

Blackburn Cathedral Music & More online Supplement No. 15

Saturday 11th May 2013

Surely the best Crypt Concert ever?



The Renaissance Singers are a fabulously talented group of musicians who can sing a solemn Mass by Victoria – (which they did two evenings earlier for the Ascension Day service), and then, without blinking an eye, can give us a rousing concert of entirely different music which almost brought their capacity audience to their feet in rapturous applause.



Samuel Hudson was the ebullient MC – inducing the receptive audience to ‘Oos’ and ‘Ahhs’. That in itself was a new delight.

It was **Shaun Turnbull’s** conducting which enabled the Singers to sing as one – absolutely together – and so musically. He was an inspiration.

The skilful accompaniments on our well-tuned piano were played so musically by organ scholar **James Kealey** and also by **Samuel Hudson**.

But what music did we hear? Everything from *Razzle Dazzle from Chicago*, to Purcell’s most

moving *When I am laid in earth*, sung so tenderly by **Rebecca Hudson**.



You could hear a pin drop.

In fact soloists were a feature of this concert, as well as fine choir music.

Our choral scholars excelled themselves in solos from *Spamalot* and from Verdi’s *La Forza del Destino* (in Italian)



(Left) **James Giddings & Daisy-Belle Dumsday** in a romantic mood.

And (below) **Daisy-Belle** and **Philip Almond** singing in Italian.



A new member of the Singers, **Barry Jackson**, showed his prowess by singing a solo by Gershwin.



But why was the platform decorated with French colours?

And why did some of the choir (and the conductor) dress in 18th Century French costume (including a most attractive soprano: was she a French forerunner of **Marge Simpson**)?



Why? Because much of the second half of the programme was devoted to extracts from Claude-Michel Schönberg’s musical *Les Misérables*, which is based on Victor Hugo’s French historical novel of 1862.



Past-President of the Singers, **Eileen Hemingway**, outlined the story of *Les Miserables* for us.



Even though this record-breaking show has been seen by millions, yet some of us didn't know the story of false imprisonment and other horrors of the French Revolution.

And so the music we experienced that evening ran the whole gamut of joy and sorrow, love and death. We were greatly moved.

And we were generously fed, too.

A feature of our Crypt Concerts is the lavish refreshments which are served in the extended interval.

This year they ranged from generous drinks, served by **Maureen** and **Lawrence Wood**. Their daughter, Alex, was a member of the YPC and is now at Durham University. Lawrence was a cellist in the Hallé and teaches the cello to Head Chorister William Fielding.



Delicious meat pies and peas, or cheese soufflé and baked beans (some of us had both!) had been cooked by our multi-talented choral scholar **James Giddings**.

My word, we're going to miss him, not only for his cooking and singing, but also for his exceptionally musical playing of the clarinet, and also, of course for his delightful outgoing personality. **Thank you, James.**

Look ahead **ONLINE** for many more photos in

Music & More online Supplement No. 14 THE CATHEDRAL ORGANISTS' CONFERENCE AT EXETER CATHEDRAL

which was attended by no fewer than FIVE Blackburn Musicians!



One current Director, two past Directors, and two former Assistant Directors who are now Directors of Music of their own cathedrals!

And look even further ahead **ONLINE** for glorious photos in

Music & More online Supplement No. 17

BBC Live TV broadcast on PENTECOST SUNDAY
which was tremendously exciting and inspiring!



...with superb music, fine liturgy and such artistic camera-work!

