

LHMF Youth Choirs Competition 2017



The Annual Youth Choirs' Competition yet again saw the Dorking Halls full of excited child singers, busy teachers, volunteer stewards and proud parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents. The day began with the youngest children, those seven years and under. Their enthusiasm for singing was obvious and they really held the audience's attention with their ability to remember so many words and to sing in Spanish too.

Six small choirs took part in the next class for eleven year olds and under. The variety of songs performed included well known ones such as, You Raise Me Up and Fascinating Rhythm, as well as an unaccompanied Polynesian song and one from an opera. There was signing and lots of action which were all performed with perfect unanimity. All the choirs sang in harmony. It would have been a difficult decision to decide who should win this class.

After lunch, four large choirs of eleven year olds and under filled the seats in front of the stage awaiting their turn to sing. Now we heard lots of songs from well-known shows. These children filled the Halls with their strong, confident singing. There was clicking of fingers, stepping from side to side and plenty of arm movements while the children continued to sing all the words from memory. During this class, there were several soloists who stood proudly on that big stage and sang out to a hushed audience.

The thirteen years and under class brought two choirs who sang very different music. One sang in French and English with beautiful harmony and dynamics. The other sang a medley of songs about feelings. This was performed with amazing energy, harmonies, actions and words which had to be sung very quickly. The final class of eighteen years and under had just one entry. This choir of girls performed two contrasting songs. They are a group clearly used to singing together and aiming to give pleasure to any audience.

Our adjudicator for the day, Marcus Pashley, Director of Music at Cranleigh School, had the difficult task of deciding which choirs would win the awards. He introduced himself to each class and led a warm-up with two groups. As well as teaching us all how singers should ideally stand, we also had to pretend to be apes and chimpanzees and to shoot fireworks into the air. The audience all joined in with these activities and the laughter in the hall set the mood for the singing to follow. Presentation of the awards had an extra excitement when one of them was dropped on the stage. A very audible gasp was heard throughout the hall. Fortunately, it bounced!

The fifteen choirs who took part this year showed us what fun children and young people can have with their singing. The courage of soloists; the energy and communication of the songs often made the audience tap their toes and smile broadly; some of the singing sent shivers down the spine because of the beauty of sound.

If you did not hear any of this wonderful singing, please make sure to join us on **Saturday 17th March 2018**. You could also encourage your local schools and youth choirs to take part.