

The Chantry Singers

present

**A CONCERT for
St. NICOLAS**

Conductor :- Timothy Venvell

St. Nicolas Parish Church,
Great Bookham

Saturday 3rd December 1988 7.30 p.m.

Programme - price £3.00
(Concessionary £1.50)
Proceeds to the Organ Fund

Programme

The Sussex Carol
There is no rose
The Angel Gabriel
Hosanna to the Son of David

trad. arr. Willcocks
Joubert
trad. arr. Willcocks
Weelkes

Children's Carols

Michael Wild

Sleepers, Wake!

1. Chorus
5. Recit (Bass) Come, enter in with me
6. Air (Duet for Soprano and Bass) My friend is mine
7. Chorale: Glory now to Thee

Bach

Interval

Ding dong merrily on high
Mary walked through a wood of thorn
Hymn to the Virgin

trad. arr. Willcocks
Radcliffe
Britten

Five Carols

1. There is no rose
2. Out of your sleep
3. That younge child
4. Sweet was the song
5. Susanni

Richard Rodney Bennett

Interlude

In dulci jubilo

J. S. Bach

Robert Langston organ

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day
Coventry Carol
We wish you a merry Christmas

trad. arr. Willcocks
Leighton
trad. arr. A. Worrell

Programme Notes

Our programme this evening has an Advent flavour, with an occasional foray into the coming Christmas season. We begin with the well-known arrangement by David Willcocks of *The Sussex Carol*, with its sparkling organ accompaniment.

The words of *There is no rose* are medieval, but the setting is modern - John Joubert published this small-scale gem in 1954. Continuing the Marian theme, we next hear of the Annunciation by the Archangel Gabriel in this varied arrangement of another traditional Advent tune. The first section concludes with a hymn of praise to the coming Saviour, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, in the setting by the Tudor composer Thomas Weelkes.

Returning to the present century, we welcome the Children's Choir of Bookham to sing a set of carols by Michael Wild, written just a few years ago and recently recorded. These *Children's Carols* are a delightful addition to the repertoire. Each carol highlights a different aspect of the Christmas story, from the Shepherds to the Wise Men including holly and Christmas pudding on the way! This evening piano accompaniment is used although string and percussion parts have also been written.

To conclude the first half, the Chantry Singers perform excerpts from the cantata for the Sunday before Advent by J. S. Bach. In his first few years as Cantor of St. Thomas's Church, Leipzig, Bach wrote almost a cantata a week, a quite phenomenal achievement. Later he only wrote cantatas for special feast days, and this cantata is one of his later ones, probably composed in 1731. The long first chorus is interesting for several reasons. The instrumental part is in the style of a French overture, with persistent dotted rhythms throughout, while the top vocal part is simply the Advent chorale tune, *Wachet auf*, declaimed in long notes above the contrapuntal lower voices. This was a device Bach employed when he did not have time to teach his trebles a new part - hence they sang the plain hymn-tune. The effect of the whole, however, is far from plain. The Bass recitative talks about the bridegroom (Jesus) coming to take his bride (the Church). The duet which follows then demonstrates the unity of bride (Soprano) and bridegroom (Bass) in figurative terms for the eternal unity of Jesus and the Church. The cantata closes with a forthright harmonisation of the chorale melody heard at the beginning (*Wachet auf*).

The second half begins with a new arrangement of the traditional *Ding dong merrily on high*. This is followed by two more carols about the Virgin Mary. Philip Radcliffe was a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and doubtless wrote this little gem for the college choir. Benjamin Britten (1915-76) wrote a large amount of choral music with great understanding and sensitivity for the human voice. In his *Hymn to the Virgin* he explores the antiphony of full chorus contrasting with four solo voices, to magical effect.

Richard Rodney Bennett is one of a small number of musicians to succeed in every style of music he tries - film scores, jazz, classical - he has done them all. His *Five Carols* on mostly familiar texts sound twentieth century, and yet are very simple in construction, showing a positive and accessible harmonic language. They were completed in 1967, and first performed by Michael Nicholas (now organist of Norwich Cathedral) and the choir of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton.

After an organ interlude we conclude with three 'carols'. *Tomorrow shall be my dancing day* is another traditional tune, wittily arranged by David Willcocks. *The Coventry Carol* again contains familiar medieval words but the setting is relatively new. Kenneth Leighton, who sadly died earlier this year, completed this beautiful setting in 1956. We conclude in a traditional manner, though you may be surprised by this arrangement.

NEXT CONCERT

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford
Saturday 25th February 1989

Mozart - Requiem

Pergolesi - Stabat Mater

Further details and tickets available from Hon. Secretary,
3, Swayne's Lane, Merrow.GU1 2XX Tel. G. 67062