



St George's Singers

2011-12 Season

St George's Singers



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Neil Taylor

Assistant Musical Director

Calum Fraser

Accompanist

Jeffrey Makinson

Assistant Accompanists

Tim Kennedy, Julia Mayall



www.st-georges-singers.org.uk

Welcome to our 2011-12 season



Dear Friends

What a wonderful year St George's Singers had last season. It began with a concert of English choral music, a delightful programme that we then took on tour to 'Elgar country' in May. The season ended with a complete contrast, Eastern European music at the much loved Gorton Monastery. However, the highlight of the year was Bach's *St John Passion* at the Bridgewater Hall with Manchester Camerata - an opportunity to perform a great choral work in a magnificent venue, and to work with Nicholas Kraemer, an internationally renowned conductor.

Next season, however, promises to be just as thrilling. In October we record our next CD, a collection of carols old and new - some of which have been written especially for St George's Singers. We hope you will want to buy a copy in time for Christmas! We return to Gorton Monastery in November for a performance of Handel's *Messiah* - a great favourite that we have not performed for many years. We will be particularly pleased to welcome as bass soloist our former Assistant Musical Director, Marcus Farnsworth, who is developing a great career as a solo singer.

The season also includes a fascinating programme of Spanish choral music in March 2012, our annual and very popular Singing Day (this year devoted to Mozart's *Requiem*), and our traditional Christmas concert. We are also planning a tour, and will be taking part in events in the local community.

We finish the season with a bang, back at the Monastery, when we are joined by the Fine Arts Brass Ensemble in a concert of music to help celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. We can already imagine the thrilling sound of this regal music in such a wonderful setting.

None of this would be possible without the skill of our extremely talented Musical Director Neil Taylor, who is constantly challenging us to reach higher standards and to tackle new and exciting works. Neil is very ably assisted by the great team of accompanist Jeff Makinson and Assistant Musical Director, Calum Fraser.

I am sure you will find something in his Season's Brochure to whet your appetite, and on behalf of St George's Singers I look forward to welcoming you to our concerts.

Anne Francis
Chair, St George's Singers



Saturday 26 November 2011, 7.00 pm
The Monastery, Gorton, Manchester



Handel *Messiah*

Conductor Neil Taylor

Northern Baroque Amanda Babington, leader

Soloists Ruth Jenkins, soprano; Laura Kelly, mezzo-soprano;

Richard Dowling, tenor; Marcus Farnsworth, bass

Organ Jeffrey Makinson

Undoubtedly Handel's best loved work, *Messiah* ranks amongst the most popular in the Western choral repertoire. Composed in London during the summer of 1741 and premiered in Dublin on 13 April 1742, it was repeatedly revised by Handel, reaching its most familiar version in a 1754 performance in aid of the Foundling Hospital, London's first home for abandoned children.

Using the words of the King James Bible, Handel presents the Christian view of the 'Messiah' or 'Anointed One', telling the story of Christ's birth, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. Although the work was originally performed during Lent, there is a strong tradition of performances in Advent. As we prepare for the Christmas season in the surroundings of the resplendent Gorton Monastery, St George's Singers will be joined by old friends Richard Dowling and Marcus Farnsworth (winner of the 2009 Wigmore Hall International Song Competition and the Song Prize at the 2011 Kathleen Ferrier Awards Competition) as well as the beautiful voices of soprano Ruth Jenkins and mezzo Laura Kelly.

"Whether I was in my body or out of my body as I wrote it I know not. God knows." – Handel, on the Hallelujah Chorus

Ticket prices: £16, £13 concessions, £5 students and children

Group discounts/season tickets available

Coach transport is available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to Gorton Monastery – please contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012 to book seats. £5, or free to Friends of St George's Singers

Saturday 3 December 2011, 7.30 pm
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport

Carols and Brass by Candlelight

Conductor Neil Taylor

Organ Jeffrey Makinson

With Vernon Building Society Poynton Brass Band

Musical Director Kevin Gibbs

Our traditional Christmas concert with our friends from VBS Poynton Band is always a great way to start the festive season. With mince pies and mulled wine at the interval to ward off the winter chill, this concert is a must for young and old alike.

Early booking recommended.

Ticket prices: £12, £10 concessions, £2 students and children

Group discounts/season tickets available.



Saturday 21 January 2012

9.30-10.15 am (registration for singers), 6.00 pm (concert)

Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire

2012 Singing Day

Mozart Requiem

Conductor Neil Taylor

Accompanist Jeffrey Makinson

Soloists Rebecca Lea, soprano; Rebecca Anderson, mezzo;

William Petter, tenor; Jonathan Ainscough, bass

St George's have never performed Mozart's *Requiem* at their Singing Day – so we're delighted to give everyone the opportunity to come and learn this marvellous work in a day, then give a performance in the evening with some wonderful young soloists. Our lunches and teas are as famous as our singing – so come along and have a truly enjoyable singing experience.

Ticket prices: £20 (to sing), £5 (audience)

Download our Singing Day application form from www.st-georges-singers.org.uk, or contact Gillian Banks, Tel 01925 213949, email gillian.m.banks@gmail.com

Please note new venue

Saturday 24 March 2012, 7.30 pm
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport

Spanish Gold
400 years of song from Spain and the Americas

Conductor Neil Taylor

The 16th and early 17th centuries witnessed an immense flourishing of Spain's artistic and literary heritage. None of the arts reflected this 'Golden Age' more than its choral music. Composers such as Victoria and Lobo in Spain, and Padilla and others in the new found lands of South America shaped the legacy bequeathed by the Moorish presence and complex native rhythms, refining the music of the Church to a brilliance that matched the gold flowing into it from Spain's New World conquests.

This concert will feature some of the great works by Spain's Renaissance masters, as well as 20th century works by Spanish and American composers that give a modern interpretation to the traditions of their glorious predecessors.

Ticket prices: £12, £10 concessions. Children/students £2
Group discounts/season tickets available

Sunday 17 June 2012, 7.30 pm
The Monastery, Gorton, Manchester



VIVAT!

Music for royal celebrations

Conductor Neil Taylor

Organ Jeffrey Makinson

With Fine Arts Brass Ensemble

In this very special Diamond Jubilee year for HM The Queen, St George's Singers will join in the celebrations with a concert of joyful music composed for British monarchs through the ages. The Monastery will resound to favourites such as Handel's *Zadok the Priest* and Parry's *I was glad*, stirring coronation anthems by Walton and Stanford, and many other works commissioned for royal occasions.

Joining St George's Singers will be the supremely talented Fine Arts Brass, the UK's leading brass ensemble, who combine a unique versatility of sound and exceptional musical virtuosity with humour and passion for the music they play.

Fine Arts Brass an extraordinarily brilliant ensemble playing with scintillating sparkle – The Times



Ticket prices: £15, £12 concessions, £5 students and children
Group discounts/season tickets available

Coach transport is available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to The Monastery - please contact Dave Francis on 01663 764012. £5 or Free to Friends of St George's

Other events

YogaSing Workshop - Saturday 3 September 2011

Run by qualified yoga teacher Carolyn Ferguson and professional singer and vocal coach Richard Strivens, this workshop for choral singers uses the physical and mental discipline of Iyengar yoga to improve singers' vocal techniques. Limited places available. For an application form, contact Susan Hodgson on susan.hodgson28@btinternet.com, tel 0161 338 3013, or download the form from the Choir website.

Open Rehearsal - Tuesday 27 September 2011

Once a year we hold an Open Rehearsal, which this season is on Tuesday 27 September 2011 in St George's Church Hall, Poynton. If you're interested in joining St George's Singers, or just want to find out what goes on at our rehearsals, then do come along, sit in at the rehearsal, enjoy a glass of wine and have a chat afterwards with Choir members. For more information, please contact our Secretary, Jacqui Smith, email enquiries@st-georges-singers.org.uk, Tel 01625 533779 or visit our website.

Other Events

Throughout the year, St George's Singers becomes involved in a range of community, local and national events. Amongst those in the planning stage for the 2011-2012 season are:

- **Making Music Overture:** Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies of which St George's Singers is a member, has commissioned a new work to celebrate the 2012 Cultural Olympiad, and which will be performed around the UK in the run-up to the Olympic Games in 2012. The Choir is hoping to perform this work with other community groups in and around Poynton in the spring and summer of 2012.
- **Poynton Music Festival:** this new community event is being organised for July 2012, bringing together many of the music groups and societies in Poynton for a weekend of good music, and in which St George's Singers will be participating.
- **Workshop on Chris Williams' music:** a special workshop to take place in the summer of 2012 is being planned with English Philharmonia to look at the choral music of Chris Williams, a young English composer known for his highly original yet accessible works.

For more information on these and all our events through the year, visit our website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk.

Friends and Patrons

St George's Singers finances all its own concerts, no small task when putting on major concerts or touring overseas. So we rely heavily on fund-raising activities, and particularly on our Friends and other Supporters.

Friends

The Friends of St George's Singers was formed by families, friends and former members of the Choir as an easy way to stay in touch with us, and enable them to support our activities.

The Friends play an important part in the social and musical life of the Choir, as well as providing vital financial support. Annual membership of the Friends costs only £15 for Red Rose, and £30 for Gold Rose Membership, though many Friends make more generous donations. Many long-standing Friends have also been invited to become Honorary Life Friends, in recognition of their contribution to the Choir.

In return Friends receive

- reserved seats at concerts where available
- the choir newsletter, Hemiola
- free coach transport to city centre venues, when available
- invitations to social events, open rehearsals and pre-concert receptions
- special rates on CDs
- acknowledgement in programmes
- early notice of concert information and priority booking
- entry into the Friends' Concert Draw for a chance to win free tickets to our next concert

To join our Friends

To join our Friends, simply complete and return the Application Form in this brochure, or contact Jean Egerton at friends@st-georges-singers.org.uk, Tel 01625 871381.

Patrons

We have recently formed our Patrons Group, individual and corporate supporters of the Choir who contribute funds for specific purposes, such as sponsoring concerts, soloists or other Choir activities. All Patrons are acknowledged in our Season Brochure and concert programmes, and depending on the level of support, on relevant concert publicity.

If you or your company are interested in becoming a Patron, please contact the Chair, Anne Francis, on chair@st-georges-singers.org.uk, or Tel 01663 764012.

2011-12 Season Patrons

We would like to offer our grateful thanks to all our Patrons for their support during the current season:

Season supporters: HSBC Bank plc, Intuitive Media Ltd

Concert Venues

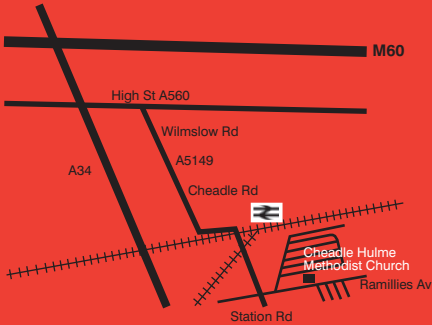
St George's Church, Buxton Road, Stockport SK2 6NU



The Monastery, Gorton Lane, Gorton, Manchester M12 5WF



Cheadle Hulme Methodist Church, Ramillies Avenue, SK8 7AL



St George's Church, London Road, Poynton SK12 1AF



Ticket Information

There are four easy ways to buy tickets for our concerts:

Online booking

To buy online using Paypal or credit card, or to download a booking form, visit our website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk, and go to 'Online Tickets'.

Telephone

Ring the Ticket Hotline on 01663 764012.

Email

Email your requirements to: tickets@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

Post

Complete the Application Form in this brochure and post with your cheque, payable to 'St George's Singers Poynton', to:
The Ticket Secretary, 11 The Ridgeway South, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 2JG.

Concessions

Concessionary rates are available for Senior Citizens, claimants, students and children. All concessionary prices are detailed against the appropriate concert in this brochure.

Group Discounts

Discounts are available for group bookings as follows: 10% off 5-9 tickets and 15% off 10 or more tickets. Please contact the Ticket Secretary on 01663 764012 for more information.

Season Tickets

Buy a season ticket to our four main concerts and save over 15% on standard ticket prices. A full rate season ticket costs £47 and a concessionary ticket is £38. (Excludes the Singing Day concert).

Singing Day

To book a place on the Singing Day on 21 January 2012, please see our separate Singing Day brochure, available to download from the website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk, or by contacting Gillian Banks, Tel 01925 213949, Email Gillian.m.banks@gmail.com.

Mailing List

For early notification of concerts, ticket availability, special events, and to receive a copy of our Choir newsletter, please register with our Mailing List by completing the Application Form overleaf.

detach along dotted line

Application Form

Please complete this form and tick the appropriate boxes below

Title **First Name**

Surname

Address

Postcode **Telephone**

Email

Mailing List Registration

Please include me on your Mailing List (please tick)

I agree to my details being stored on the Choir's database and used for publicity relating to St George's Singers only. I understand my details will not be divulged to third parties (please tick)

I would prefer to receive information by (please tick one):

post

email

Friends of St George's Singers

I would like to:

Become a Red Rose Friend for the 2011-12 Season and enclose a cheque for £15

Become a Gold Rose Friend for the 2011-12 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

I am already a Friend, and would like to:

Renew my Red Rose membership for the 2011-12 Season and enclose a cheque for £15

Renew my Gold Rose membership for the 2011-12 Season and enclose a cheque for £30

To order tickets, please remember to complete the Ticket Booking Form overleaf

Ticket Booking Form

Please complete the form and post with your cheque, made payable to 'St George's Singers Poynton', to:
 Ticket Secretary, St George's Singers, 11 The Ridgeway South, Disley, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 2DU

Remember to complete your name and address details overleaf!

Concert	Date	Price	No. full price	No. conc	No. stdnt/childn	No. coach tickets	Total £
Messiah	26/1/11	£16, £13 concession, £5 students/children					
Carols & Brass by Candlelight	3/12/11	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children Audience tickets only £5					
Mozart Requiem	21/1/12	Audience tickets only £5					
Spanish Gold	24/3/12	£12, £10 concession, £2 students/children					
VIVATI	17/6/12	£15, £12 concession, £5 students/children					
Season Tickets		Full £47, concession £38					
Grand Total £							

Coach tickets available from Poynton/Hazel Grove to Gorton Monastery concerts only: Friends of St George's Singers – free, Others - £5 per person.

For information on group discounts, please contact the Ticket Secretary on 01663 764012

About St George's Singers

Joining the Choir

Entry to the Choir is by audition, and all Singers are re-auditioned every three years. New members can join at any time, and are welcome to come along to a few rehearsals before auditioning. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings in St George's Church Hall, Poynton, SK12 1AF (located on the A523 London Road) from 7.30pm to 10.00pm. For more information about joining St George's Singers, please contact our Secretary, Jacqui Smith, Tel 01625 533779, Email enquiries@st-georges-singers.org.uk.

Social Events

Although a large group with around 100 members, St George's Singers is an extremely friendly and welcoming Choir. We hold a wide range of social events throughout the season, including the annual Social Evening (an opportunity for choir members to take the solo stage!), wine tastings, and regular walks in Cheshire and the High Peak.

Hemiola

If you want to read more about St George's Singers and our activities, pick up a copy of Hemiola, our regular Choir newsletter, from our Publicity Officer Susan Hodgson, publicity@st-georges-singers.org.uk, Tel 0161 338 3013, or sign up to our Mailing List on our website.

Cheshire Consort

The Cheshire Consort is St George's Singers' wedding choir, and is available to sing at weddings throughout the Cheshire and Greater Manchester area. You can find more information about our wedding choir on the choir website at www.st-georges-singers.org.uk/weddingchoir, as well as a guide to choosing the music for your wedding. To discuss your wedding plans and book the Consort, contact Sue Taylor on 01663 766991, email: setaylor9@btinternet.com.

"The glorious singing of the Cheshire Consort made a wonderful day even more special"



St George's Singers

St George's Singers was formed in Poynton, Cheshire in 1956 with 23 founding members drawn from the local community. Today, the Choir has over 100 members who travel from Cheshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, and is widely recognised as one of the most enterprising and innovative choirs in the North of England.

The Choir has an extensive repertoire that covers baroque, classical, jazz, modern and newly commissioned choral works; performs in venues throughout Greater Manchester and Cheshire, including the Bridgewater Hall and the Royal Northern College of Music; and tours regularly in the UK and overseas.

2011-12 Season at a glance:

27 September 2011 **Open Rehearsal**

26 November 2011 **Handel *Messiah***

3 December 2011 **Carols and Brass by Candlelight**

21 January 2012 **Singing Day – Mozart *Requiem***

24 March 2012 **Spanish Gold**

17 June 2012 **VIVAT!**

Ticket hotline 01663 764012

Online ticket bookings www.st-georges-singers.org.uk

General enquiries 01625 533779

St George's Singers is a Registered Charity, No 508686, and a member of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies



SUPPORTING &
CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC

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