

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

The Past and The Present

Steven Roberts - Conductor

Jonathan Scott – Organ

Members of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band

Lord, in Thy Mercy - Mendelssohn

Christus factus est - Bruckner

Sacred Song - Brahms

Prelude & Fugue in A minor BWV 543 - JS Bach

Lord Jesus Christ, my Life and Light - JS Bach

Ave verum Corpus - Mozart

Dostoino yest - Tchaikovsky

Laudate Dominum - Hanson

High Flight - Page

Celebration - Hollings

Gloria - Rutter

Sunday 7th July 2019 7.30 pm
Royal Northern College of Music
Manchester

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

www.altrinchamchoral.co.uk

Registered Charity No 500729

President: Roger Shelmerdine

Honorary Life Members: Steven Roberts, Roger Shelmerdine, Lydia Bryan

Chairman: Robert Gledhill Deputy Chairman: Karen Jarmany

Treasurer: Stephen Campbell Secretary: Pamela Moulton

Altrincham Choral Society prides itself in offering a diverse, innovative and challenging programme of concerts, including many choral favourites.

We are a forward-thinking and progressive choir with a strong commitment to choral training and high standards, so providing members with the knowledge, skills and confidence to thoroughly enjoy their music-making.

Rehearsals are on Monday evenings at Altrincham Methodist Church,
Barrington Road, Altrincham.

Car Park entrance off Barrington Road. Satnavs please use WA14 1HF.

We are only a 5 minute walk from the train/metro/bus station.

Rehearsals are from 7.45 to 10.00 pm

For more information contact us

E-mail: secretary@altrinchamchoral.co.uk

Tweet us @acs1945 Like us on Facebook

ACS has a new website – www.altrinchamchoral.co.uk

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD

The Award for Exceptional Service may be conferred on any member who is deemed to have given exceptional service to the society.

The award may be made to a member who has served for 25 or more years on the Committee or a Sub-Committee.

In recognition of their services to the society,
the Exceptional Service Award has been awarded to

Pat Arnold John Greenan Colin Skelton Joyce Venables Andrew Wragg

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY



Would you like to support our choir by becoming a patron or a sponsor?
We operate a well-established scheme for patrons and sponsors
and hope to develop it further with the help of our supporters.

As a patron you will receive advance publicity, complimentary
tickets, reserved seats at concerts, acknowledgement in all our
programmes and on the website.

Michael Cummings is our Patrons Secretary. He is looking forward to
hearing from you and can answer your enquiries about the scheme.
Contact him on 0161 928 1179 or patrons@altrinchamchoral.co.uk

ACS is grateful to the following for their
continued support this season:

Platinum Patrons

Anonymous
Bernard Lawrence
Lee Bakirgian Family Trust
John Kennedy
Flo Matthews (in Trust)

Gold Patrons

Barrie and Maureen Netting
John Greenan
Joyce Venables

Sponsors

Faddies Dry Cleaners of Hale
Men's Accessories by Marc Darcy

Donations

Jane Hardman
Jane Weightman

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY



Formed in 1945, *The Altrincham and District Choral Society* gave its first performance in the then Stamford Hall, in aid of the Altrincham General Hospital building fund.

Since then, the choir has continued to grow and offer its members and audience alike a rich tapestry of concerts and events. With over 120 singers, *Altrincham Choral Society* prides itself on producing a diverse, innovative and challenging programme of concerts and events, with a repertoire of not only choral favourites but also new commissions and collaborations with orchestras, choirs and youth groups.

Performing regularly at The Royal Northern College of Music as well as other venues across the country, including The Bridgewater Hall, Gorton Monastery, The Lowry Theatre, Huddersfield Town Hall and St Paul's Cathedral, ACS has also sung in Europe, including France, Prague, Lake Garda, Venice and Florence.

Recent events have seen the choir performing on tour with Russell Watson (*A Candlelight Christmas – 2014, An Intimate Evening with Russell Watson – 2015*), lunchtime recitals at St Paul's Cathedral (*London – 2015, 2016*) and in 2016 working with Barnsley Youth Choir (*2015 European Triple Gold Medalists and Grand Prix Winners*). This year ACS gave the world premiere of a specially commissioned work by Nigel Hess for choir and one-handed pianist, Nicholas McCarthy.

ACS also holds vocal training sessions for its membership, with singing days and termly open rehearsals for newcomers to come and meet the choir and explore their own voice potential and enjoy the thrill of singing.

The choir supports local and national charities throughout the year through retiring collections and sales of their CD, *Religion and Reel*. Previous charities have included St Ann's Hospice, The Rainbow Family Trust, Macmillan, Barnardo's, The Lord's Taverners, The David Lewis Centre and The Christie Hospital. This year the choir has been supporting Trafford Mencap.

ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

Brenda Adams	Helen Greig	Andy McWilliam
Joy Anderson	Pauline Griffiths	Ann McWilliam
Sara Apps *	Caroline Harris	Cathy Merrell *
Pat Arnold #	Dudley Harrop *	Eve Miles
Ann Ashby	Liz Harwood	Heather Morrey
Kate Barlow	Gill Hayes *	Jen Morris
Matthew Barr	John Hayes	Catherine Mottram
Janet Bedell *	Bill Hetherington	Pamela Moulton *
Frances Broad #	Jane Hollinshead *	Annie Muir
Neil Brougham	Catherine Horrocks #	John Mulholland *
Rachel Brougham	Valerie Hotter *	Jessica Murrills ++
Patricia Brown	Gail Hunt *	Julian Mustoe
Anne Bullock *	Rosie Hurley	Norma Nock *
Stephen Campbell	Tony Jackman	Gill Oakley
Anthony Campion	Sarah Jackson	Terence Oddy
Helen Cash	Karen Jarman	Debbie O'Driscoll
Barbara Clift *	Roy Jervis	Melanie Owen
Michael Cummings *	Elizabeth Jones ++	Alex Patel
Adrienne Davies	Clare Jones	Alison Patel
Jacqueline Davies	Gillian Jones	Christine Pidcock
Marie Dixon *	Hazel Jones	Kate Potter
Kathy Duffy	Melanie-Anne Jose *	Frances Provost
Liz Dunn	George Kistruck *	Ian Provost
Michael Dunn	Elisabeth Lawrence	Estelle Price
Richard Dyson	Keith Lewis *	Eleanor Reeves
Frank Estcourt	Annie Lloyd-Walker	Linley Roach *
Wendy Estcourt	Emma Loat	Doris Robinson #
Heather Falconer	Trish Lovett	Kate Robinson
Liz Foy *	Timothy Lowe	Olivia Robinson
Joyce Fuller *	Rosie Lucas #	Tony Robinson
Trevor Gilmore	Sarah Lucas	Sarah Ruther
Robert Gledhill	Anne McDougall	Rachel Sadler
Bryan Goude #	Norma McRae	Tobias Schiebeck

Fiona Simpson
Susan Sinagola
Colin Skelton #
Audrey Smallridge ++
Annie Taylor
Catherine Taylor
Thomas Taylor
Malcolm Thomson
Pamela Thomson
Jean Tragen *
Gill Turner
Elaine Van Der Zeil

Catherine Verdin
Jo Wallwork
Christine Weekes
Geryl Whitaker
Helen Whitehouse *
Kath Whyte *
Yvette Willey #
Ondria Williams
Julia Williamson *
Andrew Wragg #
Cecilia Wright

**denotes 20+ years*
denotes 30+ years
++denotes 40+ years



Tonight's concert, 'The Past and The Present', features works from the Classical and Romantic periods, and also, as the title suggests, pieces by living composers.

We are delighted to welcome, once again, Jonathan Scott as our guest organist and have great pleasure in presenting members of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band.

Steven Roberts – Conductor

Steven is the Conductor and Musical Director of Altrincham Choral Society, Chesterfield Philharmonic Choir and Honley Male Voice Choir. He is an adjudicator member of The British and International Federation of Festivals and regularly adjudicates throughout the United Kingdom, as well as being Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Federation. Prior to 2006, Steven combined his musical activities with a full-time post at Barnsley College. During 17 years at the college Steven held a number of posts including Head of Performing Arts and Music, Head of Quality and Director of External Relations.

He has also been conductor of Dodworth and Skelmanthorpe Male Voice Choirs, the Allendale Chamber Orchestra, the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union, Sing Live UK, Unlimited Voices and The Huddersfield Choral Society, most notably for concerts with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and José Carreras. He has also been chorus master for 'The Magic of Queen' and the Electric Light Orchestra (ELO), rock classics concerts with the Hallé Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Alongside his choral work he has conducted the Manchester Philharmonic, Derbyshire Sinfonia, Lancashire Chamber Orchestra, the National Festival Orchestra, the Yorkshire Wind Orchestra and a variety of other bands and ensembles. He is in demand as a choral and voice specialist, but studied piano, brass as well as voice and has equal extensive experience in each field. Since 1993, he has led choral days, workshops and coaching sessions and this has taken him as far afield as Peru and Bahrain.

He has conducted many times at the Royal Albert Hall, London and has been privileged to conduct in many of the country's most prestigious concert halls. He has also conducted in many sacred settings including St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City and St Mark's Basilica in Venice as well as

in Florence, Sorrento, Amalfi, Milan, Austria, Paris, Bavaria, Montecassino, Barcelona and Poland.

He has also been Musical Director for COAL, the award-winning contemporary dance piece choreographed by Gary Clarke; the piece was set at the height of the 1980s miners' strike and has successfully toured the UK featuring live brass music. He is now touring with the sequel *Wasteland*, which features both brass and voices.

He is delighted to have worked with many well-known brass bands, including Carlton Main Frickley, Brighouse & Rastrick, Tredegar and The Fairey Band, to name but a few. In December 2018 he was made Honorary Vice President of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band.

He is a member of The Lord's Taverners, the cricketing charity that raises money to give 'young people, particularly with special needs, a sporting chance' and holds Honorary Life Membership with both The Royal Philharmonic Society (awarded in November 2013) and Altrincham Choral Society.

Steven is proud to be a Patron of EnRich, the charity formed for the people of Barnsley in memory of Richard Tolson, a well-loved teacher, manager and an inspirational man. "Rich T" was Head of Music & Performing Arts at Barnsley College for a number of years and had an impact on many lives. The charity set up in his name aims to promote all specialisms in the performing and creative arts.

Jonathan Scott - Organ

Jonathan Scott enjoys a hugely varied performing career on a diverse spectrum of keyboard instruments with the aim of bringing great music to as wide an audience as possible. In addition to his career as pianist and organist Jonathan is well-known for his arrangements and transcriptions and is a specialist in the music for the art harmonium. Jonathan also has a busy international concert schedule with his pianist brother, Tom Scott, performing as Scott Brothers Duo. This season their performances include concerts across UK as well as Germany (Berlin State Opera, European Harmonium Festival), Spain (Madrid National Auditorium), France (Toulouse Organ Festival), Norway (Stavanger Concert Hall), Switzerland (Festival International d'Orgue de Fribourg), Belgium (Salle Philharmonique

Liège), Latvia (Liepāja Organ Festival), Taiwan (Taipei National Concert Hall, Kaohsiung Center for the Arts), South Korea (Lotte Concert Hall, Seoul) and Singapore (Victoria Concert Hall).

Born in Manchester, Jonathan studied piano and organ at Chetham's School of Music before gaining a scholarship to attend the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM). He continued his studies in USA and Holland, won the coveted Worshipful Company of Musicians WT Best Scholarship and gold medal, and is a Freeman of The City of London. Jonathan has been a member of the keyboard staff at RNCM since 2001 and is Associate Artist of The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester where he gives a series of popular lunchtime organ recitals which attract audiences approaching 1,000.

Jonathan's recent performances have included numerous solo recitals as pianist and organist as well as appearances at the BBC proms, broadcasts on BBC Radio 2, 3 and Classic FM, and a live recording of Copland's Organ Symphony with the BBC Philharmonic and John Wilson for Chandos Records. In 2017 Jonathan gave the world premiere of the new organ concerto '6000 Pipes!' by Sir Karl Jenkins with Hull Philharmonic Orchestra and he will be performing this work throughout 2019, including a special gala performance at The Royal Albert Hall, London in October. This season Jonathan will be appearing at concert halls and festivals across the UK with orchestras including the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hallé Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He will also be giving a series of concerto performances with the National Chinese Orchestra of Taiwan.

In collaboration with his brother, Tom Scott, Jonathan has released several recordings to great critical acclaim on the Scott Brothers Duo label. The discs have received wide international airplay, including their own special editions of BBC Radio 2's 'The Organist Entertains'. Their recent duo concert at Montserrat Abbey, Spain was broadcast live on Spanish TV and their online performance videos have totalled over 10 million views. The Scott Brothers Duo is the winner of the 2019 ECHO (European Cities of Historical Organs) competition to create a performance which introduces the pipe organ to a young audience. Their project combines animation and organ music and will be performed at major festivals across Europe in 2019 and 2020.

For more information please visit www.jonathanscott.co.uk

Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band

The South Elmsall Village Brass Band can be traced back to humble beginnings in 1884. In 1905, the band was adopted by the local Frickley Colliery, which in turn was to become owned by the Carlton Main Coal Company and by 1923 the band became known by its present name. During the band's long and successful history, it has both competed and triumphed at many of the most prestigious competitions in the world. Most notably, the band has held the titles of European Champions, National Champions, British Open Champions, Granada TV Band of the Year, BBC Best of Brass Champions, Spring Festival Grand Shield Champions and British Open Quartet Champions.

The band's more recent achievements include being crowned Yorkshire Champions in 2013 and 2015. This partnered with 3rd place at the prestigious British Open Brass Band Championships in 2011 and being crowned the Champion Band of England and Scotland at the National Championships of Great Britain in 2013. The band added another title to its collection in 2016 by winning the Grand Shield, securing an instant return to the British Open. The band's latest achievements came in July 2017, representing England at the World Championships in Kerkrade, Holland, achieving the highest honours of distinction, finishing in a fantastic 3rd place. In June 2018 the band was crowned French Open Champions, claiming both the March Title and the French Open Champion Band. To round 2018 off in style the band achieved their highest ever finish at the World's 'Leading Brass Band Entertainment Contest', Brass in Concert, finishing in 2nd place against 11 of the best bands from across the world. 2019 started with the band qualifying to represent Yorkshire at the National Championships of Great Britain at the Royal Albert Hall. This has led to Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band being firmly established as one of the top 10 ranked brass bands in the world.

The band has built a reputation as one of the finest concert bands in the country through a combination of innovative programmes partnered with quality of performance. In 2015 the band took up the position of the feature band of the Gary Clarke Company with his ground-breaking contemporary dance production and National Theatre Award Winning, COAL. This position saw the band tour both the UK and Europe throughout 2016, 2017 and 2018. The band has continued this role in Gary Clarke's sequel, Wasteland, with tour dates throughout 2019 and 2020. With

regular appearances on the BBC's flagship programme Songs of Praise and performances with the world-renowned Rambert Dance Company in 2015 and 2016, the band is currently experiencing one of the most successful periods in its history.

Cornet: *Kirsty Abbotts Seb Williman Mandy Holling Louise Belton*

Trombone: *Chris Chung Dan Browning Phil Spencer*

Tuba: *Robert Browne*

Percussion: *Rhod Younger Tim O'Connor*

Programme

Lord, in Thy Mercy (Verleih uns Frieden) Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Felix Mendelssohn, a German composer, pianist and conductor, was the grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. He was born into a prominent Jewish family and was brought up without religion until the age of seven, when he was baptised as a Reformed Christian. As a young boy, Felix was recognised as a musical prodigy, but his parents were cautious and did not seek to capitalise on his talent.

Mendelssohn enjoyed early success in his own country. By the age of 15, he had written his first symphony for full orchestra and two years later he composed his *Overture to Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one of the best known of his early works.

He revived interest in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, notably with his performance of the *St Matthew Passion* in 1829. Around this time, he began to travel widely in Europe. He was well received in his travels as a composer, conductor and soloist. His ten visits to Britain, during which many of his major works were premièred, formed an important part of his career.

Mendelssohn was active at the musical crossroads of the Classical and Romantic periods. While his early training was rooted in strictly classical conventions, around him was the music of a new era. His essentially conservative musical tastes set him apart from more adventurous contemporaries such as Liszt, Wagner and Berlioz. After a period of relative denigration due to changing musical tastes in the late 19th and early 20th

centuries, Mendelssohn's creative originality has been re-evaluated and he is now among the most popular composers of the Romantic era.

As early as his apprentice years, Mendelssohn was often occupied with chorale settings and his interest in the Lutheran hymn remained unabated throughout his symphonies and oratorios. His intensive study of the works of Bach, occasioned by his revival of the *St Matthew Passion*, led him to compose a series of cantatas on well-known hymn tunes for chorus, instruments and sometimes solo voices. *Verleih uns Frieden (Lord in Thy mercy, grant us peace)*, with words by Martin Luther (1483-1546) was composed in the early 1830's. Although many of these cantatas have been almost forgotten, in 1840, Schumann remarked of this work, 'The small piece deserves to be world famous, and will become so in the future; the Madonnas of Raphael and Murillo cannot remain hidden for long.'

Christus factus est

Bruckner (1824 – 1896)

Josef Anton Bruckner was born in Upper Austria. His father was a school teacher and church organist, and Bruckner's early life followed similar lines. When his father died in 1837, Bruckner was enrolled in the church school at the Augustine Monastery in St Florian, near Linz. There, he became a chorister and studied organ, piano and music theory.

At the age of sixteen, he undertook some teacher training and after initially working elsewhere, found his way back to St Florian, where, for the next ten years, he worked as a teacher and organist.

In 1855 Bruckner went to Vienna to study harmony and counterpoint and the following year he became the cathedral organist in Linz. His life was that of a devoted church musician and highly successful organist, giving recitals in Paris and London, specifically at the Royal Albert Hall and Crystal Palace.

But this was just a passing phase. In his forties he went to Vienna, devoted himself more and more to composition, and took over the professorship in harmony and counterpoint at the Vienna Conservatory.

Bruckner spent the 1870s and 1880s giving masterful organ recitals and composing. He was a late starter as a composer, but in his lifetime he completed almost nine superbly organised and complex symphonies. His

Masses are equally splendid and in all his church music there is the radiance of a devout believer.

Due to failing health, he resigned from the Conservatory in 1891, and devoted his last years to work on his Ninth Symphony, which remained incomplete at the time of his death.

Christus factus est is used as part of the Mass services during Maundy Thursday in Holy Week. The text comes from the New Testament. It is dedicated to Father Otto Loidol of the Benedictine Monastery of Kremsmüster, and is a prime example of the way Bruckner gradually develops harmonic tension, building to memorable climaxes then easing away.

Sacred Song (Geistliches Lied)

Brahms (1833 – 1897)

Johannes Brahms was born into abject poverty in the north German seaport of Hamburg. His father was a humble double bass player in the city theatres, his mother a seamstress. Times were hard and the family lived in a cramped tenement building in the dockland area of old Hamburg. Brahms, encouraged by his father, showed early talent as a pianist. By the age of thirteen, he was being tutored by Eduard Marxsen, a composer and the leading music teacher in Hamburg. He studied musical structure and form, particularly that of Bach and Beethoven. This thorough training was to influence his compositions for the rest of his life.

During his early teenage years family poverty compelled Brahms to earn his living by playing in cafés and dance halls. In 1853, Brahms, aged twenty, embarked on a recital tour of neighbouring towns, and thanks to a letter of introduction from Joseph Joachim, a celebrated Hungarian violinist, with whom Brahms struck up a lifelong friendship, he became an accepted associate of the great musicians of the day.

Throughout the 1850s and 1860s when Brahms was composing steadily, he was adopted as the champion of traditional principles. Like Mendelssohn before him, his conservative musical tastes set him apart from the more 'progressive' composers, such as Liszt and Wagner, who had virtually jettisoned recognisable classical forms in favour of music determined by their feelings and 'inner experience'. The conflict between the two schools became one of the most enduring quarrels in the history of music.

Sacred Song dates from 1856, and was actually composed before Brahms published any choral works. It began life as an exercise in counterpoint, and these exercises, which Brahms set for himself, could become exceedingly complex as seen in the difficult formulas for canon. But this serene and lyrical work is perhaps Brahms's greatest *tour de force* in his frequently employed technique of canonic composition.

Organ Solo Prelude & Fugue in A minor BWV 543

JS Bach (1685 – 1750)

Jonathan Scott

Lord Jesus Christ, my Life and Light (O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht)

JS Bach (1685 – 1750)

Johann Sebastian Bach was born and lived all his life in the Lutheran heartland of east-central Germany, and was brought up in a strongly orthodox Lutheran tradition. During his lifetime, he was known not as a composer but rather as a virtuoso organist and keyboard player.

In 1728 Bach was appointed Cantor at the choir school of St. Thomas, Leipzig, and as such he was also effectively musical director of the city's churches. This was a hugely demanding post, involving the teaching at the church school, playing the organ, training the choir and composing music for the city's two principal Lutheran churches as well as supervising and training the musicians at three others. Despite this enormous workload, Bach composed some of his greatest music during this period, including 250 church cantatas and such towering masterpieces as the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* and his *Mass in B minor*.

O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht is a sacred motet written around 1736 or 1737. It is known to have been performed at the funeral of Count Joachim Friedrich von Flemming on 11 October 1740 and was possibly a generic work intended for funerals. The Count was Governor of Leipzig and known to Bach had presented a couple of congratulatory works to him.

When the work was first published in the nineteenth century it was called a cantata, perhaps because there are two versions, one of which has an instrumental accompaniment. While it is not an a cappella work, modern

scholarship accepts it is a motet. The original words are by the German Lutheran Pastor and hymn writer Martin Behm (1557-1622).

Ave verum Corpus

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's short life of almost thirty-six years began in Salzburg on 27th January 1756. He was an infant prodigy, whose father, Leopold, a leading court musician and thrifty administrator, sought to exhibit the talent of Wolfgang and that of his equally musical elder sister throughout the courts of Europe.

For nine years the family relentlessly toured Europe, the children performing in a series of long and often gruelling exhibition concerts, from Hungary to Paris, London and finally to Italy. Mozart and his sister astounded audiences with their precocious skills, and by the time Wolfgang was fifteen and the family had returned to Salzburg, he had already composed numerous works and had had his first music published.

Adolescence and early manhood proved a less satisfactory time for Mozart. As he grew up he came to be regarded as just another professional in the market for a job. His attempts at finding work in Southern Germany and also Paris were disastrous, and eventually he went to Vienna. Here, in 1787, he obtained a minor court post, which gave him a reasonable salary. Lavish spending and poor management meant that Mozart often suffered financial difficulties and had to borrow money, despite working himself to exhaustion.

The last five years of Mozart's life were the climax of his creative output. During this time he produced a stream of masterpieces. His early death could be said to be one of the greatest tragedies in the history of music. The precise nature of his death from a feverish illness has given rise to much speculation.

Ave verum Corpus was Mozart's final completed sacred work. It was written in the late spring of 1791 when Mozart was visiting his pregnant wife in the spa town of Baden. He composed the little motet for choir and strings as a gift to the local choirmaster. It was first performed in the parish church at Baden on Corpus Christi. Mozart's autograph is dated 17 June 1791. This beautiful setting of the Eucharistic hymn is widely regarded as remarkable for its compact simplicity.

Dostoino yest (Hymn to the Virgin)

Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was a composer of the Romantic period, whose works are amongst the most popular in the classical repertoire. He was the first Russian composer whose music made a lasting impression internationally, bolstered by his appearances as a guest conductor in Europe and the United States.

Although musically precocious, Tchaikovsky was educated for a career as a civil servant. There was scant opportunity for a musical career in Russia at that time and no system of public music education. When an opportunity for such an education arose, he entered the nascent Saint Petersburg Conservatory, from which he graduated in 1865. Tchaikovsky's training set him on a path to reconcile what he had learned at the Conservatory with the native musical practices to which he had been exposed from childhood. From this reconciliation he forged a personal but unmistakably Russian style.

Primarily known for his symphonies, concertos and ballets, Tchaikovsky was deeply interested in the music and liturgy of the Russian Orthodox Church. In an 1877 letter to a friend and patroness he wrote, 'it is impossible not to be moved by the liturgy of our own Orthodox Church, to be carried away by the poetry of this music'. He first tried his hand at composing church music with his *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* in 1878. The success of this work prompted the Tsar to ask Tchaikovsky to write more for the church. His response was the *Nine Liturgical Choruses*, written during the composer's wanderings around Europe that year. *Dostoino yest* is number five of the nine choruses.

INTERVAL

Laudate Dominum

Hanson (b.1992)

Dave Hanson was born into a Derbyshire brass-banding family and took up his first instrument, the baritone, at the age of eleven, later moving up to the euphonium and trombone. He played for numerous local ensembles such as Newstead Brass, the Derby City Band and the Derbyshire County Wind Band. His listening repertoire included progressive rock, heavy metal and jazz, which led him on to study the bass guitar at the age of sixteen. He enrolled at the University of Salford as a euphonium player in 2010, but then switched his focus to bass and composition. There followed a whole string of prestigious honours – Best in Music, Class of 2013; the Elgar Howarth Composition Shield, the Anne Welsh Memorial Prize for ensemble performance and a first class (BA) honours degree.

Laudate Dominum was inspired by the paintings of the Victorian artist, John Martin (1789-1854). Martin was a devoutly religious man, championing Deism and ‘natural religion’. His God was a terrible and vengeful God. As a result his works often depict scenes of judgment, retribution or even apocalypse. The general premise of this piece is to try to invoke the spirit of Martin’s work. ‘Technically it is an active attempt on the composer’s part to calm down and simplify what, until this point, had been quite a fraught and complicated harmonic language; to forego copious amounts of extended tonalities and angular chord progressions, and to emphasise the sense of a solid chordal and rhythmic base, and a prominent melody – upon which the worship of the libretto rests’.

High Flight

Debra Page (b.1975)

Debra Page is a composition postgraduate living and working in Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire. Over the course of her career she has written for a wide variety of groups and occasions and has particularly enjoyed working with local youth choirs and orchestras.

Her latest work, *High Flight*, is a setting of a poem written only a few months before his death, by John Magee Jr, a young poet and trained fighter pilot with the Royal Canadian Air Force, who died in 1941, aged 19, following a mid-air collision during a training flight over Lincolnshire. In the poem, Magee exults at the thrill of flying and the freedom of manoeuvre that the unconstrained sky affords him. He reflects on the magnificent,

vacant beauty of the deep blue sky and in a quasi-religious moment, supposes he 'touches the face of God'.

This light, expressive and rhythmic work for choir aims to convey the joy and wonder of the poet's experience, painting his words through weaving textures and delicately shifting harmonies.

Members of Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band

Celebration

Ben Hollings (b.1993)

Ben Hollings is yet another Derbyshire-born musician. He began piano lessons aged seven in his home town of Glossop, later adding the euphonium and French horn to his playlist. He studied the latter with Tom Redmond at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music where his interest in brass bands was fired. He studied for a degree at the University of Huddersfield from 2011 where he majored in composition and produced 'The Mist', a programmatic work which received its world première by the University Brass Band and Phillip McCann in 2013. After graduating he was offered the position of Composer/Arranger in Residence at the Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band which he has gladly accepted.

Ben has written *Celebration* especially for tonight's concert. It is conceived round an exciting fanfare and hymn structure, and indeed, the opening features cornets playing 'exultant' fanfares, before a heroic theme is heard from the trombones. The hymn-like heroic theme settles into the hymn tune 'Eventide' (Abide with me, fast falls the eventide) featuring a cornet solo. This leads to a reprise of the opening fanfare material which is combined with 'Eventide' and the heroic theme to bring the piece to an exciting finale.

Gloria

Rutter (b.1945)

Soloists: Marie Dixon, Jane Hollinshead, Jean Tragen

John Rutter was born in London. He received his early musical education as a chorister at Highgate School and went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge. He wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student.

His compositions embrace choral, orchestral and instrumental music. He has edited or co-edited various choral anthologies including four volumes of *Carols for Choirs* with Sir David Willcocks as well as the Oxford Choral Classics series.

From 1975-79, he was Director of Music at Clare College and in 1981 formed his own choir, the *Cambridge Singers*. He now divides his time between composition and conducting and is sought after as a guest conductor for the world's leading choirs and orchestras.

Rutter's work is eclectic, showing influences of English and French 20th century choral traditions and American music. It is easily accessible music - good to perform and good to listen to. Choirs up and down the land would be impoverished without his work. He is described by the BBC Music Magazine as 'the most successful and well known composer of choral music in recent British history'.

Gloria was written as a concert work. It was commissioned by the Voices of Mel Olson Chorale, Omaha, Nebraska. Rutter conducted the première of his cantata on his first visit to the United States in May 1974. As he said himself, 'The Latin text, drawn from the Ordinary of the Mass, is a centuries-old challenge to the composer: exalted, devotional and jubilant by turns'.

Sources: Hollings, Page, Hanson, Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band, The Oxford Companion to Music (Scholes), previous ACS programme notes, internet sources.

Programme Notes: Elizabeth Jones

Programme Editors: Liz Foy

Julia Williamson



ALTRINCHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

Future Concerts:

Saturday 27 July 1.10pm

Lincoln Cathedral

Recital to include some of the music from tonight's concert

Lydia Bryan – Piano

Saturday 16 November 7.30pm

St Peter's Church, Hale

Petite Messe Solennelle - Rossini

Lydia Bryan – Piano Jonathan Scott - Harmonium

Saturday 21 December 2019 3pm

Venue tbc

Carols with the Choral

**The 2019 – 2020 season will mark
Altrincham Choral Society's
75th Anniversary.**

