

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Renowned English boy soprano to be featured in concerts

The St. Cecilia Chamber Choir is delighted to announce that their 15th Anniversary Spring Concerts on April 30 and May 1 will have the very special addition of a young guest soloist: twelve-year-old Johannes (“Jo”) Moore, who is flying in from England to sing.

Last year the Newcastle-based choir found itself fortunate in the addition of a new tenor with a classic English accent (something highly desirable in choral singing). Tenor Richard Bates lived in his native United Kingdom until 1981 when he moved to Massachusetts. Last year he saw the light and settled in Maine.

Choir director Linda Blanchard had always wanted to conduct Leonard Bernstein’s magnificent and highly dramatic *Chichester Psalms*, and decided that St. Cecilia’s fifteenth anniversary was the perfect occasion. Central to the piece, with text in Hebrew based on six Old Testament psalms, is a boy soprano, or, in British terminology, a treble soloist.

After a lead on a talented youngster in the mid coast fell through, board member Richard Bates casually mentioned that he had a young nephew in England who was a singer. That turned out to be an understatement. Nephew Jo and his parents didn’t figure that flying to Maine for two concerts was such a big deal, as Jo has already performed twice in the U.S. with his own choir, in California in 2006, and on a tour to Philadelphia and Massachusetts in 2008.

The concert tours were with Jo’s home choral group, the Hereford Cathedral Choir, which he joined at age seven. He is now Head Chorister. There have been choristers at Hereford since at least the year 1246. As part of the choir, Jo sings in the cathedral eight times a week, rehearsing before and after school every day. As Head Chorister, he is a frequent soloist and opened last Christmas’s Festival of Lessons and Carols by performing “Once in Royal David’s City.” His choir annually plays a major role, along with Gloucester and Worcester, in the Three Choirs Festival, one of the oldest music events in England.

Jo’s choir has also appeared on BBC TV several times, as well as BBC Radio, and has recently recorded a CD of music by Herbert Howells.

Quite possibly his performing highlight to date was last year when the Hereford Cathedral Choir sang at Archbishop Tutu’s cathedral in Capetown, South Africa.

Jo plays the violin and piano, and is a member of the National Youth Music Theater of Great Britain. He lives on a farm in the country with his parents, brother and sister, cats and dog. He is a West Ham football fan.

For the St. Cecilia Choir, he will be singing not only the Bernstein boy solos, but also the treble solos in *Magnificat* by Charles Villiers Stanford.

An additional nod to the United Kingdom (and the Royal wedding) will be the performance of

the joyous William Mathias piece composed for the marriage of the Prince of Wales and Lady Diana in 1981, *Let the people praise thee, O God*.

Concerts are Saturday, April 30 at 7:30 at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, and Sunday, May 1 at 3 PM at the First Congregational Church, Camden, and are accompanied by a Chamber Orchestra and numerous percussionists. Advance tickets at \$12 at the Maine Coast Book Shop, Damariscotta, and the Owl and Turtle bookshop in Camden, or from choir members, and are \$15 at the door. Students are admitted free.

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