



tamesis

chamber choir

director - Louise Rapple
 pianist - Judith Creighton
www.tamesischamberchoir.co.uk

presents the final concert
 in the 2014 season
 "Flora and Fauna"

Sumer is icumen in

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 publicise our *Remembrance* CD
 by circulating our youtube
 'Remembrance' video montage



Saturday 21st June 2014
 7:30 pm
 St Laurence's Church, Reading





Tamesis Chamber Choir

Sopranos

Miranda Bradshaw
 Clare Garner
 Katie Johnston
 Julie Kench
 Jenny Lucas
 Vicky Mason
 Anne Owen
 Tania Pratt
 Charlie Watson
 Tamsyn Wilson

Altos

Sarah Finch
 Marion Harris
 Charlie Hobson
 Elysia Roberts
 Alison Wilkins

Tenors

Tim Beavan
 Nick Brown
 Simon Eastwood
 Laurence Hicks
 Jude Watts

Basses

James Allen
 Andy Button
 John Cobb
 Ed Hobson
 Patrick Moore

Tamesis Chamber Choir aims to offer something different from other choirs in the area. We are a high-standard, fun chamber choir performing several concerts per year. We re-audition formally each September but do sometimes have vacancies during the year, so if you are interested in singing with us, contact Louise on 0118 931 4279 or email lourap@gmail.com.

Our Christmas CD for Sue Ryder

Sue Ryder is a national charity that is passionate about giving people the care they want. They have 13 care centres across the UK providing compassionate care and support for people with palliative, long-term and end of life needs. Locally, they operate the Duchess of Kent Hospice and Nettlebed Hospice. Many of us will know people who have had the benefit of their care.

In October last year, Louise was amazed and proud to be named Sue Ryder's Creative Woman of the Year in a fabulous award ceremony at the Madejski Hotel. She was nominated for the award for her work in choral music with Tamesis and other choirs.

As a result of the award, we wanted to give something back to the charity, so in April we recorded our third CD, a CD of Christmas music, with a significant portion of the proceeds going towards the wonderful work Sue Ryder does. The CD will be available in October, so be ready to snap up several copies; it's the perfect Christmas soundtrack and will suit all your Christmas present needs!



Louise began learning piano at six and sang in a Church choir from seven. She read Music and French at Reading University, specialising in performance. She studied conducting at the Conservatoire de Pau in France during her year abroad, and returned to direct the Reading University Singers for two years.

Having graduated, Louise spent seven years in Church music as organist at two Berkshire Churches. She founded Tamesis in 2003. She also directs Tamesis Cathedral Singers, an occasional choir which sings Cathedral Evensongs twice a year. She is in demand locally as a deputy conductor, and enjoys the challenge of stepping in when other choir directors are indisposed; she regularly conducts Thames Valley Gay Chorus, Goring Chamber Choir and the Twyford Singers.

Louise works full-time at Shiplake College, teaching piano, playing the organ and administrating all sorts of things. As part of her work there she runs the College Chamber Choir and Shiplake Community Choir, a choir for singers of all ages and abilities, singing a mainly popular repertoire. She is a regular panellist on Radio Berkshire's Culture Panel with Mike Read, where she tries her hardest to appear both cultured and funny, not always succeeding. In January she will be starting a new Community Choir in the village of Hagbourne in South Oxfordshire. Do get in touch if you might be interested in joining!

Forthcoming events

Visit www.tamesis.org for latest news and tickets

Saturday 18th October 2014
 Reading Salvation Army Hall
Joint concert with Ascot Brass
In aid of *Help for Heroes*

Having worked with Ascot Brass at the *The Armed Man* concert in the Town Hall in April, we enjoyed such lovely mutual admiration that we decided to do a concert together! Don't miss this one as it promises to be a real treat. Keep an eye on our website for details and tickets.

Saturday 6th December 2014
 St Nicolas' Church, Newbury
A Christmas concert for
Cancer Charities

We are delighted to be invited back to perform at this prestigious concert for the second year, having had such a marvellous evening last year. Celebrity readers, audience carols and, of course, sublime choral numbers from Tamesis—what more could you ask? Do come and join us! Ticket details will be on our website in the autumn.

A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square

Eric Maschwitz/Manning Sherwin/Jack Strachey

This wartime favourite was apparently written in Le Lavandou, a fishing village on the Côte d'Azur in France in 1939, just before the outbreak of the Second World War. Its first performance in a local bar by the composers made little impression, but the following year it was premiered by Judy Campbell in London, and became an enduring hit both in England and in the States. It was covered by virtually every well-regarded singer of the era—Frank Sinatra, Perry Como, Vera Lynn, Bobby Darin, Nat King Cole and Glenn Miller to name but a few—thus earning its status as an international favourite.

Let's do it Cole Porter arr. David Blackwell

Cole Porter wrote many 'list songs' where the song is based partly on a list. This is his first, and arguably most famous attempt at such a song. He lists all the people who fall in love, from all over the world, and then the animals, birds and fish who clearly do it as well. Needless to say, some have taken the whole song to be a euphemism for sex, and with lines like 'Why ask if shad do it? Waiter, bring me shad roe!' it's easy to see why. The song was written in 1928 for the musical *Paris*, Porter's first Broadway success. Porter was a strong admirer of Gilbert & Sullivan, and their influence can be seen in the string of suggestive and droll comparisons and examples, the preposterous pairings and double entendres and the references to culture both highbrow and popular contained within the lyrics.

Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo

Michael Flanders/Joseph Horowitz

This wonderful cantata was published in 1973, with words by Michael Flanders of Flanders & Swann fame and music by Joseph Horowitz. It was originally written for unison or two-part choir for school-children, but an SATB version followed, which was recorded memorably by the King's Singers in 1972 with Horowitz himself at the piano. The text follows the Old Testament story very closely, but is adapted to 20th century humour brilliantly, with some extremely funny moments. Listen out for the sinners drowning, Edgar Allen Poe's raven and the wonderful arrival of the rainbow, God's promise that he'll never send another flood again.

LER, June 2014

A big thank you

to our pianist, Judith Creighton,
and to the authorities here at
St Laurence's for the use of this lovely
Church and for making us so welcome.

See overleaf for a selection of photos from the recent recording sessions for our Christmas CD, courtesy of the talented Emily Cobb. As you will see, we did our best to make ourselves feel Christmassy in April, with Christmas jumpers, decorations, a Christmas tree and even mince pies! Find Emily on facebook at Emily Cobb Photography.

Programme

Sumer is icumen in Anon

Four "Fauna" folk songs:

She's like the swallow arr. Calver

Black sheep arr. Rutter

The turtle dove arr. Vaughan Williams

Sourwood mountain arr. Rutter

Interlude

Flower Duet from *Lakmé* Délibes

Sopranos: Tamsyn Wilson and Miranda Bradshaw

Three "Flora" folk songs:

My love is like a red red rose arr. Rathbone

Scarborough Fair arr. Tyler

Strawberry Fair arr. James

Medley from CATS Lloyd Webber

Interval

Kiss from a rose Seal, arr. Monette

A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square
Maschwitz/Sherwin/Strachey

Let's do it Porter arr. Blackwell

Interlude

Poisoning pigeons in the park Lehrer

Tenor: Jude Watts

Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo

Flanders/Horowitz

Narrator—Julie Kench

God—Patrick Moore

Noah—Andy Button

Mrs Noah—Tamsyn Wilson

Mrs Ham—Jude Watts

Sarcastic Bystander Who Drowns—Nick Brown

Quartet: Soprano—Tania Pratt, Alto—Sarah Finch

Tenor—Tim Beavan, Bass—James Allen

Notes on the programme

Sumer is icumen in

Anonymous (c.1250)

Sometimes called “the Reading Rota” **Sumer is icumen in** is so-called because the earliest surviving manuscript of the piece was discovered at Reading Abbey. This manuscript, pictured here, is now in the British Library. It is speculated that it might be by William de Wycombe, a medieval composer and copyist of the time. The piece is written in the Wessex dialect of Middle English. The translation of the first verse is “Summer has arrived; loudly sing, cuckoo! Seed is growing, the meadow is blooming and the wood is coming into leaf now. Sing, cuckoo!” We feel this is a very apt piece to be singing on Midsummer’s Eve.



She’s like the swallow

Newfoundland folk song
arr. Stuart Calvert

This folk song originates from Newfoundland, on the east coast of Canada. The version we sing tonight includes verses about the eponymous maiden picking roses and then making a bed of them on which to lie down with a broken heart, but it doesn’t tell what happens in the middle, namely that she takes her roses to her love, who says “How foolish, foolish you must be, to think I love no-one but thee. The world’s not made for one alone, I take delight in everyone”. And so it becomes clear why her heart is broken. The cad.

Black sheep

Traditional American lullaby
arr. John Rutter

This piece is mentioned in a rather excellent 1947 collection of Anglo-American Songs and Ballads that I came across in my search for information. The author thinks the song is a version of a Scottish ballad ‘The Twa Corbies’ where two crows pick out the eyes of a dead horse. He heard the song in Arkansas, where it was bees and buzzards which picked out the eyes of the little lost lamb. Our version, sanitised for your delicate ears, says “Birds and the butterflies a-fluttering by” thus doing away with the gruesome picking out of the eyes altogether!

The turtle dove

English folk song
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

In the early 1900s Vaughan Williams realised that English folk songs were in fast decline due to an increasingly literate population and the availability of printed music in rural areas. He proceeded to spend much of the rest of his life travelling the country collecting, transcribing and preserving as many as he could find. He collected this one in Sussex in November 1904, but didn’t write this arrangement until twenty years later.

Sourwood mountain

Tennessee folk song
arr. John Rutter

Our version is a Tennessee folk song, but on further research it appears this song is most closely associated with the music of Appalachia, a cultural region in the eastern United States that does border Tennessee. The song is a lament over the narrator’s true love, from whom he is separated, but you have to listen pretty closely to pick this out among all the ‘diddle-i-day’-ing!

My love is like a red red rose

Scottish traditional
arr. Jonathan Rathbone

Robert Burns was another passionate champion of folk songs, collecting and preserving over 300 Scottish folk songs in the last ten years of his life. Although this song, and its tune, are generally thought to be by Burns, in fact he merely collected the song, having heard it sung by a country girl to a different tune from the one we hear tonight. Over the years the words were set to several different tunes but the one which endures is the traditional Scottish tune ‘Low Down in the Broom’, which was first set to these words in 1821, 25 years after Burns’ death.

Scarborough Fair

English folk song
arr. Stephen Tyler

Stephen Tyler is the conductor of local choir A440, and when I was looking for an arrangement of this song, I came across his version on youtube, sung by Reading Phoenix Choir and conducted by Stephen himself. (The clip has had an amazing 37700 hits and counting!) The song relates the tale of a man who instructs the listener to tell his former love to perform a series of impossible tasks, after which he will take her back. Another cad, then.

Strawberry Fair

English folk song
arr. Donald James

This folk song was collected in Devon in 1891. The singer meets a fair maiden on the way to Strawberry Fair, and when she offers him his pick of her basket of cherries and roses, he asks instead for her hand in marriage, saying he’s looking for an honest mind, a generous heart and a tongue that is neither nimble nor tart. Does that make him yet another cad?

Medley from CATS

TS Eliot/Andrew Lloyd Webber

CATS premiered in the West End in 1981, with music by Lloyd-Webber and words from TS Eliot’s *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats*, which was published in 1939. It transferred to Broadway in 1982, and is the second longest-running show in Broadway history. It’s the fourth longest-running West End show, having closed on its 21st birthday in 2002. The show details the antics of the Jellicle Cats - who by day are just common cats but who by night have completely different lives. In this medley we hear about Old Deuteronomy, the Jellicle Patriarch - an ancient, wise cat, Skimbleshanks, The Railway Cat, Macavity, The Mystery Cat, and magical Mr Mistoffelees, the original conjuring cat. We also hear the famous *Memory*, sung sadly by Grizabella, a one-time glamour cat who is now a shadow of her former self.

Kiss from a rose

Seal, arr. Francois Monette

Initially released in 1994, **Kiss from a rose** made it to number 20 in the UK chart. The following year, it was used over the final credits of the film *Batman Forever*, prompting a re-release, and this time it reached number four in the UK and was number one in the US and Australia. Since then, its enduring popularity has belied its brief appearance towards the top of the charts in the UK. It is still frequently played on the radio. Apparently, Seal, who is of Nigerian and Brazilian heritage, wrote the song while living in a squat in Kensal Green, as a tribute to Crosby, Stills and Nash. Another fascinating fact? Seal’s full name is Seal Henry Olusegun Olumide Adeola Samuel!