



Louise Rapple Moore read Music and French at Reading University, specialising in performance. She studied conducting at the Conservatoire de Pau in France during her year abroad, returning to direct the Reading University Singers for two years.

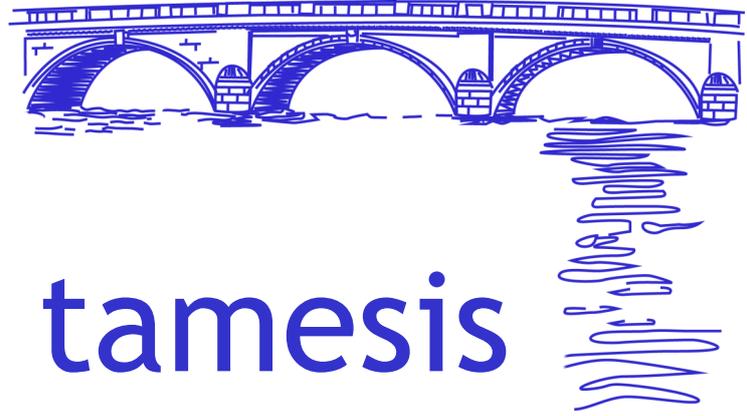
Having graduated, Louise spent seven years in Church music as organist at two Berkshire Churches. She founded Tamesis in 2003. She also directs Tamesis Cathedral Singers, an occasional choir which sings Cathedral Evensongs twice a year. She is in demand locally as a deputy conductor, and enjoys the challenge of stepping in when other choir directors are indisposed.

Louise works full-time at Shiplake College as a musician, teacher and administrator. As part of her work there she runs the College Chamber Choir and Shiplake Community Choir, a choir for singers of all ages and abilities, singing a mainly popular repertoire. She is a regular panellist on Radio Berkshire, where she tries her hardest to appear both cultured and funny, not always succeeding. Last year she started a new Community Choir in the village of Hagbourne in South Oxfordshire, which is so far proving to be a great success. Do get in touch if you are interested in joining any of Louise's choirs!

Simon Dinsdale is a former Organ Scholar of Chichester Cathedral, where he accompanied the world-renowned choir regularly during daily services in the cathedral. He moved on to become Director of Music at St. Mary's Choir School, Reigate and organist for its professional choir.

Simon moved to Reading in 1998 and now travels extensively as accompanist, continuo player and organist to a number of choirs including Tamesis, and regularly plays at cathedrals up and down the country. He has appeared as organist with the London Welsh Male Voice Choir and is a regular organist with the Chameleon Arts Orchestra. Concert tours have taken him to Ireland, Germany, Belgium and the USA in recent years; he has broadcast on BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio Berkshire and Classic FM and is frequently in demand for recordings.

Simon also performed with organ virtuoso the late Carlo Curley. He counts being accidentally locked in Westminster Abbey one Friday night whilst playing the organ amongst his lifetime's achievements! As sub-organist at The Royal Memorial Chapel, The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst since 2005, Simon has the weekly pleasure of playing the largest Allen digital organ in the UK.



tamesis

chamber choir

director—Louise Rapple Moore
organist—Simon Dinsdale
www.tamesischamberchoir.co.uk

presents

Darkness and Light

Saturday 11th March 2017
7:30 pm
Douai Abbey, Woolhampton

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About Douai Abbey

We are delighted to be performing for the third time in Douai Abbey. It is a special pleasure and privilege for Tamesis to sing here, not least because of the high calibre of musical performances that the Abbey plays host to, attended by always appreciative audiences. It's also a wonderfully inspiring and uplifting building, with a gorgeously resonant acoustic that brings out the richness and splendour of the harmonies in our programme tonight.

Douai Abbey is home to a community of monks of the English Benedictine Congregation. The monastery is under the patronage of St Edmund, King & Martyr, and was founded in Paris in 1615. Uprooted by the French Revolution, it settled at Douai in Flanders, and finally returned to England in 1903, settling here at Woolhampton and retaining the name of its earlier French home.

Douai Abbey Church was begun in 1928, built in an impressive Gothic style to the design of Arnold Crush. Lack of funds brought work to a halt in 1932, and a temporary brick wall was erected at the west end to close off the unfinished church. In 1987 a decision was taken to complete the building, to a new design by Michael Blee.

The monastery community welcomes guests on retreats or courses, as well as those who seek merely some quiet time. There are facilities for conferences of modest size, and youth or chaplaincy groups. Douai's library and archive building provide a rich resource for study and research, open to researchers and students by application.

Douai Abbey has welcomed many renowned musicians and ensembles in recent years, including Dame Evelyn Glennie, Eric Whitacre, The Sixteen and Tenebrae. It houses a Tickell organ which is used in services and for recitals and concerts. The Benedictine monks of Douai have strong historical associations with France, and the organ was designed to have appropriate resources for the convincing performance of both classical and romantic French repertoire in particular. It stands in a slender arch on the North side of the original building. The exceptional acoustics of the church allow sound to travel easily to all parts of the building, and the organ is voiced in a free and unforced manner.

The primary work of the monks of Douai Abbey is the regular celebration of the sung Divine Office and the Mass, and all such liturgical worship is open to the public.

Find out more at douaiabbey.org.uk

Dates for your diaries

Visit www.tamesis.is for latest news and tickets

Sunday 25th June 2017, 4pm
Venue tba but local to Reading
and

Saturday 1st July 2017, 7:30pm
St Endellion Church, Port Isaac, Cornwall

Places and Spaces:

Songs of the town and the countryside

We are very excited to be making our Cornish debut in July at the beautiful Church of St Endellion. The programme will include Bob Chilcott's lively 'Songs and Cries of London Town' and 'Swimming over London', and John Rutter's fabulous Birthday Madrigals.

We will also be performing this programme in Reading the week before we go to Cornwall— check our website for information about venue and tickets.

Saturday 14th October 2017, 7:30pm
Reading University Great Hall,
London Road, Reading

Bernstein: Chichester Psalms
Vaughan Williams: Toward the unknown region
Strauss: Tod und Verklärung

with Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra

We are delighted once again to be collaborating with the marvellous Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert which will showcase both ensembles. A not-to-be-missed experience and we look forward to seeing you there!

Tamesis Chamber Choir

Sopranos

Miranda Bradshaw
Clare Garner
Louise Hill
Katie Johnston
Julie Kench
Vicky Mason
Anne Owen
Tania Pratt
Kate Whiting
Tamsyn Wilson

Altos

Sarah Finch
Charlie Hobson
Emily King
Tessa Pestrige
Elysia Roberts
Alison Wilkins
Catriona Wilson

Basses

James Allen
Andy Button
John Cobb
Edward Hobson
Trevor Mansfield
Patrick Moore
Stephen Nichols

Tenors

Tim Beavan
Nick Brown
Simon Eastwood
Aled Elmore
Laurence Hicks

They stand as a farewell not just to the composer himself, but to the rapidly vanishing world of his youth. The outbreak of war was universally devastating, but for Parry there was an even deeper darkness to the times. As an ardent admirer of German culture and music, he had been convinced that Germany could not go to war against the Allies. He felt a profound sense of betrayal by the nation that had produced his artistic heroes.

Common to all the texts are the contrasting themes of the transitory nature of life and the redeeming power of faith. The first five motets are expressions of personal belief: only the final setting has a recognised sacred text.

The six individual motets are arranged in a carefully organised scheme of developing length and complexity. The first two, for just four vocal parts, are quite short and rhythmically and harmonically relatively straightforward. *Never weather-beaten sail* and *There is an old belief* are in five and six parts respectively, and introduce a degree of counterpoint into the texture.

The final pair of motets, *At the round earth's imagined corners* (taking the text of John Donne's poem) and *Lord, let me know mine end* (Psalm 39) are significantly longer and call for seven and eight voice parts. They were the last to be written, in the autumn of March 1915. The harmony now becomes much more chromatic, the rhythmic figuration more intricate, and the counterpoint more audacious. *Lord, let me know mine end* demands the intensity and focus of a double choir. It concludes with the ultimate expression of going into death and darkness, "Before I go hence and be no more seen."

Not surprisingly, the collective power of the *Songs of Farewell* means they are widely acknowledged as masterpieces of unaccompanied choral writing.

Josef Rheinberger (1839-1901): *Abendlied*

Rheinberger, a native of Liechtenstein, was a musical prodigy and a prolific composer. A contemporary of Johannes Brahms and Richard Wagner, he composed in the late Romantic style of Brahms with the precision and complexity of Bach. His work includes church music, operas, symphonies and concertos.

Abendlied (Evening Song), written when the composer was just 16 years old, is a miniature gem of the choral repertoire. It is also one of the few works by Rheinberger that is relatively well-known today. It might be mistaken for a pre-baroque composition, with its exquisitely simple shape and melody, belied by a richly polyphonic harmony. Darkness is falling in the short German text, which alludes to Luke 24:29. "Abide with us: for it is toward evening and the day is far spent." The gently swelling and receding dynamic makes it the perfect end to tonight's concert, finding peace in a comforting and hopeful reflection on night falling.

CAH, February 2017

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 4279 or email lourap@gmail.com.

Programme

O radiant dawn MacMillan

Lux aeterna Lauridsen

1. Introitus
2. In te, Domine, speravi
3. O nata lux
4. Veni, Sancte Spiritus
5. Agnus Dei—Lux aeterna

Interlude:

Lux aeterna Elgar

*Sopranos: Julie Kench and Tania Pratt;
altos: Tessa Pestridge and Louise Rapple Moore;
tenors: Nick Brown and Simon Eastwood;
basses: James Allen and Stephen Nichols*

Ave maris stella Grieg

Interval

Bring us, O Lord God Harris

Interlude:

Toccata from Suite Gothique Boëllman

Organ: Simon Dinsdale

Songs of Farewell Parry

1. My soul, there is a country
2. I know my soul hath power
3. Never weather-beaten sail
4. There is an old belief
5. At the round earth's imagined corners
6. Lord, let me know mine end

Abendlied Rheinberger

A big thank you
to Father Oliver and everyone else here
at Douai Abbey for the use of this
beautiful space and for being
so helpful and welcoming.

Light and Darkness

Our concert title is reversed for the programme order tonight. While we liked Darkness and Light as a natural-sounding phrase, we felt it was fitting to move in the opposite direction - from light to darkness in the second half - in order to finish on a note of tranquil repose that returns the Abbey to its state of reflection and prayerfulness.

Light

James MacMillan (b.1959): O Radiant Dawn (2007)

James MacMillan is one of a few contemporary big name composers who have made choral music an integral part of their output. He's been described as a modern-day Howells, with choirs queuing to commission his works. Amid his busy schedule MacMillan, a devout Catholic, still finds time to direct the amateur choir at St. Columba's Church, Maryhill, in Glasgow. The Chamber Choir of nearby Strathclyde University also sings there. *The Strathclyde Motets* were composed for these two groups, to be sung during communion on Sundays and feast days. *O Radiant Dawn* is one of the simplest in construction but most intense. The harmonies are spare, even severe, making a striking appeal for the coming dawn and the new light of Christ's birth.

Morten Lauridsen (b.1943): Lux aeterna (1997)

Contemporary composer Morten Lauridsen loves the endlessly varied and beautiful light he experiences on walks through the evergreen forests and waterways of the Pacific Northwest. This is where Lauridsen is said to find inspiration for the luminous qualities and compelling harmonies of his compositions.

Lux Aeterna is a requiem composed in the year of Lauridsen's mother's death. She introduced him to music and taught him to play the piano. There are five movements, based on references to light in sacred Latin texts.

Lauridsen freely acknowledges that he uses motive themes from two of his favourite compositions, *O magnum mysterium* and *Contre qui, rose* (from the *Chansons des Roses*). There is a feeling of familiarity to the entire work that is a comfort and a delight to Lauridsen fans, with his signature use of alternating fourths and fifths in intervals and the yearning harmonies. Dissenting voices in our number have argued that this approach lacks originality... you must decide for yourself!

Here are the movements in Lauridsen's own words:

The *Introitus* softly recalls motivic fragments from two pieces close to my heart, which recur throughout the work in various forms. Several new themes are then introduced by the chorus, including an extended canon on 'et lux perpetua'. *In te, Domine, speravi* contains the cantus firmus *Herzliebster Jesu* (from *The Nuremberg Songbook*, 1677) and a lengthy inverted canon on 'fiat misericordia'. *O nata lux* and *Veni Sancte Spiritus* are paired songs, the former a central, a capella motet and the latter a spirited, jubilant canticle. A quiet setting of the *Agnus Dei* precedes the final *Lux aeterna*, which reprises the opening section of the *Introitus* and concludes with a joyful 'Alleluia'.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934): Lux Aeterna

One of Elgar's best loved and most known pieces is *Nimrod* from the *Enigma Variations*. This eight part vocal arrangement by John Cameron (b. 1944) sets the words of *Lux Aeterna* (eternal light) to *Nimrod's* haunting theme. Cameron is better known for his

work in conducting, composing and arranging music for performance art. He created the orchestral score for the musical *Les Miserables* and has worked with pop artists Hot Chocolate and Heatwave as well as notable film director Ken Loach on TV and film music. So it's perhaps not surprising that Cameron saw the dramatic potential in combining the pathos of Elgar's original work with the spiritually elevating words of the requiem text: "Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them." The piece, with its broad emotional appeal, has been widely performed at public Armistice Day commemorations. Classic FM described 2016's memorial performance by Voces8 as "a stunning vocal rendition of Elgar's *Nimrod* [that] will have you weeping in seconds."

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907): Ave Maris Stella

The *Ave Maris Stella* is a vespers hymn to Mary dating back to around the eighth century. In terms of our theme, it bathes us in starlight in praise of Mary: 'Hail, star of the sea, life-giving mother of God and perpetual virgin'. Grieg's setting is one of only three sacred works of his entire output. It was originally written to a Danish translation of the text for solo voice and piano in 1893, then Grieg arranged it for unaccompanied chorus five years later, reverting to the Latin. The piece includes some beautiful echoes between the female and male voice parts and is one of Grieg's most loved works.

Darkness

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

Bring us, O Lord God takes text by Eric Milner-White, based on the words of the metaphysical poet John Donne. Although in the 'darkness' section of our programme, the words speak eloquently of its kindly opposite too: "where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling but one equal light". Harris composed the piece in 1959, more than thirty years later than his other particularly well-known choral 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.

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897): Toccata from Suite Gothique

The French composer is best known for this work, one of a small number of organ compositions he produced before his untimely death at the age of 35, probably from tuberculosis. He also composed for orchestra, piano, voice and chamber ensembles. An admirer of Franck and Saint-Saëns, Boëllmann's post-Romantic aesthetic is influenced by their styles. The dramatic *Toccata* is a staple of the organ repertoire, with its intense minor theme and "remarkable sonorities" (music critic Robert Havard de la Montagne.) Our organist Simon Dinsdale identified it as a perfect fit for our theme tonight, because it "starts in darkness and ends in a blaze of light."

Hubert Parry (1848-1918): Songs of Farewell

Parry's *Songs of Farewell* were written over a period of nearly ten years, and were completed during the First World War, not long before his death in 1918. He never had the opportunity to hear them sung as a single work, although they were performed at his memorial service in February 1919.