

Hereford 2012 marks the start of the Philharmonia Orchestra's three-year residency at the Three Choirs Festival, ensuring not only the orchestra's presence at Gloucester 2013 and Worcester 2014, but opening up a whole host of supporting activities which will reach well beyond the concert platform.

At its heart, the new residency is a firm commitment from both the festival and the Philharmonia to continue to bring world-class concert performances to the festival each year. Prestigious artists with whom the Philharmonia has long-standing relationships, both in London and internationally, will be making appearances as part of future festival programmes. We'll also be working together to develop the artistic programme, ensuring that the Three Choirs maintains its position as one of the UK's most distinctive and imaginative music festivals.

Supporting the Three Choirs Festival's ambitious strategy to develop community and education work will be central to the partnership, with the Philharmonia drawing on its extensive experience in these areas, most notably via its award-winning Digital programme. Safeguarding the future of the festival through audience development initiatives that contribute and animate the wider community in each of the three cities will be a key objective in the coming years.

This unique partnership is about bringing together both organisations' resources to take advantage of the many opportunities available to the world's longest-running music festival, and creating a journey for audiences, artists and the wider community alike.

James Williams
*Director, Residencies & Regional Programme,
Philharmonia Orchestra*

Welcome to the 2012 Three Choirs Festival at Hereford

Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages ...

For many people, 2012 will be remembered as Olympics year. In pondering how a classical music festival might reflect this major national sporting event – the two not being perhaps the most obvious of companions – it struck me that the Games are a form of modern secular pilgrimage, and this idea provided me with the starting point for this year's festival.

We are an island nation and our Olympic (and Three Choirs) visitors will have to travel over or under the sea to reach us. Maritime themes have always been important inspirations for poets and composers and we present two settings of Whitman: Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* and Delius's *Sea Drift*.

Delius was born in 1862 and the orchestral concert combines his Cello Concerto with *La mer* by Debussy, who was born in the same year. Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and Ravel's *Boléro* complete this evening of musical fireworks.

The centrepiece of the programme is a rare performance of Sir George Dyson's *The Canterbury Pilgrims*. Today, Dyson's name may not be familiar to many outside the world of church music, but in the mid twentieth century he was a highly influential figure in the musical life of this country, and this work, full of exciting choral writing and orchestral colour, deserves to be far better known. I hope that this revival will encourage a new look at this unjustly-neglected composer.

John Ireland died in 1962 and his *London Overture* will be a marvellous opener for a programme which includes Elgar's *The Music Makers*, first performed in 1912. Elgar championed the works of the young Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and we mark the centenary of his tragically early death with a performance of his Clarinet Quintet and *Petite Suite de Concert*.

The Three Cathedral Choirs of Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester are right at the heart of the festival, combining for joint Evensongs and a performance of Bach's *St John Passion*.

We are delighted to welcome once again the Philharmonia Orchestra to the festival. Read more about the orchestra's three-year residency at Three Choirs in the panel on the left.

The festival's vibrant tradition of commissioning and performing new music continues, with world premieres by David Briggs and Dobrinka Tabakova, and further performances of new works by Judith Bingham and Joseph Phibbs.

We begin with Haydn's ever-popular *The Creation*, and end – as the Olympics begin – with Berlioz' dramatic *Te Deum*, complete with its original 'March for the Presentation of Flags'.

Here are some of the highlights of Hereford 2012, but there's much, much more. However you're planning to get here, we look forward to seeing you!

Geraint Bowen
Artistic director & festival conductor

THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL

HEREFORD 2012
21–28 July

www.3choirs.org



HEREFORD
CITY COUNCIL

Artistic director & festival conductor

Geraint Bowen

Associate conductor

Adrian Partington

Guest conductors

Martyn Brabbins **David Hill** Diego Mathuez **Carlo Rizzi**

Orchestra-in-residence
Philharmonia Orchestra

Orchestras and ensembles
Brecon Baroque **Dante Quartet** Fretwork **Music for Awhile Orchestra**
National Youth Orchestra of Wales **Orchestra of the Swan**

Choirs and vocal ensembles

Festival Chorus **Festival Youth Choir** I Fagiolini **The King's Singers** Three Cathedral Choirs

Artists

John Mark Ainsley **Simon Bailey** Mark Bebbington **Robin Blaze** Matthew Brook **Natalie Clifton-Griffith** Sarah Connolly **Elizabeth Cragg** Wynne Evans **Owen Gilhooly** Susan Gritton **Emma Johnson** Julian Lloyd Webber **Dame Felicity Lott** Njabulo Madlala **Alan Oke** James Oxley **Robert Plane** Rachel Podger **James Rutherford** David Stout **Thomas Trotter** Ailish Tynan **Roderick Williams**

Morning

Afternoon

Evening

| | SATURDAY 21 | SUNDAY 22 | MONDAY 23 | TUESDAY 24 | WEDNESDAY 25 | THURSDAY 26 | FRIDAY 27 | SATURDAY 28 |
|------------------|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| <i>Morning</i> | OPENING SERVICE | FESTIVAL EUCHARIST Haydn Nelson Mass Hereford Cathedral Choir | ORGAN RECITAL Thomas Trotter | CLARINET RECITAL Emma Johnson | I Fagiolini Programme to include works by Monteverdi and Poulenc | SONG RECITAL Roderick Williams Programme to include <i>Songs of Travel</i> by Vaughan Williams | PIANO RECITAL Mark Bebbington Programme to include music by Ireland and the world premiere of a work by David Briggs | |
| <i>Afternoon</i> | SONG RECITAL Dame Felicity Lott | Rachel Podger Brecon Baroque Programme to include Brandenburg Concertos Nos 2, 4 & 5 by J S Bach | Debussy Danse sacrée et danse profane Dobrinka Tabakova <i>Festival commission: world premiere</i> Fauré Requiem Festival Youth Choir Orchestra of the Swan | The King's Singers | J S Bach Goldberg Variations Fretwork | Judith Bingham Celticity <i>English premiere</i> Gershwin An American in Paris Ravel Daphnis & Chloé Suite No 2 Beethoven Symphony No 5 National Youth Orchestra of Wales | Dante Quartet with Robert Plane Programme to include clarinet quintets by Brahms and Coleridge-Taylor | |
| | | EVENSONG | EVENSONG | | EVENSONG | EVENSONG | | |
| <i>Evening</i> | Haydn The Creation Festival Chorus Philharmonia Orchestra | Stravinsky The Firebird Delius Cello Concerto Debussy La mer Ravel Boléro Philharmonia Orchestra | Mendelssohn Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage Overture Joseph Phibbs <i>Philharmonia Orchestra / Anvil Arts commission</i> Vaughan Williams A Sea Symphony Festival Chorus Philharmonia Orchestra | J S Bach St John Passion Three Cathedral Choirs Music for Awhile Orchestra | Dyson The Canterbury Pilgrims Festival Chorus Philharmonia Orchestra | Ireland London Overture Delius Sea Drift Elgar The Music Makers Festival Chorus Philharmonia Orchestra | Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture Coleridge-Taylor Petite Suite de Concert Berlioz Te Deum Festival Chorus Philharmonia Orchestra | <i>The Gathering Wave</i> Bernard Hughes All Across This Jumbl'd Earth <i>World premiere</i> This community event brings together singers of all ages from across the county of Herefordshire. The concert will feature the South African baritone Njabulo Madlala. |



Dame Felicity Lott

© Trevor Leighton



Martyn Brabbins

© Sasha Gison



Emma Johnson

© Joe Bangay



Diego Mathuez

© Nobely Oliveros



Rachel Podger

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Julian Lloyd Webber

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Robin Blaze

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