

# Big name impresses with New Mill MVC

NEW Mill Male Voice Choir certainly impressed with its entrepreneurial skills, organising a major concert with a big-name guest and attracting a large Town Hall audience.

Its musical qualities are well worthy of note too.

In particular, the choir has cultivated an appealing suaveness of sound, accompanied by excellent intonation, for softer, more reflective numbers such as When I Fall in Love and Londonderry Air. These were among the highlights on Saturday.

Musical director Elizabeth Hambleton – who steps down from the post at the end of the year – has ensured that the male voices can bring out rhythmic detail too.

The concert opener, an aptly-titled Let All Men Sing, had some fairly advanced rhythms and harmonies that were confidently negotiated.

There were some ingenious touches in the arrangements by choir accompanist, Anne Levitt, of Gershwin's They Can't Take That Away From Me and Kern's The Way You Look Tonight. The singers

## Review

**TITLE:** New Mill Male Voice Choir with Julian Lloyd Webber

**VENUE:** Huddersfield Town Hall

**BY:** William Marshall



■ **MAESTRO:** Julian Lloyd Webber

brought them off with aplomb.

Cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, accompanied by pianist Di Xiao, was the special guest and is probably the most widely-known exponent of his instrument in the UK. He is a

deeply romantic player and his qualities of tone and emotional absorption were heard to excellent effect in Faure's Elegie and in the somewhat inevitable Swan, by Saint Saens.

But his crisp performance of Frank Bridge's early 20th century Scherzetto – a piece rediscovered by Lloyd Webber – was one of the highlights of the cellist's well-received sets.

The other musical guest at a concert, amusingly compered by Look North's Christa Ackroyd, was the rising, locally-based soprano Sarah Ogden, whose first sequence, accompanied by mother Sue, consisted of well-projected renditions of songs by Handel and Schubert plus the Ave Maria of Bach and Gounod.

Her second sequence had another Gounod selection and, very refreshingly, two songs by Roger Quilter – Now Sleeps The Crimson Petal and Love's Philosophy. These were lovely performances for which the singer chose a purer, simpler timbre of voice that suited the material very well.

Huddersfield Examiner Oct 11th 2010