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EX CATHEDRA

INSPIRING SINGING



 fresh
and absolutely
vital”
bachtrack.com

www.excathedra.co.uk

CHOIR | CONSORT | ORCHESTRA | EDUCATION
Artistic Director & Conductor Jeffrey Skidmore OBE



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City Council

BYRD TO BACHARACH - AND BACH

Ex Cathedra is special. A highly regarded music critic once said that the choir was probably the best in the world. This is quite a claim and not only includes the technical virtuosity and unique chemistry of the singers but also the ethos of the ensemble, its ability and desire to communicate with audiences, its imaginative programming, its stylistic awareness and above all its humanity.

Ex Cathedra's orchestra is a mixture of leading players and talented young players at the beginning of their careers and perfectly complements the choir. Our participation and education work adds a further crucial dimension. All these elements allow the group to explore an extraordinary range of diverse repertoire which addresses the important issues of our age including climate change, immigration, racism, the fight against torture, world peace, health and equality. We perform at the highest possible level traditional repertoire and newly commissioned music from every continent in our aim to make great music accessible to everybody. Another leading commentator, festival director and respected musical thinker summed up our work by saying that Ex Cathedra was 'the most sophisticated, three dimensional and multi-layered of all the leading groups in the country'. This is high praise and something we strive to maintain.

Welcome to Ex Cathedra's 53rd season. In it we celebrate several important anniversaries



and events: Rachmaninoff (150), Bach's *St John Passion* (300), William Byrd (400), the Student Scholarship Scheme (5), the recent death of Burt Bacharach and the 60th anniversary of the assassination of John F Kennedy on St Cecilia's Day 1963.

“proof, if proof were needed, of why Ex Cathedra are regarded as one of the UK's elite choirs”

www.seenandheard-international.com

Baroque music is central to understanding western classical music and as ever it is at the heart of Ex Cathedra's work. Our home town Birmingham, perhaps surprisingly, has a proud and distinguished history in this field and we continue

our exploration of Birmingham Baroque with three programmes: **Baroque Passion**, Bach's **St John Passion** and Handel's **Messiah** - the 'greatest story ever told'.

What distinguishes an Ex Cathedra performance? Freshness is frequently mentioned, even in pieces we have often



performed, as is the quality of our team of soloists who also sing in the choruses and are part of the choir and the Ex Cathedra Consort. This company of skilled singers (12 for Messiah) who work regularly together create the stylistic consistency which is one of the hallmarks of Ex Cathedra's work.

From **Byrd to Bacharach - and Bach** is a typically wide-ranging programme to celebrate the 5th anniversary of Student Scholarships, a highly successful, formal scheme which has developed in recent years between Ex Cathedra and the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Ex Cathedra's Scholars Consort works at a high level to prepare young singers for the professional world. The repertoire is typically eclectic and includes music by Charpentier, Purcell, Britten as well as the programme's three epynymous Bs.

After over 50 years as Artistic Director and Conductor of Ex Cathedra, succession has

been in my thinking for some time and you will have the opportunity to see and hear, in the two solstice programmes **Summer Music by Candlelight** and **Christmas Music by Candlelight**, three young and recent Associate Conductors who will have further opportunity to work with the group.

The season starts with Rachmaninoff's **All-Night Vigil**, his most-loved work using orthodox chants from the Znamenny tradition, Greece and poignantly from the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. Recent discoveries from the original 1915 poster inform our performance and bells, so dear to Rachmaninoff and Russian Christian culture, will sound the chants between movements.

Our programme is for everyone. I hope to see you soon.

Jeffrey

Jeffrey Skidmore,
April 2023

RACHMANINOFF 150 'VESPERS'

SUN 15 OCT, 4PM

Town Hall, Birmingham

£15 - £46 incl. per ticket commission

SAT 10 FEB, 8PM

Hereford Cathedral

£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

TUE 27 FEB, 7.30PM

St Martin-in-the-Fields,
London

£10 - £40 plus £2.75 booking fee

Additional performance:

TUE 10 OCT, 7.30PM

St Mary's Church, Warwick

EX CATHEDRA Choir

Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

Martha McLorinan mezzo soprano

James Robinson tenor

Simone Rebello bells

Powerful, passionate, hypnotic – in a time of turmoil and amid the shock of war, Rachmaninoff turned to the choral heritage he held dear, and created one of the most awe-inspiring vocal masterpieces. Immerse yourself in its luminous choral tapestry, mesmeric melodies and some of the lowest notes you'll ever hear sung. No wonder it is beloved by audiences and singers alike.

Running time is approx. 1 hr 40 minutes, including interval.



**the stuff that legends
are made of**

**Birmingham
Post**



BYRD TO BACHARACH – AND BACH

**EX CATHEDRA &
ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE**
Scholars Ensemble
Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

TUE 21 NOV, 7PM

Bradshaw Hall,
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
£5 - £20

Discover the stars of the future as we celebrate the 5th anniversary of our Student Scholars scheme with a journey from the Renaissance to the greatest hits of recent decades, plus iconic works from two of the giants of 20th-century British music. Britten's immortal tribute to the patron saint of music is heard alongside Howells' *Take him Earth for cherishing* - dedicated to John F Kennedy, who was assassinated 60 years ago on St Cecilia's Day.

Programme includes:

Byrd Ave verum corpus

Purcell Jehovah, quam multi sunt hostes mei

Britten Hymn to St Cecilia

Howells Take him Earth for cherishing

Bacharach Anyone who had a heart

Running time is approx. 2 hours
including interval.



Book online:
www.excathedra.co.uk

HANDEL

MESSIAH

SUN 3 DEC, 4PM

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

£15 - £56 incl. per ticket commission



“*stunning ... crisp,
precise and beautifully
balanced*”

Bachtrack

EX CATHEDRA Choir & Baroque Orchestra
Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

Margaret Lingas, Imogen Russell
& **Katie Trethewey** soprano
Gabriella Liandu, Martha McLorinan
& **Anna Semple** alto
Sebastian Hill, James Robinson
& **Bradley Smith** tenor
Thomas Lowen, Themba Mvula
& **Lawrence White** bass

The trumpet shall sound! We're very excited to revisit Handel's thrilling masterpiece with a historically-informed performance that underscores the vitality and virtuosity of its famous choruses and arias – sung by our wonderful company of soloists. What better way to start your festive season?

Running time is approx. 2 hours 45 minutes
including interval.



CHRISTMAS MUSIC by CANDLELIGHT

EX CATHEDRA

Jeffrey Skidmore, George Parris conductor
Rupert Jeffcoat, Nicholas Wearne organ

In the stillness of a church, where candles glow... comes the luminous sound of a choir in quiet harmony. The singers will envelop you with a spellbinding sequence of seasonal favourites, little-known gems, and inspirational new music. Add a selection of readings that capture the mystery - and humour - of Christmas, and you won't want to miss these popular, atmospheric concerts.

Early booking is advised to avoid disappointment.
Running time approx. 2 hours 25 minutes including interval.

Bring your own mulled wine and mince pies for the interval at St Paul's and a cushion for your comfort. Refreshments will be available at all other venues.



SAT 2 DEC, 7.30PM

St James the Greater, Leicester¹
£15 - £35

WED 6 DEC, 7.30PM

Hereford Cathedral¹
£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

THU 7 DEC, 7PM

Lichfield Cathedral²
£15 - £35

SAT 9 DEC, 7PM

St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton¹
£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

TUE 12 DEC, 7PM

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London
£10 - £40 plus £2.75 booking fee

THU 14 DEC, 7.30PM

Coventry Cathedral
£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

**FRI 15, SAT 16,
MON 18, TUE 19 &
WED 20 DEC, 7.30PM**

St Paul's Church, Birmingham
£15 - £46 incl. per ticket commission

¹ Performed by our
Consort of 10 singers.

² Co-presented with
Lichfield Festival.

Book online:
www.excathedra.co.uk

Angels. Stars & Kings

Christmas Music by Candlelight family concert

SAT 16 DEC, 4PM

St Paul's Church, Birmingham
£22.50 (adults) / £5 (under 16s)
incl. per ticket commission

**EX CATHEDRA Choir
& Academy of Vocal Music**
Rebecca Ledgard, George Parris conductor
Nicholas Wearne organ

The whole family will love this warm and friendly concert of beautiful music and storytelling from our very young singers, our young people and our adults, specially curated for families with young children. This spine-tingling hour will finish with everyone enjoying the sheer pleasure of singing together.

Dressing up as an angel, star or king is not obligatory of course, but go on... join in the fun!

Particularly recommended for children aged 3-13 but all ages are welcome.



BAROQUE PASSION

MUSIC OF HEARTBREAK & HEALING

EX CATHEDRA Consort & Continuo

Andrew Skidmore cello

Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

Bittersweet, sinuous and yearning for resolution, this is heart-rending music that tells of sacrifice and healing. We share in Mary's sorrow at the foot of the cross in Scarlatti's dazzling *Stabat Mater*, feel the anguish as Jephthe's daughter weeps, and find solace in the optimism of Bach's *Komm, Jesu, komm*.

Programme includes:

JS Bach Prelude, Cello Suite No 1 in G (BWV 1007)

Purcell Hear my Prayer, O Lord

Lotti Crucifixus

D Scarlatti Stabat mater

Monteverdi Maria, quid ploras?

Carissimi Lament (from Jephthe)

JS Bach Komm, Jesu, komm (BWV 229)

Running time is approx. 2 hours
including interval

SUN 11 FEB, 4PM

Town Hall, Birmingham

£15 - £46 incl. per ticket commission



Book online:
www.excathedra.co.uk

300TH ANNIVERSARY

GOOD FRIDAY BACH

ST JOHN PASSION

FRI 29 MAR, 2PM

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

£15 - £53.50 incl. per ticket commission



Sung in German with English surtitles.

Running time is approx. 3 hours including a 30-minute interval.

**EX CATHEDRA Choir, Baroque Orchestra
& Academy of Vocal Music**
Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

James Robinson Evangelist
Themba Mvula Jesus
Lawrence White Pilate
Margaret Lingas, Katie Trethewey soprano
Mercè Bruguera Abelló, Gabriella Liandu alto
Bradley Smith tenor
Thomas Lowen bass

300 years after its first performance, Bach's *St John Passion* remains as powerful and profound as it must have been in 1724. The human drama of the story - Pilate's dilemma, Peter's denial - plus the emotion of the characters makes this a compelling pilgrimage, whatever your belief. And then there is the supreme beauty of Bach's music, heightened by the colours and poignancy of the period instruments - not least the majestic acceptance of 'Es ist vollbracht' (It is accomplished).

In this anniversary performance, we incorporate chorale preludes, motets, congregational hymns and readings to offer a richer experience of the Good Friday service as Bach knew it.



SUMMER MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT

EX CATHEDRA

Jeffrey Skidmore, Quintin Beer conductor

Sumer is icumen in - and we can't wait to celebrate the return of warm, light evenings, birdsong and holidays. As daylight fades and candles glow in the twilight, we invite you to unwind and enjoy an evening of enchanting music and readings. Expect choral classics, a sprinkle of surprises, and some fun as we journey from the promise of a new dawn to the serenity of sunset.

Running time is approx. 2 hours including interval.

Bring your own strawberries and fizz for the interval at St Paul's and a cushion for your comfort. Refreshments will be available at all other venues.

PP a beautiful evening -
just magical”

Audience member

WED 12 JUN, 8PM

Hereford Cathedral¹

£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

THU 13 JUN, 8PM

**St Peter's Church,
Wolverhampton¹**

£15 - £35 incl. per ticket commission

**TUE 18 JUN, 8PM
WED 19 JUN, 8PM**

St Paul's Church, Birmingham

£15 - £46 incl. per ticket commission

TUE 25 JUN, 8PM

**St Martin-in-the-Fields,
London**

£10 - £40 plus **£2.75** booking fee



¹ Performed by our
Consort of 10 singers.



Book online:
www.excathedra.co.uk

INSPIRING SINGING ALONGSIDE THE CONCERTS

**Singing together is powerful.
It is a shared creative experience
that transforms individuals into
a community, boosts wellbeing,
builds confidence, teamwork
and empathy.**

We want everyone to have the opportunity to experience the remarkable benefits of singing, and to be inspired by world-class choral music. We offer an extensive programme of education and participation projects, seeking to inspire and nurture a love of singing for the tens of thousands of people of all ages that we reach every year – in schools, hospitals and communities.



Singing Schools

EX CATHEDRA



**Singing
Playgrounds***

EX CATHEDRA

To discover the difference singing can make in your school, visit www.singingschools.co.uk and explore our affordable, innovative and comprehensive projects that inspire, enable and support your teachers and pupils.



Ex Cathedra

**Singing
Medicine**

Ex Cathedra supports health and wellbeing through singing, from bedside sessions at Birmingham Children's Hospital to dementia groups, mental health, Long Covid, and stroke recovery.

Visit www.singingmedicine.co.uk to find out more.





Our **Academy of Vocal Music** choirs welcome young singers from toddlers to teenagers and offer a wide range of creative, learning and performing activities with a nurturing ethos.



Ex Cathedra
Ladywood
Community Choir

This **Singing Medicine Wellbeing Group** is open to all, and focuses on wellbeing and community, meeting weekly to enjoy being together and learning a range of choral repertoire.




BE AN ANGEL! CAN YOU HELP?

As a charity, Ex Cathedra relies on public support to keep our singing alive. By joining the **Host of Angels** scheme you can support our work whilst also receiving priority booking and other benefits. Please also get in touch if you can help connect us to a trust or foundation who could support our work, or have ideas for a partnership that works for your business.

Find out more at www.excathedra.co.uk/support-us

BOOKING INFORMATION



BUY MORE & SAVE MORE!

CONCERTS BOOKED	2	3	4	5	6	7
DISCOUNT PER TICKET	£2.50	£3.50	£5	£5	£6	£7
TOTAL SAVING PER TICKET #	£2.50	£3.50	£5	£8.50	£9.50	£10.50

buying 5+ tickets provides exemption from B:Music's £3.50 per ticket commission

- It's simple! - just book 2+ concerts in the same transaction, discounts will be applied automatically
- Free ticket exchange scheme if your plans change

You can include any of the concerts sold through the B:Music box office, excluding: tickets priced £15 or less, and Angels, Stars & Kings.

HOW CAN I BOOK?

Online – www.excathedra.co.uk

Telephone – varies, call the number listed on the back cover

You can choose to receive your tickets:

- as an eticket (no charge)
- by post (£2 surcharge per order)¹

WHEN CAN I BOOK?

Priority booking for our Host of Angels:

- **Thu 25 May** Archangels, Thrones & Seraphim
- **Tue 30 May** Guardian Angels
- **Thu 1 Jun** Angels
- General sale **Mon 5 Jun 2023**

ACCESSIBILITY

Designated wheelchair spaces and free companion tickets are available at all venues. Please call the relevant box office for details.

STUDENTS & UNDER 30s¹

£5 for anyone in full time education or aged 17 and younger.

£15 for anyone aged 18-30 not in full time education

GROUPS OF 10 OR MORE¹

20% discount for groups of 10+.

Plus 2 free tickets for organisers of groups of 20+.

Per ticket commission reduced to £1

Email groupbookings@bmusic.co.uk or call free on **0121 289 6331** (10am to 2pm Mon-Fri).

Please note all tickets must be paid in one transaction.

STANDBY DISCOUNTS¹

Tickets priced **£5** available from 1pm on the day of evening performances or 10am on matinees:

- Passport to Leisure holders
- Benefit Recipients (qualifying benefits are Universal Credit, Income Support, Pension Credit and Disability Tax Credit). Proof of eligibility may be required.¹

Quote ECSTANDBY when booking

WHAT'S THE 'PER TICKET COMMISSION'?

The B:Music box office operates a 'per ticket commission' of £3.50. No fee applies to tickets priced £15 and under, or those purchased as part of a package of 5+ concerts. Other box offices vary, please check when booking.

¹ Applies to eligible concerts sold through the B:Music box office. Other box offices may vary, please check when booking.

At Ex Cathedra (registered charity no. 1004086) we believe in the power of singing to change lives. We would like to thank the supporters who make our concerts, schools, hospital and community projects possible.

PUBLIC FUNDERS



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ENGLAND**



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HOST OF ANGELS

Thank you to all the individuals who have made and continue to make donations for their generous support.

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OTHER PARTNERS

B:Music

Ex Cathedra is an Associate Artist
at Town Hall & Symphony Hall



CBSO

City of
Birmingham
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ROYAL
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**Services
For Education**



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Ex Cathedra is a company limited by guarantee (no. 2396173) and a registered charity (no. 1004086).

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The information in this brochure was correct at the time of going to press. Ex Cathedra reserves the right to change programmes and artists if necessary. Ticket prices may vary; customers will have to pay the prevailing price at the time of booking.

DATES AT A GLANCE

Summer Music by Candlelight (2023)

Tue 13 Jun	St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury	0333 666 3366
Wed 14 Jun	Hereford Cathedral	01432 340 555
Thu 15 Jun	St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton	0121 780 3333
Tue 20, Wed 21 Jun	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Tue 27 Jun	St Martin-in-the-Fields	020 7766 1100

Rachmaninoff 150 'Vespers'

Tue 10 Oct	St Mary's Church, Warwick	01926 334 418
Sun 15 Oct	Town Hall, Birmingham	0121 780 3333

Byrd to Bacharach – and Bach

Tue 21 Nov	Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire	0121 331 5909
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Handel – Messiah

Sun 3 Dec	Symphony Hall, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
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Christmas Music by Candlelight

Fri 1 Dec	St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury	0333 666 3366
Sat 2 Dec	St James the Greater, Leicester	0116 242 3595
Tue 5 Dec	St John's Church, Hagley	See website
Wed 6 Dec	Hereford Cathedral	01432 340 555
Thu 7 Dec	Lichfield Cathedral	01543 306 271
Sat 9 Dec	St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton	0121 780 3333
Tue 12 Dec	St Martin-in-the-Fields	020 7766 1100
Thu 14 Dec	Coventry Cathedral	024 7655 3055
Fri 15 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Sat 16 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Mon 18 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Tue 19 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Wed 20 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333

Angels, Stars & Kings – Family Christmas Music (matinee)

Sat 16 Dec	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
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Baroque Passion: Music of heartbreak & healing

Sun 11 Feb	Town Hall, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
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Rachmaninoff 150 'Vespers'

Sat 10 Feb	Hereford Cathedral	01432 340 555
Tue 27 Feb	St Martin-in-the-Fields	020 7766 1100

Good Friday Bach – St John Passion

Fri 29 Mar	Symphony Hall, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
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Summer Music by Candlelight (2024)

Wed 12 Jun	Hereford Cathedral	01432 340 555
Tue 13 Jun	St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton	0121 780 3333
Fri 14 Jun	St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury	0333 666 3366
Tue 18, Wed 19 Jun	St Paul's Church, Birmingham	0121 780 3333
Tue 25 Jun	St Martin-in-the-Fields	020 7766 1100

Details & booking - www.excathedra.co.uk