

*ACS*

*Altrincham Choral Society*

*Mendelssohn*

*Elijah*

*Conductor*

*Steven Roberts*

*Manchester Philharmonia*

*Leader : Francis Cummings*

*Organist: Edward Rugman*

*Laurie Ashworth*

*Soprano*

*Adrienne Murray*

*Mezzo Soprano*

*Adam Magee*

*Tenor*

*Andrew Greenan*

*Bass*

*Maxwell Wynn Davies*

*Treble*



# **Altrincham Choral Society**

Registered Charity No 500729

**Musical Director : Steven Roberts**

**Assistant Musical Director : David Lloyd-Mostyn**

**Accompanist : Lydia Bryan**

## **Singing Day**

**10.00 am to 5.00 pm, Saturday 3rd March 2007**

**Altrincham Methodist Church  
Springfield Road, Altrincham, WA14 1HF**

**Everybody is welcome to this day – an opportunity to sing some exciting music from scratch, and find out more about Altrincham Choral Society.**

**Karl Jenkins:**

***Requiem***

**Górecki:**

***Totus Tuus***

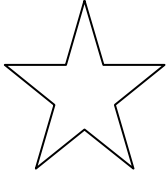
**Contact Liz Foy on 01565 754740**

## **Open Rehearsal**

**Why not join us for our open rehearsal on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006? You can come and join in, find out more about the choir or simply come and listen to us prepare for our Christmas concerts.**

**For more details of where we are and how to find us, visit our web-site**

**[www.altrincham-choral.co.uk](http://www.altrincham-choral.co.uk)**



# **Altrincham Choral Society**

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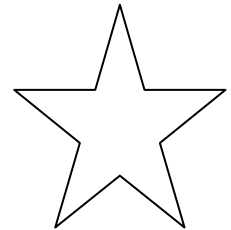
**Musical Director : Steven Roberts**

**Assistant Musical Director : David Lloyd-Mostyn**

**Accompanist : Lydia Bryan**

**Organist : David Ricketts**

*Carols*



*with the Choral*

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2006

Hale United Reformed Church

Ashley Road, Hale

7.30 p.m.



**Tickets £7.50**

**(Accompanied under 16s £2) available from**

**B Coombs 0161 437 0915,**

**[www.altrincham-choral.co.uk](http://www.altrincham-choral.co.uk)**

**or any choir member.**

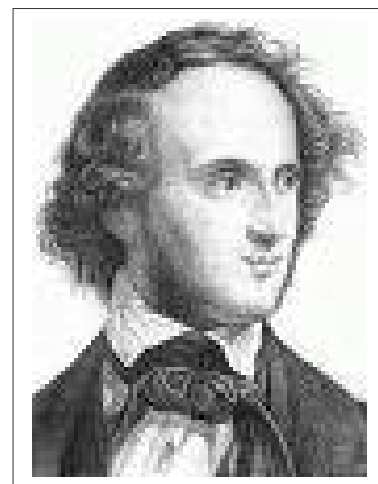


## Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

For many people, even today, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* is rivalled only by Handel's *Messiah*. This has been so since the first spectacular performance of *Elijah* on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1846 in Birmingham Town Hall.

Mendelssohn himself conducted the large choir and orchestra, and the Times wrote: 'Never was there a more complete triumph'. The Victorians loved it, and immediately took *Elijah* to their hearts. The work appealed in particular to Evangelical Anglicans and Nonconformists as the text is based closely on the Lutheran Bible.

It could be said that the popularity of *Elijah* played a major part in the growth in number and size of choral societies during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the newly industrialised areas of Britain.



Mendelssohn was not the only 19<sup>th</sup> century composer to revive the oratorio form, but his two completed works, *St Paul* (1836) and *Elijah* (1846) are the only representatives of this time to achieve lasting popularity.

He began to plan an oratorio on the subject of *Elijah* as early as 1837, a few months after the great success of *St. Paul*, at the Birmingham Musical Festival. But it was only finished ten years later, following a period of intense composition, when he received a commission from the Festival Committee.

Written for England, *Elijah* was nevertheless composed to a German text, which Mendelssohn painstakingly compiled himself. The translator William Bartholomew prepared the English version for the première in Birmingham.

After the success of the first performance, Mendelssohn returned to England the following year. On his previous European travels he had visited England nine times. He had played for the young Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. During his final tenth visit in 1847, he gave six more performances of *Elijah* in London, Manchester and Birmingham and shortly after, in November of the same year Mendelssohn suffered a stroke. Overworked and grieving after the recent death of his dear sister, he died aged only thirty-eight.

His obituary in the Musical Times January 1848 reflected the esteem in which he was held by the country at large; - "... the personal influence of Mendelssohn on the progress of music especially in England cannot be replaced; and that we shall never see him, hear him, or again partake in the enthusiasm which he excited is our deepest subject of regret. He was the adopted son of England."

To say that Mendelssohn's gifts were phenomenal is an understatement. It could be said that he was an even greater prodigy than Mozart, composing fully mature works from the age of 12. He was also a good painter, had a wide literary knowledge and wrote brilliantly. (His grandfather was Moses Mendelssohn the Enlightenment Philosopher). He was a superb performer and an inspiring conductor – and he was generally well liked.

Mendelssohn led the way in the revival of Bach's music by performing the *St Matthew Passion* in March 1829, its first performance since Bach's death in 1750.

The popularity of his work in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was followed by a severe reaction, when he was dismissed as a composer of sentimental salon music. But the pendulum has swung again and the best qualities of his music, its craftsmanship, restraint, poetry, inventive orchestration and melodic freshness are now highly valued.

## **Elijah - Part One**

Based largely on the account in the book of Kings, *Elijah* relates the chief events in the prophet's life.

The drama starts with Elijah taking centre stage and announcing the impending drought. This is the curse of an angry God against King Ahab and the Israelites who have forsaken the one true Lord and are worshipping the god Baal and other idols.

A short instrumental passage follows which reflects a powerful picture of suffering during years of famine and leads into the desperate cries of the people – Help, Lord!

Obadiah entreats the people to be faithful to the God of Israel, but the people seem unconvinced and give vent to their fears of being cursed by God and cut off from his mercy.

An angel appears to Elijah, warning him to flee into the desert, where he will be sustained by the waters of Cherith's brook and food from the ravens.

The angel reappears to command Elijah to travel to Zarephath, where a widow will care for him until such time as the famine is ended. There he is able to save her dying son.

Three years have passed and Elijah returns to confront King Ahab and challenges the priests of Baal to see 'whose God is God' by praying for fire upon the altar of sacrifice. They accept the challenge and the people evoke Baal. Mocked by Elijah, in mounting desperation, they cry even louder, but in vain.

Elijah then humbly calls upon God to hear his words and to show the people that He is the only Lord. Elijah's prayer is answered and to the amazement of the people flames consume the sacrifice. They acknowledge God as their one Lord and Elijah orders the prophets of Baal be slain.

Elijah now prays for rain, and when a child sent up the mountain reports the approaching clouds, the first half of the oratorio ends with a great outburst of rejoicing.

## **Part Two**

The second half begins with an entreaty to the Israelites to be faithful to God, to keep his commandments, and have no fear.

Elijah again confronts Ahab, this time provoking Jezebel to incite the people to turn against him. Elijah retreats to the desert and resigns himself to die. While he sleeps, the angels comfort him, (psalm 121).

When he awakes an angel bids Elijah make the distant journey to Mount Horeb, where he shall see God in person.

With courage restored, Elijah returns to his mission, taking up the good fight, overthrowing mighty kings and wreaking vengeance in the name of the Lord before being taken up to Heaven in a 'fiery chariot'.

The final choruses look towards the optimism of the New Testament, with an exhilarating concluding Amen.

Programme notes : Elizabeth Jones.

Sources: The Oxford Dictionary of Music, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Elijah (HMV Classics), <http://www.bbc.co.uk/music/profiles/mendelssohn.shtml>.

## Part the First

*“As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I stand.  
There shall not be dew nor rain these years  
But according to my word ”*

### Overture

<i>Help, Lord! Wilt thou quite destroy us?</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Lord! Bow Thine ear to our prayer!</i>	<i>Duet and chorus</i>
<i>Ye people, rend your hearts</i>	<i>Tenor</i>
<i>If with all your hearts</i>	<i>Tenor</i>
<i>Yet doth the Lord see it not</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Elijah! Get thee hence</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>For He shall give His angels</i>	<i>Double chorus</i>
<i>Now Cherith's brook is dried up</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>What have I to do with thee?</i>	<i>Duet</i>
<i>Blessed are the men who fear Him</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Baal, we cry to thee; hear and answer us!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Call him louder, for he is a God!</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Hear our cry, O Baal!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Call him louder! He heareth not</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Baal! Hear and answer!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>Cast they burden upon the Lord</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>The fire descends from heaven</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Is not his word like a fire?</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>Woe unto them who forsake Him!</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>O man of God, help they people</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>O Lord, thou hast overthrown thy enemies</i>	<i>Recitative and chorus</i>
<i>Thanks be to God!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>

## *Part the Second*

*“Hear ye, Israel  
Hear what the Lord  
speaketh”*

<i>Be not afraid, saith God the Lord</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>The Lord hath exalted thee</i>	<i>Recitative and Chorus</i>
<i>Woe to him, he shall perish</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Man of God, now let my words be precious</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>It is enough ; O Lord take my life</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>See, now he sleepeth</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Lift thine eyes to the mountains</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>He, watching over Israel, slumbers not</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>O rest in the Lord</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Night falleth round me, O Lord!</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Behold! God the Lord passed by!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Above Him stood the Seraphim</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>Holy! Holy! Holy is God the Lord!</i>	<i>Recitative , Chorus and Semi-Chorus</i>
<i>Go, return upon thy way!</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>I go on my way</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>For the mountains shall depart</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>Then did Elijah the prophet break forth</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>Then shall the righteous shine forth</i>	<i>Aria</i>
<i>Behold, God hath sent Elijah</i>	<i>Recitative</i>
<i>But the Lord, from the north hath raised one</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
<i>O come everyone that thirsteth</i>	<i>Quartet</i>
<i>And then shall your light break forth</i>	<i>Chorus</i>

salford choral society

Conductor: James Eastham  
with



Altrincham Choral Society  
Blackburn Music Society  
Keighley Vocal Union  
Nelson Arion Male Voice Choir  
Trebles of Oldham Hulme Grammar School for Boys Choir

# Orff : Carmina Burana

The Orchestra of the North  
Leader Andrew Orton

Simon Keenlyside : Baritone  
Amy Freston : Soprano  
Barry Banks : Tenor

Sunday, 29th April 2007, 7.30 p.m.  
The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Tickets: Box Office 0161 907 9001  
[www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk](http://www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk)



## **Maestro's Musings**

Next to the Messiah, Mendelssohn's Elijah is probably the most popular choral work in this country.

In spite of the labels of 'Victorianism' and 'old-fashioned' this work is as popular today as it was at its premiere performance in 1846, and there is a warm appreciation surrounding it, even before rehearsals begin. Choirs enjoy singing this masterpiece and audiences enjoy listening to it.

Elijah was composed at the end of Mendelssohn's life and was certainly a high point in his compositional genius.

Influenced by both Bach and Handel, the oratorio in two parts is carried along with a series of recitatives, arias and choruses, with the chorus often playing a dramatic role along with the main protagonist Elijah.

There is a real sense of word-painting in this piece and the audience should be able to visualise the drama progressing, particularly in some of the more 'fiery' choruses.

The story unfolds as a series of tableaux allowing the Israelites to suffer appalling trials and tribulations whilst cheerfully praising God for his goodness.

It is always a privilege to conduct this work and to see it start to take a dramatic shape, culminating in the powerful combination of orchestral textures, solo and choral singing.

Whether you're hearing Elijah for the first time or have enjoyed this incredible work before, I do hope that tonight's performance will be a special and memorable evening for you.

### **Steven Roberts**

Steven Roberts has combined a career in education with his work as a conductor, musical director and adjudicator, working both in this country and in Europe and as far afield as Peru and Bahrain. His work in education has included training musicians and actors and as senior manager with responsibility for all links with schools.

Despite a very busy educational career, Steven has conducted numerous groups, including the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union, The Huddersfield Choral Society, Dodworth and Skelmanthorpe Male Voice Choirs and a variety of orchestras, brass bands and wind ensembles.

Alongside his commitments with the Altrincham Choral Society, he holds the same position with the Chesterfield Philharmonic Choir. He regularly leads choral days with both choirs.

Steven has also worked as musical director for numerous theatrical productions, and this diversity reflects his music and drama training.

Steven has also acted as vocal coach for *Sing Live UK*, preparing singers for concerts in Huddersfield, Leeds, the Royal Albert Hall and '1000 Voices' at The FM Hallam Arena in Sheffield and was musical director for 'Sing the Musicals' at the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham.

Most recently, Steven has taken up the permanent position of Music and Company Development Director with *Sing Live UK*. This post will see him working exclusively within the music industry.

Steven is an adjudicator member of the British and International Federation of Festivals, regularly adjudicating in this country and also for the Classic FM sponsored Music for Youth Festival.

## David Lloyd-Mostyn

David Lloyd-Mostyn is a composer and teacher who lives in Manchester and works in the north of England. He studied under Phillip Wilby and Sam Hayden at the University of Leeds, where he was twice the winner of the University's composition prize, and obtained a BA(Hons) and MMus.

A skilful and witty practitioner of music for small chamber ensembles, David's compositions are beginning to enjoy international exposure and critical acclaim. He has been commissioned by the flute, oboe and piano trio Intriplicate to write a new work in 2006, and in October 2005 *Minesweeper* was premiered by the New York Miniaturist Ensemble at The Lincoln Center, New York. In 2005 he was commissioned to write *Nyctaphonia* for the Manchester-based trio, Nyx, who were subsequently awarded the 2005 RNCM Granada Prize for the chamber music with their performances of the work.

David's choral work has led to many high profile performances and broadcasts: He provided all of the original music and arrangements for the 2005 Christmas midnight Mass broadcast on BBC Radio 4, and his work *Jargonvox* has formed part of the National Youth Choir's repertoire throughout 2006.

As a conductor, David Lloyd-Mostyn holds positions with Warrington Youth Orchestra and Altrincham Choral Society, and he teaches music at a secondary school in Stockport.

## Manchester Philharmonia

A feature of the orchestral scene in England is the pool of freelance musicians of a high standard, available to form ensembles for any occasion. The Philharmonia is made up of such players, and includes musicians from around the region, from York to Birmingham and beyond. Their experience is vast, with members working regularly with all the symphony orchestras in the North and Midlands, as well as pursuing freelance careers as chamber musicians and soloists.

Theirs is a world of camaraderie and friendship, where performing excellence is as important as the ability to turn to the different styles of music required of them. They bring the same professionalism to a night at the opera or, as here, an enjoyable evening working with local choirs who share their love of music.

## Edward Rugman

*Edward Rugman appears by kind permission of the Principal, Royal Northern College of Music.*

Edward is 23 years old, a BMus (Hons) graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music, an Associate of the Royal College of Organists and a Licentiate of Trinity College, London. He has won many awards for public recitals and competitions. He was invited by the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire to meet the Queen, for contributions to Music in Civic Life, on the occasion of Preston City receiving its Royal Charter and Seal in 2002.

He has been at the Royal Northern College since he was 18, with an appointment as the Pilling Trust Organ Scholar at the City Church of St. Ann, Manchester. His principal study is in classical organ, but has had elective tuition in classical pianoforte, jazz piano and accompaniment for choirs and ensembles on organ and piano.

He was awarded the RNCM 'Meadowcroft' prize for Excellence and the Samuel Patterson Award from the Royal College of Organists in his final undergraduate year.

Edward has played in many of our Cathedrals including St. Patrick's in Dublin and recently at the Edinburgh Festival. In the past he has given recitals in Prague Cathedral and accompanied choirs in Notre Dame and L'Eglise de la Madeleine, Paris. His diary includes further performances at Chester, Liverpool and York Minster. He has been heard on BBC Radio and seen on ITV television.

He continues his studies at the Royal Northern College with his Master's degree course in organ and performance and composition.

## Laurie Ashworth

*Laurie Ashworth appears by kind permission of the Principal, Royal College of Music, London.*

Laurie Ashworth is a Lancastrian from Appley Bridge, and studies at the Royal College of Music with Patricia Rozario. She studied with Caroline Crawshaw from the age of 16, and began her undergraduate studies at the Royal Northern College of Music in 2002. Whilst at the RNCM she sang in the chorus in Purcell/*Dido and Aeneas*, Puccini/*Suor Angelica*, Stravinsky/*The Rake's Progress*, and Puccini/*Madama Butterfly* (Clonter Opera 2004). She won numerous competitions, and in 2006 was awarded a Gold Medal, the college's highest accolade for performance.

Opera roles include the maid in Dibdin/*The Ephesian Matron*, Lori and Pepi in Johann Strauss/*Spirit of Vienna*, and Serpetta in Mozart/*La Finta Giardiniera*.

Laurie makes regular appearances as a soloist on the concert platform and has a wide repertoire ranging from Bach to Messiaen. She has also made some notable recordings, including songs by Malcolm Arnold for a remembrance CD, and Mozart's aria *Der Holle Rache* for Granada's *The Worst Witch*.

Future engagements include Orff/*Carmina Burana*, and music by Finzi at the Royal Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool in December 2006.

Laurie is extremely grateful to the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and the Arts and Humanities Research Council for their support of her musical studies.

## Adrienne Murray

Adrienne Murray was born in the Isle of Man. She is a graduate of Huddersfield Polytechnic and the Royal Northern College of Music. Her distinctive voice was first noticed by ACS when she played the major role of Arcane in the RNCM production of Handel's rarely performed *Teseo*.

She has worked with many of the leading conductors including Sir George Solti, Sir Charles Groves, Richard Hickox, Jane Glover, Stephen Cleobury, Stephen Wilkinson, and Owain Arwel Hughes. She is particularly at home on the concert platform in recital and oratorio. She has sung in the Bridgewater Hall, Sheffield City Hall, the Sheldonian in Oxford and Symphony Hall in Birmingham.

Last year she sang Elgar/*Sea Pictures* at the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool alongside the celebrated cellist Raphael Wallfisch. This summer Adrienne was invited to be part of the Festival International de Musique et des Arts de la Tour de France. She again performed *Sea Pictures* together with Vivaldi/*Gloria* and Mozart/*Requiem* and *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*.

Future engagements include the two last mentioned works in the Isle of Man, Handel/*Messiah* and a concert in Malta. She is currently working with composer/accompanist David Dubery on a recording of songs which include combinations for voice, piano, harp and recorder.

Adrienne also enjoys an extremely busy teaching career.

## Maxwell Wynn Davies

Maxwell is 11 years of age and is a pupil at Lady Barn House School in Cheadle. He is a soloist with the well known Manchester Boys Choir, with whom he has toured in Canada, the USA, Germany, Jersey and the Czech Republic.

In July, he sang the role of Nicholas as a Boy in a performance of Britten: *St Nicholas*, in Chesterfield, and in March 2007 will again sing the part of The Youth, (*Elijah*) in Manchester. Last month he played the role of Louis in *The King and I* for Urmston Operatic Society.

Maxwell enjoys playing the trombone and likes cricket and tennis.

## Adam Magee

Adam Magee was born in Birmingham and began singing at the age of seven in his local parish choir. He started singing lessons in 1991 with Jo Dwyer and went on to sing with the National Youth Choir, Ex Cathedra and the CBSO Chorus. After graduating from RNCM in 2002 he undertook an opera course at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with Peter Alexander Wilson.

Whilst at RNCM he performed in many of the college productions including the choruses of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflote*, *Jenufa*, and *Queen of Spades*. Roles include 1<sup>st</sup> Man in Armour/ *Die Zauberflote*, Dr Caius/*Falstaff*, Peter Quint/*Turn of the Screw* and Reuben Waterford/*Dr Heidegger's Fountain of Youth*.

Adam has also performed the role of Benedict/*Beatrice and Benedict* for West Riding Opera, and Le Prince Charmant/*Cendrillon* with RSAMD.

On the concert platform Adam's repertoire includes Bach/*St John Passion*, Haydn/*Creation*, Handel/*Messiah*, Judas Maccabeus, Mozart/*Coronation Mass*, *Vespers*, *Requiem*, Rossini/*Petite Messe Solennelle*, Mendelssohn/*St Paul*, *Elijah*, and Finzi/*Dies Natalis*.

## Andrew Greenan

Andrew Greenan was a Choral Scholar at St John's College, Cambridge and read Modern Languages. He then went to the Royal Northern College of Music where he studied with John Cameron. He made his operatic debut at La Scala, Milan in Schoenberg's *Die Gluckliche Hand*.

Since spending five years as Principal Bass with English National Opera, Andrew has had a very active international career, which has taken him to Paris, Lyon, Hamburg, Bregenz, Turin, Seattle, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Tel Aviv, Barcelona, Nancy, Brussels, Vienna and other places, working with such conductors as Solti, Haitink, Davis, Pappano, Dohnanyi, Mackerras, Elder, Rizzi and Hickox. His many roles include Wotan, Sachs, Pogner, Sarastro, Bluebeard, Claggart, Rocco and King Marke.

His extensive concert repertoire has seen him appear with many leading orchestras including RPO, BBC Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the Belgian National Orchestra. He sang in the award winning *Les Troyens* with Sir Colin Davis and the LSO.

Recent performances include Verdi/*Requiem* at St. Paul's Cathedral, Haydn/*Creation* in Singapore and Baron Ochs/*Der Rosenkavalier* in Nancy.

Future plans take in Kothner/*Die Meistersinger* in Geneva, and *Tannhauser* and *Maria Stuarda* in San Diego. Earlier this year Andrew made his debut at Metropolitan Opera New York as King Henry in *Lohengrin*.



Breakthrough Breast Cancer is the leading charity committed to fighting breast cancer through research and education and has established the UK's first dedicated breast cancer research centre, in partnership with The Institute of Cancer Research. Breakthrough's scientific work ultimately aims to eradicate breast cancer by discovering the causes of the disease, finding methods of prevention and developing new treatments, with scientific findings being translated as rapidly as possible into practical help for patients. The new Breakthrough Toby Robins Breast Cancer Research Centre, at the Institute of Cancer Research, officially opened in December 1999. Housed in the Mary-Jean Mitchell Green Building, the Centre is associated with the Royal Marsden Hospital, at the very heart of the largest comprehensive cancer complex in Europe.

Breakthrough campaigns for policies that support breast cancer research and better services, as well as promoting breast cancer education and awareness among the public, policy makers, health professionals and the media.

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