

Durufé Requiem

Mezzo soprano:
Rebecca Leggett

Baritone:
Thomas Nießer

Organ:
George Castle

Cello:
Jonathan Hennessey-Brown

Conductor:
Jeremy Backhouse

Friday
1 March 2024
at 7.30 pm

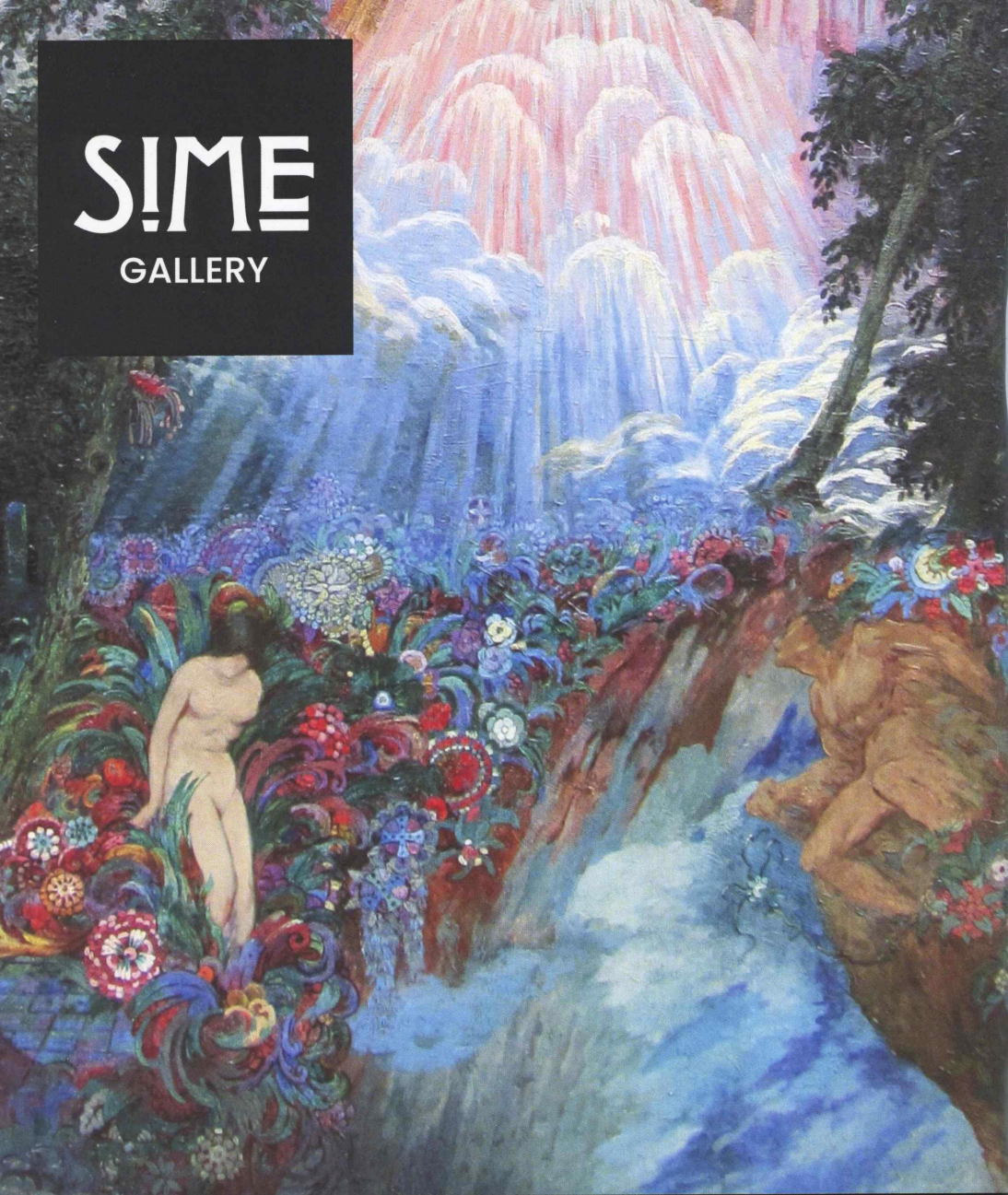
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Requiem
Maurice Duruflé

Jonathan Dove

Bless the Lord, O my soul

**Seek Him that Maketh
the Seven Stars**

Louis Vierne

**Carillon de Westminster
(Organ Solo)**

Arvo Pärt

The Beatitudes

Rihards Dubra

O Crux Ave

Ēriks Ešenvalds

Trinity Te Deum

**Charles-Marie Widor
(arr. David Willcocks)**

Sing!

Rebecca Leggett

Mezzo-Soprano

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Organ

Vivace Chorus

Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

Concert Programme

Bless the Lord, O my soul

Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

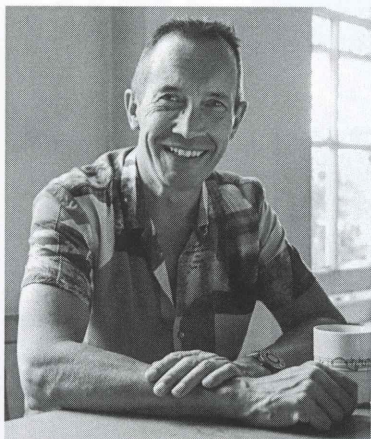


Photo © Marshall Light Studio

Jonathan Dove's piece was written for the Eton College Old Choristers' Association to celebrate more than five hundred years of "joyful praise of Almighty God", and its text, the first four verses of Psalm 104, exploits the gift for drama that has given international success to his stage works, including the community opera *The Monster in the Maze* and the Glyndebourne commission *Flight*.

The Psalm imagines God as a lord of the elements, arraying himself in light and building a sky-palace whose walls are the tent of stars and whose foundations are laid on the waters – either the sea, or the eternal cataracts above that replenish the earth. He rides on the clouds as a chariot, like a conquering king, and his servants are the air and the fire.

Dove animates the text with sensational energy, skilfully controlling pace and volume so that the description of the "flaming fire" and the shattering chord at the end have a magnificent cumulative effect. It begins with exhilarating flourishes on the organ ("brilliant" is Dove's instruction in the score) and *ahs* of wonder from the choir above an emphatic accompaniment indicating God's ebullient power. Broad rising phrases then bless the Lord while the organ seems to mark time, urgently waiting for its next surge of activity.

The wonders of God's garment of light and his universe-wide dwelling-place are conveyed in staggered choral entries and

mysterious, radiant harmonies, then excitement rises in a series of triplets until more brilliant flourishes propel the splendid finale as God strides along on the wings of the wind and launches his ministers of flame.

*Ah, Bless the Lord, O my soul,
Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment,
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain,
Who layest the beams of his chambers in the waters,
Who maketh the clouds his chariot,
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind,
Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire!*



Carillon de Westminster
(Organ solo)

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Vierne was a man of heroic dedication and achievement. Visually impaired from birth, he was taught by César Franck at the *Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles* in Paris and by Charles-Marie Widor at the Conservatoire, becoming a dedicated teacher and Widor's assistant at the great Church of Saint-Sulpice. During his thirty-seven year tenure at Notre Dame de Paris he began the long and difficult task of securing funding for, and carrying through, the restoration of the organ, as well as travelling widely to give recitals. He died at the console in Notre Dame having almost completed his 1750th recital there, with his friend and colleague Maurice Duruflé at his side.



During his travels Vierne gave a recital on the Grand Organ at Westminster Cathedral, a mighty Willis instrument still in development in the biggest Roman Catholic church in Britain.

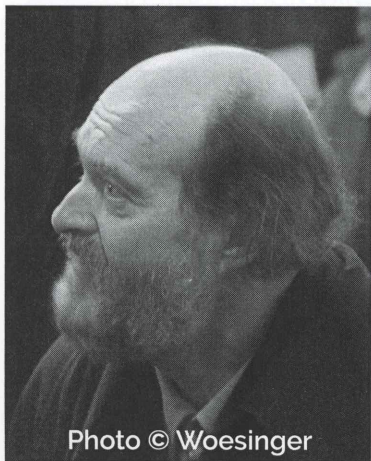
An anecdote says that the organ-builder, Henry Willis III, hummed the "changes" of the quarter-bells in the parliamentary clock tower, with a slight mistake (easily made, as the sequences are more complex than they seem despite their familiarity) – and Vierne improvised on them, later publishing the work as part of a set of *pièces de fantaisie*.

It has a characteristically French elegance and wit, with plenty of opportunity for virtuosic display and a climax that builds to an extended outpouring of unrestrained and confident grandeur.



The Beatitudes

Arvo Pärt (b. 1935)



This stunningly beautiful setting of the opening verses of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount is one of the first works that the great Estonian composer created to a text in English. Written in 1990, the year after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and revised in 1991, the year of Estonia's formal declaration of independence from the collapsing Soviet Union, it emerges in all its clarity,

directness and emotional integrity from years of social and artistic repression. Pärt grew up from the age of four under Soviet control, met hostility to his interest in "foreign" musical influences, experienced a religious conversion from

Lutheranism to Orthodox Christianity, and undertook a long period of profound study of Gregorian chant and mediæval and Early Modern polyphony as part of major changes in his musical language. From this multiplicity of explorations and influences emerged a masterpiece of devotional music.

The music scholar and violinist Timothy Judd says of this work that "mirroring the text, the music takes on the quality of a meditative recitation", focusing the mind on the moral and spiritual meaning of Jesus's "blessings" as the verses slowly rise in pitch and volume in a series of spellbinding chromatic shifts.

Between the verses, deep, subdued pedal notes on the organ gravely mark out the progress from a harmonic "centre" on F minor to a glorious C# minor on the final "Amen". Biblical commentators have shown that the Beatitudes signify more than a promise of reward for virtuous behaviour: they are an assurance that "blessedness" is an achieved state for those who open their hearts to God and to mankind, and Pärt's piece can be seen as enacting the contemplation of and the progress towards this state.

As the voices end their transformative journey the organ bursts in dramatically with "a flurry of broken quintuplet chords" (Meurig Brown in a sleeve-note for the *Hyperion* recording) that "rapidly hurls the music back down ...", so that it ends in the tonality of F minor in which it began.

One commentator points out that this gives the music the shape of an arch – maybe the great arc of spiritual authority on which Pärt believes that Jesus's authority is built, or maybe an image of the need to rise, with focus and discipline, again and again into the transcendent world through the practice of meditation. "Time has a deep meaning," he said, "but it is temporary, like our lives. Only eternity is timeless."

*Blessed are the poor in spirit:
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are they that mourn:
For they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek:
For they shall inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:
For they shall be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful:
For they shall obtain mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart:
For they shall see God.*

*Blessed are the peace makers:
For they shall be called the children of God.*

*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake:
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you,
And persecute you,*

And shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

*Rejoice, and be exceeding glad:
For great is your reward in heaven:*

For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Amen

O Crux Ave

Rihards Dubra (b. 1964)

Like Arvo Pärt, Rihards Dubra grew up in a Baltic state – in his case Latvia – under the control of the Soviet Union, and therefore in a culture that proscribed the open expression of religious faith, although Dubra was brought up privately as a Roman Catholic by his grandparents. Commenting on the composer's music (which is exclusively sacred) Rupert Gough links this experience of a deeply personal faith, combined with a need to avoid confrontation, to Dubra's fundamental enterprise: to find a way of taking his listeners on an intimate and transformative spiritual journey.

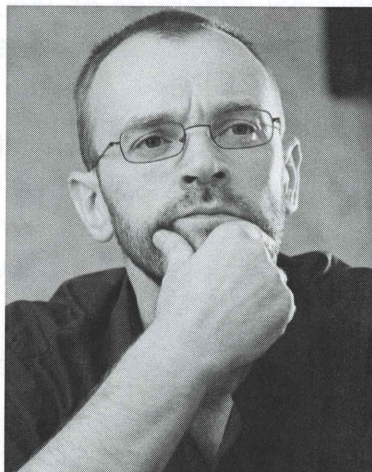


Photo © Latvian Music Information Centre

Every aspect of his anthem *O Crux Ave* shows the imprint of this: the choice of the *a capella* (unaccompanied) genre; its brevity (just over two minutes long) and the triple *piano* dynamic (*ppp*, *pianississimo*); the emotional containment suggested by its moderate, steady pulse and lucid homophonic harmonies; even the compression of the text, with its many repetitions of short phrases.

For Dubra these are a source of strength. He said that he did not want to illustrate or expound a devotional text, but to work on the emotions of his listeners at an even deeper level, and the reserved nature of his musical language here gives the work an eloquent simplicity that appeals directly to the heart.

This style is touchingly appropriate for the ancient Latin text. It belongs to the tradition of "affective piety", in which a

technique of religious meditation is powered by the intensely emotional, but also profoundly inward, contemplation of the physical sufferings of Jesus or the Christian saints, as an aid to repentance and spiritual renewal.

The phrase *hoc passionis tempore*, "in this time of suffering" or "... of the Passion", shows that the text was originally written to be sung at Passiontide, the days leading up to Good Friday, and settings of the hymn were performed in large-scale ceremonies venerating supposed relics of the True Cross of Christ.

For Dubra and his listeners, however, his version remains an intimate piece, tender and modest, and with a curious circularity in its structure: the final bars seem to lead gently back to the beginning, as if the music exists in an eternal dimension of love and reverence.

*O Crux ave, spes unica,
hoc passionis tempore.*

Hail, O cross, our only hope
in this time of suffering.

*Auge piis justitiam
reisque dona veniam.*

Grant justice to the faithful
and mercy to those awaiting
judgment.

*O Crux ave, spes unica,
hoc passionis tempore.*

Hail, O cross, our only hope
in this time of suffering.

Ešenvalds, like Dubra, was born and educated in Latvia, but he was still in his teens when Soviet power came to an end in 1991. By October 2012 he was in the middle of his tenure as Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts at Trinity College, Cambridge, at the heart of the academic and musical life of the great university.

On hearing his setting of the *Te Deum*, written in celebration of the installation of Sir Gregory Winter as Master, Ešenvalds's fellow-



Photo © Office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Latvia

composer Gabriel Jackson described it as "a reimagining in Ešenvalds's terms of the Anglican tradition of ceremonial music for a grand occasion", and the robust confidence of the piece bears this out, effortlessly incorporating a section marked *alla canzone popolare scozzese* - "in the manner of a Scottish folksong" - and ending not with the penitential supplication of the full *Te Deum* text (*let me never be confounded*) but with three blasts of *Holy, Holy, Holy!*

A careful and adaptive musical craftsman, Ešenvalds worked closely with the Trinity choir and organ scholars to exploit the warm, crisp acoustic of the College chapel, which had just been analysed and enhanced (principally for speech) with a sophisticated sound reinforcement system. Magnificent trumpet flourishes, originally scored for a brass ensemble, introduce rousing shouts of praise, subsiding to gentleness on the words *Lord God of Sabaoth* (rather unexpectedly, as this

means "Lord God of armies"), then rising in waves of power before descending again as the text moves on to the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Ešenvalds has a compelling control of dynamic and musical texture, constantly varying the emotional impact of the piece. The "folksong" passage is introduced by a mysterious sequence on the organ, originally ornamented by a line for harp, and dances along with a luminous, soaring delicacy as the upper voices relate Jesus's Incarnation and Resurrection, underpinned by the wordless harmonies that flow beneath. A mesmerising, tranquil vision of Heaven seems about to fade into the distance, but the organ suddenly swells into power, and the work ends in shouts of triumph.

We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting.

To Thee all Angels cry aloud:

the Heavens and all the powers therein.

To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy; Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee.

The noble army of Martyrs praise Thee.

The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee;

The Father of an infinite Majesty;

Thine honourable, true, and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.

*Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man,
Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,
Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.
We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.
We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants
Whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.
Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.
Holy, Holy, Holy.*



**Seek Him that Maketh
the Seven Stars**

Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

In *Bless the Lord, O my soul* Dove dramatizes God as a mystically elemental power, but in *Seek Him that Maketh the Seven Stars* he is a loving Lord of the seasons who guides and sustains the Pleiades and Orion, the constellations whose yearly rising and setting defined the most important points in the life-cycle of the ancient world – the times to sow and harvest, and to venture under sail onto the turbulent waters of the Mediterranean.

He uses shimmering, twinkling figures (marked *bright, star-like*) high up in the organ accompaniment, set against radiantly throbbing phrases in the voice to create a beautifully hypnotic image of the starry sky, a fascinating union of

delicacy and strength. He said in a note that he thought this would have a special meaning for visual artists, and the piece was commissioned for the Royal Academy of Arts's annual Service for Artists.

The voices then seem to soar, swoop and hover, gliding through the shining depths of sky in search of the God of harmony and repose: in Dove's words, "the refrain *Seek him* starts in devotional longing but is eventually released in a joyful dance, finally coming to rest in serenity".

Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion.

Seek him that turneth the shadow of death into the morning.

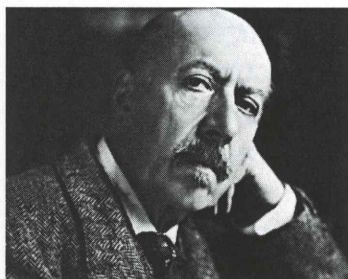
Alleluia, yea, the darkness shineth as the day,

The night is light about me. Amen



Sing!

Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)



Charles-Marie Widor

Widor's *Toccata* originated as the fifth and final movement of his fifth organ symphony (composed for organ alone), and its energetic brilliance and virtuosic demands on the player have made it one of the best known "display" pieces for the instrument.

After it was used as a recessional at the wedding of Princess Margaret in 1960 it became enormously popular, so that when Sir David Willcocks added choral parts to the score under the title *Sing!* he was building on a long-established affection for a

popular classic. The good-humoured, high-spirited nature of the enterprise comes through in Willcocks's dedication of the piece to the organist at the first performance: "...for Jane Watts, who triumphed against 4000 voices at the Royal Albert Hall, London, England on Sunday 11 July 1999".

Widor's original score is played complete, while the voices embellish it by doubling melodies or harmonies. Willcocks wrote his own text, a free adaptation of familiar motifs from the Book of Psalms, but given a contemporary twist – God is the fount of love; friend, protector, guide.

The exhilarating result is a genial tribute from a fine English conductor, composer, teacher, academic administrator and popularizer of music (and a patron of Vivace Chorus until his death in 2015) to a celebrated work that is unmistakably French in spirit – exuberant, sophisticated, dynamic and elegant, and all within a span of six minutes.

Sing we praise to God, who reigns above;

God, the fount of love;

Friend, protector, guide; ever by our side;

Let us all our voices raise and sing to God a joyous hymn of praise.

Sing praise, hallelujah, sing praise.

Sing we praise to God, who reigns above;

Sing we praise to God, the fount of love;

Sing we with joy,

O sing, hallelujah, sing with joy, O sing;

Sing we praise to God, who reigns above;

*God, the fount of love;
Friend, protector, guide; ever by our side;
Let us all our voices raise and sing to God a joyous hymn of praise.
Sing praise, hallelujah!*

Programme notes © Jon Long 2024

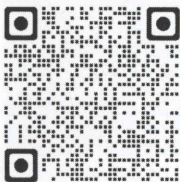
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Interval
(20 minutes)

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"That night in the dormitory I sobbed on my bed", wrote Duruflé, remembering how, at the age of ten, he had been taken by his father to the cathedral choir school in Rouen and left there, without warning, to be educated in the rigorous musical traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet years later he saw this desolating event as the beginning of a glorious new phase in his life: the

sympathetic Master of Choristers cheered the lonely boy by describing how he would now dedicate himself to music, take part in the sumptuous ceremonies of the cathedral, and one day learn to play the organ – the foundations on which Duruflé's magnificent achievement was to be built. "A great page opened before me", the composer recalled, in a moment of rhetorical expansiveness and enthusiasm.

The metaphor that he used is interesting. It suggests the grand illuminated Mass-books of the Middle Ages, in which the firm, dark plainchant notation, rising and falling in the centre of the page to represent the austere but flexible line of the chant, is often surrounded by beautiful decorative imagery from the natural world: delicate flowers, fruits and leaves,



stars and planets, lively and

engaging creatures of the wild, and the occasional elegant or grotesque human figure, all lovingly painted and richly gilded.

A serious devotional point is being made in these complex works of art: the loveliness of God's creation is complementary to the comeliness of the liturgical text, each "world" reflecting and echoing the other on the page, and embodying the same search for order and beauty as motivated the craftsmen who constructed the manuscript and the dedicated musicians who would bring it to life in God's service.

We could draw on this artistic interaction to interpret the relationship between the different elements that are integrated in Duruflé's great *Requiem*. It is famous for its fusion of a groundwork of plainchant themes with the exquisite developments in French music powered by Paul Dukas (Duruflé's teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, and a life-long influence), Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. Duruflé once said that he "adored" Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, and "adorer" is arguably a much stronger word in French than its English equivalent.

The musician and critic Robert Hugill has written of the *Requiem* that "around the plainchant Duruflé wove a gorgeous tissue of sound, unifying disparate elements with sensual harmonies and seductive scoring". Hugill was commenting on the version that includes an orchestra, but the score performed this evening, written for chorus, two soloists, cello *obbligato* and organ, sustains this musical opulence through Duruflé's glorious writing for the chorus, his careful specification of the organ stops that will best develop the blend of sound, and above all through the fascinating interweaving of the timeless eloquence of plainsong with the vibrant harmonic colours and complex textures of 20th century French music.

In his programme notes Duruflé was clear about the devotional purpose of the *Requiem*. "[It] is not an ethereal work which sings of detachment from earthly worries; it reflects, in the immutable forms of Christian prayer, the agony of man faced with the mystery of his end" (his word is *angoisse*, "anguish", a reminder that Duruflé was only three years older than Jean-Paul Sartre and lived very much in the same intellectual world). For Duruflé, however, the Christian religion resolves this "agony".

Like his great predecessor Fauré he ends his work with the believer's approach to Heaven: "*In Paradisum* [marks] the ultimate answer of Faith to all questions by the flight of the soul to Paradise". He said that his *Requiem* was "often dramatic, or filled with resignation, or hope or terror, just as [are] the words of Scripture themselves, which are used in the liturgy. It tends to translate human feelings before their terrifying, unexplainable or consoling destinies". The score is in effect a narrative of redemption, realized in music of enormous power and subtlety and sustained over 45 minutes until it comes to rest in reconciliation and peace.

Introit – Requiem æternam; Kyrie

The elegantly flowing organ part gently supports the voices, which seem to float on the rippling sound. At first the basses and tenors are like priests or monks asking the Lord to grant rest to the souls of the dead, then the wordless harmonies of the higher voices resolve into pleas for light to shine on them, and the texture becomes radiant and stirring on the word *perpetua* before dying away. Throughout the *Requiem* Duruflé varies the emotional "temperature" of the music, and as the **Kyrie** ("Lord, have mercy") begins without a break, great waves of beauty rise and interweave, then fall away as the "Christ, have mercy" emerges with a more urgent and personal appeal to Jesus's humanity.

Domine, Jesu Christe begins in a sombre mood, with hints of the ancient four-note *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath") motif. The prayer is for Jesus to be an active Saviour, using his power to save souls from the sensationally-imaged torments of Hell – the deep lake, the lion's mouth, Tartarus that sucks in and destroys.

The pleas of the chorus become insistent, climaxing in dissonances that suggest desperation and terror. There follows the noble passage leading to the baritone solo, with soprano voices first urging that Michael, the archangel who defeated Satan in person with his squadron of angels, be sent to lead the redeemed into the world of light, in accordance with God's promise to Abraham.

The soloist embodies Duruflé's "man in agony" confronting his destiny, and the moment is dramatized by a contrast between "innocent" high sopranos describing the angel, upper voices recalling the promise, and the desolate *Cromorne* stop on the organ with its hollow, reedy sound, introducing the solitary human voice (*Voix humaine* is also called for here) crying out to offer sacrifices and prayers as he speaks for all humankind.

The **Sanctus and Benedictus** are also built on a dramatic contrast. Unlike Fauré, who chose an almost identical sequence of texts in his *Requiem*, Duruflé includes the *Benedictus*, so that the resplendent praise of God, expressing his power and the sublime confidence of his worshippers, and building to a brilliantly theatrical climax, is followed by a single, simple *Benedictus qui venit* ("Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"), the acclamation of Jesus's followers as he arrives in Jerusalem to suffer and save the world. The brief, touching humility of this comes as a response to the pleas of the soloist earlier, Saviour and Believer linked by their shared humanity.

The beautiful **Pie Jesu** is set for a mezzo-soprano, partnered by a cellist whose melodic line echoes and varies that of the singer. Duruflé achieves a profound emotional impact by the simplest means here: it is as if the cello says all that cannot be said by the voice alone, and vice versa – a contemplative duet whose subtle interplay achieves a wonderful sense of repose at the end. The peaceful **Agnus Dei** sustains the atmosphere of calm as it leads into the radiant **Lux æterna**.

This "Eternal Light" movement encapsulates Duruflé's art of integrating different musical elements, old and new, in the "seamless garment" of his score. He has composed an original melody for the organ, which leads with perfect naturalness into that of the ancient plainchant, sung by the sopranos while the lower parts harmonize wordlessly beneath. The steady radiance of heavenly light is then touchingly evoked by sopranos and tenors, then altos and basses, singing the *requiem* text in gentle unison on single notes, punctuated and complemented by the delicate flourishes of Duruflé's lovely melody.

Libera me and In Paradisum

Marie-Madeleine Duruflé said that the last pages of her husband's *Requiem* should be performed with "much use of dramatic contrast", "a thousand leagues away from *une version policée et amiable*" (difficult to translate, but perhaps "civilized and well-mannered"). She emphasized that before the *In Paradisum* "which opens the gates of eternity, the soul passes through visions of terror in the face of the flames of Hell".

The **Libera me** accordingly begins with a long, startling blast of the trumpet of doom, followed by the uncompromisingly stark pleas of the basses for deliverance from eternal death. As other parts join them the pace accelerates to something like desperation, and the baritone soloist's line sounds genuinely

terrified as he emerges briefly from the anxious throng. Agitation becomes exhaustion, and the high soprano line that introduces the last of many pleas for rest and release has a touching pathos as well as hope in its weary supplication.

This prepares superbly for the beautifully poised **In Paradisum**, which dramatizes specifically the longed-for journey *into* Paradise rather than an achieved state of blessedness: all passion spent, may the souls be led by angels, lifted up by the martyrs, and at last taken into the heavenly Jerusalem. The great work ends on an eloquently unresolved chord, as if the final harmony of forgiveness and acceptance can be heard in its fullness only beyond our mortal world.

Programme notes © Jon Long 2024

1. Introit

Choir

*Requiem æternam dona eis,
Domine:*

Eternal rest give unto them, O
Lord,

et lux perpetua luceat eis.

and let perpetual light shine
upon them.

Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,

A hymn, O God, becometh
Thee in Zion;

*et tibi reddetur votum in
Jerusalem:*

and a vow shall be paid to
Thee in Jerusalem:

exaudi orationem meam,

hear my prayer;

ad te omnis caro veniet.

all flesh shall come to Thee.

*Requiem æternam dona eis,
Domine:*

Eternal rest give unto them, O
Lord,

et lux perpetua luceat eis.

and let perpetual light shine
upon them.

II Kyrie eleison

Kyrie, eleison.

Christe, eleison.

Kyrie, eleison.

III Domine Jesu Christe

*Domine Jesu Christe, Rex
gloriæ,*

*libera animas omnium fidelium
defunctorum*

*de pœnis inferni et de profundo
lacu:*

libera eas de ore leonis,

ne absorbeat eas tartarus,

ne cadant in obscurum:

sed signifer sanctus Michael

*repræsentet eas in lucem
sanctam:*

*Quam olim Abrahæ promisisti,
et semini eius.*

Choir

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Choir & Baritone solo

Lord Jesus Christ, King of
glory,

deliver the souls of all the
faithful departed

from the pains of hell and
from the bottomless pit:

deliver them from the lion's
mouth,

that Tartarus swallow them
not up,

that they fall not into
darkness,

but let the standard-bearer
holy Michael

lead them into that holy light:

Which Thou didst promise of
old to Abraham and to his
seed.

*Hostias et preces tibi, Domine,
laudis offerimus:*

tu suscipe pro animabus illis,

*quarum hodie memoriam
facimus:*

*fac eas, Domine, de morte
transire ad vitam.*

*Quam olim Abrahæ promisisti, et
semini eius.*

IV Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus

Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua

Hosanna in excelsis.

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini.*

Hosanna in excelsis.

V Pie Jesu

Pie Jesu Domine,

Dona eis requiem.

Pie Jesu Domine,

Dona eis requiem sempiternam.

We offer to Thee, O Lord,
sacrifices and prayers:

do Thou receive them on behalf
of those souls

of whom we make memorial
this day.

Grant them, O Lord, to pass
from death to that life,

Which Thou didst promise of
old to Abraham and to his seed.

Choir

Holy, holy, holy,

Lord God of Hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of Thy
glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He Who cometh in
the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Mezzo-soprano solo

Pious Lord Jesus,

Give them rest

Pious Lord Jesus,

Give them eternal rest

VI Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem sempiternam.

VII Lux Aeterna

*Lux aeterna luceat eis,
Domine:*

*Cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum:
quia pius es.*

*Requiem aeternam dona eis,
Domine:*

et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum:
quia pius es.*

VIII Libera Me

*Libera me, Domine, de morte
aeterna, in die illa tremenda:*

Choir

Lamb of God, Who takest
away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.

Lamb of God, Who takest
away the sins of the world,
grant them rest.

Lamb of God, Who takest
away the sins of the world,
grant them eternal rest

Choir

May light eternal shine upon
them, O Lord,

With Thy Saints for evermore:
for Thou art gracious.

Eternal rest give to them, O
Lord,

and let perpetual light shine
upon them:

With Thy Saints for evermore,
for Thou art gracious.

Choir and Baritone Solo

Deliver me, O Lord, from death
eternal in that awful day.

Quando cæli movendi sunt et terra:

Dum veneris iudicare sæculum per ignem.

Tremens factus sum ego, et timeo, dum discussio venerit, atque ventura ira.

Quando cæli movendi sunt et terra.

Dies illa, dies iræ, calamitatis et miseræ, dies magna et amara valde.

Dum veneris iudicare sæculum per ignem.

Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis.

IX In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant te Angeli:

in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,

et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem.

When the heavens and the earth shall be moved:

When Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

Dread and trembling have laid hold on me, and I fear exceedingly because of the judgement and of the wrath to come.

When the heavens and the earth shall be moved.

O that day, that day of wrath, of sore distress and of all wretchedness, that great day and exceeding bitter.

When Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Choir

May the Angels lead thee into paradise:

may the Martyrs receive thee at thy coming,

and lead thee into the holy city of Jerusalem.

*Chorus Angelorum te
suscipiat,*

*et cum Lazaro quondam
paupere æternam habeas
requiem.*

May the choir of Angels
receive thee,

and with Lazarus, who once
was poor, mayest thou have
eternal rest

End



Maurice Duruflé at the Cavallé-Coll organ of the
Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles, Paris, 1953



Surrey Mozart Players

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Conductor: Philip Ellis

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The Menuhin Hall,
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Surrey,
KT11 3QQ

Rebecca Leggett

Mezzo-soprano

Rebecca Leggett is a 2020 Masters graduate of the Royal College of Music and a 2018 graduate of Trinity Laban Conservatoire. She recently became a 'Rising Star' of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (2023/25) and will perform Bach's *Easter Oratorio* with the group this Spring at the Southbank Centre, as well as various Bach cantatas throughout the year. Rebecca is currently part of the 11th edition of 'Le Jardin des Voix', Les Arts Florissant's young artists programme.



Photo © Olivia Da Costa

This year, she continues to tour a new production of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with William Christie and Paul Agnew; venues include the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, The Lincoln Center in New York, and the Royal Albert Hall. Past concert highlights include Handel's *Messiah* with the Instruments of Time and Truth, Haydn's *Nelson Mass* with The Sixteen at Cadogan Hall, Copland's *In the Beginning* at St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at St. John's Smith Square.

Rebecca very much enjoys performing song repertoire and received first place at the London Song Festival British Art Song Competition 2022, with pianist George Ireland. She and George were also finalists in the Kathleen Ferrier Award 2023 at the Wigmore Hall, and the pair plan on touring a Sussex themed recital throughout the county in 2024/25. Rebecca is from Sussex and back in 2018 won the Coro Nuovo Sussex Young Musician of the Year Competition. Last year, Rebecca performed in an Emerging Artist slot for the Oxford Lieder Festival with pianist Dylan Perez and gave a joint recital with Brindley Sherratt for the Ludlow English Song Weekend.

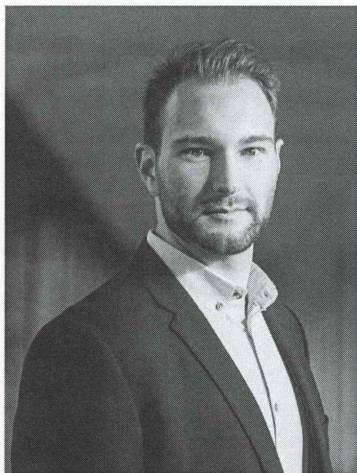


Photo © Ben Tomlin

Welsh-German baritone Thomas read Music and German at the University of Bristol before studying at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he graduated with a distinction on the Artist Masters programme. He studies with Professor Janice Chapman and Robert Dean.

He has been making a name for himself both in the UK and on the continent and has been praised for his 'powerful but richly toned

voice' (Cambrian News) and 'robust, immersive sound' (Badische Neueste Nachrichten).

Recent solo highlights include Mendelssohn *Elijah* (Choir 2000), Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem* (Bristol Choral Society), Duruflé *Requiem* (Vasari Singers), Handel *Messiah* (Trinity Choir, Fareham), Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius* and Walton *Belshazzar's Feast* (Vivace Chorus), as well as many operatic roles.

Thomas is also an experienced choral singer, having been a member of the National Youth Choir of Wales, where he won the Keith Griffin Award for Choral Singing.

He has toured with the Marian Consort and the BBC Singers and is a member of the professional choir at St Bartholomew the Great, Farringdon. In 2024 he looks forward to performing Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem* with the Guildford Choral Society and Bach's *St John Passion* with the Chorus of Dissent.

George Castle's musical education took him through singing as a chorister at Durham Cathedral, school in Bedford, where he also started to learn the organ, and a year as Organ Scholar at Worcester Cathedral. Following this, he studied for a degree in music at Oxford University, where he held organ scholarships concurrently at Trinity and Worcester Colleges. Having graduated in 2008, George returned

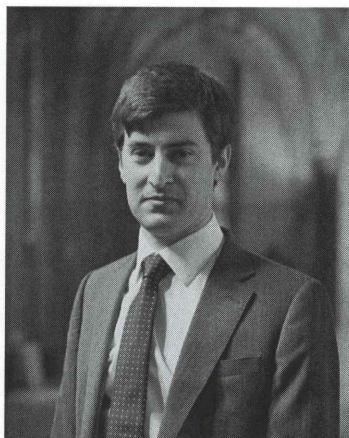
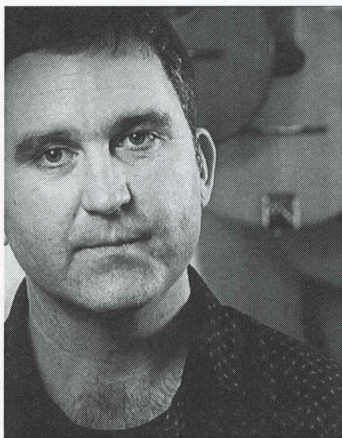


Photo © Jim Pascoe

to Worcester Cathedral for four years, where he accompanied and helped train the various choirs and, from 2011, directed the Voluntary Choir. He was then Assistant Director of Music at Winchester Cathedral until 2021. Through his work in cathedral music, George has been organist for the Southern Cathedrals Festival in Winchester and was one of the organists for a number of Three Choirs Festivals between 2005 and 2012.

George is currently a visiting music teacher at The Pilgrims' School, Winchester, and works at Winchester College and Charterhouse as an organ and piano teacher. He combines this with a busy freelance career as an organist, continuo player, repetiteur, accompanist, occasional celesta player, and choral conductor around the south of England; he is the accompanist for the Waynflete Singers, one of the regular accompanists for the Vasari Singers and the musical director of RSCM Voices West. George has featured on numerous radio broadcasts and recordings, including playing the organ for some episodes of Netflix's "The Crown", and he had a brief spell as a backing artist in the top 10 of the Italian pop charts. He enjoys medium calibre books and light calibre canoeing.



Since leaving the Royal College of Music in 1997, Jonny has spent 26 years as a freelance cellist.

He has enjoyed performing with Plácido Domingo, Renée Fleming, Damon Albarn, Cuban Ballet and various orchestras around the world, at venues as diverse as the Dubai Opera House and a Mexican prison (and felt more comfortable at the latter!)

However, this evening marks his last public performance - Hennessey Brown Music, which fixes orchestras for concerts and recordings, has become Jonny's full-time job and passion.

Representing artists such as Raphael Wallfisch, Emma Johnson, Pascal Rogé and some more up and coming artists no longer leaves him time to continue with more than one career.

He can't think of a more fitting farewell occasion than to play this stunning work with a conductor as kind and genuine as Jeremy Backhouse, and in a church that means a great deal to him and his family.

Hennessey Brown Music is putting on a concert to celebrate International Women's Day, on March 6th at Cadogan Hall in London - Jonny would be delighted if any of tonight's audience could join him there.

Jonny sees his most important job to be trying his best to be a good Dad.

Jeremy Backhouse

Conductor

Jeremy Backhouse is one of Britain's leading choral conductors. He began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral where he was Senior Chorister.

Jeremy has been the sole conductor of the internationally-renowned chamber choir, Vasari Singers, since its inception in 1980. Since winning the prestigious Choir of the Year competition in 1988, Vasari Singers has performed regularly at major concert venues and cathedrals throughout the UK and abroad. Jeremy and Vasari Singers broadcast frequently on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3 and have a discography of over 25 CDs on EMI, Guild, Signum and Naxos. Their recordings have been nominated for a Gramophone award, received two Gramophone Editor's Choice awards, the top recommendation on Radio 3's "Building A Library" and two recent CDs both achieved Top Ten status in the Specialist Classical Charts. He is totally committed to the performance of contemporary music and, with Vasari, he has commissioned over 25 new works.



Photo © Ash Mills

In January 1995 Jeremy was appointed Music Director of the Vivace Chorus. Alongside the standard classical works, Jeremy has conducted the Vivace Chorus in some ambitious programmes including Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi*, Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's "*Resurrection*" *Symphony*, Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* and *Ivan the Terrible*, then Mahler's "*Symphony of a Thousand*" and Verdi's *Requiem* in the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Until July 2022, Jeremy was also the Music Director of the Salisbury Community Choir. In 2013 the choir celebrated its 21st Anniversary with a concert in Salisbury Cathedral, premiering a specially-commissioned work by Will Todd, *The City Garden*, which they toured to Lincoln (2014) and Guildford (2015) cathedrals. A new work from Alexander L'Estrange was premiered in Winchester Cathedral in November 2018.

Jeremy has also worked with a number of the country's leading choirs, including the BBC Singers, the London Symphony Chorus, the Philharmonia Chorus, and the Brighton Festival Chorus.

About Vivace Chorus

Jeremy Backhouse
Francis Pott
Peter Norman

Music Director
Accompanist
Chairman



Vivace Chorus at the Royal Albert Hall, May 2014

Photo © Ash Mills

Vivace Chorus is a flourishing, ambitious and adventurous choir based in Guildford, Surrey. We enjoy singing traditional choral classics alongside the challenge of contemporary and newly-commissioned music – there's something for everyone at Vivace!

The choir began in 1946 as the Guildford Philharmonic Choir and was rebranded as Vivace Chorus in 2005. We have an enviable reputation for performing first-class concerts across a wide range of musical repertoire. Particular successes include a sell-out performance in May 2011 of Mahler's *Symphony No. 8*, the "*Symphony of a Thousand*", at the Royal Albert Hall, a highly acclaimed performance in November 2012 of Britten's *War Requiem* and another Royal Albert Hall success in May 2014 when we performed the Verdi *Requiem*. In 2017 we celebrated our 70th birthday with the Philharmonia Orchestra in the Royal Festival Hall and 2018 saw a sell-out performance at G Live Guildford for our "Concert for Peace".

On 13th July 2025, we plan to return to the Royal Albert Hall again, where we will be joined by other local choirs, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and internationally-renowned soloists Nicky Spence and Lucy Crowe, to perform Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloë Suite*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and the spectacular *Te Deum* by Hector Berlioz.



Photo © Ash Mills

Vivace thrives under the exceptional leadership of our conductor, Jeremy Backhouse. Jeremy's passion for choral music and his sheer enthusiasm for music-making are evident at every rehearsal and performance. He is supported by Francis Pott, who is an academic and composer of international repute and an accomplished concert pianist – who better to accompany our rehearsals?

We have also enjoyed successful European and UK tours, including trips to France, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Baltic states and, most recently, northern Spain.

We are always happy to welcome new members, so if you would like to try us out, do come along to any of our regular rehearsals on Monday evenings at 7.15 in the Guildford Baptist Church, Millmead, Guildford.

Just contact our membership secretary, Becky Kerby, at membership@vivacechorus.org or pay a visit to our website, vivacechorus.org. You can also follow us on Facebook and X (Twitter) - @VivaceChorus.

Vivace Chorus Patrons

The Vivace Chorus is extremely grateful to all patrons for their support.

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Life Patrons

John and Jean Leston

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If you have enjoyed this concert, why not become one of our patrons? We have a loyal band of followers whose regular presence at our concerts is greatly appreciated. With the valued help of our patrons, we are able to perform a wide range of exciting music, with world-class, professional musicians in venues such as G Live, Dorking Halls, the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal Festival Hall. If you are interested, please contact Anna Arthur by emailing: patrons@vivacechorus.org.

Vivace Chorus Singers

FIRST SOPRANO

Sandra Adamson
Sel Adamu
Amelia Atkinson
Jan Barklem
Helen Beevers
Mary Broughton
Olivia Church
Jo Haviland
Isobel Humphreys
Nicola Kalimeris
Becky Kerby
Fran MacKay
Suzie Maine
Sue Norton
Robin Onslow
Gillian Rix
Sarah Smithies
Joan Thomas
Miriam White

SECOND SOPRANO

Jacqueline Alderton
Gill Backhouse
Sarah Badger
Jane Barnes
Scarlett Close
Ann Fuller
Margaret Kay
Alex Nash
Alison Palmer
Kate Peters

Mary Somerville
Valerie Thompson
Olwyn Westwood
Chris Wilks
Eiri Williams

FIRST ALTO

Anna Arthur
Barbara Barklem
Jackie Bearman
Marion Blair
Jane Brooks
Amanda Burn
Philippa Curtis
Fiona Davidge
Valentina Faedi
Lynne Hargreaves
Sheila Hodson
Jean Leston
Lis Martin
Penny McLaren

Ros Milton
Lilly Nicholson
Jackie Payne
Elinor Pinnegar
Linda Ross
Catherine
Shacklady
Marjory Stewart
Julia Stubbs
Nicola Telcik
Hilary Trigg

Anna Williams
Fiona Wimblett
Maggie Woolcock

SECOND ALTO

Geraldine Allen
Evelyn Beastall
Sheena Ewen
Liz Hampshire
Pauline Higgins
Lois McCabe
Kay McManus
Val Morcom
Pamela Murrell
Sonja Nagle
Jo Stokes
Rosey Storey
Esther Van Rooyen
Alison Vincent
June Windle
Elisabeth Yates

FIRST TENOR

Bob Bromham
Bob Cowell
Andrea Dombrowe
Nick Manning
John Trigg
Susie Walker

SECOND TENOR

Peter Butterworth
Simon Dillon

Geoff Johns
Stephen Linton
Charles Martin
Peter Norman
Graham Vincent
Tim Wray

FIRST BASS

Paul Barnes
Phil Beastall
Richard Broughton
Richard Dacey
Brian John
Jeremy Johnson
Jon Long
Keith McClurey
Malcolm Munt
Chris Newbery
Robin Privett
David Ross
Phil Stanford
Rob Walker
Kieron Walsh

SECOND BASS

Peter Andrews
Norman Carpenter
Stuart Gooch
Nick Gough
Mike Johns
Neil Martin
Chris Peters
Richard Wood

Vivace Chorus dates for your diary

Verdi: Requiem

Saturday 18th May 2024 7:30pm

G Live, Guildford

Vivace Chorus performs this awe-inspiring piece alongside the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union and the National Symphony Orchestra. Full of drama and beauty, this is a bumper piece that raises the roof, shakes the floor and sends shivers down your spine! We'll be packing the G Live stage with 200 singers, a huge orchestra, four brilliant soloists and eight off-stage trumpets for this amazing performance of Verdi's *Requiem*. This is live music at its most heart-thumping - you'll kick yourself if you miss it.

Two by Two

Saturday 6th July 2024 4:00pm

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford

Join us for a relaxed afternoon family concert with a nonsense theme! We'll be singing the fantastic *Mr Lear*, by Alan Bullard, and the very popular *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo* by Michael Flanders and Joseph Horowitz. Just an hour long, this is the perfect Saturday afternoon entertainment for you and the family. Why not bring your favourite stuffed animal along with you?!

A West End Extravaganza!

Saturday November 16th 2024 7:30pm

G Live, Guildford

Join us and the award-winning Friary Band for another night of songs from the shows! Featuring some of the best-loved songs from hit West End shows, including *Guys & Dolls* and *Mamma Mia*, we bring the glamour, humour and wonderful music to your doorstep. Don't miss it!

Further details at vivacechorus.org

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Vivace Chorus is a Registered Charity No. 1026337

"live music at its most heart-thumping"

VERDI REQUIEM

Soprano: **Claire Seaton**

Mezzo-Soprano: **Catherine Backhouse**

Tenor: **Richard Dowling**

Baritone: **Tim Nelson**

National Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: **Jeremy Backhouse**

**Saturday
18 May 2024
at 7.30 pm**

GLIVE
— GUILDFORD —

**Vivace
Chorus**



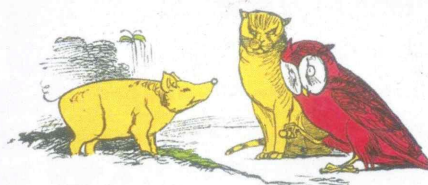
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FUTURE CONCERTS



In May, we will be joined by the forces of the Liverpool Welsh Choral for a magnificent performance of the Verdi Requiem. With 200 singers, a huge live orchestra, the iconic Verdi drum and four fantastic soloists, this music turns from the truly terrifying to the completely sublime, and is one of the most crowd-pleasing pieces in the classical music world. Book your tickets now for an unmissable evening's entertainment!



6 July 2024

Two-by-Two

a family concert
at Holy Trinity Church

Join us for a relaxed afternoon family concert with a nonsense theme! We'll be singing the fantastic *Mr Lear*, by Alan Bullard, and the very popular *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo* by Michael Flanders and Joseph Horowitz. Just an hour long, this is the perfect Saturday afternoon entertainment for you and the family.

16 November 2024

A West End Extravaganza at GLive

Join us and the award-winning Friary Band for a night of songs from the shows! Featuring some of the best-loved tunes from hit West End shows, including *Guys & Dolls* and *Mamma Mia*, we bring the glamour, humour and wonderful music to your doorstep. Don't miss it!



Durufié Requiem

and music by
Widor, Ešenvalds,
Pärt, Dubra and
Jonathan Dove
Hennessey-Brown

Vivace
Chorus

Friday
1 March 2024
at 7.30 pm

Holy Trinity, Guildford High Street.

For further details and to book go to vivacechorus.org