

Southend Bach Choir

Presents

Handel - DIXIT DOMINUS & Coronation Anthems

with

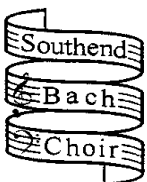
Elizabeth Dunlop & Elizabeth Upsher

Saturday 13th April, 2019

7:30 pm

St. Augustine's Church

Thorpe Bay, SS1 3JH



Programme



SUPPORTING &
CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC

The Southend Bach Choir

Musical Director - Colin Edwards

The Southend Bach Choir began life in 1943 as an evening class of the Municipal College in Southend under the direction of its founder Dr. Harold May, FRCO. Known as the Municipal College Choir it gave its first performance in December of that year. The programme consisted of selections from Handel's Messiah.

In its early years the Municipal College Choral and Orchestral Society sponsored the birth of the College Opera Group, which became independent in 1950. In this year the choir's name reverted to "The Municipal College Choral Society" and many challenging concerts followed.

In 1968 the choir became the Southend Bach Choir, and in 1993 under the baton of Gerald Bates, (Musical Director 1987-2001) the Choir celebrated its Golden Jubilee with a memorable performance of Bach's B Minor Mass. Upon Gerry's retirement in 2001 the choir welcomed its present Musical Director Colin Edwards.

The Southend Bach Choir is a very happy and friendly group of people singing a wide range of music. Singing in a Choir is a great hobby. It is not only very enjoyable, but you make new friends, and have the opportunity of learning to sing wonderful music. You would be most welcome to join us!

Our Guest Soloists



Elizabeth Dunlop (*Soprano*) - began her vocal training with Margaret Cozens and went on to study Singing with Neil Mackie and Piano with Yonty Solomon at the Royal College of Music, where she was the recipient of both French and Italian languages prizes. In 1987 she was the winner of the Freda Parry Scholarship, which enabled her to study Bel Canto and Coloratura operatic repertoire with Italian Opera singer, Graziella Sciutti.

Elizabeth performs regularly as a concert soloist, as well as being one half of local soprano duo, 'The Two Elizabeths', with Elizabeth Upsher. A respected Singing and Piano teacher for over 28 years, she also teaches class music at Thorpedene Primary School. Elizabeth also enjoys conducting and has directed adult and children's choirs, delivered choral workshops and was for 8 years assistant MD and soloist for 'The Orpheus Singers' ladies' choir. More recently Elizabeth has been engaged as Musical Director for the Southend Operatic and Dramatic Society's

productions at the Palace Theatre, Westcliff – ‘Carousel’ and ‘Sweeney Todd’ in 2015, ‘Hello Dolly’ in 2016 and in November 2017 ‘Singin’ in the Rain’.

Elizabeth is delighted to be performing with the Southend Bach Choir this evening.



Elizabeth Upsher (*Soprano*) - a classically trained soprano, a member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians and has been singing locally for over thirty years. She taught singing and music for ten years at St Hilda’s private school, teaching pupils from age 7 – 16 years. She has taught for Singer Stage School in the past and is very pleased to be working with them once again to provide tutoring at home with around 20 students.

Elizabeth has performed as a soloist with several local choirs and sung four times at Chapel of the Undercroft beneath Westminster Hall in London. Elizabeth was a member of a Southend chamber choir “La Camerata” for eleven years until it disbanded and now sings with local choir “Gaudeamus”. She also sings as part of a duo “The Two Elizabeths” with her singing partner and our other soloist this evening, Elizabeth Dunlop, and they are very busy entertaining locally most recently at the Italian Festival for BBC Essex and also having sung at the Palace of Westminster for Southend Alternative City of Culture.

Elizabeth is very pleased to be asked to sing with the Southend Bach Choir for this concert.

Jonny Munn (*Trumpeter*) - Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Thank you to **Isabelle Morgan** and **Eleanor Strutt** of Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance for supporting the choir in this concert.

Dixit Dominus - George F Handel (1685 - 1759)

Like many ambitious musicians Handel was drawn to Italy, the birthplace of opera, and in 1707 he went to Rome for three years, where he hoped to further his career as an opera composer. Though raised in the Lutheran faith, Handel always willingly composed for other denominations and was soon patronised by the Catholic Church in Rome, and by many of the city’s principal movers and shakers.

Dixit Dominus is a setting of Psalm 110 which Handel composed in 1707, when he was only 22. Along with other Latin psalm settings and motets composed at about the same time, it very probably formed part of a setting of the Carmelite Vespers for the

feast of the Madonna del Carmine. The work is in eight movements, scored for five-part chorus, soloists, strings and continuo.

At that time the talents of the finest Italian instrumentalists were regularly on display in the brilliant concertos of Vivaldi, Corelli and others, and singers were similarly able to parade their skills in opera, the exciting new musical theatre that had become all the rage, thanks to composers such as Alessandro Scarlatti and Antonio Caldara. *Dixit Dominus* is a showpiece for both singers and players alike, and whilst its unremitting energy and dramatic intensity presents all the musicians with considerable challenges, the demands that Handel makes on the choir are extremely testing, and seldom equalled in his later works. The piece is an extraordinary tour-de-force, particularly for a 22-year-old composer, and demonstrates Handel's precocious mastery of counterpoint, of harmonic and melodic invention and, perhaps most impressively, of powerful dramatic gesture. Clearly, he viewed the commission as an opportunity to display his total command of the Italian style, and so make the most memorable impression possible on his hosts. Not surprisingly, *Dixit Dominus* is regarded as one of his finest works.

It seems likely that the text was originally intended for a coronation, later becoming part of the liturgy for Sunday Vespers and the ordination of priests. It is one of the most frequently referenced psalms, and from early times has been seen as one of the primary portrayals of Christ as prophet, priest and king not only of his own people but of all nations. Nowadays it seems uncomfortably aggressive, but in Handel's time it would have been cheerfully read as a prophecy of Christ's victory not only over his earthly enemies, but also over the devil and all his works.

The psalm is set to music of exceptional brilliance, the dramatic contrasts within and between movements vividly illustrating and reinforcing the words. The work is unified by a plainsong cantus firmus - a melody in greatly extended notes, against which the remaining parts weave decorative lines - which appears in both the opening and closing movements. After the energetic opening chorus comes a simple and elegant alto solo, followed by a beautifully lyrical movement for soprano, built on a repeated triplet figure. The drama resumes in the fourth movement, one of alternating slow and fast sections, the measured 'Juravit Dominus' being notable for its daring chromatic harmony and bold dissonances. The unmistakable influence of Corelli can be heard in the instrumental introduction of the sixth and longest movement, with the two violin parts and then the voices constantly overlapping in a series of striking suspensions. The ensuing section, 'Judicabit in nationibus', is a busy fugato which appropriately disintegrates at the word 'ruinas'. There follows one of the most remarkable passages in this unique work: a series of percussive chords repeated to the same syllable (a device very reminiscent of Monteverdi) graphically depicts a crushing military victory. The Gloria brings back the cantus firmus, this time set against even more brilliant figuration than in the opening movement, and the work closes with an extended and superbly executed fugue.

John Bawden

Programme

Accompanist: Roger Humphrey

Choir

The King Shall Rejoice

Handel

Our Guest Soloist: Elizabeth Dunlop

Eternal source of light divine from *Ode for the Birthday of Queen Anne*

Handel

Choir

Let Thy Hand be Strengthened

Handel

Our Guest Soloist: Elizabeth Upsher

Let the bright seraphim

from *Samson*
Handel

Choir

Zadok the priest

Handel

INTERVAL

Choir

Dixit Dominus, HWV 232

Handel

Chorus : "Dixit Dominus"

Aria : "Virgam virtutis"

Aria : "Tecum principium"

Chorus : "Juravit Dominus"

Chorus : "Tu es sacerdos"

Soloists & Chorus : "Dominus a dextris tuis"

Rosalind Hayman, Eve Read, Janet Luxford, Derek Groom, Ian Alston

Chorus : "Judicabit in nationibus"

Soprano duet & Chorus : "De torrente in via bibet"

Chorus : "Gloria patri et filio"

Please join the choir for light refreshments during the interval.

	Latin Text	Psalms 110 NIV Text
Chorus	Dixit Dominus Domino meo: Sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum.	1. The LORD says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."
Aria	Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion: dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.	2. The LORD will extend your mighty sceptre from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of your enemies!"
Aria	Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae splendoribus sanctorum. Ex utero ante luciferum genui te.	3. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy splendour, your young men will come to you like dew from the morning's womb.
Chorus	Juravit Dominus et non paenitebit eum: Tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.	4. The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."
Soloists & Chorus	Dominus a dextris tuis, confregit in die irae suae reges.	5. The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.
Chorus	Judicabit in nationibus, Implebit ruinas, conquassabit capita in terra multorum.	6. He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.
Soprano duet & Chorus	De torrente in via bibet, propterea exaltabit caput.	7. He will drink from a brook along the way, and so he will lift his head high.
Chorus	Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now; and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

OUR PATRONS

Mrs J. Bishop-Laggett Mrs J. Restorick
Mr S.C. Burford Mr T. Harding Mr J. Wall
Miss C. Kirkham Mrs J. Bliss Mr R. Hair

*Southend Bach Choir is very grateful to the Patrons
for their continued encouragement and support*

**For details of the Patron Scheme:
Phone: Bee - 01702 553634
Email: southendbachchoir@gmail.com**

OUR NEXT CONCERT

Summer Concert

Saturday 6th July 2019 at 7.30pm

Trinity Methodist Church, Westcliff-on-Sea

WHY NOT JOIN US?

Southend Bach Choir rehearses on Tuesday evenings
from 7.30 to 9.30 pm at Blenheim Primary School, Leigh-on-Sea.
Whether you are an experienced singer or a musical beginner
you will be

VERY WELCOME

For further information please contact:
Ian Alston (Chair) on 01702 589209
or visit our website:

www.southendbachchoir.org.uk



Southend Bach Choir
Registered Charity No. 274370