

## St Hugh's Foundation Commission Award 2008 Convivium Music Voice and Verse Festival 2010

### **Project**

The St Hugh's Foundation Commission was designed to be part of the **Convivium Music Voice and Verse Festival 2010**. The theme was based on the Robert Schumann 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The commissioned composer was **Judith Bingham** who is published by Peters Edition.

Judith sourced texts from the satire "**The Life and Opinions of the Tomkat Murr**" by the near contemporary of Schumann's, **ETA Hoffman**.

Forces were chosen to represent local, regional and national artists, the Lincoln Hungate Singers, members of Sinfonia Viva as a string trio and Benedict Nelson (baritone) and Andrew West (piano).

### **Programme**

The Voice and Verse Festival comprised concerts, talks and poetry reading. The main venue used was Lincoln Drill Hall as well as Horncastle church. There were opportunities to explore the life and works of Schumann and the connections with ETA Hoffman. The open rehearsal of the commissioned work as well as "Meet the Composer" allowed audiences to make contact with the composer and get closer to the process of composition.

### **Outcomes**

The commissioned piece was received with great acclaim. It was very accessible and deserves further performances. Judith Bingham made a significant impact on audiences.

While lack of match funding limited the scope of the Voice and Verse Festival the elements which were able to be realised formed a cohesive whole.

Bringing together three levels of performers worked well and the amateur choir, the Hungate Singers found the experience to be a stimulating challenge which enhanced their own artistic development.

### **Conclusion**

*TomKat Murr* is Convivium Music's fifth commission with first performance in Lincolnshire. The St Hugh's Foundation award has allowed the organisation to continue to achieve aims of employing high quality artists, bringing them to Lincolnshire and making the composer more relevant to the community.

The St Hugh's Foundation has encouraged Convivium Music to think more widely about the future of the organisation, its ability to sustain its activity, and the possibilities of networking with other similar organisations, regionally and nationally.

Convivium Music works in a unique and rather esoteric artistic area and relies on grant funding of all kinds to achieve its aims and to grow in experience and skill. The organisation is extremely grateful to the St Hugh's Foundation for the opportunity to commission in 2010.