



WHITEHALL CHOIR

Conductor: Paul Spicer
Pianist: James Longford

presents

“As the tide was flowing”



© Simon Marsh, *Fisherman at Dawn, Robin Hood Bay*

Monday, 7 July 2008, 7.00pm
The Banqueting House, Whitehall, SW1

Programme: £2

PROGRAMME

- Elgar *From the Bavarian Highlands*
1. The Dance
 2. False Love
 3. Lullaby
 4. Aspiration
 5. On the Alm
 6. The Marksmen
- York Bowen *Ballade No. 2 in A minor for solo piano*
- Vaughan Williams *Five English Folk Songs*
1. The Dark Eyed Sailor
 2. The Spring Time of the Year
 3. Just as the Tide was Flowing
 4. The Lover's Ghost
 5. Wassail Song
- Bob Chilcott *The Londonderry Air (arrangement)*
In the Heart of the World
- Britten Two Choruses from *Peter Grimes*:
Song of the Fishermen
Old Joe has gone Fishing

There is no interval in tonight's concert.

As the Tide was Flowing

Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

FROM THE BAVARIAN HIGHLANDS

(Six Choral Songs)

Op. 27

In the early 1890s Elgar and his wife Alice went to Bavaria on holiday by courtesy of Minnie Baker, the sister of William Heath Baker, who features as the fourth Enigma Variation. The Elgars were both captivated by the scenery, the people and, as far as Elgar himself was concerned, the music of Wagner. They spent their first holiday in 1892 in Oberstdorf, but for the next four years their Bavarian holidays were spent at the Villa Bader in Garmisch, where Alice wrote her poems describing the scenes and activities they had enjoyed; Elgar set these poems to music on his return from holiday in 1895. The Villa Bader was owned by Mr and Mrs Henry Slingsby Bethell, to whom the work was dedicated. Each song has the name of the place which it commemorates, hence the title *Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands* by which the work is informally known. (The published title omits the word 'Scenes'.)

The poems themselves are hardly great works: they were more of a pastiche on the local songs and dances (*Schnadahüpfer*) performed in the *Bierstuben* where the Elgars spent their evenings. Hunting is a vital activity in the rural highlands, the *Schußmeister* being an important local figure, and the deeply romantic themes of lost love, family life and simple pleasures are a common feature of Bavarian music of the time.

Peter Greaves and his wife decided to retrace the Elgars' steps and have published an account of their research with photographs of the places depicted in the individual songs*. There is an amusing account of Elgar's attempts to speak German when he boarded a tram and asked to go to what he thought was the end of the line, calling it *Der letzte Ruheplatz* (literally the last resting place). The driver dropped him off at the cemetery! Periods of ill health, notably colds, marred some of the holidays but the affection for the country where people were polite and respectful is echoed in the warmth and sheer exuberance of the composition. In a letter to his sister Polly's children, Elgar described the difference between English and German cab drivers: "If you go by a cab stand they do not shout 'cab' but take off their hats and bow" and ticket guards "don't shout 'tickets please!' but make a small bow and say 'would the worshipful company be so friendly as to show their tickets!'" His letters home from Germany describe with evident pleasure the pine forests, the flora and fauna, the public fountains in every village and the outdoor Stations of the Cross in this deeply Catholic country. Elgar was much impressed by Bayreuth, which he visited several times, and he never lost an opportunity to hear a performance of a Wagner opera.

Elgar conducted the first performance at Worcester in 1896 in the version sung tonight. He composed an orchestral version which was performed at the Crystal Palace in 1897, and later that year he turned three of the songs ('The Dance', 'Lullaby' and 'The Marksmen') into purely orchestral pieces, which were published as *Three Bavarian Dances* in 1907.

The songs were composed two years after Elgar's *The Black Knight* had been given such critical acclaim after its first performance at Worcester, and when Elgar stood at the brink of the success and recognition he craved. Son of a piano tuner, albeit one given the soubriquet 'tuner of the pianoforte of the Queen Dowager' (Queen Adelaide), and having received no formal musical training, Elgar was the subject of much sneering condescension from the musical establishment in England. In Germany however he was greatly admired, and his music received more critical acclaim there than at home for the earlier part of his life.

The songs do not have any common musical theme or idiom. They are each separate and reflect perhaps the warmth Elgar had for Germany in general and the Bavarian Highlands in particular. The sub-title of each song does not reflect the content of the poem itself, but the memory of the place which had given the Elgars so much pleasure. The melodies are simple but beautiful and express the happiness which the Elgars enjoyed during their Bavarian holidays where life was relatively carefree, pleasures were simple and the scenery breathtaking.

In his diary Elgar described a wooden *Gasthaus* in Sonnenbichl (the subtitle of the first song) which he often frequented to enjoy the local beer. He also described the Bavarian *Schuhplattler* dancing, echoes of which appear in 'The Dance'. Wamberg is a small village outside Garmisch which the Elgars visited in 1894: it has nothing to do with 'False Love', which simply describes the eternal triangle of love. Hammersbach is another small village to the south east of Garmisch, and provided the setting for the exquisitely beautiful 'Lullaby'. St Anton is a place of pilgrimage which the Elgars visited more than once

and which may well have been the inspiration for the ethereal hymn which is the fourth song. Hoch Alp was a highland pasture where the cattle were taken in summer to be tended by the farmer's daughter. The song is full of the beauty of the highlands in summer sunshine when love is carefree. There is a large lake near Murnau called Staffelsee which it is believed was the scene of a local shooting competition described in 'The Marksmen'.

Michel Kallipetis

* Peter Greaves: *In the Bavarian Highlands* (Elgar Editions, May 2000; original photographs by Jean Greaves)

1. The Dance

"Sonnenbichl"

Come and hasten to the dancing,
Merry eyes will soon be glancing,
Ha! my heart upbounds!
Come and dance a merry measure.
Quaff the bright brown ale, my treasure,
Hark! what joyous sounds!

Sweet-heart come, on let us haste,
On, on, no time let us waste;
With my heart I love thee.
Dance, dance, for rest we disdain.
Turn, twirl, and spin round again,
With my arm I hold thee!

Down the path the lights are gleaming,
Friendly faces gladly beaming
Welcome us with song.
Dancing makes the heart grow lighter,
Makes the world and life grow brighter
As we dance along!

2. False Love

"Wamberg"

Now we hear the Spring's sweet voice
Singing gladly through the world;
Bidding all the earth rejoice.

All is merry in the field,
Flowers grow amidst the grass,
Blossoms blue, red, white they yield.

As I seek my maiden true,
Sings the little lark on high
Fain to send her praises due.

As I climb and reach her door,
Ah! I see a rival there,
So farewell! for evermore.

Ever true was I to thee.
Never grieved or vexed thee, love,
False, oh! false, art thou to me.

Now amid the forest green,
Far from cruel eyes that mock
Will I dwell unloved, unseen.

3. Lullaby

“In Hammersbach”

Sleep, my son, oh! slumber softly,
While thy mother watches o'er thee,
Nothing can affright or harm thee.
Sleep, oh! sleep, my son.

Far-away
Zithers play,
Dancing gay
Calls to-day.

Vainly play
Zithers gay!
Here I stay
All the day.

Happily
Guarding thee,
Peacefully
Watching thee.

Sleep, my son, oh! slumber softly,
While thy mother watches o'er thee,
Sleep, oh! sleep, my son.

4. Aspiration

“Aspiration bei Sankt Anton”

Over the heights the snow lies deep,
Sunk is the land in peaceful sleep;
Here by the house of God we pray,
Lead, Lord, our souls to-day.

Shielding, like the silent snow,
Fall his mercies here below.

Calmly then, like the snow-bound land,
Rest we in His protecting hand;
Bowing, we wait His mighty will:
Lead, Lord, and guide us still.

5. On the Alm

“Hoch Alp”

A mellow bell peals near,
It has so sweet a sound;
I know a maiden dear
With voice as full and round.

A sunlit alm shines clear,
With clover blossoms sweet;
There dwells my maiden dear
And there my love I meet.

There flying with no fear
The swallows pass all day,
And fast, my maiden dear,
Sees chamois haste away.

I cannot linger here,
I cannot wait below;
To seek my maiden dear,
I to the alm must go.

The mountain's call I hear,
And up the height I bound;
I know my maiden dear
Will mark my Juchhé sound.

Rejoicing come I here
My flaxen-haired sweet-heart;
I love thee maiden dear,
Nay! bid me not depart!

6. The Marksmen

"Bei Murnau"

Come from the mountain side,
Come from the valleys wide,
See, how we muster strong,
Tramping along!

Rifle on shoulder sling,
Powder and bullets bring,
Manly in mind and heart,
Play we our part.

Sure be each eye to-day,
Steady each hand must stay
If in the trial we
Victors would be!

Sharp is the crack! 'tis done!
Lost is the chance, or won;
Right in the gold is it?
Huzza! the hit!

The sun will sink and light the west
And touch the peaks with crimson glow;
Then shadows fill the vale with rest
While stars look peace on all below.

In triumph then we take our way,
And with our prizes homeward wend;
Through meadows sweet with new-mown hay,
A song exultant will we send.

York Bowen (1884-1961)

Edwin York Bowen's musical career spanned more than fifty years, during which time he wrote over 160 works. He was born in London, and began piano and harmony lessons at an early age. In 1898, when he was fourteen, he gained a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, where he studied until 1905, learning composition with Frederick Corder and piano with Tobias Matthay; during his time as a student he won numerous prizes. In 1907 Bowen was awarded a fellowship at the RAM, and not long after that was appointed a professor there, a position he retained until his death in 1961.

In addition to performances he gave as a pianist with the viola player Lionel Tertis, another of Bowen's most successful collaborations was the piano duo that he formed with Harry Isaacs, a colleague at the RAM. As a composer Bowen was noted for his inventive piano duets, and he continued to perform many of them with Isaacs throughout his career.

Bowen's works display a unique 'blend of Romanticism and strong individuality'. Although his influences include Rachmaninov, Chopin, Grieg and Tchaikovsky, the music is very much defined by its own distinctive textures and harmonies. Throughout an active career of more than fifty years, his compositional style altered very little, and throughout his life he combined the use of a diatonic key system with colourful chromatic harmonies.

Early in his career Bowen achieved considerable success as both a composer and concert pianist – indeed, he premiered many of his own works, including all his four piano concertos. After hearing the premiere of Bowen's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in Eb major* (Op. 11) in 1903, Saint-Saëns hailed him as 'the finest of English composers' – an opinion shared by many of his contemporaries and reflected in the support he received from many eminent musicians and academics. However, despite this early success, by the time he wrote his *Piano Concerto No. 4 in A minor* (Op. 88) in 1929, Bowen's romantic compositional style was considered outdated in comparison with the modern techniques used by his contemporaries.

Following his death in 1961, many of Bowen's compositions remained unpublished, and performances of his music became rarer – indeed much of it remained unperformed in the decades after his death. In addition to the enthusiastic advocacy of the composer and pianist Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji, to whom Bowen had dedicated his *Twenty Four Preludes* (Op. 102), the increase in publications and performances of Bowen's works during the late twentieth century can be largely credited to the efforts of the York Bowen Society, while publication of Monica Watson's book *York Bowen: A Centenary Tribute* (Thames, London, 1984), as well as numerous recordings made of Bowen's works, further stimulated a revival of interest in his music during the 1980s. Despite the advances made by the York Bowen Society, however, many of his works remain unpublished, and although many of the solo instrumental works contribute significantly to modern performance repertoire his orchestral and chamber works are rarely performed.

BALLADE NO. 2 IN A MINOR

James Longford, piano

Bowen's second Ballade was published in 1931. For lovers of piano music it may come as no surprise that its title reminds one of Chopin. In particular, Bowen makes a point of imbuing his piece with the same lilting melodies which open Chopin's second Ballade and the pieces share the tempo marking *Andantino*, with Bowen adding *espressivo* – perhaps an unnecessary marking when you hear the opening phrases. As ever his language is rich, reminiscent of Delius and Ireland, and there are hints of an awareness of the harmony of Debussy. After a dramatic central section, again evoking the stormier passages in Chopin's second and third Ballades, wistful turns of phrase and his love of using different harmonic progressions for the same melodic idea are combined in the final recapitulation of the first theme, which draws this imposing piece to an enigmatic end.

James Longford

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Today, live performances and recordings of folk music are widely available, and it forms an active part of the English musical scene. But a century ago it was very different – traditional song was rapidly falling into obscurity, and it is very largely owing to the work of Ralph Vaughan Williams and other collectors such as Cecil Sharp that this material was preserved and revived.

Vaughan Williams, who died fifty years ago on 26 August 1958, was taught by some of the greatest musicians and composers of the age, but found his own musical voice relatively late, in his thirties. When he did, though, it was a highly individual one – his teacher Maurice Ravel was later to say that Vaughan Williams was “the only one of my students who does not write my music”. The key event, shaping the rest of his musical career, was Vaughan Williams’ discovery of English folk music – when in 1903 he heard an elderly countryman sing ‘Bushes and Briars’, he immediately felt as if he had known the song all his life.

Vaughan Williams started collecting English folk songs from traditional singers across the country, and this collection of settings for choir dates from 1913. The first four tell of the traditional themes of love found and lost; the last, as we shall see, is a rollicking celebration of good cheer. Vaughan Williams describes them as “freely arranged”, and indeed, whilst in some he remains fairly close to the original material, in others he virtually re-composes the song.

In ‘The Dark Eyed Sailor’ a young girl tells a passing sailor of her lost lover, whom she believes drowned. The sailor is in fact himself her beloved, but he has been so changed by his time at sea that she fails to recognise him until he produces the love token they shared when he went to sea. The reunited couple are joyfully married.

The second song, now titled ‘The Spring Time of the Year’, comes from a Norfolk ballad usually known as ‘Lovely on the Water’. The full ballad tells of a couple’s sadness at the sailor’s resolve to go to sea to fight in the war, but Vaughan Williams sets only the opening verses, producing an atmospheric evocation of spring.

In ‘Just as the Tide was Flowing’, the song which gives this concert its title, Vaughan Williams remains close to the original music, but states that he has revised the words slightly. Indeed he has; in his version the story is a slight tale of a sailor meeting and wooing his true love. The original was probably deemed unfit for genteel ears, for in it, after (it is implied) the couple do rather more than watch the fishes play; the girl has fallen for the sailor totally and offers him £20 in order to retain his affections. But sadly, the rascal resolves to spend it on rum and brandy with another woman! We, however, benefit from the change, for Vaughan Williams replaces this sordid tale with a remarkable choral evocation of the flowing tide.

It is in the fourth song, ‘The Lover’s Ghost’, that Vaughan Williams moves furthest from his source. The material is not taken from the folk song of the same name, but from another called variously ‘The Daemon Lover’, ‘The House Carpenter’ and ‘James Harris’. The song derives from a 17th-century ballad called *A Warning for Married Women*, which tells the story of Mrs. Jane Reynolds, “ ... who having plighted her troth to a Sea-man, was afterwards Married to a Carpenter, and last carried away by a Spirit”. The spirit sinks the ship and the unfortunate adulteress is carried off to Hell. Vaughan Williams sets only part of the ballad, so that the narrative itself is lost, and he transforms the mood entirely by drastically slowing the tempo, creating an immensely powerful, wistful evocation of lost love.

The final ‘Wassail Song’ is completely different. Wassailing was a Yule-tide celebration in which villagers would tour their neighbourhood demanding refreshment, and wishing good luck or otherwise, depending on the standard of the ale offered! The tradition dates from pre-Christian times and was followed all over England. There are thus many wassail songs; Vaughan Williams sets one from Gloucestershire. This song is the most well-known of the set, for it is regularly sung as a Christmas carol. We hear the wassail calls approaching from afar, encounter the wassailers in full voice at (and inside!) our door, and the song ends as the satisfied revellers move off to another part of the town.

Colin Altman

FIVE ENGLISH FOLK SONGS

1. The Dark Eyed Sailor

It was a comely young lady fair,
Was walking out for to take the air;
She met a sailor all on her way,
So I paid attention to what they did say.

Said William, ‘Lady, why walk alone?
The night is coming and the day near gone.’

She said, while tears from her eyes did fall,
'It's a dark eyed sailor that's proving my downfall.

'It's two long years since he left the land;
He took a gold ring from off my hand;
We broke the token, here's part with me,
And the other lies rolling at the bottom of the sea.'

Then half the ring did young William show,
She was distracted midst joy and woe.
'O welcome, William, I've lands and gold
For my dark eyed sailor, so manly true and bold.'

Then in a village down by the sea
they joined in wedlock and well agree.
So maids be true while your love's away,
For a cloudy morning brings forth a shining day.

2. The Spring Time of the Year

As I walked out one morning
in the spring-time of the year,
I overheard a sailor boy,
Likewise a lady fair.
They sang a song together,
Made the valleys for to ring,
While the birds on spray
And the meadows gay
Proclaimed the lovely spring.

3. Just as the Tide was Flowing

One morning in the month of May,
Down by some rolling river,
A jolly sailor I did stray,
When I beheld my lover.

She carelessly along did stray,
A-picking of the daisies gay;
And sweetly sang her roundelay,
Just as the tide was flowing.

O! her dress it was as white as milk,
And jewels did adorn her.
Her shoes were made of the crimson silk,
Just like some lady of honour.

Her cheeks were red, her eyes were brown,
Her hair in ringlets hanging down;
She'd a lovely brow without a frown,
Just as the tide was flowing.

I made a bow and said, 'Fair Maid,
How came you here so early?
My heart by you it is betrayed
For I do love you dearly.

'I am a sailor come from sea.
If you will accept of my company
To walk and view the fishes play.'
Just as the tide was flowing.

No more was said, but on our way
We gang'd along together;
The small birds sang, and the lambs did play,
And pleasant was the weather.

When we were weary we did sit down,
Beneath a tree with branches round;
For my true love at last I'd found,
Just as the tide was flowing.

4. The Lover's Ghost

Well met, my own true love;
Long time I have been absent from thee,
I am lately come from the salt sea,
And 'tis all for the sake, my love, of thee.

I have three ships all on the salt sea;
And one of them has brought me to land,
I've four and twenty mariners on board,
You shall have music at your command.

The ship wherein my love shall sail
Is glorious for to behold,
The sails shall be of shining silk,
The mast shall be of the fine beaten gold.

I might have had a King's daughter,
And fain she would have married me,
But I forsook her crown of gold,
And 'tis all for the sake, my love, of thee.

5. Wassail Song

Wassail, Wassail, all over the town,
Our bread it is white and our ale it is brown;
Our bowl it is made of the green maple tree;
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right eye,
Pray God send our master a good christmas pie,
A good christmas pie as e'er I did see.
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right horn,
Pray God send our master a good crop of corn,
A good crop of corn, as e'er I did see,
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee,

Wassail, Wassail, all over the town.

Here's a health to the ox and to his long tail,
Pray God send our master a good cask of ale,

A good cask of ale as e'er I did see.
In the Wassail bowl we'll drink unto thee.

Come, butler, come fill us a bowl of the best;
Then I pray that your soul in heaven may rest;
But if you do bring us a bowl of the small,
May the Devil take butler, bowl and all!

Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock,
Who tripp'd to the door and slipp'd back the lock;
Who tripp'd to the door and pull'd back the pin,
For to let these jolly Wassailers walk in.

Wassail, Wassail, all over the town.

Bob Chilcott (born 1955)

The concert's folk-song theme continues with contemporary pieces by Bob Chilcott, who is a choral composer, conductor, and singer now based in Oxford. He is a former member of the King's Singers, with whom he sang for 12 years until his departure in 1997 to focus on composing. As a conductor he has worked extensively with choirs and festivals throughout the world. For seven years he was conductor of the chorus at the Royal College of Music in London, and he is Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers.

Bob Chilcott's setting of the traditional *Londonderry Air* is original and atmospheric, while the opening phrase of *In the Heart of the World* is musically almost identical to the Somerset folk song *O Waly, Waly (The Water is Wide)*. The subject matter is however very different. Written as a tribute to the victims of the aerial assaults of September 11, 2001, on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon building in Washington DC, it celebrates the essential goodness and resilience of the human spirit through the healing power of song. *In the Heart of the World* was commissioned by Arthur V. Neis for the Alliance for Arts and Understanding, and it received its premiere at the 2002 AmericaFest Festival. It is dedicated to "the Gentle Men of the choral tradition".

Colin Altman and William Longland

THE LONDONDERRY AIR

(*'Danny Boy'*) (arrangement)

(*traditional Irish melody; words by Fred Weatherley*)

O Danny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling,
From glen to glen and down the mountainside,
The summer's gone and all the roses falling,
'Tis you, 'tis you must go and I must bide.

But come ye back when summer's in the meadow,
Or when the valley's hushed and white with snow,
'Tis I'll be there in sunshine or in shadow.
O Danny Boy, O Danny Boy, I love you so.

And when you come and all the flowers are dying,
If I am dead, as dead I well may be,
Ye'll come and find a place where I am lying
And kneel and say an 'Ave' there for me.

And I shall hear though soft your tread above me,
And all my grave shall warmer, sweeter be,
For you will bend and tell me that you love me,
And I shall live in peace until you come to me.

IN THE HEART OF THE WORLD

(words by Brian Andreas)

The songs cannot live
With no one to sing them.

In those days we finally chose
To walk like giants and hold the world
In arms grown strong with love,
And there may be many things we forget
In the days to come,
But this will not be one of them.

In the heart of the world
there is only found,
Only a song of peace.
And it sings for everyone
in the heart of the world
For as long as it takes forever.

Listen, listen,
past the anger through the rage,
For the soft insistent message
to the children of this age.

In the heart of the world
there is only found,
Only a song of peace.
And it sings for everyone
in the heart of the world
For as long as it takes forever.

No matter if the light seems dimmed,
no matter if worlds fall,
No matter who you were before,
come forward, standing tall,
For the heart of the world holds us close,
It has always been so.

Many things we will forget
in the days to come,
but the song that rose
from the heart of the world
We will sing forever.

The songs cannot live
with no one to sing them.

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Benjamin Britten, who was born in Lowestoft in Suffolk, has been regarded by some as the greatest genius in English music since Henry Purcell. His vocal compositions include operas, such as *Peter Grimes*, written early in his career, and *Death in Venice*, dating from three years before his death, and song cycles, such as the *Serenade for tenor, horn, and strings*, as well as the large-scale *War Requiem*. He also produced a quantity of orchestral and chamber music, and solo instrumental works. His teachers included Frank Bridge, a major influence on his development as a composer, and his formal training included a period at the Royal College of Music (1930-33). After early work which included scoring documentaries for the Post Office film unit Britten entered into collaborative relationships that exerted a profound influence upon his creative life. The tenor Peter Pears was his closest intimate, both personally and professionally, and many of the song cycles and operatic roles, including the title role in *Peter Grimes*, were written specifically for Pears' voice. Britten was a pacifist, and remained one throughout his life. He and Pears left England in 1939, shortly before the beginning of the Second World War, and spent four years in the United States and Canada. While there Britten composed the *Sinfonia de Requiem*, the song cycle *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, and his first effort for the stage, *Paul Bunyan* (1940-41). *Peter Grimes* dates from his return to England in the later war years.

TWO CHORUSES FROM *PETER GRIMES*

(words by Montagu Slater)

Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* took as its inspiration George Crabbe's poem *The Borough*, which describes characters in a Suffolk fishing village in the early nineteenth century. In the poem, Grimes is misanthropic, drunken, vicious and thieving and without any redeeming features. Montagu Slater's libretto for the opera softens the character and portrays him with compassion. Britten described the work as "a subject very close to my heart — the struggle of the individual against the masses. The more vicious the society, the more vicious the individual." (It is interesting to note that three of the greatest operas of the first half of the twentieth century, Berg's *Wozzeck*, Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and *Peter Grimes*, all concern unattractive and flawed characters who are portrayed more sympathetically in the operas than in the nineteenth century literary models on which they are based.) The opera was greeted with acclaim when first performed in 1945. Like Britten's later operas, it continues to be regularly staged all over the world, and the title role is one that any leading operatic tenor aims to have in his repertoire. In addition, the Sea Interludes are frequently played in the concert hall.

The 'Song of the Fishermen' comes at the beginning of Act 1 of the opera, immediately after the first Sea Interlude (Dawn), and its accompaniment uses the same music as that Interlude. It sets the scene as the chorus of fisherfolk sing of their hard and precarious life and the inexorable tides that threaten even their homes.

The second scene is set in the local pub, The Boar. A storm is raging outside and Peter Grimes enters in order to wait for his new apprentice. A quarrel breaks out and as this threatens to lead to fighting, someone shouts "For pity's sake, someone start a song". The result is the round 'Old Joe has gone fishing'. (In the opera, Peter attempts to join in the singing but is unable to fit in with the chorus, as a symbol of his apartness from the rest of the villagers; this is omitted from this concert version.)

Malcolm Todd

The Choir is very grateful for the support that it continues to receive from the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR).

The Choir would like to thank all the helpers on the night.

Simon Marsh's "Fisherman at Dawn, Robin Hood Bay" is part of a series of paintings of the English coast. The artist walked around the coast of England and Wales over a period of 16 months, painting as he went. Pictures from the series are available from Benjamin C Hargreaves tel: 020 7385 7757, e/m: hargreavesbc@waitrose.com.

Paul Spicer



Paul Spicer began his musical training as a chorister at New College, Oxford. He studied with Herbert Howells and Richard Popplewell (organ) at the Royal College of Music in London, winning the Walford Davies Organ Prize in his final year.

As well as being conductor of the Whitehall Choir, Paul conducts the acclaimed Finzi Singers, with whom he has made 15 CDs for Chandos, the Birmingham Bach Choir, and the Chamber Choirs at the Birmingham Conservatoire where he is professor of choral conducting.

Until July 2001 Paul Spicer was Artistic Director of the Lichfield International Arts Festival and the Abbotsholme Arts Society, posts he relinquished in order to pursue a completely freelance musical career. Earlier in his career he spent time as a teacher of music at Uppingham School and Ellesmere College, before moving on to become a recording producer. He was Senior Producer for BBC Radio 3 in the Midlands until 1990, and today is in great demand as a recording producer and as a composer.

His large-scale *Easter Oratorio*, commissioned for performance in Lichfield Cathedral in July 2000, was described by *The Independent* as “almost operatic in its inherent drama” and as being “a major contribution to the choral society repertoire”. It was subsequently recorded, and was one of the Editor’s Choices in *Gramophone* magazine’s April 2006 issue, in which John Steane proclaimed: “The *Easter Oratorio* is a major work and the best of its kind to have appeared, certainly since the death of Howells, probably since Howells’s *Hymnus Paradisi*.” Other commissions have included anthems for the enthronement of Tom Wright as Bishop of Durham in October 2003, a Choral Festival in Long Island, USA, in May 2004, and the centenary of the Birmingham Diocese in 2005. Paul’s composition *The Deciduous Cross*, recorded by the Whitehall Choir, is available to buy via www.whitehallchoir.org.uk .

Paul Spicer’s highly acclaimed biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, which was published in August 1998, went into its second edition exactly a year later and is progressing to its third edition. He is a contributor to the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and has begun work on a full-scale biography of Sir George Dyson, commissioned by the Dyson Trust. Paul Spicer is a member of the Council of Lichfield Cathedral, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Research Fellow of Birmingham University and an Honorary Fellow of the Birmingham Conservatoire.

James Longford



James Longford is one of the UK's leading collaborative pianists. He trained at the Royal College of Music with support from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust, winning the Tagore Gold Medal and all the prizes for accompaniment, and was awarded a Junior Fellowship in 2000.

UK performance venues have included the Barbican Hall, Wigmore Hall, St David's Hall, Snape Maltings and St John's Smith Square, whilst abroad he has performed in Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Ireland, UAE, South Africa, the USA and throughout the Baltic States. James has collaborated on projects with Andreas Scholl, Peter Schreier and Emma Johnson, and with many outstanding young singers, including Sarah-Jane Davies, Andrew Kennedy and Nicholas Watts. He has broadcast on BBC Radios 3 and 4, most recently live from Wigmore Hall, with Ann Murray DBE and the Royal String Quartet.

He is one half of the critically-acclaimed longfordbrown piano duo with New Zealand pianist Lindy Tennent-Brown. In the 14th International Schubert Competition for piano duos in April 2005 they were the highest-placed UK duo, winning third prize. They are rapidly forging a career as one of the UK's foremost piano duos. On the duo's performance of the Poulenc Concerto for two pianos the *Hertford Mercury* said it was "a stunning performance... so seamless was the playing of the two pianists that the music of the two pianos blended as one. Unity was the wonder of their performance... utterly absorbing."

As a pianist, repetiteur and orchestral keyboard player James works with a variety of ensembles and companies, including Aldeburgh Music, Almeida Opera, Britten Sinfonia, Gabrieli Consort & Players, Polyphony, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia, BT Scottish Ensemble, London Strings, CLOD Ensemble, The Opera Group, East London Chorus, London Pro Arte Orchestra, Wigmore Hall Education, ENO Baylis, ROH2, Spitalfields Festival Education and the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme.

Also a countertenor, James regularly performs with the choir of Westminster Abbey and at other major London churches.

James's websites are www.jameslongford.com and www.longfordbrown.com.



THE WHITEHALL CHOIR

President: Sir Brian Bender, KCB

Conductor: Paul Spicer

Accompanist: James Longford

The Whitehall Choir

After its wartime origins in 1941 as a lunchtime madrigal group in the Board of Trade, the Whitehall Choir has grown and become a permanent and thriving choir, performing regularly at major London venues, and sometimes more widely in the UK. Its repertoire ranges from the Renaissance to the 21st century, and includes challenging unaccompanied pieces as well as larger choral works performed alongside professional soloists and orchestral musicians. Paul Spicer's appointment as Conductor and Musical Director has continued and enhanced the Choir's regular contribution to the London music scene. Most recently our programme has included Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and Haydn's *Imperial Mass* at St John's, Smith Square, Rachmaninov's *Vespers* at St Paul's, Knightsbridge, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* at the Cadogan Hall, and the Fauré *Requiem* at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London. In 2007 the Choir went on tour in Toulouse, France, where they performed a varied programme at two separate venues. In 2006 the Choir performed the London premiere of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross* along with Bruckner's *Mass in E Minor* at St John's, Smith Square, and both works feature on the Choir's recent (January 2007) CD recording available to purchase via our website.

If you would like to sing with the Whitehall Choir please visit our website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk, or alternatively contact Richard Grafen on 020 7215 5323 (daytime only) for details. Should places be available in the choir, membership is subject to a short audition. Registered Charity no. 280478.

Sopranos

Joanna Bradley
Nadine Brown
Gill Carruthers
Hilary Davies
Imogen Davies
Ruth Eastman
Jacky Erwtman
Kate Goulden
Fiona Graph
Shelley Haley
Kate Hand
Katherine Herzberg
Caroline James
Margaret Lauder
Leane Mercier-Tardif
Simone Nauerth
Lesley Raymond
Rachel Salisbury
Ruth Soroko
Yvette Street
Vicky Sweetman
Sue Vincent
Joanna Worrell

Altos

Helen Audaer
Rose Chandler
Tamsin Cousins
Monica Darnbrough
Miranda Douce
Samantha Foley
Katherine Howes
Kate Mole
Jean Orr
Marion Paul
Caroline Price
Penny Prior
Maira Roach
Jean Robinson
Holly Tett
Liz Walton
Lis Warren

Tenors

Colin Altman
Michael Grubb
Patrick Haighton
Graham Hand
Ken Holmes
Ashley Marshfield
Philip Pratley
David Rawlins
Danny Tomkins
Jonathan Williams

Basses

Laurence Grace
Richard Grafen
Mark Graver
Michael Growcott
Michael Hope
Martin Humphreys
Andrew Hyde
Michel Kallipetis
Simon Lawson
Keith Long
William Longland
Alberto Moscatelli
Brendan O'Keeffe
Malcolm Todd
David Wedmore
Ian Williamson

WHITEHALL CHOIR COMMITTEE, 2007-08

SAMANTHA FOLEY, Chairman
JONATHAN WILLIAMS, Hon Secretary
KEN HOLMES, Hon Treasurer
RACHEL SALISBURY, Assistant Secretary
MARTIN HUMPHREYS and RUTH EASTMAN, Publicity Managers
MIRANDA DOUCE and KATHERINE HOWES, Business Managers
LAURENCE GRACE and ROSE CHANDLER, Librarians
KATE GOULDEN, Soprano rep
LIZ WALTON, Alto rep
COLIN ALTMAN, Tenor rep
MALCOLM TODD, Bass rep
RICHARD GRAFEN, BERR Rep

FRIENDS OF WHITEHALL CHOIR

Mr C. T. Bilby
Miss E. Broadbent
Mrs D. Glover
Capt. C. W. Gotto, RN
Miss Freda Harris (*Honorary Friend*)
Mrs G. A. Holmes
Mr. L. A. Hunt
Miss P. J. Owen
Mr Roy Owen
Mr John Warren
Capt. B. V. Woodford, CBE, RN

WHITEHALL CHOIR – FUTURE PROGRAMME 2008/2009:

COME AND SING: HAYDN'S *NELSON MASS*

Saturday 1 November 2008
Church of the Holy Spirit, Narbonne Avenue, Clapham,
London SW4

CHRISTMAS MUSIC OLD AND NEW

Thursday 4 December 2008
St Marylebone Parish Church

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

Tuesday 16 December 2008
St Stephen's, Rochester Row

BRAHMS REQUIEM

Monday 6 April 2009
Banqueting House, Whitehall

PURCELL AND CONTEMPORARIES

Friday 10 July 2009
St John's, Smith Square

If you would like to be kept informed of Whitehall Choir initiatives and events, please sign up
for our

"e-alerts" via the website – www.whitehallchoir.org.uk .

ANTON BRUCKNER MASS IN E MINOR
PAUL SPICER THE DECIDUOUS CROSS



WHITEHALL CHOIR
WITH THE BRANDENBURG SINFONIA
CONDUCTED BY PAUL SPICER



During 2007 the Whitehall Choir produced a CD, featuring the first recorded performance of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross*. On this disc the Choir has also recorded Bruckner's *Mass in E minor*. The CD is on sale at tonight's performance or via our website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.

"...instrumental writing which is assured, inventive and colourful...a performance which is committed and compelling..." Organists' Review, October 2007

"...Definitely recommended!" Bruckner Journal, November 2007