheffield University to study music, where he gained an honours degree. He is currently teaching privately and as a flute specialist for Berkshire Young Musicians' Trust. Natasha has just completed her A-levels at Kennet School in Thatcham where she was Head Girl. She is the principal flute with West Berkshire Music Centre Concert Band and a member of the Berkshire Youth Orchestra. The newest member of the trio, Joanna, is a graduate of the University of Manchester, where she was a prizewinner in the Proctor Gregg performance competition. After completing a Post Graduate Certificate in Education, she is now teaching for BYMT as a specialist flute teacher.

Tityre can be contacted through David (07979) 334105 or Joanna (023) 8025 5389 or by e-mail tityretrio@yahoo.co.uk



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