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Saturday, 18th October, 1986, at 7.30 p.m.
at ST. THOMAS-ON-THE-BOURNE CHURCH
FARNHAM

RACHMANINOV VESPERS

LISZT VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF BACH: 'WEINEN, KLAGEN, SORGEN, ZAGEN'

DVORAK MASS IN D

THE WAVERLEY SINGERS

MURRAY STEWART: Organ

Conductor: **MALCOLM HICKS**

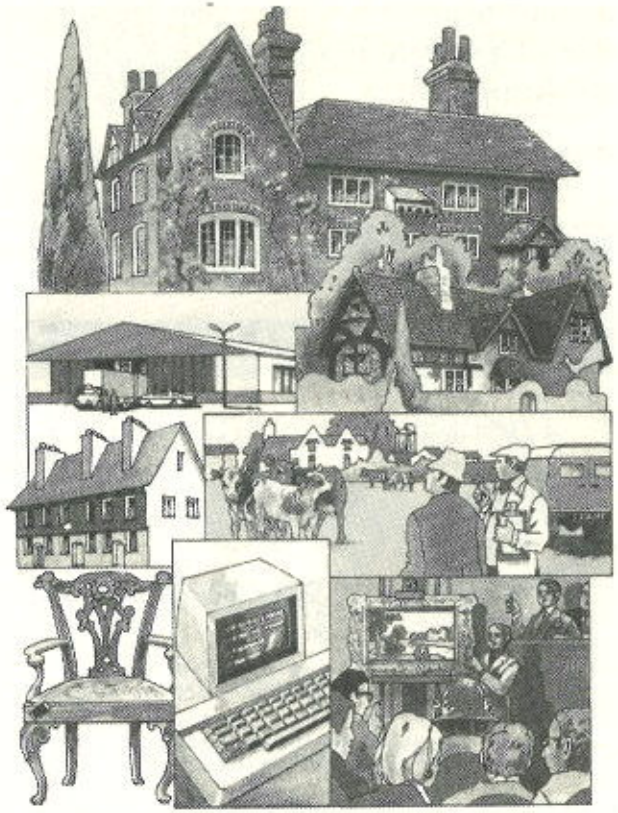
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Born in London in 1954, MURRAY STEWART was a pupil of Peter Hurford at St. Alban's Cathedral whilst still at school. In 1972 he took up an Organ Scholarship at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from where he holds the degree of Master of Arts in music. In 1977 Murray Stewart was the youngest finalist in the Interpretation Competition at the Ninth International Organ Festival. Since then he has won two scholarships from the Arts Council and the Worshipful Company of Musicians to continue his studies in Paris with Daniel Roth at the Sacre-Coeur. He has made a special study of nineteenth century French organ music, and in particular the works of Cesar Franck, a recent recording of which won him wide critical acclaim. He now lives in London working as a free-lance organist and conductor. He is Conductor of the Forest Choir, and Assistant Conductor of the Waverley Singers.

MALCOLM HICKS graduated in Music at the University of Birmingham where he was also Assistant Master of Music at the Cathedral, and organist and Assistant Conductor with major choirs and orchestras. After further studies in piano, cello, singing and conducting at the Guildhall School of Music, he has since pursued a full-time career as keyboard player and conductor. He plays with all the major London orchestras in South Bank concerts, Proms, many broadcasts for radio and TV, films and gramophone records, and on tour abroad, many times to Europe, and as far afield as Japan, Korea and Mexico. He was Associate Conductor of London Philharmonic Choir for 13 years and works as chorus master with the Royal Choral Society, Philharmonia, B.B.C. Choirs, English Baroque and Oriana Choirs. He has conducted a continuous series of orchestral and choral concerts in Hertfordshire where he lives. He has worked on the staff of the European Community Youth Orchestra, has taught, lectured and examined extensively. He was appointed Musical Director of the Waverley Singers in May 1982.

VESPERS Op. 37
SERGEI RACHMANINOV
(1873 - 1943)

1. O come and worship

2. Praise the Lord, O my soul (soloist Marian Morgan)

3. Blessed is the man

4. Ave Maria

5. Glory be to God

6. Praise the name of the Lord

It seems Rachmaninov was not a religious man in the conventional sense of the term. He possessed, it is true, sensibilities of the highest and most delicate order, and his feelings and aspirations were those traditionally associated with humanism; but for much of his life he was not a churchgoer.
Despite his indifference to outward religious forms, however, Rachmaninov created a small but impressive body of sacred works, of which **Vespers** is a masterpiece, one of the crowning compositions of Russian church music. It was written quickly, in less than two weeks, during January and February 1915. Since childhood Rachmaninov had been fascinated by the old melodies of the Russian church, but he was fully aware of the countless pitfalls confronting musicians trying to combine ancient music and modern technical processes. According to church requirements, certain of the numbers had to be written on traditional chants, although other parts of the service could be handled with more freedom by the composer. By creating original melodies compatible with the spirit of the ancient tunes - 'a conscious counterfeit of the original', as Rachmaninov himself expressed it - a sense of stylistic unity was assured.
The first performance of **Vespers**, sung in Moscow, March 10, 1915, for the benefit of war relief, was highly successful, and the composition was repeated five times before large audiences. The work is dedicated to the memory of Stephan Vasilyevich Smolensky, an authority on early Russian church music. Tonight's concert includes six of the fifteen settings that comprise **Vespers.**

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF BACH:
WEINEN, KLAGEN, SORGEN, ZAGEN

FRANZ LISZT
(1811 - 1886)

These variations date from 1862, the year after Liszt left Weimar for Rome. It also saw the completion of his oratorio. **The Legend of St Elizabeth**, by which he set great store. Liszt's well-known admiration for Bach was reinforced by their common connection with Weimar. The theme comes from the second movement of the cantata **Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen** (BWV12) for the Sunday Jubilate, the third Sunday after Easter. It dates from 1714 and was the second cantata Bach wrote after his appointment to the Weimar Court. The theme itself is the four-bar ground bass, and the Variations at first proceed very much in the manner of a normal **passacaglia**. No doubt Liszt was attracted to this particular cantata since it represents Bach at his most chromatic and expressive. (Incidentally Bach later adapted the movement for the 'Crucifixus' section of the B minor Mass). The piece was inspired by the death of Liszt's eldest daughter, Blandine. As in the cantata, the Variations end with a statement of the chorale, **Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan**, (What God does, that is well done).

INTERVAL

MASS IN D, Op. 86

ANTONIN DVORAK
(1841 - 1904)

Kyrie - Gloria - Credo - Sanctus - Benedictus - Agnus Dei

The Mass in D major takes a special position in Dvorak's church music. Its first version was devised for the rather modest circumstances for which it was commissioned - with organ accompaniment only; he made an orchestral version in 1892. The architect Josef Hlavka, known for having built several houses in Vienna, had great respect for Dvorak and asked him to compose a mass for the consecration of a chapel on his estate in Luzany (in southwestern Bohemia).
Hlavka, whose wife was a good pianist and a great admirer of Dvorak's music, was a founder and first president of the Czech Academy of Art and Science in Prague. Dvorak accepted the commission and wrote the mass in 1887, between 26 March and 17 June, the June day on which he wrote to his commissioner: 'Very Honourable Councillor and dear friend, I have the honour of informing you that I have fortunately completed my work (the mass in D-major) and that it has become a great joy to me. I think it is a work that will fulfill its purpose. It could be called 'Faith, Hope and Love to God Almighty and Thanks for the great gift that has permitted me to bring this work in praise of Him who is highest and in honour of our art to a fortunate end! Do not be surprised that I am so religious - but an artist who is not could not write such a work. Do we not have examples in Beethoven, Bach, Raphael and may others? I also thank you for giving me the stimulating spark to write a work in this form, for I should hardly ever have thought of it; up to now I had written works of this kind only in large dimensions and with large forces. This time, however, I have written for only modest means, and still I dare to claim that my work has been successful'.
Dvorak himself conducted the first performance of the mass in the chapel of the Luzany castle on 11 November 1887; the soloists were Hlavka's wife Zdenka, Dvorak's wife Anna, Rudolf Huml and Otakar Schwenda with Josef Klicka at the organ.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Waverley Singers would like to express their gratitude to Waverley District Council for their very generous financial assistance.

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Anyone interested in becoming a Patron of the choir is invited to contact Mrs. Barbara Goulder, Yatesbury House, Farnham. (Tel. Farnham 713260). Patrons receive advance notice of Concerts and priority booking forms, and are entitled to reserved seats in the position of their choice. Their names are listed in Concert programmes and gentlemen are entitled to wear the very attractive Waverley Singers' tie.

If you would like to join the choir as a singing member would you please contact the Secretary, Mrs. Josephine Reader, at The Mews, Frensham. (Tel. Frensham 2563).

This concert is subsidised by the South-East Arts Association.

The Waverley Singers are affiliated to the Adult Education Institute and the National Federation of Music Societies.

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