

COMMUNITY NEWS - Tuesday 30th November 2021

IPSWICH ARTS ASSOCIATION with CHRIS GREEN

Many thanks to the friends who supported me last weekend when I conducted the Anglia Singers and members of Trianon, for the first time after 20 months. The last time was three days before the lock down in March 2020, and although we have been rehearsing “live” since September, there was anxiety as to whether we would get an audience. We did and a very appreciative one who gave generously. Remember even conductors can get nervous. I know Benjamin Britten was, if I recall, physically sick sometimes before he went on stage. Fortunately, I was spared that but, nevertheless, it was a challenge.

Now I have to face the challenge of massed voices and an orchestra as Trianon musicians start rehearsals tonight, for their concert at the Ipswich Corn Exchange on 8 January when the wonderful world of film and television music will be performed. The structure of the programme has taken account of health and safety with the choir featured in Part One, and the orchestra in Part Two. Meanwhile, The Corn Exchange has also undergone changes to ensure maximum ventilation, so please do support them and, indeed, all other “live” events. To book tickets for Trianon phone Ipswich Entertainments on 01473 433100.



Ipswich Chamber Choir. Credit: ICC.

A number of our choirs will be in performance during the coming week. The Ipswich Chamber Choir gives its Christmas Concert on Saturday 4 December at 7pm at St Margaret's Church, Ipswich. *The Wonderful Gifts* is the title of a programme that includes Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* and Britten's *St Nicolas*. I wonder if the choir members realise the historical link between the latter work and the venue just minutes from where they are performing, St Mary-le-Tower Church is the link. I share with them the memory in the 1950s of choristers from St Mary-le-Tower Church, Ipswich singing in the Decca recording of *St Nicolas*. So, there is a tradition to continue. Vaughan Williams also visited the church in the 1950s to give a homily to his friend, Martin Shaw. Tickets for the concert cost £15 and are available from Musicworld, Queen Street Ipswich or Woodbridge Violins.



Orwell Singers. Credit: Orwell Singers

The Orwell Singers will be holding their Christmas Concert - *A Celebration of Song* - on the afternoon of Saturday 11 December at 2.30pm at St Michael & All Angel's Church, Martlesham Heath, IP5 3PL. Tickets cost £8.00 for adults, free for accompanied children, payable on the door. It will be the Singers' second concert with their Musical Director, Lindsay Blay. The choir will be accompanied by Peter Willsher (piano) and they will also be joined by guest baritone Richard Blay. The programme will be a mixture of well-known songs and seasonal music. Mince pies and non-alcoholic drink will be served before the start of the concert as there will be no interval. There will be some social distancing and ventilation will be ensured at the venue.

Now a confession: I have never been moved by the music of Berlioz unlike some of my friends. However, there are works by him which I know are enthusiastically performed. At this time of year, it is his oratorio, *L'Enfance du Christ* (*The Childhood of Christ*). The late Sir Colin Davis was a fine Berlioz exponent and his recording with the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of the work, recorded at the Barbican in 2006, is now available at super budget price from Alto on two CDs. To really enjoy the work, you need the text in front of you because it is sung in French, but the sleeve-liner notes give the listener a clear route map through the work (Alto ALC 1608). And I end on a local note because Colin Davis conducted the Ipswich Orchestral Society for a short time, and later had a home in Suffolk.



*The Birkbeck Singers, who will be performing at the IAA Town Concert on December 8th.
Credit: Birkbeck Singers.*

The Ipswich Town Lectures and Concerts end the shortened season on Thursday week when the Birkbeck Singers conducted by Chandra Grover give the lunchtime concert at 1pm at Museum Street Methodist Church. The high-quality of recent events has not been matched by the size of audiences and so I do urge readers to support this monthly series which is free, even though there is a retiring collection

If you have a story to share with other organisations, please email IAA chairperson, Professor Chris Green at: cjc.green@talktalk.net
