

About John Rutter's *Requiem*

Well known for his carols and other short pieces, John Rutter (b. 1945) has composed a number of large-scale works for chorus and orchestra. Most of them were first performed in the United States, which Rutter visits frequently, writing for US choirs and conducting performances of his own music.

John Rutter's *Requiem* is probably his greatest and considered to be his most beautiful contribution to the world of serious choral music. Dedicated to the memory of his father who died in 1984, the *Requiem* was written in 1985, performed on 13 October that year at the United Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas and conducted by the composer. Since then it has become a firm favourite with choirs and audiences around the world.

In writing it, Rutter was influenced and inspired by the example of Fauré whose own *Requiem*, "crystallised my thoughts about the kind of Requiem I wanted to write: intimate rather than grandiose, contemplative and lyrical rather than dramatic, and ultimately moving towards light rather than darkness – the Lux Aeterna of the closing text."

The *Requiem* does not adhere strictly to the conventional Catholic liturgy, but combines texts from the Requiem Mass and the Book of Common Prayer.

The first movement, comprising the Requiem Aeternam and Kyrie Eleison, is followed by a setting of Psalm 130, 'Out of the deep have I called unto thee O Lord' which begins darkly with an unaccompanied cello solo in C minor, later giving way to a more positive C major at the words 'for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plentiful redemption'. Like Fauré's *Requiem*, the Pie Jesu focuses on the soprano soloist, while in this work we also hear a subdued chorus. The Sanctus and Benedictus are both followed by an exhilarating Hosanna.

In the Agnus Dei the Latin text alternates with verses from the Burial Sentences, taken from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Here, Rutter inserts his superb setting of the 23rd Psalm, notable for its plaintive oboe solo, delicate orchestration and sensitivity to the text. This exquisite and moving piece was composed in 1976 as a separate anthem and later incorporated into this work. The last movement opens with another verse from the Burial Service, sung by the soprano soloist, which leads seamlessly into the Lux Aeterna, finally returning to the opening Requiem Aeterna theme for the peaceful conclusion.

John Rutter is one of the outstanding English choral composers and arrangers of our time. He took his degrees in music at Clare College, Cambridge University and was later Director of Music at Clare College from 1975 to 1979. Rutter was elected an honorary fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton, in 1980 and founded the Cambridge Singers in 1981.

Marlow Community Choir at Borlase



JOHN RUTTER

REQUIEM

Wednesday 21st May at 7.30 pm

The Marlow Community Choir at Borlase proudly announces its Summer Concert, culminating in a performance of one of Rutter's best loved choral works.

Conductor of Chorus and Orchestra: Gillian Dibden

Venue: Performing Arts Theatre, Sir William Borlase's Grammar School (SWBGS). Doors open at 7:0pm

Tickets: £8 (concessions £6) available from the SWBGS office, or from any member of Marlow Community Choir.

Enquiries: 01628-816 500 or 01628-602 581

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