

10/2004

GUILDFORD
PHILHARMONIC
CHOIR



Elgar

THE DREAM
OF
GERONTIUS

Forthcoming Programme

Dates for your Diary

Sunday, 12 Dec 2004: Holy Trinity Church (time to be advised)

The Mayor of Guildford's Christmas Family Concert

Promoted by Guildford Rotary/Guildford Philharmonic Choir

Saturday, 12 March 2005: Guildford Cathedral 7.30pm

Donizetti: Ave Maria

Verdi: Pater Noster

Puccini: Requiem

Mozart: Clarinet Concerto

Rossini: S tabat Mater

Promoted by Guildford Philharmonic Choir

Saturday, 14 May 2005: Guildford Cathedral 7.30pm

GPC 'Contemporary Choral Classics Cycle' Year 1

Vaughan Williams: Dona Nobis Pacem (1936)

Karl Jenkins: The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace (2000)

Promoted by Guildford Philharmonic Choir

Guildford Philharmonic Choir



President Sir David Willcocks CBE MC

Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius

Mezzo-soprano

Catherine Denley

Tenor

Eugene Ginty

Bass

Michael Bundy

Forest Philharmonic Orchestra

Jeremy Backhouse



The staging for this concert is owned by the Association of Surrey Chors. To hire, please contact Stephen Jepson, tel: 01306 730383. It was purchased with financial assistance from the Foundation for Sport and Arts, PO Box 20, Liverpool.

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GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

"Those years had seen change accelerate as never before in human history. His response had been to seek the illumination of time remembered. For all those of his generation and the future who would feel the insight of retrospection, he had made of that evanescence his music."

Jerrold Northrop Moore: 'Edward Elgar - A Creative Life' (Oxford University Press, 1984)

Elgar was the most significant British composer of his time. His career straddled the 19th and 20th centuries and is remarkable for producing some of the best-loved works of the English repertoire. Deeply inspired by England's countryside and culture, he also absorbed what was going on in Europe, writing masterly choral and orchestral works as well as chamber, instrumental and keyboard music.

Elgar was born on 2nd June 1857 in the small Worcestershire village of Broadheath, some 3 miles from Worcester in the English West Midlands. His father had a music shop in Worcester and tuned pianos. Surrounded by sheet music and instruments in his father's shop, the young Elgar became self-taught in music. On warm summer days, he would take manuscripts into the countryside to study them. Thus there began for him a strong association between music and nature. In many ways, his years as a young Worcestershire violinist, where he played in the first violins at the Worcester and Birmingham Festivals, were his happiest.

In 1889 he married one of his pupils, (Caroline) Alice Roberts, against the wishes of her family, who considered that she (a Major-General's daughter) was marrying beneath herself. Nevertheless, Alice, with determination and a dogged faith in her husband's emerging genius, played a vital part in the development of Elgar's career. They moved to London to be closer to the centre of British musical life, and Elgar started composing in earnest. The stay was unsuccessful, however, and they were obliged to return to Great Malvern, where Elgar could earn a living. He conducted and composed for local musical organisations, played the organ at St. George's Roman Catholic Church in Worcester, and taught the violin.

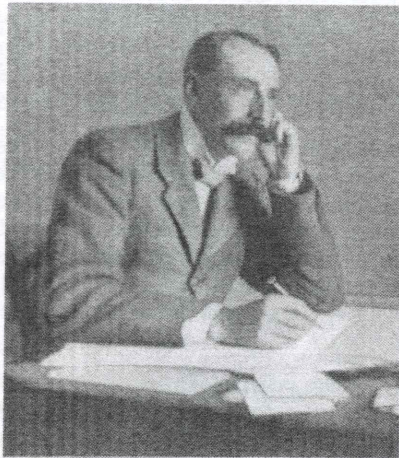
Slowly his reputation began to spread beyond the area immediately around his native Worcestershire. In 1899, at the age of 42, his first major orchestral work, the *Variations on an Original Theme (Enigma)* was premiered in London under the baton of the eminent German conductor Hans Richter. It was received with general acclaim, establishing Elgar as the pre-eminent British composer of his generation. The following year saw the first performance at the Birmingham Festival of his choral setting of Cardinal Newman's poem *The Dream of Gerontius*. Despite a badly-rehearsed and disastrous first performance, the work was established within a few years as one of Elgar's greatest.

Between 1902 and 1914, Elgar enjoyed phenomenal success, made more than one conducting tour of the USA, and earned considerable fees from the performance of his music. Elgar is probably best known for the *Pomp and Circumstance Marches* (1901) – the first, in D major, containing the famous trio

section that was later to become *Land of Hope and Glory*. In 1904, Elgar was knighted by King Edward VII. In 1906, Elgar was busy working on his great oratorio, *The Kingdom*, the sequel to *The Apostles* of 1903. Elgar originally intended that there should be a cycle of three oratorios but the third part of the trilogy was never completed. Other major works composed up to the beginning of the First World War in 1914, were the two symphonies, the violin concerto, *The Music Makers* and the symphonic study *Falstaff*.

The First World War depressed Elgar deeply and affected his composing. It was not until 1918 and 1919 that his final great period produced the three chamber works - the *Violin Sonata* and the *String Quartet*, both in E minor, the *Piano Quintet in A minor* and the *Cello Concerto in E minor*, his last great masterpiece. Audiences were quick to note the change – gone were the pomp and swagger of earlier days.

In 1920, Lady Elgar died, and with her died much of Elgar's inspiration and will to compose. Throughout the 1920s, Elgar, saddened by his bereavement and by the social and musical changes brought about by the war, lived in virtual retirement, outwardly content to live the life of a country gentleman in his beloved Worcestershire with his dogs, sometimes emerging for the occasional visit to London or for a conducting or recording assignment. Honours continued to be conferred on him: he was appointed Master of the King's Music in 1924 and in 1928 he was created Knight Commander of the Victorian Order (K.C.V.O). He died on 23rd February, 1934.



"I cycled over from Ledbury to lunch with him ... he was greatly relieved at having that instant written his name under the score of the last bar [of *Geron-tius*] ... I begged Elgar to remain just as he was while I went down and fetched my camera." William Eller, 3 August 1900

The Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38

Cardinal Newman's poem *The Dream of Gerontius* was a well-known and much-loved work in its own right by the time Elgar came to set it to music in 1900. On its completion, Elgar wrote "This is the best of me", and, in an interview for the *Musical Times* of October 1900, said that the poem had been "soaking in my mind for at least eight years."

Newman's poem falls into seven sections: the first is a prologue on earth showing the dying man surrounded by priests and friends/assistants, and the other six parts trace the Soul's progress through Judgment to Purgatory. Newman's poem comprises some 900 lines; Elgar retained most of the prologue to form Part I, and he cut down the rest to 300 lines to form Part II. This formed a balanced libretto in two parts, and meant there was a new dramatic contrast between the two states of life and death as presented in the two parts of the work.

The opening prelude is a successive experience of leading themes wonderfully scored, especially in the highly elaborate string parts (Elgar the violinist in evidence) and in the writing for low flutes, when those strings are muted to begin the uneasy berceuse representing the fitful sleep of Gerontius on his death-bed.

The first choral sound is the prayer of Gerontius' friends: *Kyrie Eleison* by the unaccompanied semi-chorus, with the main chorus, soberly accompanied by divided violas and cellos, amplifying the prayer with their petitions. The solo 'set piece' in this first part is Gerontius' *Sanctus fortis*, ranging through many moods and serving both as a prayer and a declaration of faith.

The graphic silence at Gerontius' death speaks for itself. It is broken by the trombones and the bass-solo priest sending the Soul on its way with the injunction *Proficiscere anima Christiana*, an idea taken up in stately climax by the full power of chorus and orchestra, then going on in an ascending, consoling march towards the next world, with the opening prayer almost the last thing to be heard.

Part II begins with a tender evocation by muted strings of the new world in which Gerontius finds himself. The "heart-subduing melody" that he hears is a presage of the Angel's *Alleluia* refrain, which in its turn has its own beautiful refrain on the horns. The opening question and answer dialogue of Gerontius and his guardian angel leads to a number of ever-bigger musical paragraphs: first a euphonious duet (*A presage falls upon thee*), then the extended and bitter snarls of the demons in chorus, and for a climax, the tremendous apotheosis of Newman's great hymn *Praise to the Holiest*.

Shortly after its close comes the intercession of the Angel of the Agony, with soft Wagnerian brass in its accompaniment. Thereafter there is the searing exposure to God's glance where, at Elgar's direction, every instrument must for one moment exert its fullest force. The work reaches its serene end with the Angel's farewell to the soul of Gerontius as it is consigned to purgatory (*Softly and gently*). The Angel's solo is combined with prayers on earth and the angelic voices singing *Praise to the Holiest* in the distant height.

PART I

GERONTIUS:

Jesu, Maria - I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now.
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my
brow, —

(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me!)

'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)

That I am going, that I am no more.

'Tis this strange innermost
abandonment,

(Lover of souls! great God! I look to
Thee,)

This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.

Pray for me, O my friends; a visitant
Is knocking his dire summons at my
door,

The like of whom, to scare me and to
daunt,

Has never, never come to me before;

So pray for me, my friends, who have not
strength to pray.

ASSISTANTS:

Kyrie eleison,

Holy Mary, pray for him.

All holy Angels, pray for him.

Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.

All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him.

All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for
him.

All holy Innocents, pray for him.

All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,

All holy Hermits, all holy Virgins,

All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Kyrie eleison.

GERONTIUS:

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play
the man;

And through such waning span

Of life and thought as still has to be trod,

Prepare to meet thy God.

And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent,

And, ere afresh the ruin on thee fall,

Use well the interval.

ASSISTANTS:

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord. Thy servant deliver,
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him. For once and for ever.
From the sins that are past; By Thy birth, and by Thy Cross,
From Thy frown and Thine ire; Rescue him from endless loss;
From the perils of dying; By Thy death and burial,
Or relying on self at the last; By Thy rising from the tomb,
From any complying with sin, By Thy mounting up above,
Or denying his God, Lord deliver him. By the Spirit's gracious love,
From the nethermost fire; Save him in the day of doom.
From all that is evil; Be merciful, etc.
From power of the devil;

GERONTIUS:

*Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus
De Profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus
Parce mihi Domine.*

Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three, and God is One;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.
And I trust and hope most fully
In that Manhood crucified;
And each thought and deed unruly
Do to death, as He has died.
Simply to His grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong,
And I love, supremely, solely,
Him the holy, Him the strong.

I can no more; for now it comes again,
That sense of ruin, which is worse than
pain,

*Sanctus fortis Sanctus Deus,
De Profundis oro te
Miserere, Judex meus
Parce mihi Domine.*

And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,
Holy Church, as His creation,
And her teachings, as His own.
And I take with joy whatever
Now besets me, pain or fear,
And with a strong will I sever
All the ties which bind me here.
Adoration aye be given,
With and through the angelic host,
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
*Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De Profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Mortis in discrimine.*

That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man.

And, crueller still,
A fierce and restless fright begins to fill
The mansion of my soul.
And, worse and worse,
Some bodily form of ill
Floats on the wind, with many a loathsome
curse
Tainting the hallowed air, and laughs, and
flaps
Its hideous wings,

ASSISTANTS:

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil hour,
As of old so many by Thy gracious power:
(Amen.)
Noe from the waters in a saving home;
(Amen.)
Job from all his multiform and fell distress;
(Amen.)

And makes me wild with horror and
dismay.
O Jesu, help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
Some angel, Jesu such as came to Thee
In Thine own agony.
Mary, pray for me.
Joseph, pray for me.
Mary, pray for me.

Moses from the land of bondage and
despair; (Amen.)
David from Golia and the wrath of Saul
(Amen.)
- so, to show Thy power,
Rescue this Thy servant in his evil hour.

GERONTIUS:

Novissima hora est, and I fain would sleep,
The pain has wearied me. Into Thy hands O Lord, Lord, into Thy
hands

THE PRIEST AND ASSISTANTS:

*Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc
mundo!*

Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul!
Go from this world! Go, in the name of
God

The omnipotent Father, who created thee!
Go, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
Son of the living God, who bled for thee!
Go, in the name of the Holy Spirit,

Who hath been poured out on thee! Go, in
the name

Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in the
name

Of Cherubim and Seraphim, go forth!
Go, in the name of Patriarchs and
Prophets;
And of Apostles and Evangelists,
Of Martyrs and Confessors; in the name
Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
Of holy Virgins; and all Saints of God,
Both men and women, go on thy course;
And may thy place today be found in
peace,
And may thy dwelling be the Holy Mount
Of Sion — through the same, through
Christ our Lord.

INTERVAL

PART II

SOUL OF GERONTIUS:

I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed.
A strange refreshment: for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself
And ne'er had been before. How still it is!
I hear no more the busy beat of time,
No, nor my fluttering breath, nor struggling
pulse;
Nor does one moment differ from the next.
This silence pours a solitariness
Into the very essence of my soul;
And the deep rest, so soothing and so
sweet,

Hath something too of sternness and of
pain.
Another marvel; someone has me fast
Within his ample palm. A uniform
And gentle pressure tells me I am not
Self-moving, but borne forward on my way.
And hark! I hear a singing; yet in sooth
I cannot of that music rightly say
Whether I hear or touch or taste the tones.
Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

ANGEL:

My work is done,
My task is o'er, And so I come,
Taking it home,
For the crown is won,
Alleluia,
For evermore.
My Father gave in charge to me
This child of earth
E'en from its birth,

To serve and save,
Alleluia,
And saved is he. This child of clay
To me was given,
To rear and train
By sorrow and pain
In the narrow way,
Alleluia,
From earth to heaven.

SOUL:

It is a member of that family
Of wondrous beings, who, ere the worlds
were made,
Millions of ages back, have stood around

The throne of God.
I will address Him. Mighty one, my Lord,
My Guardian Spirit, all hail!

ANGEL:

All hail, my child!
My child and brother, hail! what wouldest thou?

SOUL:

I would have nothing but to speak with thee
 For speaking's sake. I wish to hold with thee

Conscious communion; though I fain would know
 A maze of things, were it but meet to ask,
 And not a curiousness.

ANGEL:

You cannot now
 Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.

SOUL:

Then I will speak. I ever had believed
 That on the moment when the struggling soul
 Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell
 Under the awful Presence of its God,

There to be judged and sent to its own place.
 What lets me now from going to my Lord?

ANGEL:

Thou art not let; but with extremest speed
 Art hurrying to the Just and Holy Judge.

SOUL:

Dear Angel, say,
 Why have I now no fear at meeting Him?

Along my earthly life, the thought of death
 And judgment was to me most terrible.

ANGEL:

It is because
 Then thou didst fear, that now thou dost not fear.
 Thou hast forestalled the agony, and so
 For thee the bitterness of death is past.
 Also, because already in thy soul
 The judgment is begun.

A presage falls upon thee, as a ray
 Straight from the Judge, expressive of thy lot.
 That calm and joy uprising in thy soul
 Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,
 And heaven begun.

SOUL:

Now that the hour is come, My fear is fled;
 And at this balance of my destiny,
 Now close upon me, I can forward look
 With a serenest joy.

But hark! upon my sense
 Comes a fierce hubbub, which would make me fear,
 Could I be frightened.

ANGEL:

We are now arrived
 Close on the judgment court; that sullen
 howl
 Is from the demons who assemble there.

Hungry and wild, to claim their property,
 And gather souls for hell.
 Hist to their cry.

SOUL:

How sour and how uncouth a dissonance!

DEMONS:

Low-born clods
 Of brute earth,
 They aspire
 To become gods,
 By a new birth,
 And an extra grace,
 And a score of merits.
 As if aught
 Could stand in place
 Of the high thought,

Dispossessed,
 Aside thrust,
 Chucked down,
 By the sheer might
 Of a despot's will,
 Of a tyrant's frown.
 Who after expelling Their hosts, gave,
 Triumphant still,

And the glance of fire
 Of the great spirits,
 The powers blest,
 The lords by right,
 The primal owners,
 Of the proud dwelling
 And realm of light,—

And still unjust,
 Each forfeit crown
 To psalm-droners,
 And canting groaners,
 To every slave
 And pious cheat,
 And crawling knave,
 Who licked the dust
 Under his feet.

ANGEL:

'Tis the restless panting of their being;
 Like beasts of prey, who, caged within
 their bars,

In a deep hideous purring have their life,
 And an incessant pacing to and fro.

DEMONS:

The mind bold
 And independent,
 The purpose free,
 So we are told,
 Must not think
 To have the ascendant.
 What's a saint?

Virtue and vice,
 A knave's pretence,
 'Tis all the same;
 Ha! ha!
 Dread of hell-fire,
 Of the venomous flame,
 A coward's plea.
 Give him his price,
 Saint though he be,

One whose breath
 Doth the air taint
 Before his death;
 Ha! ha!

A bundle of bones,
 Which fools adore,
 When life is o'er,
 Ha! ha!
 From shrewd good sense
 He'll slave for hire;
 And does but aspire
 To the heaven above
 With sordid aim,
 And not for love.
 Ha! ha!
 (Dispossessed,
 Aside thrust...)

SOUL:

I see not those false spirits; shall I see
 My dearest Master, when I reach His throne?

ANGEL:

Yes,—for one moment thou shalt see thy
 Lord.

One moment; but thou knowest not, my
 child,

What thou dost ask: that sight of the Most
 Fair

Will gladden thee, but it will pierce thee
 too.

SOUL:

Thou speakest darkly, Angel; and an awe
 Falls on me, and a fear lest I be rash.

ANGEL:

There was a mortal, who is now above
 In the mid glory: he, when near to die,
 Was given communion with the
 Crucified,—
 Such, that the Master's very wounds were
 stamped

Upon his flesh; and, from the agony
 Which thrilled through body and soul in
 that embrace,
 Learn that the flame of the Everlasting
 Love
 Doth burn ere it transform.

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS:

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:

In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

ANGEL:

Hark to those sounds!
They come of tender beings angelical
Least and most childlike of the sons of God.

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS:

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!
To us His elder race He gave
To battle and to win,
Without the chastisement of pain,
Without the soil of sin.
The younger son He willed to be
A marvel in his birth:

Spirit and flesh his parents were;
His home was heaven and earth.
The Eternal blessed His child, and armed,
And sent him hence afar,
To serve as champion in the field
Of elemental war.
To be His Viceroy in the world
Of matter, and of sense;
Upon the frontier, towards the foe,
A resolute defence.

ANGEL:

We now have passed the gate, and are within the House of Judgment.

SOUL:

The sound is like the rushing of the wind —
The summer wind among the lofty pines.

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS:

Glory to Him, who evermore
By truth and justice reigns;

Who tears the soul from out its case,
And burns away its stains!

ANGEL:

They sing of thy approaching agony,
Which thou so eagerly didst question of.

SOUL:

My soul is in my hand: I have no fear,—
But hark! a grand mysterious harmony:

It floods me, like the deep and solemn
sound
Of many waters.

ANGEL:

And now the threshold, as we traverse it,
Utters aloud its glad responsive chant.

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS:

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!
O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.
O wisest love that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all divine. O generous love!
that He who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo;
And in the garden secretly,
And on the cross on high,
Should teach His brethren and inspire
To suffer and to die.

ANGEL:

Thy judgment now is near, for we are come
Into the veiled presence of our God.

SOUL:

I hear the voices that I left on earth.

ANGEL:

It is the voice of friends around thy bed,
Who say the "Subvenite;" with the priest.
Hither the echoes come; before the
Throne
Stands the great Angel of the Agony,

The same who strengthened Him, what
time He knelt
Lone in the garden shade, bedewed with
blood.
That Angel best can plead with Him for all
Tormented souls, the dying and the dead.

ANGEL OF THE AGONY:

Jesu! by that shuddering dread
which fell on Thee;
Jesu! by that cold dismay
which sickened Thee;
Jesu! by that pang of heart
which thrilled in Thee;
Jesu! by that mount of sins
which crippled Thee;
Jesu! by that sense of guilt
which stifled Thee;
Jesu! by that innocence
which girdled Thee;

Jesu! by that sanctity
which reigned in Thee;
Jesu! by that Godhead
which was one with Thee;
Jesu! spare these souls
which are so dear to Thee,
Who in prison, calm and patient, wait for
Thee;
Hasten, Lord, their hour, and bid them
come to Thee,
To that glorious Home, where they shall
ever gaze on Thee.

SOUL:

I go before my Judge.

ASSISTANTS:

Be merciful, be gracious;
Lord, deliver him; Spare him, Lord.

ANGEL:

Praise to His name!
O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe,
Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.
Alleluia! Praise to His name!

SOUL:

Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night-watches
keep,
Told out for me.
There, motionless and happy in my pain,
Lone, not forlorn,—
There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,
Until the morn.
There will I sing, and soothe my stricken
breast,
Which ne'er can cease

To throb, and pine, and languish, till
possest
Of its Sole Peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and
Love:—
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting
day.
Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be.

SOULS IN PURGATORY:

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge: in every generation;

Before the hills were born, and the world was: from age to age thou art God.

Bring us not, Lord, very low: for Thou hast said

Come back again, ye sons of Adam.

Come back, O Lord! how long: and be entreated for Thy servants.

ANGEL:

Softly and gently, dearly-ransomed soul,
In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And, o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold thee.

And carefully I dip thee in the lake,

And thou, without a sob or a resistance,

Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,

Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim distance.

Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou liest;
And masses on the earth and prayers in heaven,

Shall aid thee at the Throne of the most Highest.

Farewell, but not forever! Brother dear,

Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;

Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,

And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.

Farewell, Farewell.

SOULS IN PURGATORY:

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge etc. Amen.

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS:

Praise to the Holiest etc. Amen.

The notes in this programme include material supplied through the Programme Note Bank of Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies. The author, Ivor Keys, is acknowledged with thanks.

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Catherine Denley

Catherine Denley has devoted most of her long and successful career to the oratorio repertoire. She studied at Trinity College of Music, and after a brief time with the BBC Singers, embarked on a solo career which has taken her all over the world. She has worked with all of the major British orchestras.

Notable highlights have included the premiere of *Europera* by John Cage in London, Paris and Berlin; Britten's *Spring Symphony* with Kent Nagano; Handel's *Messiah* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the Tanglewood Festival; Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with Sir John Eliot Gardiner in Japan; Mahler's *Resurrection*

Symphony in Odessa and Kiev and his *Symphony of a Thousand* for TV in Dublin, and Mozart's *Requiem* in the Salzburg Mozartwoche and at the BBC Proms.

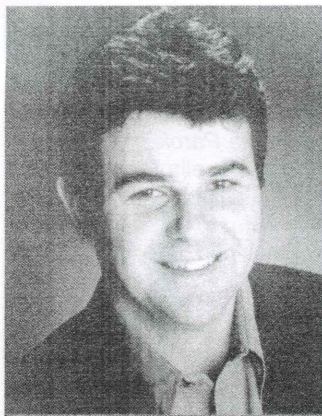
More recently she has sung Schumann's *Scenes from Faust* with Sir John Eliot Gardiner in New York and the Proms; Britten's *Spring Symphony* for Dutch Radio; Handel's *Hercules* and *La Resurrezione* with Marc Minkowski in Paris and Lyon; concert tours with Ton Koopman; and Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and Vivaldi *Solo Cantatas* with the Israel Camerata. On stage, she has taken part in the Halle Opernhaus productions of *Semele* and *Ezio* by Handel, and many other such roles, primarily from the Baroque repertoire. She has recently sung Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* in Manchester Cathedral, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* in the Gewandhaus, Leipzig, Mahler's *2nd Symphony* in Boston USA and Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* in King's College, Cambridge.

Catherine Denley is also renowned as a teacher—this summer she has given a master-class in Norway and Croatia.

Catherine Denley has over 50 recordings to her credit. She has recorded a wide ranging repertoire from Monteverdi to Copland and Messiaen, with conductors such as Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Roger Norrington, Sir Neville Mariner, Robert King, Trevor Pinnock, Sir Richard Hickox and Harry Christophers. Recent additions include Haydn's *Paukenmesse*; the *Requiem* by Michael Haydn; Schubert Songs with the Songmaker's Almanac; three highly acclaimed volumes of Sacred Music by Vivaldi, and Mendelssohn's version of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, recorded in the Gewandhaus, Leipzig.

Bouquets 1—from the Russian concert

I really was taken aback by the Polovstian Dances – I hadn't realized what a full-blooded piece it was until this evening, & thoroughly enjoyed it. As for Alexander Nevsky – even more so! How many hours does it take you to unwind after an evening like that? [Ed: about 48!]



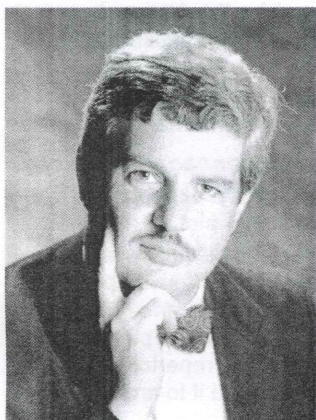
Eugene Ginty

Eugene Ginty started singing whilst reading Music at Durham University and to date has performed more than fifty operatic roles. He made his American debut as Tamino in *The Magic Flute* in Boston in 1995, and has also performed in Japan, China, Hong Kong, India, Egypt, Italy, France and Switzerland. Closer to home he has performed many times for Opera Theatre Company in Dublin, in roles such as Sandy/Officer 1 in *The Lighthouse* (1998, 2000), Filch in *The Beggar's Opera* (2000), Tamino in *The Little Magic Flute* (2001), Lukas in *The Kiss* (2002) and Mayor in *Hamelin* (2003). In the UK he has worked for

English National Opera, English Touring Opera, Opera North, Opera Holland Park, Almeida Opera, Opera Restored and Scottish Opera. Future productions include a revival of *Mac-Beth* for PanPan Theatre in the Netherlands, Germany and Ireland, *Vera of Las Vegas* for Opera Theatre Company, and *Madama Butterfly* in England.

Eugene is also in demand in oratorio, and has sung at most of the major concert halls in Ireland and the UK. He recently performed Beethoven *Symphony no.9* at the Royal Albert Hall. Future engagements include Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* in Cambridge, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* in Dublin, and Verdi's *Requiem*.

Eugene's television performances are numerous and include Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers* from the 1997 Proms, and various appearances on *Highway* and *Songs of Praise*. He has broadcast on Lyric FM, BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio 4, and is often to be heard on BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*.



Michael Bundy

Michael Bundy was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained an honours degree in music, and at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, studying on the post-graduate singing and opera courses. Further study was undertaken at the Britten-Pears school in Aldeburgh, with Hugues Cuenod, and subsequently with the late Erich Vietheer.

Since turning professional he has performed widely in very diverse genres, ranging from the early Baroque period to musicals, from grand opera to contemporary music. He has appeared as soloist with groups as varied as The Sixteen, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the

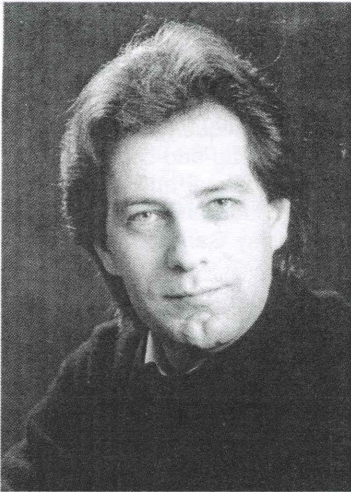
Futurum Ensemble of Sweden. With an operatic repertoire in excess of forty roles he has travelled extensively, appearing twice at the opera house in Mauritius, as *Escamillo* and *Germont Père*, and he has been under contract to English National Opera, Kent Opera and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. More recently he sang the roles of *Maestro* (in Salieri's *Prima la Musica, Poi le Parole*) and *Buff* (in Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor*) - alongside the renowned Fenella Fielding - in a production which opened the new opera house in Spitalfields Market, East London. He recently appeared with Theater Basel in *Actus Tragicus* - a new staging of some of Bach's church cantatas by the renowned director Herbert Wernicke.

In the field of oratorio he has a wide and varied repertoire, and has sung in most of the cathedrals and major concert halls in this country, He recently broadcast for BBC Radio 3 (as part of their *Choir Works* series) the oratorio *Poèmes Fransiscains* by the organist-composer Bonnal (one-time organist of Sainte Clotilde), a recording which will shortly be issued as a commercial CD. Future engagements include performances of Mahler's *Symphony of a Thousand* in The Usher Hall, Edinburgh. Work with Trevor Pinnock and The English Concert recently has included performances of the arias from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in concerts around Europe, also Istanbul and Japan. In June of last year he sang Handel's *Israel in Egypt* for Sir John Eliot Gardiner with the Monteverdi Choir and The English Baroque Soloists (repeated as a BBC Promenade Concert last summer) and toured Spain with this same conductor in a programme of Bach Cantata's and Lutheran Masses: This year he has appeared as soloist in Haydn's *Nelson Mass* (tour of the West Coast of America) and is currently touring Europe in Bach's *Messe in H moll*, having recently sung in that group's 40th birthday performance of the Monteverdi *Vespers* in St. Mark's Venice. Later this year he will be touring the Far East in programmes of English Restoration music.

He maintains a strong interest in contemporary music, and was involved in the Contemporary Music Network tour of Jonathan Harvey's opera-oratorio *Passion and Resurrection*. He premièred the chamber opera *Flowers*, by the composer John Hardy, which was widely and favourably reviewed by the National press, and recently undertook a tour of *Helen of Braemore*, by the Scottish composer Eddie McGuire. He is shortly to give the première of Celia Macdowell's *Stabat Mater*. On a lighter note, he frequently broadcasts for BBC Radio 2.

Bouquets 2—from the Russian concert

The Guildford Philharmonic's concert entitled 'A Russian Spectacular' was well named. We were indeed treated to a most spectacular evening from all points of view. Jeremy Backhouse, the choir's dynamic musical director since 1995, is to be congratulated for his continuous bold, imaginative programme planning. In less than a year the choir have promoted the most stimulating repertoire, including the colossal 8th Symphony of Mahler, and performed it to an amazingly high standard.....



Jeremy Backhouse

Jeremy Backhouse began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral where he was Head Chorister, and later studied music at Liverpool University. He spent five years as Music Editor at the Royal National Institute for the Blind, where he was responsible for the transcription of print music into Braille. In 1986 he joined EMI Records as a Literary Editor and since April 1990 he has combined his work as a Consultant Editor for EMI Classics with his career as a freelance conductor and record producer.

Jeremy is also the conductor of the Vasari Singers, widely acknowledged as one of the finest chamber choirs in the country. Since

winning the prestigious Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition in 1988, they have performed regularly on the South Bank and at St John's, Smith Square in London, as well as in the cathedrals of Canterbury, Chichester, Winchester, Hereford, Ely and Peterborough. In February 2002 the Vasari Singers performed the UK Premiere of Dupré's oratorio *La France au Calvaire*, followed by a World Premiere CD recording, on the Guild label. As a new departure, the Vasari Singers' recent Guild label CD, *Our love is here to stay*, is a collection of close harmony, blues and jazz numbers, including several arrangements by Ward Swingle, their Patron. Their CD of Howells' *Requiem* and Frank Martin's *Mass For Double Choir* has been released by Signum Records in January, and a CD of Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, in a piano duet version with Jeremy Filsell, will be released later this year on the Guild label.

In January 1995, Jeremy was appointed Chorus Master of the Guildford Philharmonic Choir, and now conducts the majority of the choir's concerts. In March 1999, Jeremy gave a "masterly" performance of Bruckner's *Mass in E minor* and Mahler's *Symphony No.2* in Guildford Cathedral; last season he significantly extended his Mahler repertoire with a performance of *Symphony No. 8*, the monumental '*Symphony of a Thousand*'.

Jeremy has worked with a number of the leading choirs in the country, including the Philharmonia Chorus (preparing for Sir Colin Davis), the London Choral Society (for Ronald Corp) and the Brighton Festival Chorus (for Carl Davies). In September 1998, Jeremy became the Music Director of the Wooburn Singers, only the third conductor in the distinguished history of the choir, following Sir Richard Hickox (who founded the choir in 1967) and most recently, Stephen Jackson.

The Forest Philharmonic Orchestra

The Forest Philharmonic Orchestra was founded in the London Borough of Waltham Forest in 1962 and has since become this country's leading community orchestra. Rivaling the highest professional standards, it uniquely combines the talents of London's best amateur musicians with those of its up-and-coming music students. The orchestra has been joined by many international artists, such as pianists John Lill and Ronan O'Hora, violinists Gyorgy Pauk and Tasmin Little, cellists Robert Cohen and Natalie Clein, and singers Lesley Garrett, Della Jones and Patricia MacMahon.

The Forest Philharmonic Orchestra is also regularly invited to perform around the country, acting as an ambassador for the Borough of Waltham Forest and broadening the orchestra's repertoire of orchestral and choral works.

Guildford Philharmonic Choir warmly welcomes the orchestra back for the first concert of this season. Since our first joint and memorable concert of Mahler's *Symphony No 2 – 'Resurrection'* in May 1999, subsequent programmes comprised Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and a tremendous performance of Mahler's *Symphony No 8* in May 2003. In March of this year, the orchestra provided the challenging and lively accompaniment for the choir's concert of American music, and made a second visit in May for the *'Russian Spectacular'*.

ANNA ARTHUR & ASSOCIATES

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Guildford Philharmonic Choir

The Guildford Philharmonic Choir was founded in 1947 by the Borough of Guildford to perform major works from the choral repertoire with the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra. Since this time, the Choir has grown both in stature and reputation and can now rightly claim its place as one of the foremost Chorus in the country. The Choir grew to prominence under the batons of such eminent British musicians as Sir Charles Groves, Vernon Handley and Sir David Willcocks. Sir David remains in close contact with the Choir as its current President, and the Choir is now independent from the Borough of Guildford.

In March 1999 the Choir gave a widely acclaimed performance of two works which must surely rank among the greatest choral works of all time, Mahler's *Symphony No.2 – 'Resurrection'* and Bruckner's *Mass in E minor*. The Choir enjoyed a challenging and exciting concert programme for the 2000/01 season, which included Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony*.

The 2001/02 season included a performance of Handel's *Messiah*, a charity concert for the Guildford Prostate cancer project (*Mozart's Vesperae Solennes de Confessore* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass*) and a patriotic and thrilling concert to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The choir also performed with the tenor Russell Watson in two concerts: at the Royal Albert Hall, London, and at Brighton. The 2002/03 season started with a performance of Dvořák's rarely heard and beautiful *Requiem* and was followed by a powerful performance of Verdi's *Requiem*, having combined forces with Wokingham Choral Society for the annual Guildford Borough concert. Undoubtedly, the climax of the season was Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, where the choir combined forces with Lewisham Choral Society, the South West Essex Choir and the Grey Coat Hospital Girls Choir.

Last season opened with an evening of Baroque music, followed by the last Christmas Carol concert to be held in Guildford Civic. In February the choir sang Haydn's *Te Deum* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, with the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, for the annual Guildford Borough concert. This was followed in March by a concert of American music, featuring works by Barber, Bernstein, Copland, Stravinsky and others. The season concluded with highly acclaimed performances of Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* and Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* (both in Russian), and Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto no 3*, performed by the choir's outstanding accompanist, Jeremy Filsell.

The Choir is always searching for new members to maintain its high standard and auditions are held throughout the year. For further details about joining the Choir or for information about any of our future concerts, please contact Noreen Ayton, tel: 01932 221918. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings throughout term time in central Guildford and prospective members are most welcome to attend rehearsals on an informal basis before committing to an audition.

The Choir's website can be found at www.guildfordphilharmonicchoir.org.uk

Guildford Philharmonic Choir

FIRST SOPRANOS

Joanna Andrews *
Noreen Ayton
Helen Beevers
Miranda Champion
Elaine Chapman
Sara Dann
Gemma Davis
Rachel Edmondson *
Calli Hayes
Mo Kfour
Hilary Minor
Susan Norton *
Robin Onslow
Rachel Owen
Margaret Parry *
Margaret Perkins*
Gillian Rix
Judy Smith
Carol Terry
Nikki Vale

SECOND SOPRANOS

Jacqueline Alderton
Gemma Allred
Anna Arthur
Josephine Field
Mandy Freeman*
Angela Hall*
Angela Hand
Jane Kenney *
Judith Lewy
Lois McCabe
Alison Newbery
Rosalind Plowright
Susannah Priede
Alison Rawlinson
Marjory Rollo
Ann Sheppard
Maggie Smith
Kathy Stickland
Rachel Wheldon *
Christine Wilks

FIRST ALTOS

Marion Adderley
Jane Brooks
Celia Embleton
Ingrid Hardiman *
Susan Hinton *
Valerie Leggatt
Kay McManus
Christine Medlow *
Rosalind Milton
Mary Moon
Penny Muray
Jacqueline Norman
Penny Overton
Lesley Scordellis
Catherine Shacklady
Maureen Shortland
Jane Sweaney
Hillary Trigg *
Pamela Woodroffe

SECOND ALTOS

Valerie Adam
Marion Aruckle
Sally Bailey
Evelyn Beastall
Iris Bennett
Mary Clayton
Andrea Dombrowe
Carolyn Edis
Valerie Garrow
Barbara Hilder
Carol Hobbs
Sheila Hodson
Yvonne Hungerford
Brenda Moore
Jean Munro
Kate New
Prue Smith *
Alex Stevens
Rosey Storey

FIRST TENORS

Bob Cowell *
Tim Hardyment
Ian Landsborough
Nick Manning *
Chris Robinson *
John Trigg *

SECOND TENORS

Bob Bromham *
Tony Cousins
Stephen Linton

FIRST BASSES

Stephen Arthur
John Britten *
Michael Dudley*
Terence Ellis
Geoffrey Forster
Vaidotas Gerikas
Michael Golden
Keith Hester
Laurie James *
Chris Newbery
David Ross *
Ian Savill
Philip Stanford
Kieron Walsh

SECOND BASSES

Dan Adderley
Peter Andrews
Roger Barrett
Norman Carpenter *
James Garrow *
Nick Gough *
Michael Jeffery
Stephen Jepson
Maxwell New *
John Parry *
Roger Penny
Nigel Pollock
Michael Taylor

* - semichorus

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Jeremy Backhouse Chorus Director

Jeremy Filsell Accompanist

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John Trigg Chairman

Bob Cowell Hon. Treasurer

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Noreen Ayton Membership Secretary Tel. 01932 221918

Stephen Jepson Projects, Staging overview

Jackie Alderton Fundraising,
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Michael Taylor Website coordinator

Rachel Edmondson

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