

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, LEWES, SUNDAY 17TH MARCH

ESTERHÁZY CHAMBER CHOIR

DIRECTOR~ NICHOLAS HOUGHTON

MUSIC FOR PASSION SUNDAY

SOPRANO~ HELEN STYLES ORGANIST~ IESTYN EVANS

FINZI LO, THE FULL FINAL SACRIFICE ORGAN: IESTYN EVANS

COPLAND IN THE BEGINNING SOPRANO SOLOIST: HELEN STYLES

INTERVAL 10 MINUTES

LOTTI CRUCIFIXUS FOR EIGHT VOICES

MESSIAEN O SACRUM CONVIVIUM

BACH JESU, MEINE FRUEDE ORGAN: IESTYN EVANS

THE CHOIR

SOPRANOS

SUE BARBER
SARAH BRIDGLAND
BECKY CLIFFORD
FRAN DU CORBIER
LUCY MORGAN-JONES
TESS POWDERHAM
HELEN STYLES

ALTOS

MARIA BIRCH
CLAIRE CARBERRY
MERYLL GOODWIN
ROBIN HOUGHTON
SARAH JARVIS
DENISE JONES
BRIONY LAMBERT
JOYCE PHILLIPS
KAREN ZEFF

TENORS

ROBERT CARPENTER
BEN STYLES
RICHARD WARE

BASSES

JOHN ASTBURY
BRIAN DERBYSHIRE
CHRIS DIXON
DEREK FROUD
DAVID GOODWIN
TAM LARGE
MATTHEW SPENCER

REHEARSAL PIANIST: SARAH JARVIS

Visit our web-site ~ www.esterhazy.org.uk

PROGRAMME NOTES

GERALD FINZI'S passion for English music developed during a musical education in the early-20th-century English alternative to the European Conservatoire: the Anglican Church. *Lo the Full and Final Sacrifice*, written just after the 2nd World War, embodies the most appealing aspects of his work, from the soar-and-dip melody shapes to the cosy yet poignant harmonies.

The text is from a translation by 17th century metaphysical poet, Richard Crashaw, of St Thomas Aquinas's *Adoro Te* and *Lauda Sion*. Finzi, as an agnostic, was inspired by the rich imagery and impassioned language of the poet, rather than any Christian content. It was commissioned by Rev Walter Hussey who had previously commissioned Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, for the patronal festival of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton in 1946.

AARON COPLAND was the first composer to export a recognisable American national musical style, despite being dubbed an apostle of dissonance. A conductor of one of his early works remarked 'If he can write like that at 23, in 5 years he'll be ready to commit murder'. However, *In the Beginning* was written 24 mellowing years later, showing how, without one step back towards the 19th century, Copland's work became symbolic of the new American culture.

The seven days of creation are described in a gentle narrative style, punctuated by the short rhythmic phrases at the end of each 'day'. The use of perfect intervals and broad harmonies refer back to the early hymns which played a major part in the development of American music. Ives-ian bi-tonality exercises the ears during several passages where the soloist and choir inhabit different keys, and the final apotheosis is pure show-business.

LOTTI'S *Crucifixus* reflects the expressive counterpoint found in Monteverdi in the previous century. It is the 8th of many settings he made of this particular part of the Roman Catholic

liturgy. They are the most often performed of Lotti's works, which include 28 operas and many secular cantatas.

OLIVIER MESSIAEN was a devout Catholic, and this, combined with his love of nature and deep belief in the power of human love, inspired some of the most moving, influential and idiosyncratic music of the 20th century. He had a powerful synesthetic ability that allowed him to identify musical sounds, tones and harmonies with colours. This gave him a predilection for slow-moving, lush harmonies with which he 'painted' his music in broad sweeps of sound.

J S BACH: *Jesu meine Freude*~ "*Jesu, my joy, my heart's repose, Jesu, my treasure, oh how ceaselessly my fainting heart longs for thee. Lamb of God, my bridegroom, no-one on earth is dearer to me*"... so begins Bach's third motet (BWV 227), based on verses from Romans VIII. One of six, this motet offers a satisfyingly Bach-ian synthesis of emotion, religious fervour, high drama (*Trotz, trotz dem alten Drachen! - Defy, defy the old dragon! Defy the jaws of death*) and exquisitely crafted counterpoint. The extensive use of the anacrusis (unstressed note or group of notes at the beginning of a phrase) is notable, a brief fetish of Bach's, perhaps.

Notes by Karen Zeff

HELEN STYLES

Whilst studying veterinary medicine in Cambridge University, Helen was a choral scholar at Christ's College, and a member of the University Chamber Choir. Her solo repertoire spans opera, oratorio, recital and stage work. She has also premiered new works. Tonight's performance is her solo debut with the Esterházy Chamber Choir.

IESTYN EVANS

Iestyn Evans was educated at Oxford and the Royal Academy of Music. He has held organ scholarships at St David's Cathedral; The Queen's College Oxford; Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey and is currently organist of St Etheldreda's Church, Ely Place in London. Iestyn is also organist at Hurstpierpoint College.

Visit our web-site ~ www.esterhazy.org.uk

THE ESTERHÁZY CHAMBER CHOIR

The Lewes-based Esterházy Chamber Choir was founded in 1993 and is currently directed by **Nicholas Houghton**, an early music specialist and Director of Music at Hurstpierpoint College.

The choir aims to perform at a professional standard whilst remaining firmly rooted in the fine English tradition of amateur music making. Performances with period instruments have become a feature of their concerts. The choir welcomes approaches for audition from experienced singers. Contact **Sarah Bridgland** for details: 01903 761446

THE FRIENDS OF ESTERHÁZY

BENEFACTORS

MR S FFAULKES
MR & MRS H FOORD

MR D FROUD
DR J HESTER

PATRONS

MISS M E BUDLEIGH
MR M EVANS
MR C B D'A FEARN
MR & MRS P GILLHAM

MRS P JOHNSTONE
MR D MILLINGTON
DR M A NORMAN
DR D J PLATT OBE

PROF A WOOD

THE WHITE STAR INN

CREEDGROVE LTD

ASSOCIATES

MR D BOTIBOL
MR A BRUCE
K & J COLEY
MR H CORNWELL

MRS M FREEMAN
MR N HOLLINGTON
MS D M PEAT
REV D W A STRIDE

MR R L VIGARS

To become a Friend, contact **Robin Houghton**: 01273 472489

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Saturday 27th April~ 7.30pm (Lewes Festival)
St John sub~Castro, Lewes

Bach B minor Mass

Saturday 11th May~ 7.30pm (Brighton Festival)
Church of the Good Shepherd, Brighton

Rossini Petite messe solennelle

Saturday 29th June~ 7.30pm (Charity Concert)
Ringmer Parish Church

'Music for a Summer's Evening'

Visit our web-site ~ www.esterhazy.org.uk