

**In their last concert of the year "Cantores Olicanae" gave a rich and exciting performance of classic and contemporary song and instrumentalism.**

In the beautiful setting of Bolton Abbey, Cantores presented "Swing into Summer" and all performers gave of their best. Both choir and instrumentalists enjoyed themselves and so too did the audience.

The opening anthem was "I was Glad" by Parry, accompanied by Nigel Duce on the organ; a most dynamic start to the evening, with the sopranos on form soaring to the top notes with ease.

"Sprig of Thyme" a cycle of traditional folk songs, arranged by John Rutter provided us with a collection of eleven songs from the British Isles, performed throughout the evening, including "The Bold Grenadier" and "The Keel Row" : all well performed and evoking memorable thoughts.

Musical Director Rory Wainwright Johnston is a young conductor who showed good knowledge and control throughout the evening and is, without doubt, an asset to the choir. He showed his experience as evidenced by keeping piano and choir together in time and with ease. The accompanist for the evening was Robert Sudall who together with Grant Russell (Bass) and Joe Lucker (Drums) formed the Jazz ensemble "Motion Complex" a most accomplished trio.

Prelude for Flugelhorn and Organ by Godfrey Cloke was played by schoolboy Lucca Fairhurst. A difficult piece played well and we wish him well in his studies.

Jazz classic "Deep Purple" appeared to be a difficult choice for the choir which needed to be a little more relaxed although it was well received and enjoyable. Two folksongs "the Sprig of Thyme" and "Down by the Sally Gardens" were sung with depth of feeling. The male section was slightly off pitch in the latter but which was quickly rectified.

Geoff Clarke is a composer and arranger from Ilkley and his Canon for Trumpet and Organ, specially written for Cantores, was well received by the audience. It was accompanied by Nigel Duce.

"Sing my Soul, His Wondrous Love" a protestant Episcopalian hymn was sung "a cappella" and engendered real emotion. Similarly "Sleep" was beautifully rendered with the ending softly fading away.

Then followed the jazz classic "Ain't Misbehavin'" performed admirably, Fats Waller would have been pleased!

From the "Sprig of Thyme" three songs - "The Cuckoo", "I know where I'm going" and "Willow Song" all dwell on love. First - love and betrayal, then parental disapproval and finally the willow garland symbolising lost love. All three songs

were delicately performed with admirable diction.

Richard Rodgers's "Blue Moon" was a great and popular choice since the whole ensemble were outstanding in their singing, diction and interpretation.

Motion Complex were excellent and gave us piano improvisation at its best. It was a joy to hear such accomplishment from Robert Suddall. I am confident that we shall hear more of this talented player.

George Gershwin's "S'wonderful" gave the choir chance to shine and they did just that, with polish and poise. We all "cared" for them.

From "The Sprig of Thyme" three more well known arrangements of traditional British songs - "O, Can You Sew Cushions?" "The Miller of Dee" and "Afton Water" These songs were in complete contrast to the former sections and all were well controlled with accomplished singing.

Another favourite by Cole Porter - "Night and Day - What a wonderful song and Cantores sang it as if they meant it. No wonder this has lasted the years

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Finally a rousing "West Side Story" - a fitting tribute to Leonard Bernstein. All the well loved songs, Tonight, I Feel Pretty, One Hand, Maria and America. Everyone in good voice, enthusiastic, enjoying themselves, what a night. Well done Cantores.

Blanche Woollin

16<sup>th</sup> June 2018