# BRAHMS

## EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM

**Lauridsen: Lux Aeterna**
**Brahms: Nänie**

National Symphony Orchestra

**Conductor:**
Barbara Höfling

Beth Yates **(soprano)**

Peter Coleman **(baritone)**



**Saturday**
**14 Nov 2026**
**7.30pm**

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Vivace
Chorus

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SCAN ME


Vivace Chorus

# Ein deutsches Requiem

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| Johannes Brahms | Nänie |
| Morten Lauridsen | Lux Aeterna |
| Johannes Brahms | Ein deutsches Requiem |

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|---|---|
| Beth Yates | Soprano |
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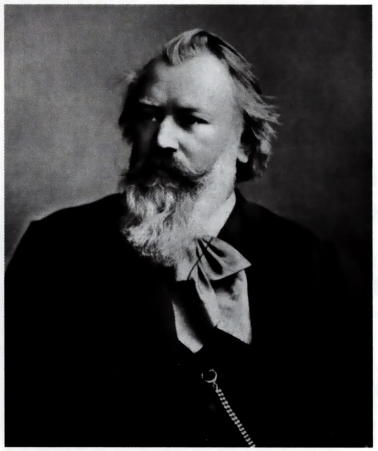
National Symphony Orchestra

Vivace Chorus

Conductor: Barbara Höfling

## Nänie (Op. 82) Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)



Johannes Brahms
Photo Carl Brasch, 1889

The choral music of Johannes Brahms is one of the romantic period's richest troves. The mid-19th century was a wonderful era for choral music and choral festivals. Early in his career, Brahms worked extensively with choral groups, including the Hamburg Women's Chorus, which he founded, and a Detmold choral society. After his arrival in Vienna in the early 1860s, one of his first formal appointments was as conductor of the Vienna Singakademie. He wrote for all the ensembles he led, arranging folk songs and other composers' music, writing the occasional sacred piece and setting a wide variety of German poetry for female chorus, men's chorus and mixed voices.

His list of works for chorus and orchestra is shorter, but distinguished by its high musical quality. Yet apart from his beloved *German Requiem* and an occasional dusting off of the *Alto Rhapsody,* precious little of it is performed. *Nänie* (1880-81), one of his last compositions for mixed chorus and orchestra, is a miracle of serenity and Brahmsian beauty: meltingly lovely music that will delight fans of Brahms who are unacquainted with this little-known area of his compositions.

Friedrich Schiller's text muses on the transitory nature of beauty, life, love and glory. Brahms turned to this poem after his friend Anselm Feuerbach died in early January 1880. A leading, if controversial, figure in the German classical painting school, Feuerbach first met Brahms in the early 1860s.



Although Feuerbach settled in Venice and died there, he had returned to Vienna for several years in the mid-1870s to teach at the Vienna Academy of Art. The friendship rekindled, and Brahms was saddened when he learned of Feuerbach's passing. The artist was only 50.

*Nänie* was thus a memorial, and Brahms elegantly captured the elegiac tone of Schiller's verse in his exquisite music. He felt that the poem reflected Feuerbach's humanist philosophy, rooted in ancient Greek and Roman ideals: the fatalism of ancient Greece tempered by acceptance. Schiller's text considers divine indifference to mankind's sufferings and tribulations. In succession the poem addresses the plight of Euridice, brought back from Hades only to be lost when Orpheus cannot resist that glance back over his shoulder; then Adonis, falling prey to a wild boar; and finally Achilles, slain by Paris in the Trojan war, upon which his mother Thetis emerges from the waters to mourn him. The message is that our memory of these glorious events is tribute. Honour comes from the retelling of great achievement and great art.

*Nänie* – sometimes translated as 'Nenia' - means threnody: a dirge or song of lamentation. Brahms takes an elegiac approach, thereby elevating his *Nänie* to a higher plane, one whose message is more philosophical and less grim. Biographer Hugh MacDonald calls it "possibly the most radiant thing he ever wrote." After an opening fugal entrance beginning with the sopranos, the setting is free. The chorus sings almost constantly, and audience attention to text and translation is richly rewarded.

**Programme note © Dr. Laurie Shulman 2016**
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**Text by Friedrich Schiller (1759 – 1805)**

Auch das Schöne muß sterben, das Menschen und Götter bezwinget! Nicht die eherne Brust rührt es des stygischen Zeus.

Einmal nur erweichte die Liebe den Schattenbeherrscher, und an der Schwelle noch, streng, rief er zurück sein Geschenk.

Nicht stillt Aphrodite dem schönen Knaben die Wunde, die in den zierlichen Leib grausam der Eber geritzt.

Nicht errettet den göttlichen Held die unsterbliche Mutter, wenn er, am skäischen Tor fallend, sein Schicksal erfüllt. Aber sie steigt aus dem Meer mit allen Töchtern des Nereus, und die Klage hebt an um den verherrlichten Sohn.

Siehe, da weinen die Götter, es weinen die Göttinnen alle, daß das Schöne vergeht, daß das Vollkommene stirbt.

Even the beautiful must perish! That which overcomes gods and men moves not the armoured heart of the Stygian Zeus.

Only once did love come to soften the Lord of the Shadows, and just at the threshold, he sternly took back his gift.

Neither can Aphrodite heal the wounds of the beautiful youth that the boar had savagely torn in his delicate body.

Nor can the immortal mother rescue the divine hero, when at the Scaen gate now falling, he fulfils his fate. But she ascends from the sea with all the daughters of Nereus, and she raises a plaint here for her glorious son.

Behold! The gods weep, all the goddesses weep, that the beautiful perishes, that the most perfect passes away.



Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten ist herrlich,

Denn das Gemeine geht klanglos zum Orkus hinab.

Auch ein Klaglied zu sein im Mund der Geliebten ist herrlich.

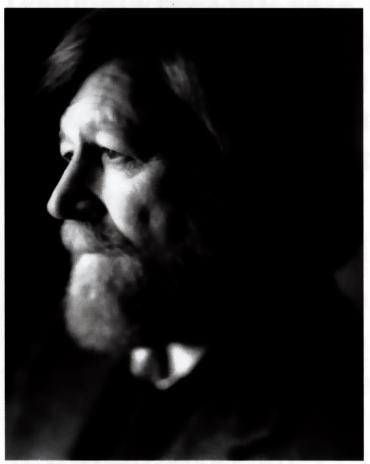
But a lament on the lips of loved ones is glorious,

For the ignoble goes down to Orcus in silence.

But a lament on the lips of loved ones is glorious.

## Lux Aeterna

## Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)



Morten Lauridsen was born in Colfax, Washington in 1943 and grew up in Portland. His mother introduced him to music and taught him piano. After attending Whitman College in Walla Walla, Lauridsen joined the music faculty at the University of Southern California in 1966, where he continues teaching to this day. He served as head of the composition department from 1990 to 2002, served as composer-in-residence for the Los Angeles Master Chorale between 1994 and 2001, and founded the USC Film Scoring programme.

Winning international acclaim for his choral compositions, over 200 CDs are devoted partly or entirely to his works. The National Endowment for the Arts named him an "American Choral Master" in 2005, and in 2007 he received the National Medal of Arts Award from President Bush in a White House

ceremony. He now divides his time between teaching in Los Angeles and his home in the San Juan Archipelago off the coast of Washington.

The final illness and death of his mother led to the composition of his five-movement *Lux Aeterna* in 1997. Lauridsen's setting of both the first movement (*Introitus*) and finale (*Agnus Dei / Lux Aeterna*) of the requiem text frame his work. But like Brahms' *Requiem* (written in memory of *his* mother), Lauridsen also fashions a personalised requiem. *Lux Aeterna* translates as "eternal light," and Lauridsen says he chose sacred Latin texts "each containing references to light... giving me strength to cope with the situation."

While both composers avoid the *Dies Irae* "Day of Wrath," Lauridsen also avoids Brahms' depiction of the overwhelming power of death. His gentle setting instead more closely resembles Faure's *Requiem*, which emphasized healing and consolation. Steven Ledbetter writes that both requiems celebrate a peaceful ending of life, "welcoming death as the step towards eternal life."

His setting of the *Introitus* opens with a pianissimo passage for orchestra that soon crescendos to forte. This sets the stage for the hushed a cappella entry of the choir, also pianissimo. To further reflect the sacred text, Lauridsen employs frequent metric shifts and repeated-pitch motives, evoking Medieval plainchant style. Central to Lauridsen's message, the text includes the phrase "let perpetual light shine upon them." So it comes as no surprise that he saves the only fortissimo outburst – a cappella - for "Hear our prayer!" (*exaudi orationem meam*).

For the second movement, Lauridsen turns to a 1677 Nuremburg songbook. He opens with a cantus firmus from "*Herzliebster Jesu*" (Dearest Jesu). It begins with an oboe and



clarinet motive soon stated several times in the choir, the final time to the text "a light has risen in the darkness for the upright. Have mercy upon us, O lord."

Over the past two decades, Morten Lauridsen has become the most performed American choral composer. So it comes as no surprise that in the third movement, he states the primary message of this work, *O Nata Lux* (Oh light born from light) , a cappella. He reaches across the eras: Medieval chant-like rhythms with the Renaissance polyphony of Josquin Desprez and rich contemporary harmony in this tender, hauntingly beautiful centrepiece for this five-movement memorial.

Turning to a more joyful style, Lauridsen draws upon *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* (Come, Holy Spirit) – "a spirited, jubilant canticle" (Steven Ledbetter). Once again, a special choral effect, unison singing for "*O Lux beatissima*" (O most blessed light), highlights the primary message. As in the first movement, the choir returns to pianissimo to begin the *Agnus Dei* finale. Soon the orchestra also returns to its very opening passage, leading to the choir's initial passage, now set to the text of the title, *Lux Aeterna*, ending pianissimo, to emphasize the role of humanity in the sacred spirit.

**Programme note © Ed Wight 2019**
**Southern Oregon Repertory Singers**

## *I. Introitus*

| | |
|---|---|
| Requiem aeternam<br>dona eis, Domine,<br>et lux perpetua luceat eis. | Eternal rest grant unto them,<br>O Lord, and let perpetual<br>light shine upon them. |
| Te decet hymnus, Deus,<br>in Sion, et tibi reddetur<br>votum in Jerusalem: | A hymn, O God, becomes<br>You in Zion, and a vow shall<br>be paid to You in Jerusalem |

Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.

Hear my prayer; to You all
flesh shall come.

Requiem aeternam
dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

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

## *II. In Te, Domine, Speravi*

Tu ad liberandum
suscepturus hominem
non horruisti Virginis uterum.

To deliver us, You became
man, You did not abhor the
Virgin's womb.

Tu devicto mortis aculeo,
aperuisti credentibus regna
cœlorum.

You overcame the sharpness
of death, and opened the
kingdom of heaven to all
believers.

Exortum est in tenebris
lumen rectis.

There is risen in the shadows
a light for the righteous.

Miserere nostri, Domine,
miserere nostri.

Have mercy on us, Lord,
have mercy on us.

Fiat misericordia tua,
Domine, super nos,

Let your mercy, Lord, be
upon us,

quemadmodum
speravimus in te.

as our trust is in You.

In te Domine, speravi:
non confundar in aeternum.

Lord, in You have I trusted;
never let me be confounded.



## *III. O nata lux*

O nata lux de lumine,
Jesu redemptor saeculi,
Dignare clemens supplicum
Laudes preces que sumere.

O Light born of Light,
Jesus, Redeemer of the world,
Mercifully deign to accept
the praises and prayers of
your suppliants.

Qui carne quondam contegi
Dignatus es pro perditis.
Nos membra confer effici,
Tui beati corporis.

You who once deigned to be
clothed in flesh for the sake of
the lost, grant that we may be
made members of your blessed
body.

## *IV. Veni, Sancte Spiritus*

Veni, Sancte Spiritus
et emitte cœlitus
lucis tuae radium.

Holy Spirit, Lord of Light,
From Thy clear celestial height,
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium.

Come, Thou Father of the poor!
Come, with treasures which
endure! Come, Thou Light of all
that live!

Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.

Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow.

In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.

Thou in toil art comfort sweet,
Pleasant coolness in the heat,
Solace in the midst of woe.

O lux beatissima,
reple cordis intima
Tuorum fidelium.

Light immortal! Light divine!
Visit Thou these hearts of Thine,
And our inmost being fill.

Sine tuo numine,
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.

Where Thou art not, man hath naught, nothing good in deed or thought, Nothing free from taint of ill

Lava quod est sordidum,
riga quod est aridum,
sana quod est saucium.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour Thy dew;
Wash the stains of guilt away.

Flecte quod est rigidum,
fove quod est frigidum,
rege quod est devium.

Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.

Da tuis fidelibus,
in te confidentibus,
sacrum septenarium.

Thou, on those who evermore
Thee confess and Thee adore,
In Thy sevenfold gifts, descend.

Da virtutis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.

Give them comfort when they die,
Give them life with Thee on high,
Give them joys that never end.

## *V. Agnus Dei - Lux Aeterna*

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

Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world,
give them rest.

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

Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world,
give them rest.

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

Lamb of God, who takes away
the sins of the world,
give them eternal rest.



Lux aeterna
luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

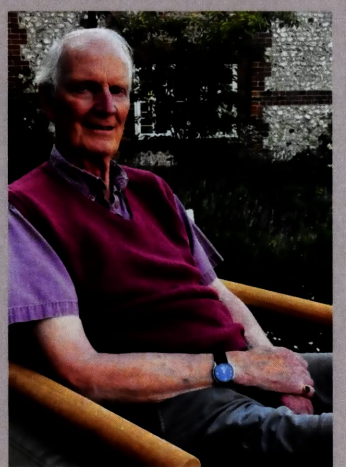
May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord,
with Your saints forever,
for You are merciful.

Requiem aeternam
dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

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

*Interval (20 minutes)*

## Robin Privett



Robin very much enjoyed his time singing with Vivace Chorus, and other choirs before us. He sadly died suddenly at the end of August while on holiday with his family in Scotland.

Born in 1940, he was a lawyer and a man of many hobbies – fisherman, musician (he played the oboe as a young man), clock restorer and rower, more recently in the Venetian style. He rode motorbikes in his younger days, and drove the odd sporty car.

He was a wonderful and much-loved father and grandfather and his grandchildren loved coming to our big concerts in the Royal Albert Hall.

We will miss him in Vivace too, and send our condolences to his family.

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## Ein deutsches Requiem — Johannes Brahms

For some years Brahms had been considering various ideas for a Requiem, but it was not until 1866, when he was 33, that he began work on it seriously. It was completed the following year with the exception of the fifth movement, which he added later in order to achieve a more balanced structure. In its incomplete form *Ein deutsches Requiem* was first heard in Bremen Cathedral on Good Friday 1868. The final version was performed the following year at Leipzig's famous concert-hall, the Gewandhaus.

Brahms may have written the Requiem in memory of his mother, who died in 1865; it is equally possible that he had in mind his great friend and mentor, Robert Schumann, whose madness and tragic death had profoundly affected the young Brahms. The composer himself gave no indication of whose memorial the Requiem might be, if indeed it was any one person's. As with all great music, the universal message of its vision transcends the circumstances of its conception.

The work's title reflects Brahms' use of the Lutheran Bible rather than the customary Latin one. He compiled the text himself from both Old and New Testaments, and from the Apocrypha. It has little in common with the conventional Requiem Mass, and omits the horrors of the Last Judgement - a central feature of the Catholic liturgy - and any final plea for mercy or prayers for the dead. It also makes only a passing reference in the last movement to Christian redemption through the death of Jesus.

Not surprisingly, the title of "Requiem" has at times been called into question, but Brahms' stated intention was to write a Requiem to comfort the living, not one for the souls of the

dead. Consequently the work focuses on faith in the Resurrection rather than fear of the Day of Judgement. Despite its unorthodox text, *Ein deutsches Requiem* was immediately recognised as a masterpiece of exceptional vision, and it finally confirmed Brahms' reputation as a composer of international stature.

The similarity of the opening and closing movements serves to unify the whole work, while the funeral-march of the second is balanced by the triumphant theme of the resurrection in the towering sixth movement. Similarly, the baritone solo in the third, '*Herr, lehre doch mich*', is paralleled in the fifth by the soprano solo, '*Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit*'. The lyrical fourth section, '*Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen*', is therefore at the heart of the work, framed by the solemnity of the first three movements and the transition from grief to the certainty of comfort in the last three.

This carefully balanced architecture is matched by an equally firm musical structure based on two principal ideas which Brahms skilfully uses in a variety of subtle guises throughout the work. The most important of these occurs at the opening choral entry and consists of the first three notes sung by the sopranos to the words '*Selig sind*'. Brahms uses this musical cell as the main building block of the whole piece, subjecting it to a variety of transformations, including upside-down and back-to-front versions, both of which play as significant a role as the original form. The other important musical idea is a chorale-like melody played by the violas at the very beginning. Its most obvious re-appearance is in the second movement, now in a minor key, as an expansive melody sung by the choir in unison. Brahms had recently discovered the cantatas of J.S.Bach, and there seems little doubt that this theme was derived from a very similar chorale melody in Bach's *Cantata No.27*.



The opening movement, the text of which is one of the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, begins in hushed and sombre mood, reflected in the orchestration by the temporary absence of the violins. As the music proceeds, however, mourning is transformed into comfort.

The second movement, in the dark key of B flat minor, is centred on the heavy rhythms of a funeral-march, with the chorus proclaiming the inevitability of man's fate, '*Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras*' (Behold, all flesh is as the grass). A lighter central episode provides some brief respite before the funeral-march returns. Eventually, at '*Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet*' (But yet the Lord's word endures), an energetic allegro emerges, once more transfiguring darkness into light and leading to a glorious conclusion.

In the third movement, the baritone soloist and chorus begin by pondering the transience of human existence. The soloist then asks '*Nun Herr, wess soll ich mich trösten?*' (Now, Lord what do I wait for?) and the reply, '*Ich hoffe auf dich*' (My hope is in thee), wells up from the depths in a rising crescendo of affirmation. This leads seamlessly into a broad, imposing fugue, remarkable for its omnipresent pedal D which, whilst creating considerable tension during the fugue itself, also provides an unshakable foundation for the final resolution.

After the intensity of the first three movements, the pivotal fourth, a serene pastorale, provides the opportunity for contemplation and rest. This is music of exceptional beauty, and it is hardly surprising that this movement is so widely known and loved.

The fifth movement features a sublime soprano solo accompanied by woodwind, horns and muted strings. The chorus, too, plays an accompanying role.

Whereas the baritone soloist in the third movement sings of grief and doubt, the soprano's message here is one of maternal consolation.

Brahms reserves his most dramatic music for the imposing sixth movement. It begins in reflective mood, but soon the baritone soloist introduces the familiar verses '*Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen, wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden .....zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune*' (We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed ..... at the sound of the last trumpet), at which point the music explodes into a blaze of sound and energy. The intensity builds up until '*Tod, wo ist dein Sieg?*' (Death, where is thy victory?) where a majestic fugue ensues. In the middle of this fugue two fortissimo climaxes grow out of an exhilarating orchestral Jacob's ladder that reaches up to heaven as it passes from the bass instruments right up to the flutes and violins. The movement ends with a final powerful statement.

The last movement begins with a radiant melody from the sopranos, followed by the basses. The moving final section is a subtle reworking of music from the very opening, and the Requiem reaches its peaceful conclusion at the same word with which it began: '*Selig*' (Blessed).

**Programme note © John Bawden MMus (University of Surrey, UK)**

## *I. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen*

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| Selig sind, die da Leid tragen, denn sie sollen getröstet werden. | Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. |
| Die mit Tränen säen, werden mit Freuden ernten. | They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. |



| | |
|---|---|
| Sie gehen hin und weinen und tragen edlen Samen, und kommen mit Freuden und bringen ihre Garben | He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him |

## *II. Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras*

| | |
|---|---|
| Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen wie des Grases Blumen. | For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.. |
| Das Gras ist verdorret und die Blume abgefallen. | The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. |
| So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder, bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn. | Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. |
| Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet auf die köstliche Frucht der Erde und ist geduldig darüber, bis er empfahe den Morgenregen und Abendregen. | Behold, the husbandmen waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. |
| Aber des Herrn Wort bleibet in Ewigkeit | But the word of the Lord endureth forever. |

## III. Herr, lehre doch mich

Herr, lehre doch mich, daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß, und mein Leben ein Ziel hat, und ich davon muß.

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am.

Siehe, meine Tage sind einer Hand breit vor dir, und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth, and mine age is as nothing before thee.

Ach wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen, die doch so sicher leben.

Surely every man walketh in a vain show.

Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen, und machen ihnen viel vergebliche Unruhe; sie sammeln und wissen nicht wer es kriegen wird.

Surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

Nun Herr, wess soll ich mich trösten? Ich hoffe auf dich.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee.

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand und keine Qual rühret sie an.

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

## IV. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!

How lovely are thy dwelling places, O Lord of hosts!

Meine Seele verlanget und sehnet sich nach den Vorhöfen

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the



des Herrn; mein Leib und Seele freuen sich in dem lebendigen Gott.

Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause wohnen, die loben dich immerdar.

Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.

## V. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit

Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit; aber ich will euch wieder sehen und euer Herz soll sich freuen und eure Freude soll neimand von euch nehmen.

And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

Sehet mich an: Ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit gehabt und habe großen Trost funden.

Ye see how for a little while I labour and toil, yet have I found much rest.

Ich will euch trösten, wie Einen seine Mutter tröstet.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.

## VI. Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt

Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt, sondern die zukünftige suchen wir.

For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis: Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen, wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden, und dasselbige plötzlich,

Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

| | |
|---|---|
| in einem Augenblick, zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune. | In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. |
| Denn es wird die Posaune schallen, und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich, und wir werden wervandelt werden. | For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. |
| Dann wird erfüllet werden das Wort, das geschrieben steht: Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg. | Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. |
| Tod, wo ist dein Stachel? Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg? | O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? |
| Herr, du bist Würdig zu nehmen Preis und Ehre und Kraft, denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen, und durch deinen Willen haben, sie das Wesen und sind geschaffen. | Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. |

### *VII. Selig sind die Toten*

| | |
|---|---|
| Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben, von nun an. | Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. |
| Ja der Geist spricht, dass sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit; denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach. | Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. |

End



Vivace Chorus

Rotary in Guildford and Vivace Chorus present



THE MAYOR OF GUILDFORD'S

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Conductor: Barbara Höfling

*in aid of*
*Surrey SATRO*
*& Home-Start Guildford*

Sunday
13 Dec 2026
at 7pm

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford.

**Tickets:** £19 (Adults); £8 (Child/Student).
Includes programme. Tickets available online at
rotaryinguildford.org or vivacechorus.org

Registered Charities: Rotary No.1201415 / Vivace No. 1207710

## Beth Yates — Soprano



Photo © Akta Photography

British Soprano Beth Yates graduated with Distinction from her MA in Solo Voice Ensemble Singing at the University of York in January 2026, where she studied under Robert Hollingworth and Susan Young. She is currently active as a freelance soloist and choral singer in London, most notably as an Emerging Artist at St Martin in the Fields. Beth has recently performed with Tenebrae and VOCES8 on the international stage, with an upcoming engagement with Apollo5. She also deputises at several top London churches such as Temple Church, St Margaret's Westminster and St Bartholomew the Great.

Beth was formerly a member of Genesis Sixteen as well as a VOCES8 Scholar and has recently recorded three projects with the VOCES8 Foundation. Alongside these engagements, she enjoys a wide range of performance opportunities across the UK and internationally, most notably as part of the VOCES8 Scholars Ensemble.

Prior to her postgraduate studies, Beth read Modern Languages at Durham University, where she held choral scholarships at several chapel choirs, and co-founded The Phoenix Consort, a vocal consort which came third in the 2023 Tolosa Choral Contest.

Beth performs regularly as a soloist, specialising particularly in Baroque oratorio. Recent engagements include Monteverdi *1610 Vespers,* Handel *Messiah*, Bach *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, *Mass in B minor*, and the cantatas *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* and *Wachet auf*; Purcell *King Arthur*; Haydn *Paukenmesse*; Zelenka *Miserere*; Vivaldi *Gloria*; Mozart *Requiem*; and Fauré *Requiem*, in addition to solo recital appearances.



## Peter Coleman — Baritone

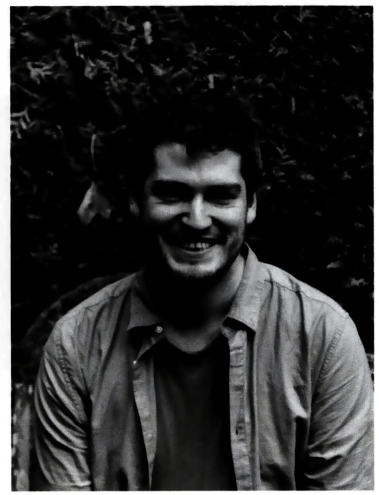

Photo © Arya Kalavath

Peter Coleman began singing as a chorister at the Schola Ceciliana at St Anselm and St Cecilia's Catholic Church, Holborn, before joining their adult choir as a teenager. He completed a batchelor's degree in Applied Psychology at the University of Kent, initially aiming to train as a clinical psychologist. He also sang in the University chorus and chamber choir and deputised regularly at Canterbury Cathedral.

He then graduated from Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge with an MA in Music Therapy. Whilst there, he deputised in various chapel choirs such as St. John's, Trinity, Pembroke and Selwyn, as well as working as a punting tour guide on the River Cam.

During his time in Cambridge, he sang regularly with the University's Gilbert and Sullivan Society and Opera Society, and Velocirapture Productions. He has sung solo roles with other ensembles in London, such as London Armenian Opera, Surrey Opera and Kentish Opera, as well as working regularly with Midland Opera in Birmingham.

He has previously worked as a lay clerk at Peterborough Cathedral, and now has a similar role at Guildford Cathedral, as well as working as a freelance music therapist and singer in the Cambridgeshire area.

He previously studied singing with Graeme Broadbent at the Royal College of Music, and now studies with Gary Coward of Guildhall and Royal Opera House.

## National Symphony Orchestra

**Leader: Matthew Scrivener**
**Principal Conductor: Paul Bateman**


Photo © Edward Webb

The National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) is one of the longest-established and most versatile professional freelance orchestras working in Britain today. Formed during the Second World War in the 1940s, the NSO's musicians were, by necessity, young and enthusiastic, and this dynamic performing tradition continues to this day.

The NSO has a hugely impressive recorded legacy as well as a busy diary of live concert performances. The orchestra is admired for its versatility and the ability to communicate, whilst connecting with audiences with consistent commitment and passion.

In 2024, with Rimma Sushanskaya, they performed and recorded a complete cycle of the Beethoven Symphonies, including a performance of Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* at Cadogan Hall on May 7th, which was the exact 200th anniversary, to the day, of the first performance. The NSO has recently enjoyed hugely successful tours to China, Saudi Arabia and New York, performed film and video concerts at the Barbican Centre, and recorded the scores for several BBC dramas, including *Wolf Hall*, *Father Brown* and *Shakespeare and Hathaway*.



The orchestra continues its series of classical concerts at Smith Square Hall, as well as Cheltenham Town Hall where it memorably performed Mahler's *Symphony No. 4*. The NSO coordinated a video project for the Women's Global Orchestra with Alicia Keys which achieved 5 million YouTube hits in its first week.

In 2018, the orchestra topped the classical charts for weeks collaborating with presenter Alan Titchmarsh and composer Debbie Wiseman for a project named "The Glorious Garden".

In 2022, the NSO was chosen to perform for Queen Elizabeth in one of her final appearances, at the Platinum Jubilee Celebration at Windsor Castle, watched by an audience of millions.

They have toured to Spain with Katherine Jenkins and Alfie Boe and were proud to play at the ceremony marking the handover to the nation of the new Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre in Loughborough in the presence of Prince William and the Prime Minister.

In July 2023 the orchestra toured to the Riyadh Film Music Festival for a series of concerts, immediately after completing recording projects of new concertos by the Argentine composer, Polo Piatti, and a new English string music disc for Quartz Records with Rimma Sushanskaya.

A live vinyl recording of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* was made in May and released on the Chasing the Dragon record label.

The NSO prides itself on the huge audiences that regularly support its concerts, and although based in London, the orchestra performs throughout the United Kingdom, drawing its fine players from all round the country.

## Barbara Höfling — Conductor



Photo © D. Gauweiler

Barbara grew up in Hanover, Germany and studied violin, singing and choral conducting at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater. She then split her career equally into solo singing work, including recording three solo CDs with Lied and chamber music, which won her a Supersonic Award for best Lied recording, and choral singing, working for some of the best choirs in the world, including RIAS Chamber Choir, BBC Singers, Berlin Radio Choir and the Monteverdi Choir.

Throughout her career she has directed choirs and orchestras in Germany and later in the UK. She is the founder and MD of the German Choir of London, which she took to perform at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Notre Dame Paris, Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral to name just a few. In 2022 she was appointed Associate Chorus Director and Head of Vocal Development of the London Symphony Chorus. In this capacity she worked regularly with LSO conductors such as Simon Rattle, Lionel Sow and François Xavier Roth.

In 2024 she became the MD of the Winchester Festival Choir.

Barbara has worked with numerous choirs in the UK and abroad, including the London Philharmonic Choir, Chineke Voices, Coventry and Canterbury Cathedral Choirs, CBSO Chorus and Cologne Radio Choir. She runs regular Workshops and Masterclasses on Choral Repertoire, Consort Singing and Vocal Technique.

In 2026 she was awarded the German-British Friendship Award for her contribution to German music in the UK.

Barbara is a keen supporter of contemporary music and has to date commissioned more than 80 choral and solo works.

In her free time she is a keen cyclist and tries to keep the brambles in check in the garden.



## About Vivace Chorus

| | |
|---|---|
| **Barbara Höfling** | *Music Director* |
| **Francis Pott** | *Accompanist* |
| **Richard Dacey** | *Chairman* |



Vivace Chorus at the Royal Albert Hall, July 2025 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".

In July 2025, we returned again to the Royal Albert Hall, where we were joined by other local choirs, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and internationally renowned soloists Nicky Spence and Lucy Crowe, to perform Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and the spectacular *Te Deum* by Hector Berlioz.

That concert marked Jeremy Backhouse's retirement, after 30 years of dedicated service to Vivace.

In September 2025 we welcomed Barbara Höfling as our new Music Director, and have enjoyed our first season working with her on a diverse range of projects - she has a wealth of experience as a choir director and vocal health specialist.

She is supported by Francis Pott, who is an academic and a 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, and are planning a visit to Denmark and Sweden in 2028.

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 Instagram (**@Vivace_Chorus**)



## Vivace Chorus Singers

**FIRST SOPRANO**
Sandra Adamson
Amelia Atkinson
Jan Barklem
Helen Beevers
Mary Broughton
Jo Haviland
Isabel Holdaway
Carol Hooker
Isobel Humphreys
Becky Kerby
Fran Mackay
Suzie Maine
Heather Newbery
Sue Norton
Robin Onslow
Siân Prentice
Gillian Rix
Sarah Smithies
Barbara Tansey
Jane Thorp
Miriam White

**SECOND SOPRANO**
Jacqueline Alderton
Sarah Badger
Jane Barnes
Scarlett Close
Ann Fuller
Alex Nash
Alison Palmer
Kate Peters
Weronika Rabsztyn
Helen Seeley
Mary Somerville
Sarah von Schweinitz
Samantha Wilkins
Christine Wilks
Eiri Williams
Fiona Wimblett
Lesley Worrall

**FIRST ALTO**
Anna Arthur
Barbara Barklem
Jackie Bearman
Amanda Burn
Philippa Curtis
Valentina Faedi
Anna Griffiths
Lynne Hargreaves
Sheila Hodson
Sheena Kaighin
Jean Leston
Kerry Manning
Elisabeth Martin
Penny McLaren
Rosalind Milton
Alison Moore
Lilly Nicholson
Jackie Payne
Lucy Reay
Linda Ross
Catherine Shacklady
Heather Shepherd
Marjory Stewart
Julia Stubbs
Nicola Telcik
Hilary Trigg
Susan Vega
Anna Williams
Maggie Woolcock

**SECOND ALTO**
Geraldine Allen
Evelyn Beastall
Mary Clayton
Liz Curry-Hyde
Sheena Ewen
Liz Hampshire
Pauline Higgins
Penny Macfarlane
Lois McCabe
Kay McManus
Val Morcom
Pamela Murrell
Lucy Schönberger
Joanna Stokes
Rosey Storey
Pamela Usher
Esther van Rooyen
Alison Vincent

**FIRST TENOR**
Robert Abrams
Rosie Jeffery
Geoffrey Johns
John Trigg
Graham Thorp

**SECOND TENOR**
Paul Barnes
Duncan Elson
Ian Gee
Geoffrey Johns
Stephen Linton
Chris Newbery
Graham Vincent

**FIRST BASS**
Paul Arnold
Philip Beastall
Richard Broughton
Richard Dacey
Jeremy Johnson
Gregor Kowalski
Andrew Linden
Jon Long
Malcolm Munt
David Protheroe
Andrew Skinner
Phil Stanford
Rob Walker
Kieron Walsh

**SECOND BASS**
Stuart Gooch
Nick Gough
Michael Johns
Chris Peters
Nick Williams
Richard Wood

## Vivace Chorus Patrons

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

### Honorary and Life Patrons

Jeremy Backhouse
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James Garrow
John and Jean Leston
John Trigg MBE

### Patrons

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Richard & Mary Broughton
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Humphrey Cadoux-Hudson CBE
Geoffrey Forster
Stephen Linton
Ron & Christine Medlow
David & Linda Ross
Geoffrey Johns & Sheila Rowell
Catherine & Brian Shacklady
Dennis & Marjory Stewart
Idris & Joan Thomas
Pam Usher
Rob and Susie Walker

### Friends

Norman Carpenter

### BECOME A VIVACE PATRON

If you have enjoyed this concert, why not become one of our **Patrons** or **Friends**? 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.

We are also now offering benefits for **Corporate Patrons**, with packages including advertising in our concert programmes, choir website and social media, and free concert tickets.

If you are interested, please contact Anna Arthur by emailing: **patrons@vivacechorus.org**. or by visiting the Patrons page on our website: **www.vivacechorus.org/vc/join-us/patrons**



## Vivace Chorus dates for your diary

### The Mayor of Guildford's Christmas Concert

**Sunday 13th Dec. 2026 7:00pm** **Holy Trinity Church, Guildford**

Join Vivace Chorus and the Mayor of Guildford for the season's most popular carol concert, attracting a capacity audience at Holy Trinity Church on Guildford High Street. This concert is a festive mix of traditional and contemporary music, along with your favourite audience carols, all in aid of the Mayor's chosen charities.

### Come and Sing: Sing Bach with Vivace Chorus!

**Saturday 23rd Jan 2027 10:00am** **Guildford Baptist Church**

Why not come and experience a day of singing with Vivace Chorus and music director, Barbara Höfling? This year, Barbara will bring both her conducting experience and vocal health specialism to Bach's masterpiece, *St. Matthew Passion*, celebrating the 300th anniversary of its first performance – and of course, there's the famous Vivace lunch!

### Marimba a cappella

**Saturday 3rd April 2027 7:30pm** **Holy Trinity Church, Guildford**

Extraordinary choral music with Delia Stevens on marimba and percussion. An exciting concert combining the rich sound of choir with the vibrant colours of marimba and other percussion instruments.

The centrepiece is Gene Koshinski's thrilling *Concerto for Marimba and Choir,* alongside a cappella choral works, pieces featuring marimba and percussion ensemble.

Delia Stevens is our solo marimba player, fresh from the 2026 Proms.

Join us for an evening of beautiful sounds, energy and rhythm!

**Further details at vivacechorus.org**

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Vivace Chorus is a Registered Charity No. 1026337

the occam singers

# The Road to Bethlehem

## Music and Readings for Christmas

## Saturday 19th December, 6:30pm

**St Nicolas' Church, Bury Street, Guildford.**

**Conductor: Nicholas O'Neill**



**Tickets: Online in advance, £20, £22 on the door, Students £10, Children under 16 free - www.occamsingers.co.uk**

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# Come & Sing

## Bach's St Matthew Passion

with **Barbara Höfling**, Vivace's highly respected conductor and vocal health specialist



## Saturday 23 Jan 2027

## 10am - 4.30pm

**Guildford Baptist Church**
**Millmead, Guildford**

**Tickets:** £27
Book online: vivacechorus.org

Registered Charity No. 1207710

Vivace Chorus

# FUTURE CONCERTS

From Christmas carols to marimba and a cappella, Vivace aims to offer you a wide variety of musical experiences: music by Vaughan Williams and Eric Whitacre, songs from West Side Story and tunes from Harry Potter..... and so much more. If singing from the St. Matthew Passion on the 300th anniversary of its first performance is your passion too, take a look at Vivace's 2026 -2027 season.










