

# Southend Bach Choir

with

*Southend Concert  
Orchestra*

# Mass in B minor

**J. S. Bach**

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7.00pm

Kings Road URC, Westcliff-on-Sea



**Programme**



SUPPORTING &  
CHAMPIONING  
VOLUNTARY MUSIC



# The Southend Bach Choir

Musical Director – Roger Humphrey

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 "Mass in B minor". Upon Gerry's retirement in 2001, the choir welcomed its past Music Director Colin Edwards until 2023.

In 2023, Roger, who had served as our accompanist for 40 years, stepped into the role of Music Director. Under his direction, the *Southend Bach Choir* continues to thrive, building on its rich history and looking forward to many more memorable performances.

This performance of Bach's "Mass in B minor" holds special significance for the choir, as it was a work that our former Music Director, Colin Edwards, had intended to conduct before his passing. In honour of his dedication and passion for this masterpiece, the choir is proud to bring his vision to life and share this extraordinary work with our audience.

## Why not join us?

- Our rehearsals:
  - *When?* Every Tuesday during school terms at 7:30-9:30pm
  - *Where?* St Andrew's Church, Southview Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 9PW
- No auditions and reading music is an advantage but not a requirement.
- ***If you are interested in singing with the choir, please speak to any one of us during the interval or after the concert!***

## Our Guest Soloists

**Ella Joy (Soprano)** - Ella is a 28-year-old soprano from Essex. During her postgraduate studies at the *Royal Northern College of Music* she was a Levenshulme Arts Scholar, resident artist at *Opera North*, commended entry to the *Frederic Cox Competition* and recipient of awards from the *Mbili Trust* and the *Kathleen Trust*. Recent operatic roles include *Baronin von Freimann* in scenes from Lortzing's "*Der Wildschütz*" at *RNCM*, *Tess*, in *Winterreise* – Schubert's "*Tess: A Winter's Tale*" with the *Curious Opera company*, *Iphigénie* in scenes from Gluck's "*Iphigénie en Tauride*", *Blanche* in scenes from Poulenc's "*Dialogues des Carmélites*", *Gretel* in scenes from Humperdink's "*Hänsel und Gretel*" and *Zerlina* in scenes from Mozart's "*Don Giovanni*". Ella has collaborated with upcoming artists and directors in London, including Julia Mintzer, Jack Furness and Eleanor Burke. She has played roles at the *Tête à Tête Opera Festival*, for the *DEBUT* opera company, *UC Opera*, *KC Opera* and the *Conservatoire du 12me* in Paris. She has performed roles at London venues including the *Playground Theatre*, the *Aldridge Theatre*, the *Maltings Theatre*, the *Bloomsbury Theatre* and the *Stratford Theatre*. Ella has performed as a member of the award-winning *Lunar Consort* and as a chorister for the *Rodolfus Choir*, conducted by Ralph Allwood. She has been a soloist for the *UCL Symphony Chorus* and for the *Chamber Choir of the Sorbonne*. She has performed with orchestra with *Morley College* and in recital with pianist Adam Turner. Since finishing her studies at *RNCM*, Ella had the privilege of studying with her wonderful teacher, Michael Harper in London, before his passing in March 2025. Michael's wisdom, kindness and body-soul approach to artistry continue to inspire her anytime she sings.

**Talia Lieberman (Soprano)** - Talia Lieberman is an emerging soprano who began her musical journey in the *Southend Girls Choir*, where she developed a passion for classical singing from an early age. A recent graduate from the *Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama*, she has already gained significant experience on the operatic stage. Whilst studying, she performed alongside the *David Seligman Opera School* in productions such as Humperdink's "*Hänsel und Gretel*" and the Welsh National Opera's "*Opera Gala*". Most notably, last spring she made her principal role debut as *Il Gatto* in Respighi's "*La Bella dormiente nel bosco*". Over the 2024-2025 season, Talia is taking part in three esteemed young artist programmes. She has been selected for the renowned *Genesis Sixteen* programme, part of The Sixteen ensemble, which is dedicated to developing young choral singers, and is a new choral scholar for the *Oxford Bach Soloists* who study and specialise in the music of J.S. Bach. She is also a member of *Vox Next Gen*, the young artist programme of the professional choir *Vox Urbane*. All these programmes are shaping her development as an accomplished

ensemble singer, providing opportunities to work with leading musicians in the industry. Alongside these achievements, Talia is serving as a choral scholar at *St James's Piccadilly*, where she continues to develop her artistry and passion for choral music.

**Helena Paish (Alto)** - Helena Paish has been singing in choirs since she was six and at the age of twelve won *BBC Young Chorister of the Year 2014*. She was a founding girl chorister at *Truro Cathedral* (2015-2020) where she took part in three CDs and was frequently featured as a soloist live on *BBC Radio 3*. During her time in Truro, she appeared as a soloist with many local choirs. Helena graduated from *Cambridge* with a Music degree in 2023 and stayed on for a 4th year with *Trinity College Choir* as an alto Lay Clerk. She has featured as a soloist on three recordings with Trinity and has toured with them to Germany, France, Italy, and Switzerland. During her studies, Helena was awarded second prize in the *Clare College Song Competition*, with head judge James Gilchrist and enjoyed taking part in concerts and performing solo recitals across Cambridge. Helena is currently studying for a masters in singing at the *Royal Academy of Music*. Alongside her studies, she has continued with choral singing as a member of the *Choir of the Chapels Royal, HM Tower of London* and *Continuum Choir*. Helena is also an established composer. In 2019 she won the *BBC Proms Inspire Competition*, which led to her compositional debut at the *BBC Proms by the BBC Singers*, and a commission by the group. She has gone on to receive commissions from groups including *The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge, Multitude of Voyces, The Vasari Singers* and *Continuum*. Her music features on three CDs.

**Colin Gilmore (Tenor)** - Colin found his voice and love for choral singing as a member of the *school choir at Southend High School for Boys* under the direction of Michael Crabb, long time Musical Director of Southend Festival Chorus. It wasn't until 1994 that he rediscovered this passion when he joined *Southend Festival Chorus* and was re-acquainted with both singing and Michael. He went on to become a member of local chamber choir *Gaudeamus* after being invited as a guest singer to tour with them in the USA in 1999 and in 2011 he became a member of *City Chamber Choir* in London, a convenient choice working as he did in the City of London. Colin developed his vocal technique and solo voice under the tutelage of local singing teacher Margaret Cozens and has provided tenor solos for all the choirs with which he sings, in many works, including Handel's "Messiah" and "Dixit Dominus", Mozart's "Requiem" and "Coronation Mass", Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" and "St Matthew Passion", Vaughan-Williams's "Serenade to Music" and "Mass in G Minor", Haydn's "Creation" and "Nelson Mass", Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and singing countertenor in Vivaldi's "Gloria" and Orff's "Carmina Burana". Having moved to Norfolk in 2022, he now sings with

*King's Lynn Festival Chorus* and *The Guildhall Singers*, and continues to be a member of *Coro 94*, formerly under the baton of the late Michael Kibblewhite.

**David Townend (Bass)** - David Townend started singing as a chorister at *Holy Trinity Church*, Southchurch, and in the *Southend Boys' Choir*. In 1985, he took a place to read Law at the University of Sheffield and became a Songman of Sheffield Cathedral. He sang with the Cathedral for 20 years. He has studied singing with Richard Hill and Martin Hindmarsh. As a soloist, David's repertoire includes Bach's "St John Passion" and "St Matthew Passion", Britten's "Canticle IV", Delius's "Appalachia", Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius", "King Olaf" and "The Apostles", Handel's "Judas Maccabeus" and "Messiah", Haydn's "Creation", Mendelssohn's "Elijah" and "St Paul", Orff's "Carmina Burana", Puccini's "Messa di Gloria", Rossini's "Petite Messe Solennelle", Schutz's "St Matthew Passion", Tippett's "A Child of Our Time", Vaughan Williams's "Serenade to Music", "Five Mystical Songs" and "The Pilgrim's Progress", and Walton's "Belshazzar's Feast". He particularly enjoys early 20th century English and French songs, and has given many recitals from that repertoire as well as recitals of Schubert's "Die schöne Müllerin".



# Our Musical Director

**Roger Humphrey** - Roger studied organ, piano and conducting at the Royal College of Music, London and University of London. Post graduate work included studies at the City of London University and Guildhall School of Music. He has held positions of Director of Music at *Southend High School for Boys* and lecturer in Performing Arts at *South Essex College*. Currently Roger teaches part time at the Westcliff High Schools. In addition to conducting the *Southend Bach Choir*, Roger is musical director of *Southend Choral Society* and Director of Music at Holy Trinity Church, Southchurch, with whom he has taken the choir to many cathedrals across the UK. Roger is the founder and Musical Director of *Southend Girls' Choir* and Director of *Southend Boys' Choir*, positions he has held for over 30 years. Roger has taken these choirs on many overseas concert tours to Poland, Belgium, France, Holland, Italy, Spain, Canada, US, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and Seychelles. These tours have included performances in The Sydney Opera House, Queensland Performing Arts Centre, Cathedrals in Paris, New York, Chicago, Washington, Milan, The Seychelles, Florence, St Peter's Basilica, Rome, St Mark's, Venice and many other major venues and concert halls across Europe, Canada, US, Singapore, and Australia. Roger has conducted the choirs in major London concert halls, including Royal Festival Hall and Barbican, and prepared the choirs for many performances at the BBC Proms. Roger directed performances of Britten's "Noye's Fludde" during the centenary year of Britten's birth, involving over 450 musicians of all ages performing in Southend, Tilbury Cruise Terminal and Southwark Cathedral. For several years Roger was Musical Director of the *Seychelles Festival of Music*.

## Southend Concert Orchestra

Leader - Jo Stephens

Tonight's orchestra consists of some of the finest musicians from Southend and surrounding areas. The players largely work as orchestral musicians and teachers across the region. The orchestra was formed to accompany choirs and choral societies, and has performed many major choral works, including Bach's "St Matthew Passion", Verdi's "Requiem", Handel's "Messiah", Bach's "Mass in B minor" and Mozart's "Requiem". The orchestra has performed widely across Southend and in venues such as Brentwood Cathedral and St Paul's Church, Covent Garden.

# Bach's Mass in B minor

Johann Sebastian Bach's "Mass in B Minor" stands as one of the greatest masterpieces of choral music, a monumental work that showcases his profound musical and spiritual depth. Composed over many years and completed in 1749, just a year before his death, this setting of the Latin Mass represents the culmination of Bach's lifelong mastery of counterpoint, harmony, and orchestration.

Unlike his other sacred works, which were written for specific liturgical occasions, the *Mass in B Minor* is an expansive and universal expression of faith, blending intricate fugues, soaring arias, and grand choral movements. It is divided into five sections—*Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*—each rich in contrast, color, and emotional depth.

Although Bach never heard the full work performed in his lifetime, the "Mass in B Minor" gained recognition in the 19th century and has since been celebrated as one of the greatest achievements in Western music. From the deeply moving *Crucifixus* to the jubilant *Dona nobis pacem*, this extraordinary work continues to inspire audiences with its blend of intellectual rigor and profound devotion.





# Programme

## **Part I: Missa**

Kyrie  
Christe  
Kyrie  
Gloria  
Et in terra pax  
Laudamus te  
Gratias agimus tibi  
Domine Deus  
Qui tollis  
Qui sedes  
Quoniam tu solus sanctus  
Cum Sancto Spiritu

## ***INTERVAL***

***Please join the choir  
for light refreshments  
during the interval.***

## **Part II: Symbolum Nicenum**

Credo in unum Deum  
Patrem omnipotentem  
Et in unum Dominum  
Et incarnatus est  
Crucifixus  
Et resurrexit  
Et in Spiritum sanctum  
Confiteor  
Et expecto

## **Part III: Sanctus**

Sanctus  
Pleni sunt coeli

## **Part IV: Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem**

Osanna in excelsis  
Benedictus  
Osanna repetatur  
Agnus Dei  
Dona nobis pacem

***Thank all of you for joining us at our concert tonight.***

***We hope you enjoyed it! 🎵***

***We look forward to seeing you at our concerts throughout the year.***

# Have you thought about becoming a Patron?

*Are you a regular attendee at our concerts?  
Ever felt you'd like to support the choir but don't want to take up a singing position?  
Do you like attending our social events?*

If so, the Southend Bach Choir Patron scheme may be for you. There is no fixed fee to join this scheme, though Patrons may make a donation if they wish. Patrons receive regular updates about choir events and activities and an invitation to continue their patronage. They will also receive a complimentary ticket to every concert and be invited to other choir events including the AGM.

If you are interested in becoming a patron or would simply like further information, then please speak to any choir member or contact us via email on:

[membership@southendbachchoir.org.uk](mailto:membership@southendbachchoir.org.uk)

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## For further information about the Southend Bach Choir please contact:

[secretary@southendbachchoir.org.uk](mailto:secretary@southendbachchoir.org.uk)

visit our website:

[www.southendbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.southendbachchoir.org.uk)

or social media pages:



Southend Bach Choir



southendbachchoir

*Singing in a Choir not only very enjoyable, but a chance to make new friends, learn to sing wonderful music and experience the health and mental benefits of choral singing. Whether you are an experienced singer or a musical beginner, you will be warmly welcomed!*

## OUR PATRONS

Mrs J. Restorick   Mr K. Treverton  
Mr S. Burford   Mr T. Harding   Mr J. Wall   Mr D. Smith  
Miss C. Kirkham   Mrs J. Bliss   Mr M. Bliss   Mr R. Hair  
Mr P. Hepworth   Mr M. Luxford

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

**For details of the Patron Scheme:  
Email: [membership@southendbachchoir.org.uk](mailto:membership@southendbachchoir.org.uk)**

## OUR NEXT CONCERT

**Sir John Rutter - Magnificat & Feel the Spirit**

*Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025, 7pm*

St Alban the Martyr Church, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 7JZ

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

More concerts from us this year will take place on:

*15<sup>th</sup> November 2025 – Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem*

*20<sup>th</sup> December 2025 – Christmas Concert*



**Southend Bach Choir**

Registered Charity  
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