

# Mark Forkgen

Mark Forkgen has directed London Concert Choir since 1996. He is also Music Director of Canticum and Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Kokoro (the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's contemporary music group).



Mark was Organ Scholar of Queens' College, Cambridge, before winning a scholarship to study conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under Christopher Seaman and Michael Tilson Thomas. During this period he also worked as assistant conductor to Mstislav Rostropovich.

Composers' Ensemble, and appeared at all the major venues including the Royal Festival Hall, the Barbican and the Royal Albert Hall.

From the Guildhall Mark went on to become Assistant Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for two highly productive years before deciding to further his career as a guest conductor.

Mark has given the first performances of over ninety works, including stage works and contemporary opera. He has been Conductor and Artistic Advisor for highly acclaimed festivals including Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' 70th Birthday; Stravinsky, and the Composers of the South-West. He is also a champion of Youth Music and, after conducting youth orchestras in London and Scotland for some years, has recently become Director of Music at Tonbridge School.

Since then he has worked with a number of leading orchestras, including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, the English Chamber Orchestra, the English Northern Philharmonia and the



## LONDON CONCERT CHOIR

Conductor: Mark Forkgen

Season 2006/2007

[www.london-concert-choir.org.uk](http://www.london-concert-choir.org.uk)

# London Concert Choir



London Concert Choir has been a significant part of the London music scene since 1960. Now with more than 100 members, the choir regularly performs in major London concert halls, cathedrals and churches, and has given concerts in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Ireland.

A hallmark of the choir is its wide and varied repertoire, ranging from unaccompanied church music through baroque oratorio and the major choral works of the 19th and 20th centuries to music by contemporary composers. The choir has frequently included newly commissioned works in its programmes.

Concerts over the last three years have included Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the London première of a reconstruction of Mozart's great C minor Mass – all with the period instrumental ensemble Counterpoint.

The choir has also sung rarely-heard unaccompanied settings of the Russian Orthodox liturgy by both Gretchaninov and Tchaikovsky.

With the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra the choir has performed Verdi's Requiem, Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* and Vaughan Williams' majestic *Sea Symphony* on the South Bank, and a concert version of Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* at the Barbican Hall.

London Concert Choir regularly gives performances for charity, including an annual carol concert at Leatherhead for SeeAbility (for visually impaired people with additional disabilities). Recently the choir gave a concert at St Martin-in-the-Fields in aid of The Connection at St Martin's (helping homeless people of all ages) and took part in a gala concert in support of AIDS relief and Education in Southern Africa.

## Stravinsky Mass Mozart Serenade in C minor Bruckner Mass in E minor

Thursday 26 October, 7.45pm  
Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, SW1

## Christmas at St Martin-in-the-Fields

Saturday 2 December  
St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, WC2

### with Counterpoint Woodwind and Brass

When writing their settings of the Mass both Bruckner and Stravinsky decided to renounce the florid, operatic style of concert versions by Mozart, Haydn and later composers. Instead they shared the aim of writing 'pure' music intended for use in church. Both works combine the sparing use of wind instruments with restrained writing for the choir.

Bruckner's E minor Mass, first performed in 1869, was influenced by Gregorian chant and contains echoes of the music of Palestrina. The acoustic of Holy Trinity Church is particularly suited to the grandeur of this sublime work.

Stravinsky's more concise Mass setting was completed in 1948 and includes some references to Russian Orthodox church music.



Mozart's Serenade in C minor for wind octet belies its title; rather than being lightweight 'background music', it is symphonic in form and predominantly serious in character.



### Family Christmas Carols at 4.00pm

Look forward to Christmas, with seasonal carols sung by the choir and traditional hymns for everyone to sing.

Tickets £10 (Under-16s £5)

### Advent Carols by Candlelight at 7.30pm

A selection of choral music and hymns to celebrate the start of the Advent season.

Tickets: £20, £16, £12, £9, £6



# The Spirit of Christmas

with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Tuesday 19 December, 7.30pm  
Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, SW1

Bach  
Suite No.3

Warlock  
Capriol Suite

Vaughan Williams  
Fantasia on  
Christmas Carols

Bach  
Magnificat

Promoted in association with  
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra



Bach's orchestral suite consists of an overture and joyful dance movements in the French style surrounding the well-known slow movement, popularised as the 'Air on the G String'. Peter Warlock based his Capriol Suite on graceful 16th-Century dance tunes, one of which has been arranged as a carol for the choir.

In the Fantasia on Christmas Carols, the story of the Fall and Redemption of mankind unfolds in a sequence of traditional English carols, some of which were collected by Vaughan Williams. The concert ends with Bach's festive large-scale setting of the Latin Magnificat, written to be performed on Christmas Day, 1723 – his first Christmas in Leipzig.

Tickets £35, £28, £20, £10  
Box Office (020) 7730 4500

# Brahms Third Symphony A German Requiem

with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

Tuesday 20 March 2007, 7.30pm  
Barbican Hall, Silk Street, EC2

Brahms composed his Requiem, one of the truly great choral masterworks, not as a Mass for the Dead, but to console the living. He himself chose texts from Luther's translation of the Bible, contrasting the transience of human life with the



everlasting nature of God and the joy of the world to come. His largest single work, it evolved over a period of twelve years and was completed in 1868, when Brahms was 36.

The Requiem is complemented by the Third Symphony, first performed in 1883. This has been described as the most perfect of Brahms' symphonies and also as his Eroica. The restless striving of the outer movements contrasts with the simplicity of the second movement and the wistful nostalgia of the third, and the tension is finally resolved in the serene coda.

Tickets £26, £22, £18, £13, £7  
Box Office (020) 7638 8891

# Choral Music from Around the World

Tuesday 15 May, 7.30pm  
St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, WC2

To include music by  
Britten, Kodály,  
Berger and  
Takemitsu

This spring concert includes Benjamin Britten's Festival Cantata Rejoice in the Lamb composed in 1943 to words by the 18th-Century poet Christopher Smart, praising God as 'the artist inimitable', present in all Creation and especially in music.

Laudes Organi (In Praise of the Organ), a late work by the Hungarian composer Kodály, is a secular cantata to a mediaeval text. It was composed in 1966 for the American Guild of Organists and contains some magnificent organ interludes.

Also in the programme is Brazilian Psalm composed in 1941 by Jean Berger (who was born in Germany, lived in France and Brazil, and finally became an American citizen), as well as music by other composers, including Toru Takemitsu, whose musical language blended Western classical and modern styles with elements of traditional Japanese music.



Tickets £20, £16, £12, £9, £6  
Box Office (020) 7839 8362

# Rodgers and Hammerstein The Great Musicals

Tuesday 10 July, 7.30pm  
Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, SW1

The most successful partnership in American musical theatre began in 1942, when the composer Richard Rodgers joined forces with the writer Oscar Hammerstein II to create Oklahoma!. This celebration, with soloists and orchestra, presents highlights from Oklahoma! and three more of their best-loved musicals: Carousel, South Pacific and The King And I. All four are full of memorable songs and choruses.

Oklahoma!, which premièred in 1943, was the first of a new kind of musical play, in which drama, music and dance were given equal importance in telling a thought-provoking story. Carousel followed in 1945 and

was one of the earliest musicals to have a tragic plot; both this and South Pacific (1949) are concerned with themes of social attitudes and prejudice. If Carousel was the authors' favourite musical, South Pacific, about the interactions between US naval personnel and Pacific island inhabitants during the Second World War, is considered to be one of their greatest.

With an equally exotic setting, The King and I (1951) illustrates the clash of cultures which ensues when the Victorian widow Anna Leonowens becomes a governess at the court of the King of Siam and tries to persuade him to come to terms with the modern world.



Tickets £25, £20, £16, £12  
Box Office (020) 7730 4500

## Joining London Concert Choir

Rehearsals take place on  
Monday evenings from  
7.15pm to 9.30pm.

London Concert Choir provides a friendly, stimulating and enjoyable experience for its members and constantly aims to stretch its abilities and to extend its repertoire and range of styles.

If you would like to join the choir, come to a rehearsal and sing with us for a few weeks before an informal audition.

See our website (below) for details.

Contact for choir membership:  
Stephen Rickett  
t: 07780 607837  
f: 0870 135 5729  
stephen@london-concert-choir.org.uk



## Supporting London Concert Choir

Thanks to our  
Friends and  
Companions

London Concert Choir is a registered charity and all income and donations received are used to further its musical objectives throughout the community.

In working with music professionals the Choir relies extensively on the voluntary work and donations of its members and supporters. In particular the Choir acknowledges gratefully the support given by its Friends and Companions.

Our Friends and Companions receive advance notice of forthcoming concerts and early booking opportunities. In addition our Companions are offered opportunities to attend rehearsals and meet the choir and conductor, to join overseas tours and to travel with the choir, a free programme at

each concert and (where venue facilities permit) a members' bar with priority ordering.

Friends and Companions are acknowledged by name in concert programmes whenever possible.

For further information about supporting the Choir please visit our website or email us at [friends@london-concert-choir.org.uk](mailto:friends@london-concert-choir.org.uk). If you have any suggestions for sources of corporate sponsorship, please email them to the same address.

The Friends subscription is £20 a year and the Companions subscription is £100 a year.

### Mailing List

If you would like advance information about our concerts, join the choir's free Mailing List: [mailinglist@london-concert-choir.org.uk](mailto:mailinglist@london-concert-choir.org.uk)



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