



Preserve Harmony

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF MUSICIANS

The New Master, Peter Fowler

In November 1992 at a lunch in the Banqueting House, Whitehall, in aid of the Musicians' Benevolent Fund, I happened to be sitting next to Laurence Rivington who told me he was a Liveryman in the Worshipful Company of Musicians and suggested I might be the right sort of 'chap' to join the Company. I applied for membership and, after being interviewed by Sir Vivian Dunn and John Heddle Nash over lunch at the RAC, I was admitted as a Freeman in January 1993. When in 1999 I was elected as one of



Peter Fowler with his wife Janet photographed at Bakers' Hall

the first four Stewards in modern times, not for one moment did I think that on 10 November 2005 I would have the honour of being installed as Master of the Company. I am of course delighted to accept but also feel some trepidation to be following in the footsteps of such illustrious predecessors. I thank the members of the Court for their confidence in electing me and will do my utmost to serve the Company well and uphold its traditions and standards.

In recent years the Company has undergone many changes and innovations. The remits of Committees have been reviewed, the Company Plan has been admirably completed under the direction of the outgoing Master, John Rubinstein, and the successful running of two Open Days has offered both Liverymen and Freemen the opportunity to contribute to the debate on the future direction of the Company. The encouragement, support and promotion of musical performance and education to 'the highest professional standards' will continue to be our goal and the introduction of external adjudicators for the Maisie Lewis Young Artists' concert platforms has added transparency to these awards.

We are indeed fortunate to have the services of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk who are an efficient duo administering the Company's affairs with dedication and tact. To the members of the Court, the Master and Wardens' Committee and to the Liverymen who freely give their time serving on the committees and sub-committees, I offer my grateful thanks for their ongoing commitment to the Company.

As a result of the conditions in the financial markets there has been a serious reduction in charitable income from the Company's investments and, despite recent improvements, our finances have been substantially reduced. Strenuous efforts are being made to raise income from gifts and legacies, but finding donors is not easy. The Clerk will shortly be circulating guidance on legacy giving to all Liverymen. The introduction in 2003 of a voluntary annual subscription of £120 for existing Liverymen (obligatory for new members) has not been as successful as the Court had hoped. However, a big thank you to the 143 Liverymen who are generously subscribing at present and, if the remaining 238 non-contributors could consider joining the

scheme, it would result in an increase of some £28,860 per annum to our funds, the equivalent cost per week to each member of a pint of beer or a glass of wine! The Clerk will be writing to those Liverymen who have yet to make a decision and I hope there will be a positive response.

My year will be one of consolidating the new initiatives and raising money for the support of our charities. The *Musicians of the Millennium* book is now five years out of date and, with the help of the new Senior Warden, an addendum

will be produced.

Having pursued a career in music and education and trained as a singer at the Royal Academy of Music, there will be a vocal theme running through my year as Master. Elizabeth Watts, a fine young soprano, will be performing at the Installation Dinner at Drapers' Hall and *Collegium Regale*, a group of seven choral scholars from King's College Cambridge, will perform at the Midsummer Banquet at the Mansion House on 28 June 2006. I look forward to greeting you and your guests on these occasions and encourage you to attend the other events of both the Company and the Livery Club. The dates are published in this edition of *Preserve Harmony*, so do make a note of them in your diary, as they are going to be great occasions.

Please give the Company your full support in any way you can but particularly financially and socially; for example we would love to see more of our members at the Maisie Lewis Concerts at the Wigmore Hall.

My best wishes to you all.
Peter Fowler