



## Media Release

For immediate publication

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### **Local youth choir in the spotlight at Royal Albert Hall for the premiere of *The Great War Symphony***

Fresh from their outstanding performance at Tuesday's premiere of *The Great War Symphony* as part of 'Classic FM Live' at the Royal Albert Hall, members of Berkshire Youth Choir are overwhelmed by the plaudits they are now receiving following the broadcast of the concert on Classic FM.

The choir was privileged to have been selected to perform at the premiere of Patrick Hawes' *The Great War Symphony* to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I.

Fifty talented young singers, aged 16-18, from across Berkshire performed to a capacity audience, alongside the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, the London Youth Choir and The Invictus Games Choir as well as the State Trumpeters and Band of the Household Cavalry, the Fanfare Trumpeters of the Royal Air Force, and the Corps Drums and Bugles of the Royal Marines.

This influential new work was commissioned to commemorate those who served in the Great War and, importantly, raised vital funds for SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity.

Louise McGahon, Head of Voice at Berkshire Maestros, summed up the excitement felt by the choir:

'This was a unique experience for these young singers which they will remember throughout their lives. I am so proud of how well they performed and impressed by the commitment shown as they learned *The Great War Symphony* over the last month. It is wonderful for a charity like Berkshire Maestros to be able to offer our local young musicians an opportunity of this type and even better to see how much they value being a part of it.'

The choir is one of three county level choirs taught and coached by local charity Berkshire Maestros, lead organisation of the Berkshire Music Hub, under the guidance of highly-acclaimed Musical Director Christopher Hann. The county choirs are selective and entry is by audition only, but the emphasis is upon finding singers with potential who love making music with others. Berkshire Maestros also runs numerous local music centre choirs and instrumental ensembles as part of its goal to enable children and young people from across Berkshire to experience quality musical opportunities, regardless of background, ability or circumstances.

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## **Note for Editors:**

### **Berkshire Maestros:**

Berkshire Maestros is a long-established children's charity offering musical education opportunities to children across Berkshire, regardless of ability, background or circumstance. We work closely with schools across the county to allow all children access to music and the opportunity to play an instrument. Through our seven music centres, we offer children of all ages the chance to sing, play instruments and enhance their life-skills through music.

Our choirs, orchestras and ensembles perform at prestigious venues across the county and beyond – helping the children to develop their team-working and communications skills as well as building their confidence.

Headquartered in Reading, the organisation has centres in Bracknell, Newbury, Windsor and Wokingham as well as satellites in Caversham and Hungerford. Further expansion is planned for the coming year.

### **Berkshire County Youth Choirs**

Berkshire County Youth Choirs bring together young singers from across the Royal County of Berkshire to enjoy singing, whilst learning interesting repertoire and developing important techniques. They are trained and directed by Berkshire Maestros, lead organisation of the Berkshire Music Education Hub, which provides high-quality musical education for children across Berkshire, regardless of background, ability or circumstances.

The county choirs are selective and entry is by audition only, but the emphasis is upon finding singers with potential who love making music with others. The combined choirs currently have a membership of approximately 180 children, ranging from 8 to 18 in age.

Berkshire Youth Choir (BYC) – ages 15 to 18 (school years 10 -13)

Berkshire Young Voices (BYV) – ages 11 to15 (school years 7 -9)

Berkshire Children's Choir (BCC) – ages 8 to 11 (school years 4 – 6)

### **More about the event:**

<https://www.classicfm.com/events/classic-fm-live/great-war-symphony-pictures/>