

## REVIEW

# Performed with panache

### **Lost and Found Bay of Plenty Symphonia and Scholars Pro Musica**

Bay of Plenty Symphonia, in conjunction with Scholars Pro Musica, presented *Lost and Found*, a programme of English orchestral and choral music, in Baycourt on Sunday afternoon.

Two items on the programme were Gustav Holst's *Folksongs from Somerset* and *Two Songs Without Words*, both dated 1906. The original scores were thought to have been lost but were found in the BOP Symphonia's music library last year.

Holst's *Folksongs from Somerset*, was played with panache, especially the woodwinds who were keen to make up for their more hesitant start in the opening bars of Delius' *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*.

The strings' pianissimo playing, along with some well-crafted dynamics, was played with confidence. There were opportunities for the oboe, clarinet and flute section leaders to feature these folksongs as solos, which they did with strength and vibrancy.

Scholars Pro Musica joined the orchestra to sing Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens*, recognised as an outstanding English choral work. This demanding piece of eight-part writing, scored for much larger resources underpinned by a large pipe organ in a resonant building, was well performed by these relatively smaller forces in the difficult acoustic of the Baycourt stage.

Scholars performed five a cappella songs by Robert Pearsall, Henry Leslie, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Hubert Parry and Edward Elgar before being joined by the orchestra to sing Holst's *Ode to a Grecian Urn* and Elgar's *Spanish Serenade*. These last two pieces were well balanced from an instrumental/vocal perspective and the vocal ensemble singing was excellent.

Congratulations to conductors Justus Rozemond and Chaliun Poppy for a most enjoyable concert.

— By Jeremy Whimster