

Review : Hardyngge Choir and Aeolian Singers concert 18th October 2014

The audience at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban were treated to a most delightful concert on Saturday evening. It was a joint concert with the Hardyngge Choir and Aeolian Singers accompanied by excellent playing from the Hertfordshire Classical Orchestra under the skilful conductor Rufus Frowde. They performed a well balanced programme comprising the Schubert Magnificat, Mozart Clarinet Concerto followed by Beethoven's Mass in C.

The choirs were supported by soloists Soraya Mafi, Soprano, Rose Setten, Mezzo-soprano, Nick Pritchard, Tenor, and Timothy Nelson, Bass. They sang throughout with exemplary expertise and in particular Saraya captivated the audience with her wonderful voice.

From the start of the Magnificat, Schubert's only setting of the words, I knew we were in for a treat, the choirs sang well with clear diction and excellent dynamics.

Beethoven wrote two masses, the Mass in C performed tonight, and the Missa Solemnis some fifteen years later. There were electrifying moments in the performance, and again with excellent dynamics and diction from the singers.

The choral works were contrasted by the Mozart's delightful Clarinet concerto, his only concerto for the then recently invented instrument written shortly before his untimely death in 1791. The soloist, Jane Booth, skillfully played a historic Basset Clarinet and produced a wonderful tonal quality. There were excellent florid passages, and overall the performance was vibrant and invigorating.

A most wonderful evening, and I hope that the choirs will entertain us with another joint venture in the future.

Neil Buick