

COMMUNITY SPIRIT 2025

UNITY

FORWARD TOGETHER



B:Music
Town Hall & Symphony Hall

WELCOME FOREWORD

We are delighted to welcome you all to Symphony Hall today for the 12th iteration of Community Spirit. As the charity responsible for the Symphony Hall and Town Hall, we are passionate about opening up a world of music to as many people as possible and reflecting the wonderful diversity of our city on our stages. In addition to over 800 performances across our two venues every year, we also deliver an extensive community outreach and talent development programme. Through these activities we aim to break down barriers to participation and provide a home and platform for local young people and communities. We are very proud to list Community Spirit as one of our flagship projects and would like to thank Black Voices and all the choir leaders and members taking part today for all their passion and commitment.

Nick Reed
CEO B:Music



Community Spirit started in 2009 and is led by B:Music Associate Artists Black Voices. It celebrates diverse and excellent choral singing in the West Midlands, giving choirs the opportunity to work together, share repertoire and enjoy the powerful and joyous experience of massed singing.

Community Spirit is more than just singing, it's about bringing communities and musical styles together, and providing a platform in a world class venue from which they can shine.

This year Black Voices have been working with 10 choirs and 300 singers, who are the beating heart of this project. They have been working under the theme of 'Unity' to build an exciting and varied programme. This year's project began back in January with an exciting training session for our choir leads with the energetic vocal coach and conductor, Ruairi Edwards. Our choirs are excited to undertake the premiere performance of two new commissions written and arranged for CS by Ruairi.

The choirs and choir leaders have worked hard through many rehearsals to prepare for today's concert, and they are proud and excited to bring this event to life.

Thank you for joining us and we hope you enjoy this very special performance!

Carol Pemberton
MBE,
Founder
and Music
Director,
Black
Voices (a
B:Music
Associate
Artist)



PARTICIPATING CHOIRS

Town Hall Gospel
Voices Entwined
Howling Wolves
Workplace Voices
Reggae Choir
Handsworth Community Choir

Halas Homes and Friends
Brandhall Community Choir
Healing Voices
Northfield Notes
Senza Nome

RUNNING ORDER

Welcome & Introductions: Host Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM

Mass Choir: Walk Together, Ruairi Edwards - Accompanied by Phil Mitchell

Town Hall Gospel Choir: Stand Up, Cynthia Erivo, Joshua Cambell, Arr C Anderson

Healing Voices: Glorious - Accompanied by Chris Collis

Reggae Choir: Satta Massaga Bernard Collins, Donald Manning and Lynford Manning – Arr Black Voices

Voices Entwined & Howling Wolves: Tedumela - Brian Abrams and Roxanne Smith

Mass Choir: Climbing Up The Mountain, Louise Blackburn

Host: Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM

INTERVAL

Host: Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM

Mass Choir: Treat People With Kindness - Accompanied by Chris Collis

Brandhall Community Choir: Instant History, Biffy Clyro

Workplace Voices: Bridge Over Troubled Water, Paul Simon – Accompanied by James Keefe

Halas Homes Signing Choir & Friends: Lean On Me

Interviews: Host Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM

Senza Nome: Kyrie, from The Polish Mass by J. Maklakiewicz

Black Voices: Now That We Found Love, Kenneth Gamble & Leon Huff,
(O'Jays/Third World)

- Swing Low, Spiritual, Arr Ken Burton

- Fragile, Gordon Sumner (Sting)

Thanks: Host Kathryn Stanczyszyn, BBC WM

Mass Choir: We Are One, Ruairi Edwards - Accompanied by Phil Mitchell
Running order may be subject to change

A special thank you to Lichfield Gospel Choir for their fabulous pre-show performance this afternoon.

BLACK VOICES

Black Voices was founded in Birmingham, England in 1987, by its Managing Director Carol Pemberton MBE.

Filling international concert venues across the world with the exquisite range of their unaccompanied voices and their intricate and soul stirring harmonies - from spirituals and traditional songs to jazz, modern and classical – Black Voices is simply exciting and one of the finest exponents of a cappella - singing in the black oral tradition.



Black Voices is a female collective, globally celebrated for bringing their unique form of a cappella to the world stage. Such is their critical acclaim and respect amongst the music industry, that Black Voices has opened concerts for some of the greatest names in music including Ray Charles, Nina Simone, Hugh Masekela, Miriam Makeba and Take 6.

‘Let me just say I love Black Voices! Outstanding talent... Outstanding spirit! You don’t want to miss them!’ 10 time Grammy winner, Mark Kibble, Take 6

KATHRYN STANCZYSZYN

Kathryn Stanczyszyn is a BBC television and radio presenter based mainly in the West Midlands. She also covers of the biggest stories on national television and radio, appearing regularly on BBC Breakfast, Radio 4 and 5 Live. She is an experienced event host and also a professional singer, currently performing in two bands and a gospel choir. She has sung for as long as she can remember in choirs of all shapes and sizes and is delighted to be hosting Community Spirit.



RUAIRI EDWARDS

Ruairi is a nationally sought-after conductor, pianist and vocal coach who works across the UK and internationally delivering projects, workshops and rehearsals. A core member of some of the country’s most prestigious choral organisations, including Ex Cathedra and National Children’s Choir of Great Britain, Ruairi works with everything from experienced chamber choirs and orchestras through to massed choruses of 800+ children; from corporate settings to local communities. He is now based in South Devon where he runs an extensive choir network called Inner Resonance. www.innerresonance.co.uk

Commissioned Pieces:

Walk Together

I put this together to celebrate this year’s Community Spirit theme of Unity. This song is hopeful and bright, and is all about celebrating the joy of singing together, being together, and the powerful sense of unity that comes from doing this as a community of singers. The chorus is designed to be catchy!

We Are One

I wanted this song to have a powerful, anthem-like feel to it. Harmonically it plays around with dark and light, ambiguity and clarity - to reflect the challenges life can throw at us. However, the central theme always shines strong - we are one, and we are powerful when we are together. The song is deeply optimistic.

AMPLIFY TOWN HALL B:INVOLVED

Preserve the Heritage

Create a Sustainable Future

Help tell the story of Town Hall!

Was your first gig at Town Hall? Did you see Black Sabbath or The Beatles on the Town Hall stage? Do you have old concert tickets, photos, autographs or tour memorabilia from events at Town Hall? Have a Town Hall story or memory that makes you smile? Help us build a digital archive to preserve the history of historic Town Hall!

Help us raise £200,000

Donate to our public fundraising appeal to improve accessibility for audiences and artists, upgrade facilities and protect Town Hall for generations of future Brummies to enjoy!

Image: Getting up close with The Editors at Town Hall. Jason Sheldon

To donate or find out more about how you can contribute to the archive please visit
bmusic.co.uk/amplify-town-hall





WITH THANKS

We would like to thank all the generous donors and funders who make our projects possible. A special thank you goes to all those who have played a vital role in supporting Community Spirit over many years.



B:MUSIC



We inspire a love of live music, through performance, participation and learning across Birmingham and beyond.

We believe that music is essential to everyone and has the power to transform and change lives, to entertain and uplift, to create shared experiences and to educate.



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