

JOHN ALLDIS

Born: August 10, 1929 - London, England

English choral conductor studied as a choral scholar under Boris Ord at King's College, Cambridge, from 1949-52.

After leaving Cambridge he quickly became highly regarded as a choral conductor. In 1966, the London Symphony Orchestra engaged him to form and direct its first standing choral group. However, he switched to the London Philharmonic Chorus in 1969, with which he remained until 1982, preparing choruses for many celebrated performances with Sir Adrian Boult, Otto Klemperer, Leopold Stokowski, Sir Colin Davis, Bernard Haitink, Georg Solti, Zubin Mehta and Daniel Barenboim.

In 1962, he founded the professional, 16-member John Alldis Choir, which launched itself with the world premiere of Alexander Goehr's *A Little Cantata of Proverbs* and his name has been identified with the choir ever since. Contemporary music figured importantly in its repertory, with first performances of works by Malcolm Williamson, Richard Rodney Bennett and Harrison Birtwistle, many of which were captured on the Argo label. In 1967, he prepared the John Alldis Choir for the first European performance of Stravinsky's *Requiem Canticles*, conducted by Pierre Boulez. The choir also participated in many opera recordings for Decca and RCA, featuring artists such as Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, Janet Baker, Joan Sutherland and Kiri Te Kanawa.

In 1971, he directed his choir in the first performance and recording of Pink Floyd's classic rock album *Atomheartmother*. In 1975, he directed the choir in the Westminster Abbey performance of Duke Ellington's *Sacred Concert* - a recording that was to be the last ever made by the great bandleader. He also conducted the London Philharmonic Choir and brass section in the recording of David Bedford's *Star Clusters*, available on the Classicprint label. In 1977, he recorded *Sounds of Glory* for Arcade Records, a celebration of choral classics which won a gold disc.

He conducted a number of other ensembles, in music ranging from the Renaissance to the present. From 1966-79, he led the choir of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. From 1971-77, he served as joint chief conductor of Radio Denmark, mainly leading its Danish State Radio Chorus. From 1979-83, he conducted the Groupe Vocal de France, recording music by Francis Poulenc and Gabriel Fauré. From 1983-86, he was the director of the Cameran Singers in Israel and briefly became guest conductor of the Hallé Choir in Manchester. From 1978-87, he conducted the American Choral Symposium in Manhattan Kansas. From 1985-98, he was a permanent guest conductor with the Netherlands Chamber Choir, with whom he made several CDs including *English Choral Music* on the Globe label. From 1989-1997, he was a music consultant to the Israel Chamber Choir and guest-conducted the Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus and the Central Philharmonic Society of China in Beijing. In 2002, he conducted the Lyon Opera in the first performance *Messa Sulenna* by the Corsican composer Jean-Paul Poletti. From 1975-2003, John Alldis served on the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust, and from 1971-2004 he conducted the Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra.

John Alldis has won Grammy awards for his work with Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Georg Solti, is an Honorary Fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, and in 1994 was named a Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He is married to the violinist and teacher Ursula Alldis, and has two sons Dominic Alldis and Robert Alldis.