

Memorable Concerts ...

Mirror of Perfection
Assisi, Italia, 26 October 1999
Neville Creed

Our performance of Richard Blackford's *Mirror of Perfection* in the Lower Basilica in Assisi had in typical Italian fashion started later than its scheduled time of 9 pm. Richard's cantata was the final work. Some performances are remarkable not just for the quality of expression, venue, ambience, audience timing, acoustics, temperature (it was a warm day) and even anticipation; all play their part in the mix. There were no spare seats and from the platform we watched as a procession of clergy, nuns and monks filled the spaces around the sides and back of this marvellous building. *Mirror of Perfection* is set to texts of St Francis of Assisi, and it was over his very tomb that we were performing that day.

As far as this performance was concerned, I knew that there were no errors. The *Canticle of the Furnace* movement, marked allegro furioso provides all singers with a musical challenge that fires the adrenalin and it was gutsy and accurate under Neville Creed's expert direction. The work ends with a haunting fugue-like melody played by the horns. I feel for the players of a rather tricky instrument who know that they have exquisite solos to play right at the end of the piece – and of the concert. In the event, they tugged at the heartstrings and the result was one of those moments of magic that was the crowning glory on a wonderful evening. The applause was so enthusiastic with many listeners on their feet. Members of the orchestra and the Chorus were in tears, and we could see that many of the men and women of the cloth were too.

John Martindale second bass

Carl Orff Carmina Burana
Owain Arwel Hughes
4 September 1979

My first concert was *Carmina Burana* with Owain Arwel Hughes conducting. I had not heard the music before and my choral repertoire was nil. It blew me away – I loved the music and really enjoyed the performance. Three years later for my re-audition, being young and confident, I sang *One Fine Day* from *Madam Butterfly*. Geoff [Hughes] was well impressed and the only thing he said to me was "Next time, sing it in Italian..."

Sandra Kernohan first alto

George Gershwin Porgy and Bess
7 January 1994

My all-time favourite concert was when we sang Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess* under Andrew Litton in Cardiff. Most memorably Litton first conducted Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* from the piano, and even the Orchestra was completely stunned – none of us had ever heard him play like that. Wow! *Porgy and Bess* was good, and we had a ten-minute standing ovation at the end. Then we did it in Poole the following night, and although it was very good, it just didn't have "it".

Everyone who came to Poole was thoroughly impressed but those of us who had done both concerts knew there was something missing. Litton was good for the Chorus and with our jazz singing. We did quite a number of *Porgy's* while he was there, including his own Suite arrangement; we also did it with Wayne Marshall, who we thought would bring something special to it, being black and a great honky-tonk player, but for me he never played Gershwin quite the way Litton, an American, did.

Joan Ingarfield second alto

**Siena Italia '99
Neville Creed**

One of my memories of our wonderful Italian trip was when we were singing Rachmaninov's *Ave Maria* in the spectacular Duomo in Siena. I looked up into the dome which was dark....but suddenly the lights were switched on, and it became all blue, white and gold. Wow! I thought that I had died and gone to heaven! Glorious music, and the splendour of the Duomo will live with me forever.

Earlier in the day though we had been thrown out of the Duomo during our rehearsal by the Verger who just switched the lights off and said we had to leave. Not to be beaten, Neville carried on rehearsing outside in the square around a lamp to some bemused passers by. We had such a wonderful time on that tour.

Joyce Rhoden first alto

Elvis The Concert!



In March 2001, a number of us took part in *Elvis – the Concert* at the BIC. It was an awesome experience of a completely different kind, when we literally performed on stage with Elvis's band, musical director and backing singers from the Las Vegas years with "The King" himself on a giant screen! The Bournemouth Echo reported me:

"When I joined the choir, I knew I would be singing with the best in the business, but I never expected this!" said BSC tenor Greg Hoar, a lifelong Elvis fan. *"I'm lucky enough to have recorded at the Sun Studio in Memphis, and now I am singing with the King. It's also the first time this year we will have sung in English!"*

The event showed our versatility to a whole new audience and I loved it!

Greg Hoar first tenor

**Naming the train
BSO centenary celebrations
Mahler 2 Royal Albert Hall 22 May 1993**

Most of the choir went on a trip to London to sing in Mahler 2 with the BSO conducted by Andrew Litton at the Royal Albert Hall. We were joined by members of the London Symphony Chorus for the concerts and they were friendly and very complimentary about Andrew. The BSC were in white blouses for some reason and we looked rudely healthy, rosy cheeked and up from the country compared to our colleagues in the LSC in their black concert dress and sporting a London pallor. We travelled in a special train to Waterloo Station with Andrew Litton unveiling the name plaque – *Bournemouth Orchestras* - and BSO brass players playing a fanfare.

Carolyn Date second soprano



*Peter Field, Divisional Director,
South West and Nigel Beale, Chairman
of the Bournemouth Orchestras
cordially invite*

*Mrx. Carolyn Date
to the naming of Class 442
Wessex Electric train
"The Bournemouth Orchestras"
at Waterloo Station on Saturday 22 May.*

*The ceremony will be performed by
Andrew Litton, the orchestra's principal conductor
and will commence at 1340 on platform 12.*

*There will be a special train leaving Poole at 1100,
which will call at Bournemouth at 1112,
Southampton at 1144, Winchester at 1204
and arrive at Waterloo at 1306.*

**BOURNEMOUTH
Orchestras**



Network SouthEast



Berlioz The Trojans
The Guildhall, Portsmouth
Roger Norrington 15 June 1986

One of the most amazingly ambitious projects was a complete concert performance of Berlioz's massive opera *The Trojans*. It was given in Portsmouth Guildhall as part of the Portsmouth Festival, one summer Sunday afternoon, under Roger Norrington. It taxed our French language skills. Alas it was given to a very small audience, but was broadcast live on BBC Radio Three.

Britten War Requiem
The Winter Gardens Bournemouth
Charles Groves May 1966

Five months after I joined the Bournemouth Municipal Choir we sang this beautiful work, conducted by Sir Charles Groves. This was an important event as it was only four years after its first performance. Britten's telegram of good wishes was posted on the BSO notice board.

Mahler 3rd Symphony
BBC Proms Royal Albert Hall
Mark Elder

Mahler 3 at the Proms with the National Youth Orchestra – an overwhelming impression created by a sell-out Royal Albert Hall, as we filed in at the end of the first movement, Mark Elder's instruction to us to "*sit diaphanously*" when we had finished singing.

Janet Cooper first alto



Porgy & Bess
BBC Proms Royal Albert Hall
Wayne Marshall 1 August 1998

I joined the Chorus and within two weeks I was at the Royal Albert Hall singing *Porgy & Bess* at the Proms for my first concert. The Tutti rehearsal was 3 hours without a break for the Chorus and Willard White was singing Porgy and during the rehearsal, he kept turning around to look at the singers – although we weren't sure why. It was all a bit of a culture shock for a new member.

Rosie Hawkyard first soprano

Voices of Exile
November 2001

When I look back over my last 10 years with the chorus my memories are filled with the camaraderie of the day-to-day mundane life in chorus off-set by moments of high emotion - pleasure at seeing Richard Blackford's reaction to hearing his *Voices of Exile* brought to life at its première almost 10 years ago, awe at singing from the choir stalls in Notre Dame de Paris, amazement that I, an amateur singer, am part of a professional recording session.



Miranda Dollen first soprano

**Beethoven Symphony no. 9
Plymouth Pavilions
Richard Hickox**

The coaches left too early for some singers who could not get time off work and combined with an epidemic of illnesses the number of singers for the *fortissimo* ending was only 67. The Chorus Master, Neville Creed agreed to sing with the basses and the feeling of energy and emotion which seem to rumble across the platform as they prepared their first entry was staggering.

Richard Hickox said afterwards that it was amazing what 67 people could do when they had to!



Jean Harvey second soprano

**Siena The Duomo
Italia '99**

Being thrown out of the Duomo in Sienna during our rehearsal by the Verger who just switched the lights off and said we had to leave, much to Neville's annoyance, is a lasting memory. Not to be daunted, Neville carried on rehearsing outside in the square around a lamp to some bemused passers by.

We had such a wonderful time on that tour in Tuscany. I remember sitting next to a young Gareth Malone on some of the coach journeys and he also sang a tenor solo in some of the concerts. He was a very considerate young man and very much how he comes over on TV. We are all very proud of his success.



Joyce Rhoden first alto

**The Dream of Gerontius
Poole Arts Centre
Owain Arwel Hughes 3 March 1989**

We all remember singing *The Dream of Gerontius* with Dame Janet Baker. She had retired from opera, but was still singing concerts. The idea that I would be on stage with Dame Janet would never have occurred to me. At that time I was in charge of ticket sales, and it was the only time we actually had to ration them, so great was the demand. Janet Baker was wonderful, a graceful lady who turned and sang to us in rehearsal. She was quiet, still and gracious and utterly professional. We were in awe of her, and it was a beautiful experience.

Joan Ingarfield second alto

**Weathers
21st November 2007**

One of the concerts I did with the Chorus after transferring from the Bournemouth Symphony Youth Chorus occurred when I was 17 years old. It was the première of a new work written especially for the BSC by Stephen McNeff, performed at Lighthouse with David Hill and the BSO.

There was a terrific storm during the concert and at one point water started pouring out of the ceiling above the choir stalls, just where I was sitting. I was drenched and had to move very quickly out of the way from what turned out to be an overflowing internal gutter. Ironically, the new work was called **WEATHERS!**

James Partridge first bass

Songs of Praise 1996

We did a Songs of Praise which was all filmed in the New Forest. Neville Creed, who was conducting us, also sang a solo (*he had a very good voice*) but as he was conducting he couldn't sing on film. So his voice was recorded and *Graham Millward* mimed on the film recording made in Ellingham Church near Ringwood and also was seen on the eventual transmission.

Margaret Burdett first soprano

African Sanctus
Bristol 18 April 2012

Having arranged a lift to Bristol, I was looking forward to arriving home early. However, en route back to Poole the tyre pressure warning light came on. Damn! In inflating the tyre at a garage we managed to lose its dust cap.

Picture the scene: five women dressed in black peering on the ground as if looking for ingredients for the cauldron. But success! Then much to our dismay, the warning light reappeared a few miles further down the road. We limped into Warminster Services and decided the only course of action was to call the AA. The Little Chef was, by now, closed but we espied a Costa Coffee machine inside the filling station shop. Five ladies of a certain age, all dressed in black and looking like a coven, were obviously too dangerous to be let in so we placed our order through the window and were served, one by one, through a warily opened crack in the door. Sometime later, the local equivalent of the AA arrived, the emergency tyre was put in place and we slowly made our way home, where I finally turned out the light at 2.30am!



Alison Chopping first alto

Britten War Requiem 1979

I especially remember Geoff Hughes and the way he enthused and introduced new choral works to the Chorus. He conducted some wonderful Carols Concerts, but I have such strong memories of his inspirational introduction to the War Requiem in 1978. He certainly inspired me! It's a work which I love, not only to sing, but also to listen to.

Carolyn Butterworth first soprano

Carmina Burana
Owain Arwel Hughes 4 September 1979

Our first concert as a Symphony Chorus was very moving for it was the week that Lord Louis Mountbatten was killed by terrorists in County Sligo. Geoffrey Hughes told us that we were to sing TWO verses of the National Anthem, including the one that talked about "*confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks*". We were quite nervous.

Sandra Kernohan first alto

Mirror of Perfection
Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford
1 October 1997



One very hot autumn day we went to sing at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. Midway through the performance, an elderly man in the tightly packed audience in the balcony was taken ill. The Chorus watched in trepidation as his body was passed along the row and taken outside.

Neville Creed was conducting, and although he knew something was going on behind his back, he hadn't the faintest idea what it was. All he could see was that the Chorus were clearly watching some drama going on behind him as most eyes were following a path from right to left behind him. He said afterwards that it was a good thing the Chorus knew the work well – they certainly weren't taking too much notice of him!

Colin Bacchus first tenor

**Elgar Festival
Barbican Hall September 1996**

Richard Hickox invited the BSC to sing two concerts in a three concert Elgar Festival at the Barbican. The London Symphony Chorus performed *The Dream of Gerontius* on the Friday and the BSC performed *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* on the Saturday & Sunday nights, staying overnight in a nearby hotel. I had pressed Richard to let us do all three performances and he contacted me from Australia to say it would be a tall order for any choir to maintain the stamina for those three works in one weekend. Afterwards, I had to agree that he was right!

Carolyn Date second soprano

**Orvieto
Italia '99**

I joined the Symphony Chorus in December 1998, but I went abroad for the first time on the Italy Trip in October 1999 and we sang first during a service in Orvieto Cathedral. I remember Chris Dowie striking up *I was Glad* and it really made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. That was a wonderful moment for me. Later on that week when we did Richard Blackford's *Mirror of Perfection* in the Lower Basilica in Assisi was another great moment. That was my favourite overseas trip, probably because it was my first, but I've enjoyed them all, Paris, Prague & Brno, Ghent and Vienna in 2010.



Aline Larkin first alto

**Voices of Exile
Richard Blackford
conducted by Neville Creed
17 & 19 November 2001**



2001 was an amazing 90th year with the Chorus and my memories are dominated by two completely different personal high points: the 90th birthday commission *Voices of Exile* at the end of the year and, in March, the one and only time the Chorus got to sing with Elvis! *Voices of Exile* was so powerful and moving and I can remember how real and connected it seemed when we rehearsed it immediately after the 9:11 attack in New York. We were in total shock, like everybody else, and when we sang "*It has happened and it keeps on happening*", it was so true - sad and terrible, but also a comfort that Richard Blackford (who was present at the rehearsal) had been able to touch the chord, literally.

Nicky Hoar second soprano

**Voices of Exile Richard Blackford
Royal Festival Hall
Neville Creed November 2001**

In London we did not repeat the first half we had performed in Poole. As it was a fundraising concert for *The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture*, the first half consisted mostly of dramatic presentations or readings by some of the finest actors in the country - Emma Thompson, Alan Rickman, Bill Patterson, Imelda Staunton, Fiona Shaw - all led by Juliet Stevenson who produced a programme which looked at notions of difference and where it leads. It was a wonderful evening singing to a packed and buzzing Royal Festival Hall, and we all felt uplifted and privileged to be a part of it.

Derek Pilling second tenor

Carmina Burana
BBC Proms Richard Hickox
4 September 1994

One of the most exciting of our London concerts was the Prom we did with Richard Hickox conducting the BSO in a stiflingly hot Royal Albert Hall. It was electrifying. The concert was quite an occasion as Richard Hickox was presented with the Sir Charles Groves prize by Lady Groves. The whole concert was televised and on the coach journey back singers were receiving reports from their families who had watched the broadcast – mobile phones were not so common then. We were due to record the following weekend but apparently Chandos realising that Hickox had recorded it for a budget label sometime in the distant past didn't want to proceed. Instead we recorded it for Decca with David Hill.

Sandrey Date second bass

Delius
Richard Hickox, 1997

A lasting memory is the Delius recording in 1997 which we undertook with another choir with Richard Hickox conducting. After the first day of recording, being phoned by Carolyn to ask whether I could sing first soprano for the recording sessions the following day, as she had discovered that 15 sopranos from the other choir would not be there. This would change the balance of the parts dramatically so of course I agreed, along with Judith Wilkins and a few others. Sight reading a new part in a recording session is not something you would want to undertake every day, but Richard Hickox said afterwards that he thought it was actually better so it was all worthwhile!

Wendy Southam second soprano

Patapan

In the early 1980s, the BSC was singing the annual Christmas Carol concerts with the Bournemouth Sinfonietta. The conductor Geoffrey Hughes asked whether our six year old son James would act as a 'little drummer boy' and play his toy drum in the carol *Patapan*, while his father, David a member of the orchestra played the piccolo part next to him. I sang in the sopranos hoping everything would be OK while James just took it all in his stride!

Carol Eaton second alto

Beethoven Mass in D

My husband loved his music was a very willing groupie to his wife and he attended our concerts. Beethoven's *Mass* [in D] was not one of his favourite pieces by any stretch of imagination. There was a couple, I won't name them, he sang and his wife came to the concerts. She was very proper, very correct. When the tickets were issued for the Concert night, she came dashing over to our table:

"Gosh, I've got my tickets, and I'm sitting with you", and so on.

My husband responded:

"I'm not going to the Concert, I've been listening to the bloody thing all week".

He strode off, bought a *Telegraph*, and sat out the evening in the pub. She was stunned, unable to understand that anyone could not want to go to this concert. My husband was loyal, but he did his own thing, and if he wasn't enjoying a piece, he'd stand up, breeze off and wait for me in the bar.

Joan Ingarfield second alto

Porgy & Bess
Proms Wayne Marshall
1 August 1998

I joined the Chorus and within two weeks I was at the Royal Albert Hall singing Porgy & Bess at the Proms for my first concert. The Tutti rehearsal was 3 hours without a break for the Chorus and Willard White was singing Porgy and during the rehearsal, kept turning around to look at the singers – although we weren't sure why. It was all a bit of a culture shock for a new member.

Rosie Hawkyard first soprano

Messiah

I have been attending BSC concerts for the last sixty years, possibly hearing Handel's Messiah at least once in each of those years and many have been excellent performances including some more recently by David Hill, Stephen Layton, Ed Gardner and especially Kees Bakels in 2008 who was apparently conducting it for the first time. However, December 2011 was for me possibly the best ever, with Paul Goodwin producing what for me has been the best interpretation to date. What a remarkable achievement to be producing better performances than ever at 100!

Michael Read Honorary member

In the 70's as the Municipal Choir we performed Messiah with Roger Norrington, who had so impressed on his first visit that he was asked to return a couple of years later. On the second occasion he adopted a very different approach to his interpretation, and shouting instructions to the chorus while we were singing, causing one of the basses to say that the choir had not done it that way before. Norrington waved his arms flamboyantly saying theatrically "*that's nothing – next year we'll do it on ice!*".

Carolyn Date second soprano

Mahler Symphony No. 8
Bath 29 May 2000

We were singing in the Bath Festival – our first stab at Mahler's 8th with Jason Thornton conducting the Bath Philharmonia. The concert was given in a supermarket car park, formerly the old Somerset and Dorset Railway Station, which had a great roof, but was open at the sides. Can you imagine: the buffers stop there, and that's where the scaffolding for the chorus was erected. There were several other choirs there, including the Bath Festival Choir and the London Philharmonic – well, it is the "Symphony of a Thousand" – and the rehearsal was accompanied by the noise of supermarket trollies clunking around. At the performance, the supermarket had fortunately closed, but during the orchestral parts you could hear the blackbirds going "peep, peep, peep". Then the soprano soloist came in from on high. We were tiered up to the second floor of a building, and there she was above us, singing at an open window of an old railway station! That was wonderful – and fun!

Dr Alastair Smith second bass

Mahler 2 Royal Albert Hall
April 2000

Doing Mahler 8 in what I think had been Green Park Station in Bath but it was very cold. We also sang it in the Royal Albert Hall and returned to sing Mahler with all the Dorset Schools in a Millenium Celebration of the Dorset Music Service. It was sold out and it was a very special occasion with lighting effects; it was amazing what Dorset could do!

Aline Larkin first alto

Not in Our Time
Chicago
27 May 2012

This concert was given in the amazing Jay Prinzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. We were singing with North Western University singers and musicians, under Robert Harris – it was his final concert before retiring. Singing this work in this environment, much of it about Americans who died, and before a huge American audience, was extremely moving. *Lucis Largitor Splendide* got a spontaneous round of applause and we were given a standing ovation at the end. It was a stupendously hot evening at 97F, and near the end, the setting sun was reflected in one the skyscrapers opposite us: a breath-taking and never to be forgotten moment for those who saw it.

Carolyn Date second soprano

Fidelio Royal Festival Hall
Andrew Litton
1 December 1992

We were to perform a concert version *Fidelio* with Andrew Litton and the BSO at the RFH and our coach was very late arriving in London so we needed to get on stage immediately on arrival. All the men moved towards the front of the coach while the women moved to the back of the coach and discreetly changed into their choir uniform with much hilarity and worry that more of us than we would have liked would be seen by commuters!

Sandra Kernohan first alto

Missa Solemnis
1959-60 Season

This concert will be remembered for the fortunately unusual occurrence of the soprano soloist's failure to appear at the rehearsal on the day. We were lucky to have Anne Dunn in the Choir and with the ability and courage to fill the gap at a few hours notice. The concert was conducted by Charles Groves but understandably and deservedly, Anne stole the show as was reflected in the reviews at the time.

Messiah
David Willcocks 1958

Willcocks conducted Messiah with us in 1958, 1970 and 1975. I think it was on the first of these concerts that he mentioned to the basses a wrong note in *For unto us*.

"Have you got a ring round it?"

The basses replied "Yes".

David Willcocks said *"Well, rub it out, it's not doing any good!"*.

Cantata Academica 1974

It has a discordant opening. After a few attempts in rehearsal, Paavo Berglund asked Rosemary Barnes to spread the chord on the piano, and then said: *"Take one of those!"*

Donald Sheppard second tenor

Gustav Holst: Shush ... shut that door!

Gustav Holst's daughter, Imogen, said in 1918 of the first performance of his masterpiece, the suite **The Planets** that the ending was *unforgettable with its hidden choir of women's voices growing fainter and fainter ... until the imagination knew no difference between sound and silence.*

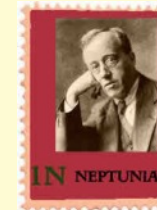
That final movement **Neptune, the Mystic**, is the first fade-out in musical history. Holst wrote in the score that the two three-part women's choruses were *to be placed in an adjoining room, the door of which was to be left open until the last bar of the piece, when it is to be slowly and silently closed.* He added, *the final bar is to be repeated until the sound is lost in the distance.*

Gustav Holst wrote the work in the Bournemouth Municipal Choir's first decade and its first performance occurred as the First World War ended. It doesn't need a large force of ladies but it does require a well-trained one. There's not much to sing but it's all at the end. *Coming in cold* is difficult for professionals, and one thinks of the cor anglais solo in Dvorak's **New World Symphony** and the entry of the harps in the Ball Scene of Berlioz's **Symphonie Fantastique**, but add strange chords, five beats in a bar, off-stage, amateur singers entering on a high pp G against an accompaniment that is remote and unhelpful and you have a real challenge!

Yesterday's formidable challenges are today's repertoire, and more recently the **Bournemouth Symphony Youth Chorus** has performed it with the **Dorset Youth Orchestra**. Working with a regional orchestra, the Symphony Chorus has noticed a steadily increasing demand for its ladies to perform their wordless magic.

To the right, Lisa Pierce tells us her inside story from outside the Concert Hall ...

LETTER CARD



from **Lisa Pierce**
first soprano

Over the years I have been part of the ladies off-stage chorus in Holst's 'Planets' suite on a number of occasions and I'm sure others could add to these memories, but here are a few that stood out.

To achieve the distant ethereal sound, we have ended up singing in some cramped and curious places. Standing on the stairs leading up to the orchestra lounge at the Lighthouse is nothing to the corridor at Basingstoke where the choir conductor, Tecwyn Evans, had to perch precariously on a box on a chair to see the CCTV monitor relaying the beat from the concert hall. Or, on the visit to Portsmouth where we were squeezed between chairs, music desks and instrument cases, and as we awaited the very quiet opening of our Neptune movement, a train rumbled past.

Then, there was the performance in Meyrick Park at the Bournemouth Outdoor Proms, when we were outside on the scaffolding at the back of the big performance tent surrounded by canvas flapping in the breeze. We couldn't see or hear what was happening on stage and might as well have been in outer space.

But the outstanding memory for me took place in Cheltenham Town Hall on a hot summer's evening when Nigel Perrin took us out into the nearby park to warm up and we were joined by several drunks keen to sing along. We received the applause before the concert! It was just what we needed to release the tension before our nerve wracking few minutes off stage.

Centenary Project - Not in Our Time

This centenary project involved commissioning, preparing and premiering a major work for the BSC and BSYC, symphony orchestra, tenor and baritone soli. Chorus members selected Richard Blackford as the work's composer. ***Not in Our Time*** is about 55 minutes long, and reflects on the impact and legacy of religion that has been used as a pretext for war since the time of the First Crusade. Both the Chorus and composer consulted widely on the libretto.

Approaches were made to local interfaith groups for feedback on the libretto. This involved representatives of the Christian and Muslim communities and was very encouraging. We consulted on the libretto with the Oxford Institute for Islamic Studies, Dorset Racial Equality Council, and the Government Office for the South West. A cross regional interfaith group involving Christian, Moslem and Jewish faith representatives in Dorset and Hampshire was also consulted. Feedback from local interfaith groups from representatives of the Christian and Muslim communities was very encouraging as were the comments from a leading figure in the Roman Catholic Church. Both Bournemouth & Poole's Arts Teams supported the project, as did Dan Somogyi of SoundStorm, without whom the education project could not have happened.

The new work was premiered in Cheltenham in partnership with Cheltenham Music Festival, on September 11th 2011, the 10th anniversary of 9/11. The orchestra was engaged by the Chorus and Paul Nilon and Stephen Gadd were



soloists. The conductor was our Chorus Master, Gavin Carr.

The date chosen for the concert premiere influenced the choice of the rest of the concert programme – Samuel Barber's ***Adagio for Strings*** and two works by Aaron Copland: his ***Fanfare for the Common Man*** and ***A Lincoln Portrait***.



Simon Callow narrated *A Lincoln Portrait* in Cheltenham whilst Charles Dance took over in Poole.

Nimbus recorded ***Not in Our Time*** the following weekend and on release in November, the CD reached number 2 in the speciality Classical Charts, and number 12 in both the Classical Charts and Classic FM's top 100.



Chorus members in the gardens near to Cheltenham Town Hall

Each concert had supporting events. Well-known figures from the world of current affairs took part in discussions and presentations. In Poole there was a visual art project associated with the project supported by Poole Borough Council. Bournemouth's Library Service and the Russell Cotes Museum also arranged exhibitions.

A significant Education Project engaged both young people and the community. Six schools took part across Bournemouth and Poole with pre-concert performances at Lighthouse by the 128 students taking part, working with Jason Thornton and his team of amateurs supported by members of BSO Resonate. Student participants included GCSE students from Glenmoor and Winton Arts & Media College in Bournemouth with Year 7 students from Turlin Moor and Hamworthy Middle Schools in Poole plus the whole of Year 8 at Carter Community School in Poole.

The final chorus of the BSC's centenary commission by Richard Blackford challenges young people to "re-imagine the world" – a world where diversity enriches, empowers and unites.

This project enables and empowers children at an educationally and socially vulnerable time of their lives to do just that. Working with transitional students (those moving from primary to secondary or from middle to upper, which can be a disconcerting time of change from one environment to another) the project aims to celebrate diversity and build confidence, putting the students centre stage as they enter their new school. Not only did they learn creatively in a non-formal environment about strength in difference but they also performed alongside their new school peers at the very start of the school year thus helping them to bond and integrate at this delicate transitional stage. The aim of the project was to generate positive reflection on historical tensions and interfaith understanding while creating a stunning new work which can be performed by other choirs in the future. The Chorus believes that this project reflects our musical heritage and salutes our founder, while demonstrating that the arts can address difficult issues in a powerful and positive way. Both UK performances received standing ovations. The Chorus was invited to take part in a performance at Frank Gehry's Jay Pritzker Stadium, Millennium Park, Chicago on May 27th 2012 which also received a standing ovation.

