



SEASON 2007-08

REVIEW

Presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Society

26 February 2009

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LEEDS PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

President: The Lord-Lieutenant of West Yorkshire, Dr Ingrid M Roscoe

Musical Director: David Hill

Honorary Vice-Presidents: Donald Hunt and Simon Lindley

Chairman: Chris Spencer

Hon Secretary: Janet Juřica

Hon Treasurer: Patsy Dorset

Hon Chorus Secretary: Anne Prinn

Hon Concert Manager and Hon Librarian: David Lunn

Hon Ticket Secretary: Susan Duce (Mrs)

Hon Marketing and Sponsorship Secretary: Roger Shirley

Committee Members: Adam Boniface, Graeme Gooday, Councillor R Harker, Elizabeth Hellewell, Rowena Herbert, Andrew McCann, Val Middleton, Rosemary O'Dea, Mary Wilson.

Chorus Master: Mark Hindley

Deputy Chorus Master: Chris Johns

Accompanist: Alan Horsey

Deputy Accompanist: Claire Bullimore

Charity Registration Number: 506467

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I had hoped greatly to be with you at the AGM since there is much for me to learn about your inspiring Society and this would have been a great opportunity. A problematic back and one or two logistical problems mean that this is sadly not possible.

Your performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio filled me with delight: I should have been impoverished to miss that experience.

How marvellous that choral music of the calibre you produce continues to come forth in an age where so much that is cheap and synthetic holds fashion.

It is wonderful to see Leeds's own Philharmonic Chorus producing sounds to rival Huddersfield or any other choir in the land.

Many good wishes for a sparkling year ahead.

I do look forward to coming to another of your performances soon.

Ingrid Roscoe
Lord Lieutenant of Yorkshire
(President)

LEEDS PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY - WHO WE ARE

Background

The Society, founded in 1870, has the distinction of being Leeds' longest continuously performing chorus - aiming throughout to promote for its audiences and members choral performances of the highest professional standards.

Its repertoire is extensive and varied. Unfamiliar, forward-looking and demanding works have been a frequent feature of the Chorus's programmes with performances including Rachmaninov's *The Bells*, Mahler's Symphonies 2 and 3, Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*, Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*, Franz Schmidt's *The Book of the Seven Seals*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, Pärt's *Te Deum*, Dvořák's *St Ludmila*, Adams *Harmonium* and Tavener's *Lament for Jerusalem*.

As well as its tradition of concerts in Leeds Town Hall, the Chorus regularly performs in other venues such as Manchester Bridgewater Hall, Symphony Hall Birmingham and The Sage. The Chorus also regularly tours Europe with great success. Tours were undertaken to the Czech Republic - Brno in 2001, Prague/Pízen in 2003 and Estonia, Latvia and Finland in 2005. The April 2007 tour found the chorus performing *Messiah* Parts 2 and 3 to rapturous reception in the Stephansdom in Vienna, Liszt Academy in Budapest and Eger Cathedral. CDs of the Budapest performance are available from the Society. The chorus visits Krakow over Easter 2009 where it will give the Polish première of Karl Jenkins *The Armed Man – A Mass for Peace*.

Over the years the Chorus has been conducted by the distinguished musicians who have held the post of its Musical Director including Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, Sir Edward Bairstow, Sir Malcolm Sargent, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Charles Groves and Richard Hickox.

The Chorus was delighted when David Hill took up appointment as its Music Director in May 2005 – continuing the tradition of its leadership by the most eminent of British choral conductors.

The recent appointment of Mark Hindley as Chorus Master with Chris Johns as Deputy Chorus Master means the Society is looking forward to many years of exciting music making with them.

CDs of the chorus's performances have proved to be 'best-sellers' - as well as receiving critical acclaim. As well as the Budapest *Messiah*, currently available CDs include Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* (Naxos) and Stanford's *Te Deum* and *Stabat Mater*, (Chandos). The Chorus also makes regular broadcasts on Radio 3. In recent years these have included Berlioz's *Grande Messe des Morts*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Elgar's *The Kingdom*, Mahler's *Resurrection*

Symphony No 2, Brahms's Ein Deutches Requiem, Schumann's Nachtlid and Britten's War Requiem.

Partnership with Leeds City Council and Leeds International Concert Season

Leeds Philharmonic Society is delighted to have established even closer links with Leeds International Concert Season and with Leeds Town Hall: home of the Leeds Philharmonic Chorus.



These closer links come from the Society's establishment during 2008 of a new working partnership with Leeds City Council.

As the longest serving chorus in the city, Leeds Philharmonic Chorus has performed in the Town Hall as part of Leeds International Concert Season for many years and this new relationship sees the Chorus officially based in the building, alongside the Leeds International Concert Season. The Society has recruited a Chorus Administrator based in the offices of the Music Department at the Town Hall and who helps to manage the running and future development of the choir.

The Society co-promotes with the Leeds International Concert Season (LICS) at least 2 concerts in Leeds Town Hall every year in which the chorus takes part. This is in addition to the one or two concerts the Society promotes on its own in Leeds Town Hall or other venues, contributing to special events and Galas at the invitation of the City Council or LICS, accepting engagements to sing in concerts from other promoters and occasional touring abroad.

Planned Performances for the 2009/10 Season

14th November 2009: Mozart, Requiem and Haydn Organ Mass

20th February 2010: Durufle, Requiem

16th May 2010: Elgar, Dream of Gerontius

REVIEW OF THE 2007-08 SEASON

The start of the 2007-08 season found the Chorus, as part of the Leeds International Concert Season, undertaking the world première with orchestra of Philip Wilby's *The Brontë Mass* - the work commissioned by the Society in memory of its late Chairman John Brodwell.

December found the Chorus singing carols - its now traditional contribution to the Lord Mayor's Carol Concerts and in response to a special invitation from Harewood House.

The Society's own promotion in February 2008 of contemporary music by two leading English 'mystic' composers – John Tavener and John Rutter.



It was conducted by the Society's Musical Director David Hill and was the first concert following the newly formed relationship with the Grammar School at Leeds. The concert - particularly the Tavener, the first performance in Leeds - was received very appreciatively by a regrettably smaller than hoped for audience.



The May performance in Leeds Town Hall of Elgar *The Music Makers* and Prokofiev *Alexander Nevsky* was the first co-promotion by the Society in a new three way promotion with LICS and the Leeds Festival Chorus whereby in each season each of the City's major choruses has a two-way promoted concert in the City's concert season and joins to perform works requiring very substantial choral forces in a second three-way concert promotion. Well received by the audience the concert perhaps remains most in the minds of some chorus members

through an unforgettable showing of the iconic Russian film for which Prokofiev provided the score.

The Season culminated with a return to Opera in the Park at Temple Newsam in July with the Orchestra of Opera North under the baton of Oliver von Dohnanyi.

The season was notable for the appointment of the new Chorus Master – Mark Hindley with, as his deputy, Chris Johns. The Chorus was very grateful indeed to Alan Horsey our accompanist who acted as Chorus Master during the interregnum and to Claire Bullimore the Deputy Accompanist who was able to support us during rehearsals.



The Committee appreciates the way in which loyal Chorus members responded to the demands of another exceptionally demanding season. The success of the Chorus depends on the efforts of all its members and

hence the Society as a whole must be very grateful to the solid core of members who are prepared to rise to all challenges with hard work, dedication and good humour.

The Leeds Building Society again generously sponsored the Chorus - as Season Sponsors – both financially and by contributing a party of guests to the audience for the Bronte Requiem. The Leeds Phil is very grateful for the generous support which the Building Society has given it over the years and understands why, in today's financial climate, that support can no longer be forthcoming.

Thanks continue to be due to the Manager and staff of Leeds Town Hall for their assistance at the Society's concerts. The Committee also acknowledges the assistance of the Principal Music Officer and staff at the Leeds International Concert Season, and hence Leeds City Council: their support, both physical and financial, and co-operation in connection with the concerts which form part of the Leeds International Concert Season continue to enable the Chorus to sing in concerts with professional artists and orchestras which achieve standards which the Society would not otherwise be able to sustain financially. The Committee is also grateful to the BBC as co-promoters and broadcasters and to the management of the different orchestras. The Committee also expresses particular thanks on behalf of the Leeds Philharmonic Chorus to the members of other choirs who joined in performances.

Music Performed in Season 2007/2008

24th November 2007

Leeds Town Hall

Philip Wilby *Brontë Mass*
Vaughan Williams *Toward the Unknown Region*

Leigh Melrose baritone

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

David Hill

For LICs

16th December 2007

Harewood Church

Community Carols

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

Alan Horsey

For Harewood House

20th December 2007
Leeds Town Hall

Lord Mayor's Carol Concerts

Fine Arts Brass Ensemble
Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

Alan Horsey - Organ
Ray Payne - Percussion

Alan Horsey
Simon Lindley

In Conjunction with LICs

23rd February 2008
Leeds Town Hall

John Tavener
Lament for Jerusalem

John Rutter *Requiem*

soloists

Leeds Girls High School Senior Choir

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

Orchestra: Manchester Camerata

Conductor: David Hill

17th May 2008
Leeds Town Hall

Elgar *The Musicmakers*

Prokofiev *Alexander Nevsky*

Sarah Fulgoni mezzo soprano

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

BBC Philharmonic

Conductor: Simon Wright

In Conjunction with: Leeds Leisure Services
and Leeds Festival Chorus

26th July 2008
Temple Newsam

Opera in the Park

Anne-Sophie Duprels, Frances Bourne, Edgaras
Montvidas, Jonathan Summers

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus

Orchestra of Opera North

Conductor: Oliver von Dohnányi

For LICs

SPONSORS

The Society's principal aim is to promote concerts of the highest artistic standards. As a registered charity and, accordingly, non-profit making organisation, its financial contribution to concerts could not be made if it were not for the generous assistance of sponsorship by private individuals and commercial organisations. Please see www.leedsphil.org for contact details and a case paper for patronage of the Society.

Current sponsors include:

Gold Sponsors: Professor Barrie O. Pettman, the Baron of Bombie.
The A & S Burton Charitable Trust.

Silver Sponsor: The Lynn Foundation.

Bronze Sponsors: Cleveland Steel and Tubes Ltd.
KPMG.

The Society also gratefully acknowledges particular contributions from:



FRIENDS OF THE PHIL

President: Mary Wilson

Secretary: Rosemary O'Dea

A band of Friends is a well-recognised, constructive way of encouraging support, keeping interested people informed and, of course, raising much needed funds. Choirs throughout the country find it a struggle to keep going financially, with rising costs of hiring halls, music, soloists, orchestras and conductors. There is a continual need to find ways of promoting performances and bringing in new audiences if live classical music is to survive.

We have many loyal supporters, spouses, partners, friends and former members who, as Friends, welcome the chance to lend support to the Society. In return they are kept informed of our activities by means of letters from the Friends' Secretary and the Chorus's Newsletter; if they wish their names can be included in concert programmes. In addition, we invite all Friends to attend a reception at the Society's own promoted concerts (normally one per year).

For those who appreciate music and for former singing members, joining the Friends of the Phil is a way of expressing a belief in the value of maintaining high standards of live choral music in Leeds.

For information about joining the Friends of the Phil please contact Rosemary O'Dea on 01132942161.