



# WHITEHALL CHOIR

## Whitehall Choir - summer newsletter 2008

Dear all,

I suddenly find that the summer is drawing to a close – and think back longingly to the lovely weather we HAVE had at times over recent months, including when we enjoyed a beautiful balmy evening for the social evening at the outdoor theatre in Regent's Park in July! It is thus time to update you on the plans for the next Season of Whitehall Choir. It's going to be a rather special one, with our next CD recording scheduled for February 2009, and a range of concerts which I anticipate will continue to provide us with the variety and challenge that we enjoy.

At the end of this newsletter is a list of dates etc for the concerts/events coming up. Please can you put these into your Diary immediately? I will highlight a few details in particular:

- We start the Season with our now – hopefully – annual trip to Clapham to welcome a host of other singers to **“Come and sing” the Haydn “Nelson Mass”** with us. Please make sure this is in your diary for Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Nov – and that you have all your singing friends and family lined up to come along. These events really do see Paul Spicer at his very best, as he loves the excitement (and challenge!) of these intense rehearsal sessions. This year I am delighted to announce that Richard Pearce (a much loved previous accompanist of Whitehall Choir) will be providing piano accompaniment at this event. A flyer will be available shortly.
- The Christmas period will be particularly busy this year, with our main concert (working title: **“Christmas music, old and new”**) of the term at **St Marylebone Parish Church** (a new venue for the Choir), our regular **Carol Concert at St Stephen's**, and then an extended run at the **Ritz Hotel** (7 nights within 15<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> Dec) to sing carols for those taking their afternoon tea (with the usual contribution to Choir funds).
- **In early February we will be recording the second Whitehall Choir CD, based on the Christmas music we rehearsed for the autumn term. More details of this will follow shortly, but please make sure that you have 7/8<sup>th</sup> Feb in your diary now (10am to 8pm each day for the moment please as I am unsure of the exact logistics at the present).**
- In March we have again been invited to join the Brandenburg Sinfonia at **St Martin in the Field** to take part in a **Faure programme**, with Paul Spicer conducting. These events have become a popular addition to our Season and allow us to perform in a splendid venue to a usually packed house, which is a great pleasure.
- In April we return to the Banqueting House on Whitehall to perform the **Brahms German Requiem** and I am delighted to say that James Longford and his duet partner - the **longfordbrown piano duo** – will be playing for us on that occasion in what I am sure will be another special evening at this unique venue.
- The summer brings a programme of **Purcell** to complement a summer evening at **St John's Smith Square**, alongside a baroque orchestra.
- And planning even further ahead, in October 2009 we will be singing **Beethoven's** magnificent **Missa Solemnis** alongside the Birmingham Bach Choir (BBC) in **Birmingham's Symphony Hall**. This will be an exciting venture for us in a fantastic venue, and an opportunity to sing a larger work than we would normally be able to tackle with just the Whitehall Choir's numbers. Again logistics are being finalised, but we will ensure that there is transport laid on to Birmingham, and the BBC have very generously offer to provide overnight accommodation for those who want it.

Phew! There is, as ever, a lot going on and I hope that you are all looking forward to it as much as I am. Now on to a few practical matters.



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## **Subscriptions**

As agreed at the AGM, subscriptions are going up a small amount this Season (increasing from £190 to £200 - only the second increase in 9 years - with proportionate increases for members under 26). All subs are due at the start of term and collection will be arranged via your part rep. If you pay by Standing Order you should have already had paperwork from Ken Holmes asking you to adjust this.

## **Re-auditions**

You should have an agreed slot (via part reps) for your re-audition in the next couple of weeks. Many thanks to you all for making yourselves available for this process. As Paul explained at the AGM (see the Choir website, Member's page, for a transcript if you weren't able to make the meeting) it is the Choir's policy to complete this exercise every 3 years, to provide a snapshot/stock take of the Choir and for Paul to assess our capabilities (individually and collectively) going forward. Of course there is a chance in this process that a small number of people will be invited to leave the Choir; all decisions in this regard will be made by Paul Spicer as our Musical Director and are final. I know that this is an uncomfortable process for many of you (me included!), but that you appreciate its necessity.

As a reminder, Paul will ask you to sing a few scales etc, to sight read a passage and then sing a short piece of your choice (please remember to bring along TWO copies of your chosen piece – one for you and one for the accompanist). Results of auditions will not be provided to individuals until everyone in the Choir has been heard; please ensure that your part rep has an up-to-date e-mail address for you as these will be used by Paul to give you your results (I anticipate no later than Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Sept).

## **Choir Website**

Please remember that the website is there for us all to use ( [www.whitehallchoir.org.uk](http://www.whitehallchoir.org.uk) ). It's proving a good way of getting interest in the Choir, and has been optimised for internet Search Engines so that anyone searching for a Choir in London should find us pretty easily. And of course it always provides up to date information on Choir activities for members to consult (2008 AGM minutes available soon). Photos taken at the Banqueting House concert will be added shortly!

Can I specifically remind you of the [Amazon link](#)? Remember that whenever you and your friends/family are going to shop on Amazon, if you access the Amazon site VIA our website (logo is on the front page) then the Choir gets a small refund from Amazon for all purchases made. With the Christmas shopping season approaching (groan!) this could provide a welcome source of extra income for the Choir with very little effort from us all. Please make a mental note now to try and use this option regularly.

## **New Members**

We are in the excellent position of having people wishing to join us when we start the new term (if you know of any good singers yourself who are looking for a Choir to join, then please do point them to our website) - we will have a small number of places in all 4 parts to fill.

## **Music**

The Librarians have been working hard to secure the large volume of music required for next term. Please remember that **you need to DOWNLOAD several of the pieces (free) from the internet**. These are detailed on the Member's page. Please could you do this for the FIRST week of term.

## **Committee Meetings**

The Committee will next meet on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Please do let us know (via your part rep) if there are any items you would like to be covered.



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And finally - **term starts Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September**. It would be great if you could arrive a few minutes early that evening to collect your music orders. Looking forward to seeing you all then!

*Sam*

Samantha Foley

Chairman, Whitehall Choir

25<sup>th</sup> August 2008

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## **For your diary:**

### **2008**

**Saturday 1 November 2008** - Come and Sing Haydn's "*Nelson Mass*"

Church of the Holy Spirit, Clapham.

**Thursday 4 December 2008, 7.30pm** - Christmas music, old and new

St Marylebone Parish Church, London NW1 5LT

**Tuesday 16 December 2008** - Carol concert

St Stephen's, Rochester Row

**15 (Monday), 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008** – carols at the Ritz Hotel.

### **2009**

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009** - CD Recording (Christmas music from autumn term)

(times tbc, but please keep the entire day/evening free for the moment)

**Thursday 19 March 2009, 7.30pm** - Faure *Requiem & Cantique de Jean Racine*

St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, WC2

**Monday 6 April 2009** - Brahms German *Requiem* with the longfordbrown piano duo

The Banqueting House, Whitehall, SW1A (time to be announced)

**Friday 10 July 2009, 7.30pm** - Purcell and his contemporaries

To include *My Heart is Inditing*, *Welcome to all the Pleasures*, *My Beloved Spake*, *Rejoice in the Lord*

St John's, Smith Square, SW1

**Saturday 24 October 2009** - Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*

Symphony Hall, Birmingham