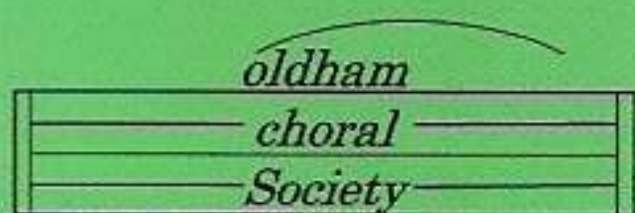


OLDHAM  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY

In The  
RNCM  
Concert  
Hall

Sunday  
17  
November

At 7pm



Founded 1884

Registered Charity 518255

The background of the poster is a vertical painting of a forest. The scene is captured at sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden-orange glow filtering through the trees. The sky is a mix of deep reds, oranges, and yellows, with a large, bright sun partially obscured by a dark, silhouetted tree in the upper left. The foreground shows the dark, pointed tops of evergreen trees against the lighter sky.

# The Spirit of the Dance

# OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

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## A Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Society I welcome you to this evening's concert. We are taking you on a whistle-stop tour, from the St. Petersburg of Alexander Borodin, to the American nightclubs with George Gershwin and then back to the Munich of Carl Orff to hear his famous Carmina Burana as our major work this evening! Should this journey fatigue you, don't worry, this lively music will keep you from slumbering!

It is appropriate to record our thanks to Nigel P. Wilkinson our MD who, besides preparing the choir musically, has once again produced the excellent programme notes contained herein on the lives of the composers and the works being performed. This contribution is greatly appreciated.

At this time of year as winter approaches, we think about those less fortunate than ourselves and particularly those who, for whatever reason, find themselves homeless. At our forthcoming Family Christmas Concert we shall be singing a new carol called "Ring the Bells". By purchasing the musical scores for this, we will be raising money to help fight this curse of our modern age. Please see the organisation's website

<https://lpc.org.uk/hearthebells/> for more information.

**Gerard Marsden**



# **OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY**

With

**The East Lancs Sinfonia**

Leader: Sally Robinson

**The Spirit of the Dance**

**An American in Paris**

George Gershwin

**Polovtsian Dances**

Alexander Borodin

~~~~~

Interval of 20 minutes

~~~~~

**Carmina Burana**

Carl Orff

With Soloists

**Fflur Wyn   Nick Hardy   James Cleverton**

**Conductor: Nigel P. Wilkinson**

**Please ensure that all mobile phones are set to  
silent or switched off**

## FFLUR WYN - SOPRANO

Having already gained wide acclaim for her performances on the operatic stage as well as the concert platform, Welsh soprano **Fflur Wyn** is quickly establishing herself as one of the country's foremost young singers. She was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM) in recognition of her distinguished contribution to the music profession so far.



Her operatic performances include Jemmy **Guillaume Tell**, Iphis **Jephtha**, Blonde **Die Entführung aus dem Serail**, and Dorinda in Handel's **Orlando** (WNO); Pamina **The Magic Flute**, Alice **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland**, and the title role in **Lakmé** (Opera Holland Park); Barbarina **Le Nozze di Figaro**, La Plus Jeune Fille **Au Monde** (La Monnaie); Sophie **Der Rosenkavalier**, Sophie **Werther**, Marzelline **Fidelio**, Blue Fairy **The Adventures of Pinocchio**, Servilia **La Clemenza di Tito**, Gretel **Hansel & Gretel**, Achsah **Joshua**, Waldvogel **Siegfried**, Fire/Nightingale/Princess **L'enfant et les Sortilèges**, and Trio Soprano **Trouble in Tahiti** (Opera North); Mimi in Offenbach's **Vert Vert** (Garsington Opera); Fido **Paul Bunyan** (ENO); Celia **Lucio Silla** (Buxton Opera); Cunegonde **Candide** (West Green Opera); Governess **The Turn of the Screw** (Mexico City); Blonde Woman **Thanks to my Eyes** (Aix-en-Provence, La Monnaie); Daughter **The Lion's Face** (The Opera Group, ROH); and Girl **How the Whale Became** (Royal Opera House).

Fflur has worked with many leading conductors and orchestras including: Sir Colin Davis, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Richard Armstrong, Harry Bicket, Seiji Ozawa and the Royal Philharmonic

Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, The Gabrieli Consort, The English Concert, and The Combattimento Consort. Some of her most notable performances include the title role in Handel *Theodora* with the RIAS Kammerchor at the Berliner Philharmonie; Bach *Christmas Oratorio* with the Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra; Handel *Jephtha* with Cappella Amsterdam and Daniel Reuss, Haydn *Creation* with The Gabrieli Consort and Paul McCreech, Orff *Carmina Burana* with the CBSO; Bach *St Matthew Passion* with the Dunedin Consort at the Wigmore Hall, Mozart *Exsultate Jubilate* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, *The Choice of Hercules* at the Göttingen International Handel Festival, Handel *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* with both the Dunedin Consort at the Misteria Paschalia Festival in Kraków and with The English Concert under Harry Bicket, Gorecki's *3rd Symphony* with the Orchestra of Opera North and Richard Farnes, and New Year *Viennese Gala* concerts with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Thomas Rösner.

Recent and future highlights include *Carmina Burana* with the RSNO, '*Handel's Divas*' at the London Handel Festival, Bach *B Minor Mass* with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Esilena *Rodrigo* at the Göttingen International Handel Festival, Vivetta *L'Arlesiana* for Opera Holland Park, and Susanna *Figaro* for Opera North.

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## NICK HARDY - TENOR

Nick Hardy works as a freelance opera chorister with Royal Opera Covent Garden, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Wexford Festival Opera, and Festival Opera. For London Festival Opera he has appeared as a principal in opera galas in Italy, Germany and Spain. For Scottish Opera and Buxton Festival he has had minor roles and major covers, whilst for semi-professional companies (including the Ahmadi Music Group, Kuwait) he has over 20 credits in major lyric and helden roles.

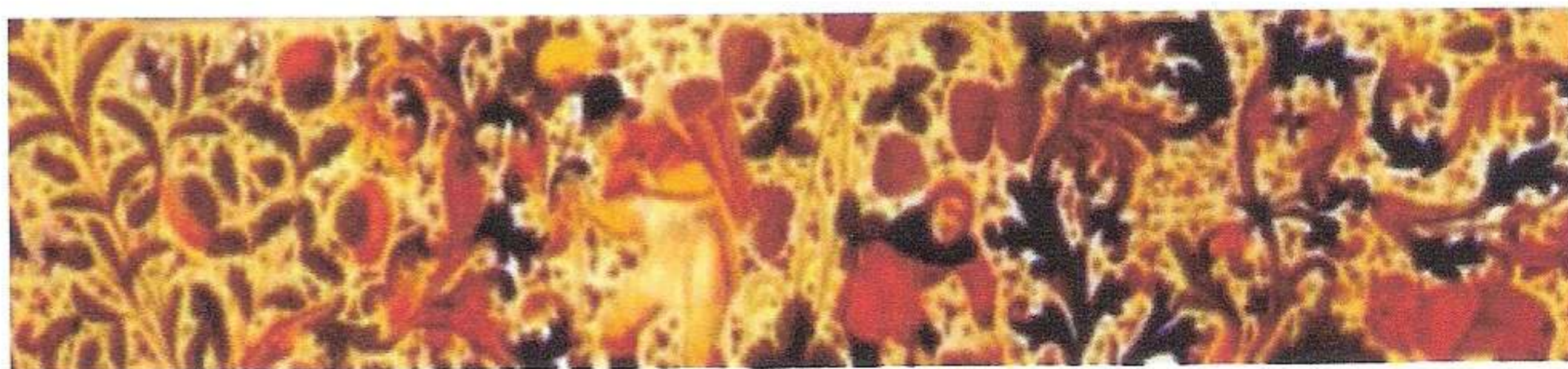


As an oratorio soloist he has appeared throughout the UK and in France in major works by Bach, Beethoven, Dvořák, Elgar, Handel, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Puccini, Rossini, Stanford, Tippett & Verdi.

He has taught singing for Shrewsbury School, Birkenhead School, Liverpool College, and The Hammond Theatre School, Chester.

He has performed at The Theatre Arts Academy in St. Petersburg. He works with 'Waiters That Sing', is the founder and director of Liverpool Italian Opera Co., and conducts the Wirral Community Choir.

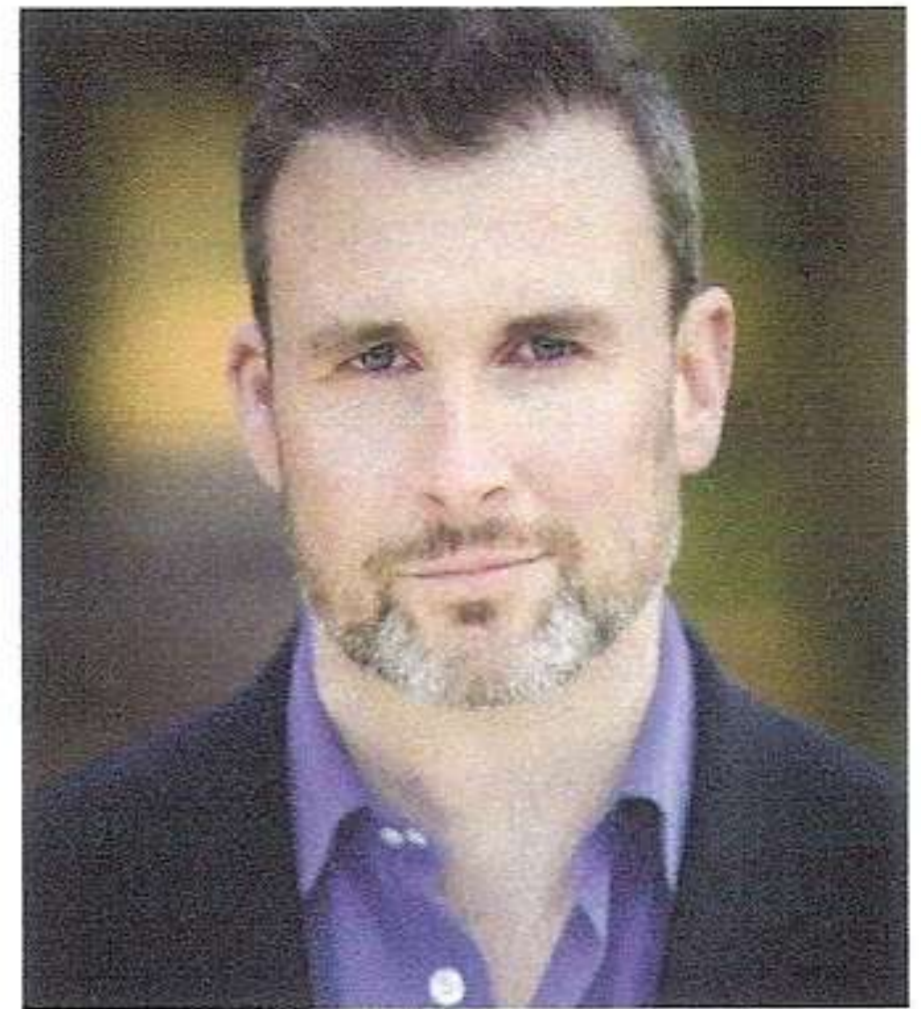
Recent and forthcoming appearances in 2019/20 include **War & Peace** with WNO at ROH Covent Garden, **Götterdämmerung** at Usher Hall for Edinburgh International Festival, **Aida** with Opera North at Birmingham Symphony Hall and other major venues, **Les Vêpres Siciliennes** for WNO, plus gala concerts for London Festival Opera in Lancashire, Cheshire and The Midlands.



## JAMES CLEVERTON - BARITONE

James trained at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Zurich International Opera Studio.

He has performed principal roles at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opernhaus Zurich, Salzburg Festival, Stadttheater St Gallen, Opera de Rennes, Opera Holland Park, Grange Park Opera and Garsington Opera.



Recent performances include Alberich *Das*

*Rheingold* under the baton of Antonio Pappano, and the Protector *Written on Skin* (Benjamin) for the Royal Opera House, his Buxton International Festival debut singing Gusmano in Verdi's *Alzira*, *The Photographer* in the world premiere of *Jack the Ripper: The Women of Whitechapel* (Bell) and Horemhab Akhnaten for ENO, Baron Douphol *La Traviata* for Welsh National Opera and Papageno *The Magic Flute* for Scottish Opera.

Equally in demand on the concert platform, James regularly performs oratorios throughout the UK and internationally. Recent highlights include the *Messiah* and *Brahms Requiem* with the CBSO at the Birmingham Symphony Hall, *Haydn Harmoniemesse* at the Cadogan Hall and *Orff Carmina Burana* at the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. He also appears as the Baritone soloist for the Raymond Gubbay Classical Spectaculars throughout the UK. Recordings include Arrostino in *Cellier The Mountebanks* with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Sir John Copeland in *Rogers and Hart Dearest Enemy* (New World Records) and as the White Rabbit on the original cast recording of *Will Todd Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Future plans include returns to the Royal Opera House and English National Opera, a New Year's Eve Gala at the Bridgwater Hall with the Manchester Concert Orchestra and Classical Spectacular at the Royal Albert Hall with the RPO.



## GEORGE GERSHWIN - AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

George Gershwin was born Jacob Bruskin Gershowitz on September 26th, 1898 in Brooklyn. He was of Ukranian Jewish and Lithuanian Jewish ancestry. He left school at the age of 15 and found his first job as a "song plugger". His employer was Jerome H. Remick and Company, a Detroit-based publishing firm with a branch office on New York City's Tin Pan Alley and he earned \$15 a week. In 1924, Gershwin composed his first major classical work, "**Rhapsody in Blue**", for orchestra and piano. It was orchestrated by Ferde Grafé and premiered by Paul Whiteman's Concert Band in New York. It subsequently went on to be his most popular work, and established Gershwin's signature style and genius in blending vastly different musical styles in revolutionary ways. He was also a famous pianist.



Subtitled "A Tone Poem for Orchestra", "**An American in Paris**" premiered at the Carnegie Hall in New York on December 13th, 1928. It was the first of Gershwin's purely orchestral works, with no role for piano but plenty of jazz harmonies and spirit.

His stated intention with the work was to "portray the impressions of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city, listens to various street noises, and absorbs the French atmosphere"; for this purpose, Gershwin incorporated such touches of verisimilitude as real French taxi horns. It is this piece that perhaps best represents Gershwin's employment of both jazz and classical forms. The harmonic structure of "**An American in Paris**" is rooted in blues traditions (particularly the "Homesick Blues" middle section), and soloists are often required to bend, slide and growl certain notes and passages in the style of jazz musicians of the 1920's. The melodies that are repeated and embellished throughout the work, however, are never subject to alteration - the antithesis of the jazz philosophy that regards melody as a mere loose outline for imaginative decoration. With its varied rhythms and free structure ("Five sections held together more or less by intuition", according to one critic), "**An American in Paris**" seemed more balletic than symphonic, and, indeed, the piece gained its most lasting fame 23 years after its premiere, when it was used by Gene Kelly for the closing ballet sequence of the classic, eponymous film musical in 1951.

Gershwin began the work in the summer of 1924. Having been asked by conductor Walter Damrosch to write the full concerto in the follow-up to the success of "**Rhapsody in Blue**", which had premiered that winter, Gershwin had decided that he would benefit from more advanced compositional training and so set off for Paris.



There, he found that the greatest names of music - amongst them Ravel and Stravinsky - were disinclined to tamper with the jazz star's innate skills. However, he also found inspiration for what turned out to be his most advanced score up to that time.

It is a fine example of the genre "program music", (i.e. an instrumental piece that has a story to tell or a scene to paint, though without the need of text, dance, or narration). Gershwin himself called it a "rhapsodic ballet". Certainly it is danceable, and the free-flowing nature of rhapsodies also seems appropriate to the piece.

## The Music

*"An American in Paris"* offers a kaleidoscope of musical impressions, opening with a light-hearted strolling melody soon interrupted by the honking of taxi horns. A busy street scene ensues, brassy interludes alternating with bubbly clarinets. Melancholy, bluesy melodies, sometimes for woodwinds, sometimes for strings, most prominently for muted trumpet, occupy the central pages. A quick change of mood leads to sassier colouring and a new spotlight for trumpet. Firm dotted rhythms of alternating short and long notes transition to a rich testament of earlier materials, now broader and more leisurely in manner. Short solos for the unusual pairing of violin and tuba set up the spirited conclusion derived from the opening strolling melody. Throughout, the composer displays how effectively this star of the jazz world had internalised the sound of the orchestra. He may have been turned down for advanced studies with the big names in the field, but he had kept his ears engaged and learned what he needed to know to make the most of the orchestral colour.



*Oscar Levant (left) and Gene Kelly in "An American in Paris" (1951), directed by Vincente Minnelli. © 1951 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc.; photograph from a private Collection.*

## ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833-1887)

Alexander Borodin was born the illegitimate son of a Russian Prince and his mistress, but following the custom in such circumstances he was officially registered as the progeny of one of the Prince's serfs. Nonetheless, the Prince saw to it that young Alexander received privileges beyond what a serf might expect with the result that he received an excellent education. Music and Science especially appealed to him. He completed the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the St. Petersburg Academy of Medicine and Surgery, where his dissertation was titled "*On the Analogy between Arsenic Acid in Chemical and Toxological Behaviour*"! He became a research chemist and a distinguished professor specialising in aldehydes, which are organic compounds used as (among other things) solvents, perfume ingredients, and components employed in producing such plastics as Bakelite and Formica.



His non-working hours were given over to music - to playing chamber music, conducting ensembles, and composing a small but impressive catalogue of works. In 1882, he fell into the circle of the Moguchaya Kuchka, the "Mighty Handful", a term put forward by the critic Vladimir Stasov. A rival critic, Aleksandr Serov, seized on the phrase and attached it to the brilliant composer and pianist Mily Balakirev and the group of composers who were just then coalescing around him: Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, and Borodin, - widely remembered as the "Russian Five". Only Balakirev had been principally trained as a musician. Cui, who held the military rank of General, was renowned for his expertise about fortifications, and Mussorgsky was also an army officer before he began composition lessons with Balakirev. Rimsky-Korsakov was a naval man: even after music took over his life, he remained for some years inspector of naval bands.

This odd assemblage of part-time composers achieved incontestable distinction. Many of Borodin's masterworks reflect the group's passionate embrace of folk sources, most especially his two symphonies (plus two fragmentary movements of a third), his "musical picture" *In Central Asia (or In the Steppes of Central Asia* as it is often called in English-speaking lands), and his opera *Prince Igor* (which he left incomplete at his death). He died instantly of an aortic aneurysm while dressed as a Russian peasant at a Carnival Week costume party at the Academy of Medicine and Surgery, so by an ironic quirk of fate, he died an apparent peasant just as he had ostensibly been born one.

## THE MUSIC

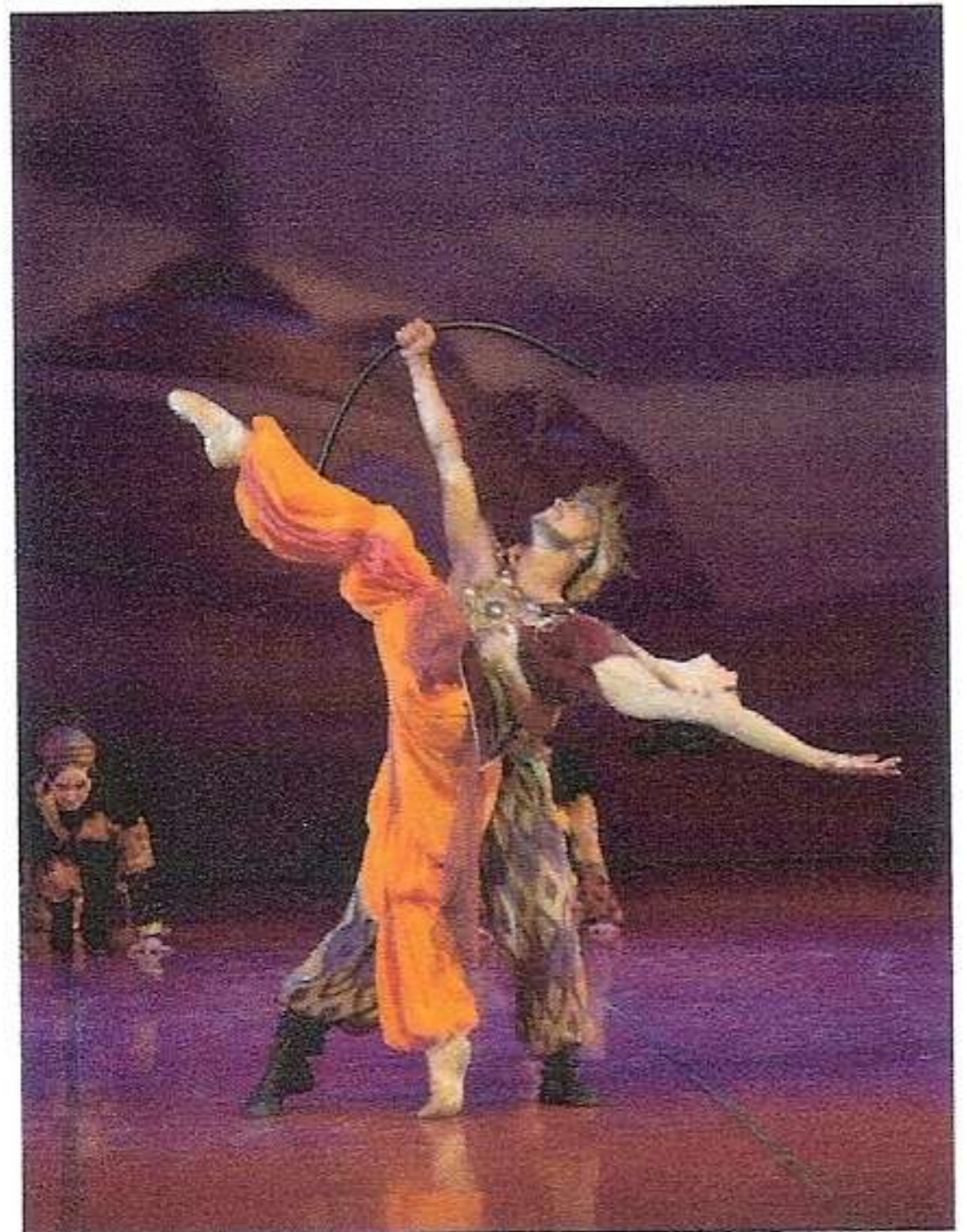
Borodin's opera *Prince Igor* should have been his **magnum opus**. He began it in 1869, but abandoned it to work on his **Symphony No.2**, returned to it in 1874, and worked on it by fits and starts from then until his death. The opera tells a complicated story of the campaign of Igor Sviatoslavich, the twelfth-century Prince of Novgorod-Seversk, and his military campaign against the Polovtsians, a Tartar Tribe.

The World Premiere, three years after his death, was finally given in St. Petersburg in November 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre, completed and orchestrated in part by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov.

**The Polovtsian Dances** offer an exhilarating climax to the opera's second act, as Prince Igor and his son Vladimir are taken prisoner by Polovtsian leader Khan Konchak, who entertains them lavishly and calls on his slaves to perform the thrilling dances. But these Choral dances have enjoyed a life outside of the opera, ever since the great impresario Diaghilev presented them as part of his first Russian Season at The Châtelet in Paris.

Most famously, a number of its themes were adapted into the 1953 Broadway musical **Kismet**, best known of which is the 'Gliding Dance of the Maidens', adapted into the song 'Stranger in Paradise'. At the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, the Polovtsian Dances opened the games as a flying girl swept through a winter landscape.

Borodin had a superb gift for melody and rhythm - all evident in this, the most popular of his works. It always leaves you wondering what he might have achieved if he had paid more heed to his colleagues and put the chemistry aside for a little more composing.



# Carmina Burana

## Fortuna Imperatrix Mundi (Fortune, Empress of the World)

1. O Fortuna (Choir) – *O fortune!*
2. Fortune plango vulnera (Choir) – *One person's good luck is another's misfortune.*

## I. Primo vere (In Springtime)

3. Veris leta facies (Choir) - *The joyous face of Spring turns to the world*
4. Omnia sol temperat (Baritone) - *All things are tempered by the Sun*
5. Ecce gratum (Choir) – *Behold, the long awaited spring returns*

## Uf dem anger (On the Lawn)

6. Tanz (Dance for orchestra)
7. Floret silva nobilis (Choir) – *The noble woods are erupting with flowers and leaves (Male chorus) - Hinc, hinc equitavit... .The boys have ridden off fast!*
8. *Chrumer, gip die varwe mir* (Choir) - *Shopkeeper, give me colour to paint my face red, so that I might attract the boys.*
9. *Reie* [Round dance for Orchestra (followed by choral items)]
  - a. *Swaz hie gat umbe* – *The maidens dance round and round in circles*
  - b. *Chume, chum, geselle min* - *Come, come my love, I long for you*
  - c. *Swaz hie gat umbe* - *The maidens dance round and round in circles*
10. *Were diu werlt alle min* [Choir] - *If the whole world were but mine*

## II. In Taberna (In the Tavern)

11. Estuans interius (Baritone) – *I am so angry, but drink makes me feel better!*
12. Olim lacus colueram (Tenor) – *'Song of the Roasted Signet' - When I was a swan, I swam on lakes, I was beautiful. Now I am burning to a cinder.*
13. Ego sum abbas (Baritone with chorus) – *I am the abbot of Cockaigne, and my companions are all drunkards. They have stripped me of all my clothes. Wafna! (Woe!)*
14. In taberna quando sumus (Male chorus) – *In the tavern we drink and gamble*

## III. Cour d'amours (The Court of Love)

15. Amor volat undique (Chorus with soprano) – *Love flies everywhere*
16. Dies, nox et omnia (Baritone) – *Day, night and everything is against me*
17. Stetit puella (Soprano) – *A girl stood in a red tunic*
18. Circa mea pectora (Baritone and choirs) – *My heart sighs for your beauty*
19. Si puer cum puellula (Male chorus) – *If a boy and a girl are left alone in a room, happy will be their coupling.*
20. Veni, veni, venias (Double chorus) – *Come, come, O come – do not let me die*
21. In trutina (Soprano) – *My feelings are torn between lascivious love and modesty, but I choose the former.*
22. Tempus est iocundum (Choirs, soprano and Baritone) – *This is the joyful time*
23. Dulcissime totam tibi subdo me! (Soprano) - *Gentle one! I give myself to you totally*

## Blanziflor et Helena

24. Ave formosissima – (Choir) - *Hail to the most beautiful one*
25. O Fortuna (Choir) - *O Fortune!*

## CARMINA BURANA - THE TEXT

The text for Carmina Burana, (Songs of the Beuren), is taken from a collection of medieval, secular Latin poetry that was discovered in 1803 at the monastery of Benediktbeuren near Munich. It dates back to the 12th century. The poetry was written by the Goliards, a diverse group of wandering scholars, students, clerics, poets, and performers who flourished from the 10th to 13th



centuries. They are often erroneously supposed to have been a religious order, an idea which arises from their satiric order of St. Goliath, the fictitious patron saint of debauchery. The actual word goliard may derive from the old French and means "big mouth," an apt description for a group which earned food, drink and lodging from their poetry. Although the Goliards were initially tolerated and even protected, their multiplying numbers eventually turned into a plague of beggars, and their irreverence put them at odds with an increasingly conservative church hierarchy, which began suppressing the movement. There is little reference to the Goliards after the 13th century.

Their poetry was meant for immediate entertainment and deals with fate and fortune, love and sex, drinking and gambling. An indication that 12th century concerns were not that different from our own! Because the poetry was meant to be readily understood, it was written either in vernacular Latin (rather than church Latin) or in medieval French or German.

The poetry is often satirical or humorous and neither secular nor ecclesiastical authority is spared. There are many allusions to well-known classical tales as well as contemporary events.



Some of the poetry is bawdy and filled with delicious double entendres. The overall theme of the collection is that, in both life and love, man is the pawn of capricious fate. The frontispiece of the manuscript is illustrated with a Wheel of Fortune, a common medieval motif. Figures at the cardinal points of the wheel are labelled: I reign, I have reigned, I have no reign, and I shall reign again.

For *Carmina Burana*, Orff selected 24 poems which he grouped into thematic categories. The piece opens with **Fortuna, Imperatrix Mundi**, (Fortune, Empress of the World), which introduces images of the capriciousness of fate and the Wheel of Fortune.

The next section, **Primo vere** (Springtime), contains poems dealing with the arrival of spring, when men's (and women's) fancies turn toward romance. A subsection, **Uf dem anger** (On the lawn) is a series of dances.

The next section, **In taberna**, (In the tavern), contains the most ribald poetry, and includes the famous "Song of the Roasted Signet", one of the great drinking songs of all time.

The final section, **Cours d'amour**, (The Court of Love), represents a long and sometimes circuitous journey toward amorous bliss. It concludes with a reprise of the opening **O Fortuna** chorus, as the Wheel of Fortune continues to turn full circle.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF CARMINA BURANA

Born in 1895 into an upstanding Munich family of officers and scholars, Orff had established himself as a significant figure in the small but important modernist musical movement (The League for Contemporary Music) in otherwise conservative Munich, but as an artist, the odds seemed stacked against him when the Nazis came to power. As a representative of the “avant-garde” it would have been expected that the composer would become yet another victim of the Third Reich’s oppressive cultural policies. Like many other artists of the time, Orff was considered a ‘leftist’. He had many Jewish friends, including Kurt Weill and the poet Franz Werfel, and collaborated extensively with well-known Marxists like Brecht. There is also evidence that Orff was a quarter Jewish, a fact that could only have added to his insecurities. Recognising the precariousness of his status in the new Germany, he tried to establish his loyalty to the Nazi regime. Cynically choosing to forget all associations with Jewish, left wing, or modernist artists, Orff emphasised his hatred of jazz music and the atonality of Schoenberg and his disciples, and emphasised his own sincere and deep-seated appreciation of folk music. Awarded a job composing music for schools, he developed his theories on music pedagogy, trying to integrate his ideas into the music policies of the *Hitlerjugend* (Hitler Youth), sometimes tailoring them specifically to Nazi demands.



*Carmina Burana* was premiered in Frankfurt in 1937 to great success. It was originally staged, with dancing and mime accompanying the music, but despite Orff’s increasing contacts with Nazi officials, the premiere was met with a stinging critique by the influential Nazi musicologist Herbert Gerigk. According to Gerigk, *Carmina Burana* suffered from a *'mistaken return to primitive elements of instrumentalism and a foreign emphasis on rhythmic formulae'*. For most, such a damning review would have signalled the end of the piece, if not of the career of the composer. However, his positive contacts with high-ranking figures, and the sheer popularity of the piece with the public, gradually transformed it into a hit. Despite its exotic sounds and sexual themes, the piece came to be perceived as *'a celebration of the power of an uninterrupted life instinct'* and its elemental melodies and rhythms were said to bear witness to *'the indestructible and always re-emerging power of the ways of the common people'*.





Orff found a comfortable place for himself within the Party Machinery, consistently appeared at Reich events, and was the willing recipient of a Nazi state subsidy.

Orff wrote the following letter to his publisher, Schott Music: *"Everything I have written to date, and which you have, unfortunately, printed, can be destroyed. With Carmina Burana, my collected works begin."*

After the war, Orff was forced to appear before a de-nazification tribunal. Aided by a sympathetic American, he was exonerated. He claimed that he had been a founder member of the "White Rose" resistance movement, which had been organised by his close friend Kurt Huber. This was not true. In fact, he had never had any involvement with the group, and when Huber was arrested and executed for his activities in 1943, he refused to intervene. According to Huber's wife, she begged Orff to use his influence to help her husband, but Orff denied her request. If his friendship with Huber came out, he told her, he would be "ruined". Huber's wife never saw Orff again. Wracked by guilt, Orff would later write a letter to his late friend Huber, imploring him for forgiveness.

## THE MUSIC OF CARMINA BURANA

There are many composers who are famous for a single work, but few of those works have achieved the iconic status of Carl Orff's Carmina Burana. Its opening section is well known to millions who will not even have heard of its composer, and will be totally unaware of its origins. Along with the "Hallelujah" chorus it must nowadays be the most immediately recognisable of all choral works. It is a rather unlikely fate for a man far better known as an innovative and influential educator than as a composer.

Carl Orff (1895-1982) spent much of his life in his native Munich. He came from a musical family and began studies at the age of five. He briefly studied at the Academy of Musical Arts in Munich, but was dissatisfied with his teachers, and he was largely self-taught as a composer. While recovering from wounds sustained during World War I, he began to study the music of the 16th and 17th centuries, especially that of Monteverdi. This began a lifelong fascination with not only music of that period, but also with ancient texts. He also developed a lifelong fascination with the theatre.

Orff developed a theory that music was founded on rhythm and movement, and stressed improvisation based on fixed rhythmic patterns. He made extensive use of percussion instruments, many of which he developed himself and which are still used today as "Orff instruments." His theories and exercises were published in a massive five-volume 'Schulwerk', subtitled 'Music for Children'. His ideas about music education were extraordinarily influential, giving rise to a world-wide educational movement.



**Orff's music** for *Carmina Burana* reflects much of the theory he developed in his *Schulwerk*. The music is highly rhythmic and features not only an extensive percussion section but also occasionally percussive use of the text. Harmonically, he pares his music down to its essential elements. The choral parts are all homophonic and largely consist of unison singing or lines harmonized in thirds. They are set above orchestral parts which feature rhythmic or harmonic ostinatos. Orff composes in short musical phrases, and each section may have several distinctive phrases which repeat with each subsequent verse. While the overwhelming feeling is one of rhythmic energy, there is considerable variation in the treatment of the different poems, and Orff also displays a wonderful melodic inventiveness. The rhythmic complexities of *Carmina* and the shimmering orchestration clearly show the influence of the Russian, Igor Stravinsky, in particular, Stravinsky's early cantata, '*Les Noces*', (*The Wedding*). Rhythm for Orff, as for Stravinsky, is often the primary musical element.

Some of the solo arias pose bold challenges for singers: the only solo tenor aria, *Olim lacus colueram*, must be sung almost completely in falsetto to demonstrate the suffering of the character (in this case, a burning swan). The baritone arias often demand high notes not commonly found in baritone repertoire, and parts of the baritone aria *Dies nox et omnia* must be sung in falsetto: a unique example in baritone repertoire. Also noted is the solo soprano aria, *Dulcissime* which demands extremely high notes. Orff intended this aria for a lyric soprano, not a coloratura, so that the musical tensions would be more obvious.



# OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY 2019

+ = 20 years service  
§ = 30 years service  
\*\* = 50 years service

## SOPRANOS

Lorna Ashton  
Helen Banham  
Christine Birks  
Jill Bromley §  
Brenda Buckley §  
Linda Butcher  
Alison Coates  
Mary Cockroft  
Lynn M. Cotton +  
Mary Crossley  
Valerie Dawson  
Sue Donohue  
Claire Ellis  
Fiona Faragher  
Ann Garry Bray  
Margaret Hallett +  
Jill Hamnett  
Mal Hardiker  
Patricia Heaton  
Fiona Hesten  
Margaret Hood §  
Sybil Lamb  
Margaret Martin  
June O'Grady  
Louise Platts  
Marjorie Richards +  
Julia Robinson  
Janet Roche  
Elaine Shaw +  
Susan Smith  
Sheila Tolley  
Margaret Ulyatt  
Christine Whitehead  
Brenda Wildish

## ALTOS

Janet K. Albiston +  
Sylvia Andrew §  
Pat Ashworth  
Gillian Barker  
Carol Bedford  
Jo Dewhurst  
Jo-Anna Dobbs  
Edna Gill  
Tricia Golden  
Christine Grime +  
Helen Halliwell +  
Maureen Harrison  
Muriel Hardy  
Marjorie Hirst  
Sue Hutchinson  
Ann Joyce +  
Caroline Knights  
Janet Lindley  
Rachel McHugh  
Iva Mottley  
Nancy Murphy \*\*  
Susan Padwell  
Ann Pickard  
Margaret Rawlins  
Helen Rigby  
Brenda Roberts  
Eileen Scott  
Brenda Sharples  
Ellie Shercliffe  
Barbara Stamp  
Judith Stott  
Carol Ann Vaudrey  
Louise Whittaker  
Elizabeth Wiener

## TENORS

Derek Clutterbuck  
Barry Cotton +  
Lawrence Croft  
John Dearden  
C. Giles Dennis  
John J. Doyle  
Damien Gilmartin  
Alan Jackson  
Barry Jackson  
Gerard Marsden  
David Nickson  
Rodney Porter  
Alan Reeves  
John Richards  
Alan Scott  
Philip J. Shaw +  
Philippa Whittaker  
Keith Wiener +

## BASSES

Alan F. Bacon  
Christopher Barratt  
Vincent Birtles  
Philip Blanchard  
Michael Clegg  
Simon Doudeswell  
Mike Edmonson  
Eric Fallows +  
Peter Garrity  
Bill Hardiker  
George Hardy  
Halcolm Hardy  
Alan Haworth  
Henry Hope  
Peter G. Kerton  
Tim Lynch  
Peter Mayall  
Terry Quinn +  
David Shipp  
Andrew Summers

## Save the Dates.....

**Friday 20 December 2019**

**Family Christmas Concert**  
**Favourite Carols and Seasonal Music**

**With Ashton Band**

**IN OLDHAM PARISH CHURCH**

**ROCK STREET OLDHAM OL1 3UH**



**Sunday 10 May 2020**

**Italian Treasures**

**Petite Messe Solennelle (Rossini) and**  
**Messa di Gloria (Puccini)**

**IN THE STOLLER HALL HUNTS BANK**

**MANCHESTER M3 1DA**



**November 2020**

**In Celebration of Beethoven**

**In the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year of his Birth**

**IN THE RNCM CONCERT HALL**

**OXFORD ROAD MANCHESTER M13 9RD**



If you enjoy singing and have wondered about joining a choir, why not come along and try? All are welcome!

Oldham Choral Society holds regular rehearsals - time and venue: 7.20 p.m. - 9.35 p.m.  
(With 15 minute interval) at Chadderton Town Hall Garforth Street OL9 6PY

For further details visit [www.oldhamchoral.org.uk](http://www.oldhamchoral.org.uk) find us on FaceBook or contact: Gerard Marsden on 01706 558342

Oldham Choral Society is a member of Making Music North West and a registered charity - Number 518225