



Tyndale Choral Society

Conductor: Michael Power

ELIJAH

by Felix Mendelssohn

SUNDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 1997

Dursley Parish Church

7.00pm

TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY

Conductor - Michael Power

with

Margaret Whitaker - soprano Catherine Knight - contralto

Mark Davies - tenor Anthony Scales - baritone (Elijah)

Alasdair Gregory - treble (Youth)

and

Tyndale Concert Orchestra

Leader - Simon Chalk

Margaret Whitaker

Margaret studied singing part-time at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama while reading Civil Engineering at the City University. She is now based in Cirencester and studies singing with Elizabeth Odell. As a soloist in oratorio and ensemble works her career is developing with recent performances for the Cirencester Festival, the Cantores Novi choir, with whom she performed the *Requiem* by John Rutter, and Baroque music with the Stanesby Ensemble.

Future performances include Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Verdi's *Requiem*, baroque music of Scarlatti and Handel with the Ensemble. Margaret continues to work as a Civil Engineer for a local consultancy.

Catherine Knight

Catherine began singing at an early age, appearing as a soloist in school productions and pantomimes. Later singing continued with various choirs around the country, then travelling abroad with the Philharmonia Chorus on several occasions, working with many renowned conductors, including Michael Tilson

Thomas and Carlo Maria Guilini. Recent performances of oratorio have included Rossini's Petite Messe Solonelle, Mozart's Solemn Vespers and Handel's Messiah. Catherine lives near Bath and studies singing with Elizabeth Odell.

Mark Davies

Mark was born in Newport and began his musical career in 1975, gaining a scholarship to the choir school of Gloucester Cathedral under John Sanders. Later, in 1986, he won a place at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he studied sing with John Mitchinson. In 1994 he began to further his studies with Theresa Goble at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. He is currently being coached by Janet Edmunds.

Mark now appears regularly with choral societies and orchestras covering a variety of styles from early music through to more contemporary compositions. Two years ago he took part in the Tyndale Choral Society's successful Tercentenary Purcell concert. Living in Gloucester, he is a Lay Clerk at the Cathedral combining his busy schedule of singing with being the proprietor of an established vintage sports car company.

Anthony Scales

Anthony was born in Hammersmith, London, in 1951 and educated at Tiffin School and Durham University. While teaching myths, handwriting and divinity in Liverpool, he pursued an active musical life, achieving frequent success in competitive festivals, conducting, producing musicals and lecturing to music societies.

In 1982 he decided to make music, especially singing, his career and he went to study at the Birmingham Conservatoire. He won major prizes, including the John Ireland Song Competition and then he studied at the European Opera Centre.

Anthony now sings in a wide variety of different musical styles. His repertoire includes over 50 oratorios. He enjoys presenting solo recitals from his varied repertoire and has undertaken a full range of operatic roles, often specialising in roles which are full of character. Work in this area includes singing two roles in a touring production of Puccini's "Madam Butterfly" in Wycliffe College and more recently in a Mahler Song Cycle with the Gloucestershire Symphony Orchestra in Gloucester Cathedral. Other interests include many sports, cookery, creative writing and industrial landscape photography.

Alasdair Gregory

Alasdair is a pupil at St Joseph's School, Nympsfield where he is a prominent member of the school choir. He is also a member of the New Youth Choir Club in Dursley, directed by Lynn James, and is learning the piano and violin.

Mendelssohn and Elijah

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn, (b. Hamburg 1809 - d. Leipzig 1847) was one of the most naturally gifted musicians of the nineteenth century. He developed his talent while still a boy. His musical inspiration was Classical and he studied carefully the works of Bach, Handel and Mozart despite being surrounded by Romantic influences during the whole of his life.

The music which Mendelssohn wrote was moulded by a great many different experiences and influences. No wonder that this year, the year of the 150th anniversary of his death, there have been so many different examples of his music performed.

Elijah was composed in the spring and summer of 1846 especially for the Birmingham Music Festival of that year. It was there that Mendelssohn conducted the first performance. He was obviously stirred by the dramatic strength of the story and he wrote at an unusually high level of intensity. Many music historians consider that the more devotional parts of *Elijah* are the least distinguished. It can be said too, that the second part is more uneven in quality than the first, yet there is much in the whole work which is impressive and it deserves to be regarded as a masterpiece by choral singers and audiences alike. Although the famous soprano, Jenny Lind, had often worked with Mendelssohn, she did not sing in the first performance. This was surprising since Mendelssohn admitted that he had her voice in mind when he composed for the soprano. He said he knew the timbre of every note and had studied her voice minutely. Jenny didn't sing in *Elijah* until after Mendelssohn's death.

In the first performance on 26th August, four choruses and four arias were encored. In a letter written after that performance Mendelssohn admitted that he was so moved by the singing of the young English tenor, Charles Lockey, in his last aria that he was "obliged to exercise great self - control in order not to be affected and to beat time steadily". Mendelssohn was absolutely delighted with that first performance although he did make some revisions once he had returned to Leipzig. These were incorporated in a London performance conducted by the composer in 1847. This one repeat performance led to another five performances in various cities, so that when Mendelssohn returned to Germany on 8th May, after having taken his leave of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, he was desperately tired. The death of his beloved sister Fanny accelerated his own deterioration in health and he died, after a series of strokes on 4th November 1847.

Michael Power

TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY

Founder and President --- Mrs M Neale



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The Society is most grateful to its Friends for their generous support and continuing interest. If you too would like to become a Friend, please give your name and address to the Secretary or any member of the Society.



The Society is indebted to The Lister - Petter Tyndale Rally for a donation and to Dursley Town Council and Uley Parish Council for their continued support with donations.

The Tyndale Choral Society is affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies which represents and supports amateur choirs, orchestras and music promoters throughout the United Kingdom.



Concert Programme for 1998

A Night at the Opera

Saturday 11th July

St Mary's Wotton-under-Edge

with

Sue Black - soprano

and

Christopher Boodle - piano and organ

Winter Concert

Saturday 31st October

(provisional date)

Venue to be arranged

Carmina Burana

by Carl Orff

with

Tyndale Concert Orchestra



Rehearsals for this programme begin at the end of March 1998 at 7.30pm in Stinchcombe Village Hall. New members in all parts will be most welcome. If you are interested in joining, please contact the Secretary:

Mrs Wendy Richardson, 2A New Street, Charfield
Telephone: Dursley 842656