

Classical Choral Music at its Best!

For over 60 years Cumbria Rural Choirs has been performing large scale choral works. With over 100 members drawn from rural communities, it is the largest amateur choir in the region. Chorus Director, Ian Wright, leads the rehearsals but this year's annual concert, to be performed in Carlisle Cathedral on Saturday 23rd March at 7.30.p.m. will be conducted by John Butt.

John was an organ scholar at King's College Cambridge, the University Organist and Associate Professor of Music at the University of California at Berkeley (1989-97), and a lecturer and Fellow of King's College Cambridge (1997-2001). He is now Gardiner Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow. Since 2003 he has also been the founder, music director and conductor of the Dunedin Consort. Under John's leadership, the Dunedin Consort have become well known for their award-winning recordings and mastery of Baroque repertoire.

The concert will begin with Haydn's rarely performed 'Seven Last Words of Christ'. According to the Gospels, Jesus made seven utterances from the cross. By the seventeenth century these were included in Good Friday devotions. In 1786 the clergy at the Holy Cave Oratory in Cadiz commissioned Haydn to write music based on these words. Initially it was performed as an orchestral work, but in 1796 Haydn adapted it as an oratorio for choir and soloists.

This will be followed by the 'Requiem in D minor' by Mozart. Mozart's health was already failing when he began the composition and although he sketched out the first three movements, the remaining three had to be completed by his students after his death in December 1791.

Cumbria Rural Choirs will be accompanied by the British Sinfonietta with Ian Pattinson on the organ. The four soloists will be professional singers with impressive national and international reputations: Susanna Fairbairn (soprano), Katie Bray (alto), Paul Smy, (tenor) and Andrew Slater (bass).

This unique combination of amateur singers and professional musicians guarantees a memorable, high quality, performance of these two important Classical choral works.

Tickets: £15 U.16's £5. Available from Eden Gallery Tea Room, Penrith, 'Bookends', Carlisle or via Email: mr4cnr@gmail.com / Tel: 01768 894404.