

Magical concert at church appeals to mind and soul

"Music for a Summer Evening" - a concert given by the Tyndale Choral Society and the Chalumeau Wind Quintet

THERE was magic abroad in the air.

So sang the Tyndale Choral Society as part of their Music for a Summer Evening in Wotton-under-Edge Parish Church last Saturday.

Magic there was, in a programme of great variety, to appeal to the intellect and the emotions alike.

Under the authoritative and clear conducting of their Music Director Michael Power, the 'intellectual' part was satisfied by two great choral masterpieces - Bach's motet *Jesu Priceless Treasure* and Parry's towering ode *Blest Pair of Sirens*.

Bach's motets are a real challenge for any choir, and Tyndale rose well to the occasion, the conductor's generally deliberate tempi allowed the often dense part-writing to come through, although there were occasional problems in sustaining the long lines.

There was no denying the determination of that last great repeat of Cruger's chorale tune.

Parry's setting of Milton is more grateful to sing, and the chorus took full advantage in a well-wrought

and moving performance.

In these, as in other pieces during the evening, accompaniment was provided by Ian Ball, Assistant Organist at Gloucester Cathedral in exemplary fashion, now supportive, now full-bodied.

The other choral pieces were smaller in scope, but were given with the same attention to detail.

It can be difficult to bring off Purcell's more intimate pieces like the *Evening Hymn* with larger resources but Tyndale achieved it, with a fine blend in the soloistic phrases.

Mozart's *Ave Verum* benefited from a lovely hushed start, and two other Parry pieces prefaced the ode.

Of these, the finer was his motet *My Soul there is a Country*; it may be an old church choir war-horse but given the committed performance here, it can still win a few rosettes.

The second half of the concert turned to part song, folk song and lighter fare, all well prepared and presented, which included as highlights, Mendelssohn's *Departure* and Elgar's *As Torrents in Summer*.

Like Barnby's *Sweet and Low* earlier, their deep-

tive simplicity can be hard to keep in tune but Tyndale achieved this without apparent effort.

As a foil to the choral sound, the Chalumeau Wind Quintet entertained brilliantly with typical elegant and sprightly French music by Claude Arrieu in the first half, and equally foot-tapping, modern dances by Norman Kallam in the second (although I'm not sure I could contrive a quickstep at Mr Kallam's speed!).

They then joined the chorus for Laura Kane's marvellously inventive arrangements in *Five Summer Songs*; especially praiseworthy was Mr Power's tactful direction of the final breathless *Jim the Carter Lad*.

To bring the concert to a close, Tyndale gave us three 'standards' of popular music: *A Nightingale* sang in Berkeley Square, *The Rhythm of Life* (from *Sweet Charity*) and Glenn Miller's *Moonlight Serenade*, all performed with the blend which is so much the essence of these choral arrangements.

On a warm summer's night, there was indeed magic abroad in the air.

IAN HARROLD

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