

Verdi

Requiem

Saturday 22 June 2024 7:30pm
St James Church, Muswell Hill

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Messa da Requiem **Verdi**

Arranged for small ensemble by
Michael Betzner-Brandt

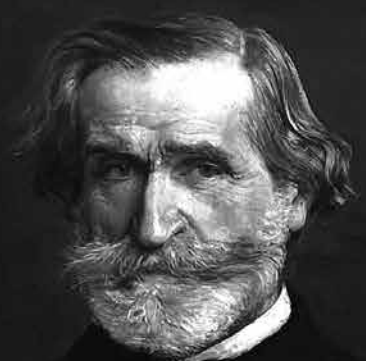
Saturday 22nd June 2024
St James Church, Muswell Hill

Soprano **Philippa Boyle**
Mezzo-soprano **Sophie Goldrick**
Tenor **Ruairi Bowen**
Bass-baritone **Frederick Long**

Conductor **Chris Hopkins**

North London Chorus

Meridian Sinfonia



Please remember to switch off all pagers, mobile phones and digital watch alarms.
The use of video cameras or other unauthorised recording devices is prohibited.
Thank you for your cooperation.

A message from the Musical Director



Following November's celebration of Handel and Bach, and our ambitious and inspiring performance of Ethel Smyth's *The Prison* in March, I am delighted to welcome you to the final

concert of NLC's 2023-24 season and our performance of Verdi's immense *Missa di Requiem*.

You may have noticed my absence from the concert flyer and tonight you will see a different conductor on the NLC podium. As many of you will be aware, for over a year I've known that my job on the music staff of English National Opera was far from secure, and redundancy finally came, as I knew it would, at the end of March this year. When the offer came from Deutsche Oper to work on one of my favourite operas, *Nixon in China* by John Adams, I could hardly refuse, and, as the first notes of the *Kyrie* sound, we will probably have got to Act 1 Scene 2 of the premiere in Berlin.

Last July I was unable to conduct *A Night at the Opera* because I was in

Manchester conducting rehearsals for the 2023 International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton. My former ENO colleague Chris Hopkins stepped in then and I'm both grateful to him for finding time in his busy schedule to take over this exciting concert, and thrilled to welcome him back. I know that both the choir and this wonderful piece of music will be safe in his more than capable hands. (I am also thrilled to be returning to Buxton this summer to conduct *The Gondoliers*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Sorcerer*!)

I am also extremely grateful to the committee and membership of the choir for their unwavering support as I enter this new era of freelance life, and for releasing me to fulfil these exciting and prestigious contracts.

Murray Hipkin

From the Foreword to the Betzner-Brandt orchestration

The Verdi *Requiem* is sometimes described as his best opera. What characterises the work is the energy and dynamism of the large symphonic orchestra in ensemble with chorus and soloists. By reducing the orchestral forces to five instrumentalists, the work becomes performable by a small choir and the four vocal soloists, not only with respect to the vocal forces but also from an organisational and financial standpoint.

The Verdi *Requiem* lends itself to performance as a 'chamber oratorio' through its many sensitively-wrought passages scored for small forces. But unlike, for example, Brahms *German Requiem*, the Verdi *Requiem* can definitely not be performed with just a piano accompaniment. A 'Dies irae' without bass drum would be a pale imitation of itself. But how can the tonal colours and the force of the orchestral tutti be portrayed with fewer instruments? And, above all, with which instruments? In the version published here the choice has fallen on horn, double bass, timpani, piano, and marimba and bass drum.

In its tonal characteristics the horn is very adaptable and it can make a most essential contribution to a full tutti sound at dramatic points by playing 'cuivré' (brassy with a forced tone). It is well suited to recreating and depicting the cantabile melodic style of other wind instruments, eg the oboe in the first movement. The double bass, representing all the string instruments, portrays all the sounds of bowed and plucked strings and, reinforcing or supporting the piano left hand, forms the basis of sound for the entire work. At times the double bass fills in for the cello. The timpani part is taken from the original version, almost unaltered. The timpani were considered indispensable because they are absolutely characteristic of the energy of the tutti passages and in addition, can hold soft sustained notes with rolls as hardly any other instrument can.

The piano is the backbone of this version. It plays almost all of the harmonically and melodically important passages, and the part is based on the existing piano reduction. Where it is important to provide body for the sound, tremoli and more virtuosi writing is introduced. The marimba is the 'joker' in this instrumentation. This versatile instrument plays passages from all groups of instruments: a 'tapestry' of strings, woodwinds, yes even – together with the piano – the section with the (additional) four off-stage trumpets in the 'Rex tremendae'. The marimba player also assumes the part of the bass drum.

All the instrumental parts demand virtuoso performances from the players as they are constantly involved and challenged both as soloists and orchestral musicians. Consequently this version presents some effects in the arrangement which deviate from previous listening habits. Many of these passages serve to heighten attention and enable listeners to hear the work with new ears, as well as developing other images and associations, just as you can discover new shadows, sharper or softer contours and a completely different atmosphere in what would otherwise be the same motif in a black-and-white photograph.

Berlin, December 2012. Michael Betzner-Brandt
Translation: Elizabeth Robinson Reproduced with permission

MESSA DA REQUIEM

VERDI

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901): *Requiem* (1874)

Various described as too Catholic (early London performances were not particularly well supported) and not Catholic enough (because of the use of female voices), Verdi's *Requiem* is nevertheless thought to be the most frequently performed choral work composed since the compilation of Mozart's *Requiem*. It began life as the *Libera me* contributed by Verdi to a composite mass proposed as a memorial to Rossini, who died in 1868, with other movements each contributed by leading Italian composers of the time. Unfortunately, most of the music didn't satisfy the organising committee and the performance never took place. It wasn't until after the death of the Italian writer Manzoni in 1873 that Verdi revised it and completed the remaining movements. Dismissed initially by some critics as opera in ecclesiastical vestments, it was never intended for liturgical performance and is remarkable for the operatic theatricality with which Verdi deploys his consummate musicality in combining chorus and soloists to display the full range of human reactions to death and its transcendence. Fear, terror, rage and defiance alternate through diverse musical forms in its seven sections with remorse, reconciliation, mercy and forgiveness. They take singers and listeners alike through a dramatically expressive gamut of intense emotions before the gentle, concluding plea for deliverance in which Verdi's masterwork had its origins.

Tonight's performance is to the accompaniment scored by Michael Betzner Brandt in 2013 for choir and small instrumental ensemble consisting of piano, horn, double bass, marimba, timpani and bass drum.

Only a genius could write something like this – Johannes Brahms

Brahms was responding to the conductor, Hans von Bulow, who had dismissed Verdi's *Requiem* in a German newspaper report without hearing it performed and after only the briefest of glimpses at the score. Brahms claimed von Bulow had 'made a fool of himself for all time' but although he later apologised profusely for his 'great journalistic *imbecility*', he was not alone in dismissing the work initially. Cosima Wagner, who with her husband attended an early performance in Vienna, said it was 'a work of which it would certainly be best to say nothing'. Her remark may well have been motivated in part by the Wagners' notorious opposition to Brahms, whose unalloyed championing of it would surely have irritated them, but what Verdi had accomplished was a major break with sacred musical convention.

The work was never intended for liturgical performance, despite being premiered in 1874 at a 'dry' mass (without the sacraments), in the baroque interior of San Marco in Milan, chosen for its acoustics, its movements linked by the church choir chanting Ambrosian plainsong. Two of the soloists and many of the chorus were women – still not acceptable to the church, but insisted on by Verdi. This had been in his mind since composing the *Libera me* for the commemorative composite mass for Rossini in 1868, when he wrote that someone towards whom the Pope was more sympathetic would have to seek his permission for their inclusion if the work were to be performed. At the *Requiem*'s premiere, the dispensation came from the Archbishop of Milan with the proviso that the female singers wore long black dresses, mourning veils and were concealed behind a curtain. There was

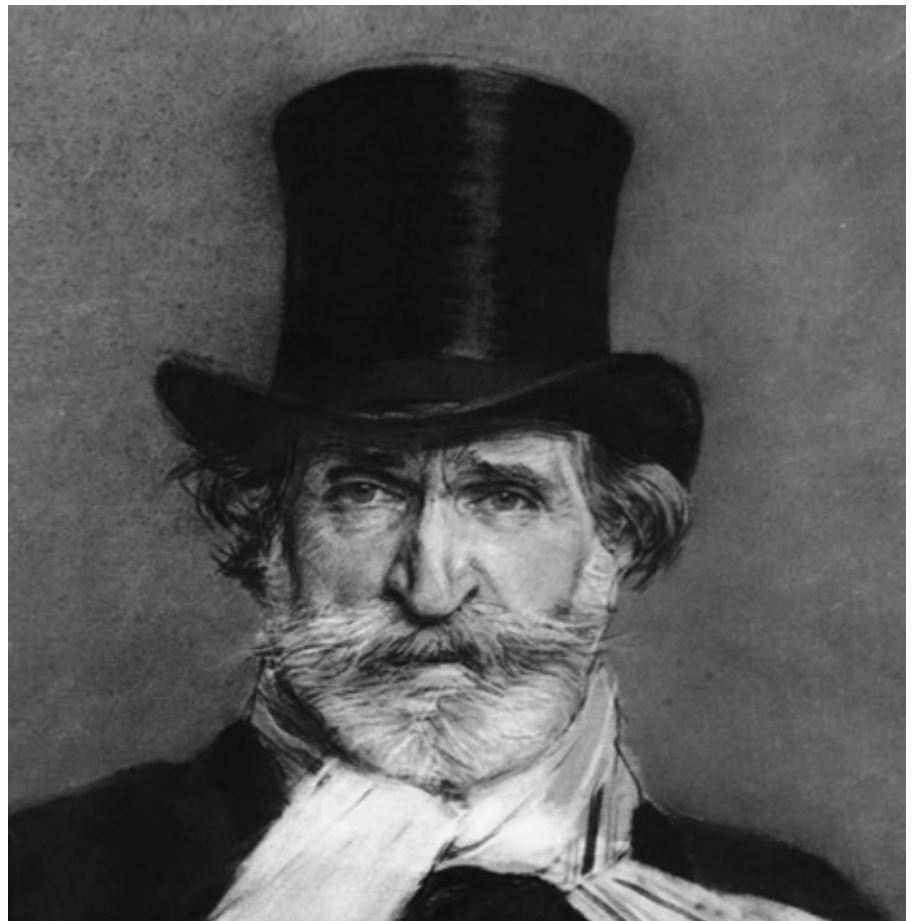
a prohibition also on applause, making the enthusiasm with which it was received rather muted in expression.

But Verdi had planned the initial presentations of his work with his usual meticulous professionalism and, anticipating his wider public's wish to hear it, had arranged three subsequent performances at La Scala. At the first of these, every section was greeted with tumultuous applause, some were repeated as encores and at its conclusion Verdi was presented with a silver crown on a velvet cushion, befitting the national hero he had by then become. A tour during which Verdi premiered the work at opera houses and concert halls in European capitals followed, including a performance at the Royal Albert Hall with a chorus of 1200, ten times the number at the first performance in Milan.

That the venues selected for these performances were secular reinforces Verdi's conception of the work, in the tradition of the major Masses of Beethoven, Berlioz and Brahms, as a public statement of his aesthetic and social philosophy for a specific occasion – in this case as a tribute to the Italian poet and novelist, Alessandro Manzoni. Verdi venerated Manzoni, referring to him at the time of Rossini's death as the other glory of Italy: "When (he) who still lives is no more, what will we have left?" Manzoni reciprocated, inscribing a photograph of himself 'to Giuseppe Verdi, a glory of Italy, from a decrepit Lombard writer'. Apart from a mutual respect for each other's work, what united them was their commitment to the Risorgimento and its aim to unify Italy under single, native rule, free from foreign domination – at the time of Verdi's birth, Le Roncole, his home town near Busseto in the department of Taro, was part of the French Empire.

As his reputation grew, Verdi's music came to be seen increasingly as an expression of Italian nationalism. Although he was only mildly sympathetic to its aims and always reluctant to make explicitly political statements, *Va pensiero*, the chorus in his 1842 opera *Nabucco*, in which the Israelites in Babylonian exile sing of their longing for their lost homeland, was adopted as an anthem of the Italian struggle for independence and often sung at political demonstrations. Even the letters of his name became an acronym, scrawled widely as apparently innocent graffiti marking his popularity during the 1848 insurrections, but actually standing for **V**ittorio **E**manuele, **R**e **d'**Italia, the Piedmontese King and Duke of Savoy whom the nationalists were fighting to bring to power as King of a sovereign Italy. After unification, Verdi was elected to the first Italian parliament in 1861, as the member for Busseto, and was thus in a strong political as well as aesthetic position from which to propose his idea for the composite commemorative mass for Rossini seven years later.

Manzoni was also elected to that first parliament. His reputation had been established initially on the basis of the poems he had written between 1812 and 1822: Goethe judged his ode *Il cinque Maggio* to be the finest European literary response to Napoleon's death in 1821. But his importance to the Risorgimento stemmed from his 1827 novel *I promessi sposi* (*The Betrothed*). The successive editions in which it was published up to 1840 reflected a shift from an essentially 18th century literary style to a serviceable modern Italian based on the classical Tuscan speech of Boccaccio, Dante and Petrarch, thereby standardizing a language for an emerging nation state whose culture had been previously



factionalized in a chaotic variety of regional dialects. It accomplished for Italy and the Italian language what Luther's translation of the Bible had accomplished for 16th century Germany. Verdi, who had first read the novel as a sixteen-year-old, judged it 'a book which is not only the greatest product of our times, but also one of the finest in all ages which has issued from the human mind. And, more than being just a book, it is a comfort to humanity as well...as true as truth itself.'

Understandably then, Verdi was grief-stricken by the death, on May 22, 1873, of a man that was both his friend and hero, as well as a strong political ally: 'With him', he wrote to his friend, Countess Clara Maffei,

'ends the most pure, the most sacred, the highest of our glories. I have read many of the newspapers, and not one of them speaks of him as he should be spoken of. Many words, but none of them profoundly felt.' Verdi's way of seeking to remedy this was to propose to his publisher, Giulio Ricordi, that he should compose a requiem to the man he had referred to as 'nostro Grande, nostro Santo'.

He was, in fact, already at work on revising and developing into a mass the unperformed *Libera me'* he had written to commemorate Rossini. In a chance remark to Ricordi, in January, 1871, he had claimed to remember nothing of his work for the aborted project of the Rossini mass. Ricordi, in turn, reported the remark to Alberto

Mazzucato, a prominent composer and critic who had been a member of the Rossini commemoration committee. Mazzucato retrieved Verdi's manuscript from the Ricordi archives and wrote to Verdi, after reading it again, of being "moved and astonished...You, my dear Maestro, have written the most beautiful, the most magnificent, the most colossally poetic page one can imagine. Nothing more perfect has been done so far, nothing beyond it can ever be done". Mazzucato's compliments almost persuaded Verdi to complete a new requiem at that time. Replying with his thanks, he noted that "with a little more working out I would find that I had already written the *Requiem (aeternam)* and the *Dies irae* of which there is a reprise in the *Libera me*". The temptation to pursue the working out, however, he felt would soon pass, since the contribution of yet another requiem to the very many already extant would be pointless, "and I detest pointless things". For all that, nevertheless, it was presumably in response to the composer's own request that in April, 1873, more than a month before Manzoni's death, Ricordi returned to Verdi the autograph of his *Libera me*. In June, after a solitary visit to Manzoni's grave, he wrote to Ricordi proposing a requiem for which the commemoration of Manzoni would provide the justification, to be performed the following year on the first anniversary of his death. He noted that it "will have somewhat vast proportions, and besides a large orchestra and large chorus it will need four or five soloists – I can't as yet specify the precise number".

Whereas Manzoni devoutly practised a liberal Catholicism, Verdi, according to his partner Giuseppina, was 'very little of a believer, and that with an obstinacy and calm that make one

want to beat him'. The commitment to the Risorgimento of both men inevitably led them to oppose the hierarchical financial and political power of the church and the role of its priesthood in legitimating the post-feudal, pre-nationalist European political order. Yet Verdi had referred to Manzoni as a Saint and so, whilst a requiem was an appropriate memorial to such a hallowed figure, from Verdi its character could at best be expected to be agnostic. That his essentially humanist sense of virtue was compatible with religious expression was formulated eloquently by Giuseppina: "There are some who are truly virtuous by nature with a need to believe in God. Others, who are no less perfect, are happy enough to believe in nothing at all, while observing every precept of strictest morality to the letter. On these terms, for me, Verdi and Manzoni both are equally subjects of endless contemplation". Thus, she insisted, "a man like Verdi must write like Verdi, that is, according to his own feeling and interpretation of the text. The religious spirit and the way in which it is given expression must bear the stamp of its period and its author's personality". She was anticipating the need to respond to those who would criticise him for bringing the theatrical idiom of opera – the mode in which his virtuosity was supreme – to his setting of the requiem, but her reference to the text is especially perceptive. Verdi had once written to a librettist, complaining of his often vain search for good texts for his operas, that he wanted 'a beautiful subject, *original*, interesting, with fine situations, and impassioned – passions above all!' The words of the requiem, the Roman mass for the dead, formulated as mythic, ritual text by its various authors over centuries and confronting passionately the fine, dramatic situations of human

mortality in the awesome belief that it celebrates the soul's transcendence into eternal bliss, surely provided him with just such a beautiful subject. His setting of its seven sections clearly suggests that sense of it.

The work begins solemnly with the chorus quietly chanting the ritual plea for eternal peace and light which develops, at first assertively then more gently, into the *Te decet hymnus*' invocation for departed souls. This leads directly into the soloists' successive and thoroughly operatic calls for divine mercy in the *Kyrie*. The chorus supports and reiterates the soloists' continuing prayer before bringing the movement to a conclusion that matches the soft calm of its opening. The combination in shifting dynamics of chorus and soloists have set the scene for what will be a dramatic exploration of the fate of the dead. Yet the contrast in what follows could hardly be more stark. The five striking instrumental chords that open the contemplation of the Day of Wrath introduce a complex sequence of scenes that constitute a third of the entire work in a musical panorama which displays the full variety of Verdi's compositional skills. The chorus's furiously agitated repetitions of 'Dies irae' are picked up by the tenor soloist, signalling the awe and terror felt at the prospect of wrathful, final judgment and quailing into a trembling fear. A short orchestral interlude amplifies gradually into *Tuba mirum*, the chorus's fierce call to the dead to stand before the throne of God Almighty.

The sequence continues with soloists and chorus alternating in the bass's fearful resurrectionary awe of *Mors stupebit* and the mezzo's portentous reminder of the *Liber scriptus*, before both sopranos are joined by the

tenor to continue the narrative of judgment, a lovely, plaintively sung trio of lamentation. The basses of the chorus then raise the mighty salute of 'Rex tremendae majestatis' before soloists and the full chorus invoke the initially timid, then desperate plea: 'salva me fons pietatis'. Over the next eight sections of the Sequence, soloists set out the promissory theological grounds justifying this call for salvation, taking the work into a series of virtuosic operatic displays. In the *Recordare*, both sopranos tenderly duet in imploring Christ to remember that his very purpose was the redemption of sinners, followed by the wretched pathos of the tenor's 'Ingemisco tamquam reus' and its sense of the unworthiness of the sinner's redemptive prayer. Finally, the bass's 'Confutatis maledictis' faces the consuming furnace of damnation in resolute sorrow, with a dignified supplicant's plea for comfort at the final hour. These solos stand as individual human testaments to the overpowering immanence of death, complementing dramatically the chorus's iteration of its terrible, divinely ordained and impersonal inevitability. The dramatic tension is then resolved gorgeously with the *Lachrymosa*, initially by soloists, then reinforced by the chorus in a quietly convulsive surrender to grief and sorrow just as exquisite as that of Mozart's final contribution to his own *Requiem*. The sequence closes with the chorus's quiet repetition of their plea for rest and peace.

The Offertory opens with an instrumental statement, before mezzo, tenor and bass soloists call for divine intervention to save the souls of the dead from the devouring mouth of hell before they should otherwise perish in its darkness – 'ne cadant in obscurum'. At this point they are joined, in a transformationally operatic

moment, by the soprano who utters a sustained 'sed' (but), at first softly, rising gradually to a crescendo then falling back, interceding with a call on St Michael to lead the departed souls towards heavenly light and the redemption of the ancient divine promise of deliverance made to Abraham and his heirs. With this lengthy quartet, Verdi marks the theatrical turning point in the *Requiem*'s narrative, moving away from mourning to offer prayers, praise and sacrifice in support of the plea for transcendence of death's dominion.

The chorus returns to mark the transition with a *Sanctus* that Verdi sets refreshingly as a virtuosic fugue for double choir. After cries of 'Sanctus', first-chorus sopranos open this exultant hymn of praise in a dance-like rhythm which continues briskly throughout its length and dynamic range to 'Benedictus' and final 'Hosannas in excelsis'. Soprano soloists then duet to open the *Agnus Dei* and continue the mood of optimistic redemptive pleading, joined by the chorus who move on calmly, through a series of melodic variations, to the closing repetitive coda of their own requiem call. *Lux aeterna*, the call for eternal light to shine upon the redeemed souls, reasserts the operatic character of Verdi's setting in a trio for mezzo, who sings the full prayer, tenor and bass, who repeat again the call for rest and peace. They conclude in a sweet, unhurried calm which continues with the returning soprano soloist's opening chant of 'Libera me Domine', the final plea for deliverance. Yet there is a returning sense of ominousness here, carried by the words: 'die illa tremenda; quando coeli movendi sunt et terra'. The chorus picks up this plainsong chant as the soloist intensifies the threat with 'Dum veneris judicare' and 'Tremens factus

sum', before tenors and basses lead the chorus back once more, against fiercely agitated instrumental accompaniment, to their terrified cry of 'Dies irae'. Their frightened awe declines into quieter, slower but no less fearful repetition as they softly reprise 'Requiem aeternam' to a new scoring. It is extraordinary to realise here that, although Verdi is recalling his opening section, that itself was recalled from his much earlier setting, for the Rossini commemoration, of this final section, with which the idea of his full *Requiem* began. This passage is followed by the soprano soloist leading the chorus into a powerful repetition of the *Libera me*, now set as a lively, almost literally liberating fugue which, together with the section's opening chant, is thought to be all that has survived of Verdi's 1868 setting of it. With the final iterations of 'Libera me', tempo slowed dramatically by each note being made double its original length, the soprano soars climactically above the chorus before the ensemble sinks quietly to a soft, slow plea, closing the work with the same reverential quietness of its opening.

More than a quarter of a century after the first performance, Verdi himself lay dying in his rooms at the Grand Hotel et de Milan on the appositely named Via Manzoni, the long road in central Milan which links piazza Cavour to piazza della Scala. His devoted fellow countrymen covered the street with layers of straw, softening the sound of horses and motor traffic in order to grant their hero, in his final hours, the rest and peace for which his *Requiem* had pleaded on their behalf with such eloquent humanity.

Paul Filmer

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901): *Requiem* (1874)

1 REQUIEM AND KYRIE ELEISON

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass and Chorus

Requiem Aeternam dona eis Domine: et lux perpetua
luceat eis.

Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion, et tibi redetur
votum in Jerusalem: exaudi orationem meam, ad te
omnis caro veniet.

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

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison.

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord; and may perpetual
light shine upon them.*

*A hymn in Zion befits you, O God, and a debt will be
paid to you in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer: all earthly
flesh will come to you.*

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

2 DIES IRAE

Solo Quartet and Chorus

Dies Irae

Chorus

Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.
Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando iudex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!

*The day of wrath, that day will
dissolve the world in ashes,
as David and the Sibyl prophesied.
How great will be the terror,
when the Judge comes
who will smash everything completely!*

Tuba Mirum

Bass and Chorus

Tuba mirum spargens sonum,
Per sepulchra regionem,
Coget omnes ante thronum.
Mors stupebit et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

*The trumpet, scattering a marvellous sound
through the tombs of every land,
will gather all before the throne.
Death and Nature shall stand amazed,
when all Creation rises again
to answer to the Judge.*

Liber Scriptus

Mezzo-Soprano and Chorus

Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continetur,
Unde mundus iudicetur.
Iudex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet apparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

*A written book will be brought forth,
which contains everything
for which the world will be judged.
Therefore when the Judge takes His seat,
whatever is hidden will be revealed:
nothing shall remain unavenged.*

Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvat saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.

*The day of wrath, that day will
dissolve the world in ashes,
as David and the Sibyl prophesied.*

Quid Sum Miser*Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Tenor*

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
 Quem patronum rogaturus,
 Cum vix justus sit securus!

*What can a wretch like me say?
 Whom shall I ask to intercede for me,
 when even the just ones are unsafe?*

Rex Tremendae*Solo Quartet and Chorus*

Rex tremendae majestatis,
 Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
 Salva me, fons pietatis.

*King of dreadful majesty,
 who freely saves the redeemed ones,
 save me, O font of pity.*

Recordare*Soprano and Mezzo-Soprano*

Recordare, Jesu Pie,
 Quod sum causa tuae viae,
 Ne me perdas illa die.
 Quaerens me, sedisti lassus,
 Redemisti crucem passus,
 Tantus labor non sit cassus.
 Juste judex ultionis,
 Donum fac remissionis
 Ante diem rationis.

*Recall, merciful Jesus,
 that I was the reason for your journey:
 do not destroy me on that day.
 In seeking me, you sat down wearily;
 enduring the Cross, you redeemed me:
 do not let these pains to have been in vain.
 Just Judge of punishment:
 give me the gift of redemption
 before the day of reckoning.*

Ingemisco*Tenor*

Ingemisco tanquem reus,
 Culpa rubet vultus meus,
 Supplicanti parce, Deus.
 Qui Mariam absolvisti,
 Et latronem exaudisti,
 Mihi quoque spem dedisti.
 Preces meae non sunt dignae,
 Sed tu bonus fac benigne,
 Ne perenni cremer igne.
 Inter oves locum praesta,
 Et ab haedis me sequestra,
 Statuens in parte dextra.

*I groan as a guilty one,
 and my face blushes with guilt;
 spare the suppliant, O God.
 You, who absolved Mary Magdalen,
 and heard the prayer of the thief,
 have given me hope, as well.
 My prayers are not worthy,
 but show mercy, O benevolent one,
 lest I burn forever in fire.
 Give me a place among the sheep,
 and separate me from the goats,
 placing me on your right hand.*

Confutatis*Bass and Chorus*

Confutatis maledictis,
 Flammis acribus addictis,
 Voca me cum benedictis.
 Oro supplex et acclinis,
 Cor contritum quasi cinis,
 Gere curam mei finis,
 Dies irae, dies illa,
 Solvet saeculum in favilla,
 Teste David cum Sybilla.

*When the damned are silenced,
 and given to the fierce flames,
 call me with the blessed ones.
 I pray, suppliant and kneeling,
 with a heart contrite as ashes:
 take my ending into your care.
 The day of wrath, that day will
 dissolve the world in ashes,
 as David and the Sibyl prophesied.*

Lacrymosa*Solo Quartet and Chorus*

Lacrymosa dies illa,
 Qua resurget ex favilla,
 Judicandus homo reus.
 Huic ergo parce Deus.
 Pie Jesu Domine,
 Dona eis requiem!
 Amen.

*That day is one of weeping,
 on which shall rise from the ashes
 the guilty man, to be judged.
 Therefore, spare this one, O God.
 Merciful Lord Jesus:
 grant them peace.
 Amen.*

INTERVAL**3 OFFERTORIO***Offertory for Solo Quartet*

Domine Jesu Christe, rex gloriae, libera animas
 omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni et de
 profundo lacu.

*O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory: deliver the souls of
 all the faithful dead from the pains of hell and from
 the deep pit;*

Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus,
 ne cadant in obscurum: sed signifer sanctus Michael
 repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam, quam olim
 Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

*deliver them from the mouth of the lion; that hell
 may not swallow them, and that they may not fall
 into darkness. But may the holy standard-bearer
 Michael show them the holy light; which you once
 promised to Abraham and his descendents.*

Hostias et preces tibi, Domine, laudis offerimus.
 Tu suscipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie
 memoriam facimus, fac eas, Domine, de morte
 transire ad vitam, quam olim Abrahae promisisti et
 semini ejus.

*We offer to you, O Lord, sacrifices and prayers.
 Receive them on behalf of those souls whom we
 commemorate today. Grant, O Lord, that they
 might pass from death into that life which you once
 promised to Abraham and his descendents.*

Libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de
 poenis inferni et de profundo lacu, de morte transire
 ad vitam.

*Deliver the souls of all the faithful dead from the
 pains of hell; Grant that they might pass from death
 into that life.*

4 SANCTUS*Fugue for Double Chorus*

Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth,
 Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
 Hosanna in excelsis!
 Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini.
 Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
 Hosanna in excelsis!

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.
 Heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest!
 Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.
 Heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest!*

5 AGNUS DEI*Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Chorus*

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

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
 grant them rest.
 Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
 grant them rest everlasting.*

6 LUX AETERNA*Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor and Bass*

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis tuis in
 aeternum, quia pius es.
 Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux
 perpetua luceat eis.

*Let eternal light shine upon them, O Lord, with your
 saints forever; for you are merciful.
 Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual
 light shine upon them.*

7 LIBERA ME*Soprano and Chorus*

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa
 tremenda; quando coeli movendi sunt et terra.
 Dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.
 Tremens factus sum ego et timeo, dum discussio
 venerit atque ventura ira.
 Dies irae, dies illa, dies calamitatis et miseriae, dies
 magna et amara valde.

*Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death on that awful
 day, when the heavens and the earth shall be moved:
 when you will come to judge the world by fire.
 I tremble, and I fear the judgment and the wrath to
 come, when the heavens and the earth shall be moved.
 The day of wrath, that day of calamity and misery; a
 great and bitter day, indeed.*

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

*Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual
 light shine upon them.*

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa
 tremenda; quando coeli movendi sunt et terra.
 Dum veneris judicare saeculum per ignem.

*Deliver me, Lord, from eternal death on that awful day.
 Deliver me, O Lord, when the heavens and the earth shall
 be moved; when you will come to judge the world by fire.*

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa
 tremenda. Libera me, Domine.

*Deliver me, Lord, from eternal death on that awful
 day. Deliver me.*

BIOGRAPHIES



PHILIPPA BOYLE SOPRANO

Soprano Philippa Boyle trained in Rome at the Opera Studio of Accademia Nazionale Santa Cecilia, where she studied with world-renowned soprano Renata Scotto, and Conservatorio Santa Cecilia. Prior to her studies in Italy she was a choral scholar at Clare College, Cambridge, where she read Classics.

Current engagements include

Schönberg's *Erwartung* for Southbank Sinfonia under Lee Reynolds at St John's Smith Square, Manon Lescaut (cover) (English Touring Opera), Marie Wozzeck with Regents Opera, and Tom Coult's *Beautiful Caged Thing* and Sibelius's *Luonnotar* with St Paul's Sinfonia.

Recent opera engagements include Lady Macbeth *Macbeth* (Paisley Opera with the orchestra of Scottish Opera), Senta *The Flying Dutchman* (OperaUpClose/Manchester Camerata), Sieglinde *Die Walküre* (London Opera Company), Judith *Bluebeard's Castle* (Regents Opera), Agrippina (cover) *Agrippina* (English Touring Opera); Leonora *La forza del destino*, Jenifer *A Midsummer Marriage* (Regent's Opera). Other engagements include Mum *Greek* (Arcola Theatre); Angrboda (cover) *The Monstrous Child* (ROH Linbury); Eva *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Elisabetta de Valois *Don Carlo*, Jenůfa and Kát'a Kabanová (Fulham Opera); Elizabeth *Maria Stuarda* (OperaUpClose) and the title role in

Tosca (King's Head Theatre). She has performed with Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Wexford Opera, Nevill Holt Opera and Aix Festival.

Recent UK concert engagements include Verdi *Requiem* in Ely Cathedral and with the London Mozart Players at the Royal Festival Festival Hall, Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall, Elgar *The Apostles* with the Philharmonia at Gloucester Cathedral in the closing concert of the 2023 Three Choirs Festival. Elsewhere, she made recent debuts in Poland *Deità Silvine* (Sinfonietta Cracovia under Lee Reynolds) and in North Macedonia (music by Zbigniew Preisner with the Philharmonic of the Republic of North Macedonia under Nicholas Chalmers). She recently released an acclaimed disc of works by Elisabeth Lutyens with organist Tom Winpenny for Toccata Classics.

www.philippaboyle.com



SOPHIE GOLDRICK MEZZO-SOPRANO

London-born Sophie grew up in Sydney, Australia. She trained in acting at Theatre Nepean, in Sydney, and at the Royal Northern College of Music where roles included Nancy *Albert*

Herring and Arsamenes *Serse*.

Sophie is a full time member of English National Opera and has sung a number of roles there including: Moppett *Paul Bunyan*, New Ofglen *The Handmaid's Tale*, Girl *The Midsummer Marriage* and Mrs Thompson *It's a Wonderful Life!*

Elsewhere, roles include; Ericlea/Pisandro *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* and Diana *La Calisto* for Longborough Festival, Baba the Turk (cover) *The Rake's Progress* for The Grange Festival, Dinah *Trouble in Tahiti* for Stage Left Project, Ruth *The Pirates of Penzance* for Merry Opera Co., Flora *La traviata* and Kate Pinkerton *Madama Butterfly* for West Green House, Alcina *Orlando Paladino* for Opera Purpur, Pitti-Sing (cover) *The Mikado* for Scottish Opera, Emilia *Otello* for the Al Bustan Festival,

Therese *Intermezzo*, Ramiro (cover) *La Finta Giardiniera* for Buxton International Festival and Carmen *Carmen* for Opera on Location and Focus Opera.

Later this summer Sophie will sing La suora zelatrice in *Suor Angelica* for West Green House and cover Giovanna in Jonathan Miller's *Rigoletto* at ENO.

Sophie produces new opera and theatre with her company Shadow Opera. Their latest podcast opera, *Veritable Michael*, is available to stream now.

Her last performance with North London Chorus was Bach *Magnificat* in November 2023.

www.sophiegoldrick.com
www.shadowopera.com



RUAIRI BOWEN TENOR

A finalist in the International Handel Singing Competition in 2020, Ruairi Bowen is much in demand as an interpreter of Baroque repertoire in the UK and abroad, collaborating with some of the leading conductors in the field including Emmanuelle Haïm, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Stephen Layton. An experienced

Evangelist of Bach's *Passions*, he made his debuts at Bachfest Leipzig and Snape Maltings with Solomon's Knot, with whom he most recently sang *Weihnachts-Oratorium* at London's Wigmore Hall. Other engagements have included Bach *B Minor Mass* (Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra), the *St John Passion* (Melbourne Symphony Orchestra/Hamer Hall), as well as for the annual Good Friday performance with Polyphony and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Stephen Layton. He has sung *Messiah* all over the UK, and performed it with Dubai Opera this winter.

Equally at home with larger-scale symphonic works, he sang in the world premiere & recording of *Mass Via Victrix* with the BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales and Adrian Partington, Dvorak *Requiem* (Philharmonia Orchestra/Three Choirs Festival), *Elijah* (Worcester Cathedral), *Missa Solemnis* (Ben Palmer/Covent Garden Sinfonia) and *A Cotswold Romance* (Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra). In 2023 he sang Finzi *Dies*

Natalis, Britten *Serenade for Tenor, Horn & Strings* and Verdi *Messa da Requiem* for the first time, while 2024 include Lili Boulanger *Faust et Hélène* with the Royal Orchestral Society and Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

On the operatic stage, he made his debut with English National Opera as Earl Tolloller *Iolanthe* this autumn, while other engagements in 2023 included staged performances of *Die Schöpfung* (Lithuanian National Opera), First Armed Man/Second Priest *Die Zauberflöte* (Maxim Emelyanychev/Scottish Chamber Orchestra at Edinburgh International Festival), Jim Cocks *Robinson Crusoe* (West Green House Opera), a revival of Purcell *The Indian Queen* (Le Concert d'Astrée in Caen, Antwerp and Luxembourg) and Cyril Princess *Ida* with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He makes his debut with Opera Holland Park and Prague State Opera this summer, and continues his studies with John Lattimore & Sam Queen.



FREDERICK LONG BASS-BARITONE

Frederick trained at the Royal Academy of Music (where he was later elected an Associate) and the National Opera

Studio. Having launched his operatic career at Glyndebourne, he is lucky enough to have been engaged by other major houses including ENO, WNO, Opera Holland Park and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. He also enjoyed an association with English Touring Opera, and his performances as the magician Isménor in Rameau's *Dardanus*, the Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas*, and Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, received widespread critical acclaim.

Recent highlights include his debut in Denmark as Aeneas with the boundary-pushing Barokksolistene, and tours as a guest soloist with the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists, with performances including the Bach *B Minor Mass* at the Carnegie Hall, New York and *Christmas Oratorio* at La Scala, Milan and the Palace of Versailles.

His rich and wide-ranging bass-baritone suits much of the great oratorio repertoire, from the Bach *Passions* and Mozart *Masses*, through Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Elgar's *The Kingdom*. His appearance as Altomaro in *Fernando* for the London Handel Festival was described as "ravishing" (the *i*) and "magnificently sung" (the *Telegraph*), and he performed a chamber *Messiah* with the Irish Baroque Orchestra at Wigmore Hall, with whom he will record the work later in the year.

When he is avoiding work, or work is avoiding him, he can be found pottering around the cider presses of Somerset, where he has made his home with his wife and two young children.



CHRIS HOPKINS CONDUCTOR

Equally at home on the concert stage as in the theatre pit, conductor Chris Hopkins is a frequent face at English National Opera, this season

conducting a critically acclaimed run of *Iolanthe*. He has conducted more than 60 shows at the London Coliseum, including the company's first production of *The Yeomen of the Guard* and a new Olivier Award-nominated production of *HMS Pinafore*, alongside *La bohème*, *The Magic Flute*, *The Mikado*, and more. He recently made his debuts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Grange Park Opera with a new 5-star production of *Werther*.

He is principal conductor of English Sinfonia, Music Director of Orchestra of the City, and has worked with Opera de Paris, the Royal Opera House and Glyndebourne Opera, on record with English Chamber Orchestra, on other projects with Royal Ballet Sinfonia, Crash Ensemble, London Mozart Players, Birdgang Ltd, and appeared at festivals including Aldeburgh, Presteigne, Cubitt Sessions, New

Paths, and Latitude. His work has been broadcast on BBC Radio 2, 3 and 4, BBC 1, 2 and 4, Scala Radio and Classic FM.

As a pianist, Chris has played for audiences around the world, working with orchestras in a range of concertos, including Brahms, Mozart, Prokofiev, Rachmaninoff, Beethoven (complete) Shostakovich and Gershwin; and recently Mozart 10, 15, 19, 22, 23 and 24, Rachmaninoff 2, Beethoven 4 and Shostakovich 2. He is a writer for Pretty Decent Music and recently released his first album of piano miniatures: *Impressions 1*.

Chris was honoured in 2013 to be made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

His last performance with North London Chorus was *A Night at the Opera* in July 2023.



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Saturday
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NORTH LONDON CHORUS

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Gloria Arthur	Debbie Goldman	Marta Jansa	Jessica Mckoen	Judith Suissa
Michaela Carlowe	Rhona Graham	Ira Kalechman	Ros Massey	Joanne Walker
Jenny Cohen	Katharine Hodgkin	Susan Kempster	Helena Michaels	Patricia Whitehead
Laetitia Dimitriu	Amanda Horton	Amanda Lebus	Susan Segal Horn	Rebecca Woolf

ALTO

Anna Armbruster-Evans	Vicky Faure Walker	Mary Instone	Catherine Mkhize	Alison Salisbury
Eloise Beckles	Eleanor Flaxen	Helen Jones	Judith Moser	Judith Schott
Vivienne Canter	Helen Ford	Alice MacKay	Tessa Padel	Julia Tash
Lucy Ellis	Hélène Gordon	Mehrnoosh Sadrzadeh	Isobel Pick	Pauline Treen
Sarah Falk	Viv Gross	Kathryn Metzenthin	Joan Reardon	Catherine Whitehead

TENOR

Gary Bilkus	Pasco Fearon	Sue Heaney	Keith Maiden	Wilhelm Skogstad
Alan Chandler	Richard Grimshaw*	Jeremy Pratt	Nigel Royden	

BASS

Marcus Bartlett	Shaun Davies	Ronnie Engelbert	David Hastings	Andrea Sabbadini
Norman Cohen	Michael Derrick	Paul Filmer	Yoav Landau-Pope	Chris Siva Prakasam*
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*NLC Guest performer



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www.meridiansinfonia.com

NORTH LONDON CHORUS



We are a talented and versatile amateur choir and have established a reputation for performances of a high standard since our first concert in 1977 under the direction of the late Alan Hazeldine. Our musical director since 2003 has been Murray Hipkin, until recently senior répétiteur at English National Opera. His considerable experience, enthusiasm and skills as teacher and conductor of choral music and opera have enabled NLC to flourish through the development of an exciting and ambitious programme of performances drawn from the choral repertoire of the 16th to 21st centuries, as well as works commissioned from contemporary composers.

The choir benefits greatly from working with our vocal coaches who give all members at least two small group tuition sessions each year and is privileged to have as its patrons the renowned operatic soprano Janis Kelly, Professor and Chair of Vocal Performance at the Royal College of Music, and the baroque musicologist and Handel scholar and performer Laurence Cummings, currently music director of the Academy of Ancient Music. Both have performed with us: Janis in 2015 in Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral; in the same year Laurence conducted us at a workshop and concert performance of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in Bloomsbury.

We give public concerts in Autumn, Spring and Summer at St James Church in Muswell Hill, and continue to explore performing at larger venues in Central London and on occasional overseas visits. We performed Brahms' *German Requiem* with the Berlin choir Cantus Domus at Milton Court in the Barbican Centre in 2014. This reciprocal visit by Cantus Domus followed our visit to Berlin in November 2013 to perform the *War Requiem* with them at the Berliner Konzerthaus. In November 2017 we performed in concert with the Swiss choir Contrapunto at the City Church of St Jakob, Staffauer in Zurich, to celebrate their 30th anniversary. They came to London later that month for a joint concert with us in Shoreditch Town Hall. The programme for both concerts included works by Mendelssohn and Vaughan Williams and a new composition by their artistic director, Beat Dähler.

We regularly explore unusual repertoire and styles of performance: in December 2020 (during lockdown) many members participated in the London Handel Festival's *Messiah Reimagined*, broadcast live on YouTube, as part of a pre-recorded digital choir. Our first live post-lockdown concert was Britten's *Saint Nicolas* in November 2021, in partnership with Finchley Children's Music Group under Grace Rossiter, with an additional relaxed afternoon performance for families with children and audience members with special needs. We repeated this successful venture at our July 2023 concert *A Night at the Opera*.

Our Spring 2024 concert was of Ethel Smyth's little-known and rarely performed work, *The Prison*, introduced by Lucy Stevens (performer of her own one-woman show about the composer). At tonight's performance of Verdi's *Requiem* we are using the orchestration designed by Michael Betzner-Brandt for an unusual combination of instruments to suit smaller groups of singers.

We are a friendly choir and hold regular social events which include a fundraising quiz evening and a weekend workshop. As well as enabling us to work intensively on vocal technique and choral repertoire under expert specialist tuition, the workshop has as one of its highlights a relaxed Saturday evening concert of cabaret-style performances of music, song and humour displaying the considerable range and variety of our members' talents.

As a registered charity, one of whose aims is the promotion, maintenance and improvement of public appreciation of choral music, we have been successful in raising funds to help subsidise our work. Through our own concerts and participation in local events we also support a number of other charities.

We rehearse weekly on Thursday evenings from 7.45pm to 10pm at Martin School in East Finchley and on additional Wednesdays as concert dates approach. We welcome new members and invite interested singers from all voice parts to attend one or two rehearsals prior to auditioning. Details are available at: <https://www.northlondonchorus.org/joining/>

JOIN US!

North London Chorus is looking for new members across all voice parts.

- Experience the joy of choral singing
- Develop your skills under the expert guidance of our Musical Director, Murray Hipkin
- Enjoy technical guidance and support from our team of professional vocal coaches,
- Get involved in our regular social activities and opera trips and enjoy our annual weekend workshops.
- Help organise our concerts and raise funds.



Whether you are an experienced singer or discovering your voice, come and be part of this friendly, ambitious and well-established group of singers.

Rehearsals take place every Thursday evening in East Finchley and we perform three concerts a year, mostly in Muswell Hill.

Here's what recent members say about us:

'First and foremost, the musical standard of performance is very high'

'From the very first moment, everyone made me feel very relaxed and at ease'

'I have made many new friends through helping in one way or another and have found it a joy to be part of such a wonderful organisation'

Come and try us out before joining – we hope you'll enjoy making music with us.

<https://www.northlondonchorus.org/joining/>



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To mark our 40th Anniversary **Friends of North London Chorus** was launched in the summer of 2017, with a performance by our late **Friends of NLC** patron and renowned soprano Sally Silver.

We would be delighted to welcome more **Friends** to the scheme. Donations support and fund special projects, workshops, new commissions and similar activities within our charitable goals, and will also enable us to provide additional support to members in need who would otherwise find it difficult to sing with the choir.

The suggested donation is £40 per year (you are welcome to give more!) and you are warmly invited to join. Membership of Friends of NLC will entitle you to the following:

- Acknowledgement of your generous support in our concert programme (unless you prefer to opt out).
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30 Jun 2012	Dvorak <i>Mass in D</i> Howells <i>An English Mass</i>	12 Mar 2016	Mendelssohn <i>Elijah</i>	30 Nov 2019	Rossini <i>Petite Messe Solennelle</i> Verdi <i>Ave Maria, Va pensiero</i>
15 Dec 2012	King <i>Out of the Depths</i> (First performance) Mozart <i>Mass in C Minor</i>	11 Jun 2016	Bernstein <i>Mass (Choral Suite)</i> Whitacre <i>Five Hebrew Love songs</i> Copland <i>Old American Songs</i>	27 Nov 2021	Britten <i>St Nicolas</i>
20 Apr 2013	J S Bach <i>Mass in B Minor</i>	20 Nov 2016	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>	9 Apr 2022	Brahms <i>Ein deutsches Requiem, Geistliches Lied</i>
29 Jun 2013	Various <i>Summertime</i>	25 Mar 2017	Dove <i>The Passing of the Year</i> Brahms <i>Liebeslieder, Neue Liebeslieder</i>	2 Jul 2022	Cherubini <i>Mass in C minor</i> Bach <i>Cantata 51 Jauchzet Gott</i> Mendelssohn <i>Wie der Hirsch schreit</i>
21 Nov 2013	Britten <i>War Requiem</i>	1 Jun 2017	Mozart <i>Requiem</i> King <i>Out of the Depths</i>	3 Dec 2022	Handel <i>Dixit Dominus</i> Charpentier <i>Messe de Minuit pour Noël</i>
15 Mar 2014	Schubert <i>Mirjams Siegesgesang</i> Korngold <i>Passover Psalm</i> Mendelssohn <i>Hear My Prayer</i> Bernstein <i>Chichester Psalms</i>	25 Nov 2017	Mendelssohn <i>Die erste Walpurgisnacht</i> Vaughan Williams <i>In Windsor Forest</i> Dähler <i>Byzantium</i>	22 Apr 2023	Vaughan Williams <i>A Sea Symphony</i>
14 Jul 2014	Mendelssohn <i>Verleih uns Frieden</i> Brahms <i>Nänie</i> Brahms <i>Ein deutsches Requiem</i>	17 Mar 2018	Haydn <i>The Creation Insanae et vanae curae</i>	22 Jul 2023	A Night at the Opera <i>Arias and choruses from favourite operas and operettas</i>
22 Nov 2014	Beethoven <i>Mass in C</i> Haydn <i>Te Deum</i>	14 Jul 2018	Salieri <i>Requiem</i> Puccini <i>Messa di Gloria</i>	25 Nov 2023	Bach <i>Magnificat, Gloria in Excelsis Deo.</i> Handel <i>Laudate pueri</i>
21 Mar 2015	Fauré <i>Requiem Mass</i> Kodály <i>Missa Brevis</i> Liszt <i>Die Seligkeiten</i>	17 Nov 2018	Britten <i>The Company of Heaven</i> Haydn <i>Nelson Mass</i>	16 Mar 2024	Smyth <i>The Prison</i> Beethoven <i>Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt</i> Brahms <i>Nänie</i>
16 May 2015	Britten <i>War Requiem</i>	9 Mar 2019	JS Bach <i>St John Passion</i>		
4 July 2015	Handel <i>Acis and Galatea</i>	22 Jun 2019	Rutter <i>Magnificat</i> Vaughan Williams <i>Flos campi</i> Dyson <i>Hierusalem</i>		
28 Nov 2015	Bach <i>Magnificat, Christmas Oratorio Parts 1,2,3</i>				

Please visit www.northlondonchorus.org for the full list dating back to the first concert in 1977

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