

Greene was organist at St Paul's Cathedral and the Chapel Royal, and was eventually appointed Master of the King's Musick, and wrote a fair amount of choral and vocal music, of which this setting is probably the best known. Hubert Parry's six Songs of Farewell, of which There is an old belief is the fourth, were written in 1916, two years before the composer's death. The songs are pre-occupied with death but remain generally optimistic in character, looking as they do towards what might be waiting 'on the other side'.

Vaughan-Williams' motet Valiant-for-Truth was composed in 1940 and is based on text from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. The piece is an excellent example of word-painting and tells the story of Mr Valiant-for-truth's discovery of his imminent death. It ends with a triumphant climax as "all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side". Bring us, O Lord God by William Harris is a example of Anglican Church music at its best. With text by the metaphysical poet John Donne, it was written in 1959, more than thirty years later than Harris's other well-known work, Faire is the heaven. It has much in common with Faire is the heaven, not least its double-choir scoring, and the unusual key of D-flat major. Harris was organist at St David's Cathedral, Lichfield Cathedral and St George's Chapel, Windsor, and he conducted at the coronations of both George VI and Elizabeth II.

Herbert Howells' masterpiece, Take him, earth, for cherishing was the result of a commission occasioned by the death of John F Kennedy. It was first performed in 1964 at an American-Canadian memorial service in Washington. It is set to text by the 4th century Prudentius and the words are quite beautiful: "Take him, earth, for cherishing; to thy tender breast receive him. Body of a man I bring thee, noble even in its ruin." As the music moves from unison melody to extravagant harmony it reflects the sweep from body to spirit, from earthly to divine, and also the ambiguity of death: both sorrow in mourning and joy at passing into paradise.

We end this evening with Donald Guest's perfect setting of Laurence Binyon's eternal poem For the Fallen, written for the Westminster Abbey Remembrance Day service in 1971.

"They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them. We will remember them."

tamesis

chamber choir

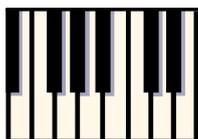
musical director - louise rapple

presents the first concert in the
"Heart and Soul" concert series
for the 2007-8 season

Songs of Sorrow and Loss

Sunday November 11th 2007
7:30 pm
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Programme

Requiem - John Rutter (1945-)

1. Requiem Aeternam
2. Out of the deep
3. Pie Jesu
4. Sanctus
5. Agnus Dei
6. The Lord is my Shepherd
7. Lux Aeterna

Organ - John Cobb, Flute - Debbie Freeman, Oboe - Charles Spicer, Cello - Tom Hammond, Harp - Satu Solo, Percussion - Martin Proctor, Soprano - Helen Styles

The Kontakion - Rupert Lang (1948-)

Soprano - Tamsyn Wilson, Tenor - Andy Button, Baritone - Austin Jacobs

- - - -

INTERVAL

- - - -

Death hath deprived me - Thomas Weelkes (c1576-1623)

Lord, let me know mine end - Maurice Greene (1696-1755)

There is an old belief - C Hubert H Parry (1848-1918)

Valiant-for-truth - Ralph Vaughan-Williams (1852-1978)

Bring us, O Lord God - William H Harris (1883-1973)

Take him, earth, for cherishing - Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

For the fallen - Douglas Guest (1916-1996)

A short silence will be followed by the Last Post.

Trumpeter - Phil Bysh

Tamesis is:

Sopranos

Miranda Bradshaw

Rachel Burgess

Heidi Cherry

Penny Firshman

Katy Nurick

Helen Styles

Tamsyn Wilson

Sarah Woodward

Altos

Jane Bell

Sarah Finch

Cathy McAllister

Paula Nichols

Liz Rapple

Chloë Robson

Basses

Reuben Casey

John Cobb

Oliver Garland

Austin Jacobs

Patrick Moore

Stephen Nichols

Tenors

Tim Beavan

Andy Button

Simon Eastwood

Jason Murray

Grateful thanks to the Reverend David Ellis and the authorities at Wesley Methodist Church for their whole-hearted acceptance of and participation in this event.

Tamesis Chamber Choir aims to offer something different from other choirs in the area. We are a high-standard, fun chamber choir performing several concerts per year. We re-audition formally each September but do sometimes have vacancies during the year, so if you are interested in singing with us, contact Louise on 0118 931 279 or email lourap@gmail.com.

Louise Rapple graduated in Music and French at Reading University in 1998, specialising in performance. During her year abroad she studied conducting at the Conservatoire de Pau in southern France and returned to the UK to direct the Reading University Singers for two years, following that with seven years in Church music, as Organist and Choir Director at two local Churches. When not conducting Tamesis, she is a full-time piano teacher, teaching both in local schools and privately. Tamesis is the realisation of her life-long dream to direct a vigorous and superior choir.

Notes on the programme

John Rutter's Requiem was first performed in 1985 in Dallas, Texas, conducted by the composer. In this version of the Requiem, the texts are taken not only from the Latin 'Missa pro defunctis', as is usual in a Requiem, but also from psalms and from the Burial Service as found in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. The first movement, Requiem Aeternam, does come from the Mass and includes the serene and calmly joyful theme for which the Requiem is probably best known. This is followed by Out of the deep, with text taken from Psalm 130, which is based around a lyrical cello solo, with the choir providing a dark and sombre melody. The Pie Jesu uses text from the Mass, text which has been made famous by Fauré's Requiem. Like Fauré, Rutter also uses a soprano solo for this movement, but this time accompanied by the choir. The Sanctus is a very jolly affair, characterised by the glockenspiel and building to a tremendous climax. This is followed by the solemn Agnus Dei, based on a funereal timpani motif and including both words from the Burial Service and words from the Mass. The setting of the 23rd psalm, The Lord is my Shepherd, includes an oboe ostinato running throughout the movement. The final movement, Lux Aeterna, includes a soprano solo using words from the Burial Service which leads into a reprise of the Requiem Aeternam motif from the opening movement.

American composer Rupert Lang's The Kontakion is also based on words from the Burial Service. The Kontakion is a form of hymn performed in the Eastern Orthodox Church. It doesn't refer to any particular text, but rather to a generic poem, often a dialogue between the Minister and the choir, or even the whole congregation, as is the case in this setting, with the refrain sung by the choir, and the verses by either a soloist or a single section of the choir. Rupert Lang is Organist at Vancouver Cathedral in Canada, and composed this piece in 2001 as a commission for Remembrance Day concert, so it is fitting that it is included this evening.

Weelkes' Death hath deprived me was written in memory of his friend, Thomas Morley, another 16th century composer whose music greatly influenced Weelkes. It was originally published in 1608, as part of Ayeres or Phantasticke Spirites for three voices, a generally light-hearted set of slightly bawdy pieces, often dealing with the themes of drinking, smoking and women. Unfortunately, Weelkes became well-known for such pastimes, eventually being dismissed from his post at Chichester Cathedral for habitual drinking and swearing.

Lord, let me know mine end is a beautiful setting by Maurice Greene of text from Psalm 39, much influenced by Purcell, who died the year before Greene was born.