

*Viva la Musica*  
Chamber Choir

# *Songs and Sonnets*

*A celebration of Shakespeare and Music*



*Peter Williams ~ Piano*

*Beth Williams ~ Musical Director*

*Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015, 7.30pm*

*All Saints, Gilmorton*

Our 'Shakespeare and Music' theme has three elements. Firstly, the inspiration that Shakespeare has provided to countless composers and musicians over the centuries. Secondly, the importance of music in daily life in Shakespeare's time, and thus its appearance in some form in almost all of his plays (there is singing in all but five, whether full songs, snatches of a ballad or indicated in stage directions. Some of the songs were well-known texts of the time, most were written by Shakespeare). Thirdly, Shakespeare's own appreciation of music, apparent in the references to its nature, power and beauty that litter the plays and sonnets.

In tonight's concert, we will try to give a tiny insight in to these three strands: we present a number of works by 20<sup>th</sup> century composers who have set Shakespeare's words to music (some of those being the full songs mentioned above), alongside vocal and instrumental pieces which would have been familiar to Shakespeare and his contemporaries. These are all interspersed with spoken excerpts which have music as their theme.

*Songs and Sonnets* No. 1-3

George Shearing

Live with me and be my love

(from *Sonnets to Sundry Notes of Music*)

When daffodils begin to peer (*The Winter's Tale*)

It was a lover and his lass (*As You Like It*)

Excerpt from *Twelfth Night* (Act 1, Scene 1)

**Read by Martin Cooke**

Four Elizabethan pieces:

Phillis was a fair maid

Anon.

Sellenger's Round

Traditional

Go to bed, Sweet Muse

Robert Jones

John come kiss me now

William Byrd

**Sue Cooke, Jo Milner & Beth Williams, recorders**

Weep you no more

Roger Quilter

(*Seven Elizabethan Lyrics*, No. 1. Text anon.)

**Lis Muller, Contralto**

April is in my mistress' face

Thomas Morley

Fyer, fyer!

Excerpt from *Henry VIII* (Act 3, Scene 1)

*Let us garlands bring* No. 1 and 4

Gerald Finzi

Come away, come away, death

O mistress mine

*(Twelfth Night)*

**John Thawley, baritone**

*Songs and Sonnets* No. 5-7

George Shearing

Who is Silvia? *(Two Gentlemen of Verona)*

Fie on sinful fantasy *(The Merry Wives of Windsor)*

Hey, ho, the wind and the rain *(Twelfth Night)*

## *INTERVAL*

Blow, blow thou winter wind

John Rutter

*(As You Like It)*

Draw on, sweet night ~ *Birthday Madrigals*, no. 2

(Words possibly by John Wilbye, 1609)

Ah Robin

William Cornysh

How merrily we live

Michael East

Excerpt from *The Merchant of Venice* (Act 5, Scene 1)

Three Elizabethan pieces:

When Laura Smiles

Philip Rosseter

Since first I saw your face

Thomas Ford

Now is the month of Maying

Thomas Morley

The Willow Song (Othello)

Traditional

**Jeni Beasley, soprano**

Adieu Sweet Amaryllis

John Wilbye

Too much I once lamented

Thomas Tomkins

Excerpt from *The Tempest* (Act 3, Scene 2)

I know a bank

Martin Shaw

*(A Midsummer Night's Dream)*

**Lis Muller, contralto**

Sweet Suffolk owl

Thomas Vautor

Fair Phyllis I saw

John Farmer

When daisies pied ~ *Birthday Madrigals*, No. 5

John Rutter

*(Love's Labour's Lost; verse 3 by George Peele, 1556-1596)*

## The Choir

*Viva la Musica* is a Loughborough-based chamber choir. It was formed in 2002 as a group of singers who enjoy singing together and welcome the challenge that singing in a small ensemble brings. They sing a wide range of music from early to modern, sacred to secular; and largely in the *a cappella* style. Beth Williams was appointed as Musical Director in May 2012.

Soprano: Jeni Beasley, Sue Cooke, Jenny Kemp,  
Gail Stiven

Alto: Joanna Milner, Lis Muller, Clare Ward-  
Campbell

Tenor: Mike Bailey, Peter Finch, Richard Thomas

Bass: Colin Butler, Martin Cooke, Kevin Norman,  
John Thawley

## **Beth Williams - Musical Director**

Originally from Devon, Beth has been singing for as long as she can remember: at first in local church and school choirs, and later more seriously at Birmingham University, where she read Music.

Since 2009, she has been the Head of Music at Wyggeston & Queen Elizabeth I College, a sixth form college in Leicester, although she is currently enjoying maternity leave with her son, George, who was born in July 2014.

She remains a keen singer: she is a member of Leicestershire Chorale, with whom she enjoys exploring a broad repertoire, particularly in the contemporary field. She lives in Leicester with George and her husband, Tom.

## **Peter Williams - Accompanist**

Peter is an organist and piano accompanist having given many recitals both here and abroad. He began his career at St. George's Chapel, Windsor then moved to York Minster where he was assistant organist to Dr. Francis Jackson. After a long career in education his final teaching post was at Repton School where he was also Chapel Organist. He has played the organ in concerts and recitals in Britain, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Estonia and Finland and is now busy as a freelance organist and piano accompanist.

*With warmest thanks to all at All Saints, Gilmorton,  
for inviting us to sing this evening.*

