

ADVERTISING FEATURE BEARSDEN CHOIR

Expect a rousing performance of two classical staples at Bearden Choir's forthcoming City Halls performance, writes **Nan Wallace**

DESPITE the pandemic being a very difficult period for choirs, Bearsden Choir are returning to live performance in an even stronger position than before.

Their first performance in front of a live audience is taking place next month when they will appear on stage at Glasgow City Halls on May 22.

For the choir and audience alike it is a "major milestone" and the hope is that this will be the last stage in the long journey back to normality.

"It will be an amazing experience for the choir to be able to return to the concert platform in the glorious City Halls and to be able to share that with an audience is really important" said conductor Andrew Nunn.

The choir, which has been in full rehearsal since January, will be performing two famous classical pieces. The first is Haydn's Nelson Mass, which it has performed before, but the second, Mozart's Solemn Vespers, is new to the choir. "They are loving getting their teeth stuck into something new," said Mr Nunn. "The choir was 50-years-old in 2018 so it is quite unusual to find a piece they have never performed in their history."

There will be four Scottish soloists: soprano Monica McGhee, mezzo-soprano Penelope Cousland, tenor Jamie MacDougall, and bass Andy McTaggart. "We're very proud that we have four talented Scottish soloists joining us on our journey," said Mr Nunn.

This will be the first live performance for the choir since December 2019 but much time, effort and money has been spent on keeping singing going during the pandemic. Weekly rehearsals continued online, with guest speakers also giving their musical insights. Special projects included recordings for online release.

"We wanted to make sure we had a choir to come back to," said Mr Nunn. "The investment online was tiring and stressful but it has paid off. We have invested in the community aspect of the choir and we are now stronger than we were."

The result is that membership numbers have actually increased with a good balance of voices across the sections and many young people.



Choir's return will be a noteworthy milestone

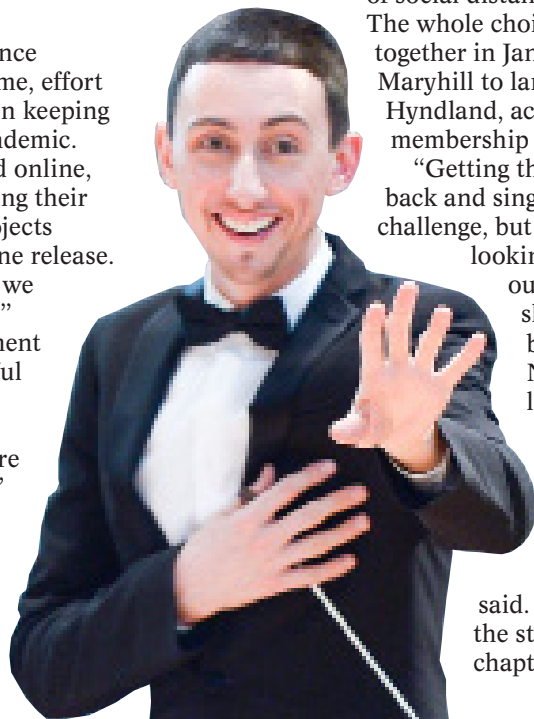
Bearsden Choir will once again be led by conductor Andrew Nunn, below, at Glasgow's City Halls

"It's extremely unusual for a choir that membership increased during the pandemic but we are emerging in a strong place in numbers and standard," said Mr Nunn.

The choir first started in-person rehearsals last September but had to split into two groups because of social distancing measures. The whole choir was able to come together in January, moving from Maryhill to larger premises at Hyndland, accommodating the large membership of 126 singers.

"Getting that number of people back and singing together was a challenge, but so worth it and we are looking forward to seeing our audience again and sharing what we have been working on," Mr Nunn, adding that the live performance on May 22 feels like the "last piece of the jigsaw".

"It's a big milestone as it has been a very difficult time for choirs" he said. "Hopefully this marks the start of a bright new chapter for Bearsden Choir."



bbc BEARSDEN CHOIR

HAYDN NELSON MASS

MOZART SOLEMN VESPERS

SUNDAY 22ND MAY 2022 @ 4PM
GLASGOW CITY HALLS

TICKETS £20, £15, £10 & £5 (STUDENTS & CHILDREN)

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM CONCERT HALL BOX OFFICE
www.glasgowconcerthalls.com
OR FROM CHOIR MEMBERS

WWW.BEARSDENCHOIR.CO.UK

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