

From the age of nine Fauré (1845 - 1924) studied music at the École Niedermeyer, the 'École de musique religieuse et classique', where Saint-Saëns was a member of staff. Saint-Saëns was regarded as a progressive teacher, introducing his pupils not only to the music of Bach and Mozart but also to controversial composers such as Wagner and Liszt. Unlike most major French composers, Fauré did not attend the Paris Conservatoire but continued his studies with Saint-Saëns, who greatly encouraged him by putting work his way and helping him to get his music published. The two became lifelong friends and Fauré later said that he owed everything to Saint-Saëns.

The subtlety of Fauré's music, and his concentration on the small-scale, led many to criticise him for lacking depth, a judgement based on the mistaken premise that the bigger and bolder a composer's music the more worthwhile it must be. Fauré deliberately avoided the grander kind of orchestral music that could easily have brought him fame and fortune. He preferred instead to embrace an elegant and subtle musical language that has won him increasing numbers of admirers, particularly as a composer of songs, a genre in which he is now recognised as a master.

Fauré's *Messe Basse* was composed in 1881, whilst the composer was on holiday in Normandy. The title means 'Low Mass' or in other words a *Missa Brevis*, containing only the Kyrie, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei. Without the most dramatic sections of the full Mass - the Gloria and Credo - the remaining movements provide the ideal context for Fauré's typically understated style. In a number of places the Mass hints at the much more famous Requiem, written just seven years later.

The *Requiem* was composed in 1888, when Fauré was in his forties, quite probably in response to the recent death of his father. Shortly after its first performance, Fauré's mother also died, giving the work an added poignancy. In 1900, under some pressure from his publishers, he reluctantly agreed to the release of a revised version containing additional instrumental parts designed to broaden the work's appeal, though tonight we use just the organ. Nowadays it is such a firm favourite that it comes as a surprise to learn that it did not gain widespread popularity until the nineteen-fifties.

In its sequence of movements the *Requiem* departs significantly from the standard liturgical text. Fauré included two new sections, the lyrical Pie Jesu and the transcendent In Paradisum. He also omitted the Dies Irae and Tuba Mirum - for most composers an opportunity to exploit to the full the dramatic possibilities of all the available choral and orchestral forces. Consequently the prevailing mood is one of peacefulness and serenity, and the work has often been described, quite justly, as a Requiem without the Last Judgement.

Michael Hurd (1928 - 2006) composed sixty published scores and wrote twenty books on music, along with many articles, reviews and broadcasts. An acknowledged authority on British music, he played a major role in the revival of interest in both Ivor Gurney and Rutland Boughton. Actively involved in music-making around his Hampshire home and far beyond throughout a fifty-year career, his best-selling works for young performers have a lasting world wide legacy. "They sell in alarming quantities and thus make it possible for me to live in modest comfort as a freelance composer and author." Thus was Michael Hurd's reflection on the enduring popularity of his pop cantatas, of which *Jonah-Man Jazz* was the first - and by far the runaway best-seller. It tells the story of Jonah's flight from Nineveh, his defiance of God's wishes and his brush with the Whale.



Promenade Choirs

Requiem

and Messe basse - Fauré

Jonah Man Jazz - Hurd

directed by **Christopher Goldsack**
accompanied by **Ben Frost** - organ
and **Pam Phillips** - piano

**St Peter's Church,
Hersham,
7pm Sunday March 27th 2011**

the **RCSheriff** Trust
advancing the arts in **Elmbridge**



Programme

Ladies' Choir

Messe basse - Fauré

Kyrie
Sanctus
Benedictus
Agnus Dei

Junior Choir

Jonah Man Jazz - Hurd

A City of Sin
Listen to me Jonah
I need a boat
The waves grew high
Jonah sank into the sea
We had a wonderful party
narration: Matthew Long

Youth Choir

Requiem - Fauré

Introit et Kyrie
Offertoire
Sanctus
Pie Jesu
Agnus Dei
Libera Me
In Paradisum

solos: Miles Ascough, Naomi Vidis-Humphries and Mike Smith

Members of the Promenade Junior Choir:

Lottie Buchanan	Tara Broekhuizen	Manon Hagger
Saskia Hawkins	Chloe Judd	Marcus Lee
Matthew Long	Courtney Lovell	Eliie Quire
Leanda Robinson	Isabella Sasso	Maggie Talibart
Eloise Timms	Benedict Williams	

Members of the Promenade Youth Choir:

Issy Anstead	Miles Ascough	Nattie Brett-Jones
Amber Broekhuizen	Abigail Clarke	Andrew Clarke
Emma Clarke	Helena Droszol	Fleur Eldridge
Ford Eldridge	Georgia Glover	Beth Goldsack
Rebecca Goodchild	Summer Greenaway	Rebecca Lacey
Helen Lawrence	Esther McNamara	Olivia Mitchell
Matthew Palfreyman	William Pepperell	Evangeline Rice
Daisy Shephard	Mike Smith	Naomi Vidis-Humphries
Hannah Vidis-Humphries	Elena Viglienghi	

With thanks to Messrs. Peter Brown, Robert Geary and John Sutton for their invaluable support this evening.

Members of the Promenade Ladies' Choir:

Catherine Cunningham	Vivien Ellison	Jane Griffith-Ward
Jackie Harding	Carol Hooker	Jo Humphries
Jane Jamieson	Helen McNamara	Rebecca Price
Susanna Rang	Pam Smith	Marion Tempest
Ruth Tipmensi	Louise Walker	

Anybody interested in joining the *Promenade Choirs* can visit the *Promenade* website www.promenade.org.uk or call Christopher on 01932 242805. With a thought to the future any men interested in joining forces with the Ladies Choir to create a mixed voice chamber choir should let Christopher know.

Dates for the diary:

The next rehearsals for the Youth and Junior Choirs will be Monday 2nd. The Youth Choir will be performing at two summer festivals promoted by the R.C.Sherriff Trust - on May 1st at 12.30 in Riverside Gardens, and on June 18th at Imber Court. The Youth and Junior Choirs will be performing on Sunday June 26th in a light hearted programme (venue to be decided), and the Ladies' Choir will be putting on a charitable dinner cabaret (date and venue to be decided... soon!)