

Simon Halsey

Professor and Director of Choral Activities

Contact details

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About

I am a conductor and educator in choral music and particularly proud to try to bring together all the singers of Birmingham, one of the great international centres of choral endeavour.

Qualifications

BA, MA Cantab

Honorary degrees: MA Warwick, DUniv Birmingham City University, DMus University of Birmingham

Biography

Simon Halsey is one of the world's leading conductors of choral repertoire, regularly conducting prestigious orchestras and choirs worldwide. Halsey holds the position of Chief Conductor of the Berlin Radio Choir, frequently collaborating with such conductors as Sir Simon Rattle, Claudio Abbado and Marek Janowski. He has been Chorus Director of the CBSO Chorus for over 25 years, and works closely there with the orchestra's Music Director Andris Nelsons. In 2012 he was announced as Choral Director of the London Symphony Orchestra and London Symphony Chorus, working closely with LSO Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev and leading choral strategy across the LSO's performance and education programmes. Simon Halsey also holds the positions of Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic's Youth Choral Programme and Director of the BBC Proms Youth Choir.

Recent projects for Halsey with the Berlin Radio Choir have included performances of Bizet's Carmen at the Salzburg Easter Festival 2012 with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle. He furthermore prepared the choir for Tallis' 40-part motet Spem in alium and Antonio Lotti's Crucifixus, in a programme with Mahler's Eighth Symphony which concluded Musikfest Berlin, as well as for Jonathan Harvey's grand new work Weltethos. As Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic Youth Choral Programme, Halsey will be responsible for leading a long-term education and performance project, bringing together a diverse range of young singers from all over Berlin to act as a large-scale youth chorus and partner to the Berlin Philharmonic for concerts at the Berlin Philharmonie and on tour.

Upcoming projects in the 2012/13 season with the London Symphony Orchestra and London Symphony Chorus include Szymanowski Stabat Mater and "Song of the Night" with Valery Gergiev, Brahms Ein deutsches Requiem, also with Gergiev, and Mozart Requiem with Sir Colin Davis. Highlights of Simon Halsey's work in Birmingham include Symphony Hall's 21st anniversary concerts in June where he will be conducting the CBSO and its Chorus in Elgar's final, deeply personal masterpiece The Music Makers. His work in Birmingham is complemented by a new role as Professor and Director of Choral Activities at the University of Birmingham. Simon Halsey held the position of Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Choir from 1997-2008, and the position of Principal Conductor, Choral Programme of the Northern Sinfonia from 2004-2012.

Halsey has worked on countless major recording projects, many of which have won major awards including several Gramophone Awards and Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik. In February 2011 Halsey received his third Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance for the recording of L'Amour de Loin by the Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho, having previously won a Grammy in both 2008 and 2009 for the Berlin Radio Choir's recordings of works by Brahms and Stravinsky respectively.

In addition to the three Grammy-winning recordings, Halsey has made four recordings conducting the Berlin Radio Choir: Brahms Ein deutsches Requiem recorded on Coviello Classics; XL, a disc of choral music including works by Tallis, Bach, Kodály and Harvey recorded on Harmonia Mundi; Christian Jost's Angst and Simple Gifts, featuring works by Britten, Copland, Barber and Tippett, both on the Coviello label.

Other landmark recordings include Elgar's Dream of Gerontius with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Sir Simon Rattle, Dame Janet Baker and John Shirley-Quirk; Beethoven's 9th Symphony on EMI, in a live recording with the CBSO Chorus, Vienna Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle and Mahler's 2nd Symphony with CBSO, Sir Simon Rattle, Dame Janet Baker and Arleen Augér on EMI. Simon Halsey's book and DVD Master Class Chorleitung was published by Schott Music in 2011.

In January 2011, Simon Halsey was presented with the prestigious Bundesverdienstkreuz 1. Klasse, Germany's Order of Merit by State Cultural Secretary André Schmitz in Berlin. This is in recognition of outstanding services to choral music in Germany.

Teaching

Teacher of Masters in Choral Conducting at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama; Director of Music at University of Warwick Music Centre; Regular Masterclasses in Hilversum (Netherlands Radio Choir) and Berlin (Berlin Radio Choir); Guest Lecturer and Conductor at Yale University.

Publications

Schott Master Class Chorleitung:

"Vom Konzept zum Konzert" (incl. 2 DVDs)

October 2011

ISBN: 978-3-7957-0755-2, ED 21050

Faber New Choral Works:

Adés, Thomas

Fayrfax Carol, The (SATB unaccompanied)

January Writ (SATB)

Anderson, Julian

I'm A Pilgrim (SATB)

My Beloved Spake (in prep.)

Andrew, Kerry

Maranatha (SATB)

Dove, Jonathan

Ecce Beatam Lucem (SATB)

Into Thy Hands (SATB unaccompanied)

Seek Him That Maketh The Seven Stars (SATB)

Wellcome All Wonders In One Sight! (SATB unaccompanied)

Who Killed Cock Robin? (SATB unaccompanied)

Einfelde, Maija

Ave Maria (SATB)

Goodall, Howard

In Memoriam Anne Frank (SATB)

Jubilate Deo (SATB)

Lord Is My Shepherd, The (Psalm 23) (SATB)

Lord Is My Shepherd, The (Psalm 23) (SSA)

Lord Is My Shepherd, The (Psalm 23) (TTBB)

Love Divine (SATB)

Love Divine (SSAA)

Marlborough Canticles (SATB)

Gordon, Michael Zev

And I Will Betroth You (SATB unaccompanied)

Grier, Francis

Alleluia! I Bring You News (SATB unaccompanied)

Two Advent Responsories (SATB unaccompanied)

Harvey, Jonathan

Remember, O Lord (SATB unaccompanied)

Hayes, Malcolm

Corpus Christi (SATB) (in prep.)

Hindson, Matthew

Home (from Heartland) (SATB)

Keeling, Andrew

Ave Verum Corpus (SATB)

Lauridsen, Morten

Ave Dulcissima Maria (TTBB unaccompanied)

O Magnum Mysterium (SATB unaccompanied)

O Nata Lux (SATB unaccompanied)

L'Estrange, Alexander

e-Motion (in prep.)

Let All The World In Every Corner Sing (in prep.)

Lute-Book Lullaby (SATB)

Lute-Book Lullaby (SATB a cappella/unacc.)

Three Prayers (in prep.)

Marshall, Wayne

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C (SSAA)

Matthews, Colin

Angel's Carol, The (SATB unaccompanied)

Moore, Philip

Lo! God Is Here! (SATB)

Pitts, Antony

Adoro Te (SATB unaccompanied)

Libera Me/Lamentations 5 (SATB unaccompanied)

Rouwkema, Daniel

Celtic Prayer, A (SATB)

Sculthorpe, Peter

Morning Song (SATB)/Birthday Of Thy King (SSATBB)

Woolrich, John

Spring In Winter (SATB unaccompanied)

Choral Programme Series:

Upper Voices

All The Things You Are (Jazz Classics) (in prep.)

Autumn Leaves (Jazz Classics) (in prep.)

Banuwa (Brewer) (SSAA) (in prep.)

Choral Works (SSA) (Goodall)

Classic English Folksongs (SSA)

Eight Partsongs (Schumann) (SSA)

Eight Romantic Partsongs (Brahms) (SSAA)

Fly Me To The Moon (Jazz Classics) (SSA)

French Motets (SA)

Gaudete! (SSA unaccompanied)

Girl From Ipanema (SSA)

Godspell & Children Of Eden Choruses (SSA)

Good News! (SSAA)

Gospel Christmas, A (SSA)

Liverpool Oratoria Selection (McCartney) (SSA)

Hamba Lulu (Brewer) (SSAA)

How High The Moon (in prep.)

Mamma Mia and other ABBA Hits! (SSA)

Memory & Other Choruses from Cats (SSA)

Merry Christmas Everybody! (SSA)

Six Motets (Fauré and Saint-Saëns) (SA)

Three Carols (Britten) (SA)

Three Partsongs (Schubert) (SSAA_)

Yesterday & other Classic Pop Ballads (SSA)

Mixed Voices (SATB)

All The Things You Are (Jazz Classics) (in prep.)

Autumn Leaves (Jazz Classics) (in prep.)

Banuwa (Brewer)
Chansons Des Roses, Les
Christmas Celebration, A
Christ's Nativity (Britten)
Classic Victorian Ballads
Easter Celebration, An
English Sacred Music (Tallis)
Fair Oriana
Feel The Spirit
Five American Folksongs
Five Anthems (Purcell)
Five English Folksongs
Five Partsongs (Holst)
Five Spirituals
Five Welsh Carols
Four Partsongs (Schubert)
Fly Me To The Moon (Jazz Classics)
Four Choruses (Dvořák)
Four Sacred Choruses (Mendelssohn)
French Chansons
Girl From Ipanema
Godspell & Children Of Eden Choruses
Gospel Christmas, A
Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Choruses I
Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Choruses II
Great Sacred Choruses (J S Bach)
Great Unaccompanied Motets (Bruckner)
Hamba Lulu (Brewer)
How High The Moon (Jazz Classics) (in prep.)
Irish Folksong Arrangements (Goodall)
King's Singers Standards Arrangements (Naylor) (in prep.)
Liverpool Oratorio Selection (McCartney)
Madrigali: Six Fire Songs (Lauridsen)
Mamma Mia and other ABBA hits!
Masterpieces Of The French Baroque
Masterworks From The Russian Orthodox Church
Memory & Other Choruses From Cats
Merry Christmas Everybody!
Musicke's Praier
My Dancing Day
Nocturnes (Lauridsen)
Opera Choruses (Verdi)
Passetime With Good Company (unaccompanied)
Passiontide Masterworks
Ready To Ride!
Seven Partsongs (Parry)
Seven Partsongs (Stanford)
Six Motets (Mozart)
Six Sacred Choruses (Bruckner)
Three Choral Hymns (Vaughan Williams)
Three German Carols
Three Jewish Songs (Skeaping) (in prep.)
Two Early Works (Vaughan Williams) (in prep.)

Discography

Adès: America A Prophecy
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
EMI 57610 (2004)

Anderson: Four American Choruses
City Of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
BCMG, Sakari Oramo, Oliver Knussen and Martyn Brabbins
NMC D121 (October 2006)

Britten: The Prodigal Son
City of Birmingham Touring Opera, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
BBC MM74 (1998)

Britten: Lets Make an Opera (DVD)
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus & Youth Chorus, Coull QuartetArthaus musik (2000), ZDF TV Germany

Bruckner: Mass in E Minor, Motets
City Of Birmingham Symphony Chorus & Orchestra Winds
Conifer CDCF192 (1990)

Jost, Christian: Angst
Berlin Radio Choir, Muiskfabrik
Coviello (July 2006)

Rossini: Petite Messe Solenelle
City Of Birmingham Symphony Chorus
Conifer CDCF184 (1990)

Various: XL
Berlin Radio Choir
Antony Pitts XL for 40 voices
Harmonia Mundi HMC801873 (2005)

Various: English Partsongs (2 Discs) – works by Elgar, Holst, Delius and Grainger

City Of Birmingham Symphony Chorus
Conifer 75605517522 (1995)

Various: English Choral Favourites
City Of Birmingham Symphony Chorus
EMI 09463614992 (2006)

Various: Simple gifts – works by Britten, Copland, Barber and Tippett
Berlin Radio Choir
Coviello (September 2006)

Various: Classic Hymns – works by J.S. Bach, Stanford, Goss, Tallis, Stainer, Wesley, Irvine, Parry and Vaughan Williams
City Of Birmingham Symphony Chorus & Orchestra Brass
Conifer CDCF502 (1990)

Bartok: The Miraculous Mandarin
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 5550942 (1994)

Beethoven: Christus am Oelberge
Berlin Radio Choir, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin
Kent Nagano, conductor
Harmonia Mundi HMC 801802 (2003)

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 724355757227 (2003)

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Walter Weller, conductor
Chandos 8750

Berlioz: The Damnation of Faust
Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus
Myung-Whun Chung, conductor
Deutsche Grammophon 028945350028 (1998)

Berlioz: Requiem
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Orchestra and Chorus of the Mariinsky Theatre
Valery Gergiev, conductor
EMI 58118

Bernstein: Mass (2 Discs)
Berlin Radio Choir, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester
Kent Nagano, conductor
Pacific Mozart Ensemble, Staats-und Domchor Berlin
Harmonia Mundi / HMC 901840.41 (2005)

Boulanger: Psalm 24 and Psalm 130
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, BBC Philharmonic
Yan Pascal Tortelier, conductor
Chandos 9745

Brahms: Ein Deutsches Requiem
Berlin Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 3653932 (2007)

Britten: Britten Collection (8 Disc)
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 5757922 (2002)

Britten: Saint Nicolas / Hymn to Saint Cecilia
English Chamber Orchestra, Corydon Singers, Girls of Warwick University Chamber Choir, Choristers Of St George's Chapel Windsor
Matthew Best, conductor
Hyperion CDA66333

Britten: War Requiem
City Of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 7470342 (1983)

Busoni: Piano Concerto
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus Men
Mark Elder, conductor
Hyperion 67143 (1999)

Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI CDS7495492 (2000)

Haydn: The Creation (2 Discs)
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI CDS7541592 (1991)

Haydn: The Creation

Academy of Ancient Music Chorus and Orchestra

Christopher Hogwood, conductor

Decca 4303972 (1990)

Liszt: Dante Symphony

City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra

Gianandrea Noseda

Chandos 10524 (2009)

MacMillan: Quickening

City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus & Youth Chorus

BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Hilliard Ensemble

James MacMillan, conductor

Chandos (2007)

Mahler: Das Klagende Lied

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus

Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI CDM5664062 (1997)

Mahler: Symphony No. 2 (2 Discs)

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus

Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI CDS7479628 (1987)

Mahler: Symphony No. 3 (2 Discs)

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus

Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI CDS5566572 (1998)

Mahler: Symphony No. 3

City of Birmingham Symphony Youth Chorus, Berliner Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Chorus

Claudio Abbado, conductor

Deutsche Grammophon 4715022 (2002)

Mahler: Symphony No. 8

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Chorus & Youth Chorus

London Symphony Chorus, Toronto Children's Chorus

Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI 7243 5 57945 2 9 (2005)

Mahler: Symphony No. 8

Berlin Radio Choir, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchestra Berlin

Kent Nagano, conductor

Harmonia Mundi / HMC901858.59 (2005)

Mascagni: Il Piccolo Marat

Netherlands Radio Choir, Netherlands Radio Symphony Orchestra

Kees Bakels, conductor

GB 21692 (1992)

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 2 in B flat major 'Lobgesang'

Philharmonia Orchestra & Chorus

Walter Weller, conductor

Chandos 8995 (1991)

Monteverdi: Orfeo

European Voices

Emmanuelle Haim, conductor

Virgin Classics Veritas 45642 (2004)

Orff: Carmina Burana

Berlin Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra

Sir Simon Rattle, conductor

EMI 5578882 (2005)

Poulenc: Gloria

Netherlands Radio Choir, Concertgebouw Orchestra

Mariss Jansons, conductor

RCO Live

Pärt: Collage

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus

Neeme Järvi, conductor

Chandos 9134 (1993)

Prokofiev: Cantata for the 20th Anniversary of the October Revolution Op. 74 / Tale of the Stone Flower Op. 11 (Excerpts)

Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus

Neeme Järvi, conductor

Chandos 9095 (1992)

Purcell: Dido & Aeneas

European Voices, Le Concert d'Astree

Emmanuelle Haim, conductor

Virgin 5456042 (2003)

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé / Boléro

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI CDE5747502 (2001)

Ravel: L'enfant et les sortilèges Ma Mère l'oye (Mother Goose suite)
Berlin Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 2641972 (2009)

Schoenberg: Gurrelieder
Berlin Radio Choir, Leipzig Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 5573003 2 (2002)

Schumann: Szenen aus Goethes Faust
Netherlands Radio Choir, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
Nikolaus Harnoncourt, conductor
RCO Live 09001 (2009)

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 13 'Babi Yar'
Netherlands Radio Choir, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic
Mark Wigglesworth, conductor
BIS – SACD - 1543

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 13 'babi Yar'
City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, City of Birmingham Choir, University of Warwick Chorus, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Okko Kamu, conductor
Chandos 8540

Saariaho: L'amour de loin
Berlin Radio Choir, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester
Kent Nagano, conductor
Harmonia Mundi (2006)

Stravinsky: Syphony of Psalms/ Symphony in C / Symphony in 3 movements
Berlin Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 2 07630 0 (2008)

Syzmanowski: Harnasie
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 3 64435 2 (2006)

Szymanowski: King Roger / Symphony No. 4
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Chorus & Youth Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI CDS5568232 (1999)

Szymanowski: Stabat Mater / Litany to the Virgin Mary / Symphony No. 3
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI CDC5551212 (1994)

Tippett: A Child of our Time
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Sir Michael Tippett, conductor
Naxos 8557570 (2005)

Various: Angel Dances, The 12 Cellists from the Berlin Philharmonic
Berlin Radio Choir
EMI 3570302 (2006)

Various: Leaving Home
Schoeneberg: A Survivor from Warsaw
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI 5661362 (1996)

Verdi: Falstaff
Berlin Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Claudio Abbado, conductor
Deutsche Grammophon DG 471-194-2 (2001)

Wagner: Orchestral Music: Parsifal: Prelude and Good Friday Music / Tannhäuser: Overture / Tristan und Isolde: Vorspiel und Liebestod
Swedish Radio Choir, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
Claudio Abbado, conductor
Deutsche Grammophon 000098502 (2003)

Walton: Belshazzar's Feast / Symphony No. 1
Orchestra Chorus Cleveland, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
Sir Simon Rattle, conductor
EMI CDC5565922 (1998)

Wolf: Der Feuerreiter
Berlin Radio Choir, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin
Kent Nagano, conductor
Harmonia Mundi / HMC 901837 (2006)

