



Abbey Chamber Concerts Sunday 2nd February 2014

The Choir of Somerville College, Oxford

David Crown (conductor)
Robert Pecksmith (organ and piano)

Richard Farrant (1525-1580)

Hide not thou thy face

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

Missa O magnum mysterium

Kyrie

Gloria

Agnus Dei

Thomas Ravenscroft (1582-1635)

Remember, O thou man

Jacques Arcadelt (1507-1568)

O Lord, my God

Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C (BuxWV 137)

Robert Pecksmith, organ

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Ave verum corpus

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

O salutaris hostia

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

A Hymn for St. Cecilia

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Studien für den Pedalfügel, op. 56

V. Nicht zu schnell

Robert Pecksmith, organ

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)

Bogoroditsye Dyevo

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Seal Lullaby

John Rutter (b. 1945)

O clap your hands

The Choir of Somerville College, Oxford

The Choir of Somerville College, founded by Francis Knights and Sam Bayliss in 2001, is one of Oxford University's leading mixed-voice college choirs. Since 2007 David Crown has been Director of Chapel Music. He is assisted by Robert Pecksmith (Organ Scholar) and Stefan Schwarz (Choir Manager).

In recent years the choir has toured Germany and Italy. Performances in the UK include a number of cathedral visits and high-profile concerts in Oxford and London. In 2012 the choir was invited to sing the Accession Day service at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the Diamond Jubilee. The choir has released two CDs on the Stone Records label, *Requiem aeternam* (2012) and *Advent Calendar* (2013). As part of the *Britten in Oxford* festival, the choir recorded a newly commissioned work by Daniel Saleeb for Radio 3 in December. Plans for 2013/2014 include two performances of Bach's *St John Passion* and a US tour with a service at Washington National Cathedral and several concerts in the Boston area.

Soprano: Ruth Akinradewo, Beth McMillan, Joanna Perkins, Megan Thomas, Emily Winkler, Alexandra Worrell

Alto: Katie Jeffries-Harris, Eleanor Makower, Isabel Sinagola, Orly Watson

Tenor: James Aldred, Antony Beere, Ian Buchanan, Sam Walker

Bass: Oliver Johnston-Watt, Matthew Kerr, Nathan Mattock, Robert Pecksmith (Organ Scholar), Christoph Schnedermann, Stefan Schwarz (Choir Manager)

Website: www.somervillechoir.com

David Crown (conductor)

David Crown has been singing and conducting choirs and orchestras since his teens. He won a Choral Scholarship to King's College, Cambridge and was also a university instrumental award holder on the viola. At university he conducted many symphonies and large-scale oratorios and for a while also played the viola professionally. He also conducted his youth orchestras and at the Purcell School of Music where he attended sixth form. Immediately after leaving university he embarked on a career as bass-baritone soloist in opera, lieder and oratorio winning several competitions. He also built a considerable reputation as teacher of singing and conducting. He taught for five years at Bristol University and now teaches in Oxford. In more recent years he has left the world of solo singing and returned to his first love of conducting.

He is Director of Music at Somerville College, Oxford, and Music Director of the Reading Phoenix Choir and the Oxford Singers. His work with choirs and orchestras has attracted superb notices in the UK and abroad. He is also in demand for master-classes and as guest conductor with many other choirs and orchestras. He is frequently asked to be on the judging panel of competitions, both choral, vocal and in composition.

A CD of Duruflé's *Requiem* coupled with the world premiere recording of Robin Milford's *Mass* recorded by Somerville and featuring soloists including mezzo-soprano Christine Rice and cellist Guy Johnston was released on Stone Records in 2012 and received excellent reviews. Reading Phoenix Choir have made several broadcasts and took part in the Olympic Torch ceremonies. Somerville have been invited to sing Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral three times and took part in *Writing for Voices* for the *Britten in Oxford* festival in 2013 as the only collegiate choir.

Website: www.david-crown.com

Robert Pecksmith, ARCO (organ and piano)

Robert Pecksmith is currently the Organ Scholar of Somerville College, Oxford, where he accompanies and occasionally directs the college choir for their regular services and concerts. He began musical life aged 5 on the piano, and moving to the organ aged 13 at the Birmingham Conservatoire under the tutelage of Henry Fairs, where he remained for five years. During this time he performed regularly and participated in several masterclasses, notably at Lincoln's Inn and at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, as well as accompanying several vocal groups associated with the Birmingham Conservatoire; he also played regularly for his parish church in Bournville, Birmingham.

Now at Oxford, Robert receives lessons from Stephen Farr, and was recently awarded an ARCO diploma, also winning the Sowerbutts Prize and Durrant Prize. He has had the pleasure of participating in numerous choir concerts and tours, notably at Blackburn Cathedral, Lancaster Priory, Birmingham Cathedral, Ampleforth Abbey and three times at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Robert regularly performs recitals as well as participating in masterclasses led by David Goode, Guy Bovet and William Whitehead. He has twice been a finalist in the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition. Recently, he collaborated with conductor Nicholas Cleobury for a concert recorded by the BBC.

Future plans include a choir tour to America and an extensive recital tour of Germany with concerts in Berlin, Brandenburg and Weimar. Robert also pursues piano studies with Margaret Newman, achieving a DipABRSM aged 16, winning numerous prizes in music competitions, both for his solo playing and as part of a piano trio.

Website: www.robertpecksmith.co.uk