

DURHAM INTERNATIONAL BRASS FESTIVAL

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

INFORMATION FOR SINGERS



We would like to invite you to take part in a unique event being presented as part of the 2017 Durham BRASS Festival.

The Event

Durham BRASS Festival has commissioned a very special arrangement for Brass Band and choir of William Walton's magnificent oratorio Belshazzar's Feast. With such strong brass and choral traditions in the North East the Festival is keen to create new opportunities for our top bands and singers to perform together by commissioning transcriptions of major choral works for brass band and choir.

The performance will take place in Durham Cathedral on Saturday 15th July at 7.30pm. Tickets for the concert are already on sale from the Gala Theatre Box Office.

The Band

The band for this exciting premiere will be the Reg Vardy Band. The band was formed in 1910 as the Craghead Colliery Band in the mining village of Craghead near Stanley in County Durham. The band qualified to compete in the National Finals in the Royal Albert Hall for the first time in 1963 and have continued to qualify almost every year since, 36 times as North East Regional Champions. The Reg Vardy Band has become one of the most successful brass bands in history having won the Northern Regional Championships more times than any other brass band and are the only North East band to have competed in every major UK competition as well as the World Championships in Kerkrade, and they consistently feature in the World Brass Band Rankings top 20.

This new transcription will provide an excellent opportunity for the band to demonstrate their extraordinary skill and virtuosity.

The Conductor – Paul Leddington Wright

Paul is a conductor, organist, composer and arranger, whose lifelong love of sacred and classical music has always been matched by his passion for musical theatre and opera. Over 25 years of work for BBC radio and television have seen countless collaborations with an eclectic mix of people, involving numerous musical genres in often challenging locations. Paul was an organ scholar at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge and was later to become Director of Music at Coventry Cathedral, a position he held for over a decade. He has been the conductor of the Saint Michael's Singers (the Cathedral's Choral Society) since 1984 and with them he has made over 25 recordings. A prolific arranger for the weekly BBC TV programme Songs of Praise, he is also well known as the principal conductor for the series and, since 1986, has conducted programmes from cathedrals, churches and concert halls worldwide, including numerous broadcasts of The Big Sing, from London's Royal Albert Hall.

The Chorus Master - Michael Summers

Michael is a leading figure in Music and Music education in the North East. He is manager of Music Education for Durham Music Service (lead partner in the Durham and Darlington Music Hub) and Schools Improvement Advisor working across the north of England. As a choral conductor he has been musical director for Felling Male Voice Choir, Guisborough

Choral Society and Prudhoe Gleemen and has also held posts with The National Youth Choir of Great Britain and Northern Spirit Singers. Michael studied for a Masters in Choral Conducting at Huddersfield University with Deborah Catteral before moving to Durham to train to be a teacher. He is Director of the Durham Vocal Festival in this its inaugural year, showcasing the very best choral music from across the North East.

Rehearsals

Sun 11 th June	10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
Sat 1 st July	10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
Sat 8 th July	10am – 1pm, 2pm – 4pm
Thurs 13th July	7 – 10pm with the Reg Vardy Band
Sat 15 th	1.15pm – 4pm in Durham Cathedral

All rehearsals will be in Durham City Centre

Taking Part

We would be delighted to include you in our special Festival Chorus for this unique premiere. To register interest in taking part please email: info@choralevents.co.uk and let us know which part (soprano, alto etc) you will be singing and we will send further details.