

# philharmonia orchestra

## **Tugan Sokhiev on the Three Choirs Festival 2009**

### **Tugan Sokhiev – Conductor**

The rehearsal went very well. It was a great pleasure again to come back to this wonderful orchestra. We're rehearsing for the Three Choirs Festival, with which my relationship with this orchestra started. It was in 2002 in Worcester Cathedral, I stepped in at very short notice. I heard the orchestra before in concerts but never actually worked with it. For me it was such a revelation. It is such a pleasure to come back to this wonderful group and family of musicians. They are one of the greatest orchestras in the world.

#### *Musical extract*

They're such wonderful places you know. The cathedral in Worcester where Elgar himself conducted. Historically it means a lot, to the orchestra and to me to be there, to be part of this wonderful British summer festival Three Choirs, which has a long, long history. To be part of that history is a big honour.

It is a very nice mixture, it starts with Beethoven but then we go on to Mendelssohn which is slightly more romantic and we finish with 20<sup>th</sup> century Stravinsky. And also to do something as big as the *Rite of Spring* in that cathedral is going to be a big challenge because the orchestra is huge. There are so many instruments; lots of percussion, lots of brass, you have 8 horns, you have 4 trumpets, 2 tubas. So it's going to be a challenge how you actually make it sound very distinct.

#### *In rehearsal:*

We have to be *mezzo forte* or *mezzo piano* in order for the fourth bar to be louder for bassoon and English horn. *Da da da da da da*. And then again *mezzo forte* and then again. Otherwise it just sounds all the same and doesn't make a lot of sense. Seven. *Mezzo forte* not louder. Seven.

#### *Musical extract*

That's the kind of piece which shows an orchestra like the Philharmonia Orchestra at its best. You get wonderful individual playing like the beginning of the piece which is a bassoon solo. You get cor anglais solo, you get violins, you get the trumpets suddenly sparkling. And then in the final *Sacred Dance* you get the whole orchestra going demented in this crazy un-rhythmic, which sounds un-rhythmic but is in fact very rhythmic, all these tutti and all the instruments are playing. And that's what shows the brilliance of this orchestra and the real power and the real colour of this orchestra.