



A Press Release from the Royal School of Church Music

CATHEDRALS TO ROCK TO “O WHEN THE SAINTS”

Three cathedrals and three well-known schools in England are to echo to familiar spirituals, such as “Go Down Moses” and “Oh When the Saints” when hundreds of school pupils take part in a series of services celebrating African and Gospel music.

The schools festival services called “Road to Freedom” reflect on the story of the many millions of Afro Americans forced into a life of slavery. Youngsters taking part will sing a number of catchy African songs, brand new arrangements of well known spirituals, and uplifting music from the gospel tradition. The readings include a contemporary account of life on a tobacco plantation written by William Brown, himself an American slave, and an extract from Dr Martin Luther King’s famous “I have a dream” speech delivered in 1963.

“Young people love singing gospel songs and spirituals,” says one of the organisers, the RSCM’s Esther Jones. “We hope this year’s schools festivals will give participants more than just an uplifting and inspirational musical experience: our aim is to challenge those taking part to think about the injustice of the slave trade and the struggle of the civil rights movement. By singing the songs of the slaves the young people will be able to better understand and identify with them, and also appreciate the importance of hope for a suffering people,” she said.

The schools festival series is organised annually by the RSCM – the Royal School of Church Music - an international organisation promoting all aspects music in worship. Locations for this year’s events include Winchester and Ripon cathedrals, Rugby School, and King’s College School in Wimbledon.

For wider circulation, a service booklet called “Road to Freedom” has been published by the RSCM for teachers and church musicians. Each item can be used separately for school assemblies, concerts and other occasions. In addition, a separately available CD-ROM includes recordings of each piece, along with pre-recorded backing tracks for use in rehearsals. Other educational materials on the CD-ROM include an order of service for use in schools, quiz

sheets on slavery and gospel music plus practical tips on warming up singers and running rehearsals.

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Notes for Editors.

You are invited to send a reporter / photographer to cover any event. For further details and to arrange interviews, please contact Stuart Robinson RSCM Media Relations Organiser on 07831 827701.

The venues are as follows.

Eton College	Tuesday 13th June	directed by Ralph Allwood
Winchester Cathedral	Wednesday 14th June	directed by David Ogden
Ely Cathedral	Wednesday 14th June	directed by Geoff Weaver
Rugby School	Thursday 15th June	directed by Richard Dunster-
Sigtermans		
King's College School (Wimbledon)	Wednesday 11th October	directed by Daniel Phillips
Ripon Cathedral	Wednesday 18th October	directed by Gordon Appleton.

For more information about the RSCM's work, visit www.rscm.com

There is also some information for schools on this page: <http://www.rscm.com/education/schoolsFestival.php>

For more information about the VOICE FOR LIFE training programme: <http://www.rscm.com/education/vfl.php>

The RSCM is an international and ecumenical organisation promoting all aspects of music in worship. It publishes training materials and sheet music, and organises a wide variety of courses and events for all those involved in the performance of music in worship. The RSCM was established by Sir Sidney Nicholson in 1927 in response to the musical needs of Church of England churches. Since then, the RSCM has broadened its horizons; today the membership comprises a total of over 5000 affiliated churches schools and colleges around the world, and nearly 4000 individual members worldwide.

Founded by Sir Sydney Nicholson in 1927, its original emphases were English and choral. Now, in a diverse international context, the RSCM's work is far broader and more diverse. It offers models of good practice, provides programmes and resources that can be adapted to local circumstances, and supports the work of local churches through its voluntary committees. Today the RSCM core programmes in singing, church music skills and music in worship are ecumenical in purpose, nature and content.

Follow these internet links for more information about our [history](#), and the central office [move to Salisbury](#).

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