

Wimbledon Choral Society

with members of the New Queen's Hall Orchestra

Saturday 17th March 2007, 7.30pm
St John's Church, Waterloo, SE1

Fauré Requiem

Finzi

Lo, the Full Final Sacrifice

Howells

Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing

conductors

Michael Ashcroft
Norman Harper

Bass - **Thomas Faulkner**

Violin - **Katie Stillman**

Piano - **Simon Lane**

Tickets: £14, £11, special student rate £7.50

Box Office: 020 8605 2444

or tickets@wimbledon-choral.org.uk



Although usually performed in concert, Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) wrote his *Requiem* originally for liturgical use as it was not written to commemorate anyone in particular. Fauré saw it driven "... by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest ...". He is quoted as stating that "... after all the years of accompanying burial services on the organ, I wanted to write something different!" Nowhere near the scale of the huge versions by Verdi and Berlioz, it is nevertheless more than equal in its popularity because of its simplicity and beautifully crafted movements, such as the familiar but wonderfully peaceful final movement *In Paradisium*. This work is always a great favourite with concert-goers and with its orchestral accompaniment should provide a most uplifting experience.

One of Wimbledon Choral Society's aims is to stretch its choral repertoire by introducing unfamiliar works to both choir members and audience alike. This is the case in this concert where two of the three choral works are new to the choir, both from British composers.

Gerald Finzi (1901-1956) was greatly admired for his ability to choose the right texts and to write music which seemed to wrap itself around those words. In his festival anthem *Lo, the Full Final Sacrifice*, Finzi took his text from a translation of the 13th century poet St Thomas Aquinas and the music ebbs and flows to extract every drop of meaning in the words. It is widely acclaimed to have one of the most sublime *Amens* written in any choral work.

Herbert Howells' (1892-1983) work *Take Him, Earth, For Cherishing* was also a commission but in a completely different league. Like most of the world in November 1963, he was shocked to hear of the assassination of John F Kennedy. Such was Howells' standing as a composer at the time that it was he who was commissioned to write a motet to be sung at the memorial service for the former President in Washington Cathedral. Also like Finzi, Howells took his text from an early poet and the result is arguably one of the finest English choral motets of the twentieth century. It is sung *a cappella* and will really test the choir's skill in performing such challenging music.

Three very diverse pieces from three very different composers and an opportunity to hear the choir perform these in the lovely setting of St John's Church, Waterloo. Complementing this, we are delighted to welcome two young talented musicians, Katie Stillman and Simon Lane, both of whom are gaining reputations for excellence in performance on their respective instruments.

Future Concerts

Saturday 26th May 2007, Royal College of Music

Handel *Gloria* (sop. Elizabeth Weisberg)

Schubert *5th Symphony*

Schubert *Mass in A flat*

with the New Queen's Hall Orchestra

Saturday 24th November 2007, Fairfield Halls, Croydon

Elgar *Cello Concerto* (soloist Guy Johnston – BBC Young Musician 2000)

Vaughan Williams *A Sea Symphony*