

Performance that's one to remember

UPON completion of his masterpiece, *The Dream of Gerontius*, Sir Edward Elgar quoted these words from Ruskin: "This is the best of me ... and this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory."

On Saturday evening at the Guildford Civic the Guildford Philharmonic Choir gave us a performance of "*The Dream*" which was, indeed, worth our memory.

Augmented by a small but extremely fine chamber choir, the Vasari Singers, they rose to the challenge of this difficult but moving work.

Jeremy Backhouse, conductor of the Vasari Singers since 1981, has built up a close understanding with the Philharmonic Choir.

On Saturday this rapport was evident, with the choir responding keenly to his interpretation. The dissonant outburst of the Demons' chorus was electrifying, and the hissing, sneering tone woven into the singing of *What's a Saint?* was enough to bring a chill to the boldest of souls.