

# Proms at St Jude's

CELEBRATING A SPECTACULAR

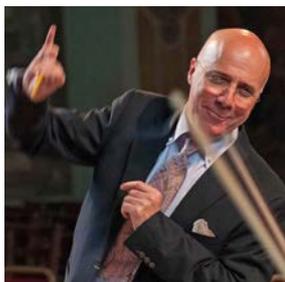
# 2015

# *Festival*



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# THE MAGIC OF PROMS 20



# 15 – OUR 23RD SEASON



*'Timeless, glorious and heavenly, it took me to another world'*  
Audience member after Cardinal's Musick concert

*'Sound was superb and the TV system made everyone look like stars'*  
Praise for technical staff after Cardinal's Musick



# It would be a cardinal sin to miss this

St Jude's in Hampstead Garden Suburb will echo to the strains of 400-year-old compositions from English composer John Tavener - when The Cardinal's Musick

If there's one aspect of British musical life that's the envy of the world it's the emergence of an army of elite, small-scale professional choirs whose exploration of historic repertoire keeps bringing new discoveries to light.

Largely made up of former Oxbridge choral scholars, the membership of these choirs tends to overlap. But the best of them are still somehow distinctive, with a sound determined by the person in charge. And if you go to hear the magnificent Cardinal's Musick at the St Jude's Proms you'll notice something their director Andrew Carwood calls "a soloistic risk-taking in performance that makes us edgier, less smooth in sound than say The Sixteen or the Tallis Scholars but hopefully adds excitement.

"We're a group with large-ish voices that I encourage to sing out and go for expression in ways that can make the ensemble but makes



■ The Cardinal's Musick picture: Dmitri Gutjhar

requirement for cathedral music posts.

It hasn't proved a problem: his eight years have worked out well. And he describes St Paul's as "an intensely creative

but extraordinarily demanding platform that turns you into an adrenaline junkie. It's one high-profile project after another, with events involving the royal family or the government on top of

## London Evening Standard

### Kammerphilharmonie Europa classical music review: a late start but a dazzling finish

Barry Millington's highlight was trumpeter Kirill Gusarov, who combined beauty of tone with an utterly secure technique

Not even the blockade at Calais and chaos at Dover could deter the Kammerphilharmonie Europa from making their appearance at the Proms at St Jude's.

As the concert began... up the M20, but they... the Hummel Trumpet... Piano Concerto No. Russian-American pianist Sergey Schepkin gave us a delightful, if unscheduled mini-recital of three Debussy preludes (fluently and evocatively played) and a generously pedalled, strongly projected reading of Bach's Partita No. 6 in E minor.

It would perhaps be kinder to dwell on the Kammerphilharmonie Europa's heroic endeavours in crossing the Channel, rather than their execution of the concertos. Suffice to say that Schepkin hustled the outer movements of the Mozart along, taking no prisoners... Proms at St Jude's Thursday June 11, 2015, H&H Series

*'We were an hour and a half late..the audience were so kind and forgiving'*  
Kammerphilharmonie Europa member on her epic journey from Cologne

### Queen of Swing brings big band sound to prom



They call her the Queen of Swing, and she's played the St Jude's Proms before. But this time Clare Teal is back with her so-called Mini Big Band - which, as she explained to me "doesn't mean a group of very short people" but a reduced-scale version of the kind of '50s band that Ella Fitzgerald might have sung to. Serried rows of trumpets, saxophones and... "It's virtually impossible the days to tour with a real big band," says Teal, "so I use arrangements for a rhythm section and just fit

brass. You get the same effect, of a sort of Hollywood style orchestra, but more compactly".

Arguably Britain's leading female jazz voice, Teal's career has taken her beyond the jazz-club circuit to considerably grander venues like the Albert Hall

environment. But she's used "You'd be surprised how of jazz musicians find themselves playing in churches. It's not usually a problem - although you have to be careful with the drums. Church acoustics

### 'Want something done? Politics is your best bet'

Ahead of a talk about his latest memoir, Stanley Johnson tells Alex Bellotti why his future plans are open as he leaves the campaign trail to his sons

Stanley Johnson: one-time spy, politician, animal rights crusader - and inevitably brilliant raconteur. So reads the blurb of the 74-year-old's second volume of memoirs. And while he no doubt lives up to such praise, he is also aware that most will commonly know him as the Mayor of London's dad.

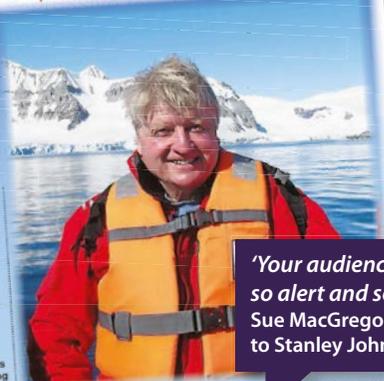
This in itself is no problem - indeed he's "as pleased as punch" at the fact. In a typically calamitous... "I said, 'I am not a politician', and Joe and I looked at me. 'Well, how many more are there?' "Of course, the studio audience loved that. The ice was broken. A good time was had by all."

Returning to his then-Primrose Hill home, Stanley found his only unnamed child, Julia - born, like Max, from his second marriage to Jennifer Kidd - not quite as amused. As memoir entries go, though, the incident demonstrates its narrator's enjoyable ability to lampoon himself with regular gusto - a fact which should make for an entertaining author talk at Proms at St Jude's on June 21 with broadcaster Sue MacGregor.

Elsewhere in the book, Stanley regales us with tales of his campaign to ban the importation of seal skins in Canada, writing a dozen spy novels, travelling to Antarctica and of course the rising fortunes of the Johnson clan. "Of course I'm absolutely delighted that both Jo and Boris have joined the government in some form," he tells me regarding his two MP sons. He has "no line" on whether the latter's dual role as mayor may prove problematic, but is eager to say something nonetheless - adds that Boris "played a blinder" in winning voters over on the election trail.

Similarly, a mere mention of ambition in the Johnson household immediately gets shut down. "Oh, I don't know about that... no, I don't think so... we just get on with our things" - but the Regent's Park resident suggests his sons are in politics for the same reason that he became an environmentally-campaigning MEP in the late '70s.

"In a very practical way, I've always thought that if you want to get something done then politics is a pretty good way to get something done, if you want to lobby people, well, that's one thing, but why not get in there and do it?" Nonetheless, at an age where returning to the political stage is realistically out of the question, Stanley's future ambitions are re-published in America, and having once co-presented Channel 4's The Last Word for a short time, he retains an interest in television. "I have had occasional feelers



Stanley's venture to Antarctica is one of many adventures in his memoir as the Johnsons well know, the joker in the pack can often play the most important role of all. Stanley Johnson will be in conversation with Sue MacGregor at Proms at St Jude's on June 21. Stanley, I Resume is published by The Robson Press in paperback for £10.99.

*'Your audiences are always so alert and so interested'*  
Sue MacGregor after talking to Stanley Johnson at Litfest

*'Congratulations! You are quite the best-organised festival I know'*  
Piers Plowright, who interviewed Vanessa Nicolson at Litfest

*'The concert was great..and we had lovely tea and sandwiches too!'*  
Older Proms-goer after lunchtime harp recital

'Proms has done it once again... a real triumph' Graham Welland, Kentish Town

'I really liked the violinist and the modern fast bits' Olivia, aged 10, after our Wonderland performance

# 'I'm more caterpillar than white rabbit'

Ahead of her appearance at an event marking 150 years of Alice in Wonderland, tells **Michael White** why she identifies with Carroll's bolshy insect and being c

**S**carred for life as I doubtless am by having played the Dormouse in a primary school staging and been stuffed into a teapot every night, I have mixed feelings about Alice in Wonderland. And so does the actress Maureen Lipman who stars in an evening of words and music to mark the 150th anniversary of the Alice stories.

As she told me last week, Lewis Carroll wasn't her childhood reading of choice: "I liked books about girls who go to ballet school - Laura of the Wells or whatever - not girls who go down rabbit holes. And you do get rather annoyed by Alice don't you? She's such a very Victorian child it's quite hard to identify with her.

"But lots of things in life remind me of Alice: when you come across reversals of justice where black becomes white, you can't help thinking That's very Alice in Wonderland. And I can certainly identify with some of the other characters.

"You'd probably put me down as the White Rabbit sort, but I'm actually too lazy. I see myself more as the Caterpillar, endlessly contrarian, a bit bolshy. And finding the voices for these creatures is maybe the main reason I agreed to do this show - apart from the fact that it means working with musicians, which is something I love. I like to be in the presence of events where the things I can't



in public when she couldn't. Silenced only by death, which intervened barely a month after selling out Carnegie Hall, Florence passed into legend as a joyous paradigm for dreadful singers everywhere, thank performances of Mozart, and others that were, as one commentator put it, "unda the composer's intent".

"They survive to this day YouTube, where you can fit to the supreme feebleness of her Queen of the Night and the

summer's night, you wouldn't have wanted to hear the noise coming out of the open windows as we rehearsed". Florence's fame is due to get another lease of life, because

**'Truly moving and haunting. These five are all so gifted'**

Tim Brown, East Finchley, on Gemma Rosefield & Rodinsky Quartet

# Ham&High

## Proms at St Jude's 2015 draws to crescendo finish

Imogen Blake



Night of St Jude's Proms with The London International Orchestra conducted by Howard Williams & soloist Victoria Simmonds

The illustrious Proms at St Jude's festival drew to a crescendo finish last weekend following a week of literary talks and orchestral concerts.

Audiences were delighted by a wide variety of lunchtime and evening concerts in the last days of the annual festival - of which the Ham&High is its media partner - at the weekend at St Jude-on-the-Hill church in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Proms committee member David Littaur was honoured on his 90th birthday at the magnificent Last Night of the Proms on Sunday when he was invited to take up the baton to conduct a short piece.

Proms founder Susie Gregson said: "He is the epitome of an English gentleman, extraordinarily polite and considerate and we are fond of saying that when we grow up we want to be just like David!"

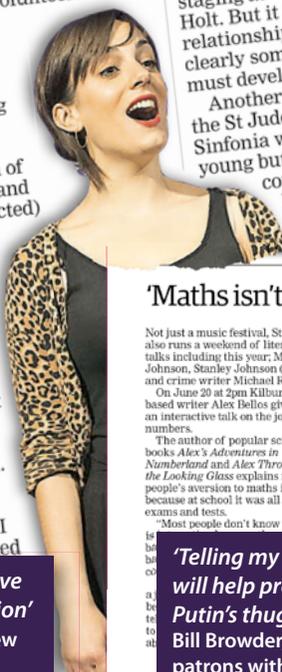
**'A magical night in glorious surroundings... I will be back'** Gabrielle West, Barnes

## Concert Carmen a revelation as St Jude's tallies a good year

Now that the accounts are done, the collecting buckets emptied, and the dust settled on this year's St Jude's Proms, they've raised £60,000 for the charities that benefit from the event. As always, it's a result that owes everything to the tireless work of Susie Gregson and her army of volunteers who run the show.

But the 2015 season was also an artistic success - starting as it meant to continue with a concert-Carmen of extraordinary (and frankly unexpected) impact.

Like most critics, I've sat through more than enough Carmens; but I can truly say that this one kept me onside and engaged. I cared about the characters. I



**'It was so very impressive to see the Proms in action'** Gill Hornby after interview with Bridget Galton

a shrew as a seductress, with an edgy but exciting sound. And I admired the strength and technical assurance of the orchestra and chorus under Nicholas Chalmers, whose command of the score was unflinching.

This concert was a sort of dress rehearsal before a full staging at the country-opera Nevill Holt. But it felt complete. And the relationship with Nevill Holt is clearly something that St Jude's must develop.

Another asset this year was the St Jude's debut of the Melos Sinfonia with their absurdly young but seriously talented conductor Oliver Zeffman. I've heard them play with more confidence than they did here in a programme of Debussy.

## 'Maths isn't just useful, it's culturally enriching'

Not just a music festival, St Jude's also runs a weekend of literary talks including this year, MP Alan Johnson, Stanley Johnson (see p8) and crime writer Michael Ridpath.

On June 20 at 2pm Kilburn-based writer Alex Bellos gives an interactive talk on the joy of numbers.

The author of popular science books Alex's *Adventures in Numberland* and *Alex Through the Looking Glass* explains most people's aversion to maths is because at school it was all about exams and tests.

"Most people don't know maths

to be good at maths to understand."

Always looking for a numbers-related "angle" when fans kept asking: "what's your favourite number?" Bellos was initially irked by the simplistic question, but then turned it around on them.

"People had really serious responses, so I thought 'this is something people care about, why not quantify it?' His online poll was answered by 40,000 people from all over the world.

Interested in the "psychological and cultural associations of numbers" (such as why odds are considered masculine, and even numbers are numbers, think, how decisions, raring plot in Indian to an 1 nt number

"Why are there 90 degrees in a circle? It's not just because it's convenient, it's a Babylonian invention related to their positional system of numbers.

"Why are triangles so important? Without them we wouldn't have accurate maps of the world or have got to the moon."

One question he asks is where does maths begin?

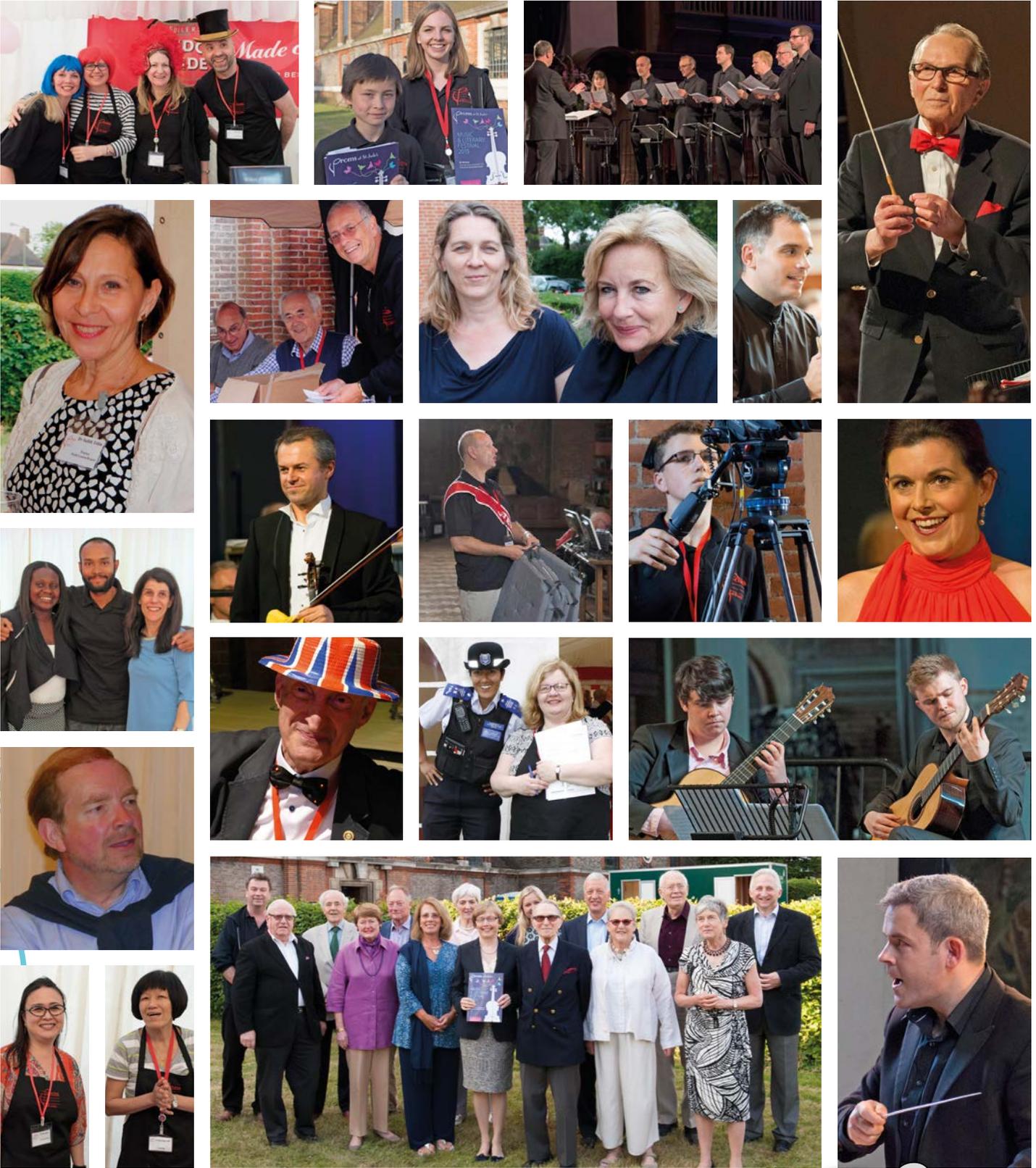
"You could say it was Thales measuring the pyramid in 600 BC, calculating the height without going to the top by seeing how the shadow fell, taking a small stick to measure that shadow and working out the ratio through deductive logic. All maths is abstraction and deduction. People say you should learn it because it's useful, but I say it's culturally enriching. Once you understand it you can appreciate the world better in the same way that studying Shakespeare makes you appreciate the world better."



Writer Alex Bellos

**'Telling my story at LitFest will help protect me from Putin's thugs'** Bill Browder, who enthralled patrons with his dark tale from Russia

and the 450 concert-goers were not left disappointed.



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