



Hexham Orpheus Choir



Spring Concert



*Saturday 24th April 1999
7.30 pm*



*QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL
HEXHAM*



PROGRAMME: 50 PENCE



Hexham Orpheus Choir

Conductor: Glenn Davis

Peter Carey, Baritone

Duncan Hewitt, Treble

with

the choir of St Joseph's Middle School, Hexham

trained by Tricia Unsworth

and

an invited orchestra, led by Julia Boulton

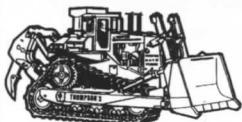
*The Hexham Orpheus Choir is affiliated to the
National Federation of Music Societies with funds
provided by Northern Arts*

The Hexham Orpheus Choir always welcomes new members.

We rehearse on Wednesday nights in
St Joseph's Middle School, Hexham.

If you are interested, please ring (01434) 602763.
There is no audition.

We also offer an associate membership for non-singers who wish to
support the choir and attend our social events.



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Gabriel Fauré

Requiem, Op. 48

- i. Introit and Kyrie (choir)
- ii. Offertory (choir and baritone solo)
- iii. Sanctus (choir)
- iv. Pie Jesu (soprano solo)
- v. Agnus Dei (choir)
- vi. Libera Me (baritone solo and choir)
- vii. In Paradisum (choir)

In setting the Requiem text Fauré seems to have reacted completely against the taste for large-scale dramatic effects seen in many nineteenth-century settings. The scoring is for a small 'chamber' combination of organ, doubled by violas, cellos and bass with extra colour in some movements being provided by a solo violin, horns and harp, trumpets and bassoons. In addition the sequence 'Dies Irae' (the dramatic 'Day of Judgement' section of the text) is missing altogether, although the sixth movement approaches it in mood. Fauré seems to select those Catholic texts which emphasise death 'as a happy deliverance ... rather than a painful experience'. (Fauré's words). The music is not without many undertones of unease, but the word *requiem* itself ('rest') is used in five movements out of seven, and begins and closes the work.

Three baritone solos

Pelham Humfrey:	Hymn to God the Father
John Blow:	The Self Banished
Herbert Howells:	King David

Interval

Andrew Carter:

Benedicite

Like the Rutter Requiem, Andrew Carter's *Benedicite* is a good example of how contemporary composers can write for adult and youth choirs (and, we hope, audiences) in an accessible style. It was first performed in 1989 after a commission by the British Federation of Youth Choirs. Andrew Carter writes in the full score '*Benedicite* is simply the Latin title for 'All the world, praise the Lord'. The English Prayer Book takes thirty-three verses to say so; so I chose a few of the old verses and added a sprinkling of new ones to make the following eleven movements:

1. O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord

A dance of joy to the rhythm of trumpets and drums

2. Green Things

In lilting five-four time, the old verse is amplified to include familiar plant forms like 'herbs and heathers'





3. Sun and Moon

An attempt to capture in sound that sense of silence and eternity, not to say human insignificance, that we feel when looking up into the heavens on a starry night

4. Badgers and Hedgehogs

In the first of the three sections for young singers, some of the animals that Noah forgot to mention have a rumbustious time

5. Ice and Snow

Whilst we sleep, nimble Jack Frost darts round the village with his icicle brush. We shiver in winter's special beauty

6. Whales and Waters

Is a drop in the ocean. Our voices and instruments can only hint at the vast unknown. But in the middle, I have transcribed into the strings the plaintive song of the majestic whale, recently captured on tape by the British Antarctic Survey

7. Butterflies and Moths

The youngsters remind us and themselves that life is fragile and transient, wafted away on the breeze. So we enjoy and give thanks for a myriad of colourful moments

8. Thunder and Lightning

Over a short repeating bass line, a storm threatens, and the frightening elemental powers give way to the calm waters of:

9. Spirits and Souls

In a brief reference to earlier music, we think of all those absolutely smashing people of our own generation who are good to know, and of those of earlier times whose lives can serve as a model. Not least of course:

10. Grannies and Grandads

11. O let the earth bless the Lord

The world has come full circle, and the final hymn of praise recalls the opening fanfares.

(programme notes by the composer)

