

The Chantry Singers

SUMMER CONCERT

Conductor ... Andrew Wilson

Flute ... David Smith

**Tormead School, Guildford
Saturday 21st June, 1997**

PROGRAMME

Hymn to St Cecilia, Op.27

Benjamin Britten (1913-76)

Flute interlude

Suite de Trois Morceaux

Benjamin Godard (1849-1895)

Allegretto

Idylle

Valse

From the "Songs of Farewell"

C. Hubert H. Parry (1848-1918)

My soul, there is a country

I know my soul hath power to know all things

Never, weather-beaten sail

INTERVAL

Five Childhood Lyrics

John Rutter (b.1945)

Monday's Child

The Owl and the Pussycat

Windy Nights

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

Sing a Song of Sixpence

Flute interlude

Suite Antique

John Rutter (b.1945)

Ostinato

Chanson

Waltz

Let's do it

Over the rainbow

S'wonderful

Cole Porter

Arlen / Harburg

George & Ira Gershwin

Hymn to St. Cecilia

In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm;
And by the ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.

Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.

*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.

I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.

I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.

All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

I shall never be
Different. Love me.

Chorus O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day, O re-arrange.

Solo O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, o weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dear,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.

Chorus O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.

Solo O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.

Chorus O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of our intellectual will.

Solo That what has been may never be again.

Chorus O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.

Solo O bless the freedom that you never chose.

Chorus O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.

Solo O wear your tribulation like a rose.

W.H. Auden

Songs of Farewell

1.

My soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry
all skilful in the wars:

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flow'r of Peace—
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress and thy ease.

There above noise and danger,
Sweet peace sits crowned with
smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.

Leave then they foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

Henry Vaughan

He is thy gracious friend,
And - O my soul awake!
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.

2.

I know my soul hath power to know all things,
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.

I know my life's a pain and but a span;
I know my sense is mocked in everything;
And to conclude I know myself a Man,
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

John Davies

3.

Never weather beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrims' limbs affected slumber more
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly
 out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest.

Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven's high paradise,
Age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines whose beams
 the blessed only see:

O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!
Thomas Campion

Benjamin Britten (born on St Cecilia's Day) was one of the outstanding British musicians of his generation. As well as composing, he is remembered for his great accompanying skills and as a reviver of early English music, especially that of Purcell. Although composing at the same time as serial composers in the rest of Europe, and indeed he wanted to study with Berg, Britten did not embrace European avant-garde techniques and never abandoned the principles of tonality. Today he is remembered most for his contribution as a vocal composer, writing twelve operas, a large body of solo songs with piano or orchestra and a collection of secular and sacred choral works. In 1939 he set sail for America intending never to return, but in 1942 homesickness and a conscientious objectors' tribunal forced him to return to England. He had collaborated with the poet W.H. Auden for his opera *Paul Bunyan* in 1940, and it was he who provided the text for the *Hymn to St Cecilia*. The text is set in three sections, each ending with the refrain *Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions*.

Hubert Parry is often overlooked when English music of the 19th century is surveyed, yet it was he and his near contemporary Charles Stanford who were at the forefront of the English renaissance. His style is deeply embedded in the rich harmonic language of the late 19th century and his works do not contain a hint of the atonal and serial techniques of his continental contemporaries. His vocal works have stood the test of time and have held their places in the choral repertory since their composition; *Blest Pair of Sirens* and the Coronation anthem *I was Glad* are among the best-known. Recently there has also been a revival in his orchestral music with his Piano Concerto and Five Symphonies having been recorded. He was nearly seventy years old when the six motets known as the *Songs of Farewell* were composed. Five of them have secular texts, and as a collection they are virtually unsurpassed in terms of their richness of expression and sensitivity to the inflexions of the text.

John Rutter has established himself as one of the foremost choral composers of his generation with his special gift for writing and

arranging vocal music for amateurs and young people. His neo-romantic style has made works such as his *Requiem* (1985), and a clutch of carols (including the famous *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*), immensely popular. Combining the harmonic language of English composers from earlier this century with the rhythmic vitality of composers such as Mathias and Walton, the *Suite Antique* was written in 1979 for the Cookham Festival, to be performed using the same forces as Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No.5*, and the work pays homage to the forms and styles of Bach's day. The *Five Childhood Lyrics* pay homage to the world of children and date from 1973. They are settings of rhymes and verses that Rutter recalls from his own childhood.

Andrew Wilson was born and educated in Leeds. He went on to study at Edinburgh University where he won the prize for organ performance. He gave recitals in the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival as well as other venues in Central Scotland. Since leaving Edinburgh, he has spent time at Cardiff University studying for an MA in eighteenth century Music, and in particular English oratorio of the period, and has given recitals in Cambridge and Ipswich. He is currently Assistant Director of Music at the Royal Grammar School in Guildford, having previously held a similar position in Ipswich, and he accompanies the University of London Chamber Choir, with whom he has made a number of recordings. At present he also conducts the Guildford Chorale, a youth choir based in Guildford, and Beare Greene and Newdigate Choral Society, as well as examining for GCSE and A-level.

David Smith began his musical training as a chorister at Guildford Cathedral. He has been playing the flute for nine years and at present is a member of the Junior Department at the Royal College of Music. He is about to leave the Royal Grammar School in Guildford to embark upon the pre-degree course at the Royal College of Music before going on to read music at university. He is also an accomplished pianist, having performed Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Guildford Sinfonia earlier this year. He is also a keen sportsman.