

6th November 2018

Belfast Philharmonic Choir announces involvement with Great War Symphony US première.

During the Summer of 2018 Belfast Philharmonic Youth Chamber Choir were involved in recording part of Patrick Hawes' new work the Great War Symphony, commemorating the centenary of the end of the Great War. This recording was one of those from National Youth Choirs broadcast in to the Royal Albert Hall during the world première of this stunning piece on October 9th, 2018. The world premiere was recorded by and broadcast on Classic FM.

On 11th November 2018, one hundred years on from, what came to be known as, the end of World War One the US première of The Great War Symphony will be held in Carnegie Hall, New York. Following the successful involvement of our Youth Chamber Choir in the Royal Albert Hall concert, Stephen Doughty chorus master of Belfast Philharmonic Choir and Alastair Rankin, chairman of Belfast Philharmonic Choir, received an invitation for the adult choir to take part in this US première in New York.

16 members of Belfast Philharmonic Choir are honoured and excited to be flying to New York to rehearse and sing in this concert with specially selected choirs from around the world, as Distinguished Concerts Singers International, and under the baton of composer, Patrick Hawes, himself.

Contacts:

Alastair Rankin chairman@belfastphilharmonic.org.uk

Sally Picton honsecretary@belfastphilharmonic.org.uk

www.belfastphilharmonic.org.uk

Closer to home Belfast Philharmonic Choir are giving a concert in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast on Saturday, 17th November – information and tickets are available online <https://getinvited.to/belfastphil/music-for-a-big-church/>

and will be performing Handel's Messiah in the Waterfront Hall with the Ulster Orchestra on the 7th/8th December.

About Belfast Philharmonic Choir

The Belfast Philharmonic Choir (affectionately known as "The Phil") led by music director Stephen Doughty, is Northern Ireland's only symphonic choir.

The 120+ strong choir performs at least four programmes per year, many alongside the Ulster Orchestra, including performances of Handel's Messiah every Christmas - a tradition that goes back as far as 1886!

We also travel and have performed in Derry/Londonderry and most recently in Dublin. In August 2017 we undertook a highly successful three date concert tour performing to full houses in Opole Cathedral and Christ The King Cathedral in Katowice, Poland and The Philharmonia Concert Hall in Lviv, Ukraine.

Our repertoire is varied and includes many major works - Mendelssohn's Elijah and Dream of Gerontius, Mozart Requiem, Brahms' German Requiem, works by Bach, Beethoven, Rossini, Bruckner and Karl Jenkins to name but a few, not forgetting our annual performances of Handel's Messiah.

Belfast Philharmonic Choir also endeavours to bring modern/new classical music to a wider audience. In our 2017-18 season there were two European premières, Stuart Scott's Requiem Brevis in November, and, in May, Christopher Marshall's Earthsong, the latter with our Phil Kids Junior Choir. In 2015 we performed the world première of James Whitbourn's The Seven Heavens, written especially for us to commemorate our 140th anniversary. In 2012 we sang in another world première - Titanic Requiem, a commemoration of those lost on the Titanic by Philip Hammond.

Apart from the usual choral fare, Belfast Philharmonic Choir take part in an interesting array of projects. In May 2018 19 of our singers were excited to take part in the Game of Thrones Concert Experience European Tour, conducted by series composer

Ramin Djawadi himself! They formed the stage choir for two spectacular evenings one at the 3Arena, Dublin and the other at the SSE Arena, Belfast.

Earlier in the season we switched genres again and joined the Ulster Orchestra to sing favourite tunes from the musicals, a concert which was recorded and later broadcast on BBC Radio Ulster's Classical Connections.

We have worked in collaboration with the Belfast Film Festival and the Ulster Orchestra to perform the music from Star Wars and Patrick Doyle music as heard in the films of Sir Kenneth Branagh.

We have also accompanied Kathryn Jenkins at the Odyssey Arena (now the SSE Arena) and sung with Ennio Morriconi and his orchestra for Belfast Festival at Queens.