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Londinium chamber choir announces the appointment of Stephen Farr and Andrew Griffiths as its Joint Musical Directors

October 2011

London chamber choir Londinium is delighted to announce the appointment of **Stephen Farr** and **Andrew Griffiths** as its Joint Musical Directors.

Over the six years since its creation **Londinium** has acquired a growing reputation for its high-quality performances of unusual a cappella repertoire and its innovative and varied programming. The Joint Musical Directors, both of whom have directed Londinium for specific projects previously, will be working together to develop the choir in a stimulating and wide-ranging programme of concerts for Londinium's 2011/12 season, and will alternate in their direction of the choir's performances over this season.

Londinium's Chair Helen Statham said of the appointment: *'We are excited to be working with two such talented and experienced musicians, and are fortunate to be in a position to benefit from their combined musical strengths.'*

Stephen Farr has an established reputation as one of the leading organists of his generation, and made his début at the Proms in 2011 with a solo organ recital. He is Director of Music at St Paul's Church Knightsbridge and Worcester College Oxford, is a regular deputy conductor for Polyphony and the Holst Singers, and frequently works as a conductor for special projects involving professional vocal ensembles.

Andrew Griffiths has a growing reputation as a talented and versatile conductor with a particular flair for opera and choral music. He has conducted productions at the Royal Opera, where he trained as a Jette Parker Young Artist, Opera North, Early Opera Company and the Iford Festival, and has recently worked at Glyndebourne, English National Opera, Chicago Opera Theater and the BBC Singers. He is also a founder member of Gramophone Award-winning vocal consort Stile Antico.

The Joint Musical Directors' first season with Londinium continues the group's reputation for unusual repertoire and innovative programming, with the season's opening concert on 15th November 2011 (*Fire and Ice*, conducted by Andrew Griffiths) contrasting Victoria's *Requiem* with recent motets from Scandinavia and the Baltic.

On 9th February 2012 Stephen Farr will conduct *The Elements*: a beautiful programme for Spring based around the four classical elements of earth, air, fire and water, which includes Howells' *Take Him Earth for Cherishing*, Tippett's *Dance Clarion Air*, Lauridsen's *Fire Madrigals* and Judith Bingham's *The Drowned Lovers*.

Londinium's April 2012 concert, conducted by Andrew Griffiths, focuses on the music of Brahms and his wide-ranging interests and influences, presenting Brahms' exquisite smaller-scale choral works (including his *Fünf Gesänge* op.140) alongside early music by Gabrieli and Schütz, and works by Brahms' friends and contemporaries Robert and Clara Schumann, Mendelssohn and Peter Cornelius.

The 2011/12 season closes with the upward journey of the soul. *Flights of Angels*, conducted by Stephen Farr on 10th July, features Josquin's *Nymphes des Bois*, Mendelssohn's *Mitten wir in Leben sind*, John Tavener's *Song for Athene*, and Pizzetti's *Requiem*.

Notes for Editors:

(1) Londinium's Concert Schedule 2011/12:

- Tuesday 15th November 2011, *Fire and Ice: Victoria to Arvo Pärt*, conducted by Andrew Griffiths
- Thursday 9th February 2012, *The Elements: Songs of the Earth, the Air, Fire and Water*, conducted by Stephen Farr
- Tuesday 3rd April 2012, *Brahms and his World*, conducted by Andrew Griffiths
- Tuesday 10th July 2012, *Flights of Angels: Music for the Departing Soul by Josquin, Mendelssohn, Tavener, Vaughan Williams and Pizzetti*, conducted by Stephen Farr

(2) Reviews of Londinium's previous performances:

- *'From start to finish, Londinium perfectly captured [the] delicate emotion [of the piece], without ever losing the provocative torment that defined Curry's work'* (Kay Kempin, Bachtrack, reviewing the world première of Jessica Curry's *Perpetual Light*, performed by Londinium in The Old Vic Tunnels on 4th June 2011)
- *'Howells' Requiem received a beautifully controlled performance. The small size of the choir told here in a number of passages performed with lovely transparency of texture, notably in the first Requiem movement. Secure tuning in Howells' rich harmonies meant that the choir gave a movingly confident performance with commendable solos taken by the choir members.'* (Robert Hugill, *Music and Vision*, reviewing Londinium's concert *Joy, Sorrow, Song*, 30th November 2007)
- *'I found the sound of your choir just gorgeous - both luscious and true'* (Cecilia McDowell, May 2009)
- *'One of the most beautiful performances of Sleep I have ever heard'* (Eric Whitacre, November 2010)