



The St Marylebone Festival 2018

Celebrating the community and the rich cultural heritage of Marylebone

Festival Patron: John Rutter, CBE

www.stmarylebonefestival.com

The rich community and cultural heritage of Marylebone is celebrated during the 3rd St Marylebone Festival (21-27 July 2018).

The Festival is an annual event that constantly punches above its weight in terms of artistic performance and breadth of vision. Marylebone is rightly proud of its rich musical and cultural background, including those artists with local connections who are featured in this year's festival such as composers Gerald Finzi, John Rutter CBE, leading Suffragette, Dame Ethel Smyth and acclaimed poet Lord Byron.

Festival Artistic Director & Director of Music at St Marylebone Parish Church, Gavin Roberts and The Revd Canon Stephen Evans, Rector of St Marylebone, have devised a packed programme of diverse events during Festival week 21-27 July 2018. All events are held at the spectacular Regency parish church of St Marylebone which sits in the very heart of the community to which it lends its name.

The Festival supports an exciting multi-million pound development project, St Marylebone 'Changing Lives', which will help sustain and extend the parish church's work of more than 900 years in building and engaging with diverse communities both locally and across London as well as nationally and internationally. The Festival welcomes a wonderful range of both distinguished international artists as well as emerging talent and enjoys the warm support of the local community. The festival is supported by several local institutions, including Regent's University, London, formerly Bedford College - the first establishment for higher education in the UK to provide for women.

Programme

Overview:

The nation's favourite choral composer and Festival patron, John Rutter CBE, launches this year's proceedings in typically robust fashion with his eagerly-anticipated 'Come And Sing' event on Saturday 21st July at 6pm, preceded by a singing workshop from 2-4pm.

The Choral Eucharist on Sunday 22nd July at 11am showcases music by women composers, followed by an organ recital at 3pm with former St Marylebone Director of Music Peter Barley at the parish church's magnificent Rieger organ. London Young Sinfonia conducted by Bertie Baigent with tenor, Mark Wilde round off the day's events with a concert at 6.30pm showcasing Finzi's 'Dies Natalis' and Strauss' 'Metamorphosen'.

The story of women during the seismic events of WW1 are celebrated on Monday 23rd July at 1pm by mezzo-soprano Marta Fontanals Simmons with Gavin Roberts, piano, followed at 7.30pm by a Piano Duel, where pianists Peter Foggitt and Thibault Charrin recreate – in period costume - a famous piano dual between Marylebone-based composer Joseph Woelfl (1773-1812) and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827).

Flamboyant Romantic poet, Lord Byron, was baptised in St Marylebone Church and the event on Tuesday 24th July at 1pm with soprano, Amanda Pitt and Gavin Roberts, piano,

celebrates his legacy through song and readings. The entertainment continues at 7.30pm with a commedia dell'arte fête galante masquerade, that celebrates the legacy of French painter Antoine Watteau, many of whose works are housed in the nearby Wallace Collection and there will be a pre-concert talk by a curator from the Wallace Collection to illuminate this event. This event features many talented students from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

On Wednesday 25th July, Jill Kemp, recorders and Claire Williams, harpsichord, present a colourful programme containing many musical delights that may have been heard in the original Pleasure Gardens of Old Marylebone. At 3pm, there is a free screening of the classic 1948 film 'Scott of the Antarctic' featuring John Mills and directed by Charles Frend. The score was composed by former Marylebone resident, Ralph Vaughan Williams, who reworked it into his later 'Sinfonia antartica'. We return to Scott for the 7.30pm concert of 'Scott and Schubert – A Winter Journey' as 2018 heralds Scott's 150th birthday. Readings from his diary will be combined with Schubert's haunting 'Winterreise' with tenor James Way and Gavin Roberts, piano.

The 1pm concert on Thursday 26th July showcases and celebrates the life of Australian pianist Noel Mewton-Wood, who studied at the Royal Academy of Music in Marylebone and who performed his debut concert under Sir Thomas Beecham. Mewton-Wood enjoyed an illustrious performing career and was friends with Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. Tragically he was to take his own life following the death of his lover William Fredrick. The events feature James Robinson – tenor, Adam Sullivan – tenor, David Jones – baritone and Gavin Roberts – piano.

Doughty Marylebone-born composer, Dame Ethel Smyth, who wrote the famous suffragette anthem 'The March of the Women', is in the spotlight at 7.30pm in 'Grasp the Nettle' where her remarkable story - including being imprisoned in Holloway Prison with Mrs Pankhurst - is told in her own words and compositions in the year that we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act 1918 that finally gave some women the vote. She was the first woman composer to be performed at the Royal Opera House and is now acclaimed as the 'missing link' between Purcell and Britten. This remarkable woman's legacy is celebrated by contralto Lucy Stevens with Gavin Roberts, piano and is preceded by a talk on Dame Ethel Smyth by Lewis Orchard of the Surrey History Society.

Friday 27th July marks Mars' closest approach to Earth and this noteworthy event is celebrated with a performance at 1pm of Holst's The Planets Suite, arranged by the composer for two pianos, featuring Thomas Besnard and Gavin Roberts. The final Festival event of 2018 features a 19th Century Drawing Room Soirée with music performed by Members of the Choir of St Marylebone Parish Church. It includes a light supper in honour of another famous Marylebone resident, Mrs Beeton. (Supper at 7pm; performance at 7.45pm).

Gavin Roberts, Festival Artistic Director & Music Director, St Marylebone, commented: *"The amazing and often surprising cultural history of Marylebone is real inspiration for programming this exciting festival, which tells the past and present stories of our community. It is a delight to celebrate such a vibrant area through our events and performances"*.

The Revd Canon Dr Stephen Evans, Rector of St Marylebone, noted: *"St Marylebone Parish Church has been shaping, sustaining and changing lives for 900 years. The festival week provides an unparalleled opportunity to tell the story of St Marylebone that "Great City North of Oxford Street*" through music, word and song". (* 'Marylebone: Great City North of Oxford Street' by Gordon Mackenzie).*