

ADVERTORIAL BEARSDEN CHOIR

With 40 new members, Bearsden Choir has been refreshed and revitalised for this year's Christmas concert in Glasgow, writes Ann Fotheringham

WITH a milestone birthday comes a chance to reflect, and Bearsden Choir, which marks the 55th anniversary of its first concert this

December, has much to contemplate.

This year alone, the choir – which is one of Scotland's finest – welcomed 40 new members, made its television debut to great acclaim, and tackled an impressive range of projects from Mozart to movie nights.

"We have had a busy year," agrees musical director Andrew Nunn, in something of an understatement. "The choir is in a really strong place – our new members take our total to around 150, which is fantastic.

"It is testament to the choir's reputation – people really recognise how vibrant it is, and the variety of projects we take on. No two years are the same at Bearsden Choir."

Earlier this year, the choir was asked to perform with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the Old Fruitmarket in Glasgow for a documentary about British composer Michael Tippett.

Michael Tippett: The Shadow and The Light was broadcast on BBC Two to great acclaim. "It was absolutely amazing to be part of that," says Andrew. "The choir worked very hard, on what were extremely difficult pieces, and they really relished having the experience of recording for television – something very new for them."

As a result, the choir has been asked by BBC Scotland to record five pieces for the channel's Christmas broadcasts this year. They will be shown over the festive season, including on Christmas Eve in A Christmas Celebration, and in Reflections at the Quay on Christmas Day.

"We are in the process of recording them at the moment, which has been lovely," adds Andrew. "We are also rehearsing for our December concert of Brahms' A German Requiem – which is entirely different, of course – so it has been very interesting, and quite a challenge, to switch between them."

The choir also performed at a Home Alone movie night, providing vocals alongside an orchestra accompanying the classic Christmas movie about a young boy who is accidentally left behind when his family go on holiday.

Later this month, some of the choir's members are heading to New York's Carnegie Hall to perform as part of a Thanksgiving concert. "It is wonderful to be invited to do so many different things, which help us reach people outside of Glasgow's walls," says Andrew. "People all over the world watched the Michael Tippett



Bearsden Choir are currently preparing to perform Brahms' A German Requiem at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on December 14 at 8pm

City concert heralds 55 years of harmony

documentary; viewers across Scotland will see the choir in action over Christmas – these are great opportunities."

Bearsden Choir, featuring pianists Judith Keaney and Lynda Cochrane, soprano Monica McGhee and baritone Daniel Shelvey, are currently preparing to perform Brahms' A German Requiem at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on December 14 at 8pm.

Written in the composer's native German, with the choir also singing in German, its themes of grief and loss are a reflection of the turbulence in his life at the time. It is, however, a beautiful and thoughtful piece to perform, explains Andrew. "It is challenging, but also full of calmness and reflection," he adds. "We chose it because it is something a little bit different for the season, a step away from the Christmas hustle and bustle."

"There are many Christmas musical events going on in the city, so we try to do something different for our December concert. It is the variety on offer in Glasgow which makes it such a special place for music." He adds: "For us, turning 55 is an important milestone. It does make you pause and reflect on what you have achieved, and we are proud to have achieved a great deal."

Tickets available from the box office at glasgowconcerthalls.com

Bearsden Choir
Conducted by Andrew Nunn

JOHANNES BRAHMS
A GERMAN REQUIEM

Monica McGhee
SOPRANO

Daniel Shelvey
BARITONE

Judith Keaney & Lynda Cochrane
PIANO

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, New Auditorium
Thursday 14 December 2023, 8pm



Tickets available from the box office
glasgowconcerthalls.com
Scottish Charity Number: SC001117

Tickets: £17.50
Under 26: £6