

Controlled dynamics

IT WAS cold and damp outside, but the audience inside the parish church at Wotton-under-Edge on Saturday evening forgot it all as they were transported to the opera.

Tyndale Choral Society, under their conductor Michael Power, gave us a delightful evening of choruses from some of the most famous operas. The singing was well balanced, with a full range of well-controlled dynamics, clear diction and good intonation, even in the notoriously difficult *Humming Chorus* from *Madam Butterfly*. Most worthy of note was the *Slaves Chorus* from Verdi's *Nabucco* while the *Easter*

TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY

Hymn from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* provided a moving end to the first half.

Guest artist with the choir was the soprano, Sue Black. She thrilled the audience with her expressive singing, the richness and warmth of her voice throughout her whole range, and her ability to sing in different styles. She held the audience spellbound in Rusalka's *Hymn to the Moon*, seduced the men with Carmen's *Habanera* and made the church resound with the climactic top note in *One Fine Day* from *Madam Butterfly*.

The whole was brilliantly accompanied by Christopher Boodle on both piano and organ. He revealed his great gift of sympathetically accompanying both choir and soloist, providing just the right amount of support.

But he also treated the audience to his own arrangement of music from Verdi's *Aida* giving the audience the opportunity to hear the organ as a solo instrument.

In the second half, the choir revealed hidden talents in their performance of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera *Trial by Jury*. Sue Black took the leading role,

ably assisted by other soloists drawn from the choir. All gave life to their characters and the choir responded enthusiastically to the action. It is essential that all words are heard clearly in this opera, to enable the audience to follow the storyline, and even in the patter song this was the case. This was a work well suited to the forces available and all were obviously enjoying themselves.

Lastly, praise must go to the society's conductor, Michael Power, for his choice of a delightful programme, his thorough preparation of the choir, and the skill with which he so successfully held the whole evening together.

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