

Proms at St Jude's

TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF THE 2022 FESTIVAL

**Drinks reception and entertainment
for Benefactors, Friends, Sponsors and Guests**

7.30 pm Sunday 27 March 2022

The Parish Church of St Jude-on-the-Hill
Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11 7AH

Drinks 7.30pm • Music programme 8.00pm

**VOCES8 • Finchley Children's Music Group
Patrick Hawes *conductor* • Nicholas Chalmers *organ***

WELCOME: Richard Clegg, Chairman

PROGRAMME

**Finchley Children's
Music Group**

Anton Bruckner

Ave Maria

Josef Rheinberger

Abendlied

**VOCES8 and Finchley
Children's Music Group**

Patrick Hawes

The Innocents

A selection of pieces from the lighter side of VOCES8's repertoire

CLOSING REMARKS

Susie Gregson MBE, Chief Executive

**In solidarity with the people of Ukraine, we finish this
evening with a performance of their National Anthem**

The Innocents

*City of Benares, Ark of Salvation
from nightmare nights of flame;
For all the terrors that sent them away
The Innocents bear no blame.*

Innocents together innocence enfolds,
There is a dream, a communion of soul
This refuge - a perfect home for Innocents to thrive;
Cherished, apart, from all that lurks outside.
The innocents have different eyes:
They see a world experience denies.
The innocents have a different Mind
Believing all the world is good and kind.
In that night as Innocents sleep,
death comes skimming from the deep.
Noise shatters silence, slumber becomes screams
Innocence drowns in all that war has schemed.

*City of Benares, Ark of Salvation
from nightmare nights of flame;
For all the terrors that sent them away
The Innocents bear no blame.*

Torrential chaos, confusion, frozen fear:
The listing liner has twisted, jamming gear.
Falling, thrashing in the freezing sea,
double-darkness is all that can be seen.
Dawn breaks with pity on a wretched sight;
Flotsam, bodies, yet some cling to life.
Too late for seventy-one the Hurricane arrives
desperate sailors seek, yet only seven survive.
The trust of Innocents finds itself betrayed
For in hell order is swept away.
No light of day can scatter this dread dark
The shroud of death lies heavy and will not part.
In lifeboat twelve six Innocents drift away;
A miracle reveals them after eight long days.
Thirteen survived and seventy-seven died:
Innocents pay the price for greed and pride.

*City of Benares, Ark of Salvation
from nightmare nights of flame;
For all the terrors that sent them away
The Innocents bear no blame.*

Words by Andrew Hawes

The Sinking of the SS *City of Benares* 18 September 1940

In September 1940, the passenger liner SS *City of Benares* set sail from Liverpool for Canada with 100 evacuee children on board. Michael Rennie, son of the then Vicar of St Jude's, travelled as a volunteer escort.

A few minutes after midnight on 18 September a German submarine torpedoed the *Benares*. 258 passengers and crew (of 406) died, including 77 of the 90 children and six of their ten escorts. Michael Rennie repeatedly dived into the sea from lifeboat No. 11 to rescue drowning children but died of exhaustion before rescue ships arrived. The death toll shook Britain and its allies and marked the effective end of all overseas evacuation from Britain.

Deborah Heiligman, in *Torpedoed: The True Story of the World War II Sinking of the "Children's Ship"* (2020), notes that the overwhelming majority of the crew were South Asian Muslims whose stories were not collected after the disaster. Walter Starmer's memorial mural to Michael Rennie and the children who were lost is situated in St Jude's.

Patrick Hawes has made his mark as a torchbearer of the English musical tradition. He is best known for writing the *Highgrove Suite* for HRH The Prince of Wales, for being Composer-in-Residence at classical music station, Classic FM, and for the Number One albums *Angel* and *The Great War Symphony*. His vast and varied catalogue encompasses everything from small-scale piano and chamber works to full-scale symphonies and large choral works.

Nicholas Chalmers has been artistic director of Nevill Holt Opera from 2013 since when the award-winning company has produced 14 opera productions and created a nationally recognised education and young artist programme. Nicholas has established partnerships with the many of the UK's leading orchestras.

VOCES8 is proud to inspire people through music and share the joy of singing. Touring extensively throughout Europe, North America and Asia, the ensemble performs a repertoire from Renaissance polyphony to contemporary commissions and arrangements. VOCES8 is passionate about music education and is the flagship ensemble of the music charity VCM Foundation.

Finchley Children's Music Group is a versatile group of mixed-voice choirs based in north London, committed to the promotion of singing and choral music for young people aged between 4 and 18. Under the direction of Grace Rossiter since 2001, the choirs are known for their natural, vibrant vocal quality.

Highlights of Proms at St Jude's 2022

Concerts by: Orchestra Nova with Benjamin Nabarro • The Darius Brubeck Quartet • Echo Ensemble with Robert Max • Christian Forshaw, Grace Davidson & Libby Burgess • Fantasia Orchestra with Martin James Bartlett • The Gould Trio • Nevill Holt Opera • Joanna Eden • Peter Edwards • The Armonico Consort

12 exciting **Heritage Walks** both in and around the Suburb and in central London

LitFest talks including: Claudia Roden *Med: A Cookbook* • Victoria Glendinning *Family Business: An intimate History of John Lewis and the Partnership* • Steve Richards *The Prime Ministers We Never Had* • Jon Sopel *UnPresidential: Politics, Pandemics and the Race that Trumped all others* • Francis Spufford *Light Perpetual* • the David Cohen Memorial Event with Colm Tóibín in an online conversation with Hermione Lee

Help spread the word about our 30th Season

Please help to spread the word about the Festival. Full details of our concert programme and heritage walks can be found at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk. Full LitFest details will be available in April. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter @promsatstjudes.

We should like to take this opportunity to thank all our Patrons, Sponsors, Benefactors, Friends and numerous others who help 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: LG Harris Trust, The John S Cohen Foundation and St Jude's Church, who made the commission and this performance possible.

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