

SHAKESPEARE IN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Stratford-upon-Avon

5 May 2025



STRATFORD CHAMBER CHOIR

directed by Stephen DODSWORTH

Charles MATTHEWS, Organ

CHOIR

Kyrie eleison (4-Pt Mass)

Teach me, O Lord

O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit

If ye love me

William BYRD

William BYRD

Thomas TALLIS

Thomas TALLIS

ORGAN

The Earl of Oxfords March

William BYRD

CHOIR

Ne irascaris

Nolo mortem peccatoris

Alleluia! I heard a voice

William BYRD

Thomas MORLEY

Thomas WEELKES

ORGAN

Miserere a 3

(on the plainsong melody *Clarifica me, Pater*)

William BYRD

CHOIR

Gloria in excelsis Deo (4-Pt Mass)

Almighty and everlasting God

The Record of John

William BYRD

Orlando GIBBONS

Orlando GIBBONS

ORGAN

The Bells

William BYRD

CHOIR

Agnus Dei (4-Pt Mass)

O nata lux de lumine

Evening Service for Trebles

Hosanna to the Son of David

William BYRD

Thomas TALLIS

Thomas WEELKES

Thomas WEELKES

Stratford Chamber Choir was founded in 1993 and quickly established itself as one of the leading choirs in the area. It is a choir of gifted amateurs working to professional standards. Within the immediate locality, it has been invited to sing by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Town Council, various charitable organisations and has performed a number of times in the Stratford Music Festival.

Further afield, it has led services in St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Winchester Cathedral, Tewkesbury Abbey, Beverley Minster and Norwich Cathedral. The choir has a long history of performing abroad including several tours to Burgundy and Paris, as well as performing in Stratford, Connecticut and at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine in New York. In 2004 the choir was engaged to perform in the prestigious Bach Festival in Combrailles.

The choir has been featured on BBC Songs of Praise and on Radio 3 and was honoured to be invited to sing for HM Queen Elizabeth II in the Guild Chapel in 1996.

Stephen Dodsworth was from 1996 Assistant Director of Music (later Director of Music – Performance) at Pocklington School and also Organist and Choir Master at the town's Parish Church. He formed the A Cappella Choir and the Pocklington Players, an orchestra which gave regular concerts as well as accompanying the school's Choral Society. He founded and, for many years, ran a flourishing Chamber Music Society.

In 1989 he was appointed Director of Music at King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon (retiring from that position in 2008) and, in 1990, the conductorship of the Stratford Choral Society. He joined the music staff of Holy Trinity Church as Deputy Director of Music and, following his retirement in 2019 was appointed Organist Emeritus. Together with Tim Raistrick he founded the Stratford Chamber Choir in 1993.

For thirty years he worked on the staff of courses for choir singers run by the Royal School of Church Music. He is an accomplished composer of choral and orchestral works.

Charles Matthews studied at the Royal College of Music, London, and was an organ scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has won numerous awards, including first and second prizes in international piano and organ competitions in Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain.

He has performed for productions by the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet, and recorded music used in various theatres in Spain. Schott Music publish a collection of his compositions for flute and piano. He has recorded for numerous CDs.

He is organist of St Catharine's Church, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, and also performs as a member of the Spire organ and electronics project. He works extensively with young people, acts as piano accompanist and organ tutor at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and regularly works on music courses in the UK and internationally. He is Musical Director of the Campden Chorus and Patron of Shipston Music Society.