

## Chair's Report to Ely Sinfonia members' Annual General Meeting Sept 15<sup>th</sup> 2019

It has been a successful year on many levels – musically and financially. It has been exciting to play to such large audiences and I hope we are establishing a core audience who look forward to hearing us play in a local venue. Perhaps now is the time to consider performing elsewhere. What do you think?

As well as our two core concerts and workshop day, we played Durufle Requiem as part of the Remembrance Day services for the cathedral and played for their Christmas Concert. We played Mozart Coronation Mass on Easter Sunday, which was Paul Trepte's last day as Music Director at the cathedral. Paul has been a great supporter of the orchestra and we look forward to building a similar relationship with Edmund Aldhouse, the new director, who I am meeting with on Monday.

There is also a new head at Kings School Ely and we hope that our relationship with school, which provides us with free rehearsal space when available, will continue.

So, looking forward.....

We need to build on the successes of the last couple of years while we are financially secure. We have programmes in place for May and September 2020 including a commissioned work, details of which are on the website. We have also accepted an invitation to accompany Kings Lynn Festival Chorus in Beethoven's Missa Solemnis on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 in Kings Lynn – a return match following Beethoven 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony.

We have a Wind Workshop on October 20<sup>th</sup> and it has been suggested that we have another string weekend. We hope also to have a series of sectional rehearsals in preparation for the May concert, all of which is aimed to improve our playing. Any other ideas would be most welcome.

Looking further ahead.....

We celebrate 25 years of Ely Sinfonia in 2024. I have contacted Britten Sinfonia to see if it would be possible to collaborate with them for a concert to mark the occasion and to reprise the early work we did together. I would suggest the piece by James MacMillan which we performed with them in 2002.

Steve has also suggested approaching Nicola Benedetti. This could also be linked to her Foundation with an educational project.

In terms of programming, we always welcome your suggestions. There is a list of repertoire we have already played with dates and a list of suggestions received a couple of years ago, which has helped us in building current programmes. Getting suitable dates from the cathedral remains an issue as no bookings can be made more than 18 months ahead, a problem if you want to book Nicola Benedetti...

So what holds us back? Irregular attendance at rehearsals will always be a problem but our rules are clear although exceptions can be made with permission from section leaders and the artistic director. We try to fix rehearsal dates well in advance and where players are not needed for every rehearsal we try to accommodate absences through the rehearsal schedule.

And of course, we don't play together regularly. Do we want to do more concerts? Perhaps workshop sessions or opportunities for chamber music would help and be fun. What do you think?

And finally, I'd just like to remind you of our purposes as described in our constitution, which we reviewed at our last committee meeting on Sept 4<sup>th</sup>

- to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and an appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of concerts, workshops or other such charitable activities as the charity may from time to time decide. These activities will be undertaken to the highest musical standards attainable by the participating players.