

TODAY'S RADIO *Mail*

In Our Time

9AM, 9.30PM, RADIO 4 ★★★★★

Christina Rossetti was born in London to an Italian family of poets and artists. Money worries, and her father's poor health, cast a shadow over her childhood. Melvyn Bragg is joined by Rossetti experts to consider the life and poetry of a woman whose work includes the thrillingly mysterious Goblin Market.



St Ives

featured on the soundtrack of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, writes songs that sound, in the best possible way, as if they have been around for ever. Tonight, she'll give us music from her new album, *The Harrow & The Harvest*.

Radio 2 In Concert: Will Young

St Ives And Me

11.30AM, RADIO 4 ★★★

Anna Chen is a British-born Chinese comedian with a long-standing connection to St Ives in Cornwall. She's become fascinated by its arty and exotic history and, this morning, takes us on a tour of the seaside town that she's come to love.

Radio choice | John Bungey

ElvenQuest

Radio 4, 6.30pm

For those unacquainted with digital radio, specifically Radio 4 Extra, this will be the first chance to hear the third series of the entertainingly daft swords-and-sorcery spoof. Stephen Mangan stars as Sam, who is left behind as the rest of the band seek out the man-munching Giant of Ranknor. Mangan transplants his character from *Green Wing* – self-regarding with a dose of self-pity – plus a little of his Tony Blair thrown in. When a beautiful maiden (Sophie Winkleman, above with Mangan) accosts him and proposes, the future of the Questers' Fellowship is thrown into doubt. There is more



gentle escapism when Anna Chen salutes a Cornish jewel in *St Ives and Me* (Radio 4, 11.30am). She explores the artistic legacy and unique painterly light that brought Barbara Hepworth, Patrick Heron and Molly Parkin to the little port. And, like the Lower Earth of *ElvenQuest*, *St Ives*'s charm endures because it's such a long drive from London.

Times

RADIO *Observer 27.11.11*

St Ives and Me

Radio 4, 11.30am

Anna Chen presents an atmospheric profile of one of her favourite places, St Ives in Cornwall. Having visited since the age of 10, she has encountered many of the town's artists, recalling convivial cups of tea in Patrick Heron's studio. Novelist Molly Parkin is another associate who explains how she fell "passionately in love" with the place. Artists continue to admire the town's unique, refracted light, but Chen also reminds us of the community's origins as a working fishing harbour. **Stephanie Billen**

December 1 Thursday

27.11.11 Radio

Gillian Reynolds: pick of the day

TELEGRAPH

Radio 2 In Concert

RADIO 2, 8.00PM

It's almost a decade since Will Young (defying expectations) won the first big TV talent contest, *Pop Idol*, and thereafter embarked on a brilliantly managed career which has defied many more expectations ever since. His voice is sweet, slightly smoky. But small. He's done a bit of acting. But not enough to make a parallel career. He gives a nice interview and supports many charities, actively. His new album *Echoes* (his fifth) is just out. All sell, worldwide too. And I still can't quite grasp why. **St Ives and Me** (Radio 4, 11.30am) finds Anna Chen back in the Cornish



In Concert: singer Will Young, who won Pop Idol a decade ago

town where she's spent summer holidays since she was 10. That means she's known many of the famous people who've lived, worked and passed through, including marvellous Molly Parkin

(journalist and adventurer) who introduced her to the painter Patrick Heron. What it is about St Ives which draws artists? They always say "the light" and I didn't believe it until I saw it. It really is strangely brilliant. Chen will have better words for it as she takes us round the town and such places of pilgrimage as Barbara Hepworth's studio and garden. **ElvenQuest** (Radio 4, 6.30pm) shifts from the 11.00pm slot it started out on here and, for its third series, already heard on Radio 4 Extra, transfers its monsters, heroes and magic to the top slot. Stephen Mangan, Alistair McGowan, Kevin Eldon, Dave Lamb and Sophie Winkleman star.