

Website: strettonchoral.org.uk



Dates for your diary

*10 December 2023—programme to include
Geoffrey Bush's delightful Christmas
Cantata, along with other seasonal music*

*12th May 2024—programme to include
Joseph Horovitz's fun, light choral work,
Captain Noah and His Floating Zoo.*

Why not join us ?

If you've enjoyed this evening's concert, and think that you might like to join us (*or know someone who may*), why not come to our **Come & Sing** event at the *United Reformed Church and Hall* on **Saturday 9th September** from 2 pm to 5 pm. Music will include some well known Gilbert & Sullivan and other choruses.

Cost: £5 including refreshments.

Watch out for our posters nearer the time.

Stretton Choral Society acknowledges the assistance of *Shrewsbury Performing Arts Library* for the loan of music used in this concert.

In addition, the Society gratefully acknowledges help in presenting our concerts from many local sources and special thanks are extended to:

Church Stretton Library
Co-op Foodstore
Stretton Focus
Vine & Co

Also helpers and choir members who donate and assist with refreshments.

The Society is very grateful for the support of those who are our Society Friends

If you would like to become a Friend please contact

Joanna Clark Vivian on
01694 720369 or joannaclark45@gmail.com



Member of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies

Stretton Choral Society

presents



A Celebratory Concert

Soloists

Caroline Clarke, Soprano

Bethan Langford, Alto

John Bowen, Tenor Piran Legg, Bass

Conductor ~ Michael Turner

The Shropshire Hills Ensemble

Sunday 7th May 2023

7.30 pm

Silvester Horne Institute

Registered Charity No. 1012348

www.strettonchoral.org.uk

PROGRAMME £1

PROGRAMME

Mass in D
by
Antonín Dvořák

Kleine Orgelmesse
(Little Organ Mass)
by
Joseph Haydn

INTERVAL

*Please remain seated until the choir and orchestra have left the hall.
Refreshments will be available for sale at the side of the hall.
A bell will be rung at the end of the interval.*



For a Coronation
by
Michael Turner
(First Performance)



Bethan Langford – Mezzo Soprano



British mezzo-soprano Bethan Langford is a graduate of the Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the National Opera Studio, and a former Scottish Opera Emerging Artist.

Operatic career highlights include Hebe (*HMS Pinafore*) for English National Opera, the title-role in the world premiere of Errollyn Wallen's *The Paradis Files* at the Southbank Centre and national tour with Graeae Theatre Company, her debut with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, in Jules Maxwell's *The Lost Thing*, Second Lady (*The Magic Flute*) for Scottish Opera, Second Angel (Sir George Benjamin's *Written on Skin*) with the

Melos Sinfonia at the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg, Dorabella (*Così fan Tutte*) for Bury Court Opera, Third Maid (*Elektra*) under Esa-Pekka Salonen at the Verbier Festival, Noble Orphan (*Der Rosenkavalier*) at Glyndebourne and the title-role in award-winning *The Rape of Lucretia* at the Grimeborn Opera Festival. She has appeared in concert at the Wigmore Hall, Heidelberger Frühling Festival, Oxford Lieder and Buxton festivals, St John's Smith Square, Granada Manuel de Falla Concert Hall and the International Lied Festival Zeist. Bethan was a soloist at the 2022 BBC Proms in Smyth's *Mass in D* under Sakari Oramo and the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

Bethan is a Samling Artist, a Yeoman of the Musicians' Company and a past recipient of the Elizabeth Eagle-Bott Award for partially sighted and blind musicians. She lives in Shrewsbury with her husband and baby daughter, June.

Piran Legg - Bass Baritone



Piran Legg is a Bass – Baritone from Whitstable and a graduate of Kent University, where he studied history. He went on to gain a Vocal Masters with Distinction on the opera course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, as well as an Artist's Diploma. Piran has performed extensively in Opera around the UK and abroad, singing roles with companies such as Scottish Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Garsington Opera and Chelsea Opera Group. His work has ranged from characters such as Ferrando in Verdi's *Il Trovatore* with WHO, Schaunard in Puccini's *La Bohème* at

Cadogan Hall, Guido in Britten's *Death in Venice* with Garsington Opera to the comic role of Sante in Scottish Opera's *Il Segreto di Susanna* and a performance as Action in *West Side Story* with the Bath Festival Orchestra. He is represented by Connaught Artists.

Notable oratorio performances have seen Piran as the bass soloist in Handel's *Messiah* at Amiens Cathedral, Elgar's masterpiece *The Dream of Gerontius* in Canterbury Cathedral, Brahms *Requiem* at Tewkesbury Abbey, in Dvorak's *Te Deum* at Birmingham Symphony Hall alongside the Orange County Symphony Orchestra and with the Orchestra of Scottish Opera in Bach's *Mass in B Minor* at the Caird Hall. In 2023 amongst other performances Piran will be the bass soloist in Dvorak's *Requiem* with the St. Albans Bach Choir and in Handel's *Messiah* with the Phoenix Singers.

As a recital singer Piran has sung in solo recitals at the Barbican Theatre, Oxford Lieder Festival and the Cheltenham Festival. He has won Music Prizes at the Canterbury Festival, is a former International Opera Awards Young Artist and Fishmongers Music Scholar.

SOLOISTS

Caroline Clarke - Soprano



Caroline started singing after graduating from Durham University with a degree in Music specialising in composition.

Her operatic roles have since included the title role of Tosca for Heritage Opera; Fiordiligi (*Così fan Tutte*) for Opera UK and Birmingham Chamber Orchestra; Queen of the Night (*The Magic Flute*) for British Youth Opera and Surrey Opera; Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*) and Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*) for Vox Lirika, Tatyana (*Eugene Onegin*) for Birmingham Chamber Orchestra; Gilda (cover) and Countess Ceprano (*Rigoletto*) and Flora (*La Traviata*) for Heritage Opera; as well as the role of Jane in the world premiere of John Whittaker's *The Three Wayfarers* for Opera Anywhere. She also played the Lace Seller in *Death in Venice* in the Aldeburgh Festival, directed by Yoshi Oida - a role she went on to perform at the Bregenz Festival where she also appeared as the ZDF Director and Airport Officer in Benedict Mason's *Playing Away*, directed by David Pountney.

A regular concert performer, Caroline has sung in venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Cadogan Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and St John's, Smith Square as well as in performances on BBC Radio 3. She has sung as a soloist in venues internationally performing works including Brahms' *Requiem*, Haydn's *Creation*, Mahler's Symphony No.4, Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Handel's *Messiah*, Schubert's *Magnificat* and Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*.

Caroline made her debut concert appearance in the Church Stretton Arts Festival in 2019.

John Bowen - Tenor



John has had a varied career, beginning as a chorister at St. Paul's Cathedral, a choral scholar at King's College Cambridge and a period of study at The Royal College of Music.

He has sung as a soloist at Covent Garden, the Staatsoper Berlin and Sydney Opera House. John has worked on a number of occasions with Michael Turner before, singing Elgar, Butterworth, Delius, Grainger, Finzi and Vaughan Williams. He sang the vocal part in the premiere

performances of Michael's *Then Only the Empty Spaces*, written to mark the 100th anniversary of World War I.

John has appeared on a number of recordings including Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, conducted by Paul Daniel, discs of Rachmaninov, Mendelssohn and Vaughan Williams with the Corydon Singers conducted by Matthew Best, Monteverdi directed by Rene Jacobs and Vaughan Williams' *Sir John in Love*, conducted by Richard Hickox.

After a period away from music, John returned in 2014 by joining a number of ensembles including the Monteverdi Choir, The Gabrieli Consort and Opus Anglicanum. Future projects include tours of Austria and Switzerland and work with the Berlin Philharmonic

Musical Notes

An introduction to our programme from our Music Director, Michael Turner

Antonin Dvořák – Mass in D

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) wrote his Mass in D major Op. 86 in 1887. It is also called the Lužany Mass after the chapel in Lužany for which it was written. It was originally written for four soloists, choir and organ and expanded to include an orchestral accompaniment in 1892.

Dvořák was commissioned to compose a mass by the architect and patron Josef Hlávka for the opening of the chapel that he had built for his summer residence in Lužany. Due of the modest size of the building, the choir had to be small and the use of an orchestra was not an option. Dvořák completed the Mass in June 1887 and wrote to Hlávka that he was “supremely pleased with the result” musically and as a man of faith. It seems that the modest resources available Dvořák found to be an inspirational change from the larger choral and orchestral forces that he had written for previously, particularly for the Birmingham Triennial Festival.

The mass was first performed at the chapel on 11 September 1887, conducted by the composer and with Zdenka Hlávka, the architect's wife, and Dvořák's wife Anna among the soloists. The first public performance took place on 15 April 1888 at the municipal theatre of Plzeň, accompanied by two harmoniums, cello and double bass. This evening, the choir and soloists are accompanied by a wind quintet, in an arrangement by Joachim Linckelmann.

The mass is in six movements:

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

Joseph Haydn – Kleine Orgelmesse

The Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo in B-flat major was written by Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) around 1774. It uses the modest forces of soprano soloist, choir, two violins, organ, cello and double bass. It is known as the Kleine Orgelmesse (Little Organ Mass) due to a prominent organ solo in the Benedictus.

Haydn composed four or five short masses of which the Kleine Orgelmesse was the last. It was written for the order of the Barmherzige Brüder, also called Brothers of Mercy, in Eisenstadt (then in Hungary, now in Austria) where Haydn lived, working for the court of Nikolaus II, Prince Esterházy.

Haydn played the organ in the first performance, in the hospital chapel of the Brethren in Eisenstadt. "Kleine" (little) may refer to the organ as well as to the composition, due to the instrument having just six stops and no pedals. The instrument being used tonight has no pedal board.

The Kleine Orgelmesse follows the same structure and texts as the Dvořák Mass in D.

Michael Turner – For a Coronation (*First Performance*)

The date of the Coronation of King Charles III was set long after the Stretton Choral Society had put the date of its 2023 Spring concert in the diary. It was therefore decided to include a suitably celebratory piece in the programme and I agreed to write something new.

For a Coronation, is written to be used at any Coronation and falls into four sections, performed, essentially, without a break. A viola solo opens the piece, marking the death of the previous Monarch. This leads to the choir singing:

at first quietly and then with more intensity before a loud climax leads into the next section. Again led by the viola, the instrumentalists embark on what I have called "busy music", representing folk preparing for the "main event" (you may spot a reference to a well known piece or two here). The music subsides before the choir sings a short hymn to the words:

For the last time, the solo viola provides a link to a joyous, fast and celebratory final section where the instrumentalists accompany the choir singing; before a few, triumphant concluding chords.



The performance of For a Coronation this evening is given with the support of a Stretton Focus Community Award, for which Stretton Choral Society is immensely grateful.

Sound the trumpet, sound the trumpet, sound the trumpet
Sound, sound, sound the trumpet till around
You make the listening shores rebound
On the sprightly oboe play
All the instruments of joy
The skillful numbers can employ
To celebrate the glories of this day

This land for the hopeful praise and pray
Let glorious music sound on this day
Hark a mighty nation make glad reply
Our lips are thankful our hearts are high
Hearts in hope uplifted loyal lips that sing
Strong in faith and freedom we have crowned our King

The day of celebration has arrived
A dance of joy and gladness must be danced
The day of celebration has arrived
Let joy and music ring out far and near
A King is crowned. Sing Aloud! Shout with joy!
Oh celebrate the crowning of a new King!
Sing aloud and shout with joy
And create dazzling images and music full of joy.

The day of celebration has arrived
A dance of joy and gladness must be danced
The day of celebration has arrived
Let joy and music ring out far and near
A King is crowned. Sing Aloud! Shout with joy!
To celebrate the crowning of a new King!
To celebrate the crowning of a new King!
Let's celebrate the King!