



Patron: Samuel West
Music Director: Darius Battiwalla

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Sisters Steal Away



Sisters Jo Briddock and Rachel Mallaband have more reasons than most to be looking forward to this weekend's Festival of Music – they are both part of a quartet of singers featured in Deep River, from Tippett's A Child of our Time in the Ballroom concert "Steal Away – Spirituals and More" on Saturday.

"We've sung together in Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus for over 10 years now", said Rachel, aged 45 from Lodge Moor, "but when Jo texted to say I was one of the

quartet you could have knocked me down with a feather!” she laughed. “It was her fault” she continued pointing at big sister Jo, “I would never have volunteered to sing anything on my own that had a top B in it!”

Having sung together for over 40 years, the sisters have sung everything from Simon and Garfunkel, to Handel’s Messiah and of course, many Christmas concerts. But there is no favouritism when it comes to auditions, joining the Chorus is a matter of needing to be of the standard expected by Music Director, Darius Battiwalla. That said, the Chorus has a number of families represented – husbands and wives, mums and daughters. Members put it down to the wonderful opportunities that come their way that they wax lyrical about – encouraging family members to join. Jo’s claim to fame is singing at the Proms (at which Rachel pulled a face, having not been chosen on that occasion) and filming Songs of Praise for the BBC when the Chorus first became associated with the local village carols. “But recording the CD was certainly a highlight too” said Jo referring to *Awake, Arise!* the Chorus’s new recording featuring some of the local carols due out on 20 November. “We are so lucky – fancy getting to record such fabulous arrangements, and in the City Hall too”, added Jo.

Classical Sheffield’s first ever Festival of Music takes place from Friday 23 to Sunday 25 October at venues across Sheffield. Concerts range from free pop up events in the Winter Gardens to full orchestras. There is something for everyone and tickets start at just £5 with under 18s free. Full details are available at <http://www.classicalweekend.com/>

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS

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Awake, Arise! was recorded in Sheffield City Hall on 26-27 January 2015

Awake, Arise! is available to pre-order from

<http://www.sheffieldphil.org/awakearise.php> and is released on 20th November.

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Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus website - www.sheffieldphil.org

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus will be performing *Steal Away - Spirituals and More* in the City Hall Ballroom on Sheffield City Hall Ballroom, Saturday 24 October from 1:30pm - 2:15pm. The concert will consist of Tippett's Spirituals from *Child of our Time*, Tavener's *Syvati* and Avro Pärt's *Magnificat*.

Photograph available for use with this article.

Suggested caption: Jo Briddock (left) and Rachel Mallaband (right) photographed when they recorded the local village carols with Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus for *Songs of Praise*.