

ST CATHERINE'S DAY GALA CONCERT

Friday 22nd November, 2024
7.30pm

Auditorium, Anniversary Halls

The audience is kindly reminded that we request that no photography or video footage is taken during the concert. Should you wish to take photographs after the concert, we ask that everyone be mindful that images may include other students. If other students feature, the footage should not be shared on the internet or on social media, but should be reserved for family albums or electronic folders at home.

The Bar is open in the Lower Atrium before this evening's concert and during the interval. For your convenience, interval refreshments may also be pre-ordered at the Bar before the concert.

Symphony Orchestra

with Middle Chamber Choir and Senior Chamber Choir

Director: Donald Lloyd

Riverdance **Whelan arr. Lloyd**

Riverdance is a theatrical show that celebrates traditional Irish music and dance. It is rooted in a three-part suite of baroque-influenced traditional music called *Timedance*, and began as a seven-minute interval act at the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, held in Dublin. This performance can be considered to be one of the most well-known interval acts in Eurovision history, and is credited with transforming Irish dance from a modest and reserved traditional dance form into a new, vibrant modern form. The show features a blend of traditional Irish music and dance and was originally performed by the Irish folk band *Planxty* along with a rock rhythm section of electric bass, drums, and a four-piece horn section. Its dancing includes both solo and group performances, showcasing the intricate footwork and energetic rhythms which are characteristic of Irish dance, and exploring themes of Irish culture, mythology, and history.

Since its debut, *Riverdance* has toured all over the world, captivating audiences with its vibrant performances and becoming a symbol of Irish cultural pride.

Brass Band

Director: Denise Burt

Down by the Salley Gardens **Irish trad. arr. Kingston**

Down by the Salley Gardens is a beautiful Irish folk song, with text written by the renowned poet W.B. Yeats in 1889. The poem is a reflection on lost love and the passing of time, capturing a sense of wistfulness and longing. The song's title refers to 'salley' trees, or willows, which grow by rivers and streams in Ireland, often in a natural tranquil setting.

This arrangement for brass band maintains the simplicity and elegance of the original folk tune, passing the lyrical and haunting melody between the trumpets and the horns, all supported by the subtle harmonies from the lower brass.

Middle Chamber Choir

Director: Mitchell Farquharson

Can You Hear Me? **Chilcott**

Bob Chilcott's *Can You Hear Me?* is a poignant and evocative piece that explores the themes of communication and connection. The text is a reflection from the perspective of a deaf child reaching out to the world around them. Composed for the *Children in Harmony Choral Festival* in 1998, Chilcott's simple yet profound setting incorporates sign language to transcend the barrier of accessibility whilst retaining the innocence and earnestness of the child's voice, creating a powerful emotional resonance. The gentle and flowing melodies enhance the contemplative nature of the text and the recurring question – "*Can you hear me?*"

– serves as a powerful metaphor for the human desire to be understood and acknowledged.

In the composer's own words: “I wrote this piece to include sign language, as I have always found it to be an incredibly sensitive and beautiful form of communication – it also served as a reminder to me always to try to be open and aware of other people, and also of our surroundings.”

Senior Chamber Choir

Director: Sarah Jones

Cantique de Jean Racine **Fauré arr. Greenfield**

Composed in 1865, when Fauré was just twenty, *Cantique de Jean Racine* is very much the precursor to the *Requiem*, with similarly lush intense choral writing layered on top of sparse keyboard accompaniment. As with the *Requiem*, it takes a religious text as its inspiration – in this case, words by the French playwright Jean Racine. This arrangement has captured the same beautiful harmonies for upper voices.

Word of God, one with the Most High,
In whom alone we have our hope,
Eternal Day of heaven and earth,
We break the silence of the peaceful night;
Saviour Divine, cast your eyes upon us!

Pour on us the fire of your powerful grace,
That all hell may flee at the sound of your voice;
Banish the slumber of a weary soul
That brings forgetfulness of your laws!

O Christ, look with favour upon your faithful people
Now gathered here to praise you;
Receive their hymns offered to your immortal glory;
May they go forth filled with your gifts.

String Orchestra

Director: Silja Loya

Largo *from Lute Concerto in D major RV93* **Vivaldi arr. Martin**

Vivaldiana **Martin**

Although we associate Vivaldi mainly with Venice because he spent pretty much the first forty years of his life there, he did, inevitably, get itchy feet as he became older. In his fifties, his reputation as a composer preceded him and Vivaldi was able to travel quite a lot. This lute concerto comes from this globe-trotting period (or, at least, this *Europe*-trotting period). It was written in Bohemia, although it never saw publication in his lifetime. The *Largo*, without a doubt, is a piece of touching beauty. In the original version, the lute carries a melodic line of noble but peaceful simplicity, while the violins, bass, and continuo provide harmonic support. The concerto has been recorded by lute as well as mandolin players and there are modern arrangements transposed for guitar. In our String Orchestra arrangement, the melodic line has been given to the first violins.

Vivaldiana by Peter Martin was influenced and inspired by music of the Venetian baroque. It was written for Sam Heredia in recognition of his remarkable and inspirational orchestral programme in Mexico.

Wind Band

Director: Denise Burt

Radetzky March **Strauss arr. Terry**

The *Radetzky March* was composed in 1848 and is one of the most widely recognised works in the classical music repertoire. Strauss senior was commissioned to compose the march in honour of Field Marshall Radetzky, who had achieved significant military successes during the Austro-Sardinian War. In Austria, the march is often played as a celebratory anthem. It is especially famous for being performed at the annual Viennese New Year's Day Concert, where

traditionally the conductor encourages the audience to clap in time with the music.

Wind Band have thoroughly enjoyed practising this lively march with its infectious rhythms and bold melodies, and I am sure they would like you to join in by clapping with the final refrain!

Fourth Form Choir

Director: Matthew Greenfield

I Have a Dream **Donnelly arr. Strid**

Mary Donnelly, a contemporary composer known for her evocative and inspiring choral works, has crafted a powerful musical setting of Martin Luther King Jr's iconic speech, "*I Have a Dream*." This poignant composition captures the spirit of hope, unity and social justice that resonated through Dr King's words.

Born and raised in Nevada, Donnelly met George Strid when they were assigned to team-teach a Music class. They were later invited to write a musical together for the school where they taught, and this initiated many years of collaboration which resulted in over two hundred songs and twenty-five musicals.

Camerata

Director: Silja Loya

Overture – Dieci al prezzo di uno **arr. Martin**

If you regularly have BBC Radio 3 or Classic FM on in the background, this overture is a treat for you: it comprises some of the world's most widely-known pieces from the classical repertoire, condensed into one overture and arranged for string orchestra. But can you name the composers and the pieces? There are ten works by eight different composers in this mash-up.

INTERVAL

(20 minutes)

Fife & Drum Band

Directors: Denise Burt, Ian Young

The St Catherine **trad. arr. Kenny**

The St Catherine was stumbled upon by Major Kenny whilst arranging our very own *Farewell Medley* that the Fife & Drum Band performs at the end of Speech Day. A rousing piece arranged for piccolo, flutes and percussion, *The St Catherine* has become a traditional piece regularly performed on school occasions.

Concert Band

Director: Ian Young

War Horse: Dartmoor, 1912 **Williams**

War Horse serves as the musical accompaniment to the 2011 film directed by Steven Spielberg. The score, performed by a 90-piece orchestra, was recorded in March and April of the same year.

John Williams drew inspiration from his visits to a horse farm in California, where he observed the interactions and behaviours of horses. He noted, “I developed a routine of watching the horses in the morning, which allowed me to appreciate their connections with one another and their curiosity towards me. This experience deepened my understanding of horses as truly remarkable beings.

They have been our magnificent and trusted companions for ages, contributing to our lives with remarkable grace."

This project provided a rich musical opportunity, as it explores the relationship between humans and animals across three different countries. The score begins with an intimate portrayal of the bond between Joey and Albert on the farm, but the onset of war dramatically shifts the tone. The music transitions from a serene, gentle, and sentimental quality to the intense sounds of battle and conflict. This composition offers a profound musical journey filled with emotional depth, aiming to evoke the lyrical, poetic, and tragic atmosphere of that era.

The melodic and harmonic brilliance of John Williams is vividly showcased in this compelling yet nuanced film score. The symphonic arrangement for band that you will experience this evening highlights the warmth and character of the score, ranging from solo passages to expansive ensemble themes.

Upper Three Choir

accompanied by The Upper Sixth Orchestra

Director: Matthew Greenfield

Elton John Medley **arr. Greenfield**

Born in 1947 as Reginald Kenneth Dwight, Sir Elton John is an acclaimed British singer, songwriter and pianist whose music and showmanship have had a significant and long-lasting effect on the music industry. He learned to play the piano at an early age and won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, where he studied for five years. At the age of fifteen he formed a blues band (the names Elton and John came from fellow bandmembers), but left five years later to embark on a solo career, and met lyricist Bernie Taupin with whom he went on to have a highly-successful partnership.

Tonight's medley includes a number of classic Elton John hits from the 1970s and 1980s, which were *almost* entirely familiar to the U6 Orchestra, and which U3 Choir have greatly enjoyed getting to know.

Jazz Band

Director: Ian Young

Deed I Do **Hirsch & Rose arr. Stitzel**

September **White, McKay & Willis**

Deed I Do is a jazz standard from 1926, featuring music by Fred Rose and lyrics by Walter Hirsch. This piece was notably recorded by the prominent clarinettist and bandleader Benny Goodman, marking his first recording in the same year. Other distinguished vocalists who have interpreted this song include Lena Horne, Perry Como, and Ella Fitzgerald, accompanied by the *Count Basie Orchestra*. This evening, our Jazz Band will perform this classic, showcasing a recent arrangement by Rick Stitzel, with Iris taking the lead on vocals and trumpet.

September is a composition by the American band *Earth, Wind & Fire*, which was released as a single on November 18, 1978. The track achieved significant commercial success, reaching the number one position on the US charts and number three in the UK. *September* has become a defining piece of the band's repertoire, having been sampled, covered, remixed, and recorded multiple times. In 2018, it was included in the Library of Congress's National Recording Registry, recognising its cultural, historical, or aesthetic significance. The song was collaboratively written by *Earth, Wind & Fire* guitarist Al McKay, vocalist Maurice White, and songwriter Allee Willis over the course of a month. Willis remarked on the seemingly nonsensical lyrics "*Ba De Ya*," which White incorporated throughout the song. White's response was, "Who cares what it means? Remember, never let the lyrics get in the way of a good groove." This insight became a crucial lesson for Willis in her songwriting journey. The Jazz Band is sure to be in high spirits tonight as they perform this arrangement, which has

consistently been a highlight during our weekly rehearsals. It undoubtedly holds the top position in our Jazz Band's repertoire.

Middle Cantores

Director: Sarah Jones

The Call of Wisdom **Todd**

This radiant anthem was commissioned as part of the celebrations to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. It was first performed at the Service of Thanksgiving on 5 June 2012 at St Paul's Cathedral by choristers from the Chapel Royal, St Paul's, and an expressly-auditioned *Diamond Choir* of young singers from around the UK. Setting a text adapted from Proverbs 8 by Michael Hampel that implores the listener to place their trust in a faithful God, Todd employs arching melodies and beautifully simple harmonies that are underpinned by a gentle accompaniment.

Cantores

Director: Matthew Greenfield

Moondance **Morrison arr. Greenfield**

Northern Irish singer-songwriter Van Morrison recorded what was to become his most popular song in 1969: *Moondance* has remained a firm favourite of the repertoire ever since. With its walking bass line, light piano chords, instrumental solos and soft jazz swing, Morrison later described the work as 'a sophisticated song: Frank Sinatra wouldn't have been out of place singing that.'

In tonight's a cappella arrangement, many of the instrumental features of the original can be heard, all held together with some trademark Cantores sophistication. Frank Sinatra would approve.

Senior Choir

Director: Matthew Greenfield

When the Saints Go Marching In **trad. arr. Rutter**

John Rutter is one of the most well-known contemporary composers of choral music. Born in London, he went on to read Music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he first came to notice as a composer during his early undergraduate years. In the latter half of the 1970s, he held the position of Director of Music in the Chapel of his alma mater, and has since divided his time between composition, editing and conducting.

In his rousing arrangement of *When The Saints Go Marching In*, Rutter cleverly builds up the familiar American gospel melody, using it differently in each iteration with a series of counter-melodies in the more stirring verses and atmospheric harmonies when the text is more reflective. After an introduction borrowed from *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, Rutter takes the choir and audience through a journey of several key changes in his usual style, building up the excitement towards a climactic ending. Do enjoy the final top C in the highest soprano part!

MUSIC
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