

NEWBURY CHORAL SOCIETY



Saturday June 24th 2006

DOUAI ABBEY, WOOLHAMPTON

NEWBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

121st Season

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ROBERT RICE BARITONE

LONDON CONCERTANTE

CONDUCTOR LEO HUSSAIN

We would like to thank the Friends of Newbury Choral Society for their support this season.

Programme

Four Last Songs

Richard Strauss

Elizabeth Atherton - Soprano

Fruhling (Spring)

September

Beim Schlafengehen (While going to sleep)

Im Abendrot (In twilight)

Interval - 15 minutes

A Child of Our Time

Michael Tippett

Part 1

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. The world turns on its dark side | Chorus |
| 2. Man has measured the heavens | Alto |
| 3. Is evil then good? | Alto & Chorus |
| 4. Now in each nation | Narrator (Bass) |
| 5. When shall the users' city cease | Chorus |
| 6. I have no money for my bread | Tenor |
| 7. How can I cherish my man in such days? | Soprano |
| 8. Spiritual: "Steal away" | Chorus & Soli |

Part 2

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. A star rises in mid-winter | Chorus |
| 2. And a time came | Narrator |
| 3. Away with them! - Where? How? Why? | Double Chorus |
| 4. Where they could | Narrator |
| 5. We cannot have them in our Empire | Chorus |
| 6. And the boy's mother | Narrator |
| 7. O my son! | Mother, Boy, Aunt, Uncle (Solo quartet) |
| 8. Spiritual: "Nobody knows the trouble I see" | Chorus & Soli |
| 9. The boy becomes desperate in his agony | Narrator & Alto |
| 10. They took a terrible vengeance | Narrator |
| 11. A Spiritual of Anger: "Go down, Moses" | Chorus & Bass |
| 12. My dreams are all shattered | Boy (Tenor) |
| 13. What have I done to you, my son? - | Mother (Soprano) |
| 14. The dark forces rise like a flood | Alto |
| 15. Spiritual: "O, by and by" | Chorus & Soprano |

Part 3

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. The cold deepens | Chorus |
| 2. The soul of man | Alto |
| 3. The words of wisdom are these | Bass & Chorus |
| 4. I would know my shadow and my light | Chorus & Soli |
| 5. Spiritual: "Deep river" | Chorus & Soli |

Vier Letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs) Richard Strauss (1864 – 1949)

Written in the last year of his life the *Four Last Songs* are the culmination of Richard Strauss's long and productive life as both composer and conductor. Born in Munich in 1864 (the year that Richard Wagner was appointed the conductor of the Munich Court Orchestra and Hans von Bulow conducted the first performance of *Tristan und Isolde*) Richard Strauss was the son of the celebrated horn player Franz Strauss who is perhaps better known for his violent feelings against 'that drunkard Wagner'. As the leader of the anti-Wagner faction in the Munich Court Orchestra, Franz Strauss refused to stand as a mark of respect when Wagner died. Whatever his feelings for Wagner, within the orchestra pit Franz was a true professional, respecting the pro-Wagner conductor Von Bulow (whom he personally detested) and as principal horn played the horn solo in the first performances of *Tristan*, *Siegfried* and *Die Meistersingers*.

Franz Strauss recognised the undisputed talents of his son and at the age of four, Richard began to study both the piano and the violin. His father also encouraged him to compose, (his first composition being the *Schneiderpolka* written at the age of six). He received a classical education at the Holkapellmeister Friedrich Meyer before attending Munich University. His first symphony (*Symphony in D minor*) received its first performance in 1881 and was performed the following year in both New York and Cologne. From that time, Richard Strauss's future both as a composer and a conductor was assured. The late nineteenth century marked the supremacy of Romantic classical music and Strauss had the good fortune to meet and hear composers of the calibre of Wagner, Mahler, Liszt and Berlioz (then regarded as the avant-garde). He also worked with conductors such as Weingarten, Von Bulow, and Mahler and later in life Bruno Walter, Toscanini and Beecham.

By the second half of the nineteenth century the symphony to a great extent had lost the classical form it had inherited from Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven and was being superceded by the Symphonic poem, a symphony in which a literary event, action or emotion is depicted. In the Symphonic poem Richard Strauss found his metier as can be seen in works such as the *Alpine Symphony* (1915), *Don Juan* (1884), *Till Eulenspiegel* (1895), *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (1894), *Don Quixote* (1896), and *Ein Heldenleben* (1898). Opera also claimed Strauss's attention and masterpieces such as *Der Rosenkavalier* (1909-1910), *Salome* (1905), and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912) are only a small proportion of his prolific output which also includes two horn concertos, works for wind ensembles such as *Metamorphosis* (1945) and a considerable number of songs.

During the second world war, Strauss experienced difficulties in working in the atmosphere of the Nazi regime. Unlike Bruno Walter or Toscanini he had no Jewish antecedents and therefore initially Strauss did not feel any compulsion to leave Germany. He remained at Garmisch in Bavaria maintaining apolitically that he was interested in music not politics.. Nevertheless his relationship with the Nazi's was uneasy particularly since his son's wife (and therefore his grandchildren) were Jewish. After refusing to permit his house in Garmisch to be requisitioned by Nazi's he was increasingly hounded and was removed from the Reichsmusikkammer. Realising that he could no longer maintain his neutrality he was forced to move to Switzerland where he spent the last four years of the war. After the war he faced the Denazification Bureau set up by the occupying Allied forces but was cleared of any offences in 1948.

The *Four Last Songs* were written during Strauss's exile in Switzerland at a time when Strauss, depressed by events in Germany, felt that he no more to say as a composer. Strauss however loved poetry and reading the poem *Im Abendrot* by Joseph von Eichendorff, he realised that it expressed what life held for him and his wife. *Im Abendrot* was originally conceived as a single song but Strauss later added three settings of poems by Herman Hesse to create a song cycle which is permeated by a spirit of tenderness, tranquillity and readiness for death. Each song in the cycle has a slightly different orchestration and while the orchestral forces are large there is a simplicity of melodic line and a freedom from the ostentation and excesses of many of Strauss's earlier compositions.

At his wedding in 1894 Strauss had presented his bride, the soprano Pauline de Ahna with four songs he had composed for her and now when he realised their life together was coming to an end he expressed in the *Four Last Songs* what he felt was the ethos of their long life together. Strauss gave the songs to the great soprano Kirsten Flagstad who sang them at their first performance, conducted by Furtwangler, in the Royal Albert Hall on May 22 1955.

Fruhling

In dämmrigen Grüften
träumte ich lang
von deinen Bäumen und blauen Lüften,
von deinem Duft und Vogelsang.

Nun liegst du erschlossen
in Gleich und Zier,
von Licht übergossen
wie ein Wunder vor mir.

Du kennest mich wieder,
du lockest mich zart,
es zittert durch all meine Glieder
deine selige Gegenwart!

September

Der Garten trauert,
kühl sinkt in die Blumen der Regen.
Der Sommer schauert
still seinem entgegen.

Ende Golden tropft Blatt um Blatt
nieder vom hohen Akazienbaum.
Sommer lächelt erstaunt und matt
in den sterbenden Gartentraum.

Lange noch bei den Rosen
bleibt er stehen, sehnt sich nach Ruh.
Langsam tut er die großen
müdigewordnen Augen zu.

Beim Schlafengehen

Nun der Tag mich müd gemacht,
soll mein sehnliches Verlangen
freundlich die gestirnte Nacht
wie ein müdes Kind empfangen.

Hände, laßt von allem Tun,
Stirn, vergiß du alles Denken,
alle meine Sinne nun
wollen sich in Schlummer senken.

Und die Seele unbewacht
will in freien Flügen schweben,
um im Zauberkreis der Nacht
tief und tausendfach zu leben.

Im Abendrot

Wir sind durch Not und Freude
Gegangen Hand in Hand:
Vom Wandern ruhen wir beide
Nun überm stillen Land.

Rings sich die Täler neigen,
Es dunkelt schon die Luft,
Zwei Lerchen nur noch steigen
Nachträumend in den Duft.

Tritt her und laß sie schwirren,
Bald ist es Schlafenszeit,
Daß wir uns nicht verirren
In dieser Einsamkeit.

O weiter, stiller Friede!
So tief im Abendrot,
Wie sind wir wandermüde -
Ist dies etwa der Tod?

Spring

In dusky vaults
I have long dreamt
of your trees and blue skies,
of your scents and the songs of birds.

Now you lie revealed
in glistening splendour,
flushed with light,
like a wonder before me.

You know me again,
you beckon tenderly to me;
all of my limbs quiver
from your blissful presence!

September

The garden is mourning,
the rain sinks coolly into the flowers.
Summer shudders
as it meets its end.

Leaf upon leaf drops golden
down from the lofty acacia.
Summer smiles, astonished and weak,
in the dying garden dream.

For a while still by the roses
it remains standing, yearning for peace.
Slowly it closes its large
eyes grown weary.

While going to sleep

Now that the day has made me so tired,
my dearest longings shall
be accepted kindly by the starry night
like a weary child.

Hands, cease your activity,
head, forget all of your thoughts;
all my senses now
will sink into slumber.

And my soul, unobserved,
will float about on untrammelled wings
in the enchanted circle of the night,
living a thousandfold more deeply.

In Twilight

We've gone through joy and crisis
Together, hand in hand,
And now we rest from wandering
Above the silent land.

The valleys slope around us,
The air is growing dark,
And dreamily, into the haze,
There still ascends two larks.

Come here, and let them flutter,
The time for sleep is soon.
We would not want to lose our way
In this great solitude.

O vast and silent peace!
So deep in twilight ruddiness,
We are so wander-weary -
Could this perchance be death

**A Child of our Time. Michael Tippett
(1905 – 1998)**

Michael Tippett's first mature work, *A Child of our Time* was written during the years 1939-41 when Europe was shrouded in one of the darkest and most evil periods in its history. The events of November 7 1938 or Kristallnacht as it has since become known became Tippett's inspiration. On that date Herschel Grynszpan, a seventeen year old German-Polish Jew, who had failed to prevent the deportation of his parents (who were among the 50,000 German Jews forcibly deported to Poland), assassinated the diplomat Ernst von Rath at the German legation in Paris. Although Grynszpan's parents survived, thousands of Jews and other minorities died in transit. In response to Grynszpan's action the Nazi's began a brutal pogrom against the Jews, millions of whom died in concentration camps in Poland, Germany and elsewhere in Nazi occupied Europe.

Tippett a pacifist, was appalled by the horrific events taking place in Europe and believed that as a composer he should, through his music, address the moral issues of the time. Work on the Oratorio, which at the time had no prospect of performance, began in September 1939 and occupied Tippett for two years. However it was not until 1943 that Tippett, following a brief period of imprisonment as a conscientious objector, showed the score to Benjamin Britten who helped to arrange the first performance which took place in the Adelphi Theatre, London in March 1944 with Walter Goehr conducting the Morley College Choir and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Tippett conceived the work as a modern parallel to the great passions of J.S.Bach whose influences are seen in the way in which the work is divided into arias, narrative recitatives, choruses and chorales. The oratorio's tripartite structure is related to Handel's Messiah which Tippett had conducted on many occasions. Tippett invited the poet T.S.Eliot to write the text but the latter having received Tippett's sketch advised the composer to complete the libretto himself. Tippett later described the process of writing the oratorio as follows

" the real beginning of 'A Child of our Time' was the moment when Grynszpan's act and Jesus, who voluntarily died for sins, became the strands which formed, as it were, a new-old pattern. This pattern seemed to me expressible only in an oratorio.... Bit by bit, the drama sorted itself out into chorus, scena, airs and recitative. But there was something missing which was traditional for the Lutheran Passions and that was the chorales..... The effect of the chorales was like a popular commentary on the divine story.One Sunday I listened-in to a man singing Negro (Afro-American) songs(and) when he came to the phrase in the spiritual 'Steal Away' I was shot through with the sudden realisation that the melody was greater than the individual singer.....So I got hold of a book of spirituals and chose five which exactly suited certain emotional situations in my text.... These five spirituals became the chorales."

In *A Child of our Time* Part One establishes a general background, depicting the horrific violence of the age, Part Two describes the boy's action against evil where he acts as a scapegoat for the sins of mankind (the child of our time) and Part Three attempts to show that reconciliation if not redemption is a possibility.

The oratorio established Tippett as a composer of substance and has been performed worldwide. It remains relevant today for it speaks for all those who are oppressed and although it is a protest against man's inhumanity it carries with it a message of hope and reconciliation.

Programme notes by Diane Knill

PART 1

CHORUS

The world turns on its dark side. It is winter.

THE ARGUMENT

Alto Solo

Man has measured the heavens with a telescope,
driven the gods from their thrones.

But the soul, watching the chaotic mirror, knows that
the gods return.

Truly, the living god consumes within and turns the
flesh to cancer!

SCENA

Chorus

Is evil then good? Is reason untrue?

Alto

Reason is true to itself;

But pity breaks open the heart.

Chorus

We are lost. We are as seed before the wind.

We are carried to a great slaughter.

BASS SOLO*The Narrator*

Now in each nation there were some cast out by authority and tormented, made to suffer for the general wrong.

Pogroms in the east, lynching in the west; Europe brooding on a war of starvation.

And a great cry went up from the people.

CHORUS OF THE OPPRESSED

When shall the usurers' city cease, And famine depart from the fruitful land?

TENOR SOLO

I have no money for my bread;

I have no gift for my love.

I am caught between my desires and their frustration as between the hammer and the anvil.

How can I grow to a man's stature?

SOPRANO SOLO

How can I cherish my man in such days, or become a mother in a world of destruction?

How shall I feed my children on so small a wage?

How can I comfort them when I am dead?

A SPIRITUAL*Chorus and Soli*

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;

Steal away, steal away home.

I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the thunder,

The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,

I ain't got long to stay here.

Steal away, *etc.*

Green trees a-bending,

poor sinner stand a-trembling,

The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,

I ain't got long to stay here.

Steal away, *etc.*

PART 2**CHORUS**

A star rises in mid-winter. Behold the man!

The scapegoat! The child of our time.

BASS SOLO*The Narrator*

And a time came when in the continual persecution one race stood for all.

DOUBLE CHORUS OF PERSECUTORS AND PERSECUTED

Away with them! Curse them! Kill them!

They infect the state.

Where? How? Why?

We have no refuge.

BASS SOLO*The Narrator*

Where they could, they fled from the terror.

And among them a boy escaped secretly, and was kept in hiding in a great city.

CHORUS OF THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS

We cannot have them in our Empire.

They shall not work, nor beg a dole.

Let them starve in No-Man's-Land!

BASS SOLO*The Narrator*

And the boy's mother wrote a letter, saying:

SCENA*Solo Quartet**Mother (Soprano)*

O my son! In the dread terror they have brought me near to death.

Boy (Tenor)

Mother! Mother! Though men hunt me like an animal, I will defy the world to reach you.

Aunt (Alto)

Have patience.

Throw not your life away in futile sacrifice.

Uncle (Bass)

You are as one against all.

Accept the impotence of your humanity.

Boy

No! I must save her.

A SPIRITUAL*Chorus and Soli*

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,

Nobody knows like Jesus.

O brothers, pray for me, O brothers, pray for me,

And help me to drive Old Satan away.

Nobody knows *etc.*

O mothers, pray for me, O mothers, pray for me,

And help me to drive Old Satan away.

Nobody knows *etc.*

SCENA*Duet — Bass and Alto Soli**The Narrator (Bass)*

The boy becomes desperate in his agony.

Alto

A curse is born.

The dark forces threaten him.

The Narrator

He goes to authority.

He is met with hostility.

Alto

His other self rises in him, demonic and destructive.

The Narrator

He shoots the official —

Alto

But he shoots only his dark brother —

And see — he is dead.

BASS SOLO

The Narrator

They took a terrible vengeance.

THE TERROR

Chorus

Burn down their houses! Beat in their heads!

Break them in pieces on the wheel!

BASS SOLO

The Narrator

Men were ashamed of what was done.

There was bitterness and horror.

A SPIRITUAL OF ANGER

Chorus and Bass Solo

Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;

Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.

When Israel was in Egypt's land,

Let my people go,

Oppressed so hard they could not stand,

Let my people go,

"Thus spake the Lord," bold Moses said,

Let my people go,

"If not, I'll smite your first-born dead,"

Let my people go.

Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;

Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.

CHORUS

The cold deepens.

The world descends into the icy waters where lies
the jewel of great price.

ALTO SOLO

The soul of man is impassioned like a woman.

She is old as the earth, beyond good and evil,
the sensual garments.

Her face will be illumined like the sun.

Then is the time of his deliverance.

SCENA

Bass Solo and Chorus

Bass

The words of wisdom are these:

Winter cold means inner warmth,
the secret nursery of the seed.

TENOR SOLO

The boy sings in his prison.

My dreams are all shattered in a ghastly reality.

The wild beating of my heart is stilled: day by day.

Earth and sky are not for those in prison.

Mother! Mother!

SOPRANO SOLO

The Mother

What have I done to you, my son?

What will become of us now?

The springs of hope are dried up.

My heart aches in unending pain.

ALTO SOLO

The dark forces rise like a flood.

Men's hearts are heavy: they cry for peace.

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus and Soprano Solo

O, by and by, by and by,

I'm gonna lay down my heavy load.

I know my robe's going to fit me well,

I've tried it on at the gates of hell.

O, hell is deep and a dark despair,

O, stop, poor sinner, and don't go there!

O, by and by, by and by,

I'm gonna lay down my heavy load.

PART 3

Chorus

How shall we have patience for the consummation
of the mystery?

Who will comfort us in the going through?

Bass

Patience is born in the tension of loneliness.

The garden lies beyond the desert.

Chorus

Is the man of destiny master of us all?

Shall those cast out be unavenged?

Bass

The man of destiny is cut off from fellowship.

Healing springs from the womb of time. The simple-
hearted shall exult in the end.

Chorus

What of the boy, then? What of him?

Bass

He, too, is outcast, his manhood broken in the clash of powers.

God overpowered him — the child of our time.

GENERAL ENSEMBLE

Chorus and Soli

Tenor

I would know my shadow and my light,
so shall I at last be whole.

Bass

Then courage, brother, dare the grave passage.

Soprano

Here is no final grieving, but an abiding hope.

Alto

The moving waters renew the earth.

It is spring.

Chorus repeats the words of the soloists.

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus and Soli

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,

Deep river, Lord,

I want to cross over into camp-ground.

O, chillun! O, don't you want to go,

To that gospel feast,

That promised land,

That land where all is peace?

Walk into heaven, and take my seat,

And cast my crown at Jesus' feet.

Deep river, my home is over Jordan, I want to cross
over into camp-ground, Lord!

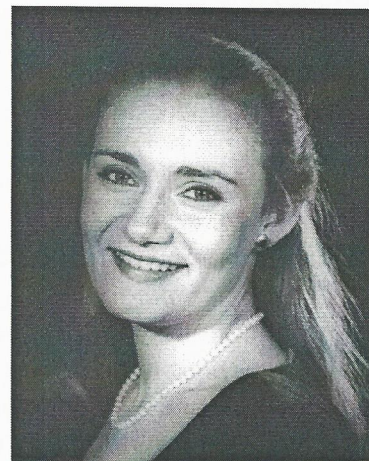
Elizabeth Atherton read Music at Trinity College Cambridge before entering the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, where she studied with Patricia MacMahon. Elizabeth has won several prestigious prizes including the 2001 Maggie Teyte Prize and the 2003 Handel Singing Competition.

Whilst a student at the RSAMD she performed the roles of Conception in *L'Heure Espagnole*, the title role in *Alcina*, Female Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* and *Ilia* in *Idomeneo*. Elizabeth performed the roles of Melissa in *Amadigi* and La Stonatrilla in Gassmann's *L'Opera Seria* at the Batignano Festival in Italy and Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with English Touring Opera

In concert Elizabeth has performed Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces* with the London Symphony Orchestra and Antonio Pappano, Bach's *B Minor Mass* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; *Messiah* with the Northern Sinfonia and Matthew Best, Vivaldi *Gloria* and Bach *Magnificat* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; Haydn *Creation* with the English Festival Orchestra and Sir David Willcocks at the Royal Albert Hall, Mahler and Strauss Lieder with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Jiri Belohlavek and Berlioz *Les nuits d'Été* with the English Chamber Orchestra and Benjamin Wallfisch. In recital she has appeared at the Purcell Room, the Hampstead and Highgate Festival and the Linbury Studio of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. Elizabeth has appeared on In Tune for BBC Radio 3 and made her commercial recording debut with Liszt's *Via Crucis* and *Missa Choralis* with Matthew Best and the Corydon Singers on the Hyperion label.

Recent engagements have included Pamina in *The Magic Flute* and Thibault in *Don Carlos* for Welsh National Opera, Tippett's *The Vision of St Augustine* with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Richard Hickox at the 2005 Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, Handel's German Arias at the London Handel Festival, Mozart's *Coronation Mass* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the St Magnus Festival, Debussy's *Trois Ballades de Francois Villon* and Boulez's *Le Soleil des eaux* with Pierre Boulez and BBC Symphony Orchestra, Elgar's *The Spirit of England* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and recitals with Iain Burnside at the Leeds Lieder+ Festival and the Wigmore Hall plus recitals in London's National Portrait Gallery and a BBC Radio 3 recital in the Voices series.

Elizabeth is a Welsh National Opera Associate Artist and also the recipient of the WNO Sir John Moores Award and WNO Chris Ball Bursary. Future plans for WNO include Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, Minerva in *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* and Micaela *Carmen*, as well as Pamina *Die Zauberflöte* for Grange Park Opera. Other plans this season include concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Orchestra of WNO and a recording of Childhood Songs with Roderick Williams and Iain Burnside.



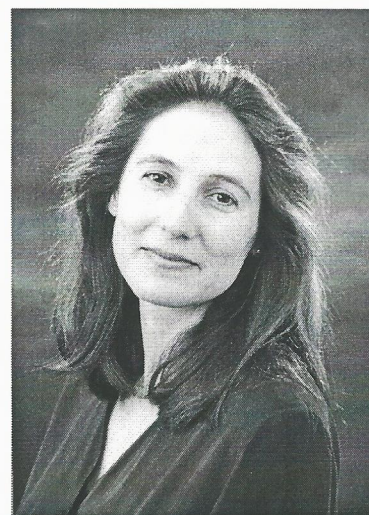
Clarissa Meek studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Ellis Keeler. On leaving she joined Scottish Opera where early roles included the title role in *Iolanthe* (broadcast by BBC Radio), the Violin Pupil in *Street Scene* and, for Scottish Opera Go Round, Madam Larina in *Eugene Onegin*.

Other early work included a long relationship with Glyndebourne where she created the roles of Fear and Model in *The Second Mrs Kong*, gained critical acclaim for her performance of Madam Larina and was awarded their Erich Vietheer Memorial Award.

More recently she was seen as Mother in *Misner* at Glyndebourne, in a concert performance and recording of *Boris Godunov* for Brighton Festival and in concert with the Flanders Orchestra in Belgium, Alcmena in *Die Liebe der Danae* at Garsington, Annie Fisher in *Friend of the People* with Scottish Opera, Suzuki in *Madam Butterfly* and singing *Sea Pictures* in the Symphony Hall, Birmingham.

The concert hall has always played a very important part in Clarissa Meek's work. Her repertoire is widely varied and engagements have taken her throughout Britain and Europe, most notably *Messiah* in Hanover and at Glyndebourne, *Dream of Gerontius* at St Asaph's Cathedral, Haydn's *Stabat Mater* at Aldeburgh, Verdi's *Requiem* at Paisley Abbey, a BBC Symphony Orchestra broadcast as Ursule in *Béatrice et Bénédict* and Berlioz *Nuits d'Été* with the Flanders Symphony Orchestra under the batons of such conductors as Sir Simon Rattle and Walter Weller.

Recent engagements include Katisha in *The Mikado* and Mrs Grose in *The Turn of the Screw* for Grange Park Opera, Second Squire in *Parsifal* at the Royal Opera House, Virtu/Pallade in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Netherlands Opera in New York and Fox in *Cunning Little Vixen* with Opera Theatre Company and English Touring Opera, *Mayerling* for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, Fox in Brno and concerts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Bamberger Symphoniker. This season's and future plans include Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Heavenly Voice in Stephen Barlow's new opera *King* in Canterbury Cathedral and *May Night* at Garsington.



Matthew Beale was a choral scholar at New College, Oxford, where he read Psychology. Following three years as a lay clerk at St George's Chapel, Windsor he trained at the Royal College of Music with Margaret Kingsley and the National Opera Studio where he was sponsored by the Royal Opera House. He received The Laura Ashley Scholarship as well as a Sybil Tutton award from the Musician's Benevolent Fund and one from the Ian Fleming Charitable Trust. He now studies with Ryland Davies.

Matthew's opera engagements have included Andres *Wozzeck* for Welsh National Opera, First Priest in *Die Zauberflöte* and Second Gravedigger in *Hamlet* at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Remendado in *Carmen* with Glyndebourne on Tour and Roderigo in *Otello* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera. He made his Italian opera debut as Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with John Eliot Gardiner for La Fenice. He has performed the role of Septimius in *Theodora* for Opéra du Rhin and sung Berengario in Handel's *Lotario* and Ugone in *Flavio* with the London Handel Festival.

Matthew's concert appearances have included Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* and *Missa Brevis* with The Sixteen / Harry Christophers, Dupré's *De Profundis* with the Bayerisches Rundfunkorchester / Marcello's *Viotti* in Munich, *Dido & Aeneas* with The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment at The Proms and in Utrecht, the *St John Passion* with The Hanover Band, Bach's *B Minor Mass* with The Manchester Camerata, *Easter Oratorio* with The Scottish Chamber Orchestra / Nicholas Kraemer, Mozart's *C Minor Mass* with The Bach Choir / David Hill, Britten's *Les Illuminations* with The City of London Sinfonia and Finzi's *Dies Natalis* at The Highbury Festival. He has also sung Boccherini's *Stabat Mater* with The King's Consort at the Wigmore Hall, *Messiah* with the Ulster Orchestra and with the Hallé Orchestra, *Creation* with the Guildford Philharmonic and Bach and Handel with the Raglan Baroque Players/Nicholas Kraemer. As a recitalist he has performed in Japan, England and Wales. His repertoire includes Bach's *Magnificat* and *St Matthew Passion*, Monteverdi's *Vespers*, Mozart's



The mezzo-soprano soloist at tonight's concert will be Pippa Longworth.

Pippa Longworth mezzo-soprano

Studied at Trinity College of Music, Guildhall School of Music, L'Academie de Maurice Ravel and at the Breton International Music Symposium.

As a soprano, Pippa made her professional debut at the Royal Opera House as Silver Spirit in Taverner's *Therese* and then sang throughout Europe both in concert and opera. Roles included Amelia *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Tatyana *Eugene Onegin* and Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni*. She has performed with such conductors as Sir Georg Solti, Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Roger Norrington, Pierre Devaux, Sergio Siminovitch Robert Craft and Jan Latham Koenig.

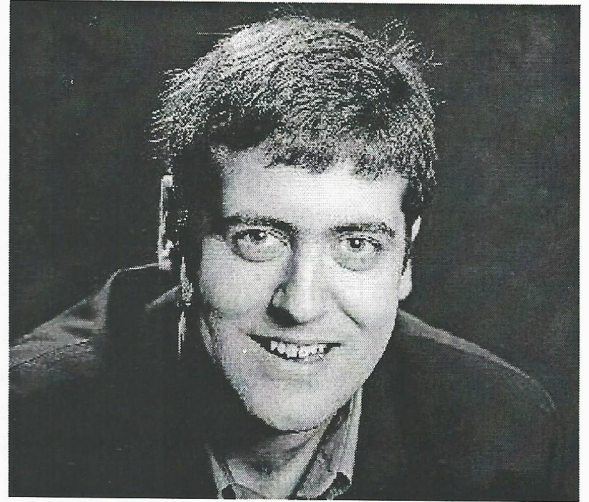
Now a mezzo soprano, Pippa's recent performances have included Handel's *Saul* with John Tomlinson in the title role, the Prince of Persia in Handel's *Belshazzar* conducted by Graeme Jenkins, the Mother and Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* for Lyric Opera in Dublin, Venus in Cavalli's *L'Orione* for Venetian Opera, Queen of the Fairies in *Iolanthe* with Carl Davis and the Halle Orchestra, a solo recital for Dartington International Music Festival, *Nelson and Emma* devised by herself and the baritone, Karl Daymond, concerts with the Brodsky String Quartet including Respighi's *Il Tramonto*, Florence Pike in *Albert Herring* for New Kent Opera, Marcellina *The Marriage of Figaro* with Savoy Opera and Federica Luisa Miller for Opera Holland Park.

Requiem, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* and Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*. He recently recorded the tenor arias in Bach's *St John Passion* with The Choir of New College Oxford / Edward Higginbottom for Naxos and Marcel Dupré's *La France au Calvaire* and *De Profundis* with The Vasari Singers / Jeremy Backhouse.

Matthew's 05/06 engagements include Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* for Glyndebourne On Tour, his Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin début in *Dido & Aeneas*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* for Welsh National Opera, the Mozart Requiem with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment / Sir Roger Norrington, Schürmann's *Ludovico Pius* with the Akademie für Alte Musik / Attilio Cremonesi, the Evangelist in the *St Matthew Passion* with the Bachkoor Holland / Roy Goodman and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* with the English Chamber Orchestra / Goodman and The Sixteen / Christophers.

Robert Rice was a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge and a postgraduate at the Royal Academy of Music in London, under Mark Wildman. He continued his studies with Richard Smart and Sheila Barnes.

Robert is in great demand as a concert artist throughout the British Isles and abroad. He sings regularly with the major choral societies, including, most recently, those of Hereford, Worcester, and Wokingham. He has appeared at Three Choirs Festival in Hereford, the Windsor Festival, the St David's Festival and the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival, among others. During a busy season in early 2003 he will perform *Elijah* for Henley Choral Society, Bach's *Mass in B minor* with the Northern Sinfonia, and Mozart's *Mass in C minor* with the CBSO at Birmingham Symphony Hall.



On stage Robert has a growing reputation for demanding twentieth-century roles. He has appeared in Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, at the South Bank, and his *The Martyrdom of Saint Magnus* for the Opera Group, as well as Ligeti's *Aventures/Nouvelles Aventures* at the Bonn Chance Festival, and *Arcane*, by Paul Clark, for Opera Circus at the Cardiff International Festival of Musical Theatre last October. Further credits include the Vicar in *Albert Herring* for Opera East Productions and the Sailor in *Dido and Aeneas* for the Gabrieli Consort at the Théâtre du Chatelet, Paris.

Robert has been featured regularly on television and radio, most recently singing music by Richard Terry live on Christmas Day on BBC1, and appearing on BBC Masterclass with Barbara Bonney. He is also increasingly in demand as an arranger of vocal music, and is published by Novello.

Leo Hussain trained at Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music. Among orchestras he has conducted recently are Southbank Sinfonia, West Forest Sinfonia and the Salomon Orchestra. He was for three years Music Director of the University of London Symphony Orchestra, with whom projects included Mahler's fifth and Shostakovich's eighth symphonies. Equally at home in the opera pit as on the concert platform, Leo was for two years Head of Music for English Touring Opera's Spring Tours, for whom he conducted *Figaro*, *The (Little) Magic Flute*, *Così fan Tutte* and *Maria Stuarda*. He has also conducted at the Batignano Festival, and for Glyndebourne on Tour (*Pelleas et Melisande* and *La Cenerentola*). Last year he was acclaimed for his first Verdi opera, *Falstaff*, at the Aberdeen International Youth Festival. This season he has conducted a new opera, *Gentle Giant*, for ROH2 at the Royal Opera House, and *Pelleas et Melisande* at the Salzburg Easter Festival with Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker. He is currently conducting a new production of *Così fan Tutte* for Opera Holland Park; plans for the coming year include *Rigoletto* for Opera North, and a return to Salzburg to assist Valery Gergiev on *Benvenuto Cellini*



THE LONDON CONCERTANTE

Artistic Director: Chris Grist

The London Concertante is one of the finest chamber ensembles in the country, its players brought together through a shared passion for chamber music. Under the dynamic leadership of the international recording artist, Adam Summerhayes, the ensemble thrives on inspired programming and the loyalty of some of the country's finest instrumentalists. The London Concertante gives over 100 concerts each year at major London venues as well as performing for festivals, music clubs and theatres.

With an enviable array of critical acclaim, a wide spectrum of recordings and performances throughout the UK and Europe, The London Concertante rightfully claims its position at the forefront of classical performers in the UK.

Janet Coxwell - Assistant Chorus Master. Since graduating from the Guildhall School, Janet has worked professionally as both a solo artist and choral singer. While specialising in early music, she enjoys all genres, from Tallis and Purcell to Bjork backings and Disney soundtracks.

Janet works closely with Maidenhead-based composer Patrick Hawes. Their latest collaboration resulted in the birth of a new professional choir, Conventus, whose first album, *Blue in Blue*, featuring Janet's "voice like melting honey on freshly buttered toast" (*Radio 3*) and the English Chamber Orchestra, came out in 2004.

Her work with Patrick Hawes has launched Janet into the world of media music. Her "bell-like tones" (*Financial Times*) are heard regularly on TV, radio, film, and classical and pop CDs. She worked on Dreamworks' film *Sinbad* and Brad Pitt's *Troy*.

Janet regularly tours Japan, Australia and America with The Tallis Scholars. In January they premièred Tavener's *Tribute to Cavafy* with Vanessa Redgrave and Sarah Connolly. They are touring the USA in April, and performing in France and Spain later in the year. This summer Janet will take courses in Oakham and Seattle, sing in the New York *Mostly Mozart* festival and début at the New England Tanglewood Festival in August. In October she will sing Pamina in *The Magic Flute* in Brighton.

Nearer home, Janet judges competitions, takes singing master classes and leads choral workshops, among others for Newbury Choral Society, to which, following a long-time association, she was recently appointed Assistant Chorus Master.



Audience members are invited to offer their feedback on tonight's concert via the feedback forum at www.newburychoral.org.uk.

The
Cecilia *Forthcoming Concert*
Consort

Saturday 14 October 2006

Douai Abbey, Upper Woolhampton

Programme to be confirmed

NEWBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Saturday November 25th 2006, 7.45pm

ST NICOLAS CHURCH, NEWBURY

Beethoven *Violin Concerto*

Brahms *Symphony No. 1*

Conductor: Christopher Dawe

Tickets £10, (£8 concessions, £5 students) available from the Newbury Corn Exchange (01635 522733)

Saturday March 31st 2007

CORN EXCHANGE, NEWBURY

Ravel *Pavane pour an infante defunte*

Gershwin *Piano Concerto in F*

Walton *Symphony No. 1*

Conductor: Christopher Dawe

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

16th December, 2006
7.45 pm

St Nicolas Church, Newbury
Rachmaninov *Vespers*

24th March, 2007
7.45 pm

St Nicolas Church, Newbury
J.S.Bach *St Matthew Passion*

23rd June, 2007
7.54 pm

Douai Abbey, Woolhampton
Elgar *Serenade for Strings*
Britten *Cantate Misericordium*
Handel *Dixit Dominus*

Conducted by Leo Hussain



Newbury Choral Society is affiliated to Making Music, which represents and supports amateur performing societies throughout the UK.

The Newbury Choral Society is very grateful for the financial assistance which has been provided by:

The Arts Council (England)

The Englefield Trust

Newbury Town Council

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING? THEN WHY NOT JOIN US?

Membership of Newbury Choral Society is open to all who enjoy choral singing, can read music, and can promise a regular commitment. The Society meets regularly on Monday at 7.30 pm at the Newbury Methodist Church Hall. If you are interested in joining the Choral Society and would like more information:

**telephone the Secretary, Mike Barthorpe, on 07796 337 002,
or visit our website: <http://www.newburychoral.org.uk>**

Newbury Choral Society has provided the finest choral music for Newbury citizens for over 120 years. If you or your company would like to support this thriving Society and contribute to its splendid musical programme please contact **Mike Barthorpe**.