

CHESTER MUSIC SOCIETY.

LONDON CONCORD SINGERS

Musical Director : Malcolm Cottle.

Guest Conductor : Robert Lanston.

SATURDAY, 21st JULY, 1973.

at 8.00 p.m.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL REFECTORY.

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| 1. | Laudibus in sanctis | BYRD. |
| 2. | O magnum mysterium | GABRIELI. |
| 3. | Tibi laus | PHILIPS. |
| 4. | Salvator Munid | BLOW. |
| 5. | The Silver Swan | GIBBONS. |
| 6. | Weep O mine eyes | BENNET |
| 7. | Thule | WEELKES |
| 8. | Three Shakespeare Songs | VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. |
| 9. | The Shower | ELGAR. |

INTERVAL.

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| 10. | Jesus and the traders | KODALY. |
| 11. | Reincarnations | BARBER. |
| 12. | Five Childhood Lyrics | RUTTER. |
| 13. | Turtle Dove | arr. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. |
| 14. | Mary had a baby | arr. GARDNER. |
| 15. | Three links of chain | arr. MURRAY. |
| 16. | Pick a bale of cotton | arr. GARDNER. |
| 17. | Jericho | arr. LANG. |

The programme touches on music of many ages and many lands.

From Hungary, we have Kodaly's "Jesus and the Traders", a powerful dramatic treatment of the well-known Gospel incident in the Temple at Jerusalem, when Christ overthrew the tables of the merchants and moneychangers. The urgent, restless music evokes the anger and turbulence of the moment. The effect is achieved very largely by aggressive contrapuntal writing, punctuated by calmer moments of narrative.

Counterpoint is much in evidence, too, in Samuel Barber's "Reincarnations", an early trilogy of choral songs; but this is not cerebral music - Barber's lyricism is also much to the fore, particularly in the third song, a gentle love-lyric, sung by a goatherd in the cool of the evening.

Further americana is provided in a group of negro spirituals. Of these, Lyn Murray's setting of "Three Links of Chain" is notable for exploiting the choral possibilities of a simple refrain, yet still preserving its essential character - and including some fine 'close harmony' effects. Perfect music for a summer's evening!

Back on our own side of the Atlantic, the Elizabethan polyphonists are represented by madrigals and motets, including Byrd's fine festive setting of Psalm 150, 'Laudibus in Sanctis', and the motet 'Tibi Laus' by Peter Philips, a powerful work, with Italian influences shining out of every bar!

There is Latin influence of a different kind in Vaughan Williams' 'Three Shakespeare Songs'. That this most English of composers owed more than a passing debt to Impressionism is clearly shown in this late work, composed when he was nearly eighty. It is apparent, especially in 'Full Fathom Five', where the evocative chordal accompaniment adds a real 'frisson' to the echoing sea-knell: "Hark, now I hear them, Ding, dong bell".

English to the core, however, is John Rutter's 'Childhood Lyrics', commissioned by the choir for a South Bank recital earlier this year. This is delightfully friendly, easy-going music - again, most appropriate to Summer revelry.

THE LONDON CONCORD SINGERS was founded in its present form in 1966. It seeks to maintain a small, well-knit group of some 30 voices, practising and performing a wide range of choral music. Its members come from a great variety of backgrounds, though few of them are full-time musicians. The choir's range of activities is equally varied: it has accepted cabaret engagements at many functions, as well as promoting very successful concerts in and around London; most recently at St. Martin-in-the-Fields and the Purcell Room, where the choir presented programmes of nineteenth and twentieth century music.

The group is also much-travelled, and has won competitive prizes at home and abroad. During the last season it visited Richmond, Walkern (Herts.) and Castle Howard, Near York, while previous years have included Festival appearances at Montreux and Dubrovnik. The choir has enjoyed an enthusiastic reception both by audiences and by the press.

Our guest conductor tonight, ROBERT LANGSTON, studied at the Royal Academy of Music from 1967 - 1970 where his professors were Douglas Hawkrige for organ, and Jean Harvey for piano. Whilst at the Academy he won several prizes and diplomas for organ and piano, including the F.R.C.O. From 1970 - 72 he held an organ scholarship at Peterhouse, Cambridge, where he read music for the B.A. degree.

Robert Langston is Organist and Director of Music at St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, and Organist and Choirmaster at St. Dunston-in-the-West. Apart from conducting choirs he has given many organ recitals in England and Germany and taken part in the City of London Festival and the Oxford Bach Festival.

The National Federation of Music Societies to which this Society is affiliated supports these concerts with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

The Society also acknowledges with gratitude financial assistance from the Chester Federation of Arts and the William Rushworth

FURTHER CONCERT IN THIS SERIES.

Roger Fisher and the Chester Symphony Orchestra, 28th July, 1973.

At 8.00 p.m. in the Cathedral.