



## Senior School Christmas Concert Delights Audience

**By Mr Keating-Roberts (Director of Music)**

As the festive season fast approaches, BGS experienced a magical evening filled with enchanting melodies and festive cheer at the annual Senior School Christmas concert Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The Assembly Hall was transformed into a winter wonderland, setting the stage for an unforgettable night of music.

The concert kicked off with a dramatic entrance from Bel Canto, treating us to a candle lit entrance beautifully singing the *Procession* from Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols* before dramatically changing the pace with *This Little Babe* from the same work.

Several standout moments during the concert left a lasting impression. The singers were a tour de force starting with Serena Jacob (Lower Sixth) who delivered a breath-taking solo performance of *Après un rêve* by Fauré, showcasing supreme vocal control. The rendition of 'When Christmas Comes to Town' by Liberty McNiff (Year 9) left the audience in awe, with many attendees expressing their appreciation for the spine-tingling beauty of the piece. Thandi Shongwe (Year 11) absolutely blew us away with an incredible performance of *O Holy Night*, a true Christmas classic performed with a real sense of style and panache.

Our instrumental soloists were also in fine fettle. Ella Coupland (Year 7) showed her command of the flute performing *Autumn' from Vivaldi*, Niamh Odell (Year 7) performed a wonderfully playful rendition of *La Donna e Mobile* with her flute teacher truly capturing the essence of the piece. The piano performances were fantastic from Noorie Sibia (Year 7) and Frances Penny (Year 7) who added a real sense of mischief in her performance dressed as an elf! Daniela De Velasco (Year 8) gave a wonderful performance of Carl Reinecke's *Sonatina No.2 in A Minor*.

There were so many standout moments throughout the Concert from our soloists but I think a special mention should be made of two senior violinists Eleni Zorn (Upper Sixth) and Melisa Rasool (Lower Sixth), two very contrasting performances but utterly exquisite. Melisa performed *Merry-go-round of Life* by Joe Hisaishi from the Japanese animated film *Howls Moving Castle*. Eleni delivered a phenomenal performance of the 1st movement from Haydn's 2nd Violin concerto in G executed with poise and control throughout. It was a real pleasure to see a mixture of younger performers and older performers together demonstrating the Musical journey of our students as they excel and develop in their instruments.

The heart of the concert was undoubtedly the stunning ensemble performances, from jazzy arrangements of the wind band and flute choir and complex harmonies of our combined Consort Choir with the Bedford School to Symphony Strings and the superb Symphony Orchestra showcasing Christmas at the Movies. Together, they presented a harmonious blend of orchestral arrangements and choral excellence. The lush sounds of the orchestra complemented the angelic voices of the choirs and soloists, creating a musical tapestry that transported the audience to a winter paradise.

In addition to the traditional instruments and choral ensembles, the program featured modern interpretations of holiday favourites, adding a contemporary twist to the festive repertoire. The seamless integration of various musical styles ensured that there was something for everyone, from the young to the young at heart. With superb toe tapping performances from the Year 8, Year 11 Rock School Bands and to close out proceedings in style the Lower Sixth groups Astrophe and Counteract.

As the final notes of *Step into Christmas* echoed through the Assembly Hall, the audience erupted in thunderous applause, expressing gratitude for a magical evening. The Senior BGS Christmas concert was more than a musical performance; it was a communal celebration of the Festive spirit. The talented musicians, passionate performers, and enchanting ambiance combined to create a Christmas concert that will be remembered and cherished for years to come. The students and staff involved should be thoroughly proud of what they have achieved this Term.