

St. Mary's House, Bramber

Concerts and Events

2010

Saturday 10 April at 7.30pm

FILM PREMIÈRE: A YEAR AT ST. MARY'S

Celebrate with us, as we enter our 26th year at St. Mary's, with a glass of wine and a viewing of an unusual presentation. The film-maker and video producer, BOB JENNER, has now produced a DVD with an excellent and informative commentary spoken by ROGER LINTON, Curator of St. Mary's. A rare chance to look inside the day-to-day workings of an historic house open to the public. The evening also includes a unique audio-tape interview recorded in 1978 with a former owner of St. Mary's, Miss Dorothy Ellis. Copies of the DVD will be on sale.

With wine and canapés **£15**

Saturday 8 May at 7.30pm

SPRING PIANO RECITAL

ROMAN RUDNYTSKY piano

During his spectacular career as an international concert pianist, Roman has performed in 95 countries throughout the world and has, in his phenomenal repertoire, some 45 works for piano and orchestra as well as a formidable list of solo works. He gave the UK première performance of the newly-discovered Liszt Piano Concerto No.3 in E flat and was the first pianist in the world to celebrate Chopin's bi-centenary year with a recital on New Year's Day 2010. His programme begins with one of the *Phantasiestücke* and includes the magnificent and joyful work, *Carnaval* by Schumann, whose bicentenary we also celebrate in this recital. Other works include Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* and Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No.15*.

With wine and canapés **£22.50**

Saturday 19 June at 7.30pm

ALISON NEIL in 'LIVING IN THE LIGHT'

Alison Neil's latest one-woman show is the story of one of the most prominent figures of medieval times, the remarkable Hildegard of Bingen, 12th century musician, composer, playwright, artist, visionary, theologian and healer. Her extraordinary talents were famed throughout Europe. Her music, some of which we hear in Alison's excellent play, has even topped the Classic FM charts 850 years after it was written! In her time, she rose to the unheard-of position for a woman – preaching in cathedrals, giving advice to an Emperor and criticising the Pope. Her advanced views on sex were (for a nun!) astonishingly frank, her writings on medicine and her phenomenal knowledge of the workings of the world outside the convent walls were unique.

With wine and canapés **£22.50**

Saturday 10 July at 7.30pm

CLASSIC RHYTHM

This brilliant trio for flute, piano and percussion has been taking the country's concert circuit by storm in recent years. The quality of their musicianship and the unique blend of arresting instrumentation and entrancing arrangements have received rapturous applause the length and breadth of the British Isles and beyond. The programme includes renderings of favourite classical compositions: Handel's *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*, a movement from Haydn's *'Clock' Symphony*, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumble Bee* and other virtuoso pieces. The whole performance is presented with wit and charm. The *Musical Opinion* review described the trio's Purcell Room recital as 'remarkable...played with instinctive precision.'

With wine and canapés **£22.50**

Saturday 31 July at 3.00pm

ST. MARY'S TRADITIONAL PALM COURT TEA

SHELLEY VAN LOEN (violin) and her PALM COURT PLAYERS

Another popular afternoon with a real chance to recapture the pleasures of time past with the musical masterpieces of Victorian and Edwardian England. We recently spotted Shelley and her orchestra playing in an Agatha Christie episode, one of several occasions when she has appeared on BBC TV. Shelley and her Palm Court Players have played for 'Friday Night is Music Night', and 'Sunday Night Out' on Classic FM, and had the distinction of being chosen to entertain invited guests at the ceremonial opening of the Channel Tunnel. She has also played at private concerts given for Her Majesty the Queen.

With traditional English afternoon tea **£25**

Friday 6 August at 7pm (gates open 6.00pm)

Prior to their Edinburgh Festival season

**THE DISTRACTION THEATRE COMPANY present
THE CANTERBURY TALES**

In the garden of St. Mary's House

A highly entertaining performance of the bawdy tales of medieval poet Geoffrey Chaucer. Set in a tavern in the middle ages - but with a modern twist. A mad miller, a handsome scholar, a beautiful tart, an East End bad boy, and a farmyard rooster, Chanticleer, all weave a plot of betrayal, lies and other naughtinesses. Rewritten in modern language using a combination of original live music and well-known songs, *The Canterbury Tales* will whisk you away to the wonderful world of medieval mayhem. **Wet or fine, bring a picnic and folding chair. No rugs or umbrellas, please! Transparent kagouls with hood available at £1.**

An intelligent and zesty performance. Delightfully funny - Edinburgh Festival Review

Highly recommended. Impressive. Ingenious comic twists - Buxton Festival

Adults £15 Children £5 Family ticket £35 (2 adults and 2 children)

Saturday 21 August at 3.00pm

**IN THE ENGLISH POETRY GARDEN
GWYNETH POWELL and ALAN LEITH**

A delightful afternoon of poetry and prose with in the English Poetry Garden at St. Mary's, which was founded by Peter Thorogood last year. Gwyneth made her mark in television in the long-running BBC series, *Grange Hill*. Her other credits include *Heartbeat*, *The Enigma Files*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Father Brown*, and *Emmerdale*. Earlier this year she played the leading role in the much-acclaimed performance of the comedy classic, *Arsenic and Old Lace* at the Salisbury Playhouse. Alan Leith has appeared in major roles including *Blood Brothers* (The Strand Theatre), *Waiting for Godot* (Royal National Theatre), Pinter's *The Birthday Party* and Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple*. Recently he toured the midlands with the classic drama, *The Holly and the Ivy*. After the readings (45 minutes), the audience can view Peter Thorogood's current exhibition of poetry and enjoy a wander in the Victorian 'Secret' Garden, returning to the house for strawberry tea. Dancing on the lawn by SOMPTING MORRIS.

With Strawberry Cream Tea **£20**

Saturday 4 September at 3.00pm

THE COVENT GARDEN MINUET COMPANY

This spectacular group of dancers, resplendent in full authentic recreations of 18th century costume, revisits St. Mary's to entertain us in the elegant setting of the Music Room. The group vividly bring to life the unique atmosphere of a typical assembly room ball of the Georgian period. Gavottes, minuets, sarabands and bourrées are choreographed in the style of the time. The performance includes a demonstration of the mysteries of the language of the fan, the etiquette of the day and even a duel! The music of Bach, Handel, Purcell, Lully, Mozart and Rameau contribute to the jollity of the occasion. Other venues have included Spencer House, Strawberry Hill, Harewood House and the Banqueting House, Whitehall. After the interval, members of the audience are invited to join the dancers and try out some of the steps. Dancing mistress: Sarah Cremer.

Limited seating.

Tea with Georgian delights! **£25**

Saturday 18 September at 7.30pm

A GALA NIGHT AT THE OPERA

THE SINGERS ENSEMBLE entertain with a performance of favourite duos, trios and quartets from a wide range of opera, operetta and musical theatre: Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Donizetti, Offenbach, Saint-Saëns, Léhár, Sullivan, Gershwin and others. **JACQUELYN FUGELLE** (soprano), made her début at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, with Mozart's *Mitridate* to wide critical acclaim and has performed in opera across the globe, from Iceland to South America. **SUSAN LEGG** (mezzo-soprano) won the Schubert Society Prize among other awards and has sung at Glyndebourne and Bayreuth. Her oratorio performances include Handel's *Messiah* and Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*.

ANDREW WICKS (tenor) was a chorister at Chichester Cathedral. In a wide-ranging career, he has performed numerous operatic roles, including Scaramuccio in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Count Alma Viva in *The Barber of Seville*, and Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*. **GILES WHITE** (bass) was a bass lay vicar at Chichester Cathedral and is now sings at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. He has participated in many live BBC broadcasts and had great success as soloist in Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*. **TERENCE ALLBRIGHT** (piano) composed some 50 musical scores for BBC Radio dramas and performed his more recent compositions in the Brighton Festival in 2008. He is in much demand as an accompanist. He recently recorded a new CD of Peter Thorogood's *Five Suites for Piano*.

Black tie optional

With wine and canapés **£25**

Saturday 2 October at 7.30pm

PIANO MUSIC FOR FOUR HANDS

ROBERT WEATHERBURN piano, JEFFREY GRICE piano

Well-known classic piano duets in a programme which includes Mozart's *Sonata in D major*, *Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann* and *Ten Waltzes* by Brahms, *Romance and Russian Theme* from *Suite*, Op.11 by Rachmaninov, and other works. Robert Weatherburn studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with Alexander Sverjensky, a pupil of Rachmaninov. He began broadcasting on Australian radio and television, and later toured world-wide. Jeffrey Grice was born in New Zealand and graduated from Auckland University in languages and music. In 1999 the French Ministry of Culture decorated him for distinguished services to music.

With wine and canapés **£22.50**

Saturday 30 October at 3.00pm

PRIVATE VIEW: ST. MARY'S ON FILM AND TELEVISION

Another opportunity to see Alan Durden's comprehensive DVD presentation, first shown in December last year. A fascinating and often amusing delve into the St. Mary's film archives, with memories past and present of St. Mary's House and Gardens. We hear the voice of former owner, Miss Dorothy Ellis, interviewed in BBC Radio's *Down Your Way*, and see her in the garden with her Welsh Springers. We see Peter Thorogood and Roger Linton being interviewed by Fiona Fullerton (one of James Bond's girl friends!), excerpts from a classic 1988 episode of BBC's *Dr. Who*, Roger's appearance on the Jimmy Saville show, *Jim'll Fix It*, entertaining episodes from Prince Edward's TV series *Crown and Country*, and a special visit to Buckingham Palace to see Peter and Roger each receive their MBE from Prince Charles.

With tea and cake **£15**

SATURDAY 13 November at 7.30pm

RED PRIEST present NIGHTMARE IN VENICE: A BAROQUE FANTASY

PIERS ADAMS recorders JULIA BISHOP violin ANGELA EAST cello HOWARD BEACH harpsichord

Concertos by Vivaldi and music by Bach, Tartini, Purcell, Gluck and Corelli, played as never before. RED PRIEST take their name from the flame-haired Venetian composer, Antonio Vivaldi, and are a highly original group with a difference. The critics have called them 'visionary and heretical', 'highly irreverent and highly enlightened', 'outrageous' but at the same time 'compulsive'. Whatever may happen this evening, the audience will experience the mystery, magic and fantastical in 18th century Venice. Real 'Red Hot Baroque'!

Wine and canapés **£25**

Saturday 11 December at 2.30pm and 7.30pm

ST. MARY'S TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS CRACKER

SUSAN JAMESON, SIMON BRETT

NEIL JENKINS tenor, PENNY JENKINS soprano, THE NEIL JENKINS CHORALE

PETER THOROGOOD narrator

'Old ones, new ones, loved ones, neglected ones'

A grand celebration of Christmas in words and music with some pleasant surprises chosen from Peter Thorogood's archive of poetry and prose. Join us in a joyous, reflective, festive programme of songs, carols and seasonal readings. **Susan Jameson** had a great success in her role as Mrs Nickleby at the Chichester Festival and has appeared in many television series, most recently with her husband, James Bolam in the popular BBC1's *New Tricks*. **Simon Brett** is one of our top crime writers having published over 70 books and is the author of the comedy TV series, *After Henry*. **Neil Jenkins**, besides being a celebrated international tenor, is director and conductor of the Sussex Chorus, and brings his popular **Neil Jenkins Chorale** to add to the special Christmas atmosphere of 15th century St. Mary's with its panelled rooms, blazing log fire, and traditional, illuminated Christmas Tree.

Plated Christmas tea (afternoon) **£25**

Wine and Christmas canapés (evening) **£25**

GARDEN OPEN DAYS FOR CHARITY

Five acres of gardens open in aid of **THE NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME**

Friday 16 and Saturday 17 July, 2pm - 5.30pm, Adults **£4**, Children **free**. Teas.

Formal gardens with amusing topiary. Exceptional examples of prehistoric 'living fossil' tree *Ginkgo Biloba* and *Magnolia Grandiflora*. Water features include pools, shaded stream and ancient ivy-clad 'Monks' Walk' pergola – all complementing the Grade I medieval timber-framed house. (**House not open for this event.**)

The Victorian Walled and Pleasure Gardens. Hidden for over half a century, with 140 ft fruit wall, heated pineapple pits with original stove-house and potting shed now housing the Rural Museum. Woodland walk with newly-opened Poetry Garden in the former 19thC circular orchard. Visit also the Jubilee Rose Garden and Terracotta Garden.