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DVOŘÁK

Stabat Mater



Saturday 21 March 2026 7:30pm
St James Church, Muswell Hill

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Stabat Mater

Antonín Dvořák

Saturday 21 March 2026
St James Church, Muswell Hill

Elinor Rolfe Johnson *soprano*
Amy Holyland *mezzo-soprano*
Christian Joel *tenor*
Alaric Green *bass-baritone*

North London Chorus
Meridian Sinfonia
Murray Hipkin *conductor*

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ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

STABAT MATER

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904): Stabat Mater Op.58 (1876-7)

With Dvořák...You just listen to the music and it tells you everything. The Stabat Mater tells you what happened to him while he was composing it...It is all there in the music, the grief, the sense of hope, and then the final triumph of faith. (Harald Stamm, bass soloist, Hamburg State Opera, 2004)

What had happened to Dvořák, between mid-February and early May 1876 when he wrote the first sketch of his *Stabat Mater* and mid-November 1877 when he completed the orchestration and definitive score of it, was the experience of life in the shadow of death. His two-day-old daughter Josefa had died in September 1875 and it might have been partly in response to this that he began the sketch, although he dedicated it to František Hušpauer 'as a souvenir to the friend of his young days'. Dvořák's ambitions were as a composer, at which he was already prolific but not yet widely recognised, but with a wife and young family to support he needed his employment as an orchestral viola player and a poorly-paid church organist. He was beginning to receive serious commissions after being recommended by Brahms to his own publisher, Simrock, and it was possibly to focus on some of these that necessitated suspending work on the *Stabat Mater*. He resumed it in the early autumn of the following year, almost certainly in response to further personal tragedies: in August his 11-month-old daughter Ruzena had died after accidentally drinking poison; and on September 8th, his own 36th birthday, his three-and-a-half-year-old son Otakar died of smallpox, leaving Dvořák and his wife childless. Whilst

they would have been familiar with the significant level of neo-natal and child mortality at the time - Dvořák was the eldest of 14 children, of whom eight survived into adulthood - the sequence of these deaths in the space of two years would surely have devastated them and might have broken a less devout couple. Yet they survived and had six more children, five of whom lived into old age and the sixth, Otilka, until she was 27. Dvořák did eventually compose a *Requiem*, but not until one was commissioned in 1891. Premiered with great success in Birmingham, it was nevertheless dismissed by George Bernard Shaw as a 'paltry piece of musical confection'.

Apart from a Mass, composed during his teens, of which the manuscript is lost, the *Stabat Mater* was Dvořák's first attempt at a sacred text in Latin. The text emerged from the Franciscan monastic world at the beginning of the 14th century and is thought to be the work of Jacopone da Todi (d. 1306), a prosperous Umbrian merchant who became a monk on the death of his young wife. A poem of 20 three-line stanzas, it develops the context and implications of the delphic biblical passage (John 19, 25-27) describing Jesus's mother Mary, her sister Mary, Mary Magdalena and 'the disciple Jesus loved', who is never named but may or may not have been John himself, all gathered at the foot of the cross to witness his final moments. It has been widely set since the 15th century - most notably immediately before Dvořák by Liszt, who incorporated it as the third movement of his large-scale oratorio *Christus* (1872). Dvořák's own setting was

premiered in Prague in December 1880 by the opera company of the Czech Provisional Theatre and its orchestra, in which he had played as an instrumentalist. It was first performed in England at the Royal Albert Hall in March 1883, which proved to be the breakthrough occasion for his international reputation and sustained popularity with the flourishing British choral culture: he was invited back the following year to conduct it himself at the same venue, with a large orchestra and a choir of more than 800 voices.

The simple incessant incantatory rhythms of the poem, whilst appropriate to the deep pathos of its topic, make it difficult to set. Yet Dvořák shows considerable ingenuity of composition and orchestration in avoiding the risk of any musical monotony, as well as by imaginatively restructuring the form of the text by deconstructing the stanzas and rearranging the lines of the poem to suit his own interpretation of it. This gives his setting a clear declaratory theological narrative, initially showing Mother Mary fulfilling, through her witness of Christ's passion, Simeon's grim prophecy that 'a sword shall pierce your heart' and then, through interrogative contemplation of her grief at Christ's sacrifice, becoming a prayer for her intercession, exhorting believers to see and share her grief. Four of the 10 movements are set in major keys, brightening the mood surrounding an occasion of enormous grief and sorrow and thereby expressing the religious optimism of Dvořák, as well as the joyfulness of Slavic piety, premised on the Gospel's

teaching that the experience of existential suffering leads ultimately to eternal bliss. The veneration of Mary as the Mother of Sorrows is central to this belief and was especially prevalent in Catholic areas of Slavonic-speaking countries which were home to Dvořák's family.

Structuring it as a substantial work, both symphonic and operatic in character, Dvořák organised it into 10 self-contained movements of varying lengths and numbers of stanzas, extending to some 90 minutes in performance. These are shared variously between the chorus, who have three movements entirely to themselves (III, V, VII), and soloists, with whom they share four movements (I, IV, VI, X). The remaining three movements are distributed between the soloists (II, VIII, IX). Thus, the first movement, (grouping stanzas 1 to 4 of the poem) describes a grieving Mother Mary weeping at the foot of the cross from which her only begotten son hangs in fatal torment; the second (stanzas 5 to 8) appeals to the watching believer for sympathy with what Mary sees and feels. The third is of one stanza only, the ninth and is a direct appeal to Mary to enable the believer to feel and share the power of her sorrow.

Prompted by this, movement IV (stanzas 10 and 11) marks a change of devotional focus from Mary's grief to an assertive plea that the believer's soul may burn for the love of Christ, thereby to share in his pain, wounds and suffering. Movement V, again a single stanza (12) endorses this, begging to share the pain Christ suffered for the salvation of



humankind. Movement VI (stanzas 13 and 14) expresses a desire to stand weeping with Mary at the foot of the cross, and to bemoan the crucifixion thereafter for life. Movement VII, another single stanza (15), reiterates the request to weep alongside Mary, hailing her as the chosen amongst virgins. Movement VIII (stanzas 16 and 17) then pleads to show love of Christ by sharing and commemorating his wounds, bearing the fate of his passion and becoming inebriated by the cross. By now inflamed and set afire, in movement IX (stanzas 18 and 19) the appellant begins to celebrate

this ecstasy of Manichean faith. Movement X (stanza 20) constitutes the final plea that on the death of the body, the soul is granted the glory of paradise.

The work opens quietly with a long (70 bars) orchestral introduction, middle strings rising slowly and gently into the upper registers of violins and woodwind, then continuing into a descending chromatic phrase. There is a clear echo of Wagner here, whom Dvořák admired and under whose baton he had played as an orchestral instrumentalist. The rise and fall of

this opening passage provides the musical foundation of the first movement, by far the longest of the work, an extended sonata form in symphonic style. The rising octaves and chromatic descents are often said to be intended by Dvořák to represent the cross itself, leading the listener to contemplate Christ elevated upon it with Mary and her companions huddled weeping beneath it, but there seems no evidence to support this rather visual interpretation other than that the movement begins with bare octave F sharps, and the German word for sharp is Kreuz, which also translates as cross. After the orchestral introduction, tenors lead the chorus into the ascending opening line, 'Stabat mater dolorosa', adopting the chromatic descent for 'juxta crucem lacrimosa'. Led by the tenor, soloists introduce a second theme to describe the piercing of Mary's soul, their phrases punctured by the chorus describing Mary's further affliction and sorrow. Vocal harmonies and musical textures contrast these complementary themes, exploring and developing them symphonically in a complex range of dynamics and varying tempi within the range of *andante con moto* until the soloists' dramatic recapitulation of the rise and fall of its opening phrase begins to bring the movement to a quiet close.

The second movement, which is also the second longest, is set as an elaborate quartet for the soloists. In different combinations and individually they expound in detail on the deep agony of Mary's grief. The orchestra concludes the movement after the morbid finality of the soloists' closing line, describing her utter

desolation at the sight of her dying son's final surrender of his spirit. The third movement marks this finality in setting the single, ninth stanza as a funeral march for the chorus alone, at the pace of an appropriately sober *andante*. And it augurs a significant change in the fourth movement, of tempo to *largo*, but also to majestically dramatic music introduced by a remarkable bass solo almost Wagnerian in character, mingling with, but also having to stand out against, the orchestra, which takes on at times a harmonic autonomy that provides a further dimension to the sound. He pleads with a forceful dignity that his heart may be caused to burn for the love of Christ, though this alternates with interruptions from the chorus, initially as a choir of double sopranos and altos, later joined by the remaining voices, who sing more gently of a wish to share Christ's wounds, their staggered entries on 'Crucifixi fige plagas, cordi meo valide' before the bass soloist's final passage carrying a clear resemblance to the Crucifixus of Bach's *Mass in B minor*.

With the fifth movement, setting the single line 12, the chorus returns to *andante con moto*, but now *quasi allegretto*, singing in a gently swaying 6/8 time of the gift of salvation that comes from the wounded Christ's suffering. Then a change of dynamic to *forte* for repetitions of a brisker, more assertive plea to share his pain before a return to the softly lilting opening tune. The sixth movement sets the 13th and 14th stanzas for tenor soloist, who opens with another prayer to share in Mary's grief at the foot of the cross, and choral basses

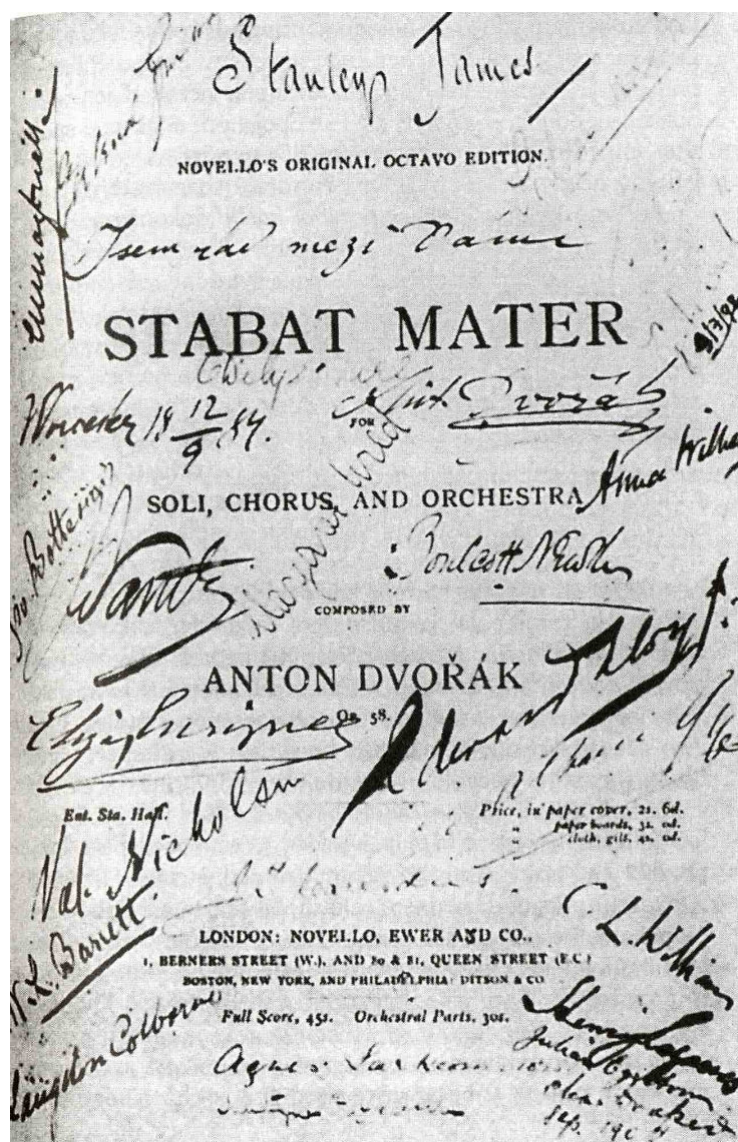
and tenors, who interrupt his plea with a succession of increasingly harmonically complex interventions. It is another, slower march, dramatically concluded by the soloist's declaratory 'Juxta crucem tecum stare in planctu desidero' and repeated by the chorus. The seventh movement, marked *largo*, places the orchestra in a semi-detached relation to the chorus, leaving them to sing sustained passages *a capella*. It sets the single, 15th stanza, hailing Mary as outstanding among virgins, and it is this opening salute, 'Virgo virginum praeclara' that is sung most often without accompaniment, sometimes also with the following concluding words 'fac me tecum plangere', another plea to share her grief. The orchestra meanwhile is given its own passages, expansive at times and once marked *molto espressivo* and at the end of the movement, *molto tranquillo*. Movement VIII sets the 16th and 17th stanzas as a duet for soprano and tenor soloists. The plea is again to bear Christ's wounds by sharing his passion through obsession with the cross ('cruce hac inebriati'), beautifully evoked through the delicately weaved inventions through which the solo voices intertwine with and differentiate from one another, weaving imaginative sound patterns to the accompaniment of sympathetic strings and woodwind.

A final change of tone heralds the closing of the work with the alto solo that constitutes its ninth, penultimate movement. It opens with a surprisingly baroque orchestral flourish of strings and wind, underwritten by a trenchantly assertive bass line which drives the movement throughout. It

sets the 18th and 19th stanzas, which plead for the inflamed, burning soul to be armed by Christ's death, guarded by the cross with which it has declared its obsession, cherished by Christ's grace and defended by the virgin on judgment day – a rhetorically baroque catalogue of requests in character and surely deserving of a matching recital, though many critics treat this movement as an aberration, unsympathetic to the mood of the work as a whole and uncharacteristic of Dvořák's compositional style. Nevertheless, it sets the mood for the setting of the final stanza and its scope and structure offer the soloist dramatic vocal opportunities comparable to those for the bass in the fourth movement.

The final movement sets the last stanza and reverts to the vocal and orchestral forces of the opening of the work, reuniting chorus and soloists in a confidently enthusiastic plea that on the death of the body the soul will be granted the glory of paradise. This is followed by a fugal Amen, at the commencement of which Dvořák changes the tempo to *allegro molto*. Led by the tenors, the chorus begin harmonical elaborations of their Amens, the soloists gradually following suit towards a triumphant concluding statement by the chorus a *capella* of 'Quando corpus morietur, fac, ut animae donetur paradisi gloria' before the orchestra slows to a quiet accompaniment for a final sequence of 'Amen' from all voices.

Paul Filmer, with grateful acknowledgment to Irina Walters



Title page of Novello's edition of the score of Dvořák's Stabat Mater: memento of the performance in Worcester on 12 September 1884, with signatures by Antonín Dvořák and members of the orchestra.

I Quartet & Chorus - Stabat mater dolorosa

Stabat mater dolorosa juxta crucem lacrimosa
dum pendebat filius.

*A mother stood grief-stricken, by the cross,
weeping, while her son was hanging there.*

Cujus animam gementem contristatam et
dolentem pertransivit gladius.

*As she shared in his sorrow and grieved, a sword
pierced her groaning heart.*

O quam tristis et afflicta fuit illa benedicta atmer
unigeniti!

*O how sorrowful and afflicted was that blessed
woman, the mother of the only begotten one.*

Quae maerebat et dolebat, pia mater, dum
videbat, et tremebat, nati poenas incliti.

*Devoted mother, who mourned and grieved,
trembling as she watched the punishment of her
glorious son.*

II Quartet - Quis est homo

Quis est homo qui non fleret, matrem Christi si
videret in tanto supplicio?

*Who is the man who would not weep if he saw the
mother of Christ in such torment?*

Quis non posset contristari, Christi matrem
contemplari dolentem cum filio?

*Who could not share in the sorrow, were he to
contemplate the mother of Christ grieving for her son?*

Pro peccatis suae gentis vidit Jesum in
tormentis, et flagellis subditum.

*She saw Jesus in agony and subjected to whips for
the sins of his nation.*

Vidit suum dulcem natum moriendo desolatum
dum emisit spiritum.

*She saw her sweet child desolate in his dying
moments, as his spirit slipped away.*

III Chorus - Eja, mater, fons amoris

Eja, mater, fons amoris me sentire vim doloris
fac, ut tecum lugeam!

*Alas, mother, fountain of love, let me feel the force
of your grief, so that I may bemoan with you.*

IV Solo & Chorus - Fac, ut ardeat cor meum

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum in amando Christum
Deum ut sibi complaceam.

*Let my heart burn with love of Christ our Lord so
that I may please him.*

Sancta mater, istud agas, crucifixi fige plagas
cordi meo valide.

*Holy mother, do just that, let the blows of the
crucified one drive strongly into my heart.*

V Chorus - Tui nati vulnerati

Tui nati vulnerati, tam dignati pro me pati,
poenas mecum divide.

*Share with me the punishment of your wounded
son who suffered so worthily for me.*

Interval

During the 20-minute interval, members of the audience are requested not to enter the performing area.

VI Solo & Chorus - Fac me vere tecum flere

Fac me vere tecum flere, crucifixo condolere,
donec ego vixero.

*Let me truly weep with you, grieve with you for
him, crucified for as long as I live.*

Juxta crucem tecum stare, te libenter sociare In
planctu desidero.

*I long to stand by the cross with you, gladly
keeping company with you in your lamentation.*

VII Chorus - Virgo virginum praeclara

Virgo virginum praeclara, mihi jam non sis amara
fac me tecum plangere.

*Virgin, most noble of virgins, do not now be bitter
towards me, let me lament with you.*

VIII Duet - Fac, ut portem Christi mortem

Fac, ut portem Christi mortem, passionis fac
consortem, plagas recolorere.

*Let me bear Christ's death, let me share in his
sufferings and receive the blows.*

Fac me plagis vulnerari, cruce hac inebriari, ob
amorem filii.

*Let me be wounded by the lashes, intoxicated by
that cross, through love for your son.*

IX Solo - Inflammatus et accensus

Inflammatus et accensus, per te, Virgo, sim defensus, in die iudicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri morte Christi praemuniri confoveri gratia.

Blazing and scorched, may I be protected by you Virgin, on the day of judgement.

Let me be guarded by the cross, defended by the death of Christ, fostered by grace.

X Quartet & Chorus - Quando corpus morietur

Quando corpus morietur, fac, ut animae donetur paradisi gloria.

When my body has died, let it be that the glory of paradise is granted to my soul.

Amen

Amen.

NEXT CONCERT


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Forthcoming concert
at St James Church, Muswell Hill

Meridian Sinfonia

Mozart
Daive Penitente

Fanny Hensel
Hiob

Schubert
Mirjam's Siegesgesang

Saturday 4 July 2026
7.30pm

BIOGRAPHIES



ELINOR ROLFE JOHNSON SOPRANO

London-born soprano and Cambridge University graduate Elinor Rolfe Johnson, possesses a 'commanding stage presence and the voice to match' (*Seen and Heard International*) and has been praised for her 'superlative singing' (*The Guardian*). An RCS scholar and Britten-Pears Young Artist, Elinor has been a finalist in various competitions, including the inaugural Sing Finzi,

London Welsh Singer of the Year and International Handel Singing Competitions.

Elinor has worked with companies including Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Chelsea Opera Group, Nevill Holt Opera, The Mozartists and the London Handel Festival; her roles include Contessa *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Rosalinde *Die Fledermaus*, Desdemona *Otello* and Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni*.

She has performed in venues including the Carnegie Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Royal Opera House, Het Concertgebouw, Palais de Versailles, Royal Festival Hall and La Scala. Broadcasts include appearances on *In Tune* for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Proms performances.

In demand on the concert platform, Elinor has performed with ensembles including La Nuova Musica, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Britten Sinfonia, the Monteverdi Choir, Ulster

Orchestra and BBC Symphony Orchestra; her repertoire includes the Passions of J.S. Bach, Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Creation*, Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Mozart *Mass in C minor*, Strauss *Vier Letzte Lieder*, Mahler 4th Symphony and *Rückert lieder*, Vaughan Williams *Sea Symphony* and *Serenade to Music*, Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* and the Requiems of Brahms, Verdi, Mozart and Fauré. Elinor has worked with conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Antonio Pappano, Laurence Cummings, Jakob Lehmann, Anna Lapwood, David Bates and Raphael Pichon.

In 2024, Elinor was nominated for an Off West End Best Performance award for Contessa at the Arcola Theatre. She most recently performed Mozart *Mass in C minor* (1st soprano) with David Bates and La Nuova Musica and the role of Cleone in Rossini *Ermione* with Jakob Lehmann and the Monteverdi Choir.



AMY HOLYLAND MEZZO-SOPRANO

Originally from South Cumbria, Amy is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama's opera course and

The Royal Academy of Music. She is currently an ENO Harewood Artist.

Amy was the recipient of Glyndebourne's prestigious John Christie Award in 2022. During her time at Glyndebourne, Amy performed as the mezzo soloist in performances of Mozart's *Requiem*. She also covered the roles of Bradamante *Alcina* and Cherubino *Le Nozze di Figaro* and was a member of the chorus. Amy returned in the 2023 season to cover Baba the Turk *The Rake's Progress*.

During her time as an ENO Harewood Artist, Amy has performed the roles of Maddalena *Rigoletto*, Flora *La traviata*, Second Lady *Die Zauberflöte*, Daughter 5 *Akhnaten* and covered

Wellgunde *Das Rheingold* and Brigitta *Die tote Stadt*. In the 2025/26 season she will sing the roles of Sister Lillianne and Sister Helen Prejean (cover) *Dead Man Walking* and Begbick (cover) *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.

Amy has performed on oratorio and concert platforms around the country, including the Verdi *Requiem* in The Royal Albert Hall. This season she looks forward to performances of Verdi's *Requiem*, *Elijah*, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, Mahler's *Rückert-Lieder* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

BIOGRAPHIES



CHRISTIAN JOEL TENOR

The Trinidadian tenor Christian Joel sings a wide repertoire, particularly Mozart, bel canto and new opera. Following studies at HEMU de

Lausanne and Zurich University of the Arts, he was an artist of the Lyon Opera Studio. Christian has appeared with Welsh National Opera, as Chief Pee-Ay-Sis in Will Todd's *Migrations*, and Anthony (cover) in David Hackbridge Johnson's *Blaze of Glory!* He also sang Amnon in Hagemann's *Ruth* with Pegasus Opera Company, and Handel's *Orlando* with Liberata Collective at Buxton International Festival and on tour.

Other roles include David in John Adams' *I Was Looking at the Ceiling and Then I Saw the Sky* (Opéra de Lyon), Dr Sachs in Michael Nyman's *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (Théâtre Oriental-Vevey), Prince Paul in Offenbach's *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein* (Lucerne Theatre).

He is highly experienced as a concert soloist, appearing recently in *Carmina Burana* at l'Espace René Pourny in France, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* under Leonardo García Alarcón, Mozart's *Requiem* at the Herkulessaal in Munich, and singing Bach cantatas all over Switzerland and France. He also recorded for the popular *Blob Opera* program with Google Arts & Culture.

In 2024, Christian made his debut in the premiere of Des Oliver's *Windrush, The Journey* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and sang the Steuermann in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* with Persona Arts.



ALARIC GREEN BASS-BARITONE

Alaric is a current Harewood Artist at English National Opera, starting in the 25/26 season. In 2011, when he was 17, Alaric Green was the youngest ever person accepted to the London School of Musical Theatre. He was cast in the BBC Three musical reality

TV show *South Side Story* and in 2016 he appeared on *The Voice UK*, moving through to the third televised knockout round.

Alaric also discovered a love for carpentry and worked in various theatres across the West End whilst at the same time pursuing a career with his band, eventually deciding to explore his classical singing voice at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Here he studied with Robert Dean and Stephan Loges, completing his undergraduate degree and the Opera Course and graduating in 2024.

During his time at Guildhall Alaric performed the roles of George Benton *Dead Man Walking*, Zosimo *Maria Egiziaca*, Melisso *Alcina* and Pedro Paramo *A Star Next to the Moon*.

At ENO he has covered and went on for the role of Alidoro *La Cenerentola*, Pirate King *Pirates of Penzance* and Figaro *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, and performed the roles of Steward *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at BBC Proms, Guard 1 *Dead Man Walking* and Bob Becket *HMS Pinafore*.

This summer he looks forward to making his Opera Holland Park debut as Ashby *La Fanciulla Del West*.



MURRAY HIPKIN CONDUCTOR

Murray Hipkin studied at York University, the Guildhall and the National Opera Studio before joining English National Opera (1983–1988 and 1995–present). There he has conducted *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *The Gondoliers*, *Kismet*, *Carousel*, *Chess* and *Man of La Mancha*, and was associate conductor of *The Duchess of Malfi* (ENO/Punchdrunk). As répétiteur his

productions over 36 seasons have included Phyllida Lloyd's *Ring Cycle* and Terry Gilliam's *The Damnation of Faust*; as assistant conductor, recent projects include *Sweeney Todd*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *Akhmaten*, *Iolanthe*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *HMS Pinafore*. In 2013 he played the solo piano in the ENO film of *Death in Venice* and recently played the solo piano in *The Turn of the Screw*, *Albert Herring* and *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* and onstage bells in *The Magic Flute*. In 2022 he appeared as Music Supervisor and coach in the ENO reality series *Anyone Can Sing*.

Elsewhere he has conducted *La bohème* (Surrey Opera, Opera Box); *Salieri Falstaff*, Haydn *La vera costanza*, Mozart *Apollo and Hyacinth*, Gluck *Le cinesi* (Bampton Classical Opera), and worked for Opéra de Lyon, La Monnaie, Opera Factory, Scottish Opera and Opera Brava.

Other highlights include assisting the composer John Adams both for the C4 film *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and for *Nixon in China* at the Proms and in Berlin; *Pierrot Lunaire* with Björk at the Verbier Festival and *Sweeney Todd* for Bergen National Opera. In February 2009 Murray completed an eight-month sabbatical from ENO as Musical Director of *The Sound of Music* at the London Palladium. In 2023 and 2024 he conducted *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Mikado*, *The Sorcerer* and *The Yeomen of the Guard* at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton and in spring 2024 he worked on the Deutsche Oper Berlin production of *Nixon in China*.

Murray has been with NLC since January 2003 and from 2010 until 2023 was also MD of the Pink Singers, Europe's longest-running LGBT+ choir. Plans include *Angel's Bone* (ENO/BBC Phil/Aviva). In 2025 Murray joined the Board of Trustees of The Choir With No Name.

AUTUMN CONCERT

nlc

Autumn concert
at St James Church, Muswell Hill

Meridian
Sinfonia

Mendelssohn
Elijah

Saturday 14 November 2026
7.30pm

NORTH LONDON CHORUS

SOPRANO

Gloria Arthur	Jess Cattley	Amanda Horton	Ainsley McArthur	Patricia Whitehead
Helena Beddoe	Jenny Cohen	Enid Hunt	Ros Massey	
Jenny Bourne Taylor	Laetitia Dimitriu	Marta Jansa	Jacqueline Robarts	
Naomi Braybrooke	Bernadette Gillespie	Susan Kempster	Susan Segal Horn	
Valerie Britton	Debbie Goldman	Amanda Lebus	Jennifer Somerville	
Michaela Carlowe	Rhona Graham	Alison Liney	Judith Suissa	

ALTO

Nicola Bartlett	Vicky Faure Walker	Alice MacKay	Mehrmoosh Sadrzadeh	Rachel Winton
Eloise Beckles	Eleanor Flaxen	Kathryn Metzenthin	Alison Salisbury	
Jessica Bendell	Megan Greene	Tessa Padel	Judith Schott	
Vivienne Canter	Viv Gross	Marianne	Julia Tash	
Jennie Christian	Katharine Hodgkin	Parke-Antonis	Pauline Treen	
Lucy Ellis	Jo Hulme	Isobel Pick	Catherine Whitehead	
Sarah Falk	Helen Jones	Joan Reardon	Clare Winton Alam	

TENOR

Chloe Bedford	Alan Chandler	Elisabeth Hewitt	Jeremy Pratt
Eileen Battye	Pasco Fearon	Vikki Heywood	Nigel Royden
Gary Bilkus	Sue Heaney	Keith Maiden	Wilhelm Skogstad

BASS

Marcus Bartlett	Michael Derrick	Simon Gibeon	Tim Lutton
Bruce Chambers	Andrew Elder	David Hastings	Dan Newman
Norman Cohen	Ronnie Engelbert	Peter Knight	Tom Pedder
Shaun Davies	Paul Filmer	Yoav Landau-Pope	David Stone

MERIDIAN SINFONIA

Leader

Eleanor Gilchrist

Viola

Ariane Alexander
Stella Nedeva
Dan Manente

Oboe

Rachel Harwood-White

Horn

Richard Wainwright
Kate Hainsworth
Josh Pizzoferro
Henry Wright

Timpani

Nick Cowling

1st Violin

Gavin Davies
Peter Hembrough
Alistair Legg
Paula Collar

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Rosalie Watson

Cello

Ruth Alford
Sophie Willis

Clarinet

Lucia Porcedda
Alan Andrews

Trumpet

Fraser Tannock
Alex Cromwell

Orchestral Management

Richard Thomas

2nd Violin

Emma Penfold
Daniel Lewis
Tetiana Sapozhnikova
Gabriel Lowe

Double Bass

Kenneth Knussen

Bassoon

Jo Turner
Sarah Seçu

Trombone

Pau Hernandez
Santamaria
Felix Fardell
Andrew Lester

NORTH LONDON CHORUS



Photo by Tim Lutton

We are a talented and versatile amateur choir and have established a reputation for performances of a high standard since our first concert in 1977 under the direction of the late Alan Hazeldine. Our musical director since 2003 has been Murray Hipkin. His considerable experience, enthusiasm and skills as teacher and conductor of choral music and opera have enabled NLC to flourish through the development of an exciting and ambitious programme of performances drawn from the choral repertoire of the 16th to 21st centuries, as well as works commissioned from contemporary composers.

The choir benefits greatly from working with our vocal coach Yvette Bonner, who gives all members at least two small-group tuition sessions each year. We are privileged to have as our patrons the renowned operatic soprano Janis Kelly, Professor and Chair of Vocal Performance at the Royal College of Music, and the baroque musicologist and Handel scholar and performer Laurence Cummings OBE, currently music director of the Academy of Ancient Music, both of whom have performed with us.

We give public concerts in Autumn, Spring and Summer at St James Church in Muswell Hill, and continue to explore performing at larger venues in Central London, such as Milton Court at the Barbican Centre and on occasional overseas visits, most recently at the Berliner Konzerthaus and the City Church of St Jakob, Staffauer in Zurich.

We regularly explore unusual repertoire and styles of performance: in December 2020 (during lockdown) many members participated in the London Handel Festival's

Messiah Reimagined, broadcast live on YouTube, as part of a pre-recorded digital choir. Our first live post-lockdown concert was Britten's *Saint Nicolas* in November 2021, in partnership with Finchley Children's Music Group, with an additional relaxed afternoon performance for families with children and audience members with special needs. We repeated this successful venture at our July 2023 concert *A Night at the Opera*. Our concert in November 2025 included the cantata *Some Corner of a Foreign Field* by the contemporary English composer Cecilia McDowall, who attended one of our rehearsals to discuss her work with us.

Every year we hold a weekend workshop, enabling us to work intensively on vocal technique and choral repertoire under expert specialist tuition. It also includes a relaxed Saturday evening concert of cabaret-style performances of music, song and humour displaying the considerable range and variety of our members' talents.

As a registered charity, one of whose aims is the promotion, maintenance and improvement of public appreciation of choral music, we have been successful in raising funds to help subsidise our work. Through our own concerts and participation in local events we also support a number of other charities.

We rehearse weekly on Thursday evenings from 7.45pm to 10pm at Martin School in East Finchley. We welcome new members and invite interested singers of all voice parts to attend one or two rehearsals prior to auditioning. Details are available at: <https://www.northlondonchorus.org/joining/>.



Friends of NLC

Supporting musical development
with a little help from our friends



To mark our 40th Anniversary **Friends of North London Chorus** was launched in the summer of 2017, with a performance by our late **Friends of NLC** patron and renowned soprano Sally Silver.

We would be delighted to welcome more **Friends** to the scheme. Donations support and fund special projects, workshops, new commissions and similar activities within our charitable goals, and will also enable us to provide additional support to members in need who would otherwise find it difficult to sing with the choir.

The suggested donation is £40 per year (you are welcome to give more!) and you are warmly invited to join. Membership of Friends of NLC will entitle you to the following:

- Acknowledgement of your generous support in our concert programme (unless you prefer to opt out).
- Complimentary programmes.
- Complimentary interval drink from our range of wine and soft drinks (one per concert).
- Being amongst the first to know about our concerts and events via our mailing list.
- Priority booking for concerts.

If you would like to become a friend of the NLC, please join the scheme via our website

www.northlondonchorus.org/friends

Ann Beaton
John Davies
Julia Fabricius
Vivienne Gross

Vivienne Mitchell
Harvey Ratner
Laura Sabbadini
Phyllis White

Jack Whitehead
Windsor Castle, N2
and those who wish
to remain anonymous.



Join our Choir!

**Come and sing with
North London Chorus and enjoy:**

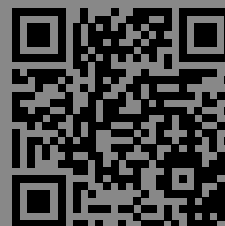
- ◇ A friendly welcome
- ◇ A wide repertoire of classical choral music
- ◇ Expert guidance under Musical Director Murray Hipkin
- ◇ Support from vocal coaches
- ◇ Regular performances in Muswell Hill

We rehearse weekly on Thursdays at 7.45pm at Martin School, East Finchley and currently have vacancies in all voice parts.

Try us out before you join!

[www.northlondonchorus.org/joining/
join@northlondonchorus.org](http://www.northlondonchorus.org/joining/join@northlondonchorus.org)

 [instagram.com/northlondonchorus](https://www.instagram.com/northlondonchorus)



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PAST CONCERTS - THE LAST TWELVE YEARS

15 Mar 2014	Schubert <i>Mirjams Siegesgesang</i> Korngold <i>Passover Psalm</i> Mendelssohn <i>Hear My Prayer</i> Bernstein <i>Chichester Psalms</i>	1 Jun 2017	Mozart <i>Requiem</i> King <i>Out of the Depths</i>	3 Dec 2022	Handel <i>Dixit Dominus</i> Charpentier <i>Messe de Minuit pour Noël</i>
14 Jul 2014	Mendelssohn <i>Verleih uns Frieden</i> Brahms <i>Nänie</i> Brahms <i>Ein deutsches Requiem</i>	25 Nov 2017	Mendelssohn <i>Die erste Walpurgisnacht</i> Vaughan Williams <i>In Windsor Forest</i> Dähler <i>Byzantium</i>	22 Apr 2023	Vaughan Williams <i>A Sea Symphony</i>
22 Nov 2014	Beethoven <i>Mass in C</i> Haydn <i>Te Deum</i>	17 Mar 2018	Haydn <i>The Creation</i> <i>Insanae et vanae curae</i>	22 Jul 2023	A Night at the Opera <i>Arias and choruses from favourite operas and operettas</i>
21 Mar 2015	Fauré <i>Requiem Mass</i> Kodály <i>Missa Brevis</i> Liszt <i>Die Seligkeiten</i>	14 Jul 2018	Salieri <i>Requiem</i> Puccini <i>Messa di Gloria</i>	25 Nov 2023	Bach <i>Magnificat, Gloria in Excelsis Deo.</i> Handel <i>Laudate pueri</i>
16 May 2015	Britten <i>War Requiem</i>	17 Nov 2018	Britten <i>The Company of Heaven</i> Haydn <i>Nelson Mass</i>	16 Mar 2024	Smyth <i>The Prison</i> Beethoven <i>Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt</i> Brahms <i>Nänie</i>
4 July 2015	Handel <i>Acis and Galatea</i>	9 Mar 2019	JS Bach <i>St John Passion</i>	22 Jun 2024	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>
28 Nov 2015	Bach <i>Magnificat, Christmas Oratorio Parts 1,2,3</i>	22 Jun 2019	Rutter <i>Magnificat</i> Vaughan Williams <i>Flos campi</i> Dyson <i>Hierusalem</i>	23 Nov 2024	Durufié <i>Requiem</i> Poulenc <i>Gloria</i>
12 Mar 2016	Mendelssohn <i>Elijah</i>	30 Nov 2019	Rossini <i>Petite Messe Solennelle</i> Verdi <i>Ave Maria, Va pensiero</i>	29 Mar 2025	Bach <i>Mass in B minor</i>
11 Jun 2016	Bernstein <i>Mass (Choral Suite)</i> Whitacre <i>Five Hebrew Love songs</i> Copland <i>Old American Songs</i>	27 Nov 2021	Britten <i>St Nicolas</i>	12 Jul 2025	Brahms <i>Schicksalslied</i> Elgar <i>The Music Makers</i>
20 Nov 2016	Verdi <i>Requiem</i>	9 Apr 2022	Brahms <i>Ein deutsches Requiem, Geistliches Lied</i>	22 Nov 2025	Vaughan Williams <i>Dona Nobis Pacem</i> McDowall <i>Some Corner of a Foreign Field</i>
25 Mar 2017	Dove <i>The Passing of the Year</i> Brahms <i>Liebeslieder, Neue Liebeslieder</i>	2 Jul 2022	Cherubini <i>Mass in C minor</i> Bach <i>Cantata 51 Jauchzet Gott</i> Mendelssohn <i>Wie der Hirsch schreit</i>		

Please visit www.northlondonchorus.org for the full list dating back to the first concert in 1977

Patrons

Janis Kelly
Laurence Cummings OBE

Musical Director

Murray Hipkin

Rehearsal Accompanist

Catherine Borner

Vocal Consultant

Yvette Bonner

Many thanks to our team of volunteers who assist us so generously at our concerts.

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