Have faith in choir's Psalmfest rendition

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The Nantwich Choral Society

French and England unite tomorrow evening as Nantwich Choral Society present an evening of Gounod and Rutter at St Mary's Church, writes Liz Rowley

RUTTER'S Psalmfest is such a demanding work that few choirs attempt to perform it.

But for John Naylor, Nantwich Choral Society's conductor, presenting it at St Mary's Church, Nantwich, tomorrow night shouldn't prove a problem for the singers he has absolute faith in.

"The Psalmfest is a collection ofpsalms by John Rutter, the modern British composer," says John, who took leadership of the society in September 2005.

"It's a very complex work, definitely not easy to get your head around, but the choir is technically proficient and they have been working very hard," he adds.

"The work isn't performed very often because it's so challenging, but I have every faith in the choir and I think they are at their best at the moment."

A popular composer with choirs, Rutter's work will dominate the second half of the programme while the first, at approximately 45 minutes, belongs solely to French composer Charles Gounod.

"During the first half we will sing Gounod's Messe Solenelle de Sainte Cecile, parts of which despite being composed in France, actually had their premier in London in 1851," says John who was a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, with the great Dr George Guest.

"Gounod is probably best known as the composer of Ave Maria to Bach's Prelude and for his operas but this is a wonderful mass and I think new listeners will really enjoy it," he continued. "The great thing about both of these pieces is that the choir loves to sing them and the audience loves to hear them so it's a winning programme all round."

Having worked with numerous choirs and choral societies in past years as well as being an accomplished singer himself, John says that Nantwich in particular is at the top of its game.

"The Nantwich Choral Society is a great choir to work with," he concludes.

"The members are really friendly, enthusiastic and ambitious to do great things which is why I enjoy working with them so much.

"It's definitely a choir that's on the up and I get so much pleasure out of performing great works such as these with such talented people."

The Nantwich Choral Society can be seen at St Mary's Church, Nantwich, tomorrow night at 7.30pm. Tickets are available on the door.

Anyone interested in learning more about the choir, including membership information, should contact Anne Barnard on 01270 522664 .