

NEW / IMPORTANT ITEMS (scroll down for further details)

- **Mozart Requiem feedback and message from our President Rachel**
- **Ticket offer for singing day on 14 July in Appelby**
- **Contact Helen Kirk if going to Summer Sing on 13 August 2024**
- **Thanks from Chris Wiltshire**
- **Updated list of singing opportunities including *Creation* with CBSO**
- **PLEASE use the special email to tell SPC about change of address, telephone or email (see bottom of every update)**

French trip rehearsal is on Tuesday 25 June 2024 at Birkdale

The next rehearsal – for those going on the French trip - is on Tuesday 2 July, upstairs at St Mark's Church. The rehearsal will be recorded and broadcast on Zoom for those who can't make it.

You will find recordings and links to voice part rehearsal tracks for the French repertoire on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Rehearsals / Preparing the music](#). This includes the links recently kindly provided by 2nd alto Alex Walton (many thanks Alex!)

Mozart Requiem

Thanks to everyone who helped to organise this mammoth undertaking, and to Chorus members for being flexible and cooperative, always cheerful despite the rigours of the tour and no matter what happened – and who sang so wonderfully well. Special thanks to Rachel and Maggie for their help as always, plus Joe, and of course to Darius for preparing us with clarity, enthusiasm and humour so very thoroughly and expertly. Everyone agreed that it was very special and all thoroughly enjoyed it. Here are some reviews and comments.

"It was a real treat to be in the audience for the London and Edinburgh performances. Knowing the piece so well made a huge difference as it enabled a real feeling of communication with the conductor, responsiveness and unanimity in phrasing, made it a really memorable experience - I think the best I've ever heard the choir in a concert. You have raised my expectations for next time!" Darius

"Flanders Symphony Orchestra review – Vienna comes to London via Ghent and Sheffield 21 June 2024

Three works from the Viennese periods of Mozart and Beethoven given worthy presentations by the Flanders Symphony Orchestra and Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus.

Flanders SO [Belgium] were joined for this performance by Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus [England] for a generally sturdy performance that took no risks, but delivered everything it needed to.....

The chorus gave a very decent account that was nicely co-ordinated and alight with attention to Poska's requirements in terms of speed and dynamic, albeit that, perhaps, a little extra drama might have been gained from more contrast in the latter (the only truly pianissimo came in the final 'dona eis requiem' of the 'Agnus Dei'). The contrapuntal material presented them with no challenges, so that their fugues throughout were crisp and well delineated in each voice (although perhaps having half of the sopranos and altos positioned in the gallery led to occasionally understrength entries in these parts). If the opening of the 'Sanctus' was perhaps a touch underpowered (the subsequent statements got louder), the friskiness brought to 'Hosanna' made up for it."

Barry Creasy see full review at [Flanders Symphony Orchestra review – Vienna comes to London via Ghent and Sheffield 21 June 2024](#)

"Safe, solid, super: Flanders Symphony finishes UK tour in Edinburgh

.....Coming to their tour on its final performance, in Edinburgh's Usher Hall, you could tell that the relationship between the orchestra and chorus had settled in nicely. They even had an encore up their sleeves, Mozart's Ave verum corpus, which formed a neat companion piece to the main item on the programme, Mozart's Requiem in D minor.

This was a Requiem performed with focus and energy, held together ably by conductor [Kristiina Poska](#), who preferred fast speeds and tight drama. Those speeds stretched the chorus a little in the fugues of the Offertorio, and there were one or two pitching issues in the Confutatis and Lachrymosa. Otherwise, they sang with concentration and drive, managing proper heft in the Dies irae and impressive agility in the more stately Kyrie fugue.

Touring programmes tend to go for safe options, and in featuring only Beethoven and Mozart this one didn't contain any surprises, but it was delivered with care, affection and a great degree of skill. Most audiences would find that very satisfactory indeed."

[Simon Thompson](#), see full review on [Bachtrack](#)

"Flanders Symphony Orchestra

Unusually, the night on 100-strong choir occupied the choir balcony throughout the first half, clad in black with gold sashes for the ladies, worn on the right shoulder for the sopranos stage right and on the left for the altos stage left; the tenors and basses in the middle. Before a note was sung, they looked absolutely stunning.

The choir were as aurally impressive as their visual promise. Scrumptiously sepulchral in the Introitus, the Kyrie gave a first taste of their ardent facility with contrapuntal singing as they were unleashed in a double fugue. Flawless pitching in the chromaticism of the Dies Irae confirmed their status as a topflight chorus. More delicious full-on counterpoint with Rex tremendae dropped dramatically to hushed awe and had me on the edge of my seat. A spirit-shocking contrast can be wrung from the brutality of the male voices interspersed with the gentleness of the female lines in the Confutatis and Kristiina Poska exploited this to great effect, the chorus evidently willing accomplices in the theatricality. The mood of the opening was recalled in the Lacrymosa, bringing the Sequentia to a close. Two more fabulous fugues drove the drama of the first part of the Offertorium, Domine Jesu. The second part, Hostias, with dynamic contrasts and searching harmonies, explored a range of keys before another dramatic fugue. Süssmayr's Sanctus was satisfying with its wee fugue on the Hosanna. After the Agnus Dei, the Communio brought us back to Mozart's glorious music from the beginning, fitted to the concluding liturgy. Perfect.

The Usher Hall audience knew they had experienced something special. The dynamic balance, a bit light on the string sound in the first half, was fine for the Requiem. The applause was enthusiastic and prolonged and the chorus' Music Director, Darius Battiwalli, came to the stage to acknowledge it with the other performers. Ms Poska then addressed the auditorium, thanking the audience for the warm welcome and announced "a little present". The four soloists had joined the choir in their balcony. All then performed the most perfect rendition of Mozart's exquisite 'Ave verum corpus' as an encore. A perfect end to a perfect afternoon of music-making." Donal Hurley [Full review in the Edinburgh Music Review](#) (online review site)

Comments on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), email or reported

"Great to watch [@SheffPhilChorus](#) at [@theusherhall](#) in Edinburgh for an evening of Mozart and Beethoven with Flanders Symphony Orchestra. The Philharmonic is a fine example of Sheffield's cultural export, with their three-city tour this weekend. Well done to everyone involved" Councillor Ben Maskell

"TERRIFIC Mozart Requiem from [@SheffPhilChorus](#) at [@cadoganhall](#) tonight. Never heard them in better voice. I am a very proud Patron. Incisive, dynamic conducting from

[#KristiinaPoska](#) and fine Flanders Symphony Orchestra ensemble. More South Yorkshire-Belgium collaborations please” Sam West

“They were terrific weren’t they? - fantastic conductor as well. Glad you enjoyed it!” Darius in reply to Sam West

“Have a great Usher Hall today. Thrilled you’re showing these London and Scottish wusses what a great Yorkshire choir can do” Sam West

“The singing was superb, really together, words clear, good dynamic range and very beautiful. Fantastic the choir could perform with such a great orchestra and conductor and wonderful soloists. Congratulations ... to choir members for stamina in going from one performance to the next with all the travelling, late night and early morning.” Rachel Rowlands, audience member

“Congratulations on a really excellent performance by the choir at the Usher Hall on Sunday. Very moving and beautifully phrased. The conductor appeared outstanding.” Former member in the Edinburgh audience

Sam West was impressed that we all looked up – just what a great choir should do, he said during his visit backstage to praise the Chorus after the London concert.

Julia Smith from IMG was full of praise, said it was wonderful singing, enjoyed it all, Sunday was best of all she thought, she hopes we can work together again. Passed on the fact that Kristiina said the experience made her want to conduct more choral work.

Bass and tenor soloists said they really enjoyed singing with us, they agreed that Sunday was the best, hope to meet up again.

A number of the orchestra players were full of our praise and said it would be good to work with us again

Staff at the various venues reported the Chorus as helpful and easy to work with, grateful we got on with everything with no fuss, and were generally marvellous.

Message from our President Rachel Copley

“I think that, like many of us, I am ‘coming down’ from the highs of the weekend, and what a weekend it was! Thanks to the months of planning by Team Phil, and wonderful, constructive rehearsals by Darius, everything seemed to come together, culminating in the final concert in Edinburgh. Even after days of travelling, late nights, and early mornings, I was overwhelmed with the emotion that Kristina brought to the evening, as I am sure that she, and the wonderful orchestra, did on the previous two nights. It was privilege to be on the platform with our special choir, and to feel the response to each and every nuance that the conductor asked for, being returned to her, and the audience.

My sincere thanks to all concerned in the planning and execution of the tour, for the companionship of fellow singers, and the wonderful gift of making music together. With all good wishes for the Summer, Rachel.”

Singing Day ticket offer for 13 July 10.30 to 4pm in Appelby

Alto Nerissa Kisdon has a ticket for the Tim Knight Music Singing Day (1030am - 4pm) at St Lawrence's Church, Appleby CA 16 6QN. She is unable to use it herself, sadly, so is offering it to anyone from the choir who would like to go. Hopefully it won't matter if you're not an alto. The ticket includes music and refreshments. Nerissa doesn't want refunding but suggests perhaps a donation to Chorus funds – eg to Helen Kirk for the Singing Day in August. **Please contact Anne Adams (reply to this update) if interested.** Further information at <https://www.timknightmusic.com/events/come-and-sing-great-oratorio-choruses>

Contact Helen Kirk to confirm you're going to the Summer Sing on Tue 13 August

Please contact Helen Kirk HelenKirk@sheffieldphil.org if you're planning to attend this year's Summer Sing, at 6.30-7.00pm on Tuesday 13 August at soprano Charlotte Liu's large garden - Arcadia Landscape design, Long Lane, off Back Lane, Stephen Hill S10 5PY. We'll sing a range of music, eg madrigals, and there's a poly tunnel if it rains. Buffet in the form of a Bring and Share. – so please bring something savoury or sweet. Here is a link to information and photos of the garden, which was featured in BBC Gardener's World. [Doug & Charlotte \(@arcadia_landscape_design\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Thank you from Chris Wiltshire

Chris Wiltshire would like to give sincere thanks to all the Phil members who supported his Schbertathon, played in memory of his wife, former Phil, 2nd sop, Pat. “*Thanks to those who came in person and all those who donated. To date, nearly £3,000 has been raised for Alzheimer's Research. With very best wishes to all at the Phil, Chris*”.

Diary dates (dates in italics are voluntary electives; attendance expected at all others)

Confirmed concert dates and details, including piano and tutti rehearsal dates, times and locations, are posted on the Chorus website as soon as they become available so that members can plan their activities, at [Members Area / Diary dates](#) ((user name member password M4hler8D@rius22)).

- *11 to 17 July 2024 mini tour in France (elective)*. Rehearsals 25 June (Birkdale) and 2 July 2024 (St Mark's Broomhill, upstairs). Please work at home on the programme: *Faure Requiem*, Grieg: *Ave Maris Stella*, Esenvalds: *Evening* and *Amazing Grace*, Delius: *To be sung of a summer night on the water*, Coleridge Taylor: *Summer is gone* and *The Lee Shore*, Clara Schumann: *Abendfeier in Venedig*, Fanny Mendelssohn (Hensel): *Schone Fremde*, Reger: *Nachtlied*, Bruckner: Motets, Stanford; 3 motets. Recordings and/or rehearsal tracks for these works are on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Rehearsals / Preparing the music](#). This includes the links recently kindly provided by 2nd alto Alex Walton (many thanks Alex!)

2024-25

- Friday 15 November 2024, 7pm, Lily Boulanger Psalm 103 with the Halle at City Hall (first half) Second half features Darius on the organ with the Saint-Saens Fantaisie in Eb major for organ and his wonderful Symphony No.3, “Organ”. SICS*
- Saturday 14 December 2024, 2.30pm, Christmas Carol Concert with Black Dyke Band, presenter Seb Soanes, at City Hall SICS*
- *Sunday 15 December 2024 St Lukes carol Service (elective)*
- Sunday 23 March 2025, 7pm, St Marie's cathedral, final concert of the Classical Sheffield Festival Weekend: Young Composer Competition winner(s), two newly-commissioned works by composer Stephen Johnston, and the Faure *Requiem* (self funded, part-sponsored).
- April / May – self funded concert of some kind, still to be sorted
- Sunday 8 June 2025 4pm, Haydn *Creation* with Matthew Hamilton and the Halle at City Hall SICS*

*SICS = concert is part of the Sheffield International Concert Season

Darius concerts

- Thursday 4 July, 1pm Halifax Minster
- Monday 16 September, 1.15pm Leeds, St Anne's Cathedral

Full list and details on Darius's website at <http://www.dariusbattiwalla.com/index.html>

Singing opportunities

A list of wider singing opportunities, compiled by Phil Harrison and provided by John Morgan, is on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Information / Singing Opportunities](#) (user name member password M4hler8D@rius22).

Opportunities are listed for events in Buxton, Wirksworth, Chester, Nottingham, Derby and Leicester. **Note Haydn's Creation with CBSO on Sunday 2 Feb 2025.**

What's On

Classical Sheffield's What's On page tells you which classical concerts are scheduled around Sheffield: <https://classicalsheffield.org.uk/events>.

What to do if your contact details change

If any of your contact details change, including address, email or telephone number, please send a message to emailchange2019@sheffieldphil.org to ensure that your details are amended on the Membership database and that you continue to receive the weekly update.

Weekly updates, Chorus and Classical Sheffield websites and passwords

If ever you don't receive the weekly update, please contact Membership Officer Marianne Grayson or read it on the website at [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#) User name *member* password *M4hler8D@rius22*; please don't share these.

The Members Area lists rehearsal details, rehearsal notes and links to recordings, concert and re-audition arrangements, as well as dates for the following season, our official stage procedure, Darius' rehearsal schedule, how to look after your voice etc. The website is available at <http://sheffieldphil.org> or via a Google search.

A reminder of the Classical Sheffield Member's Area: <https://classicalsheffield.org.uk/about> ; the password is *moremusic*.

Contact emails

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A1 Voice Rep Nerissa Kisdon NerissaKisdon@sheffieldphil.org

A2 Voice Rep Jane Baker JaneBaker@sheffieldphil.org

T1 & T2 Voice Rep Jim Monach, 1st Tenor JimMonach@sheffieldphil.org

B1 Voice Rep Richard Salt RichardSalt@sheffieldphil.org

B2 Voice Rep Alan Lacey AllanLacey@sheffieldphil.org

Privacy Policy – summary SPC uses member emails in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018, ie, only to help run the Chorus and keep members informed about SPC activities. SPC will never pass your data to third parties - if another member asks for your contact details SPC will only ever share them if you consent. SPC will never use your data to send messages from third parties. Weekly updates are uploaded to the Chorus website every week, however email is the easiest and quickest method of sharing information so we hope you continue to allow us to send them to you. However, you may opt out by contacting administrator@sheffieldphil.org. The full Privacy Policy is on the Chorus website at <http://sheffieldphil.org/about-us/privacy-policy/>