



Tring Choral Society



Conductor: Colin Stevens



Mozart *Solemn Vespers K339*

Elis Pehkonen *Russian Requiem*

SOLOISTS

Philippa Boyle (Soprano)
Rebecca Lodge (Contralto)
Robert Johnston(Tenor)
Charles Gibbs (Bass)

Chiltern Orchestral Society
Leader: Janet Hicks

Saturday 19 March 2016 at 7.30pm

Registered Charity No. 276980



The Soloists



PHILIPPA BOYLE (SOPRANO) trained in Rome, at Conservatorio “Santa Cecilia” in Rome, graduating with full marks and distinction, and Santa Cecilia Opera Studio (Accademia Nazionale Santa Cecilia), where she studied bel canto repertoire with world-renowned soprano Renata Scotto. Prior to her studies in Italy,

Winner of first prize in the Emmy Destinn Young Singer Awards for Czech song and opera, and semifinalist in the Kathleen Ferrier awards, Philippa has performed at Festival Lyrique d’Aix en Provence, Beijing Music Festival, Munich Oper Fest and Innsbruck Festival under conductors including Ivor Bolton, Rene Jacobs, Pablo Heras-Casado and Andrea Marcon.



Philippa was a choral scholar at Clare College, Cambridge, where she read Classics.

Recent opera engagements include Alice Ford (Verdi’s *Falstaff*) for Woodhouse Opera, Donna Anna (Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*) for Opus Opera, Giorgetta (Puccini’s *Il Tabarro*) for Opera Vera and Giunone (Cavalli’s *La Calisto*) for Hampstead Garden Opera, while oratorio engagements include Verdi’s *Requiem* under David Hill in King’s College, Cambridge, Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis* in Snape Maltings and St Albans Cathedral, Britten’s *War Requiem* in Oxford Town Hall, Rachmaninov’s *The Bells* in Canterbury Cathedral and Handel’s *Messiah* in Auditorio Manuel de Falla, Granada.

Philippa performed with Glyndebourne Festival Chorus in the 2015 season in productions of Bizet’s *Carmen* and Donizetti’s *Poliuto* and will return there in 2016 in Berlioz’s *Béatrice et Bénédict*,

REBECCA LODGE (CONTRALTO); Rebecca studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where she graduated with a First Class degree in singing and piano.

During her time at the RAM, she received many prizes, including the Lloyds Bank Scholarship for postgraduate study, which enabled her to complete her studies on the Opera Course. Her career over the last 25 years has seen her perform in many different venues and styles – from a musical theatre one-woman show at the

Jermyn Street Theatre in London, to creating the role of “The Informer” in *The Jailer’s Tale*, a new contemporary opera by Malcolm Singer. In 2012, she created the role of ‘Lizzie’ in the new community opera *Cycle Song* in Scunthorpe, part of Yorkshire’s Cultural Olympiad.

As a member of the BBC Singers, the United Kingdom’s only full-time, professional chamber choir, she has broadcast extensively on BBC Radio 3 and BBC television. Her many solos for the



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group include Strauss's *Deutsche Motette*, the Rachmaninov *Vespers*, the Duruflé *Requiem* and Scarlatti's *Stabat Mater* at the Proms. Proms this season have included Schoenberg's *Friede of Erden* and Eric Whitacre's *Cloudburst*, both of which have been televised.

Recent engagements include Bach's *St John Passion* in Coventry Cathedral with the English Symphony Orchestra, and also in Finland with Kunin Kantien Muusikot, Liszt's setting of *Psalm 137* with the Cheltenham Bach Choir at the Cheltenham Festival, Karl Jenkins' *Stabat Mater* at Birmingham's Symphony Hall, Tippett's *A Child of our Time* at the Royal Festival Hall and the role of the the Newspaper Seller in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* at the Barbican with the BBC Symphony Orchestra.



ROBERT JOHNSTON (TENOR) started his singing career as a treble in Salisbury



Cathedral Choir and went on to study singing at The Royal Academy of Music, where he was awarded LRAMs in Singing and the Teaching of Singing, as well as a GRSM III honours degree in Music. He was awarded an ARAM by Sir David Lumsden in 1995 for services to the profession.

Robert has been much in demand as a solo singer and consort singer since leaving The Royal Academy of Music. He was a Vicar-Choral in the choir of St Paul's Cathedral from 1989 – 1997, making many recordings as well as performing regularly in concerts and services. He appeared as a member of The Tallis Scholars from 1990 – 1996, performing in over 300 concerts worldwide and recording extensively on TV, Radio and CD. He has also appeared regularly with The Monteverdi Choir, The Sixteen, The Gabrielli Consort, The English Concert and from 1997 to 2015, the BBC Singers, where he now has a



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full-time management position.

Concert engagements also take him worldwide. In recent seasons he has sung in Argentina, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Israel, Germany, Holland, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Japan and France.

Robert has broadcast regularly on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3, and has made many CDs with, among others, the BBCSO and Harry Christopher's The Sixteen.

For television Robert's solo recordings include filming works by Carl Orff with Donald Runnicles in Munich for *The South Bank Show*, works by Purcell for *England*,

My England with Gardiner and he also filmed the part of the Venetian Opera Singer in the feature film of *Dorian Gray*.

His voice is often heard on TV and Film soundtracks, including the singing voice of Daniel in BBC's *Daniel Deronda*, a young monk in *Brother Cadfael* and several *Harry Potter* films.

On a lighter note, Robert has also made recordings or performed live with Elton John, Sting, Dusty Springfield, Mike Oldfield, The Opera Babes, Susan Boyle, Johnny Mathis, Richard and Adam, Jonathan and Charlotte, Jai MacDowell and Il Divo.

CHARLES GIBBS (BASS); Charles Gibbs was born in Bristol and studied modern languages at Robinson College, Cambridge before attending the Royal Academy of Music to study singing as a postgraduate student. He was taught by

(Sondheim). He spent a year in *Les Miserables* in the West End, where he played the Bishop of Digne and understudied Javert, the experience of which led him to concentrate on his career as a concert singer.



Derek Hammond-Stroud and took various leading roles, including *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart) and *Sweeney Todd*

Since leaving, he has worked for most of the British professional ensembles, including the Monteverdi Choir, The Sixteen, The Gabrieli Consort and The Kings Consort. In 2006, he joined the BBC Singers, the nation's only full-time professional choir, and is frequently to be heard on Radio 3, performing anything from Renaissance polyphony to cutting edge contemporary music. His career has taken him all over Europe, Iceland, Egypt, Japan, Australia, the USA, Mexico and Singapore. He is also a member of the innovative vocal ensemble I Fagiolini, with whom he is able to indulge both his musical and theatrical talents.

Recent stage appearances include Plutone in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Coyle in Britten's *Owen Wingrave* and Cold Genius in Purcell's *King Arthur*.



Mozart (1756-1791)



Mozart was born in Salzburg in 1756 and, perhaps more so than most other composers, his life story is well known, and stories of his childhood precociousness are well documented. For instance, at the age of four he could learn a piece of music in half an hour. At five, he was playing the clavier incredibly well and, at six, he began composing, writing his first *symphonies* at the age of eight. He was constantly travelling all over Europe with his father, Leopold. The musical feats and tricks of young Wolfgang were exhibited to the courts, to musical academicians, and to

Wolfgang went on a tour with his mother to Munich, Mannheim, and Paris. It was in Paris that his mother died suddenly in July, 1778. With no prospects of a job, Mozart dejectedly returned to Salzburg in 1779 and became court organist to the Archbishop. Mozart finally achieved an unceremonious dismissal from the archiepiscopal court in 1781, and thereafter became one of the first musicians in history to embark upon a free-lance career, without the benefit of church, court, or a rich patron.

Mozart moved to Vienna where he lived for a time with the Webers, a family he had met in 1777. He eventually married Constanze Weber in August of 1782, against the wishes and strict orders of his father. Then, for a time, things began to look bright for the young composer. Beginning in 1782 with the *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Mozart began turning out one masterpiece after another in every form and genre.

Mozart is probably the only composer in history to have written undisputed masterworks in virtually every musical genre of his age. His *serenades, divertimenti and dances*, written on request for the entertainment and outdoor parties of the nobility, have become synonymous with the Classical 'age of elegance'.

During his years in Vienna, Mozart also made the acquaintance of Haydn. The two became close friends and the older composer's music had a profound influence on Mozart. Between 1782 and 1785, Mozart composed a series of six string quartets which he dedicated to Haydn. Upon playing through some of them together, Haydn said to Mozart's father, who was present, 'Before God and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer I know, either personally or by



the public. Between the ages of seven and fifteen, the young Mozart spent half his time on tour. During these tours, he heard, absorbed, and learned various European musical idioms, eventually crystallizing his own mature style.

Fully expecting to find an ideal post outside his sleepy home town of Salzburg and the detested archiepiscopal court, in 1777

name". Yet, through his mismanagement of money (and as a successful composer of operas and a renowned piano virtuoso, he made a great deal), and the documented incidences of his tactless, impulsive, and, at times, childish, behaviour in an era of powdered wigs and courtly manners, Mozart seemed to find it difficult to make a successful living.

By 1790, he was writing letters to friends, describing himself and his family (he and Constanze had six children, only two of whom survived) in quite desperate circumstances and begging for money. He was also by this time seriously ill with what was most likely a disease of the kidneys. With the success of *The Magic Flute*, and

a newly granted yearly stipend, Mozart was just beginning to become financially stable when his illness brought an end to his life and career at the age of thirty-six. He was buried, like most Viennese in those days by the decree of Emperor Joseph, in a common grave, the exact location of which remains unknown.

The influence of Mozart on the composers that followed cannot be emphasized too strongly. Not only was he idolized by such late nineteenth-century composers as Wagner and Tchaikovsky but his music also came to influence the *neo-classical* compositions of Stravinsky and Prokofiev in the twentieth century.





Mozart; Vespers K339



Mozart composed the Vespers, K339, in 1780 and the work is scored for bassoon, two trumpets, three (optional) trombones, timpani, organ, strings (without violas) and chorus. In Mozart's time, it was common for the Vespers to include non-liturgical music such as arias or choruses on spiritual themes and instrumental music (except for dances) in addition to the usual Vespers texts and those specific to the time of year. The texts of K339 (Psalms 109, 110, 111, 112, 116 and the Magnificat, each ending with the Doxology) follow the Roman rite practised at Salzburg's cathedral rather than the Benedictine rite of its other large church, St. Peter's. The precise occasion for the work is unknown, but there was a great demand for such music. The cathedral's liturgical calendar

included 21 major feasts that would have been preceded the night before by a solemn Vespers performed with orchestra, customarily with the archbishop himself presiding. On such occasions the two balconies closest to the cathedral's altar held the Kapellmeister, solo singers, a double bass, three trombones, a bassoon and an organ on one side, with the strings led by the Konzertmeister on the other side. Trumpets and timpani stood on the other two balconies, while the choir was down below in the chancel. Antiphons were probably sung by a small group of priests between the psalm movements, which explains why Mozart didn't worry about setting adjacent movements in related keys. The opening of the *Confitebor* is based on the traditional Gregorian chant melody for that text.



The Text



I. Dixit Dominus

Dixit Dominus Domino meo: sede a dextris meis, donec ponam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum. Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion, dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum. Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae in splendoribus sanctorum, ex utero ante luciferum genui te. Juravit Dominus et non poenitebit eum: Tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.

Dominus a dextris tuis confregit in die irae suae reges. Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas, conquassabit capita in terra multorum. De torrente in via bibet, propterea exaltabit caput.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(The Lord said to my Lord: sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a stool for your feet.

The Lord sends the rod of your strength out of Zion, to rule in the midst of

your enemies. Your troops are with you in the day of your strength, in the splendours of the saints; from the womb have I brought you forth before the morning star. The Lord has sworn and will not repent; you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.)

The Lord at your right hand has broken kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, and fill them with ruination; He will shatter the heads of many in the land. He drinks of the torrent on the way; therefore will He lift up His head. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever will be, forever and ever. Amen.)

2. Confitebor

Confitebor tibi Domine in toto corde meo in consilio justorum et congregatione. Magna opera Domini, exquisita in omnes voluntates ejus.

Confessio et magnificentia opus ejus et justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi. Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, misericors et miserator et justus, escam dedit timentibus se. Memor erit in saeculum testamenti sui. Virtutem operum suorum annuntiabit populo suo. Ut det illis hereditatem gentium. Opera manuum ejus veritas et judicium. Fidelia omnia mandata ejus, confirmata in saeculum saeculi facta in veritate et aequitate.

Redemptionem misit Dominus populo suo, mandavit in aeternum testamentum suum. Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus. Initium sapientiae timor Domini, intellectus bonus omnibus facientibus eum, laudatio ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, Sicut erat, sicut in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen. *(I will confess the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.*

Great are the Lord's works, and sought after according to all His wishes. His work is affirmation and magnificence, and his

justice endures forever. He has made a remembrance of his marvellous works, being merciful, compassionate and just. He has given food to those who fear Him; He will be ever mindful of his covenant: He will tell his people of the power of his works. That He may give them the inheritance of the heathen, the works of His hands are truth and judgement. All His commandments are reliable; confirmed forever and ever made in truth and equity. The Lord has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant for ever. Holy and fearful is His name. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. A good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endures for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost as it was in the beginning, is now and always will be, for ever and ever. Amen.)

3. Beatus Vir

Beatus vir qui timet Dominum, in mandatis ejus volet nimis. Potens in terra erit semen ejus, generatio rectorum benedicetur. Gloria et divitiae in domo ejus, et justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi. Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis, misericors et miserator et justus. Jucundus homo, qui miseretur et commodat, disponet sermones suos in judicio. Quia in aeternum non commovebitur.

In memoria aeterna erit justus, ab auditione mala non timebit. Paratum cor ejus sperare in Domino.

Non commovebitur donec despiciat inimicos suos. Dispersit dedit pauperibus, justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi. Cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria.

Peccator videbit et irascetur, dentibus suis fremet et tabescet: desiderium peccatorum peribit.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(Blessed is the man who fears the Lord

and His delights exceedingly in his commandments. His seed will be strong in the land; the generation of the righteous will be blessed. In his house will be glory and abundance; and His justice endures for ever and ever. A light for the righteous has risen in the darkness; He is merciful and compassionate and just. Agreeable is the person who is merciful and helpful; He arranges His words with judgement, because He will never be moved. He will be just in eternal memory, and will not fear to hear evils; His heart is ready to put its hope in the Lord. He will not be moved until He looks down upon his enemies. He has distributed and donated to the poor; His justice endures for ever and ever. His horn will be exalted in glory. The sinner will see, and become enraged; He will gnash His teeth and wither away. The desires of the sinners will perish. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and the Holy Ghost as it was in the beginning, is now and always will be, for ever and ever. Amen.)

4. Laudate Pueri

Laudate pueri Dominum: laudate nomen Domini.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum ex hoc nunc, et usque in saeculum. A solis ortu usque ad occasum,

laudabile nomen Domini. Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus, et super coelos gloria ejus.

Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster, qui in altis habitat, et humilia respicit in coelo et in terra?

Suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem: Ut colloset eum cum principibus

populi sui. Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo matrem filiorum laetantem. Gloria Patri, et Filio., et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et semper, et in saecula, saeculorum. Amen.

(Praise the Lord, children; praise the name of the Lord. May the name of the Lord be blessed, from this time onward for ever. The Lord is on high above all nations, and His glory is over the heavens. Who is like

the Lord our God, who lives on high and regards the lowly in heaven and on earth? Raising up the destitute man from the earth, and lifting up the poor man from the muck, that He may place Him with the princes of His people. Who makes the barren woman to live in a house, the happy mother of children. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and always will be, for ever and ever. Amen.)

5. Laudate Dominum

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes: laudate eum omnes populi: Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus: et veritas Domini manet in aeternum. Gloria Patri, et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(Praise the Lord, all nations; praise him, all peoples; For his mercy is established over us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever. Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now and always will be, for ever and ever. Amen)

6. Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum. Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est et sanctum nomen ejus. Et misericordia ejus a progenie in

progenies timentibus eum. Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae. Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

Sicut erat, in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my saviour. For He has regarded the lowliness of His servant: for behold, from this time forward all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things to me, and holy is his name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His hand; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their seats, and raised up the lowly. He has filled the

hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has protected His child Israel, being mindful of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, Abraham and His seed forever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost as it was in the beginning, is now and always will be, for ever and ever. Amen.)



Interval



Mozart's own time machine

It is generally accepted among musicologists, musicians, composers etc that Mozart was the supreme musical genius, so the quality of his music is undisputed - but what about the quantity?

In his all-too-short life, he turned out 626 compositions (going by Köchel numbers). It is thought that his first piece (K1) was composed when he was five years old and, as he died when he was thirty-five, he effectively had thirty years of productive life. In this time he wrote forty-one symphonies, twenty-seven piano concertos, twenty-two operas and nineteen piano sonatas - and this is in addition to concertos for other instruments, choral and other vocal works and many other compositions.

If we just indulge in a little simple mathematics for a moment, we will

see that, if Mozart wrote 626 compositions in thirty years, he obviously wrote a fraction under twenty-one a year. This means that he was turning out a new piece every two weeks. If you consider that we are talking about operas, symphonies, concertos, sonatas and the like, it really is a quite phenomenal achievement in quantity terms alone, never mind the sublime quality. And he did this continuously for thirty years!

That wasn't all, of course. He was also a performer (performing most of his own pieces), teacher and family man.

So where on earth did he find the time? Perhaps that was part of his genius.

Oh yes, and he still found time to play billiards!



Elis Pehkonen



Elis Pehkonen was born in Swaffham, Norfolk, England in 1942. He was a pupil at Hamond's Grammar School, Swaffham, where he was taught Art by Harry Carter, the man who created many Norfolk Village signs and nephew of Howard Carter (the Egyptologist who discovered the tomb of Tutankhamen).

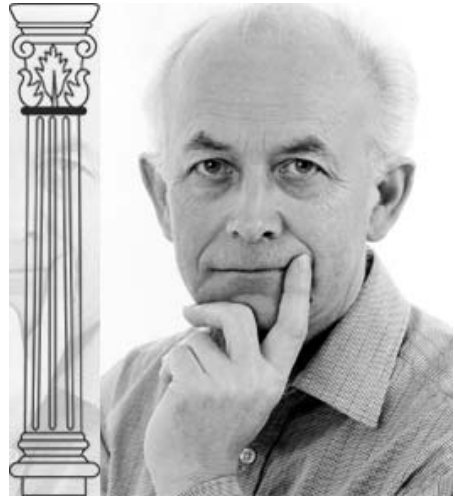
In 1960, Elis had his first composition lesson with Benjamin Britten. That same year he won a composition scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he studied with Peter Racine Fricker until 1964. He also had consultation lessons with Lennox Berkeley, Alan Ridout, Geoffrey Bush, Richard Rodney Bennett, and Anthony Payne.

His first commission, at Britten's recommendation, was in 1966 for the Kings Lynn Festival, the Incidental Music for *Everyman*. His first work to be broadcast on Radio 3 was the Three Songs to poems by Laurie Lee, whom he met when he moved to Gloucestershire in 1964.

It was in Cirencester where Elis composed the first version of his major work Requiem, the first ever complete setting of the *Missa Pro Defunctis*, lasting one hour and fifty minutes. From 1967 to 1979, Elis taught at Cirencester School, where he continued the tradition begun by Peter Maxwell Davies of involving pupils in performing contemporary music. For eight years, Elis conducted the Cirencester School Percussion Ensemble in dozens of concerts and broadcasts, which included music by David Bedford, Brian Dennis, Philip Lane, James Patten, and many other notable composers.

Elis' music took a new direction in 1980 with *Buccinate Tuba* for choir and brass, commissioned by John Sanders and the

Three Choirs Festival. (This was revived at the 1992 Gloucester Festival.) Many commissions and important performances followed after Elis moved to Suffolk to compose full-time.



In 1982, the large-scale Requiem – *Missa pro Defunctis* - received its second-version performance at Cheltenham Town Hall, the impetus coming from the conductor Roger Smith and the Arts Council. In 1986 *The Russian Requiem* was performed at the Three Choirs Festival conducted by John Sanders, and in 1993 *The Russian Requiem* was performed at the Royal Festival Hall with the Bach Choir conducted by Sir David Willcocks.

Since 2000, Elis has been digitalizing and publishing his "In Manuscript" works, including all the Concertos and music for String Orchestra and many small-scale pieces. He has also produced a definitive final-edition Full Score of what he calls the "Big Requiem" (1967/82) and has composed many other works for a wide range of virtuoso performers.



Pehkonen; *Russian Requiem*



Elis Pehkonen composed his remarkable *Russian Requiem* in 1986 for Birmingham Festival Choral Society. It was repeated in Birmingham in 1998, where it was also recorded, and has since been performed at the 1989 Three Choirs Festival and the 1991 Leith Hill Music Festival in Dorking.

Russian Requiem stands in fascinating relation to two other outstanding British twentieth-century oratorios - Tippett's *A Child of our Time*, written in 1942 at a time of war, and Britten's *War Requiem*, written in the 1960s as an act of healing after that war, and incorporating poems from the earlier Great War. Like Britten, Pehkonen uses the Latin text of the *Missa pro defunctis*, the Catholic Requiem Mass, though he uses only short extracts. Like Britten, he interweaves this with other texts, but he uses several disparate sources, unlike Britten's single choice of Wilfred Owen. He looks back, again like Britten, to the world of 1918, but his eye is turned to Russia and the Leninist/Marxist revolution.

He is looking also at the subsequent horrors of Stalin's era and, in the score, he acknowledges the influence of Tolstoy's book *Stalin's Secret War*. The work is dedicated 'To the still-born child of Gorodietsky' and at the head of the score stands a quotation from Alexander Tvardovsky:

*They are mistaken who think
That memory sets no store by itself,
That the waterweed of time will entangle
All the past, All the pain.*

Compared with the universal lament against war and persecution in Britten's and Tippett's works, the *Russian Requiem*

seems to be more specific in its lament for the Russian victims and, in its choice of Lenin, an historical leader, as the mouthpiece of demonic destruction. Pehkonen does reach out to a wider world in his direct reference to Christ's death and resurrection through Boris Pasternak's poem *Gethsemane*, but his response is specifically Christian, compared with the more humanist response of Britten and Tippett.

The work has four distinct movements. The opening *Requiem*, using only the Mass text, acts as an atmospheric prelude and sets a prayerful mood, with gentle choral chanting rising to a climax at the plea for perpetual light.

The long *Dies Irae* which follows is a remarkable and fierce extended collage for the two soloists and chorus, full of images of violence, destruction and damnation; the Mass text on the wrathful day of judgement is interspersed with images of Hell from Dante's *Inferno* and with biblical passages from the *Revelation of St John* describing the horsemen of the Apocalypse. This horror is directly identified with the Russian revolution by the inclusion of invective from Lenin's writing, and an undeniably political dimension is introduced. These revolutionary cries of 'Root then out! Trample them underfoot!' strongly recall the chorus 'Burn down their houses! Beat in their heads!' from *A Child of Our Time*, and also hark back to the cries of 'Crucify Him!' from the Passions. Lenin's revolution is clearly represented as both a day of judgement and the work of the devil. The movement ends with great unaccompanied choral plea, 'How long wilt thou wait, O Lord, to avenge our blood?' followed by words of desolation from Dante.



Pehkonen; Russian Requiem

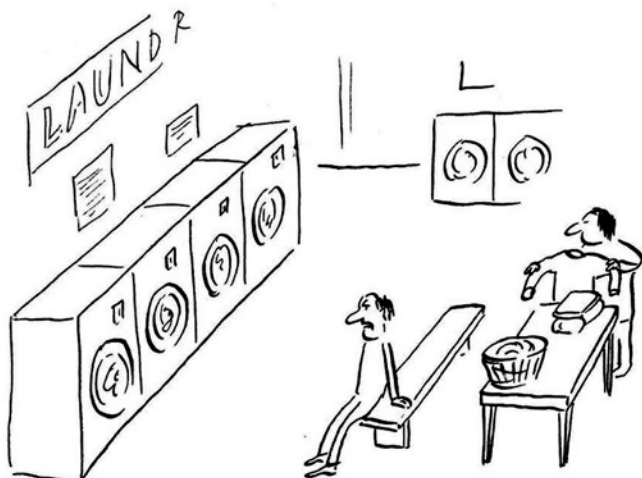


The contrasting third movement, *Offertorium*, is quieter but no less dark in mood. Pasternak's poem Gethemane tells of Christ's agony in the garden, and Pehkonen links his prayer for release from death with the Requiem's Latin prayer for escape from Hell. Christ does eventually freely accept his own agony and predicts his resurrection and reign; the movement ends with his quiet but chilling warning to future centuries: 'I will judge them' (a reminder that the dreadful day of judgement is, paradoxically, instigated by God).

In the final soothing and reconciling *Agnus Dei*, discord and pain are left behind. Against the Latin text referring to the redemption of sins through Christ's

sacrifice, sung by the soloists, Pasternak's verse, sung by the chorus, depicts snow covering all the world – snow of desolation or of cleansing? The warmth of the simple harmonies, backed by gentle trumpet and horn calls, highlights the final vivid image – the candle on the table – a glimmer of hope, of which Christ, the Lamb of God, the Light of the World, has been such a powerful representation down the centuries. Pehkonen has developed a musical language of great directness and simplicity, and there are no 'difficult modernisms' to prevent his message and his music reaching the widest audience.

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"This is taking forever — I shouldn't have put the load on the Ring cycle."



Pehkonen; Russian Requiem



The Text

1. Requiem Aeternam

Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine,
Et lux perpetua luceas eis.

Dies irae, dies illa

*(Eternal rest grant to them O Lord and let
perpetual light shine upon them. Day of
anger, day of wrath.)*

2. Dies Irae

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate
(Abandon hope all ye that enter here.)

I looked and beheld a pale horse
And the man that sat on him was Death
And hell followed with him.
And power was given unto them
Over the fourth part of the earth,
To kill with the sword,
With hunger, and with death

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
The world shall lie in ashes,
As David with the Sybil testifies.
How great shall be the power
When the judge shall come to
examine all things.)*

The world must be destroyed
by fire and iron.
We destroy in order to build better.
Podonki, nasekomoj, tuneyadisti.
(Scum, insects, parasites.)

Per me si nella città dolente,
Per me si nell' eterno dolore,
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

*(Through me is the way to the doleful city,
Through me is the way to eternal pain,
Through me is the way amongst lost
generations.)*

Root them out!
Slap them down!
Trample them underfoot!
Dies irae, dies illa
(Day of anger, day of wrath.)

I looked and beheld another horse
That was red as blood,
And power was given unto him that sat
thereon
To take peace from the earth,
And that they should kill one another.

Insult them!
Spit on them!
Arrest them all and don't forget you rifles!
Intensify the repression!
Long live the Revolution!
We destroy in order to build better!

Dies irae, dies illa
(Day of anger, day of wrath.)

And I saw the souls of them
that were slain for the word of God
and they cried with a loud voice saying,
"How long will wilt Thou wait, O Lord, to
avenge our blood?"

Non isperate mai veder lo cielo,
l'vegno per menarvi all'altra riva,
Nelle tenebre eterne, in caldo e in gelo.
*(Hope not to see heaven,
I come to lead you to the other shore,
into eternal darkness, into fire and ice.)*



Pehkonen; Russian Requiem



3. Offertorium

Domine Jesu Christie, Rex gloriae,
 Libera animas omnium fidelium
 De poenis inferni, et de profundo lacu.
*(Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
 Free the souls of all the faithful
 From the depths of hell and the deep lake.)*

My soul is sorrowful unto death
 Stay here and watch with me!
 The night was a kingdom of despair.
 The world seemed uninhabited.
 Only a garden was a place for the living.
 He gazed into the black abyss.
 Empty, without beginning or end.
 Sweating blood, he prayed to his Father
 That the cup of death should pass him by.

Libera eas de ore leonis
 Ne absorbeat eas tartarus
 Ne cadant in obscurum.
*(Deliver them from the jaws of the lion
 Lest they fall into darkness
 And the black depths swallow them up.)*

God has granted you to live in my time
 The hour of the Son of Man has struck,
 He will deliver himself into the hands of
 sinners.

Could not my Father send me a host
 Of winged legions to defend me?
 Then would no hair of my head be touched.
 I shall go freely, through torment, down to
 the grave.
 And on the third day I will rise again.
 Like rafts down a river, like a convoy of
 ships, the centuries will float to me out of
 the darkness.

4. Agnus Dei

Agnus dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
 Dona eis requiem sempiternam.
*(Lamb of God that takes away the sins
 of the world, grant them eternal rest.)*

Snow, snow swept over all the world,
 swept it from end to end.
 The candle on the table burned,
 The candle burned.

The text of the **Russian Requiem** consists of selected excerpts from five different sources: verses from the *Missa pro defunctis*, short passages from Dante's *Inferno*, short quotations from *The Book of Revelations*, brief comments from Lenin's sayings, and verses from 'Zhivago's Poems' at the end of Pasternak's novel *Dr Zhivago*, reproduced by kind permission of the publishers Collins Harvill. The composer is indebted to Boris Pasternak and the translators of his work, Max Hayward and Manya Harari.

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Tring Choral Society thanks the Rennie Grove Hospice Care Shop, Tring, for support as our ticket agents.

The piano accompanist for Tring Choral Society rehearsals is Adrian Johnson.

Our thanks go to Roy Mathers for writing and compiling this programme.

We are grateful for the presence of St John Ambulance representatives at this concert.



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