

Reviews of The Choir of Royal Holloway

Reviews of *Kreek's notebook*

(International Record Review, June 2013)

'This album proclaims the excellence of British choral singing and the remarkable quality of contemporary choral music from the Baltic countries. If you think that only indigenous choirs can bring out the best in music from this part of the world, then these magnificent performances, the latest in a Hyperion series, will make you think again ... Gough and his forces deliver a spellbinding performance'

Review quotes from the UK première of *Kreek's notebook* in the Spitalfields Festival

(New Statesman, June 2012 - Alexandra Coghlan)

"An evening of Baltic choral music from the Choir of Royal Holloway and the Britten Sinfonia threatened to strip the peeling paint from the walls of Shoreditch Church, so raw was its emotional delivery. Oxbridge chapel choirs have long had it all their own way, but under the direction of Rupert Gough, Royal Holloway have become a serious rival. Their chief strength is their musicality

Reviews of Peter Philips

(Gramophone, June 2013 - Fabrice Fitch)

"The Choir of Royal Holloway is a fine one on this showing ... the overall sound full and well balanced but not overpowering ... A very enjoyable portrait of a composer whose name deserves to be better known."

(BBC Music Magazine)

"The Royal Holloway Choir is adept and musical and...can pull off splendid performances"

Reviews of Hansson's, 'Endless Border'

(International Choral Magazine, Nov 2012 – Critic's Pick - Debra Shearer-Dirié)

"This recording, devoted to the choral works of Bo Hansson, not only pays tribute to the Swedish composer's melodic choral writing but also to the elegant delivery given by the Choir of Royal Holloway and their director, Rupert Gough"

"Gough creates a selection of choral musical delights...each with exquisite treatment of text and perfect performance of sensitive musical nuances"

"credit must go to Gough's performance with its shape, at each stage of this piece, crafted flawlessly"

(Choir and Organ Magazine, May 2012 - Philip Reed) *****

"This marvellous disc devoted to the works of Bo Hansson not only pays tribute to the Swedish composer's fresh, melodic choral writing but also to the uniformly excellent vocal ensemble at Royal Holloway under their inspirational director, Rupert Gough..."

Highly recommended”

(Music Web International, May 2012 - John Quinn)

“The composer was present at the recording sessions and I am sure he will have been delighted to find his music so splendidly served. Rupert Gough has clearly schooled his young singers very thoroughly in this unfamiliar music which they put across with conviction and assurance. The choral sound is consistently pleasing... if you like Bo Hansson’s choral music I’d be surprised if you come across it in better performances than these.”

Review quotes from the Presteigne Festival 2011

(Christopher Morley – The Birmingham Post, Sept 2011)

“the finest concert I have ever heard in my long experience of the festival...a simply stunning account of James MacMillan’s Seven Last Words from the Cross. The youthful members of the Choir of Royal Holloway sang with unwavering commitment (expertly coached by Rupert Gough). This was a huge triumph for George Vass and the Presteigne Festival itself.”

(David Hart – The Birmingham Post, Sept 2011)

“an example of choral singing at its most elegantly fashioned...stunningly delivered in terms of tonal quality and technical brilliance under Rupert Gough’s unobtrusive direction”

(John RushbySmith – The Western Mail, Sept 2011)

“As well as bringing together leading composers and performers from all over the UK, this year’s festival celebrated the music of modern Lithuanian composers in performances that were as revelatory as they were enjoyable. No more so than in the splendid concert by the young singers of the Choir of Royal Holloway when the Baltic predilection for complex a cappella vocal music was revealed to ravishing effect.”

Classic FM Magazine review of Miškinis', 'Time is endless'

(Jan, 2011 – Andrew Stewart) *****

“Under Rupert Gough’s care since 2005, the Choir of Royal Holloway College has attained standards of musicianship and technical refinement high above the reach of most student ensembles. The clarity and translucence of Royal Holloway’s young voices, expertly trained and thoroughly prepared for this demanding job, ideally suits Miškinis’ infinitely subtle art. Gough and his choristers are outstanding in such works as Oišala, šala, Salve Regina and Dum medium silentium, exquisite in their hypnotic contrasts of sound and folk-like purity.”

Gramophone review of Miskinis', 'Time is endless'

(Dec, 2010 – Malcolm Riley)

“Rupert Gough has wrought wonders with his Egham choristers...such compelling and committed singing, this benchmark recording has whetted my appetite for much more. Enjoy!”

BBC Radio 3 Record Review: review of Miskinis', 'Time is endless'

(Nov, 2010 Jeremy Summerly)

“The Choir of Royal Holloway is really enjoying the acoustics of St. Alban the Martyr, really enjoying the sound of the music. The whole way Royal Holloway have approached this project is magnificent. I think this disc has real integrity and I’m loving listening to it.”

International record Review: review of Miskinis', 'Time is endless'

(Nov, 2010)

“Vytautas Miškinis might be the best thing to happen to choral societies since Morten Lauridsen ... The Choir of Royal Holloway sing with excellent intonation and blend.”

'International record Review: review of Dubra's, 'Hail Queen of Heaven'

(Jan, 2010 – Ivan Moody)

“I cannot imagine that the composer can have heard his music better sung than here.”

Classical Source: review of Dubra's 'Hail, Queen of Heaven'

(Jan, 2010 – Graham Rogers)

“Rupert Gough and the excellent Choir of Royal Holloway are terrific advocates for this repertoire. The choristers sound as fluent with and as dedicated to Dubra’s music as if they had been singing it all their lives.”

Choir and Organ: review of Dubra's 'Hail, Queen of Heaven'

(Dec, 2009 – Philip Reed)

“Rupert Gough and his admirable Royal Holloway Choir give lovingly prepared and committed performances. Warmly recommended.”

Classic FM Magazine: review of Dubra's 'Hail, Queen of Heaven'

(Dec, 2009 – Andrew Stewart)

“Royal Holloway's fabulous choristers and their inspired conductor convey the purity and spiritual fervour of Dubra's ear-catching output.”

Town Topics, Princeton

(June, 2009 – Nancy Plum)

“Visiting musical ensembles, especially from overseas, can be a real inspiration to the local organisations. From time to time, these gems drop into the laps of a community, and such was the case last Tuesday night when the Choir of Royal Holloway performed at Princeton University Chapel. The Choir of Royal Holloway is certainly, to the American audiences at least, yet another of the unknown performance treasures from overseas.”

The Church Times

(May, 2009 – Roderick Dunnett)

“Of all London's college, or college-plus choirs, that of the Royal Holloway College can justly claim to be one of the most polished and accomplished. This lucid, 28-strong chamber choir is roaring from strength to strength. At its latest concert, in the Cadogan Hall off Sloane Square, the choir instantly unveiled its most admirable credentials.”

MusicWeb International

(Feb, 2009 – John Quinn)

“The performances by the Royal Holloway choir are excellent—I especially admire the choir's blend and their clear, fresh sound. They are sympathetically recorded and the engineers achieve a good balance between the choir and the accomplished organ playing of Samuel Rathbone.”

Classics Online

(June, 2008 – John France)

“The singing is great, the sound quality perfect and the programme notes are well written and informative. I look forward to more offerings from this impressive, competent and obviously committed choir and from Rupert Gough their director.”

Gramophone

(May, 2008 – John Steane)

“What more can you possibly ask for? Here is a choir of 23 young singers, fresh of tone and fresh of mind, careful and accurate over their notes yet giving the impression that it all comes naturally. Collectively they have a keen feeling for rhythm. They enunciate clearly but without making a point of it. They blend perfectly, they shade sensitively, they appear to work with a like mind towards an agreed ideal of choral sound.”

The Times (London)

(March 22, 2008 – Rick Jones)

“The mixed choir of Royal Holloway College makes a truly fabulous sound under the assured direction of Rupert Gough. The title track, a setting of the wellknown Communion text by Gabriel Jackson, is a serene vehicle for these beautifully pure voices. The soprano line in particular is a blemishless thread. The basses are nimble: few ever manage the “thundering” in Weelkes’s Alleluia with such precision. The choir is coolly contemporary in Pärt’s Magnificat, romantically heroic in Bruckner’s Christus Factus, and breathtakingly expressive in Weelkes’s When David Heard.”

Music Web International review of Messiah in Exeter Cathedral

(Dec, 2007 – Bill Kenny)

“A Messiah performed to perfection. This was essentially a small scale, light touch Messiah although with more than enough power to fill the Cathedral’s vast spaces. Taken along at a distinctly sprightly pace, the young choristers - about thirty all told - tackled Handel’s familiar but oddly tricky score with great accuracy, excellent ensemble and impeccable tuning.”