

Proms at St Jude's

MUSIC & LITERARY FESTIVAL

Saturday 24 June–Sunday 2 July 2023

TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF THE 31st YEAR OF THE FESTIVAL

The Board of Trustees of Proms at St Jude's welcomes you to

**A drinks reception and entertainment
for Benefactors, Friends, Sponsors and Guests**

7.00 pm Sunday 26 March 2023

The Henrietta Barnett School Hall, Central Square,
Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 7BN

WELCOME: Kate Webster,
Chairman of the Proms Board

A recital by the *a cappella*
vocal quartet The Clefhangers

John Twitchen *tenor*
Angelo Fallaria (lead)
Tom Fesmer *baritone*
Seán Purtell *bass*

The Clefhangers are young professional singers who have come together especially for the Proms Launch, and will entertain us with a programme of barbershop favourites and vocal quartets

CLOSING REMARKS

Susie Gregson MBE, Chief Executive

THE CLEFHANGERS are a group of friends made up of four London-based singers. They have each studied at some of the top institutions in the UK. Tonight they will be performing some well known barbershop classics.

JOHN TWITCHEN is a London-based tenor with an international career in choral, solo and operatic work.

ANGELO FALLARIA (lead) is a tenor currently on the masters course at the Royal Academy of Music.

TOM FESMER is a baritone in his final undergraduate year at the Royal Academy of Music.

SEÁN PURTELL (bass) is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and is currently on the Proms Music Planning Committee.

PROGRAMME

Always Look on the Bright Side of Life

Moon River

God only Knows

La Mer (Beyond the Sea)

And so it Goes

The Longest Time

Can't Help Falling in Love with You

Goodnight Sweetheart

Barbershop Music

The musical genre known as ‘barbershop music (or harmony)’ has for long been such a distinctive part of American culture that its possible historical origins in pre-Mayflower England tend to be dismissed as discredited academic research and of little relevance to the present-day form that most people know.

Still, it is interesting to recall that a regular haunt of popular music in England and other countries in Europe from the 16th through to the early 18th century was the barber’s shop. Here customers awaiting their turn for shaving, haircutting, blood-letting or tooth-drawing could try their hand on simple instruments (almost invariably the cittern – a kind of wire-stringed lute). The barbers themselves were often proficient performers.

In Ben Jonson’s play *The Silent Woman* (1609) a man takes a wife on a barber’s recommendation only to find that she talks all the time: ‘That cursed barber! I have married his cittern’.

Quite how music associated with European barber shops mutated into a distinctive form of *a cappella* (unaccompanied) vocal quartet singing remains obscure. The Barbershop Harmony Society, based in Nashville Tennessee and founded in 1938 ‘for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing’, confidently asserts on its website that barbershop music is ‘a uniquely American . . . art form whose roots lie in African-American improvisation and European harmony traditions.’ The Society cites 1990s research at Tulane University, New Orleans, as providing ‘overwhelming evidence that barbershop quartetting was pervasive in African-American culture in the late 1800s and early 1900s, including among many men who went on to become the pioneers of jazz.’

Barbershop music is characterized by four-part chords for every melody note in a primarily homorhythmic texture (i.e. chords follow the pattern of the words syllable by syllable). The melody is consistently sung by the lead (second tenor). The (first) tenor harmonizes above the melody, the bass sings the lowest harmonizing notes and the baritone completes the chord.

Thomas Radice



Help spread the word

Please take further copies of the Proms leaflet to give to your friends and help to spread the word about the Festival.

For full details of the programme, including the Literary Festival and heritage walks, visit our website www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.



@promsatstjudes

We should like to thank all our Patrons, Sponsors, Benefactors, Friends and numerous others who have been working to make this annual festival possible by supporting and helping us in so many different ways.

On this occasion in particular we wish to thank:

Clare Wagner, Head Teacher, and The Henrietta Barnett School

Mike Eletttheriades, photography

SUPPORTING TOYNBEE HALL & NORTH LONDON HOSPICE

Patrons: Sir Rodric Braithwaite GCMG,
Henry Kelly, Dame Emma Kirkby,
John Lill CBE, Sue MacGregor CBE

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