

HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR & ORCHESTRA

# TIPPETT A CHILD OF OUR TIME

VERDI - OVERTURE:  
THE FORCE OF DESTINY

Hexham Abbey Saturday May 11, 2019 7:30pm

Director: Mark Edwards

Soloists:

Rachel Dyson (Soprano)

Valerie Reid (Alto)

Austin Gunn (Tenor)

Graeme Danby (Bass)

Hexham Orpheus Choir Regd. Charity No.514942



## FORCE OF DESTINY (OVERTURE)

GUISSEPPE VERDI

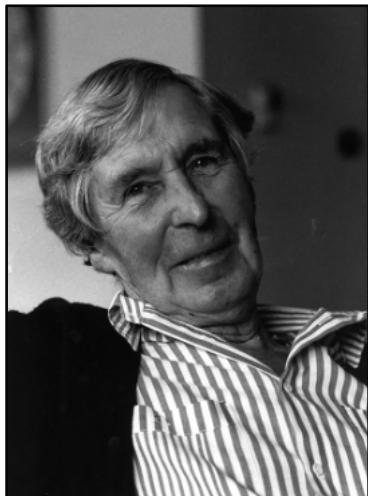
(1813-1901)

Of Verdi's more than two dozen operas, from *Oberto* to *Falstaff*, spanning fifty-four years and including some of the most beloved works ever staged, none has a more rousing or popular overture than *La forza del destino*. When it was first performed in 1862, the opera opened with a modest and conventional prelude. However, it is one of a handful of operas that Verdi later extensively reworked and, in 1869, he replaced the prelude with this magnificent full-scale overture. It offers a preview of the opera's highlights, from the stirring "destiny" motive to Leonora's soaring prayer.

## A CHILD OF OUR TIME

MICHAEL TIPPETT

(1905-1998)



In November 1938, Herschel Grynszpan, a 17-year-old Polish Jew living illegally with his aunt and uncle in Paris, vainly attempted to gain official papers from the German authorities. Frustrated and angered by the persecution of his mother, he shot a German diplomat – an act which resulted in a violent pogrom in Germany against its Jewish population; Kristallnacht. The boy was imprisoned and later disappeared after being handed over to the Nazis.

Tippett used this story as the basis for his oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, extending the specific details into universal significance. He began work on it, his first large-scale work, two days before the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, and completed it two years later. T S Eliot was asked to

supply the libretto, but on studying the composer's detailed synopsis he advised Tippett to write his own text. The first performance was in London in March 1944.

The work's layout in three parts is consciously modelled on Handel's *Messiah*. In the composer's own words:

*Part I deals only with the general state of affairs in the world today as it affects all individuals, minorities, classes or races who are felt to be outside the ruling conventions – Man at odds with his Shadow. In Part II appears the Child of our Time, enmeshed in the drama of his personal fate and in the elemental social forces of our day. The drama is due to the fact that the forces which drive the young man prove stronger than the good advice of his uncle and aunt – as it always was and always will be. Part III is concerned with the significance of this drama and the possible healing that would come from Man's acceptance of his Shadow in relation to his Light.*

Musically, the most obvious influence is that of Bach's Passions. The story is told by a narrator (bass) in recitative, while the arias provide moments of reflection. The chorus fluctuates between dramatic involvement and detached comment, and at crucial points in the drama it uses the modern equivalent of the Lutheran chorale – the spiritual, the song of the African American slaves and their descendants, an oppressed race like the Jews under Nazism. Tippett's musical style is eclectic: many of his works reflect the powerful influence of Beethoven, though *A Child of Our Time* draws more obviously on the modality and rhythmic complexity of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century English music and on jazz and blues.

Programme notes provided by Eric Cross (1997)

## Part 1

### Chorus

*The world turns on its dark side. It is winter.*

### The Argument - Alto

*Man has measured the heavens with a telescope, driven the gods from their thrones. But the soul, watching the chaotic mirror, knows that the gods return. Truly, the living god consumes within and turns the flesh to cancer!*

### Chorus

*Is evil then good? Is reason untrue?*

### Alto

*Reason is true to itself; But pity breaks open the heart.*

### Chorus

*We are lost. We are as seed before the wind. We are carried to a great slaughter.*

### The Narrator - Bass

*Now in each nation there were some cast out by authority and tormented, made to suffer for the general wrong. Pogroms in the east, lynching in the west; Europe brooding on a war of starvation, and a great cry went up from the people.*

### Chorus of the Oppressed

*When shall the usurers' city cease, And famine depart from the fruitful land?*

### Tenor

*I have no money for my bread; I have no gift for my love. I am caught between my desires and their frustration as between the hammer and the anvil. How can I grow to a man's stature?*

### Soprano

*How can I cherish my man in such days, or become a mother in a world of destruction? How shall I feed my children on so small a wage? How can I comfort them when I am dead?*

### A Spiritual - Chorus & Soli

*Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus; Steal away, steal away home, I han't got long to stay here.*

*My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the thunder, The trumpet sounds within-a my soul, I han't got long to stay here.*

*Green trees a-bending, poor sinner stand a-trembling, The trumpet sounds within-a my soul, I han't got long to stay here.*

*Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus; Steal away, steal away home – I han't got long to stay here.*

-----INTERVAL-----

## Part II

### Chorus

*A star rises in mid-winter. Behold the man!  
The scapegoat! The child of our time.*

### The Narrator - Bass

*And a time came when in the continual  
persecution one race stood for all.*

### Chorus of Persecutors and Persecuted

*Away with them! Curse them! Kill them!  
They infect the state. Where? How? Why?  
We have no refuge.*

### The Narrator - Bass

*Where they could, they fled from the terror,  
And among them a boy escaped secretly, and  
was kept in hiding in a great city.*

### Chorus of the Self-righteous

*We cannot have them in our Empire. They  
shall not work, nor drawn a dole. Let them  
starve in No-Man's-Land!*

### The Narrator - Bass

*And the boy's mother wrote a letter, saying:*

### Mother - Soprano

*O my son! In the dread terror they have  
brought me near to death.*

### Boy - Tenor

*Mother! Mother! Though men hunt me like  
an animal, I will defy the world to reach you.*

### Aunt - Alto

*Have patience. Throw not your life away in  
futile sacrifice.*

### Uncle - Bass

*You are as one against all. Accept the  
impotence of your humanity.*

### Boy - Tenor

*No! I must save her.*

### A Spiritual - Chorus & Soli

*Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,  
Nobody knows like Jesus.  
O brothers, pray for me, O brothers, pray for  
me, And help me to drive Old Satan away. O*

*mothers, pray for me, O mothers, pray for me,  
And help me to drive Old Satan away.  
Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,  
Nobody knows like Jesus.*

### Narrator - Bass

*The boy becomes desperate in his agony.*

### Aunt - Alto

*A curse is born. The dark forces threaten him.*

### The Narrator - Bass

*He goes to authority. He is met with  
hostility.*

### Aunt - Alto

*His other self rises in him, demonic and  
destructive.*

### Narrator - Bass

*He shoots the official –*

### Aunt - Alto

*But he shoots only his dark brother – And see  
– he is dead.*

### The Narrator - Bass

*They took a terrible vengeance.*

### The Terror - Chorus

*Burn down their houses! Beat in their heads!  
Break them in pieces on the wheel!*

### The Narrator - Bass

*Men were ashamed of what was done. There  
was bitterness and horror.*

### A Spiritual of Anger - Chorus & Bass

*Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;  
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go. When  
Israel was in Egypt's land, Let my people go.  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let  
my people go.*

*'Thus spake the Lord,' bold Moses said, Let  
my people go.*

*'If not, I'll smite your first-born dead,' Let  
my people go.*

*Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;  
Tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.*

### **The boy sings in his Prison - Tenor**

*My dreams are all shattered in a ghastly reality. The wild beating of my heart is stilled: day by day. Earth and sky are not for those in prison. Mother! Mother!*

### **The Mother - Soprano**

*What have I done to you, my son? What will become of us now? The springs of hope are dried up. My heart aches in unending pain.*

### **Aunt - Alto**

*The dark forces rise like a flood. Men's hearts are heavy: they cry for peace.*

### **A Spiritual - Chorus & Soprano**

*O, by and by, by and by, I'm going to lay down my heavy load.*

*I know my robe's going to fit me well, I tried it on at the gates of hell. O, hell is deep and a dark despair, O, stop, poor sinner, and don't go there! O, by and by, by and by, I'm going to lay down my heavy load.*

## **Part III**

### **Chorus**

*The cold deepens. The world descends into the icy waters where lies the jewel of great price.*

### **Alto**

*The soul of man is impassioned like a woman. She is old as the earth, beyond good and evil, the sensual garments. Her face will be illuminated like the sun. Then is the time of his deliverance.*

### **Scene - Bass**

*The words of wisdom are these: Winter cold means inner warmth, the secret nursery of the seed.*

### **Chorus**

*How shall we have patience for the consummation of the mystery? Who will comfort us in the going through?*

### **Bass**

*Patience is born in the tension of loneliness. The garden lies beyond the desert.*

### **Chorus**

*Is the man of destiny master of us all? Shall those cast out be unavenged?*

### **Bass:**

*The man of destiny is cut off from fellowship. Healing springs from the womb of time. The simple-hearted shall exult in the end.*

### **Chorus**

*What of the boy, then? What of him?*

### **Bass**

*He, too, is outcast, his manhood broken in the clash of powers. God overpowered him – the child of our time.*

### **Tenor**

*I would know my shadow and my light, so shall I at last be whole.*

### **Bass**

*Then courage, brother, dare the grave passage.*

### **Soprano**

*Here is no final grieving, but an abiding hope.*

### **Alto**

*The moving waters renew the earth. It is spring.*

**Chorus** repeat the words of the soloists.

### **A Spiritual - Chorus & Soli**

*Deep river, my home is over Jordan, Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into camp-ground.*

*O chillun! O don't you want to go, To that gospel feast, That promised land, That land where all is peace?*

*Walk into heaven, and take my seat, And cast down my crown at Jesus' feet. Deep river, my home is over Jordan, I want to cross over into camp-ground, Lord!*

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

### Mark Edwards MMus



Photo by  
Kaupo Kikkas

Originally from Edinburgh, Mark trained as a percussionist before taking up conducting and receiving his MMus with Distinction. With a keen interest in contemporary music, Mark has worked on new compositions with Royal Northern Sinfonia, London Sinfonietta Academy and Streetwise Opera. Recent highlights include performing at the Royal Albert Hall London and Symphony Hall Birmingham and live broadcasts for various BBC 3 broadcasts. Recent concerts have included Elgar – Dream of Gerontius, Vaughan Williams – A Sea Symphony, and Verdi Requiem. In 2017 Mark won the National Brass Band Conducting Competition.

Mark is currently undertaking further study with Clark Rundell and Mark Heron at the Royal Northern College of Music which includes being assistant conductor for projects with BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and the Psappha ensemble. Further roles have included being assistant conductor for projects with Scottish Chamber Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and RTÉ Concert Orchestra. This summer Mark will return to assist with Scottish Chamber Orchestra as well as a project with the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra.

He is currently director of music for Newcastle Sinfonietta, Hexham Orpheus Choir, Northern Praeclassica, Felling Male Voice Choir, workshop leader for Streetwise Opera, lecturer in conducting at Newcastle University and associate conductor for 'Voices of Hope' who recently won the BBC Choir of the Year Competition.

## SOLOISTS

### Rachel Dyson (Soprano)



Northumbrian soprano Rachel Dyson has been based in Tallinn for the past few years as a member of the Estonian National Opera ensemble. Recent performances include Wagner's *Fliegende Hollander*, Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* (2<sup>nd</sup> bridesmaid), Stein's *Viiuldaja Katusel*, Kalman's *Die Zirkusprinzessin* (Circus Maiden), Hindemith's *Cardillac*, Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Gounod's *Faust*, Wagner's *Tannhauser*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Korvit's *Liblikas*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Puccini's *La Boheme*, Puccini's *Tosca*, Handel's *Giulio Cesare* and Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*. The National Opera have also toured Estonia, Scandinavia, Moscow and the Baltic states with various productions and concerts.

Back in the UK her performances have included a NEPAC *Last Night of the Proms* at The Sage Gateshead, *Proms on the lawn* at Kirkley Hall, 'Pot Luck' *Pirates of Penzance* (Mabel) at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, Bach's *Johannes Passion* and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* for the Bury Bach Choir, Goodall's *Eternal Light Requiem* for Scunthorpe Choral Society and the following roles for Rocket Opera: Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (Donna Anna), Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Belinda), Sullivan's *The Mikado* (Yum Yum), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Mabel) and *Trial by Jury* (The Plaintiff). Colombina in Lusvardi's comic opera *Colombo Tutto Tondo* at the Galway Festival, *Happy and Glorious a Queen's Jubilee* concert in Bury St Edmunds, Bizet's *Carmen* (Micaela) for The Sage Gateshead Opera Chorus, touring with Heritage Opera production of Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, Sullivan's *The Gondoliers* (Gianetta) and the title role in *Patience* at the Buxton International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival.

## Valerie Reid (Alto)



Valerie was born in Fife, Scotland and studied with Patricia MacMahon at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Whilst there she won the Governors Recital Prize, the prestigious John Noble Bursary, three Caird Scholarships, the Worshipful Company of Musicians Silver Medal and was twice a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier and Royal Overseas League competitions.

Valerie's operatic roles with English National Opera include Anina in Peter Konwitschny's production of *La Traviata* conducted by Ed Gardner, Glasha in David Alden's production of *Katya Kabanova*, Madalena in Sir Johnathon Millar's production of *Rigoletto*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lady in *Magic Flute*, The Fishmonger in Richards

Jones acclaimed production of *Julietta*, Anne's Mother in the World Premiere of Nico Muhly's *Two Boys*, Grimgerde in *Die Walkure* which was broadcast live from the pyramid stage at Glastonbury and most recently Grandmother Burja in David Alden's production of *Jenůfa* about which Rupert Christiansen of the Telegraph said that 'Valerie Reid's excellent mezzo cleverly unleashed the power of Janaceks score'. Recently Valerie completed a very successful tour as Lady Jane in the ETO production of the Gilbert and Sullivan masterpiece *Patience*.

Equally at home on the concert and oratorio platform Valerie has sung Elgar *Sea Pictures* at the Megaron Concert Hall in Athens and at the Bury St Edmunds Festival, Verdi *Requiem* in Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Coventry Cathedral, St Albans Abbey – *Dream of Gerontius* in Dunblane Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds Cathedral – *Elijah* at the Barbican, Truro Cathedral and St Albans Abbey.

Valerie is a highly respected vocal tutor and is a Professor of Practice at the University of Cumbria.

Tyneside based tenor Austin

## Austin Gunn (Tenor)



Gunn has appeared as a soloist in France, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and throughout the UK. He has sung with English National Opera every season since his debut there.

Austin's major operatic debut was Vorsinger *Zaide* (Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Charles Mackerras) in the Edinburgh International Festival. Other performances include 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor Soloist *Curlew River* (EIF) & Zweite Lehrbube *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (EIF, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra), cover Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* (Scottish Opera), Manager *The Waiter's Revenge* and Martin *Hummus* (Musica Na Fabrica Festival, Lisbon), Spectre *The Spectre's Bride* (Ars Cantata, Zurich), Aubrey *Der Vampyr*, Beppe *Rita*, Dormont *La Scala di Seta* (Berwick Festival Opera), Don Jose *Carmen* (Black

Cat Opera), Frederick *Pirates of Penzance* and Nanki-Poo *The Mikado* (Opera Anywhere). His extensive work with English National Opera includes cover Pliable/Superstition/ Celestial *A Pilgrim's Progress* and cover Dantine *The Perfect American*, Guest John Cage *Dinner Party* (ENO MusiCircus), Gizmo 3 *The Way Back Home* and Guard *Between Worlds* in preproduction, Tamino *Magic Flute* and Alfredo *La Traviata* (ENO Baylis events), an ENO Late Shift Recital (National Portrait Gallery), Nanki-Poo, Don Basilio *Marriage of Figaro* and Don Ottavio (ENO Opera Squad). Broadcasts include Maxwell Davies *Solstice of Light*, 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor Soloist *Curlew River*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lehrbube *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (BBC Radio 3), a Scots song recital (PBS America), and as the singing voice of a soldier in the BBC series *Band of Brothers*. Austin teaches singing at Hull, Durham and Leeds universities and has given masterclasses at York University, the La Cité internationale des arts in Paris and for OperaLab, Brussels.

Graeme Danby was born in

## Graeme Danby (Bass)



County Durham. In a professional operatic career that spans over 35 years he is recognised as one of the world's most prolific character basses of his time.

Graeme has performed over 1250 performances as a principal at English National Opera with roles in *Tosca*, *La Traviata*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Lulu*, *A Masked Ball*, *Rigoletto*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Peter Grimes*, *Damnation of Faust*, *Magic Flute*, *Carmen*, *Xerxes*, *Semele*, *Fairy Queen*, *Morning to Midnight*, *Falstaff*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Boris Godunov*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Il Tabarro*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *The Trojans*, *War and Peace*, *Barber of Seville*, *Jenufa*, *The Makropulos Case* and *On the Town*.

Performances elsewhere include The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, La

## Alexandra Raikhлина (Leader)

Scala Milan, Los Angeles Walt Disney Concert Hall, Theatre San Carlos Lisbon, Vlaamse Opera Antwerp, Garsington Festival, Palau des Arts Valencia, Festspiele House Salzburg, Athenee Louis Joubert Paris, Bord Gais Dublin, Royal Albert Hall, Equilibre Fribourg, Scottish Opera, Buxton Festival, Opera du Rouen, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Festival Hall London, Israeli Opera Tel Aviv, National Opera House Wexford, Bozar Brussels, Die Singel Antwerp, Snape Maltings, Sage Gateshead, Birgitta Festival Tallinn and Opera du Rhin Strasbourg.

Graeme is also Professor of Practice and Artistic Director of the Stanwix Theatre at the University of Cumbria.



Alexandra Raikhлина was born in Moscow and later received a scholarship to do undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with David Takeno and Krzysztof Smietana. She currently holds the position of sub-principal first violin with Royal Northern Sinfonia.

She has performed extensively in Belgium, England, Switzerland, Russia, Greece and Hong-Kong, and has appeared as a soloist and a chamber musician in Wigmore Hall, Barbican Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Fairfield Halls and the Sage Gateshead. She has appeared as a soloist with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Epsom Symphony Orchestra and the Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

Her first BBC Proms appearance was part of the

*Composers Portrait* programme broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Other radio appearances have included performances at BBC Radio 3's *Free Thinking Festival*.

Alexandra has won awards from the Craxton Foundation, the Martin Scholarship Foundation and was awarded the LSO String Scheme Experience. She was a prizewinner at the Richmond upon Thames Performing Arts festival and a finalist and special prizewinner at the International Koningin Sophie Charlotte competition.

During her freelancing career she has played with the London Symphony Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic and has co-led Manchester Camerata. She is a frequent guest with Britten Sinfonia, and co-leader of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Alexandra is the Artistic Director of Brundibár Arts Festival based in Newcastle and Gateshead.



Hexham Orpheus Choir rehearsing the Verdi *Requiem* (May 2018) - Photograph by Liam Moss

## HEXHAM ORPHEUS CHOIR

Hexham Orpheus Choir (Charity Registration 514942) is dedicated to performing and promoting access to classical music in Tynedale. We have around 85 members and always welcome new singers. Our members range from the very experienced to the less so and both are equally welcome. For the less

experienced, if you have a singing voice, with an innate feel for pitch and rhythm and a desire to practise and develop your singing and sight reading, then membership of the choir is a great way to develop your skills.

**[hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk/](http://hexham-orpheus-choir.org.uk/)**

## Warren Smith (Rehearsal Pianist)

We would like to thank our rehearsal pianist, Warren Smith, for all his hard work in helping to prepare the chorus for this performance.

## SOLOISTS

**Sopranos**  
Sarah Barker  
Carolyn Below  
Paddy Burridge  
Olivia Cameron\*  
Elspeth Christie  
Mary Houlton\*  
Margaret Huntington  
Pip May  
Liz McNeil Grist  
Cicely Mortimer  
Mary Oswell  
Anna Pattinson  
Ann Reed  
Maeve Selby  
Bonnie Shaw\*  
Teresa Toms  
Esther Urwin  
Carolyn Vasey  
Carrie Winger  
Michelle Woollard\*

**Altos**  
Emma Banks\*  
Lou Baxter  
Gail Chapman  
Jane Dammers  
Sheila Dance  
Pippa Exham  
Rita Howell  
Claire Huddleston  
Diane Keetch  
Louise Khazaee  
Jenny Lewis  
Linda Lord  
Val Mallinson  
Hilary McKendrick  
Joanna O'Neill  
Heather Porritt  
Bronya Read  
Jenny Sadgrove  
Jean Wilks  
Lorna Wright\*

**Tenors**  
John Barker  
John Below  
Malcolm Chainey  
Bill Day  
Tim Grew  
Paul Hagger  
Denis McCaldin  
Jenny McKay  
Chris Moss  
Peter Nevin  
Rachel Ogilvie  
David Pattinson  
Anne Stennett  
William Tyson\*  
Peter Vasey  
Chris Vernazza\*  
Euan Williamson\*

**Basses**  
Julian Boyfield  
Stuart Dearlove  
Warwick Eden  
Graeme Helliwell  
Tim Hockin\*  
Nick Lord  
Don MacLeod  
Keith Mallinson  
Tony May  
Bruce Reed  
Warren Smith\*  
Roland Tate\*  
Chris Welch

\* Guest member from 'Voices of Hope'

## THE ORCHESTRA

**1st Violin**  
Alexandra Raikhлина  
Amy Cardigan  
Pauline Brandon  
Joanne Atherton  
Jo Montgomery  
Michael Walton  
**2nd Violin**  
Ed Cross  
Hannah Tattersfield  
Rebecca Howell  
Markus Lawrenson  
**Viola**  
Laura Newton  
Fiona Allinson  
Tom Foster

**Cello**  
Nick Byrne  
Gemma Kost  
Ele Leckie  
**Bass**  
Duncan Brown  
**Flute**  
Clare Crinson-  
Graves  
Cressida McKay  
Frith  
**Oboe**  
Josh Hall  
Robin Crinson  
**Cor Anglais**  
Philip Cull

**Clarinet**  
Dov Goldberg  
Jonathan Caudle  
**Bassoon**  
Anthea Wood  
Sharon Clatworthy  
**Horn**  
Chris Senior  
Chris Griffiths  
Ben Woolley  
Maria Robinson  
**Trombone**  
Stuart Gray  
Steve Baxter  
Toby Bannan

**Tuba**  
Stephen Boyd  
**Trumpet**  
Anthony Thompson  
Chris Lewis  
Alastair Lord  
**Harp**  
Venera Bojkova  
**Timpani**  
Paul Campbell

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This performance has been a major project and we are extremely grateful for the support offered by many in our community.

**Cogito Books:** Hexham's award-winning independent bookshop for ticket sales.  
[cogitobooksongline.co.uk](http://cogitobooksongline.co.uk)

**Margaret Huntington and Tony May,** for the loan of lighting equipment.

**Members of the committee and others who have helped,** for their valuable contributions throughout this project.

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