

Bournemouth Bach Choir, Christchurch Priory 18th June 2011

Music for a King. This latest programme into the realms of joyful music making might, at first sight, seem to be gender biased. Yet the inclusion of a work originally penned for Mozart's favourite castrato would suggest an exemplary piece of politically correct planning!

Nevertheless, be it king, queen or otherwise, the performance here of Exsultate, jubilate by soprano Rachell Nicholls showed her to be a powerful princess of coloratura with a stunning voice.

Tim Hooper's direction brought out the marvellous joie-de-vivre of Haydn's Te Deum 'for the Empress Marie Teresa' with trumpets and timps putting the sparkle in, with no lack of polish from the rest of a very fine orchestra, who held the spotlight in Mozart's Epistle Sonata No.12.

Considering that the penultimate work, Handel's Coronation Anthem: My Heart is Inditing, though written for the coronation of King George II, was actually reserved for the crowning of his queen, Caroline, and the final presentation, which included Rachell Nicholls and soloists Catherine Backhouse, mezzo-soprano, Graham Neal, tenor and Daniel Rudge, baritone (all in splendid voice) in Mozart's Coronation Mass celebrating the crowning of a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, Music for a King was probably a misnomer!

However the singing was magnificent and majestic!

Mike Marsh, Bournemouth Echo 20th June 2011