

BEST PROMS PROGRAMME YET FOR FIFTH YEAR



Jill Gomez

Imagine a composer combining Richard Strauss's sumptuousness, Puccini's lyricism and Gershwin's jazziness and you have some idea of Erich Wolfgang Korngold. This year marks the centenary of his birth and we will be featuring three of his pieces at the Proms at St Jude's.

The *Baby Serenade*, written in 1928 to celebrate the birth of the composer's second son, Georg, is an exuberant, uplifting score, but it has never been heard live in this country before: the performance in our opening concert on Tuesday 24 June will be its UK premiere. Owain Arwel Hughes will conduct the Covent Garden Chamber Orchestra, and they will be joined by Robert Max for Korngold's Cello Concerto, a score that originated in the soundtrack for Bette Davis's film *Deception*—Korngold left Vienna in 1934 to enjoy a flourishing career in Hollywood. *Deception* is based on a love triangle involving a pianist, a cellist and a composer and the concerto is suitably passionate as well as a virtuoso showpiece.

The second half of this ambitious concert will be devoted to folk song settings and orchestral pieces by Percy Grainger. If



Robert Max



Chilingirian Quartet

you thought Grainger was all country gardens and morris dancers, come and hear these extraordinarily imaginative and poignant treatments of love won and lost. The shanty *Shallow Brown*, with its haunting tremolo of mandolins and guitars will freeze your blood. The award winning Joyful Company of Singers, who have successfully recorded this repertoire, will provide the chorus.

On Wednesday 25th June a

programme of attractive Italian Baroque music will be given by the soprano Nicki Kennedy, with Deborah Calland on trumpet, Kasia Elsner on theorbo, and Elizabeth Boyle on keyboard. This will be a rare chance to hear the exquisite 17th-century Italian chamber organ newly installed in St Jude's.

The following evening (Thursday 26 June) the world-famous Chilingirian Quartet offer an unmissable programme of

Mozart and Brahms quartets, together with another rorty Korngold's Piano Quintet. The latter, conjuring the effect of a full orchestra, taxes the players to their limit this will be only its second performance in this country.

On Friday 27 June we have two concerts. At lunchtime the distinguished Canadian pianist Joan Rowland offers a delightful programme of Mozart, Chopin and Debussy, while in the evening we invite you to come to the cabaret. Anyone who has experienced the celebrated soprano Jill Gomez, suitably attired and exotically lit, in cabaret mode will know the treat they have in store. Her programme, with accompanist John Constable, will include a miscellany from Kurt Weill's *Marie Galante* (the touching 'J'attends un navire' was adopted by the French Resistance during the War), three priceless examples of the genre by Benjamin Britten (to witty texts by W.H. Auden), and classics by Cole Porter ('Night and Day', 'Miss Otis Regrets') and George Gershwin ('S' wonderful', 'Love walked right in', 'Fascinating Rhythm'). Come to the marquee after the concert and mingle,

glass in hand, with the artists.

The Proms reach their climax on Saturday 28 June with Britten's *Nove's Fludde*. Professionals will be joining local schoolchildren and the Youth Music Centre for Britten's moving Chester miracle play ('strong men have been known to weep unashamedly at the sound of the bugles and at the appearance of the rainbow', according to Britten's biographer, Michael Kennedy). The conductor will be Edward Kay of South Hampstead High School. In the first half, the animals will be introduced by Rebecca Austen-Brown and the ensemble Tintagel in an audience-friendly sequence of medieval songs and dances entitled *The Ark of Noah*.

The Proms at St Jude's is a Music Aid production in aid of Save the Children and the Organ Fund. All artists are donating their services. Further information from The Administrator (0181 455 4518).

Barry Millington
Artistic Director,
Proms at St Jude's

Tickets from Artmark 01395 223400 or from the Garden Suburb Gallery

BIG FUN WALK

Getting on for 400 people, including John Marshall and Rudy Vis, many staff from the Hospice, families, their dogs, the young and the elderly, walked in sunshine from East Finchley Station through Cherry Tree Woods, up and over to Parliament Hill Fields, down to Primrose Hill and Regents Park, then down through the Parks to finish at Storey's Gate opposite Westminster Abbey. We were sent off by the Mayor of Barnet, urged on by the Mayor of Camden at Belsize Park, and welcomed by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Westminster. Along the way we were fortified by supplies of drinks and sandwiches from

the Hospice van, and at the end revived by coffee and doughnuts generously donated by McDonalds.

It really was a Big Fun Walk, but it also had a very serious purpose in raising desperately needed money for the North London Hospice. This was highlighted by the news that week that the Borough of Barnet was withdrawing its annual support of £27,000 towards the nearly £2 million needed each year to keep the Hospice and its services available to the local population.

The walkers through their sponsors have so far raised over £20,000.
Jan White

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"SUCH A BIG CHURCH"

Figures recently released by the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England show that congregations in the Church of England have shrunk this year by the greatest number in 20 years. Average Sunday attendance was 1,045,000 in 1995-36,000 below the previous year.

I have to say that I am not too sure how these figures are arrived at—the only return we make from Saint Jude's to headquarters is of the number of communicants at Easter. In fact before I came to Saint Jude's it does not seem to have been the custom to record the number attending services, only the number receiving communion. So how should we respond to these statistics? Some traditionalist commentators have ascribed the downturn to weak leadership of the Church during the 1980s and to theological liberalism. Optimists point out that the number who go to church in this country is still higher than the number who attend football matches. Others have said that the figures do not give the full picture. The Bishop of Manchester thinks that there is anecdotal evidence of a switch from weekly attendance to equally regular, but less frequent attendance.

I think that is certainly true of Saint Jude's. There are, I think, circles of attendance, ranging from those who are able to come every week to those who come more occasionally. The monthly family service we have instituted is meant to encourage this so far as families with small children are concerned.

I have been looking recently at our old service registers from Saint Jude's. We still possess these going back to the opening of the church in 1908. And it is interesting what these records show. The largest number of communicants at any single service was at **Midnight Mass** in 1924 when 309 people made their communion. At **Midnight Mass** last year 290 made their communion.

Ever since I have been on the Suburb I have heard of how in the 1920s the first Vicar, **Basil Bouchier**, used to preach to congregations of thousands in this church. If he did, the church registers don't record it. And I don't think we have ever owned more than 500 chairs. I have seen this church with that number of Henrietta Barnett School girls here for a concert and there wasn't

much room left. So as a historian I conclude that Basil preached to 400 or 500, and that the church was, or looked, full. It was as if there were thousands of people here—so many you just couldn't count.

Anyway, as **Evelyn Waugh** (who was confirmed at Saint Jude's) records in his autobiography, "Bouchier's congregation was not exclusively—nor indeed primarily—local. Personal devotees flocked to him from all parts of London. His sermons were dramatic, topical, irrational—and quite without theological content. They would have served, my father remarked—and no stricture was more severe on his lips—as leading articles in the *Daily Mail*".

Since I have been on the Suburb I have also got used to being asked, "Do we fill Saint Jude's?"—it's such a big church! This question, I would suggest, is a completely modern and commercial one. Someone looking at a church of this size in the Middle Ages would never have asked, do we fill it? England is full of tiny villages with churches that seem enormously out of proportion to the size of the population. I suppose most of us just assume the village was bigger once than it is now. But that is not necessarily so.

The fact of the matter is that until very recently, when economic constraints became paramount, the size of church buildings had nothing whatsoever to do with the size of congregations. Churches were built to give glory to God. The bigger the church the more glory. Our church is bigger than yours even though we are only a little village and you are a big one. Churches are *sacred* not commercial space.

St Jude's is *sacred space*. It is a big church from the outside, but less than half of it is congregational space. Half is only for the clergy, servers and the choir.

To conclude, a few more words from **Evelyn Waugh** which remind us why we are really here. "Despite all Mr Bouchier's extravagant display", Waugh writes, "it was here", at Saint Jude's, Hampstead Garden Suburb, that I first had "some glimpse of higher mysteries".

Rev Alan Walker

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HOSPICE THANKS

Over £925 was raised for the North London Hospice in only 2 hours at the "Bring & Buy Coffee Morning" in the Tea House on 22nd February! Very many thanks to everyone who supported us.

The NW Support Group of the North London Hospice welcomes new members. If you would like to receive our programme of

fundraising events or perhaps run an event yourself (whether large or small), please contact our Membership Secretary, Sylvia Cleary, on 0181 455 6547. **The Hospice needs our continued support to carry on providing its wonderful services to all those who need them.**

Yvonne Oliver

St Jude-on-the-Hill

Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11

Recital Series 1997

Sundays at 4 pm

27th April

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plays works for clarinet, cello and piano by Beethoven and Glinka

4th May

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plays works by Bach, Bruhns and Widor

18th May

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play music for trumpet and organ by Purcell and Handel

1st June

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