DUNSFORD SINGERS

conductor Tim Pithers

HUMMEL MASS IN B FLAT

&

MUSIC BY MOZART, RUTTER, LAURIDSEN, WHITACRE & MORE

14th June, 7.30pm

St David's Church, Exeter

PROGRAMME

website

www.dunsfordsingers.co.uk

Conductor: Tim Pithers

Tim is passionate about community and student music-making, and firmly believes that classical music should be made as accessible as possible to performers and audiences alike. He undertook his degree in Music and French at the University of Exeter studying violin, composition and musical direction. Tim studied conducting with Denise Ham at the London Conducting Academy, completing the programme in 2024. He has also studied with Rodolfo Saglimbeni, Dominic Grier and Denise Ham at the George Hurst Conductors' Course at Sherborne Summer School of Music, at the Girton Conducting Course and at other public masterclasses. He enjoys working with ensembles of varying degrees of experience and aims to develop ambitious objectives for amateur groups. As well as holding the role of Musical Director of the Dunsford Singers, Tim is also Conductor of Exeter University Symphony Orchestra and Exeter University Symphonic Wind Orchestra, Dartmouth Orchestra and EX4 Chamber Orchestra.

Organ: Tim Crompton

Tim started learning the Organ when he was 14 and went on to study Organ and Bassoon at the Birmingham Conservatoire. He has spent the last 33 years teaching Music in secondary schools in the midlands and the last seven years teaching from Nursery to A level music at Trinity School ; Teignmouth. He still manages to find time to play Bassoon in local orchestras. conduct the Shaldon Singers and play the Organ as and when required at Shaldon, Stokeinteignhead and Combeinteignhead parish churches.

Piano: Carol Galton

We are delighted to have Carol as our official accompanist for rehearsals and some parts of our concerts. A pianist and cellist, she came to England from South Africa as a post-graduate student. Carol became a primary school teacher in Devon, much valued for her teaching diploma from the Royal School of Music and her co-ordination of children's music-making at all levels. She continues to teach piano and cello. As well as being a sought-after accompanist and performer, Carol is also a keen vegetable grower!

MASS IN B FLAT by Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778 – 1837)

Hummel was an Austrian composer whose music reflects the transition from the Classical to Romantic eras. As an eight year old child prodigy pianist he attracted the attention of Mozart, who housed and taught him for free for two years. By 1790 he was touring Europe, including a stint in London, astonishing audiences with his virtuoso performances.

Returning to Vienna he studied under Haydn and Salieri and formed a friendship with the young Beethoven.

Aged just twenty six, Hummel became *Konzertmeister* at the beautiful Esterhazy estate at Eisenstadt, in eastern Austria, under the patronage of Nikolaus II. Haydn had spent most of his life here as the *Kapelmeister* but his failing health meant that Hummel undertook more and more of his old teacher's musical duties.

Hummel is remembered as a champion of all musicians, fighting for the principles of intellectual property and copyright law. He was famous, admired and respected in his lifetime as a pianist and composer yet public interest in his work faded as the Romantic period took hold. However, it seems that he knew everyone – Liszt and Schumann were his friends and he greatly influenced Chopin and Mendelssohn.

His musical output as a composer was prolific: he wrote for piano, cello, mandolin, guitar, trumpet, violin and clarinet. The Mass in B flat is an absolute treasure, written for the noble Esterhazy family. Its majesty, brilliance, achingly beautiful melodies and technical challenges make it awe-inspiring to learn and perform. Singers familiar with the words of the Latin mass will find a refreshing musical twist hovering somewhere between the preciseness of the Classical and the emotional appeal of the Romantic.

Kyrie
Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

INTERVAL

A glass of wine or fruit juice is available at the back of the church

Anthem: Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring by JS Bach 1685 -1750

This most beautiful chorale, dating from 1723, was part of an Advent cantata and the tune occurred twice in different movements, with different words. The words we are singing tonight date from 1661; the English version was created by the poet Robert Bridges who is said to have been inspired by Jahn's original German text. It is a very popular choice to sing at Advent, Christmas, Easter, weddings … and evenings in June!

Jesu, joy of man's desiring,
Holy wisdom, love most bright;
Drawn by Thee, our souls aspiring
Soar to uncreated light.
Word of God, our flesh that fashioned,
With the fire of life impassioned,
Striving still to truth unknown,
Soaring, dying round Thy throne.

Through the way where hope is guiding,
Hark, what peaceful music rings;
Where the flock, in Thee confiding,
Drink of joy from deathless springs.
Theirs is beauty's fairest pleasure;
Theirs is wisdom's holiest treasure
Thou dost ever lead Thine own
In the love of joys unknown.

Laudate Dominum by WA Mozart 1756 – 1791

Soloist: Jan Middleton

This is the fifth movement from *Vesperae de solonnes de confessore,* a work written for liturgical use in Salzburg Cathedral in 1780. It uses the text of Psalm 117.

The title suggests it was intended for evening services on a specific saint's day.

The soprano solo is delivered with simplicity and sincerity:
O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise Him, all ye people.
Because it was confirmed his mercy is upon us,
And the truth, the Lord's truth, remains forever

The choir join in at the conclusion of the psalm:
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.
The soloist rejoins for the *Amen*

Anthem: The Peace of God by Sir John Rutter b 1945

A very lovely arrangement, employing Rutter's signature lilting, haunting melodies and scrumptious harmonies. The words are from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer

Anthem: And I Saw a New Heaven by Malcolm Archer b 1952

The words are from Revelation 21: 1-2, 4 and describe a profound vision of hope and renewal; a reminder of God's ultimate plan for humanity. Jerusalem symbolises God's presence among his people, where there will be no more suffering.

Anthem: Ave Verum Corpus by WA Mozart

This motet is a setting of the hymn *Hail, true body*. It is a perfect example of how Mozart could always find the right means of expression, in this case music for the Eucharist (Holy Communion). It was written on 17th June 1791 for Anton Stoll, the village schoolmaster and choir director at the spa, Baden bei Wien. It was the composer's way of returning a favour – Stoll had reserved rooms at the spa for Mozart's wife Constanze, who was expecting their sixth child. In just three minutes, Mozart's setting of these medieval words seems to reach a divine status.

Seal Lullaby by Eric Whitacre b 1970

Words by Rudyard Kipling 1865 -1936

Imagine for a moment you are a baby seal, resting in the swell of the ocean, under the watchful eye of the moon and your mother. The tender protectiveness of Nature shines through in this gorgeous lullaby. Surely every baby or toddler is a 'weary wee flipperling' at the end of a busy day. Whitacre's exquisite rhythms ebb and flow as his harmonies and melody capture this moment of precious restfulness.

Oh, hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us*
At rest in the hollows that nestle between.
Where billow meets billow, then soft be thy pillow,
O weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease.
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow swinging seas,
Asleep on the arms of the slow swinging seas.
Oooh …

**'combers' are long, curling sea waves*

Sure On This Shining Night by Morten Lauridsen b 1943

Words by James Agee 1909 -1955

The words, written in 1934 and taken from a much longer poem, suggest how a beautiful, starlit night in midsummer may cause us all to reflect upon our place in the cosmos, and the individual journeys we are on. Even in the darkest times surely there is still some loving-kindness to be found – those acts of self-sacrifice that show the true, inspirational meaning of humanity. We know that winter passes and summer comes but summer is all the more beautiful because of its brevity; in the same way, in the time we have 'this side the ground', we should strive to make our lives count for something. Lauridsen's musical setting seems to capture the intensity and magic of Agee's profound thoughts.

Sure on this shining night of star-made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me this side the ground,
On this shining night, this shining night.

The late year lies down the north,
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.
Sure on this shining night,
Sure on this shining night.

I weep for wonder, wandering far alone
Of shadows on the stars,
Sure on this shining night of star-made shadows round
Kindness must watch for me this side the ground
Oh, this shining night; this shining night
Sure on this shining night.

THE SINGERS

Sopranos: Jane Boulton, Ruth Frampton, Sue Jury, Daphne Leversedge, Jo Macdonald, Jan Middleton, Verity Stiff, Mari Turner

Altos: Bryony Bushell, Jo Jenkins, Kath Keating, Leslie Pearman, Liz Robin, Juliet Speed

Tenors: Steve Cook, Giles Frampton, Lorraine Hart, Francis Leversedge, Ray Mallett

Basses: Antony Galton, Don Oliver, Tony Stevens, Jan Traylen

TEIGN VALLEY ENSEMBLE

Violin 1: Kat Goldby (leader), Francesca Van Holthoon, Oscar Piggot

Violin 2: Ruth James, Hannah Bradley

Viola: Serena Stephenson, Deborah Hamilton

'Cello: Amye Farrell, Carol Galton

Double Bass: Isabelle Woolcott

Future Dates:
Autumn rehearsals 2025 begin on Monday 15 September 2025 in Dunsford Village Hall - 7.30pm-9:00pm.

Christmas Concerts – look out for the dates!

Come and sing with us!
http://www.dunsfordsingers.co.uk
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