

# Music to Die for...

...music to touch the heart  
and revive the soul.

## **GRADUATE SINGERS**

**DIRECTED BY ANDREW CLOSE**

*with Rosalind Martin, Amara Seabrook,  
Peter Hopkins and Matthew Atherton*

St John's Anglican Church, Halifax St  
Saturday May 17 1997, 8.00pm  
Sunday May 18 1997, 2.30pm

## MUSIC TO DIE FOR...

***Wie Lieblich Sind***

Johannes Brahms

***Miserere mei, Deus***

Gregorio Allegri

Amara Seabrook, cantus I  
Alison McDougall, cantus II  
Penny Dally, altus  
Bill Jackson, bassus

***Pie Jesu***

Andrew Lloyd-Webber

Rosalind Martin and Amara Seabrook, soprani

***Agnus Dei***

Samuel Barber

Greta Bradsen, soprano

***Five Negro Spirituals***

Michael Tippett

*Steal Away*

*Nobody Knows*

*Go Down Moses*

*By and By*

*Deep River*

Rosalind Martin, soprano  
Peter Hopkins, baritone  
Christine Beal, alto  
Martin Penhale, tenor

**Interval - 20 minutes**

***O Viridissima Virga***

Hildegard of Bingen

***Requiem, Op 48***

Gabriel Fauré

*Introit et Kyrie*

*Offertoire*

*Sanctus*

*Pie Jesu*

*Agnus Dei*

*Libera Me*

*In Paradisum*

Rosalind Martin, soprano  
Peter Hopkins, baritone

***This concert is being recorded. Your cooperation in keeping live and electronic noise to a minimum is appreciated.***

### **Music to Die For ...**

All of us have moments when we need to quieten our busy thoughts, to refocus our beliefs and to rediscover the simple joy of living. What better way than through the healing powers of music? Choirs can count themselves fortunate that we have so many pieces that help the listener in this regard, and hence this program. For the listener who seeks a quiet moment, a chance to recover lost energies, a reminder of what is important and a gateway to the joy of life, we welcome you and hope we achieve our aim ...

A sense of rapture is indeed what we find in Brahms' **Wie Lieblich Sind**, from the composer's German Requiem. "How lovely is thy dwelling place" is a typically (for Brahms) lush setting, in which the long tendrils of melody are interrupted only once to allow a more boisterous passage free rein. While the listener is often unaware of the beautifully crafted writing, which guarantees that each part sounds like the lead line, the overall arches of sound are simply a joy to behold.

Although there has been doubt cast on its authorship, there is no doubt as to the beauty and timelessness of Gregorio Allegri's **Miserere Mei, Deus**. Three elements - the full choir, male chanting and a solo quartet - present a reassuring patchwork of varied textures in what is essentially a simple work. The highlight of this work must surely be the ethereal sound of one soprano floating high above the rest of her quartet.

When Andrew Lloyd Webber first wrote the **Pie Jesu** section of his Requiem, I wonder if he realised how far reaching his few simple phrases would become? Perhaps it is this simplicity of language that so appeals to us, as it is an escape from the ever more complex lives we seem to live. Whatever the reason, our "Sarah Brightman", Rosalind Martin, and our "Paul Miles-Kingston", Amara Seabrook, will surely leave you thankful for Lloyd Webber's moment of stillness and beauty.

Samuel Barber's **Agnus Dei** began life as an Adagio for String Quartet - the present version surely the result of the original's extraordinary popularity. Some listener's will recognise the music as the theme from the film *Platoon*. For many Americans this piece will eternally be linked with the death of J.F.K., for on that day many radio stations simply kept repeating Barber's Adagio, as if this one piece summed up the feelings of a whole nation.

Negro Spirituals have always been a constant source of comfort, describing as they do a source of hope for the oppressed and in need. Michael Tippett's **Five Negro Spirituals**, drawn from his Oratorio, "A Child of our Time", weave simple melodies into a lattice work of voices. This musical braid culminates in a split choir rendition of "By and By", and a multilayered "Deep River".

Hildegard of Bingen - visionary, naturalist, playwright, poetess and composer - was the most celebrated woman of her age. The Abbess Hildegard's music is a very ornate form of chant, and likewise her texts are thick in metaphor and allusion. **O Viridissima Virga** depicts Mary as a fertile branch, from which beautiful flowers spring forth. To truly appreciate Hildegard's liquid sounds, we invite you to close your eyes as the choir processes around the pews.

Fauré's **Requiem** is a work of contradictions: a master of intimate forms writes a superbly crafted longer work, a Requiem is sung without a Last Judgement, a work of classical simplicity is written during the summit of Romantic excesses. The key to resolving these contradictions is to understand Fauré's faith, for the composer saw death as a "happy deliverance, an inspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience". Would that we all could have Fauré's trust in his beliefs!

If you enjoy today's program, you may be interested in our next appearances:

### **South Australian Artists in Concert II**

Saturday August 2nd 1997  
8pm  
Pilgrim Church, Flinders St.  
\$15/\$10

Program includes works by  
Harold Wyde, James Govanlock,  
Percy Grainger, Matthew  
Atherton, Martin Wesley-Smith  
and Duncan McKie

### **Gems & Eggs**

Saturday Oct. 18th  
8pm

with Orchestra

Featuring Vivaldi's  
"Gloria" and  
P.D.Q. Bach's  
"The Seasonings"

#### **ANDREW CLOSE - MUSICAL DIRECTOR**

Andrew Close was appointed Musical Director of Graduate Singers at the beginning of 1997. He is well known and respected in Adelaide as both a performer and Conductor, and currently teaches music at Pembroke School. He was formerly the Principal Clarinettist with the Band of the South Australian Police.

As a conductor, Close has been involved in a number of groups, focusing particularly on choral work. He has been Musical director of the Noarlunga City Choir, Noarlunga City Children's Choir, Hills Choral Society and Assistant Musical Director of Corinthians XXXII. In addition he has been Musical Director of the Tea Tree Gully Youth Orchestra and the Northern Light Theatre Company, and an occasional conductor for the Flinders Street Wind Ensemble and the Band of the South Australia Police.

As a performer, Close has focused on the contemporary music scene. Close received a Masters Degree in Performance in 1991, in part for his Australian premiere of Stockhausen's Harlequin. He has also given the first performance of works by Aldam, Bridgoake, Fox, Grandison, Grant, Chapman Smith, Harris, Hines, Kotlowy, Llewellyn, McIlwain, Newsome, Polglase and Whittington.

Close has an interest in composition, and has himself written a number of works. Song cycles such as "Songs of Middle Earth" and "Songs for Sinsha" have received a number of performances each, both in Australia and overseas. "Blossomfall" is to be recorded by the distinguished bass Conal Coad and Anne Adamek, piano in the ABC studios of Adelaide. Close's "Divertimento" for String Orchestra received its premiere recently and will be taken to Europe as part of Pembroke School's forthcoming tour.

#### **ROSALIND MARTIN - SOPRANO**

Soprano Rosalind Martin spent ten years studying and working in Europe before returning to Adelaide. A voice and clarinet student at the University of Adelaide, she won several major singing prizes in Australia before taking up a German Academic Exchange Scholarship to study opera in Germany. From there she moved to the UK where a close association with the Britten/Pears School in Aldeburgh led to several performances in the Snape Maltings,

including Donna Elvira in the Mozart/Britten Festival, the *Messiah* with the London Bach Orchestra and as soloist in Mahler's *4th Symphony*.

She has been a finalist in both the 's-Hertogenbosch and Belvedere International Singing Competitions and has sung in concerts in Germany, Holland, Belgium, France and Britain.

She has worked for the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Kent Opera, Mecklenburgh Opera and Pimlico Opera and operatic roles performed include the Countess, Pamina, Fiordiligi, Gretel, Mrs Julian (Owen Wingrave), Violetta and Nedda. She sang the role of Magda Wang in the British premiere of Zbigniew Rudinski's opera *Mannekens* with the Mecklenburgh Opera for the London International Opera Festival and was the Wife in the world premiere of Nicola Lefanu's *Blood Wedding* for the Women's Playhouse Trust.

Rosalind performed in the 1996 Barossa International Music Festival and is currently on the staff of the Elder Conservatorium of Music.

#### **AMARA SEABROOK - SOPRANO**

Since 1988, Amara has sung with a number of Adelaide choirs, including Corinthian Singers, Adelaide Chamber Singers, Adelaide University Choral Society, Flinders University Choral Society and Graduate Singers. She has also performed as soloist in works such as Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Mozart's *Speyr Messe*.

In 1994, Amara completed Honours in Voice Performance at the Elder Conservatorium, after being awarded the Guli Magarey scholarship towards vocal studies. Last year she considered it a great privilege to perform the soprano solo in the premiere of Matthew Atherton's *Requiem to the Unknown* with Graduate Singers.

Amara has sung the role of Anne in concert performances of Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* and has been a member of the State Opera Chorus since 1991. She also holds an Honours Degree in German and teaches both German and Music at Temple Christian College.

#### **PETER HOPKINS - BARITONE**

Peter's early music experience was in the Flinders and Adelaide University Choral Societies and also performing principal roles in musicals and Gilbert and Sullivan. He started singing at the Elder Conservatorium with James Christiansen and has performed as a soloist for the major Adelaide choirs, notably in "Carmina Burana", "The Messiah" and the Fauré "Requiem".

In opera he has performed in the chorus of the Australian Opera and State Opera, as well as taking the role of Morales in "Carmen", and Valentine in "Faust" for the Bristol Opera Company.

Peter is in much demand as a voice teacher and teaches at the Flinders Street School of Music and some secondary schools. Peter also has directed several musical productions and he is currently Musical Director of the Hill's Choral Society.

#### **MATTHEW ATHERTON - ORGANIST**

In 1987, Matthew completed his Bachelor of Music (Performance) degree, majoring on pipe organ and tutored by Christa Rumsey. He obtained his Honours in performance at the Elder Conservatorium the following year. He has been privileged to meet and participate in masterclasses with Gillian Weir and Thomas Trotter.

Matthew was Organ Scholar at St Peter's Cathedral from 1988 - 1991. He was appointed Assistant Organist at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral in 1989, a position he still holds. Matthew has given numerous public recitals since 1986, including inaugural recitals for new organs, and concerts featuring his own works and those of other Adelaide composers. Several of his recitals and compositions have been broadcast on 5UV.

Matthew has accompanied many Adelaide Choirs including Graduate Singers, Adelaide University Choral Society, Flinders University Choral Society, St Francis Xavier Cathedral Choir, Adelaide Harmony Choir, Woodlands Girls Choir and Rostrevor College. He also played for the Ecumenical Liturgy Workshop for the 1989 World Council of Churches Conference which was broadcast on ABC TV.

Matthew has been composing since he was at school. With aid of synthesizers, samplers, digital and multitrack recording equipment and computer notation programs, he produces works in many different styles - including solo organ works, electro-acoustic works and vocal and choral works. He maintains a keen interest in the 20th Century repertoire and in perpetuating the organ as a serious tool for contemporary music.

#### **GRADUATE SINGERS**

Graduate Singers was formed in 1977 and has sung under a number of musical directors, including Carl Crossin, Hilary Weiland, and Graham Abbott.

Graduate Singers has performed for the ABC on many occasions and has broadcast on ABC-FM. The choir gained critical acclaim for its concerts with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and has enjoyed the opportunity of working with international and Australian conductors including Nicholas Braithwaite, János Fűrst, David Porcellijn and Vladimir Verbitsky.

The choir performs many styles of music, from chamber concerts of music from all periods, to more ambitious presentations of great choral classics, including Bach's *Mass in B Minor* and *Magnificat*, Handel's *Messiah*, *Samson* and *Dixit Dominus*, Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* and Mozart's *Requiem*.

In 1995, under then Musical Director, Jason Shute, Graduate Singers presented Schütz' *St Matthew Passion*, with soloist Brian Gilbertson, premiere performances of works by he and Matthew Atherton, and Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* and *St Nicolas*. Graduate Singers also joined with other choirs to perform Berlioz' *Requiem* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Major concert presentations in 1996 included Mozart's immortal *Requiem* and the premiere of Adelaide composer and organist, Matthew Atherton's inspired *Requiem to the Unknown*.

In 1997 Graduate Singers welcomes its new Musical Director, Andrew Close. The choir's first performance of the year was Evensong in celebration of the Queen's Birthday for the Anglican Parish of Christ Church, North Adelaide on April 21.

## **GRADUATE SINGERS**

### **Sopranos**

Trudie Austin  
Greta Bradsen  
Christine Beal  
Brigid Bruer  
Rosemary Byron-Scott  
Alison Doerr  
Alison McDougall  
Miriam McGregor  
Margaret Rawlinson  
Gillian Wilson

### **Altos**

Susan Arnold  
Penny Dally  
Mary Doube  
Vera Green  
Melissa Jones  
Cathy Lock  
Susan Murdoch  
Jill Noble  
Sherry Proferes  
Bronwyn Timko

### **Tenors**

Peter Bleby  
Malcolm Chia  
Martin Penhale  
Jason Rowley  
Michael Speck  
Louise Tunbridge

### **Basses**

Bill Jackson  
Phil Lock  
Gavin Pearce  
Jeremy Schluter  
Chris Stekete  
Peter Watt  
Terry Werner

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Venerable John Collas and Catherine Bonython,  
Christ Church, North Adelaide

St. John's Anglican Church, Halifax Street

School of Computer and Information Science,  
University of South Australia

Pembroke School

Vivienne Muller, our accompanist

Marina Delpin, stage manager

Andrew Timko, recording

Wendy Boyce

Daryl Zeuner, Deb Tranter, Emma Rosenzweig,  
our front of house helpers

*This concert is presented by Graduate Singers Inc. PO Box 768 Unley 5061.  
People interested in auditioning for Graduate Singers should contact  
our president, Bill Jackson ph. 8352 3553.*