



Billericay Choral Society



Remembrance Concert



Featuring.....

The Armed Man (Choral suite)

Karl Jenkins

Conductor

Jamie Wright

Accompanist

Ashley Thompson

Trumpet

Steven Drury

Saturday 24th November 2018 7.30 pm

United Reformed Church, Billericay

Programme £1



Tonight's programme

The Armed Man a Mass for Peace

The Armed Man, was written for the Royal Armouries Museum to commemorate the millenium. It is dedicated to victims of the recently ended Kosovo crisis. Jenkins uses various inspirations for the text, including the Muslim call to prayer, the 16th century French folk song *L'Homme armé*, ancient religious texts and the Latin Mass tradition. It charts the growing menace of a descent into war, interspersed with moments of reflection. It shows the horrors that war brings and ends with hope for peace.

Kyrie *Kyrie* is usually the opening part of a mass. The sopranos lead with the main theme which the rest of the choir take up. The *Christe eleison* that follows is musically an episode in a quite different style – a piece of Renaissance counter-point in the style of Palestrina. The choir then return to the *Kyrie eleison*, which we hear again with some musical variation.

Sanctus is traditionally a joyful section of the Mass, but this setting has a menacing air with a sense of foreboding which suggests going into battle. The sense of military build-up, contrasts with the choir's hopeful chanting of the traditional Sanctus.

Hymn Before Action The words are by Rudyard Kipling whose son, John, was killed at the Battle of Loos in 1915 aged 18. Although Kipling was obscure about his religious views he did write on religious themes and the text is from Kipling's most religious poem, written in 1896. He makes clear that this is a prayer, harking back to Old Testament prayers of the Hebrews for victory in battle. But this is not a simple prayer for victory. It also comprises a confession of sin, and recognises that those who praise God in time of need often ignore Him in time of plenty and safety. Finally, Kipling asks God to give everybody the courage to face death.

Agnus Dei After the traumas of war this movement brings the hope of peace. It is a beautiful setting of part of the Latin Mass and it featured in this year's Royal British Legion Remembrance Service at the Albert Hall.

Benedictus This invocation is introduced by a beautiful motif. The tune is taken up by the choir to words from the Latin Mass "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini" (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord). Peace leads to rejoicing and after an explosive Hosanna the mood of serenity returns.

Cantique de Jean Racine Gabriel Fauré

From 1854 till 1865 Fauré was a pupil at the École Niedermeyer in Paris, a school for church musicians. He composed the Cantique in his final year and it won the school's composition prize. 10 years later it was published in a church music series called *Echo des Maitrises*. The publisher was the Société Nationale du music, an organisation dedicated to the promotion of French music. In 1905 the *Cantique* was orchestrated, though there is doubt whether Fauré did the orchestration.

The text by Jean Racine is from a Latin hymn of unknown origin, *Consors paterni lauminis*, written in Ambrosian style. The translation was included in his collection *Hymnes traduites du bréviaire romain*.

In paradisum Gabriel Fauré

In paradisum (*Into paradise*) is an antiphon from the traditional Latin liturgy of the Requiem Mass for the dead. It is sung in procession on the way from the church to the graveyard. This setting is from Fauré's Requiem which was almost certainly a musical tribute to his father, who died in 1885, three years before work on the Requiem began.

The melodic highpoint in this setting comes on the name of Lazarus, the poor beggar in Luke's Gospel.

Verleih' uns Frieden Felix Mendelssohn

In 1830 Franz Hauser, a Viennese singer and Bach enthusiast, sent a Lutheran hymnal the *Lutherisches Liedbüchlein* to Mendelssohn who was in Italy as part of his Grand Tour. This treasury of words and music inspired Mendelssohn to compose 6 chorale cantatas 2 motets and the present hymn setting which takes Martin Luther's text, the music being entirely Mendelssohn's. He wrote to Hauser in January 1831:

"I intend to set the little song *Verleih' uns Frieden* as a canon with cello and bass"

By February the piece was complete. In the event the canonic opening was for divided cellos, it's theme both recalling the second subject from the *Hebrides* overture of 1830 anticipating the opening clarinet motif from another overture, *Die schöne Melusine* (1833).

Thou Knowest Lord Henry Purcell

Purcell wrote funeral music that included the music for the funeral of Queen Mary 2nd who died in December 1694. **Thou Knowest Lord** was first performed at Queen Mary's funeral which was not until in March 1695. Purcell died a year later and the piece was played at his funeral.

Kontakion of the Departed

A kontakion is a sermon in verse accompanied by music in Eastern Christian churches. It usually has a biblical theme, and often features dialogue between biblical characters. The full form consists of 18 to 24 metrically identical stanzas and was so large when written that the text was rolled up on a pole for use in the services. Kontakion means "from the pole" in Greek.

The kontakion originated in Byzantium in the sixth century AD. Saint Roman the Melodist is believed to have written the first piece, the *Kontakion for the Birth of Our Lord*. Born into a Jewish family, Roman settled in Beirut, where he was ordained to the diaconate and assigned to the *Church of the Resurrection*.

In current practice, the kontakion has limited parts sung at funerals. It featured in funeral procession in the film *Dr. Zhivago*.

So They Gave Their Bodies Peter Aston

Peter Aston's career combined teaching and composing. He held professorships York University and the University of East Anglia and is best known as a composer of church music.

This anthem was commissioned by the Royal School of Church Music in 1976. The text is from Pericles' Funeral Oration of 431 BC, as it appears in Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War. Shortly after the war had started, Pericles delivered his oration to commemorate troops who had already fallen in battle.

Pericles relates the special qualities of Athenians; their ability to put aside their differences and work for the greater good of the city, a shared desire for freedom, an adherence to the law, tolerance and open mindedness. Pericles' view was obviously a very idealized one, and it ignored the realities of party factionalism, selfishness, and arrogance that were to soon manifest after his death.

Part One

- 1 **A Letter from Second Lieutenant Home Peel to his wife Gwendolen**
Reading by Keith Miller
- 2 **So They Gave Their Bodies**
Words: from Pericles Funeral Oration 431BC
Music: Peter Aston 1938-2013
- 3 **Thou Knowest Lord** Funeral Anthem for Queen Mary 2nd
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
- 4 **Verleih' uns Frieden**
Words: Martin Luther (1483-1546)
Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
- 5 **August 1914 - May Wedderburn Cannan**
Reading by Rachel O'Hara
- 6 **Kontakion of the Departed (Kiev Melody)**
Arranged by Jamie Wright
- 7 **Cantique de Jean Racine**
Words: Jean Racine (1639-99) Music: Gabriel Fauré
Translation: John Rutter
- 8 **In Paradisum (From Requiem)**
Words: Traditional Music: Gabriel Fauré

Part Two

1 And There Was A Great Calm - Thomas Hardy

Reading by Gytha Washington

2 The Armed Man A Mass for Peace

Music: Karl Jenkins b.1944

(I) Kyrie

(II) Sanctus

(III) Benedictus

3 Everybody Sang - Siegfried Sassoon

Reading by Joy Kempson

The Armed Man (continued)

(IV) Agnus Dei

(V) Hymn Before Action

Words: Rudyard Kipling

*Audience members are requested not to
applaud after Hymn Before Action.*

4 The Last Post

Played by Steven Drury

5 A minute's silence.

6 For the Fallen

Words: Laurence Binyon

Music: Douglas Guest

Jamie Wright Conductor

A singer and conductor, Jamie read Music at the University of York and undertook the vocal performance Masters programme at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with distinction.

Jamie has worked in television for Gareth Malone, performed at the BBC proms, and was the soloist in *All the Angel's* at Shakespeare's Globe. He also works closely with the National and London Youth Choirs and Welsh National Opera, as well as being a chorister of the Chapel Royal, Tower of London. When not making music, Jamie can usually be found playing with technology or behind a camera.

He is delighted to join Billericay Choral Society as Director of Music and hopes you all enjoy the concert.

Twitter: @jamiewdwright

www.jamie-wright.co.uk

Laurence Binyon

For the Fallen was one of a number of poems by Laurence Binyon.

Binyon came from Lancaster, the son of Reverend Frederick Binyon and his wife Mary. He studied Classics at Oxford and when he graduated he was already an award winning poet.

He took up a job in the prints department of the British Museum and continued to write poems. In 1914, he published a collection of 12 war poems with the title of *The Winnowing Fan*.

Rudyard Kipling called it "the greatest expression of sorrow in the English language".

In 1915, despite being too old to fight, Binyon volunteered at a British hospital for French soldiers, in Haute-Marne, France, working as a hospital orderly. He returned in the summer of 1916 and took care of soldiers taken in from the Verdun battlefield. He wrote about his experiences in *For Dauntless France* (1918) and his poems, *Fetching the Wounded* and *The Distant Guns*.

Ashley Thompson Accompanist

Ashley is currently accompanist to Maldon Choral Society, under Dr. Gillian Ward Russell, Anglia Singers, under Professor Chris Green OBE, Gale Singers, under Colin Fowler, and Billericay Choral Society.

He is also Director of Music to The Parish Church of Holy Trinity Rayleigh, The Ordinariate at St John Fisher, Prittlewell; and the Evensong Organist for The Parish Church of St. Alban The Protomartyr, Romford.

Away from his piano and organ accompaniment portfolio he is the founder and Director of Music to The Triple H Community Choir, covering the three neighbouring South Essex villages of Hockley, Hawkwell and Hullbridge. He also teaches singing, organ, piano and music theory.

Outside of music he is the Chairman of Southend East Liberal Democrats.
For more information, please visit www.ashleythompsonmusic.com

Steven Drury Cert Ed, LRSM, CT ABRSM Trumpet

Steven is a former soldier of the Royal Artillery Band and is now a professional freelance trumpet player and teacher of brass working with the best ensembles in world, including London Brass, the Royal Artillery Staff Band, Black Dyke Mills Band, GUS Band, Sun Life Band, Williams Fairey Band and Opera UK plus teaching brass to many students in the UK and abroad.

He is currently Director of Music of the Essex Youth Brass Ensemble, and is brass instructor of the Essex Youth Orchestras and has this year adjudicated the Danish National Brass Band Championships in Aarhus.

Steven is enjoying composing and arranging, and has several works on catalogue published by The Music Company (UK) Ltd.

As a sideline he works as ensemble or extra on movies and TV, the latest appearance being in Tom Hooper's Oscar Winning movie Les Miserables acting with Hugh Jackman, Helena Bonham Carter and Sasha Baron Cohen and the BBC One Show in tribute to the late Sir Terry Wogan.

November 1918 The Armistice and afterwards

Armistice At 5:12 am on November 11th, the Armistice was signed in a railway carriage belonging to the Allied Supreme Commander Marshal Foch, in the Forest of Compiègne 50 miles NE of Paris.

Ceasefire 11am- Paris time (noon German time) was set as the time hostilities would end. Fighting continued up until the last minute. Future American president Harry S. Truman, an artillery captain, kept his battery firing until the final moments.

Negotiations The German delegation arrived at Compiègne on the 8th November. They were handed the list of Allied demands and given 72 hours to agree. Discussions, such as they were, were held with French and Allied officers but not Foch. He who only appeared twice in the three days of negotiations, first, to ask the German delegation what they wanted, and on the last day, to sign the agreement.

The terms The terms amounted to complete German surrender and demilitarisation. The British naval blockade of Germany was not lifted until complete peace terms could be agreed upon. The Germans were able to correct a few impossible demands (for example, the decommissioning of more submarines than their fleet possessed), and registered their formal protest at the harshness of Allied terms.

On 9 November, the Kaiser's abdication was announced. Hindenburg, the German military commander, said that the armistice should be signed even if the Allied conditions could not be improved on.

Signatories to the armistice were: Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the Allied Supreme Commander, British First Sea Lord Admiral Rosslyn Wemyss and for Germany, Matthias Erzberger, a civilian politician, Count Alfred von Oberndorff, Foreign Ministry, Major General Detlof von Winterfeldt, army, Captain Ernst Vanselow, navy.

Armistice 1940 The French turned Marshal Foch's railway carriage into a national monument. When Hitler returned to France with Nazi Germany's invasion 22 years later, he forced the French to sign the capitulation of France in the same carriage and later ordered it to be blown up to avoid a similar symbolic gesture by the Allies.

Billericay Choral Society

Chairman Anne Fryer
Membership Secretary Scott Gobeille
01277 624320
e-mail: scott_gobeille@hotmail.com



Web site: www.billericaychoral.co.uk

And you can follow us on Facebook.

Would you like to join us?

We always welcome new singers. No audition is required.

We practise on Tuesday evenings from 8pm until 10pm
in the Mayflower Hall in Chapel Street.

Phone or e-mail Scott Gobeille for details or
just turn up to a rehearsal.

We are having an open rehearsal next Tuesday 27th November.
Everybody is welcome to come. We will be practising Christmas
Carols that we will be singing at the Billericay Christmas market on
2nd December. 8pm in the Mayflower Hall, Billericay.

Our next concert.....

16th March 2019

Rutter Gloria and Vivaldi Gloria

Watch our web-site and our Facebook page for more details.

We would like to thank:

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production of this programme, and

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