

SURREY AD. 30/5/14

Memorable performance of *Requiem* from Vivace

Vivace Chorus: Verdi's Requiem
Royal Albert Hall
Rating: ★★★★★

THE Verdi *Requiem* is much-loved and often performed, and last Sunday the Vivace Chorus put together a memorable and moving performance at the Royal Albert Hall, singing to a near-capacity audience.

The concert, which was

promoted by Vivace, saw them join forces with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Wimbledon Choral Society, the Twickenham Choral Society and the London Philharmonic Choir in a performance that involved more than 500 musicians.

The *Requiem* is as operatic a mass as they come and begins with hushed tones in the orchestra, which were

beautifully phrased by the RPO under conductor Jeremy Backhouse, whose instinctive commitment to the music was obvious to musicians and audience alike.

This breath-holding start set the scene for a roller-coaster of dynamics, textures and moods that came together wonderfully in both the massed choirs and the orchestra - a real feat in the acoustics of the hall.

The Vivace Chorus chose its partner choirs well. With Vivace's singers on the main stage, the ranks of Wimbledon, Twickenham and the LPC rose majestically behind them but the sound was always together and the commitment shone through, both in the ferocious *Dies Irae* and the whispered drama of the *Libera Me*.

The soloists are required to work hard in this work and

we heard excellent singing from all four singers, with particular mentions for the dramatic tones and precise diction of mezzo soprano Kate Symonds-Joy and the exquisite control and beauty of tone from soprano Claire Seaton, a regular with Vivace.

This concert has been long in the planning and along the way, Vivace has organised various fundraising events, the most adventurous being

a cycle ride from Paris to London in aid of the Rainbow Trust, which has so far raised more than £10,000 for the charity.

The choir is currently preparing to tour northern Italy, with concerts in Verona, Venice and Genoa. Vivace's 2014/15 season starts with the Bach *Mass in B minor* in Guildford Cathedral on November 15.

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Members of the Vivace Chorus get ready for their charity cycle from Paris to London.