



SONGS OF FAREWELL

RICHARD DAWSON - DIRECTOR

Saturday 19 November 2016, 7.30pm
St Michael's Church, Lewes

In partnership with *Stories Seen through a Glass Plate*
Photographs from the Edward Reeves Archive



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SONGS OF FAREWELL

THE ESTERHÁZY CHAMBER CHOIR

Song for Athene	John Tavener (1944 - 2013)
Mother of God, here I stand	John Tavener
Funeral Ikos	John Tavener
Requiem	Herbert Howells (1892 - 1983)

I. Salvator mundi

II. Psalm 23 (Soprano: Karen Smith | Alto: Naomi Warman | Tenor: John Torry)

III. Requiem aeternam (I)

IV. Psalm 121 (Tenor: John Torry | Baritone: John Gillies)

V. Requiem aeternam (II)

VI. I heard a voice from heaven (Soprano: Cesca Eaton | Baritone: John Gillies)

INTERVAL

20 minutes

Songs of Farewell	Hubert Parry (1848 - 1918)
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I. My soul, there is a country

II. I know my soul hath power to know all things

III. Never weather-beaten sail

IV. There is an old belief

V. At the round earth's imagined corners

VI. Lord, let me know mine end

WELCOME

Welcome to this evening's concert of British choral music, which marks the opening of the Esterházy Chamber Choir's 2016-17 concert season.

The title of tonight's concert is taken from Hubert Parry's set of motets, entitled *Songs of Farewell*. When Parry began composing this set of pieces in 1913, it is likely that he had no idea of the horrifying consequences that the impending war would have on his country. It would have certainly been impossible to foresee the vast number of lives that would be lost during the Great War. By the time of the work's completion in 1915, it may well have taken on an extra poignancy that was Parry unable to predict in 1913. Just one year later, British troops would be locked into one of the bloodiest battles of human history: The Battle of the Somme, which ended 100 years ago yesterday.

This evening's repertoire, some of the most searingly beautiful choral works written by British composers during the 20th and 21st centuries, draws together themes of loss, rest and remembrance.

We are extremely grateful for the support of the Edward Reeves Archive in helping publicise this concert as part of their exhibition series: *Stories Seen Through A Glass Plate - 1916: Lewes Remembers*. It is a great privilege for this concert to be included as one of the final events of the exhibition, and we hope that you might find the time to see some of the light boxes in the shops and houses of Lewes on your way home this evening. For more information, please visit www.reevesarchive.co.uk

I very much hope that you enjoy this evening's concert, and that you can join us again for our annual Christmas Carol Concert at St Anne's Church, Lewes on 17 December, and for our performance of J.S. Bach's *St John Passion* at Lewes Town Hall on Sunday 26 March 2017.



Richard Dawson
Musical Director

TONIGHT'S MUSIC

John Tavener (1944 - 2013)

Song for Athene (1993)

Mother of God, here I stand (2003)

Funeral Ikos (1981)

John Tavener composed *Song for Athene* in 1993 to commemorate the tragic death of actress Athene Hariades. The opening 'Alleluia' reflects Tavener's devotion to the Eastern Orthodox faith and his fascination with its musical traditions, while the quotation from the final scene of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, 'flights of angels sing thee to thy rest', brings Hariades' profession to the foreground. The combined effect is of extreme simplicity and emotional purity. The work now serves as a duplex memorial having been performed as the recessional Hymn at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997.

It was on 27 June 2003, at the Temple Church in London, that the first performance of John Tavener's *The Veil of the Temple* began. It did not end, however; until the following morning, for this work is a seven-hour-long vigil, designed to last all night. Tavener himself described it as being the 'biggest thing' that he had ever done and referred to it as a statement of his life's work. Piers Dudgeon, Tavener's biographer, told of his own experience of attending the first performance, of how there was a cushion on each seat along with two bars of chocolate 'to help to sustain us through the night'.

It is in the seventh of the work's eight cycles that comes *Mother of God here I stand*, a setting of words by the Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov. Writing in the Guardian about his experience of attending the first performance of *The Veil of the Temple*, Simon Poole recalled that at 1.02am he was 'entranced by the setting of a Lermontov poem that begins *Mother of God*' and claimed that he wouldn't have minded 'hearing just that, over and over again, for the rest of the night'.

Funeral Ikos, which has become one of Tavener's best-known shorter works, was composed in 1981 and is a calm, even serene setting of words from the Greek Orthodox service for the Burial of Priests, evoking the bliss of the righteous in Paradise. In order to place the words at the forefront of the experience, the music is of extreme simplicity, much of it in unison or with only the most exiguous of harmonies. The chant is shared between upper and lower voices and then the full choir, and each verse ends with a spell-binding Alleluia.

Edmund Spenser,
Peter Avis & Malcolm MacDonald

Herbert Howells (1892 - 1983)

Requiem (1932)

Salvator mundi

Psalm 23

Requiem aeternam (I)

Psalm 121

Requiem aeternam (II)

I heard a voice from heaven

Not released for publication until 1980, the **Requiem** for unaccompanied voices, an exquisite and deeply personal expression of loss in which appears much of the material that was eventually to be expanded and reworked into *Hymnus Paradisi*, was initially thought to be a first draft of that work, composed soon after the death of Howells' young son, Michael, in 1935. However, the research of biographer Christopher Palmer soon revealed that the *Requiem* was in fact composed in 1932, some three years before Michael died, and was modelled on a little-known work, *A short Requiem* in D major composed in 1915 by Walford Davies, one of Howells' earliest teachers at the Royal College of Music, in memory of those killed in the war. Howells drew on this work first of all for its selection and ordering of texts, which he adopted almost without change. The only difference is that Davies set Psalm 130 where Howells has Psalm 23. It is an unconventional and original structure drawing on the Burial Service in the Book of Common Prayer, the Latin Requiem Mass, and the Psalms. But Davies' work was more than just a template for the words. The musical structure of both

works is very similar. Both composers set 'Salvator mundi', 'Requiem aeternam (I) and (II)', and 'Audi vocem' ('I heard a voice from heaven') in a more extended and complex way than the Psalms, which Davies sets to Anglican chants of his own composing, and Howells to simpler, more syllabic music. Similarities also extend to the structure of phrases and verbal rhythm, most markedly in 'I heard a voice from heaven', where the rhythm of Howells' opening solo matches almost exactly that of Davies' baritone in 'Audi vocem'. But these similarities are of course superficial. Howells may have had Walford Davies' work in front of him as he planned his own *Requiem*, but Davies' workmanlike music is transmuted into pure Howellsian gold. This is a wonderful, heart-aching work of searing beauty. It may not have been written as a direct response to personal loss, but it is scarcely surprising that it was to this work that Howells returned just a few years later to find both the structure and much of the musical material he needed to make his own response to the deepest, most profound loss of his life.

Paul Andrews

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848 - 1918)

Songs of Farewell (1913 - 1915)

*My soul, there is a country
I know my soul hath power to know all things
Never weather-beaten sail
There is an old belief
At the round earth's imagined corners
Lord, let me know mine end*

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry has always been paid at least lip service as one of the founding fathers of the English musical renaissance. For a long time, although his memory was kept green through such fine works as the choral song *Jerusalem* and the Coronation anthem *I was glad*, his large output of music was largely forgotten and unregarded. Recent years, however, have seen the beginning of a reevaluation of Parry's orchestral and choral works, foremost among which is his noble series of motets collectively entitled ***Songs of Farewell***. Composed between 1913 and 1915, they are superbly written for unaccompanied voices; in their contrapuntal mastery and harmonic richness they must be ranked among the masterpieces of English choral music.

Probably the best-known of the motets is the first, 'My soul, there is a country far beyond the stars', a four voice setting of words by the 17th century metaphysical poet Henry Vaughan (1622-1695). The constant changes of rhythm and tempo make this beautiful piece quite a challenge; the rising phrases with which the work opens return at the end with a new strength and confidence.

'I know my soul hath power' sets two stanzas from *Nosce Teipsum*, a didactic poem on human knowledge by Sir John Davies (1569-1626). This is the simplest of the motets, almost entirely homophonic in style, but Parry makes it highly effective through his use of dramatic pauses and unexpected changes of chords and dynamics.

In the third motet, 'Never weather - beaten sail', the number of parts is increased to five by the addition of a mezzo-soprano line. From here on, each motet in the cycle has one more voice than the one that precedes it, building eventually to eight parts. For the charming poem by Thomas Campion (1567-1620) Parry also eschews the dramatic style of the first two motets in favour of a much more flowing, essentially lyrical approach. For 'There is an old belief', Parry chose words by the Scottish poet, novelist and biographer John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854) which declare that a better world lies 'beyond the sphere of Time and Sin, and Fate's control'. Serenity is the distinguishing characteristic of this motet, expressed by Parry in a sonorous six-part polyphonic texture, changing to a unison reference to the plainsong of the *Credo* where the text mentions

'that creed I fain would keep', and the motet ends with majestic choral writing.

The last two motets are the most ambitious: the fifth sets John Donne's (1572-1631) 'At the round earth's imagined corners', a vision of the Last Judgement. Parry's contrapuntal gifts are displayed at their finest in the monumental seven-part writing that evokes the fanfares of the angelic trumpets, the rising from the grave of the 'numberless infinities of souls', and the distress of the sinner who has repented too late.

The climax of the entire cycle, and the longest of the motets, is 'Lord, let me know mine end', a setting of verses from Psalm 39 for double choir. The two four part (SATB) groups allowed Parry to compose antiphonal responses as well as very full eight-part harmony and very elaborate eight-part polyphony, as well as giving him a tremendously varied vocal palette from the leanest to the fullest textures. He took advantage of all these possibilities in a work that is a *tour-de-force* of a cappella technique. The final section, 'O spare me a little', has a wonderful luminous delicacy and poignancy that suggests that the composer, who by now was suffering from a serious heart condition, may have known he had less than three years to live.

Malcolm MacDonald



JOIN THE CHOIR

The Esterházy Chamber Choir is auditioning for new members in January, ahead of their performance of Bach's St John Passion on 26 March 2017. Applications are welcomed for first sopranos, or for places on our waiting list. We also enjoy having student members who are interested in building experience in singing exciting and challenging repertoire.

If you would like to attend a rehearsal and sign up for an audition, or would like more information, please email richardjdawson@outlook.com

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TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Song for Athene | Tavener

Alleluia.

May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Alleluia.

Remember me, O Lord, when you come into your kingdom.

Alleluia.

Give rest, O Lord, to your handmaid who has fallen asleep.

Alleluia.

The Choir of Saints have found the well-spring of life and door of paradise.

Alleluia.

Life: a shadow and a dream.

Alleluia.

Weeping at the grave creates the song: Alleluia.

Alleluia.

Come, enjoy rewards and crowns I have prepared for you.

Alleluia.

Text from Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' and the Orthodox Funeral Service

Mother of God, here I stand | Tavener

Mother of God, here I stand now praying,
Before this icon of your radiant brightness,
Not praying to be saved from a battlefield,
Not giving thanks, nor seeking forgiveness
For the sins of my soul, nor for all the souls.
Numb, joyless and desolate on earth,
But for her alone, whom I wholly give you.

Mikhail Lermontov (1814 - 1841)

Funeral Ikos | Tavener

Why these bitter words of the dying,
O brethren, which they utter as they go hence?
I am parted from my brethren.
All my friends do I abandon, and go hence.
But whither I go, that understand I not, neither
what shall become of me yonder;
only God, who hath summoned me knoweth.
But make commemoration of me with the song:
Alleluia.

But whither now go the souls?
How dwell they now together there?
This mystery have I desired to learn,
but none can impart aright.
Do they call to mind their own people, as we do them?
Or have they forgotten all those who mourn them
and make the song:
Alleluia

We go forth on the path eternal and as condemned,
with downcast faces,
present ourselves before the only God eternal.
Where then is comeliness? Where then is wealth?
Where then is the glory of this world?
There shall none of these things aid us,
but only to say oft the psalm:
Alleluia.

If thou hast shown mercy unto man,
O man, that same mercy shall be shown thee there;
and if on an orphan thou hast shown compassion,
the same shall there deliver thee from want.
If in this life the naked thou hast clothed,
the same shall give thee shelter there,
and sing the psalm:
Alleluia.

Youth and the beauty of the body fade
at the hour of death,
and the tongue then burneth fiercely,
and the parched throat is inflamed.

The beauty of the eyes is quenched then,
the comeliness of the face all altered,
the shapeliness of the neck destroyed;
and the other parts have become numb,
nor often say:
Alleluia.

With ecstasy are we inflamed
if we but hear that there is light eternal yonder;
that there is Paradise,
wherein every soul of Righteous Ones rejoiceth.
Let us all, also, enter into Christ,
that all we may cry aloud thus unto God:
Alleluia.

*From The Order for the Burial of Dead Priests
translated from the Greek by Isabel Hapgood*

Requiem | Howells

I. Salvator Mundi

O Saviour of the world,
who by thy cross and thy precious blood hast redeemed us,
save us and help us,
we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

II. Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd:
therefore can I lack nothing.
He shall feed me in a green pasture:
and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
He shall convert my soul:
and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me:
thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

III. Requiem aeternam (I)

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

*Rest eternal grant unto them.
And may light perpetual shine upon them.
Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.*

IV. Psalm 121

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills:
 from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord:
 who hath made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:
 and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel:
 shall neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord himself is thy keeper:
 he is thy defence upon thy right hand.
So that the sun shall not burn thee by day:
 neither the moon by night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:
 yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in:
 from this time forth and for evermore.

V. Requiem aeternam (II)

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

*Rest eternal grant unto them.
And may light perpetual shine upon them.
Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord.*

VI. I heard a voice from heaven

I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, "Write,
From henceforth blessed are the dead
which die in the Lord:
even so saith the Spirit;
for they rest from their labours."

Songs of Farewell | Parry

I. My soul, there is a country

My soul, there is a country,
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry,
All skillful in the wars.

There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.

He is thy gracious Friend
And (O my soul, awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.

Leave, then, thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One, who never changes,
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

Henry Vaughan (1622 - 1695)

II. I know my soul hath power to know all things

I know my soul hath power to know all things,
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.

I know my life's a pain and but a span;
I know my sense is mocked in every thing;
And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

John Davies (1569 - 1626)

III. Never weather-beaten sail

Never weather-beaten sail more
willing bent to shore,
Never tirèd pilgrim's limbs
affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs
to fly out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and
take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of
heaven's high Paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears
nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines;
whose beams the Blessèd only see:
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and
raise my sprite to Thee!

Thomas Campion (1567 - 1620)

IV. There is an old belief

There is an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief
Dear friends shall meet once more.
Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin

And Fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.
That creed I fain would keep
That hope I'll ne'er forgo,
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so.

John Gibson Lockhart (1794 - 1854)

V. At the round earth's imagined corners

At the round earth's imagined corners
blow your trumpets, angels
and arise from death
you numberless infinities of souls
and to your scattered bodies go!

All whom the flood did and fire
shall overthrow
All whom war, death, age, agues, tyrannies,
despair, law, chance hath slain;
And you whose eyes shall behold God

And never taste death's woe,
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn apace,
For, if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace
When we are there.

Here on this lowly ground,
Teach me how to repent, for that's as good
As if Thoud'st sealed my pardon with
Thy blood.

John Donne (1572 - 1631)

VI. Lord, let me know mine end

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days,
That I may be certified how long I have to live.
Thou hast made my days as it were a span long;
And mine age is as nothing in respect of Thee,
And verily, ev'ry man living is altogether vanity,

For man walketh in a vain shadow
And disquieteth himself in vain,
He heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.
And now, Lord, what is my hope?
Truly my hope is even in Thee.
Deliver me from all mine offences
And make me not a rebuke to the foolish.
I became dumb and opened not my mouth
For it was Thy doing.
Take Thy plague away from me,
I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand.
When Thou with rebukes does chasten man for sin
Thou makest his beauty to consume away
Like as it were a moth fretting a garment;
Ev'ry man therefore is but vanity.
Hear my pray'r, O Lord
And with Thy ears consider my calling,
Hold not Thy peace at my tears!
For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner
As all my fathers were.
O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence
And be no more seen.

Psalm 39, verses 5-15

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

The Esterházy Chamber Choir

The Esterházy Chamber Choir was founded in 1993 and is based in Lewes, East Sussex. Comprising around thirty four experienced singers from a wide variety of backgrounds, the choir aims to perform a varied and exciting repertoire at the highest standard. Recent concerts have included Bach's Mass in B minor and settings of the Requiem by Desenclos and Fauré.

www.esterhazychoir.org

Soprano

Sue Cartwright
Cesca Eaton*
Dilys Goggins
Judy Mackerras
Lucy Morgan-Jones
Karen Smith*
Sue Thomas
Diana Uprichard
Kate Yarrow

Tenor

Nick Bielby
John Carroll
David Gillham
Peter Larcombe
John Torry*

Alto

Claire Champness
Denise Jones
Sarah Jarvis
Serena Kynaston
Janet Ormerod
Charlotte Pearson
Joyce Phillips
Helen Simpson
Grainne Sinclair
Naomi Warman*

Bass

John Astbury
Chris Dixon
George Fitzsimmons
Derek Froud
John Gillies*
Matt Horsbrugh
Andrew Leach
Mike Lodge
Matthew Spencer

* Soloists in Howells *Requiem*

Richard Dawson | Director



Richard Dawson is the Deputy Director of Music and Head of Academic Music at Brighton College, Musical Director of the Esterházy Chamber Choir, Director of Music and Organist at St Paul's Church, Brighton and Vice-President of the Brighton and District Organists' Association.

Richard read music at the University of Oxford, where he was also the Organ Scholar at Keble College. Whilst at Oxford University, Richard founded and directed the Henry Ley Singers, a chamber choir comprised of 8-16 young singers. Under Richard, the choir performed several concerts in Keble College Chapel, including a concert for the Britten in Oxford festival in 2013. They also sang for services in Ely Cathedral, and recorded their first CD, 'The Leaves of Life', which featured music by Benjamin Britten and Clive Russell. Whilst at Oxford, Richard was also Conductor and Manager of the Oxford University Student Chorus (the largest student choir in Oxford), and regularly conducted the Chapel Choir at Keble College for their three weekly services. Richard now directs the Chapel Choir at Brighton College.

Richard has studied conducting with Paul Spicer, Edward Higginbottom and Ralph Allwood.

"Dawson's direction is brimming with a musical maturity rooted in a deep emotional connection with the music..."

Jake Robert Barlow, Review of 'The Leaves of Life', 2015

www.richardjdawson.co.uk



STORIES SEEN THROUGH A GLASS PLATE, 1916: LEWES REMEMBERS

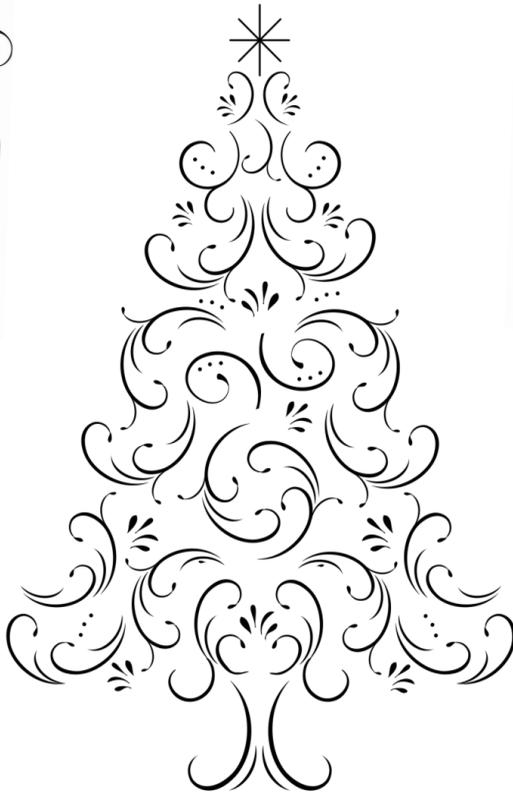
29 OCTOBER – 20 NOVEMBER

*An exhibition of 80 light boxes
in 65 windows throughout Lewes.*

Edward Reeves studio is believed to be the oldest continuously operated photographic studio in the world. Today it houses an archive of over 150,000 glass plates taken by the first three owners as well as approximately 200,000 images taken by Tom Reeves, the current owner, on film and as digital files. This archive is both a unique record of the daily life of Lewes and the history of commercial photographic practice.

Stories Seen Through A Glass Plate was first exhibited during the Brighton Biennial in October 2014. This year's light box exhibition, *1916: Lewes Remembers*, shows work by Benjamin Reeves, the present owners' grandfather. The photographs are shown in various relevant locations.

E. Reeves



Carols by Candlelight

The Esterházy Chamber Choir

Saturday 17th December, 6.00pm
St Anne's Church, Lewes

Free Admission





BACH

ST JOHN PASSION

Sunday 26th March 2017
Lewes Town Hall

Johann Sebastian Bach.

The Esterházy Chamber Choir
Richard Dawson