

What a great feast of music the Leith Hill Musical Festival was over the three days at the end of the week!

I was absolutely delighted with the vibrant spirit and intense musical involvement that the singers from all twelve choirs brought to each day - both within their own choirs in the morning competitions but especially when we combined to make music together in the afternoon rehearsals and the culmination of the three evening concerts.

The performance of the monumental *The Kingdom* by Elgar captured all the passion and colour that I hoped for, Friday's *Mass in Blue* (and the L'Estrange African songs) really made the Dorking Hall bounce with energy, and Saturday's performances of *Vaughan Williams* and *John Rutter - Mass of the Children* was full of musical commitment and confident choral singing. We had really terrific soloists each night - Gareth Brynmor John on the final night reinforced my certainty that he is heading for an absolutely stellar career - and great support from Southern Pro Musica (Thursday and Saturday) and Will Todd's ensemble (for the Friday concert).

I hope that everyone who took part in the 2018 Festival feels the same sense of fulfillment and achievement that I do and I look forward to working with everyone again in 2019 for the next chapter in the great musical tradition that the Leith Hill Musical Festival has become.

Jonathan

Jonathan Willcocks - Festival Conductor