

Scots Guards he joined the orchestra of the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet as a percussionist.

The newest theatre was constructed so there is access to the original Sadler's Wells and bore hole.

Members were then treated to some footage of the all-male Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*. Also pictured was a race horse named Sadler's Wells and a bulk carrier with the same name.

The lecture concluded with footage of the ballet *La Sylphide* with dancers John Field and Alicia Markova and the orchestra conducted by Robert Irving.

The lecturer received loud applause for this most interesting account of The Mothership.

Details of our programme of lectures can be found on our website www.theartsocietyhaslemere.org.uk together with details of how to join the society.

Rosie Bird

Farnham & Bourne Choral Society

THE SPRING CONCERT was *Petite Messe Solennelle* by Gioachino Rossini.

Rossini wrote this extraordinary mass towards the end of his life in 1863. After composing 40 operas by the age of 37, he suffered from ill health and wrote nothing else for many years.

Then later in Paris he started composing songs, full

of wit and parody, which he called his *Peches de Vieillesse* or *Sins of Old Age*. His *Petite Messe Solennelle* is indeed solemn like a *Missa Solemnis*, but is light hearted too.

Rossini had the greatest sense of humour in the history of comic opera, as shown for example in his *Comic duet for two cats*.

In this performance the Kyrie began with the solo piano playing a rhythmic ostinato pattern. The work was brilliantly accompanied throughout on the piano by Diana Owen, with Inigo Mikeleiz-Berrade providing a dramatic chordal backing on the accordion.

The choir entered a little tentatively at first, but soon gathered momentum. They sang beautifully in the *Christe Eleison*, a double canon in the style of *Palestrina* but with some more modern modulations.

The tenor soloist, Kieran White, sang the *Domine Deus*, which was in an exuberant, Italianate style that suited his resonant voice. This was followed by a beautiful duet for soprano, Ellie Sperling, and alto Tabitha Reynolds. Their voices balanced perfectly with the writing almost operatic. The bass soloist Greg Bannan sang the *Quoniam* with a tuneful, well

sustained tone.

The chorus then sang the *Cum Sancto Spiritu*, which was a lively fugue, in the style of JS Bach, but with a light-hearted element. Their entries were clear and they coped very well with the runs, ably conducted by their conductor Ben de

Souza. Similarly, the *Et Vitam Venturi* chorus in the *Credo* was in a fugal style, but with a chromatic chordal ending, which the choir sang with a good full tone.

The *Prelude Religieux* was played very sensitively by Diana on the piano. It is very unusual to find a piano solo in a Mass. Another rare feature was

the inclusion of the solo *O Salutaris Hostia*, sung here most attractively by the soprano soloist.

Finally, the *Agnus Dei*, which for me was the highlight of the concert, reminded me of the Qui Tollis from Bach's *B minor Mass*. The alto soloist sang with a beautiful rounded tone interspersed with the choir pleading *Dona Nobis Pacem*, which is particularly fitting in the world today.

Yvette Bailey

Four Marks Horticultural Society

FOR THE first time there was a problem with the speaker



Inigo Mikeleiz-Berrade