

THE MALCOLM SARGENT CANCER FUND FOR CHILDREN

LONDON CONCORD SINGERS
AND ORCHESTRA

Olive Simpson : Soprano
John Cobb : Baritone

Malcolm Cottle : Conductor

Tenebrae Responsories

Vittoria
(c1548-1611)

The Tenebrae Responsories are sung at the end of each of the three readings at matins in the three nocturns on each of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

The great Spanish composer, Vittoria, set all eighteen from the 2nd. and 3rd. nocturns of each day. We are going to sing the same seven that Poulenc uses in his 'Sept Répons', but whereas Poulenc takes them out of liturgical order so that they make a chronological sequence, we shall perform Vittoria's in the order they would have appeared over the three days.

1. Judas Mercator Pessimus (resp 2, 2nd noct, Maundy Thurs)

Judas, the wicked merchant, sought the Lord with a kiss. He, like an innocent lamb, did not refuse the kiss of Judas. For a number of coins he delivered Christ to the Jews. It had been better for him if he had never been born. For a number of coins.....

2. Una Hora (resp 2, 3rd noct, Maundy Thurs)

Could you not watch with me one hour, you who were eager to die for me? Or do you not see Judas, how he does not sleep, but hastens to betray me to the Jews? Why do you sleep? Arise and pray, lest you fall into temptation. Or do you not see.....

3. Tenebrae factae sunt (resp 2, 2nd noct, Good Friday)

There was darkness when Jesus was crucified by the Jews. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice: My God, why hast thou forsaken me? And bowing his head he gave up the ghost. Jesus crying out with a loud voice said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And bowing his head.....

4. Jesum tradidit impius (resp 2, 3rd noct, Good Friday)

The wicked man betrayed Jesus to the chief priests and elders of the people: but Peter followed him afar off, to see the end. And they led him to Caiphas, the High Priest, where the Scribes and Pharisees were met together. But Peter followed.....

5. Caligaverunt Oculi mei (resp 3, 3rd noct, Good Friday)
My eyes became dim with my weeping: for he is far from me that consoled me. See all you people, if there is sorrow like my sorrow. O all you that pass by, behold and see - if there is sorrow like my sorrow.

6. Ecce Quomodo moritur (resp 3, 2nd noct, Holy Sat)
See how the just man dies, and no one takes it to heart: and just men are taken away, and no one cares: the just man has been taken away from the face of iniquity: and his memory shall be in peace. He was mute as a lamb before the shearer, and he opened not his mouth: he was taken away from anguish and from judgement. And his memory.....

7. Sepulto Domino (resp 3, 3rd noct, Holy Sat)
When the Lord was buried, the tomb was sealed, a stone was rolled before the entrance of the tomb. Soldiers were placed to guard it. The chief priests went to Pilate to petition him. Soldiers were placed.....

Requiem

Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Fauré started to write the Requiem in 1887 purely 'for the pleasure of it', although the death of his father in 1885 and of his mother two years later may have given impetus to its composition. The original version consisted of only five movements - Introit/Kyrie, Sanctus, Pie Jesu, Agnus Dei and In Paradisum, and was scored for lower strings, timpani, harp and organ only with a violin solo in the Sanctus. The bassoon, horn and trumpet parts were added later. The Offertoire and Libera Me movements were added in 1893 although the latter had been written as early as 1877 as an independent composition for baritone and organ. The more familiar symphonic version of the work was not made until 1900 and was probably the work of one of Fauré's students. We are performing the original version as realised by John Rutter.

1. Introit and Kyrie.

Eternal rest grant them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Thou, O God, art praised in Sion, and unto thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.

2. Offertoire.

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, free the souls of the departed from the pains of hell, and from the deep pit: deliver them from the jaws of the lion, lest they are swallowed up, and lest they disappear in darkness. We offer you, Lord, this sacrifice of prayer and praise: receive it on behalf of the souls of those we recall this day. Make them, Lord, to pass from death to life as you promised Abraham and his seed. Amen.

3. Sanctus.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

4. Pie Jesu.

In your mercy Lord Jesus, grant them everlasting rest.

5. Agnus Dei.

O lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest eternal. Let perpetual light shine on them, Lord, with the saints in eternity, because thou art merciful. Eternal rest grant them, Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

6. Libera Me.

Deliver me, Lord, from eternal death on that awful day: when the heavens and the earth shall shake: and when thou shalt come to judge thy people with fire. I am seized with trembling and fear, until the day of trial, and thy wrath comes. That day, a day of wrath, calamity and misery, a day of great and bitter grief. Eternal rest.....

7. In Paradisum.

May the angels lead you to Paradise: may the martyrs receive you at your coming, and lead you into the holy city, Jerusalem. May choirs of angels receive you and, with Lazarus, once a beggar, may you have eternal rest.

INTERVAL 20 minutes

Ode to death

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Holst composed the Ode to Death, a setting of a Walt Whitman poem, in 1922, when it was given its first performance at the Leeds Festival. In spite of its subject matter, this is far from being a gloomy work, but indeed looks forward with optimism to escape from the earthly life and all its cares. By a happy coincidence, it appears that Ode to Death was one of Sir Malcolm Sargent's favourite works.

Edmund Rubbra, in his book on Holst's music, says that Holst was the first composer to realise that the English language seems to fall naturally into rhythms of five and seven, and to exploit this in his writing. In this piece, for instance, we have to wait until half way through before we find the first 4/4 bar.

See separate sheet for words.

Sept Répons des Ténèbres

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Poulenc's last major work was composed in response to a commission from the New York Philharmonic to celebrate its opening season in the Lincoln Centre for Performing Arts. The work uses quite large orchestral forces, indeed probably too large for our fairly small chorus, but we hope you will excuse this for an opportunity to hear this very rarely performed piece. A soprano soloist is used in the 3rd., 5th. and 7th. movements. Poulenc instructs that the voices used should be boys (including the soloist) and mens, although he does say that one may replace the boys voices with womens, but under no circumstances by the voices of young girls!

1. Una Hora.
2. Judas Mercator Pessimus.
3. Jesum tradidit impius.
4. Caligaverunt Oculi mei.
5. Tenebrae factae sunt.
6. Sepulto Domino.
7. Ecce Quomodo moritur Justus.

Olive Simpson read modern languages at Trinity College, Dublin, and studied singing in Belfast. Whilst in Dublin she sang as soloist in many oratorio performances and on radio. When she moved to England she became first soprano with Swingle II with whom she sang for 13 years. She has sung many operatic roles in this country and on the continent. She works closely with composer Nigel Hess and is lead singer with his group Chameleon, who have just released their first album. Olive also sings regularly with the Tallis Scholars and the Hilliard Ensemble. Solo engagements this year include Bach's St. John Passion in Ely Cathedral and Berio's Sinfonia with the Brussels Philharmonic.

John Cobb is embarking on a career as a soloist. He studies singing with Roger Cleverdon. John sings with the group Threes Company. He has sung in La Traviata with Lyrica International. He has also appeared in Trial by Jury, Dido and Aeneas and Thomas Arne's opera Thomas and Sally.