

22/23



THE
HUDDERSFIELD
CHORAL



EXPERIENCE THE
MAGIC OF THE
NORTH'S PREMIER
INDEPENDENT CHOIR

BE UPLIFTED WITH HCS

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the Huddersfield Choral Society's 2022/2023 Season.

Over the coming 12 months we will present a sparkling array of programmes that feature an unrivalled wealth of world class orchestras, conductors and soloists. All making their way from across the world to perform in the heart of West Yorkshire.

I am delighted that Ellie Slorach's partnership with the Choral Society continues to blossom. Her performance of *Messiah* will feature some of the best young British soloists. Our much loved friend and Artistic Advisor Martyn Brabbins returns to his Yorkshire musical family for the first time since 2019 in a programme that features the premier of our *We'll Sing* Commissions together with some rather wonderful works by Mendelssohn and Brahms. This promises to be a very moving occasion for us all. Looking into 2023 we have a very popular Come and Sing day and I can't wait to set the stage alight with the mighty *Missa Solemnis* by Beethoven.

The HCS family of ensembles continue to go from strength to strength. Do look out for and support our fantastic Youth Choirs and the ever vibrant and engaging HCS Voices. We at Huddersfield Choral Society are committed to offering singing opportunities to people of all ages, background and abilities.

The Huddersfield Choral Society mission is very simple; to renew our fine tradition and to continue to make exceptional choral music, to constantly challenge ourselves with fresh ideas and to share our world class choral music with audiences near and far. Though the last two years have been a challenge for us all I can honestly say we have never sounded so good.

I am immensely proud to lead this remarkable choral organisation and I look forward to welcoming you to many of our concerts across the next 12 months.

The future of this amazing group is more exciting than ever. I can't wait for you to be part of it too!

Greg

Gregory Batsleer
Conductor



DATES FOR YOUR CHORAL DIARY



You might also want to experience singing with the Choral by putting our 'Come and Sing' concert on Saturday 25th March into your Diary.

Further details will be on the website nearer the date.



FRIDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2022 - 7.30PM

BRAHMS – SCHICKSALSIED,
MENDELSSOHN – DIE ERSTE WALPURGISNACHT,
ARMITAGE, FRANCES-HOAD AND KIDANE - PANDEMIC POEMS
MANCHESTER CAMERATA

Conductor: MARTYN BRABBINS

Soloists: FELICITY BUCKLAND (Mezzo), ALESSANDRO FISCHER (Tenor),
MATT DURKAN (Baritone)



FRIDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2022 - 7.30PM

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Presenter & Conductor: GREGORY BATSLEER

BLACK DYKE BAND Conductor: NICHOLAS CHILDS
HCS, HCS YOUTH CHOIRS, HCS VOICES



TUESDAY 20TH & WEDNESDAY 21ST DECEMBER 2022 - 7.15PM

HANDEL - *MESSIAH*

ORCHESTRA OF OPERA NORTH

Conductor: ELLIE SLORACH

Soloists: ELLA TAYLOR (Soprano), KATIE BRAY (Mezzo),
NICK PRITCHARD (Tenor), DINGLE YANDELL (Bass)



FRIDAY 26TH MAY 2023 - 7.30PM

BEETHOVEN - *MISSA SOLEMNIS*

ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Conductor: GREGORY BATSLEER

Soloists: SINEAD CAMPBELL-WALLACE (Soprano),
ANDREW STAPLES (Tenor), ASHLEY RICHARDS (Bass)

OCTOBER CONCERT

In memory of:
STEPHEN BROOK
PHILIP CARLIN
DAVID CROFT

BRAHMS, MENDELSSOHN, PANDEMIC POEMS

JOIN US ON OCTOBER 28TH
7.30PM AT HUDDERSFIELD TOWN HALL

MANCHESTER CAMERATA

Conductor: MARTYN BRABBINS

Soloists: FELICITY BUCKLAND (Mezzo)
ALESSANDRO FISHER (Tenor)
MATT DURKAN (Baritone)



In the depth of the 2020 lockdown, we commissioned two new works released as online videos that November. This concert sees their world premiere in live performance.

Poet Laureate Simon Armitage asked members of the Choir to choose one word that reflected their experience of lockdown, and used them as the inspiration for two poems – *We'll Sing* and *The Song Thrush and the Mountain Ash*.

Settings by Cheryl Frances-Hoad and Daniel Kidane were recorded under Covid safe conditions with film production by Century Films – some of which was then used in a BBC special '*A Pandemic Poem – Where did the World go?*' screened in June 2021. Simon's words and the music evoke the depth of isolation that descended on people and communities during 2020-21, against which so many private tragedies were played out.

These two compositions have since been orchestrated and are performed live this evening for the first time.



ENO director and HCS Artistic Advisor Martyn Brabbins returns to the Town Hall podium for the first time since our critically acclaimed recording of Elgar's *Caractacus* in 2018, conducting the Manchester Camerata with soloists Felicity Buckland, Alessandro Fisher and Matt Durkan.

The concert pairs the new commissions with classic choral works by Brahms and Mendelssohn.

Johannes Brahms' *Shicksalslied* (Song of Destiny) is a setting of a poem by Friedrich Holderlin. Along with his German Requiem it is considered to be one of Brahms' best choral works, and is sometimes referred to as 'The little Requiem'. Despite the work's undoubted popularity, this is its first ever performance by Huddersfield Choral Society.

Die erste Walpurgisnacht by Felix Mendelssohn is based on a poem by Goethe telling of the attempts by Druids in the Harz mountains to practice their pagan rituals in the face of new and dominating Christian forces. Hector Berlioz called it 'The finest thing that Mendelssohn has done..' and Mendelssohn himself wrote to his sister Fanny describing '.. a grand cantata with full orchestra. [...] when the watchmen make a ruckus with their prongs and pitchforks and owls, there is also the witches' spookiness, and [you] know that I have a particular fondness for that'.

So why has the work been absent from the Town Hall stage for over a century?

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

JOIN US ON DECEMBER 9TH
7.30PM AT HUDDERSFIELD TOWN HALL



Conductors: GREGORY BATSLEER
NICHOLAS CHILDS

BLACK DYKE BAND, HCS VOICES,
HCS & HCS YOUTH CHOIRS



Get into the Christmas spirit with this much-loved seasonal celebration which packs the Town Hall. The Youth Choirs combine with the full forces of the Choral Society, and for the first time our Community Choir, HCS Voices, will join us. With over 200 singers on stage, plus the mighty Black Dyke Band, start your festive season with a cracker!

With a heritage stretching back to 1855, the Black Dyke Band's pedigree is almost as long as the Choral's. Over 350 recordings and numerous national and European competition titles have made the name Black Dyke synonymous with musical excellence.

"Virtuosity of this order takes the breath away"

MESSIAH

G.F. HANDEL

JOIN US ON DECEMBER 20TH & 21ST
7.15PM AT HUDDERSFIELD TOWN HALL

ORCHESTRA OF OPERA NORTH

Conductor: ELLIE SLORACH

Soloists: ELLA TAYLOR, KATIE BRAY,
NICK PRITCHARD,
DINGLE YANDELL

The Choral has performed *Messiah* in Huddersfield every year without fail since 1864, uninterrupted by wars (though twice by fire alarms, after which the choir and audience resumed their places and just carried on where they left off)... with the only exception being the ban on live performance in 2020.

Handel's great oratorio *Messiah* is associated worldwide with the Choral Society, and with our many recordings of this iconic work. For well over 150 years, it has been the centrepiece of a traditional Huddersfield Christmas. Need we say more?

Well, yes, because the combined forces of Huddersfield Choral Society and Orchestra of Opera North are directed for the first time in this performance by the outstanding young choral conductor Ellie Slorach; and the winner of the Dame Joan Sutherland Audience Prize at Cardiff Singer of the World 2019, the mezzo-soprano Katie Bray, makes her first appearance on the Town Hall stage. Don't miss it.



A NIGHT WITH BEETHOVEN

MISSA SOLEMNIS

JOIN US ON MAY 26TH

7.30PM AT HUDDERSFIELD TOWN HALL

ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Conductor: GREGORY BATSLEER



The titanic *Missa Solemnis* comes from Beethoven's late period, composed at around the same time as the 9th Symphony. He himself wrote that it was 'the greatest work I have composed so far', and it stands as one of the most powerful and universal choral works of all time. Beethoven's writing gives no quarter to singers or orchestra, but scales dramatic heights that few concert experiences can match.

We welcome the RLPO back to Huddersfield after several years' absence – and it was with them that the Choral last performed this work (2011) to rapturous receptions in both Huddersfield and Liverpool.



First page of Beethoven's score inscribed "from the heart – may it return to the heart"



Martyn Brabbins is Music Director of the English National Opera. An inspirational force in British music, Brabbins has had a busy opera career since his early days at the Kirov and more recently at La Scala, the Bayerische Staatsoper, and regularly in Lyon, Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Antwerp.

He is a popular figure at the BBC Proms, who in 2019 commissioned 14 living composers to write a birthday tribute to him. Known internationally for his advocacy of British composers, he has conducted hundreds of world premieres across the globe.

Martyn is Artistic Advisor to the Huddersfield Choral Society and has for many years supported professional, student and amateur music-making at the highest level in the UK.



Gregory Batsleer is Choral Director of the Huddersfield Choral Society and has built a strong reputation as an innovative leader and conductor over a decade working at the highest level of classical performance. He was Choral Director of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (from 2009) and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra from 2015 until 2021 when he was appointed as Director of the London Handel Festival.

From 2012 to 2017, Gregory was Artistic Director of the National Portrait Gallery's Choir in Residence programme, the first ever in-house music programme of any gallery or museum in the world. He has curated and devised performances for the Southbank Centre, Wilderness Festival and Latitude and collaborated with leading cultural figures across art forms. In 2017, Gregory co-founded Future Stages, a charity dedicated to providing pathways into the performing arts for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Ellie Slorach is Associate Choral Director of the Huddersfield Choral Society. Based in Manchester, she has a growing international career which includes the post of Assistant Conductor for the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège.

As well as her concerts in Liège, Ellie has worked with the BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, Northern Ballet and Northern Opera Group. In the 2020-21 season, Ellie worked with the BBC Singers for recording and filming and conducted Northern Ballet's 'Swan Lake' at Leeds Grand Theatre.

In 2015, Ellie founded Kantos Chamber Choir. Kantos has risen to the fore of the choral scene in the North of England, and Ellie is gaining a reputation for offering unique and innovative concerts, as anyone lucky enough to have heard her June 2022 concert with the Choral Society and members of the British Sinfonietta will know.

OUR CONDUCTORS

ORCHESTRAS



Manchester Camerata celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022 and is now one of the country's most sought-after ensembles, with a wide range of performance - their 2022 programme encompasses Joy Division as well as Mozart.

According to The Times 'Probably Britain's most adventurous orchestra', the Camerata is becoming a familiar and welcome visitor to Huddersfield, most recently with the performance of J.S.Bach's St John Passion in April of this year.



The Orchestra of Opera North holds a unique place among British orchestras as the only ensemble with a year-round dual role in the opera house and concert hall, regularly performing major symphonic repertoire with international guest conductors and soloists.

The ensemble is at the heart of Opera North's celebrated concert stagings, from its RPS and Sky Arts Award-winning cycles of Wagner's Ring in 2016, to Turandot (2017), Salome (2018), Aida (2019) and Parsifal (2022). It works regularly with the Choral Society as well as being the resident orchestra for the Kirklees concert season.

The Orchestra has received international recognition for its recordings, notably a Gramophone Award-winning Troilus and Cressida; a series of Walton's orchestral music conducted by Paul Daniel; the complete Beethoven Piano Concertos with Howard Shelley; and Elgar's Caractacus with Huddersfield Choral Society and Martyn Brabbins.



The award-winning Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra.

The origins of its concert series date back to the formation of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, a concert society founded by a group of Liverpool music lovers in 1840.

It has long been a unique ambassador for Liverpool through an extensive touring schedule throughout the UK and internationally, and through broadcasts and recordings. Over 500,000 people in 92 countries listen to Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra recordings each month on Spotify, more than any UK orchestra outside London.

RLPO and the Choral Society have collaborated on many occasions, including a critically acclaimed 2014 recording of Shostakovich Symphony 13 "Babi Yar" under Vasily Petrenko.

SONG IN A SILENT WORLD

THE MAKING OF THE PANDEMIC POEMS

The pandemic of 2020-21 silenced all live performance. The Choral lost its voice and also lost several dear colleagues to Covid-19. Our response was to commission two pieces designed for online distribution. We worked with Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, Century Films and composers Cheryl Frances-Hoad and Daniel Kidane to produce *We'll Sing* and *The Song Thrush and the Mountain Ash*.

Looking back nearly two years later, Simon Armitage recalls "At a time of so much silence it was an honour to provide words, especially for a local organisation, and a great thrill to hear them."



SIMON ARMITAGE

Simon Armitage, born in the village of Marsden near Huddersfield in 1963, was appointed Poet Laureate on 10 May 2019. He has published over 20 collections of poetry starting with 'Zoom' in 1989 as well as being a prolific writer for film and broadcast. His work has won recognition with many national and international awards.



CHERYL FRANCES-HOAD

Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b. 1980) has been composing to commission since she was fifteen. Classical tradition along with diverse contemporary inspirations including literature, painting and dance, have contributed to a creative presence provocatively her own.



DANIEL KIDANE

Daniel Kidane's (b. 1986) works range from solo pieces to large orchestral works. Often drawing from experiences from his own background and upbringing, Daniel's compositions explore narratives, especially multilingual interactions in everyday life.

YOUTH CHOIRS



Alison North MBE

The Huddersfield Choral Youth Choirs were formed in 1986, to give young people in Huddersfield and the surrounding area the opportunity to experience the joy of music making.

Made up of 3 choirs, the Youth Choir (Mixed voice ages 13-21), Vocalise (Unbroken Voices from 12 upwards) and Young Voices (ages 7-12) they perform individually or together, performing both religious and secular pieces in concert and competition.

We have spent the last 12 months building the choirs back into something like the wonderful ensembles we had prior to lockdown, and it is pleasing that the quality is still there, particularly with Vocalise, our more senior choir of unbroken voices. This quality was evident as early as February this year when,

under the brilliant direction of Alison North MBE and with Jane Robertson at the piano, the choirs had their most successful Mrs Sunderland Festival yet. The joint Youth Choirs won the Waverley School Trophy in the School Year 11 and under class, and in the Young People's Choir class – 21 years and under, Vocalise gained a first place with an 'Outstanding' grade, and the joint Youth Choirs took second place.

This coming season is another busy one; once again welcoming new members plus helping some with transition from Young Voices to Youth Choir. Our Young Voices will be taking part in the Holmfirth Music Festival in October, our first return to this event since 2019. We start the festive season with Countdown to Christmas on the afternoon of 4th December 2022 at Holy Trinity Church, followed by our participation in the Choral's Christmas concert on 9th December in Huddersfield Town Hall.



CONCERT DATES

DECEMBER 4TH 2022

COUNTDOWN TO
CHRISTMAS

HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH

DECEMBER 9TH 2022

HCS CHRISTMAS
CONCERT

HUDDERSFIELD
TOWN HALL

MARCH 26TH 2023

SPRING
CONCERT

VENUE TBC

JUNE 25TH 2023

SUMMER
CONCERT

VENUE TBC

In 2023, we will be busy preparing once again for the Mrs Sunderland Festival, on to our Spring Concert on Sunday March 26th and finishing the season on the afternoon of June 25th. With more events still in the planning, it's looking like being another varied and enjoyable year.

With such a busy season ahead, we are on the lookout for new members, especially in our tenor and bass section which disappeared prior to lockdown. Any youngsters (aged between 7-21) interested in singing and music-making please get in touch, we'd love for you to come and join us. And if anyone is interested in coming along and joining our small, but dedicated group of volunteers, we would be grateful for any help you could spare whether it be at Wednesday rehearsals, concerts or behind the scenes!

For more details visit our website
www.huddersfieldchoralyouthchoirs.com
or contact Choir Secretary, Nicola Tanner
at hcsyouthchoirs@gmail.com

In March 2020 the Youth Choir were all geared up to go to the final of the BBC Songs of Praise Young Choir of the Year.

Sadly the Covid pandemic meant cancellation, so we had the t-shirts but not the title. But we will be back!



HCS VOICES



HCS Voices is the inspiration of Gregory Batsleer, the Choral Director of the Huddersfield Choral Society. It had to be a choir open to all (over the age of 18 years), for people of all abilities and backgrounds, complete beginners to experienced singers.

HCS Voices is a choir of do's and don'ts. Do want to sing, do want to have fun, do want to make friends. Don't have to have an audition, don't have to be able to read music. Just make music and enjoy doing it.



This, Voices has been doing since its launch in September 2019 under the brilliant leadership of Abi Kitching, the choir's dynamic first music director. With five wonderful concerts already under its belt and future concert dates in the diary including taking part in the Huddersfield Choral Society Christmas concert with HCS Youth Choir and Black Dyke Band, this community choir is going places.

Going places is something we did in May 2022, a trip to sunny Holmfirth to take part in the Folk Festival, singing outside at various locations around the town.

HCS Voices continue to reach out for new members. If you would like to sing in a choir that's fun and definitely not stuffy, give us a try. Contact Alison Shaw at alison.shaw@huddersfieldchoral.com and we'll be right in touch.

HCS VOICES CONCERTS

Christmas concert – Sat 3rd Dec 7.30pm
Moldgreen United Reformed Church

Spring concert – Sat 1st April 7.30pm
New North Rd Baptist Church

Summer concert – Sat 1st July 7.30pm
New North Rd Baptist Church

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WHEN IT MATTERS ■

If like me you love the very special experience of hearing HCS perform the best choral music with spectacular soloists and top-class orchestras in the historic and relatively intimate setting of Huddersfield Town Hall, consider subscribing to our annual concert season.

Your subscription covers the three concerts per year including the Annual Messiah. The Spring and Autumn concerts include well known works from the choral repertoire but some surprises as well.

In their early days, many choral societies were subscription only clubs, and subscribers have been a vital part of the Huddersfield choral society since its inception. HCS is unusual in maintaining this great tradition. For much of its history the only way to hear HCS regularly was as a subscriber. Although you no longer have to be a subscriber to see HCS perform in its home town, being a subscriber gives you the best chance of getting the seats you want and like any club, brings other benefits as well. For the choral society, performing to a regular and loyal audience encourages our musicians to bring that little bit extra to every concert!

As HCS's new Subscribers' secretary I am here to represent subscribers. I am not a member of the choir, but I am a choral music enthusiast like you! I have been subscribing for more than 30 years and I have rarely missed a concert. I will work hard to repay the loyal commitment of subscribers, old and new.

*Laura*

Laura Rawnsley
Subscriber Secretary

Contact me at subscribers@huddersfieldchoral.com



SUBSCRIBE TODAY

CONCERT TICKETS

2022/2023 TICKET PRICES

	MESSIAH 20/21 DEC	28 OCTOBER 26 MAY 2023	CHRISTMAS 9 DEC	SEASON TICKET
CENTRE BALCONY	45	30	35	105
SIDE BALCONY	40	25	35	90
BALCONY WINDOW	35	20	30	75
CENTRE STALLS	30	15	25	60
LEFT AND RIGHT STALLS	25	10	20	45
GALLERY	15	7.5	15	30
CONCESSIONS (GALLERY)	5	5	10	N/A
VIP & HOSPITALITY	105	95	105	N/A

TICKETS ARE PRICED PER PERSON IN POUNDS STERLING

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS



To purchase tickets for individual concerts please go to www.tickets.kirklees.gov.uk/ or scan the QR code.

This will take you to the Town Hall Box Office. Look for the events calendar (may be down to the left of the webpage) and select the date of the concert for which you wish to book.

SEASON TICKETS



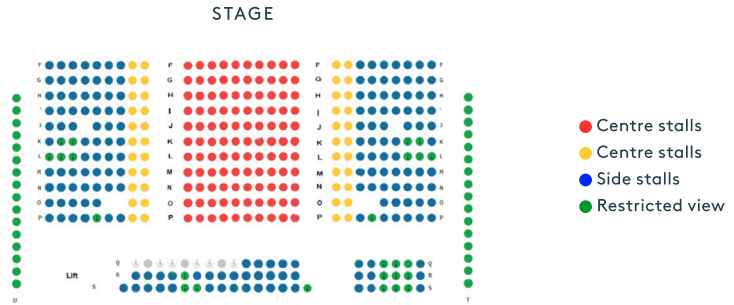
To purchase season tickets please scan the QR code or go to the Town Hall Box Office at www.tickets.kirklees.gov.uk/subscriptions

For VIP/Hospitality sales please contact Alison Shaw. Call [07864 591844](tel:07864591844) or email alison.shaw@huddersfieldchoral.com

Concessions are available in the Gallery for audience members 25 years or under. There are some reduced prices for restricted views. Restricted View Balcony window seats are priced as Centre stalls. Restricted view area seats are priced as Gallery. Season tickets can be purchased up to 21st October 2022.

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN HALL

AREA SEATING





SUPPORT HCS THE NORTH'S PREMIER INDEPENDENT CHOIR

Here are some of the ways you can become a part of the Choral family:

CONCERT SPONSOR

Could your business be a Concert Sponsor? Sponsorship ensures that the Society can bring the very best in large scale choral performance to our Huddersfield Town Hall season, and comes with full publicity and VIP hospitality for your party.

Friends of the Society support our activities and enjoy benefits such as priority booking for public concerts. Membership is £24 pa for a couple, £18 for an individual. Find out more from Alison Shaw on 07864 591844 or at alison.shaw@huddersfieldchoral.com

And everyone can sign up to get news and information from HCS through our online newsfeed, Choral notes. Just go to huddersfieldchoral.com/blog - it's free!

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Companies can also support us and at the same time get real business benefit by joining our Business Voice network.

CHORAL SCHOLARS

Our Patrons are individuals who support us financially, and in some cases also support our bursaries for Choral Scholars. They are people who want to be right at the heart of what we do.

If you want to know more about any of the options, contact Sponsorship Secretary John Harman at john_harman2003@yahoo.co.uk



BUSINESS VOICE

HUDDERSFIELD CHORAL SOCIETY'S BUSINESS NETWORK

Promoting Huddersfield
Culture • Business • Learning

Join some of Huddersfield's most well known businesses who support Huddersfield Choral Society through membership of Business Voice. Business Voice members support the Society across the board, and share our efforts to promote Huddersfield together – culture, business and learning, as the strapline says.

Formed in 2017, we were instrumental in launching Huddersfield Unlimited, which now brings a business perspective to promoting the town and its economy, collaborating with public sector bodies like the Council, the Mayoralty and the NHS.

Over the last year we have resumed our programme of business events, with sessions on the Council's plans for the town centre and the "Station to Stadium corridor" as well as what businesses might expect from the Kirklees Year of Music.

In addition to all this, Business Voice members are part of the Choral family, have been invited to Society concerts and events as our guests, and have featured in our newsletter circulation and concert programmes. In 2019 this may have been an audience of around 1000 people, but we are now engaged in a drive to widen our communications to a national and worldwide audience.



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Huddersfield Choral Society
Revenue Chambers, St Peter's Street
Huddersfield, HD1 1DL

+44 (0)7864 591 844
info@huddersfieldchoral.com
huddersfieldchoral.com

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