



# ULSTER SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS AND CHOIRMASTERS

President: Philip Stopford

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NEWSLETTER ~ September 2008

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~ SEPTEMBER EVENT ~

Saturday 20th September

Come & Sing

## CHORAL WORKSHOP

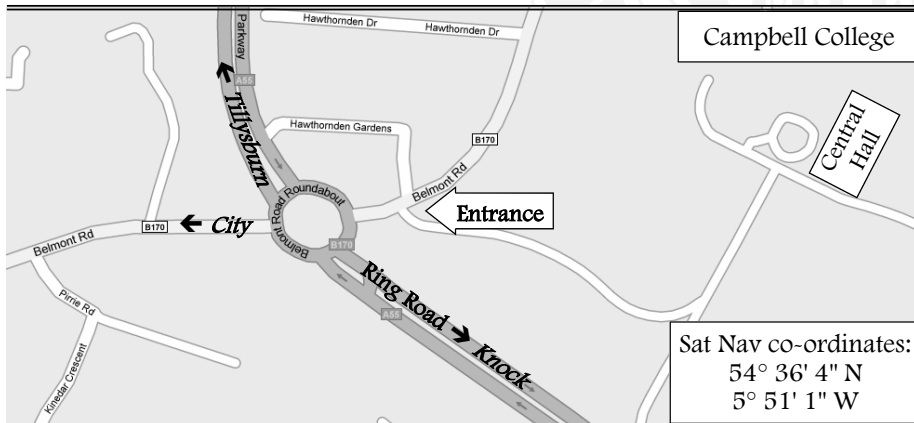
conducted by John Rutter

10:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.\*

*\*Note change in finish time.*

*Please bring a packed lunch. Tea & coffee will be on sale.*

Central Hall, Campbell College, Belmont Road, Belfast BT4 2ND



**SEPTEMBER, Saturday 20th**

Campbell College, Belmont Road, Belfast

**"COME & SING" ALL DAY CHORAL WORKSHOP** conducted by John Rutter



10:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.\*

\* PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN FINISH TIME

**THIS EVENT IS NOW FULLY BOOKED**

*For those attending this workshop, please note these important points about the day's events:*

- ♪ The Workshop will last from 10.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m.\*, and it is important that everybody is there for a prompt start.
- ♪ You will need to bring a packed lunch: tea and coffee will be available to purchase at the school.
- ♪ Bring your ticket(s). You cannot attend without a ticket as all seats have been allocated.
- ♪ Everyone is expected to sing, as John Rutter insists that there are no observers.
- ♪ All music used will be provided on the day as it will be hired by USOC. There will be an opportunity to purchase copies afterwards should anyone wish to do so.
- ♪ There is ample car parking.

**OCTOBER, Saturday 18th**

**3:00 p.m.**

**St. John's Malone, Belfast**

Donald Davison will show us what the internet can provide in terms of free resources for church organists, from organ and choral viewpoints.

*Full details will be confirmed in due course.*

**NOVEMBER, Saturday 15th**

*To mark the centenary of Olivier Messiaen's birth:*

**BELFAST ORGAN DAY ~ IN CELEBRATION OF MESSIAEN**

**12.00pm St. Peter's Cathedral**

A brief introduction to 'Messiaen and Theology'  
by Very Rev. Dr. Hugh Kennedy

*followed by*

Belfast City Organist, Colm Carey,  
playing movements from Livre du Saint Sacrement



**3.00pm St. Anne's Cathedral**

A short talk by composer Piers Hellawell

*followed by*

A recital of French music by Melisma (Director - Philip Stopford)  
and Tristan Russcher (Organ)

In association with Belfast City Council.



John Rutter is one of the heroes of twentieth century British classical music.

Choirs up and down the land would be impoverished without his work, and Christmas somehow wouldn't be the same without some of his carols lilting in the frosty air!

Most of his works are crowd pleasers, and he generally provides worthwhile parts for all the voices (which is particularly appreciated by altos, who often end up singing the same two or three notes throughout a piece!). There is a tendency for more serious critics to look down their noses at Rutter's work, but this is unfair: it is, for the most part, pleasant to listen to and within the grasp of any decent church choir or choral society. It may not be as fashionably minimalist as some of today's composers, but it is good music - good to perform and good to listen to.

John Rutter was born in London on 24th September, 1945 and received his first musical education as a chorister at Highgate School, where a fellow pupil was John Tavener. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student.

His compositional career has embraced both large and small-scale choral works, orchestral and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the King's Singers.

His larger choral works, Gloria (1974), Requiem (1985), Magnificat (1990), Psalmfest (1993) and Mass of the Children (2003) have been performed many times in Britain, North America, and a growing number of other countries. He co-edited four volumes in the extraordinarily successful Carols for Choirs series with Sir David Willcocks, and, more recently, has edited the first two volumes in the new Oxford Choral Classics series, Opera Choruses (1995) and European Sacred Music (1996).

From 1975 to 1979 he was Director of Music at Clare College, whose choir he directed in a number of broadcasts and recordings. After giving up the Clare post to allow more time for composition, in 1981 he formed his own choir, the Cambridge Singers, as a professional chamber choir primarily dedicated to recording sacred choral repertoire, and he now divides his time between composition and conducting. He still lives near Cambridge, but frequently conducts other choirs and orchestras around the world. He has guest-conducted or lectured at many concert halls, universities, churches, music festivals, and conferences in Europe, Africa, North and Central America and Australasia.

... continued overleaf

In 1980 he was made an honorary Fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, and in 1988 a Fellow of the Guild of Church Musicians. In 1996 the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred a Lambeth Doctorate of Music upon him in recognition of his contribution to church music. He was honoured in the 2007 Queen's New Year Honours List, when he was awarded a CBE for services to music.

Rutter's compositions are chiefly choral, and include Christmas carols, anthems and extended works such as a Gloria, a Magnificat, and a Requiem. The world premiere of his Requiem Mass, as well as his authoritative version of Faure's, was with the Fox Valley Festival Chorus, in Illinois, during his tenure with Cambridge. In 2002 his setting of Psalm 150, commissioned for the Queen's Golden Jubilee, was performed at the thanksgiving service in St Paul's Cathedral, London. He has also written an opera for young people called *Bang!*

Rutter's music is eclectic, showing the influences of the French and English choral traditions of the early 20th century, as well as of light music and American classic songwriting. Almost every choral anthem and hymn that he writes, in addition to the standard piano/organ accompaniment, has a subsequent orchestral accompaniment as well, utilizing various different instrumentations, such as strings only, strings and woodwinds, or full orchestra with brass and percussion, among others.

Despite composing and conducting much religious music, Rutter told the U.S. television program *60 Minutes* in 2003 that he was not particularly a religious man, but he is inspired by the spirituality of sacred verses and prayers. The *60 Minutes* program, which aired a week before Christmas, focused on Rutter's popularity with choral groups in the U.S.A., Britain and other parts of the world, and on his composition, *Mass of the Children*, composed after the sudden and tragic death of his son Christopher, a student.

His music is very popular, particularly in the U.S.A. (NBC's *Today Show* called him "the world's greatest living composer and conductor of choral music"); though in the UK it receives a more mixed reception. Some from the Anglican choral tradition do not regard him as a sufficiently 'serious' composer. There is still great appreciation for his work in many parts of the UK, however, as illustrated by the following quotation from a review in the London *'Evening Standard'* (25th September, 2005): "For the infectiousness of his melodic invention and consummate craftsmanship, Rutter has few peers."

In terms of performances John Rutter is probably the most successful choral composer of his generation. For example, his *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*, written while he was still at school, is reputed to have sold well over one million copies in sheet music alone!

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John Rutter's music is published by Oxford University Press, Hinshaw Music Inc. and Collegium Music Publications.



Belfast Philharmonic Choir is seeking singers (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass) for an exciting new season of choral music. Members are selected by audition, at which they are asked to sing a song of their own choice, plus a voice range test and possibly sight reading. Chorus Master Christopher Bell is considered one of the UK's leading choral directors. He has an energetic style and rehearsals are a stimulating and exhilarating experience.

The choir meets each Wednesday (September - May) from 7:30 - 9:45 p.m. in St. Bride's Hall, Derryvolgie Avenue, Malone Road, Belfast.

For further information about the choir and membership subscriptions, contact Ethel Ruddock:

by email: [ethel@utvinternet.co.uk](mailto:ethel@utvinternet.co.uk) or tel.: 07711 987052

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The 2008-2009 concert programme includes:

<b>Ennio Morricone</b>	Friday 17 & Saturday 18 October
Belfast Festival @ Queens Opening Concert	Waterfront Hall

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<b>Beethoven Mass in C</b>	Friday 21 November
Ulster Orchestra	Waterfront Hall

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<b>Handel Messiah</b>	Friday 12 & Saturday 13 December
Ulster Orchestra	Waterfront Hall

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<b>Mad, Bad and Dangerous</b>	Friday 23 January
Ulster Orchestra	Waterfront Hall

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<b>Opening of Ulster Hall</b>	Friday 6 March
Ulster Orchestra	Ulster Hall

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<b>Haydn Creation</b>	Friday 3 & Saturday 4 April
Ulster Orchestra	Waterfront Hall

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<b>Berlioz Te Deum</b>	Saturday 30 May
with Edinburgh Royal Choral Union	Usher Hall, Edinburgh

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## NEW SERVICE

### available through the B.E.L.B. MUSIC LIBRARY

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Last year this library set up The Choral Collection which includes additional titles and multiple copies of vocal scores. This improved service means that the music library can now provide copies of many well known and loved scores from stock rather than sourcing from other libraries.

***Scores are available for loan and are free of charge to members of any public library in Northern Ireland.***

The Northern Ireland Music Archive is held at Belfast Central Library and currently holds approximately 400 irreplaceable classical music recordings from the BBC NI archives. Listed below is a fully updated list of vocal scores available for hire.

|                           |                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bach, J.S.</b>         | Christmas Oratorio; Easter Oratorio; Magnificat in D and The Six Motets; Magnificat; Mass in B minor; St. John Passion; St. Matthew Passion |
| <b>Beethoven</b>          | Mass                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Bernstein</b>          | Chichester Psalms                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Brahms</b>             | German Requiem                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Britten</b>            | Ceremony of Carols                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Byrd</b>               | Ave Verum Corpus                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Charpentier</b>        | Messe de Minuit                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Palestrina</b>         | Missa Brevis                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Dvořák</b>             | Requiem; Stabat Mater                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Elgar</b>              | The Dream of Gerontius                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Fauré</b>              | Requiem; Pavane                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Franck</b>             | Panis Angelicus                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Gounod</b>             | Messe Solonelle de Saint Cécile                                                                                                             |
| <b>Handel</b>             | Acis & Galatea; Dettingen Te Deum; Dixit Dominus; Judas Maccabeus; Messiah; Samson; Coronation Anthems                                      |
| <b>Haydn</b>              | Creation; Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo; Te Deum; Nelson Mass                                                                          |
| <b>Howells</b>            | Requiem                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Jenkins</b>            | Adiemus - Songs of Sanctuary; The Armed Man                                                                                                 |
| <b>Lloyd Webber, A.</b>   | Requiem                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Maschwitz-Postford</b> | Goodnight Vienna                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Maunder</b>            | Olivet to Calvary                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Mendellsohn</b>        | Elijah; Hymn of Praise                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Monteverdi</b>         | Beatus Vir; Christmas Vespers; Gloria; Vespers                                                                                              |
| <b>Mozart</b>             | Barbarina; Laudate Dominum; Regina Coeli; Requiem; Vesperæ Solennes de Confessore                                                           |
| <b>Parry</b>              | I was glad                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Pergolesi</b>          | Stabat Mater; Magnificat                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Rossini</b>            | Petite Messe Solennelle                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Rutter</b>             | Magnificat                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Saint-Saëns</b>        | Christmas Oratorio                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Somervell</b>          | Christmas                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Stainer</b>            | The Crucifixion                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Stanford</b>           | Magnificat                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Walton</b>             | Belshazzar's Feast; Jubilate Deo; Coronation Te Deum                                                                                        |
| <b>Vaughan Williams</b>   | Benedicite; Fantasia on Christmas Carols                                                                                                    |
| <b><u>COLLECTIONS</u></b> | Ash Wednesday to Easter; Christmas Voices; The Greatest Christmas Choruses; Carols for Choirs 1, 2, 3 & 4; Russian Choral Masterpieces      |

**MUSIC DEPARTMENT, BELFAST CENTRAL LIBRARY, ROYAL AVENUE, BELFAST, BT1 1EA**  
**Tel.: 028 9050 9197      Email: belb@ni-libraries.net**

# HOLYWOOD MUSIC FESTIVAL

(Organ classes in association with USOC)

*Stephen Timpany informs us that the 2008 Festival Organ classes, to be held in Hollywood Methodist Church, are as follows:*

## SATURDAY 22ND NOVEMBER

### 1. AGE 16 AND UNDER

**Entry Fee £5**

Prelude in G minor (J. S. Bach) *from Eight Short Preludes and Fugues*  
and  
Another contrasting piece

**1ST PRIZE £30**

*presented by the Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters*

### 2. OPEN CLASS

**Entry Fee £5**

Two contrasting Pieces (4 minute time limit for each piece)

**1ST PRIZE £50**

*presented by the Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters*

### 3. HYMN ACCOMPANIMENT

**Entry Fee £5**

Confined to competitors who have never won a 1st, 2nd or 3rd prize in organ at any festival at date of application.

This class aims to promote good hymn accompaniment skills. Using the hymn 'Glory be to Jesus' (tune Caswell) each candidate will play a suitable introduction, followed by two verses (with pedals). There should be a change of registration in the second verse.

The initial registration will be set by the Secretary.

**1ST PRIZE £30**

*presented by the Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters*

***Completed entry forms and fees should be sent to:***

Mr. Stephen Timpany  
11 Erindee Park,  
Donaghadee  
BT21 OLG

***by Wednesday 1st October***

Mr. Timpany will be pleased to deal with any questions regarding the classes.

(Mobile 07980 117397)



Each candidate will be allocated practice time on the instrument in the church in advance of the competition.

## ULSTER IN PETERBOROUGH

Two USOC members, Philip Kennedy and John Crothers, were in the ranks of 'The Balligan Consort' which sang daily services in Peterborough Cathedral from Wednesday 13th – Sunday 17th August inclusive. Directed by David McKnight, the Consort's wide and varied repertoire included:

- ♪ Preces/Responses by Barnard, Neary, Radcliffe, Reading, Sanders (First Set) [RSCM] and Sanders (Second Set) [Oecumuse].
- ♪ Evening Canticles - Charles Wood in E minor, Gibbons 'Short Service', June Nixon (Second Service) [Encore], S. S. Wesley in F and Thomas Causton.
- ♪ Morning Canticles - William Boyce in C.
- ♪ Eucharist Office – 'Missa Brevis' (Radcliffe).
- ♪ Introits – 'Ave Maria' (Victoria), 'Glory to Thee' (Whitbourn), 'I know my soul hath power' (Parry), 'O Lord support us' (Henrietta Byrne Moran) and 'Peace be to this congregation' (Cadden/Grindle).
- ♪ Anthems – 'Ave maris stella' (Daley), 'Geistliches Lied' (Brahms), 'O salutaris hostia' (Rossini), 'Sicut cervus' (Palestrina), 'The Creation' (McDougall) and 'Tu es Petrus' (Hassler).

With the exception of the Brahms, music, including Psalms, was unaccompanied. It was impressive and moving to hear these excellent ambassadors from Ulster sing in this ancient cathedral. With an unmatched clarity of tone, subtle interpretation of music and of words, and excellence of musicianship, 'The Balligan Consort' exported to England a tradition of which we can all be proud for, unlike the plethora of concert choirs, whose existence has contributed to empty places in choir stalls throughout churches in the North of Ireland, The Balligan Consort's *raison d'être* is to sing regular liturgical services.

It does this in St Andrew's Church, Balligan, Ballywalter Parish, Co Down, on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the months September – June, when it sings Choral Evensong at 3.30 pm. An annual Advent Carol Service and 'The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols' at 8pm on Christmas Eve complete its duties.

At Balligan Church there is the opportunity to share in a tradition of worship which can be traced back to the days of a Benedictine monastery known as 'Black Abbey' sited about a mile southwest of Ballywalter. In 1704, early in the reign of Queen Anne, the historic Church of St Andrew, Balligan, united three parishes connected to the Black Abbey and it recently underwent major restoration during its tercentennial year.

It is an holy and atmospheric place, lit only by candles and oil lamps, where much of the service is sung by the Consort alone, during which the congregation worships in silent participation. You are encouraged to attend services in St Andrew's Church, Balligan, where you will be made welcome and you will not be disappointed.

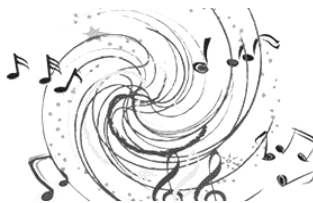


*Ian Hunter*





**WELL DONE!**



Congratulations to USOC member Edward Craig and his choir Grosvenor for their success in securing a place in the Category Finals of BBC Radio 3 (Adult) Choir of the Year Competition.

The National Selection Stage took place on 18th June 2008. All of the choirs who got through each Area Selection Stage were judged against one another for a place at the Category Finals. These will take place at the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th November as part of the Liverpool European Capital of Culture '08 celebrations.

The Grand Final will take place at the newly refurbished Royal Festival Hall, on London's South Bank, on Sunday 7th December and will be broadcast on BBC4 and BBC Radio 3.



Another of our members soon to be in the spotlight is Andrew Orr, who will be singing in the live Radio 3 broadcast of Choral Evensong from Blackburn Cathedral on **WEDNESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER**. Andrew met up with us for part of this year's May Bank Holiday weekend trip, when Blackburn Cathedral was amongst our venues.

*Here is the music list, as shown on the Radio 3 website:*

|                  |                                                 |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Introit:         | Laus Trinitati (James Davy)                     |
| Responses:       | Sumsion                                         |
| Psalm:           | 119 (vv1-32) (Goss, Warborough, Walker, Barnby) |
| Canticles:       | St Paul's Service (Howells)                     |
| Anthem:          | O pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Howells)     |
| Hymn:            | All my hope on God is founded (Michael)         |
| Organ Voluntary: | Psalm Prelude, Set 2, No. 1 (Howells)           |

*Here is another Radio 3 broadcast of local interest:*



**Charles Wood  
SUMMER SCHOOL**

**SUNDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER** Choral Vespers  
Charles Wood Summer School at St Malachy's Church, Armagh



|                  |                                                |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Introit:         | Ave Maria (Victoria)                           |
| Responses:       | Plainsong                                      |
| Hymn:            | Hail, Queen of heaven, the ocean star (Stella) |
| Psalm:           | 110, 111 (Philip Duffy)                        |
|                  | Magnificat primi toni (Victoria)               |
| Anthem:          | Totus Tuus (Gorecki)                           |
|                  | Salve Regina (Plainsong)                       |
| Organ Voluntary: | Prelude and Fugue in C, BWV 547 (Bach)         |



## PROPOSED USOC 2009 MAY TRIP

### Friday 1st ~ Bank Holiday Monday 4th May

Partly as a result of feedback from members, we have been working on the possibility of visiting some areas associated with J.S. Bach. These being in the eastern part of Germany, and direct flights to Berlin not being at convenient times, we propose to travel from Belfast International to and from Prague, provided the 2009 Easyjet timetable is similar to this year's.

*If what we have been working on is able to be finalised the details will be as follows:*

**FRIDAY 1ST** 16:40 Easyjet from Belfast International to Prague: arrive 20:10  
Coach to Hotel Ibis in Dresden city centre: arrive c22:30

**SATURDAY 2ND** Day in Leipzig, visiting Altenburg Castle on the way (Trost organ in Chapel). In Leipzig, visit the Bach Archiv and Museum and attend public concerts in the famous St Thomas' (Bach's church) and St Nicholas' Churches. Some free time.

**SUNDAY 3RD** Divided between Dresden and Freiberg (45 minutes away). This is 'Silbermann country' and we are planning to visit churches and cathedrals, mostly with organs by this famous builder. Also on our itinerary will be the Frauenkirche, the magnificent church in Dresden, rebuilt in the original style following war damage and opened amid much publicity in 2005.

**MONDAY 4TH** The plan at present is to leave our hotel after breakfast in a coach for Prague, where we would visit three magnificent churches and also have free time. However, we might spend more time in Germany if we are unable to gain access to all the desired churches in Prague.

20:40 Flight to Belfast: arrive 22:15

We need to gauge the level of interest in such a trip and have deposits so that we can book flights as soon as they become available.

**The cost is likely to be around £380 if sharing a double or twin room and £450 for single occupancy.**

This would cover return flights, coach travel, three nights on a bed and breakfast basis and all fees, concert tickets etc.-but NOT other meals.

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Please complete and return the enclosed slip to Philip Walden as soon as possible but before 31st October at the latest along with a **deposit of £200 per person** and the name of anyone else for whom you are booking.

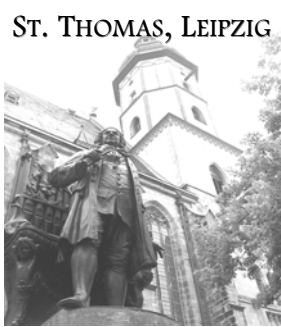
Please note that no alternative travel arrangements can be accommodated unless you wish to meet us and leave us at our Dresden hotel, or at Prague, with the implications of the risk of your flight being late being entirely your own.

Please phone me (James Little) on 028 9042 1332 if you have any questions about the proposed trip.

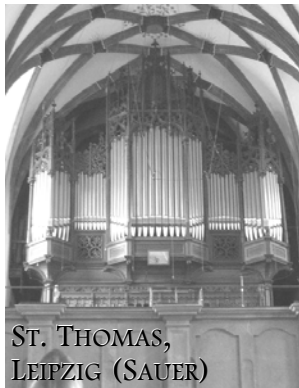


ALTENBURG CASTLE (TROST)

ST. THOMAS, LEIPZIG



ST. PETRI,  
FREIBURG



ST. THOMAS,  
LEIPZIG (SAUER)



HOFKIRCHE, DRESDEN



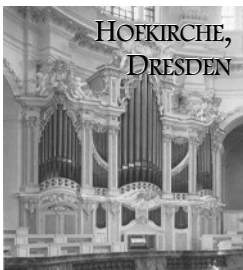
FRAUENKIRCHE,  
DRESDEN (KERN)



FRAUENKIRCHE,  
DRESDEN



ST. JAKOBI,  
FREIBURG



HOFKIRCHE,  
DRESDEN



ALTENBURG CASTLE

2009 May Trip



## 'THE ILLUSIONIST'S ART'

*Ian Mills reports on a summer of organ music at Derry Cathedral, including a silent movie improvisation by David Briggs.*

If, like me, you spend half an hour on a Sunday afternoon in the company of the Times' restaurant critics, you will appreciate that only a very small proportion of what A. A. Gill and the insufferable Michael Winner have to say is in any way related to what they may have chewed and swallowed in the past week. On Sunday 20th July, an audience at Derry



Cathedral was treated to a two course masterclass in the art of improvisation by the British virtuoso, David Briggs. Given that I possess neither the literary prowess of Messrs. Gill or Winner, the following review of Briggs' concert may seem a little out of proportion. But bear with me. At any rate, I hope these short observations bring you up to date with the musical goings-on in the North West.

Each year, St Columb's Cathedral - Derry's most historic building - welcomes over 80,000 visitors. These numbers are constantly changing, but, according to the latest statistics released by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Derry Cathedral is the province's second most popular attraction (after the Giant's Causeway). The Cathedral's 2008 Summer Music Festival - a new venture - was designed with two aims in mind: firstly, to celebrate the 375th anniversary of the Cathedral's completion and secondly, to allow our new 59 rank Wells-Kennedy organ to find a new audience. Each of our three lunchtime concerts was exceptionally well attended: audience numbers at each recital reached triple-figures. Performers included Travis Baker (Australia), the renowned UK-based counter-tenor Mark Chambers, and the choir of Christ's College, Cambridge. The culmination of the Festival was a celebrity recital and silent movie improvisation by David Briggs.



The main course was to be an improvisation accompaniment of the 1923 film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. David confessed that he was more than a little familiar with this movie, given that this was his 32nd performance! Before the movie began, we heard a series of aperitifs, including

Briggs' new arrangement of Glinka's overture to *Ruslan and Ludmilla* (an arrangement which had been premièred at the Royal Albert Hall a few weeks before), along with popular works by Mendelssohn, Elgar and Scott Joplin. The 25 minute first half concluded with an

improvisation on the Battle Hymn of the Republic, complete with a 2-part (and sometimes 3-part) fugue for the feet.

As David explained, the art of organ improvisation is enjoying a renaissance - not least thanks to his own efforts. A quick look at Briggs' website reveals the extent of the genre's international appeal; indeed, a few days after David left Derry, he performed the same Hunchback improvisation in Cologne Cathedral to an audience of 4000. Briggs reiterates advice from his idol Pierre Cochereau, explaining that improvisation is essentially the original 'illusionist's art'.



An improvisation on this scale (the movie lasts almost 2 hours) can be approached, and enjoyed on many levels. Children will be mesmerized by the high sounds and low sounds, the loud noises and the gentle stops; composers and the analytically minded can appreciate the complex leitmotifs and structure: the rest of us can fall somewhere in between.

Having never heard a silent movie improvisation before, I was struck by the connection between the action on-screen, and the response from the player at the console. It was immediate, and at times even pre-emptive, but never distracting. Also, I was incredibly impressed by Briggs' use of dynamics to portray action in both foreground and background. For example, a close-up scene showing the great bells of Notre Dame would be accompanied with the immediacy of the Great reeds; but when the camera moved away from the bell tower, the same theme could be heard, but on the Swell with the box closed. This clever subtlety lent the performance a sense of dimension and perspective.



Silent movie accompaniment must surely be one of the most physically and mentally draining art-forms. Although Briggs draws on pastiche by various composers - we heard bits and pieces by Vierne, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, to name but a few - the way in which each theme is knit together is incredibly impressive.

Briggs' use of the instrument is always fresh and inspiring, and there are moments in the movie which lend themselves to improvisation: the epic scene when Quasimodo pours molten lead from the west face of Notre Dame is just one example. Throughout this thoroughly enjoyable performance, the Solo strings were used to great effect, and I particularly enjoyed hearing the Swell reeds used in the style of French *en chamades*, accompanied by rich 8' and 4' *fonds* from other departments. Notre Dame indeed!



# Bombarde 32!

NEW  from David Briggs

*£10 plus £1 P&P when necessary.  
Available from Hon.Secs. Cheques to USOC*



David Briggs plays the famous Toccata from Widor's Symphony No.5 on the 1889 Cavaillé-Coll Organ of St. Sernin, Toulouse, France.

This DVD evolved rather unexpectedly during the final moments of the BBC Music Magazine recording session of Widor's 5th and Vierne's 3rd organ symphonies.

Two days of sheer exhilaration, inspired by the great Cavaillé-Coll in the haunting atmosphere of Europe's largest Norman basilica, led them to try to capture the moment on film.



We have secured a great deal which will enable members of USOC to purchase this DVD for the discounted price of only £10. This represents a worthwhile saving of £3 on the current web price if you were to buy direct from David's own site. Those of us who attended his recent recital in Derry already have our copies, and this release is to be thoroughly recommended. It starts off with a fairly detailed history of the Basilica of St. Sernin, narrated by David himself. Some of this is done over zoomed stills, as they just did not have the time to film more than a few video shots the next day, but this does not detract from the experience in any serious way. What is fascinating is David's relaxed manner at the console, and there is not a deal of room around the console, so the cameras were run from a fixed position, and there are no perceptible edits at all. Unlike the Liverpool DVD which Richard Campbell reviewed for us last year, all the video is in sync with the sound. There are no mimed bits at all. You nearly feel as if you are part of the performance, just standing at the treble end and looking on. The Widor is the only filmed bit of playing, but as a bonus, David gives us a five minute improvisation on the Lourdes Hymn, Ave Maria, which is played on the bells every hour at St. Sernin, and this is a cue for more views of the organ case and building. Well worth having in the drawer below your TV...

## Saint Finnian's Parish Church, Cregagh

### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Following the appointment of the current post holder to a teaching post overseas, we are seeking to appoint a Director of Music.

The Parish has a strong choral tradition with a large SATB choir, and potential to develop other areas of music ministry.

The two manual Binns organ was extensively refurbished in 2003 by Philip Prosser.

For further information, please contact:

028 9079 4444 (Robin Heatley)

07740 673880 (Paul Berry) or email: [paul.a.berry@ntlworld.com](mailto:paul.a.berry@ntlworld.com).

Appointment & Vacant Console

### WELCOME ....

.... to Dr. Emma Gibbins, who takes up the post of Director of Music at Saint George's Parish Church, High Street, Belfast from September 2008.

Emma began her musical career as organ scholar at Pembroke College, Cambridge, during which time she studied with Anne Page. After moving to London in 2001 to study for a PhD, she spent a year as assistant organist of St. Michael's, Battersea, a year as organ scholar at St. Michael's, West Croydon, and a year as organ scholar at St. Martin in the Fields. During this time she directed a small chamber choir, Canto Villanella. In 2004, she was appointed organ scholar at Southwell Minster, working under Paul Hale, during which time she was awarded Associateship of the Royal College of Organists. She was also accompanist and associate conductor for the Cranmer Company of Singers, a Nottinghamshire based chamber choir. She has completed the MMus course at the Royal College of Music, where she studied organ with David Graham and harpsichord with Robert Woolley. In recent years Emma has been organ scholar at Brentwood Cathedral, associate organist at St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate and Director of Music at St. Mary's Church, Stoke D'Abernon, in Surrey.

Recital

**THURSDAY 2ND OCTOBER**

**7:30 P.M.**

SAINT MARK'S DUNDELA, HOLYWOOD ROAD, BELFAST BT4 2DR

**ORGAN RECITAL by DAVID LEIGH**

(Assistant Organist, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin)



Music from the time of C.S. Lewis, who was baptised in Saint Mark's by his grandfather Thomas Hamilton, who was the first Rector of the church.



C.S. Lewis

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## MESSAGE FROM THE HON. SECRETARIES

### **OCTOBER NEWSLETTER:**

Items for this to be with the Secretariat by **Friday 26th September** please.

*If you are sending us information for Newsletters, please make absolutely sure that all the details are correct, as we will assume that they are.*

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### **FLIERS:**

We are happy to enclose fliers for events of interest along with the monthly newsletters. There is a nominal charge of £10 for this service, which should be included with the fliers - please send to us by the 20th of the month for the next issue - address below.

Size of flier: A6, A5 or 1/3 A4 as we use A5 envelopes.

Circulation: we print 200 newsletters at present.

The event will also be advertised in the usual way in the newsletter.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE HON. TREASURER

Thank you to all members who have already paid their subscriptions, by whatever means, for 2008. However, I would be delighted to receive subscriptions from those members who have still to pay.

Members paying their subscriptions this year have again shown generous support for the Arthur Beggs Fund by making a supplementary donation. This Fund is now in a very healthy state and attracting interest payments such that we need to take care to avoid tax liability. Therefore I am asking that members refrain from making further donations for the time being, while steps are taken to promote the intended use of the Fund's resources. However, those members who have enhanced standing orders may leave them, as more expense would be involved amending them.

The current annual subscriptions are:

|                                        |     |                        |     |
|----------------------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|
| Northern Ireland & Republic of Ireland | £20 | Mainland Great Britain | £10 |
| International Overseas Member          | £7  | Full-time Student      | £10 |

Please contact the Treasurer if you have any queries in this regard.

CONTACT

### **HONORARY SECRETARIES:**

Stephen & Carolyn Hamill

07714 ...

... 023964

usoc@phoenix-organs.co.uk

### **HONORARY TREASURER:**

philip dot walden at btinternet dot com

