



Scarborough: a glorious return

What a pleasure it was to return to Scarborough to sing.

The Choir was more than happy to perform there on Saturday evening, (20th August) after three long years of absence because of the pandemic.





We were thrilled that our super patron, **Miss Christine Cox**, had invited the old team back to make music. This took place, as usual, at the hall at Queen Street, just above the South Bay in that most iconic of seaside places, Scarborough.

What a wonderful hall it is to sing in, too, big enough to create a sense of occasion with its magnificent organ behind the singers and yet small enough, and with such a terrific acoustic for the Choir to make it ring with a glorious sound in our forte passages and resonate beautifully in quieter sections.

So we wowed our audience with stunning volume at the climax of **'How Great Thou Art'** and charmed them with the tenderness of **'I Dreamed of Rain'**. This was a new piece for the Choir, getting its first performance outing. The same was true for the bass-challenging Queen number **'Somebody to Love'** which went down a storm.

Sarah Ogden and not-so-new-boy, **Christopher Pulleyn**, were the only changes to the familiar line up. Once again, cornet virtuoso, **Phillip McCann** and organist, **Simon Lindley** were there. Simon and Choir conductor and soloist, **Thom Meredith** shared the compère roles.

It was a happy return and a great night of music.

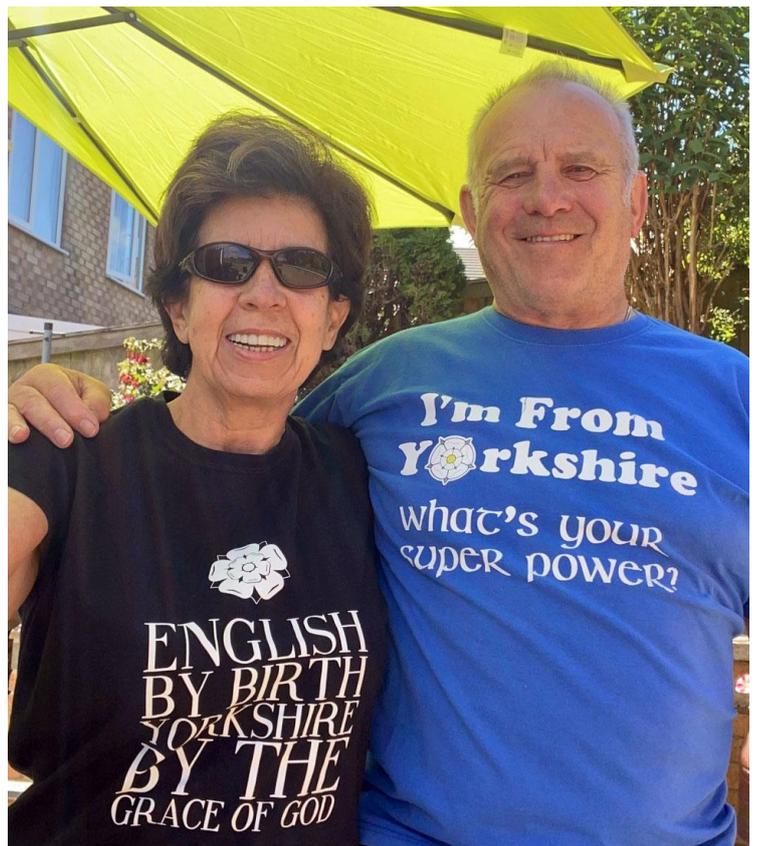
Yorkshire Medley

One of the concert items that our Scarborough audience enjoyed was the **'Yorkshire Medley'**.

They joined in with many of the songs with **'Yorkshire Relish'** that entirely fits with our pride in our Yorkshire heritage.

The Choir's kindly old archivist, **David Clarke** and his girlfriend, **Chris Wilson**, share this devotion to **'God's own County'** as can be seen in this photo sent to the editor.

Christine, (who incidentally provided the fine photograph of all the concert performers) and David, aware that the **'Yorkshire Medley'** includes the song **'Scarborough Fair'**, noticed this gem of local history on their seaside wanderings around Scarborough's picturesque harbour. They thought VotV readers might find it of interest. Thank you, both.



Scarborough Fair: The origins

Almost everyone knows the first line of the song, 'Are you going to Scarborough Fair', made famous by Simon and Garfunkel.

This is an old canticle, but Scarborough Fair is much older. The origins are medieval and based on the lowly herring.

Christine says she found this on a wall in Scarborough and transcribed it for VoTV.

SCARBOROUGH FAIR: THE ORIGINS

Almost everyone knows the first line of the song, 'Are you going to Scarborough Fair', made famous by Simon and Garfunkel. This is an old canticle, but Scarborough Fair is much older. The origins are medieval and based on the lowly herring. The vast shoals of these little fish, numbered in billions, migrate down the North Sea from North East Scotland in the spring and are found off Northumberland/Durham in June and July. In the first week of August into early September (approximately 40 days) the herring are spawning off the Yorkshire Coast.

In years past, along with many local boats, catchers came from near and far to fish this abundant stock. These visiting craft, mostly from Scotland, East Anglia, Cornwall and the Low Countries, used mid-water drift nets each night to harvest the 'silver darlings'. This annual bonanza, the equivalent of a modern oil boom, continued for hundreds of years. The currency used when trading with the Low Countries was the 'Easterling', which was eventually shortened to 'Sterling'.

The huge wealth that this industry created each year attracted all the associated followers of the time, good and bad, drawn by the money generated. This seasonal gathering became 'Scarborough Fair'.

The catches were gutted, salted and barrelled, mostly by 'herring girls' from the North East of Scotland. Some of whom lodged in this building during the season. The salted herring were sold and exported to ports all over Europe. Being preserved, as well as feeding the populace, the barrels of fish were also used to feed the armies and navies of many countries.

Herring were barrelled in Scarborough up to WWII and were still caught in drift nets, landed each day and marketed fresh until the mid 1970s.

Large shoals of herring are still to be found off the Yorkshire coast in the season, but they are now caught in huge mid-water trawls by a few large Scottish and Dutch ships, which adhere to strict quotas. Scarborough Fair is now consigned to the history books.

'Herring Girls' created by Bill Cordaroy

Narrative Fred Normandale

She tells us , *'The vast shoals of these little fish, numbered in billions, migrate down the North Sea from North East Scotland in the spring and are found off Northumberland/Durham in June and July.'*

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*This seasonal gathering became "**Scarborough Fair**".*



The catches were gutted, salted and barrelled, mostly by 'herring girls' from the North East of Scotland, who came down to Scarborough following the shoals. The salted herring were sold and exported to ports all over Europe. Being preserved, as well as feeding the populace, the barrels of fish were also used to feed the armies and navies of many countries.

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(info from Herring Girls, created by Bill Cordaroy with narrative by Fred Normandale.)

Steven Roberts returns

One of our favourite guest conductors, Steven Roberts, came back to Slaithwaite the other night to lead the Choir rehearsal, taking us through pieces we were preparing for our concert in Scarborough.

We always enjoy Steven's visits. You can rely on him to bring some fresh insights to the music and some good pointers to creating impressive performance.



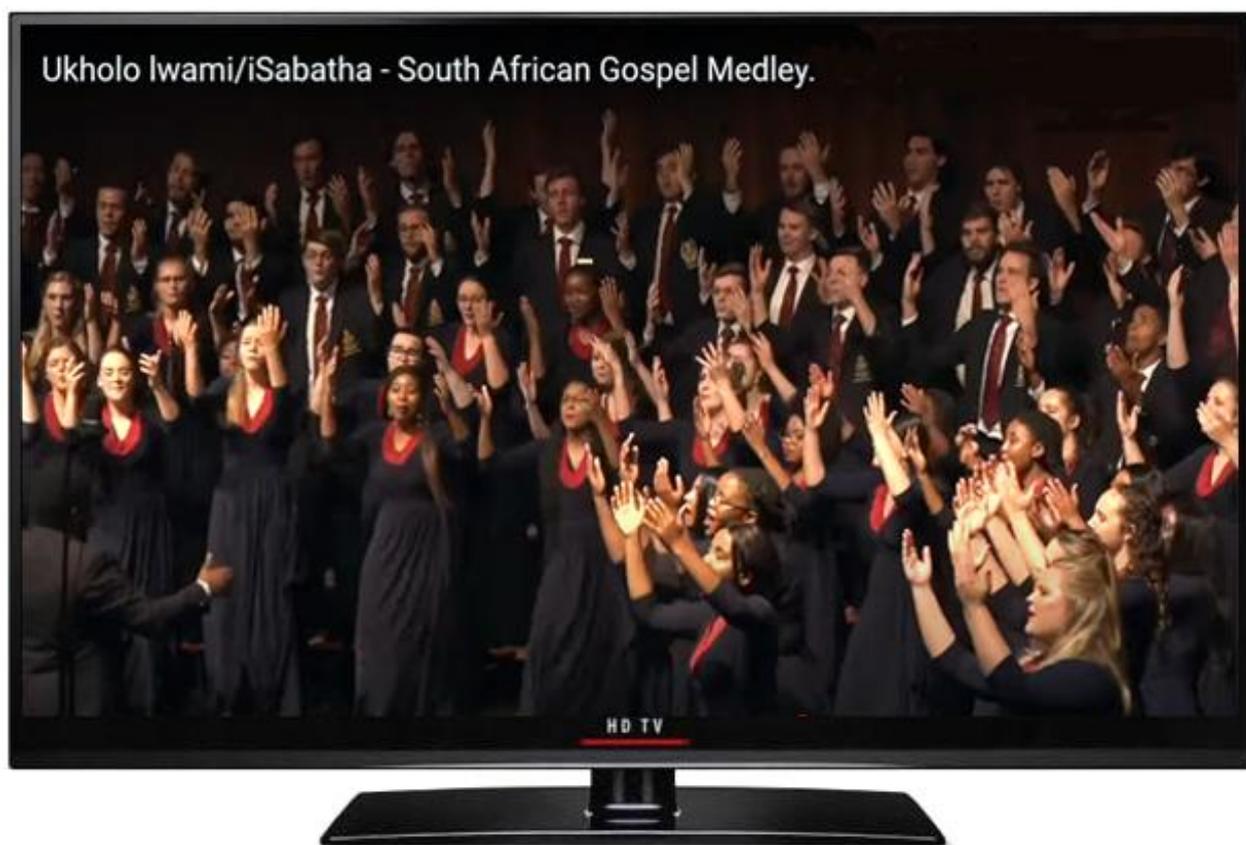
Tux Camerata

Regarding our stage presence, Steven recommended we look at Tux Camerata - a university choir from Pretoria. Watch one of their performances, he urged us. They are enjoying themselves and what is most striking, is that their enjoyment shines through in their bodies and faces. There's a lesson there for us, says Steven.

And he is right, agrees VotV. We may love singing but look at our photos - we often look as miserable as sin!

It's always a pleasure to welcome Steven back.

Incidentally, **Tux Camerata** have recently completed their UK Tour, culminating in workshops and performances with young singers in neighbouring **Barnsley**.



Watch one of their superb videos on this link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4JDVkBaiQo>

So farewell then....

Bernard Cribbins, who played station porter, Perks, in 'The Railway Children', died recently, aged 93.

This priceless novelty record from 1962, 'Right Said Fred' still tickles your Editor's fancy.

Click on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQ6LXJCp9IU>

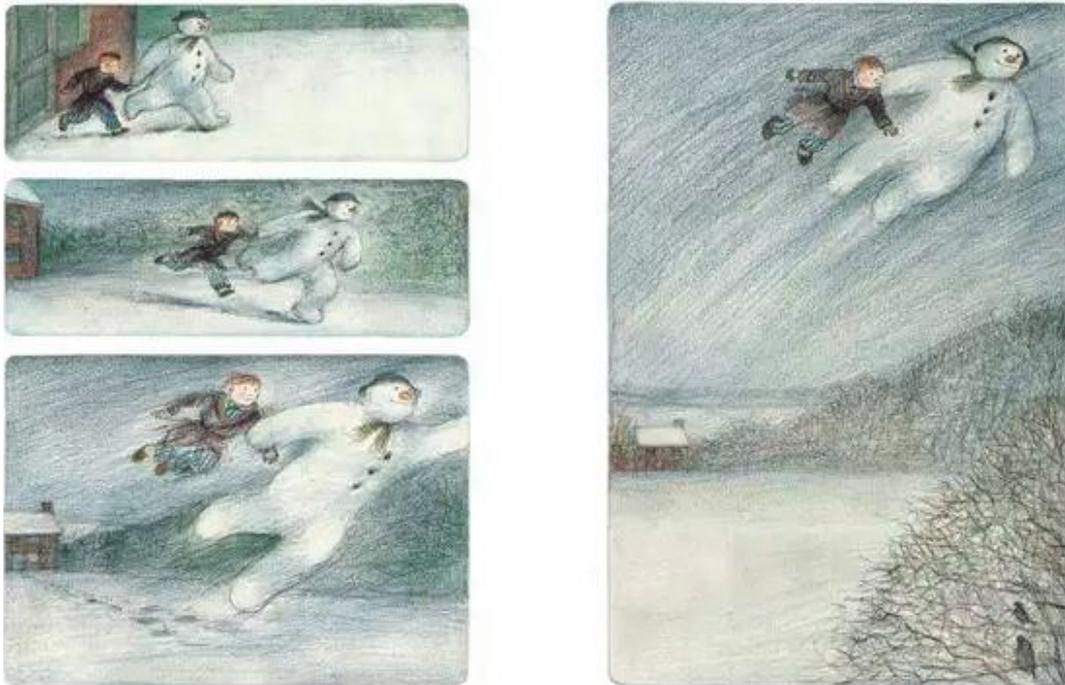


Another sad departure is that star of 'Grease', **Olivia Newton John**. Her transformation from 'goody two shoes' to sex-bomb remains the highlight of the 1978 movie.



Raymond Briggs, illustrator and author, born 18 January 1934; died in August 2022, too.

Famous, of course, for the **Snowman**, with whom we've gone 'Walking in the Air' at many a CVMVC Christmas concert....

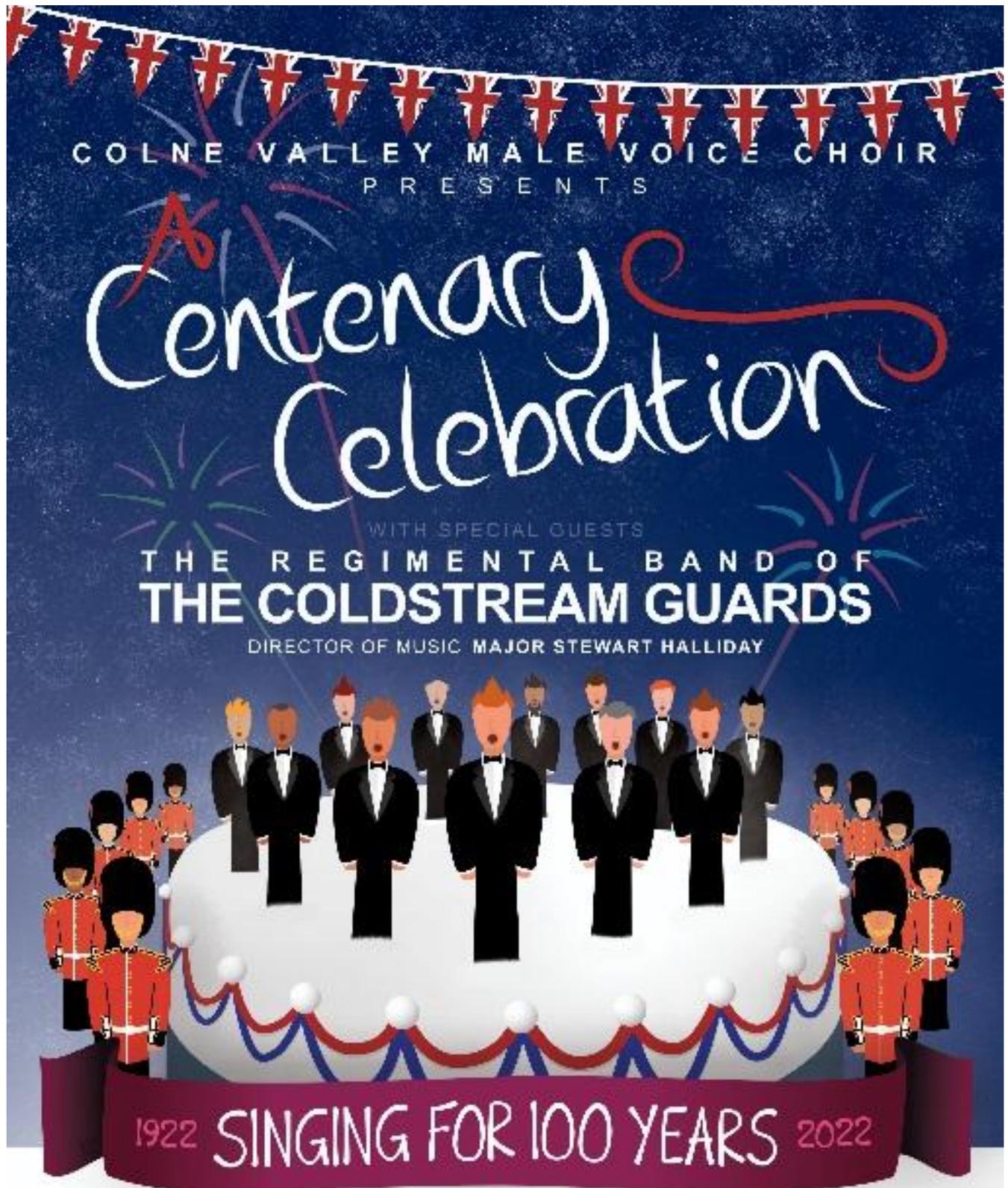


... and infamous, of course, for the entirely disgusting and much-loved, 'Fungus the Bogeyman'.



Dates for your diary

... the not-to-be-missed centenary highlight concert with special guests, the Coldstream Guards



INFLUENCED BY
Thom Meredith
ACCOMMODATED BY
Chris Pulleyn

Saturday 1st October 2022

7:15pm | Huddersfield Town Hall

Tickets £10-£20 | Discounts available for children & NUS
Call 01484 846262 or contact Kirklees Box Office

SUPPORTING



The Army's National Charity

..... and later in October a local concert with our local Band



Anniversary Concert

Featuring

Slaithwaite Brass Band

Celebrating 130 Years

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

Celebrating 100 Years

Colne Valley Boys Choir

With Guest Compere from BBC Radio Leeds

Andrew Edwards

14:30 Sunday 16th October

St James Church, Slaithwaite

Ticket's £10 Adults

Children under 12 free

Another keen Yorkshireman



Halifax resident, avid Yorkshireman and fellow bass singer, **Brian Fairclough**, reckoned Scarborough was 'A cracking concert'. He sent *VotV* readers these dialect phrases to decipher.

Intitot?

Smarrarweeim?

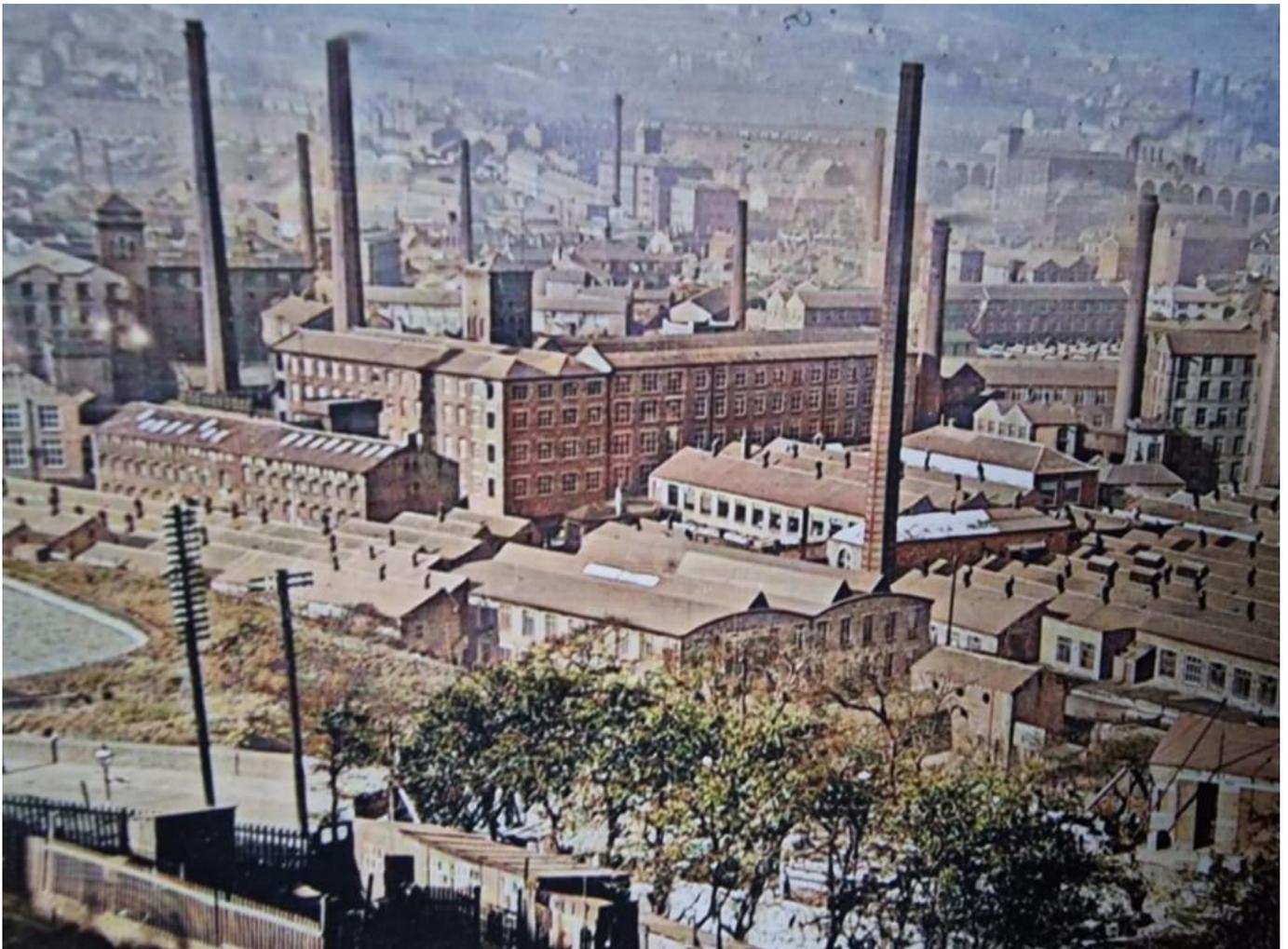
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Edurrant purrizead undertwatter

Corforus arpastate intmornin

Eesezitintis burraberritis

And what could be more 'Yorkshire' than this picture of the Colne Valley at the height of its textiles heyday?



Ellie Sax and Harry live up the Piece Hall

Thom and Lynn must be pleased !

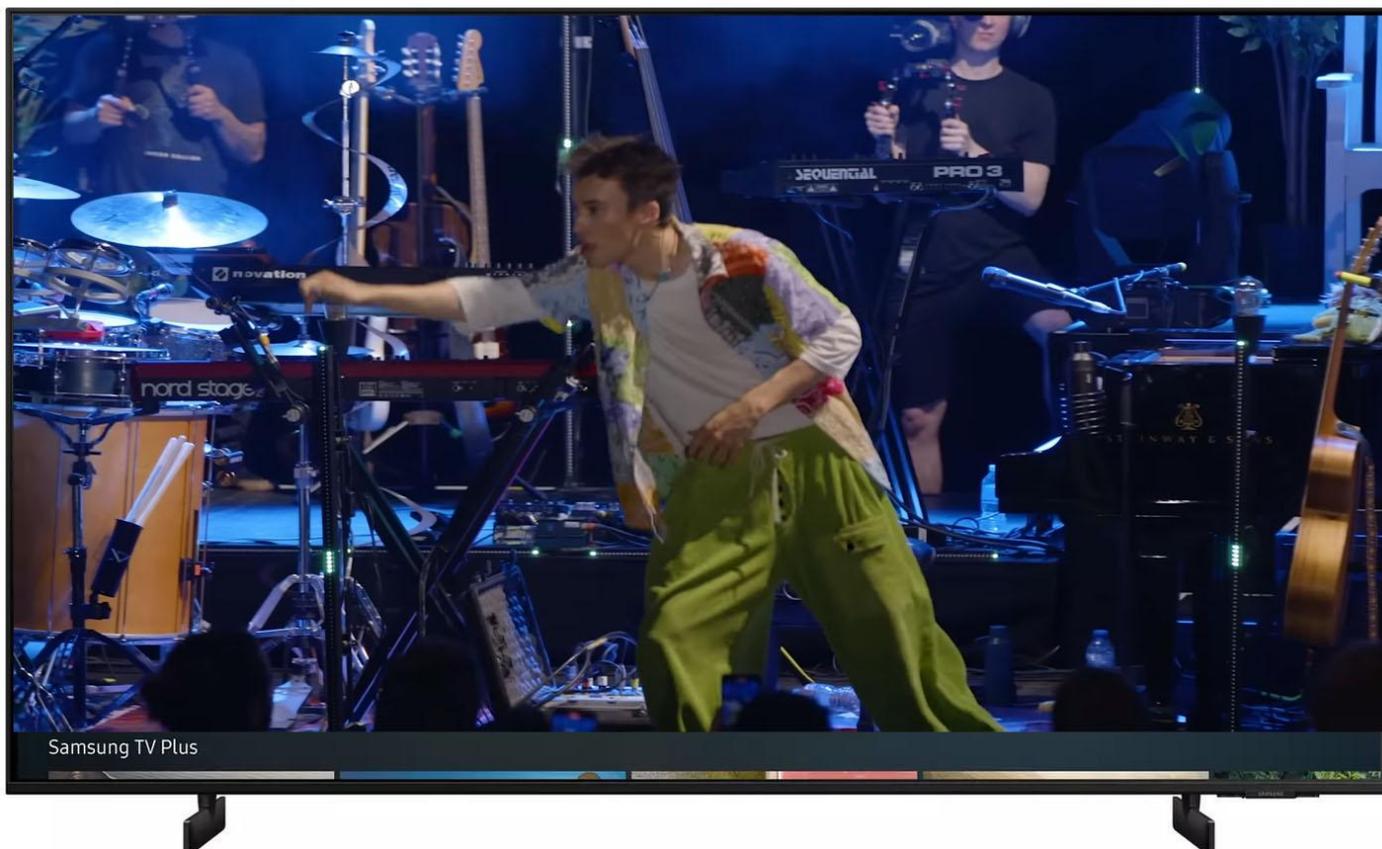


Their son, Harry and daughter- in - law, Ellie, thrilled a great crowd at a gig in Halifax's Piece Hall the other night.

It must have been great for proud parents and for the hundreds of folk dancing in the square.



Jacob Collier conducts his audience



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KsF309XpJo>



Baritone **Rob Rosborough** reckoned this was worth a look and he's right.

Regular VotV readers will know that your editor rates London boy, Jacob Collier. Here he creates a moving musical experience by conducting his audience.

Maybe we can get Thom to do it at one of our concerts?

Well it made me smile....



And remember VotV always welcomes reader contributions.



colnevalleymvc.org.uk

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