

On Saturday, November 19th 2016 Bedford Choral Society performed the following concert at Bedford Corn Exchange to an almost full auditorium:

Mozart - Regina Coeli K276

Kabalevsky - Cello Concerto No.1 (orchestral)

Mozart - Kyrie K341

Mozart - Mass in C minor K427

Soprano: Bethany Seymour

Mezzo Soprano: Kitty Whately

Tenor: Joel Williams

Baritone: Philip Tebb

Cello Soloist: Neil Martin

The following is an extract from the very detailed review that was kindly provided by Benjamin Thiele-Long after the concert:

"This is a concert that the Bedford Choral Society should be incredibly proud of. Three works, all of varying complexity were sung incredibly well and given the grandeur necessary for grand mass settings. Equally, with all three works, the choir were able to bring the various shades of colour in phrasing, dynamics and performance needed to deliver music that not only sounded good but was interesting to the listener.

The Mozart Große Messe in C Minor is an extraordinarily difficult piece of music. Even Mozart himself was unable to complete it, such was the scale and grandeur of the work that he died before it's completion. But there is a reason that composers such as Haydn referred to Mozart as the greatest musician they ever knew and the Mass includes a thorough demonstration of the breadth of his talent. Tackling this was no mean feat, but the choir met this challenge head-on, delivering an accomplished performance that both gave justice to Mozart's talent, but also met all of the nuances of a complex religious setting.

The first half included the notoriously difficult Kabalevsky Cello Concerto No.1, performed excellently by soloist Neil Martin, sandwiched between Mozart's Regina Coeli (K266) and Kyrie in d Minor. Neither work is particularly heart-stopping in their own right, but both were performed with skill and clarity, particularly the Kyrie which was the stronger of the two pieces, with the choir showing precision on the numerous entries throughout the piece, giving it the impact it deserved.

Choral works of this scale are not easy. They are packed with opportunities for a strong choir to shine and the Bedford Choral Society certainly did that in what was a very accomplished and competent performance. Moreover, at no point did I feel like I was just being sung at. So often these works are sung almost like a formality, rather than as a performance and opportunity to show the hard work that the singers have put into learning it. I certainly got a sense by the end of the evening that the choir felt incredibly proud of what they had achieved, and rightly so, and they should be congratulated for their hard work".

Benjamin Thiele-Long