

## A SUMMER CELEBRATION

### Waltham Singers in Great Waltham Church

22.06.13

Celebrating their fortieth season, this concert was an impressive meeting of past and future, sacred and profane. Based largely on the music they took with them on their tour of Venice last month.

It began with a sequence of church music from Byrd to Rutter – his simple, fervent God Be In My Head. These were some of the pieces that the Singers have shared with us over the years – Bruckner's Locus Iste, for example - and included a performance of Victoria's Misa O Magnum Mysterium. Superbly balanced blend of voices in Tallis's O Nata Lux, and the splendour of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus to end.

All directed with inspirational enthusiasm and eloquent precision by Andrew Fardell, who confessed that after the interval they were straying outside their comfort zone, loosening up a little. No need to worry, since the next three numbers were all arrangements for The Kings Singers, who have proved better than anyone that letting your hair down doesn't mean letting your standards slip.

Excellent work, and hugely entertaining, especially the I'm A [High Speed] Train encore. [Though some of us might have appreciated the contrasting nostalgia of Slow Train, from the same album, I think ...]

Guest artist for the evening was singer/pianist Claire Harper, who gave us some great jazz standards, unmediated by microphones, and then joined the Singers for a heady mix of the cool and the choral, especially in Gershwin's S'wonderful.