



FYC

25 Years of Historic Achievement

The choir was formed in 1984 by David and Gillian Victor-Smith. It aims to provide children aged 11 to 18 with the opportunity of singing to a very high standard. The choir's repertoire is broadly based to give a musical education that supports and extends the children's individual musicianship. At any one time some twenty songs are performed from memory covering many different styles and spanning several centuries of choral music. The choir regularly commissions new compositions and arrangements. Julia Freeman, an experienced professional pianist, is the choir's accompanist. Additional vocal training is provided by Catherine Watts, a professional singer, singing teacher and children's choir trainer.

Success and Recognition

- 2009 Montreux Choral Festival (Switzerland): Runner-up (Excellent with distinction)
- 2008 National Festival of Music for Youth, Birmingham: Highly commended
- 2007 BBC Radio 4: *Water of Tyne* is JP Donleavy's first choice on Desert Island Discs
- 2006 World Choir Games, Xiamen (China): 2 gold diplomas and 2 silver medals
- 2005 Montreux Choral Festival (Switzerland): 1st prize (Audience)
- 2005 BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year: Finalist
- 2004 52nd European Youth Choral Festival, Neerpelt (Belgium): 1st prize cum laude
- 2002 Sainsbury's Youth Choir of the Year: Finalist
- 1999 Jersey International Festival: 1st prize (Youth Choirs Section) and Overall Winners
- 1998 Sainsbury's Youth Choir of the Year: 1st prize
- 1998 International Choir Competition, Riva del Garda (Italy): Gold award and 1st prize (Children's Section)
- 1997 MBE awarded to David Victor-Smith for services to Farnham Youth Choir
- 1997 National Festival, Royal Festival Hall, London: Outstanding performance award
- 1994 Smetana International Festival, Litomyšl (Czech Republic): Gold award and 1st prize (Children's Section) and Folk Song award
- 1993 Tolosa International Choral Festival (Spain)
- 1992 Sainsbury's Youth Choir of the Year: 1st prize
- 1992 National Festival, Royal Festival Hall, London: Outstanding performance award
- 1991 National Festival, Royal Festival Hall, London: Outstanding performance award
- 1989 National Festival, Royal Festival Hall, London: Outstanding performance award

1987 National Festival, Royal Festival Hall, London: Highly commended award

FYC on Tour

2009 Switzerland (Montreux)
2008 Belgium (Ghent, Antwerp) and Germany (Andernach, Mayen)
2006 China (Xiamen, Beijing)
2005 Switzerland (Montreux)
2004 Belgium (Neerpelt)
2003 Australia (Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Yea) and Singapore
2002 Germany (Berlin, Leipzig and Dresden)
2000 Germany (Arolsen)
1999 Jersey
1998 France (Strasbourg) and Italy (Riva del Garda)
1997 Belgium (Namur)
1997 UK (Llangollen and Chester)
1996 Germany (Andernach and Arolsen)
1995 UK (Derby and Nottingham)
1994 Czech Republic (Prague and Litomyšl)
1993 Spain (Tolosa)
1993 UK (Harrogate, Perth and Newcastle)
1992 Germany (Arolsen)
1989 France (Paris)
1988 Germany (Arolsen)

At Major Venues

2009 Cadogan Hall, London: John Rutter's *Mass of the Children* with the Choir and Orchestra of London
2007 Royal Albert Hall, London: John Rutter's Christmas concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Choir of London
2007 Imperial War Museum, London: Premiere of *Stolen Voices* by Tarik O'Regan, a special commission for World Peace Day
2007 Royal Festival Hall, London: Reopening ceremony
2006 St. Paul's Cathedral, London: John Rutter's *Mass of the Children* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
2006 Forbidden City Concert Hall, Beijing (China): Gala concert
2005 Royal Albert Hall, London: John Rutter's Christmas concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
2003 Guildford Cathedral, UK premiere of John Rutter's *Mass of the Children*
2003 Royal Festival Hall, London: John Rutter's Christmas concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Choral Society
2001 Royal Festival Hall, London: John Rutter's Christmas concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Choral Society

1998 Royal Albert Hall, London: Festival of Remembrance

1998 Mansion House, City of London

Other performances have taken place at Symphony Hall, Birmingham; Buxton Opera House; St. John's Smith Square, London; King's College, Cambridge; St. George's Chapel, Windsor; St. James's Palace, London; and Eton College Chapel

On Television

1999 BBC: *Songs of Praise* from The Bishop's Palace, Wells Cathedral

1998 BBC: *The Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance* from the Royal Albert Hall, in the presence of the Queen

1998 BBC: *Blue Peter*

1992 BBC: *Blue Peter*

FYC has also been featured on the BBC during Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competitions in 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2004.

On CD

2008 John Rutter's ***Christmas Festival***, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Cambridge Singers – available now

2008 ***Yo Le Canto*** covers the previous three years of FYC repertoire, with a wide variety of sacred and secular items – available now

2005 John Rutter's ***Mass of the Children***, with the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge

2005 ***Laudate*** covers the previous two years' repertoire, with a wide variety of sacred and secular items

2001 ***A Dream of Snow***, includes this song cycle by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and items from the choir's repertoire at that time

1999 ***Carnival!***, premiered by FYC, takes its name from a modern adaptation of Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals* by Gwyn Arch and Jeremy Browne; it also includes the winning songs from Sainsbury's Choir of the Year 1998 and items performed at that year's Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall

1997 ***Sing You Now*** includes *Four Elizabethan Lyrics*, commissioned from Ronald Corp, plus items from the choir's repertoire at that time.

1996 ***Hodie*** is a collection of Christmas items ranging from carols by Britten and Rutter to traditional and much-loved favourites

1993 ***Water of Tyne***, the choir's first CD, recorded in 1993 and including most of the songs performed at the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition in 1992

Commissions and Premieres

2009 Gwyn Arch arrangements of *Over the Rainbow* by Harold Arlen and *Where or when* by Richard Rodgers – commissioned and to be premiered on 12th July

2009 *Gray's Pier* by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Master of the Queen's Music – commissioned and premiered

2009 *Silver* by Graham Ross – commissioned and premiered

2007 *It sounded as if the Streets were running* by Jonathan Dove – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on ***Yo Le Canto***

2007 *Stolen Voices* by Tarik O'Regan – premiered at the Imperial War Museum (not available on CD)

- 2003 *Four Bashō Settings* by Augusta Read Thomas – commissioned and premiered (not available on CD)
- 2003 Gwyn Arch arrangements of the standard classics *Sweet Georgia Brown*, *Anything Goes* and *Blue Moon* – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **Laudate**
- 2001 *A Dream of Snow* by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **A Dream of Snow**
- 2000 Douglas Coombes arrangements of two English folk songs, *O Rare Turpin Hero* and *Sweet Polly Oliver* – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **A Dream of Snow**
- 1999 Peter Gritton arrangement of the standard classic *Fever* – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **A Dream of Snow**
- 1999 Gwyn Arch arrangement of the English folk song *Beautiful Nancy* – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **A Dream of Snow**
- 1999 Gwyn Arch arrangement of Saint-Saëns's *The Carnival of the Animals* – premiered and recorded on **Carnival!**
- 1997 *Four Elizabethan Lyrics* by Ronald Corp – commissioned, premiered, and recorded on **Sing You Now**
- 1991 *Epigraminals* by Grayston Ives – commissioned by the Farnham Festival and premiered by FYC (not available on CD)

Special Relations

John Rutter *Composer and Conductor*

Invitation to perform Christmas concerts at the Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, involving a subsequent commercial recording released by Collegium.

Invitation to give the UK Premiere at Guildford Cathedral of his world-acclaimed *Mass of the Children*, followed by further performances (St. Paul's Cathedral; King's College Chapel, Cambridge) and a recording released by Naxos.

Mike Brewer *Musical Director of The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain*

Annual FYC workshops with David Victor-Smith to help develop the musicianship of new and current FYC members. David Victor-Smith is also guest conductor of the NYC Boys' Choir.

Sing Up

The Music Manifesto's National Singing Programme. FYC has recorded several collections of music for this government-sponsored initiative, accessible on-line at <http://www.singup.org/songbank/index.php>

Community support and former choir parents

Through its work with and for young people FYC has generated an astonishing level of long-term parental and community support. The success of choirs like ours stands or falls with the commitment of volunteers. These are just some parents who have extended their work for many years, past and present: Mariola Boyd, Jan and Phil Dunford, Sue Klatt, Alison Noakes, Jeremy Smith...

In Andreas Klatt and Chris Mansell we have also been fortunate to have had visionary supporters with a lively interest in the artistic development of the choir, resulting in ground-breaking commissions from leading composers of our time.

Such unassuming contributions should never be underestimated.