



Patron: Samuel West
Music Director: Darius Battiwalla
Registered Charity No. 518073

Press release (Timing – Immediate)

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Free choral workshops and a welcome return for Handel's Messiah

Handel's *Messiah* will return to the City Hall in style on 15th December with the Manchester Camerata joining Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus, conducted by Darius Battiwalla. The *Messiah* was an annual feature at the City Hall for many years and the Chorus is thrilled to be celebrating the City Hall's 80th birthday with the return of this glorious, and ever popular, work.

To enhance the occasion further the Chorus is welcoming new singers in all voice parts and offering free places in a workshop series primarily aimed to encourage men who feel they would love to sing works of this kind but feel their music reading and vocal skills may not be quite up to this.

The free workshop series starts on Tuesday 16th October 2012; will run for 6 weeks and be taught by a professional music teacher at the Chorus's new rehearsal venue, King Edward VII Upper School, Glossop Road, Sheffield S10 2PW. These half hour workshops will run from 6:30 to 7pm at which point the men will join the main rehearsal under the wing of an existing chorus member; an ideal way to feel prepared for your audition. Full details of the workshop series is available at www.sheffieldphil.org Previous workshops have proved very popular so please reserve your place as soon as possible by email to comeandtryus@sheffieldphil.org , or by phone to Sally Turnbull 01433 630970 or 07771 578233.

The Chorus is always busy and, as well as the *Messiah*, forthcoming Sheffield concert dates will see it join the internationally renowned Black Dyke Band in the City Hall on 8th

Rachel Mallaband
Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus - Marketing & Publicity
Mobile: 07961 607183

December for two Christmas concerts, perform the beautiful unaccompanied *Vespers* by Rachmaninov in the newly refurbished Cathedral of St Marie on 8th March 2013 and return to the City Hall on 2nd June 2013 to perform Vaughan Williams's *Sea Symphony*.

So, if you are free on Tuesday evenings and would like to sing with the region's most successful symphony chorus then please book your place quickly since demand is already high. Who knows? Following the excellent preparation you will receive for your brief audition, in just a few weeks time you may find yourself singing with gusto on the City Hall stage for the *Messiah* rather than under your breath in the audience.

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact

Rachel Mallaband

Tel: 0114 2305304 ; 07961 607183

Email: Publicity@sheffieldphil.org

Useful Links

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus website - www.sheffieldphil.org

Photo

The attached photo of the Chorus may be used in conjunction with the article.

Suggested caption – Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus in the City Hall

ABOUT SHEFFIELD PHILHARMONIC CHORUS

The Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus was founded in 1935 as the resident chorus for the new Philharmonic Society's series of concerts in Sheffield City Hall and was formed from two Sheffield choirs whose origins date back to the 1860s.

Chorus membership now stands at over 180 which reflects the increasing profile and quality of this highly successful symphony chorus.

2012 has been both busy and exciting for the Chorus. They performed Fauré's *Requiem* in the City Hall on 11 February and led the *Alight* festival, part of Music Nation, a Countdown event for the London 2012 Festival, the finale of the Cultural Olympiad, on 3 March. *Alight* comprised over 30 separate performances by over 1,500 local amateur musicians and dancers, commissioned 2 brand-new musical works; one by Chorus member Yaron Hollander of Sassoon's "Everyone Sang" and the other "Olympic Triptych" a major work by Timothy Allen composed for and premiered by the massed *Alight* forces in the City Hall evening show "Alight: Twilight".

On 22 September the Chorus partnered with the Bliss Society and the BBC to celebrate the Coventry Cathedral Golden Jubilee festival; performing Sir Arthur Bliss's *The Beatitudes*. This piece was composed for the opening of the Cathedral 50 years ago, but for complex reasons was never actually performed there, hence the Chorus was privileged to perform its premiere in the venue for which it was composed, and feature in a BBC Radio 3 broadcast.

This Christmas will see a welcome return of Handel's *Messiah* to the City Hall when the Chorus performs this much-loved work on 15 December, and two popular Christmas concerts on 8 December with the Black Dyke Band presented by the BBC's Peter White.