

Blackburn Cathedral. 2015 No. 6  
**Music & More online**  
**Cathedral Choristers' Concert**  
**22 May 2015**

This was one of the most thrilling concerts we have ever attended in Blackburn Cathedral.  
 Why?

Because not only did our 16 choristers and probationers sing so very well, so confidently and with such beautiful tone, but also because many of them played instrumental solos which evoked tremendous applause from their audience.



The boys were conducted by **Samuel Hudson** and accompanied by **Shaun Turnbull** and it was noticeable that all the boys, from the most senior to the newest (and there were a number of new boys there) sang with wholehearted commitment – there were no 'passengers'. How does Sam Hudson do it?

The first choral items were:

*I will magnify thee* by Joseph Corfe (1741-1820) and

*The Father's love* by Simon Lole (b.1957). **Simon Lole** was Director of Music of Sheffield and Salisbury Cathedrals, and is now a free-lance composer.

Both anthems were demanding (sung in two parts) and performed so confidently; the boys' superb tone filled with delight every corner of our cathedral.

Then came the first group of instrumentalists:



**Louie Hindle** played two short solos by Clementi and Grieg with crisp confidence. The audience responded with much enthusiastic applause.



Then came **Joseph Dearden** with his guitar – who played *Amazing Grace* with much careful concentration. More applause!

And lastly, in this first group of solos, **Ethan Rawcliffe** played *All through the night* on his clarinet. What a lovely sound!

Even though a large proportion of the audience was made up of parents and friends, yet their appreciative applause after every item showed not only their joy at the high standard of music-making but also their encouragement for all that membership of our cathedral choir gives to them and their sons.



Samuel Hudson then conducted the boys in two more anthems:

*The Call of Wisdom* by Will Todd (b.1970) accompanied by organ scholar **Joseph O'Berry**, and

*Salvator Mundi* by David Bednall (b.1979)

**Will Todd** is a young British composer who has worked at the Royal Opera House in London, the Lincoln Center in New York, with The Sixteen and many other leading musicians. His *Call of Wisdom* was commissioned for The Queen's Diamond Jubilee service in St Paul's Cathedral.

**David Bednall** is a virtuosic organ performer with a particular interest in improvisation. His large and varied repertoire extends from the Renaissance to the present day. He has given several brilliant organ recitals in our cathedral, and his impressive website includes a photo of him sitting at our cathedral console.

Then came five more instrumental solos by our talented choristers:

**Harrison Chick** played *Over the rainbow* on his French horn especially beautifully. What did that involve? He had to synchronize his playing with a backing tape – which meant not only concentrating on his own playing, but also listening acutely to the tape.

It was truly wonderful.

He was followed by choir prefect **Leo Fulwell** playing music by a Spanish composer (with an unpronounceable name) on his guitar – which included rhythmic

beating with his hand on the instrument.

This was splendid.

Then came deputy Head Chorister **Seb Roberts** playing his violin accompanied by former Head Chorister (and now young bass) **William Fielding**. This, too, was a delight.



Head Chorister **Oliver Fulwell** played his trombone (an impressive sight) for a rhythmic piece called *Junk-Mail Blues!*



And finally in this section **Jacob Reddy** played one of his own energetic compositions on his electric guitar, accompanied by his sister, **Lydia**, on the triangle. This brought the house down. There were smiles all round. What a terrific sound!



Two more choral items followed:

*Come, Holy Ghost* by Thomas Attwood (1765-1838) and *Litany to the Holy Spirit* by Peter Hurford (b. 1930)

**Thomas Attwood** had been a chorister in the Chapel Royal and later became a pupil of Mozart. His *Come, Holy Ghost* is in the repertoire of all cathedral choirs for it is so delightfully tuneful.

**Peter Hurford OBE**, was the dynamic founder of the St Alban's International Organ Festival and recorded the complete organ works of Bach – twice! He was a contemporary of JB both at the Royal College of Music and at Cambridge.

It was he who suggested to JB that our 1969 cathedral organ should be designed on the *werkprinzip*. (Look that up!)

The final group of soloists were all pianists:  
**Oliver Fulwell** played *A Wise Bud*



**Seb Roberts** played Grieg's difficult *Nocturno* which involved some dexterous cross-hand playing.



And the **Fulwell brothers** played a duet: *Inconsequential Blues*.



The final choral items were:

*And now another day is gone*, by Leonard Blake (1907-1989) and *All things bright and beautiful*, arranged by Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

**Mack Wilberg** is the music director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and his arrangement of *All things* uses the traditional melody for the choir, but with a sparklingly difficult accompaniment for the piano, which Shaun Turnbull played with his accustomed dexterity.



The choir, soloists, accompanists and conductor were given prolonged and thoroughly well-deserved applause, and Head Chorister **Oliver Fulwell** gave a vote of thanks to our music leaders for all they are doing for our cathedral choristers.

**It was an unforgettable evening.  
Let's have many more!**