



Matthew Larkin
Music Director

Listing information (media release follows)

MASS APPEAL

Saturday, April 12, 2008

Dominion Chalmers Church

Matthew Larkin – Conductor, organ soloist

Justin Welsh – baritone

Teresa van den Boogaard – organ

ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

Missa Brevis

Teresa van den Boogaard – organ

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Songs Of Travel

Justin Welsh – baritone, Matthew Larkin – piano

(The Vagabond, The Roadside Fire, Youth and Love, The Infinite Shining Heavens, Whither Must I Wander)

Te Deum In G

Three Chorale Preludes On Welsh Hymn Tunes (*Bryn Calafaria - Rhosymedre – Hyfyrdol*)

Mass In G Minor

The Ottawa Choral Society presents MASS APPEAL, an homage to the great English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams on the 50th anniversary of his death. Along with a retrospective of the magnificent Vaughan Williams legacy, the programme also features Zoltan Kodaly's brilliant Missa Brevis. The concert takes place in the splendid Byzantine setting of Dominion Chalmers Church on Saturday, April 12th at 8:00 pm.

Choirs and orchestras across the world will be singing and playing the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams in this, the 50th anniversary year of the great composer's death. The Ottawa Choral Society has planned its own homage with **MASS APPEAL**, the concluding concert of its 2007-08 concert series, which will feature a number of works by Vaughan Williams. On the programme are his glorious unaccompanied *Mass in G Minor* for double choir and his triumphant **Te Deum in G**. Representing the composer as the arranger of an enormous number of magnificent hymns, Music Director Matthew Larkin will be heard as organ recitalist in *Three Chorale Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes*, which he will perform on the church's magnificent Casavant organ. To reveal his genius as the composer of many exquisite, quintessential English songs, Larkin has invited the fine young baritone, Justin Welsh, a winner of this year's 'OCS New Discoveries Auditions', to perform five songs from Vaughan Williams' great 'wayfarer' cycle, *Songs of Travel*.

Also featured is the brilliant *Missa Brevis* by Vaughan Williams' Hungarian contemporary, Zoltan Kodaly. Juxtaposing the work of these two men, who were working on opposite sides of Europe, will provide, Larkin says, "a fascinating comparison and complement of two of the twentieth century's most influential, admired and beloved composers".

TICKETS: Adults \$30, Students \$10.

Available at the door and on-line at www.ottawachoralsociety.com

Also at Collected Works (Wellington at Holland), Leading Note (370 Elgin), Compact Music (785A Bank) and CD Warehouse (all Locations).

Backgrounder:

Ralph Vaughan Williams was often called the "man who set England to music". Musical editor of the 1906 English Hymnal, many of his settings remain in use to this day. He was the composer of nine symphonies, splendid choral music and beautiful songs. The listeners of Classic FM in Britain have just voted his rhapsodic work for violin, "The Lark Ascending".

To mark the 50th anniversary of the composer's death, Matthew Larkin has programmed a selection of the great composer's most treasured works. The **Mass in G Minor**, written in 1921, has been said to be the "first mass written in a distinctly 'English' manner since the sixteenth century". A masterpiece for *a cappella* double chorus, Larkin has brilliantly paired it with the triumphant **Te Deum in G**. The evening will also offer a splendid opportunity to hear Matthew Larkin as organ recitalist when he performs **Three Chorale Preludes on Welsh Hymn Tunes** on the magnificent Cassavant organ at Dominion Chalmers Church. Presenting the composer as the writer of some of our most beloved songs, the OCS is delighted to introduce Justin Welsh, the young baritone who was a winner in the recent 2008 OCS New Discoveries Auditions for Young Artists. With Matthew Larkin as his accompanist, he will perform five songs from RVW's inimitably "English" and enduringly lovely **Songs of Travel**: *The Vagabond, The Roadside Fire, Youth and Love, The Infinite Shining Heavens* and *Whither Must I Wander*.

The evening also features the brilliant **Missa Brevis** by RVW's Hungarian contemporary, the ethnomusicologist, educator, linguist and philosopher Zoltán Kodály. Written in 1943 as an Organ Mass, Kodaly rearranged it in 1945 for a performance by a mixed chorus and orchestra with organ and it received its first performance in the Cloakroom of the Budapest Opera House during the Siege of Budapest in 1945. Teresa van den Boogaard joins the Choral Society to perform the organ accompaniment. Kodaly is particularly dear to choristers for his firm belief in choral singing as a way to musical literacy. Indeed, after World War II, his ideas became the basis of state policy, backed in part by his own large output of choral music, much of it for children.

Larkin says, "The great masses on this evening's programme offer a fascinating comparison and complement. Composing on opposite sides of Europe, these two modern masters revived the polyphony of Bach and Palestrina, and in an uncanny synchronicity, both composers were great educators and avid collectors of the native songs of their people." In Europe, Kodaly was a pioneer in the serious study of folk tales and music, recording over 100,000 songs on phonographic cylinders, while, on his own visits to the hamlets and towns across Britain, RVW catalogued over 800 English folksongs. Together the two men safeguarded the musical heritage of their countrymen in a war-shattered Europe.

Tickets: adults \$30, students \$10. Available at the door and online at the Ottawa Choral Society Web site www.ottawachoralsociety.com. Also available at Collected Works in Westboro (Wellington at Holland), Leading Note (370 Elgin), Compact Music in the Glebe (785A Bank Street), and CD Warehouse (all Locations).