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Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*

Christopher Bowen - tenor

Jessica Gillingwater - mezzo-soprano

Michael Pearce - baritone

Conductor - Richard Pearce

Waverley  Singers

Saturday 2nd July 2022 - Romsey Abbey

www.csorchestra.org - www.romseychoral.org.uk
www.waverleysingers.com



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Saturday 12th November 2022

Romsey Abbey

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Hayden's Nelson Mass

Sunday 11th December 2022

Chandler's Ford Methodist Church

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Saturday 18th March 2023

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PROGRAMME

Part 1

INTERVAL

Part 2

Programme notes.....	p5
Lyrics	p7
Richard Pearce, musical director.....	p15
Jessica Gillingwater, mezzo soprano.....	p16
Christopher Bowen, tenor.....	p17
Michael Pearce, bass-baritone.....	p18
The Waverley Singers.....	p19
Romsey Choral Society.....	p20
City of Southampton Orchestra.....	p21

PROGRAMME NOTES AND LYRICS

Edward Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius, Op. 38

In the Summer of 1898 Elgar was asked if he would write a major new work for the 1900 Birmingham Triennial Festival. He determined to base the work on John Henry Newman's poem 'The Dream of Gerontius', having known it well for over 10 years. In the end, he used slightly less than half of the poem, cutting whole sections and shortening others to focus on its central narrative: the story of a man's death and his soul's journey into the next world. 'I imagined Gerontius to be a man like us,' he wrote to his friend, August Jaeger of Novello's the music publisher, 'Not a priest or a saint, but a sinner ... no end of a worldly man in his life, & now brought to book. Therefore I've filled his part with a good, healthy, full-blooded romantic, remembered worldliness.'

An unfortunate combination of late completion of the vocal score, the untimely death of the festival choirmaster and the failure of both his replacement and the conductor, Hans Richter, to appreciate the complexity of the work led to an under-rehearsed and poorly received première. Fortunately, a German choirmaster in the audience recognised the work's considerable merits and produced subsequent sell-out performances in Düsseldorf in each of the following two years, which set the precedent for its place in the established choral repertory.

The poem and Elgar's setting are distinctly Catholic in terms of the religious ideas conveyed, specifically the account of the soul's need to pass through Purgatory before entering Heaven. For this reason many contemporaries dismissed the work, Charles Villiers Stanford, a celebrated Anglican composer, allegedly saying that the work 'stank of incense'. The Dream of Gerontius is not, however an exposition of Catholic doctrine, but an allegorical representation of the transition from time to eternity. Over a hundred years on, religious sensitivities have given way to a wider appreciation of the work's greatness and it is now undoubtedly the most popular and among the most frequently performed of all Elgar's choral works.

The orchestral Prelude to Part 1, which opens with a dark, pianissimo theme in D-minor, the 'Judgement Theme', presents all of the work's main themes. They are some of Elgar's most fertile melodic ideas, so dovetailed that each flows seamlessly into the next. As the prelude fades away, we hear Gerontius on his deathbed praying.

Elgar gives him a unique vocal style, which is neither simple recitative nor full singing, but which lets the music shape itself to the words in a natural and expressive way. We can hear it in the first line, 'Jesu, Maria, I am near to death'. In his first eighteen opening lines Gerontius goes through feelings of desperation, terror, supplication, and then exhausted calm.

Gerontius's friends pray at his bedside with a 'Kyrie eleison' ('Lord have mercy') that begins in the a cappella semi-chorus. At the rehearsals for the first performance, Elgar urged the chorus not to sing as though they were in church, but with "more tears in their voices," as though they were at the side of a dying friend. The friends' prayers rouse Gerontius to a more spirited solo, followed by a second choral section in the form of a subdued fugue, 'Be merciful, be gracious'. Gerontius's emotional and passionate statement of faith, 'Sanctus fortis' follows, its final bars marked *piangendo* ('wailingly').

'Rescue him, O Lord,' sing his friends and Gerontius utters his dying words, 'Novissima hora est,' ('It is the final hour'). After a brief pause, the Priest pronounces the final blessing: 'Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo' ('Go forth from this world, Christian soul'). Elgar here conveys faith, sorrow and wonder, all at once, in one of the work's most inspired passages, in which at the words 'Go in the name of Angels and Archangels,' the chorus joins in, building to a triple forte on the words 'go forth', expressing an affirmative trust in the dying man's new life beyond the grave. The Priest again gives a blessing, the accompaniment softens to a single melody for the first violins, and with one last, gentle swell of orchestra the first part closes on the words 'through Christ our Lord'.

Part 2 opens with a new, delicate melody, displaying none of the rhythmic pulse that permeates Part 1, telling us that time no longer exists, 'I hear no more the busy beat of time ... nor does one moment differ from the next'. Gerontius's soul begins to sing 'I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed'. The discrete physical senses that informed his earthly body are gone, but he is aware of being carried forward and of his Guardian Angel singing, 'I hear a singing; yet in sooth I cannot of that music rightly say whether I touch or taste the tones'. There follows one of the work's most memorable passages: the dialogue between the Soul and the Angel which the musical setting interprets with great imagination. The Soul is hesitant, but curious to know 'a maze of things' about his new condition. The Angel's response is understanding and compassionate: 'You cannot now Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.' Gerontius wonders why he has not already seen God and the Angel explaining that they are fast approaching the place of Judgement, reassures the Soul and the Soul sings of his new-found joy.

Close by the Court of Judgement Gerontius's soul hears the demons singing a fierce, mocking fugue, intensified by cries of sarcastic laughter, complaining at their expulsion from Heaven and expressing cynical disdain for the Saints who have inherited it. As the demons pass, the Soul notices that he has only heard them, not seen them. Will he be able to see God? The Angel says he will, but warns that 'the flame of the Everlasting Love Doth burn ere it transform.'

There is distant music, angelical beings singing 'Praise to the Holiest in the height.' There is a great, expectant moment as the Angel sings, ecstatically, 'And now the threshold, as we traverse it, Utters aloud its glad responsive chant' when all the voices join together triple-forte, singing 'Praise to the Holiest' with thrilling support from the orchestra. This is the beginning of one of the most elaborate and stirring passages in

choral music: Elgar called it 'the great Blaze.' The music swings into a second subject in 6/4 time on the words 'O loving wisdom of our God!' and the two subjects blossom and intertwine in soaring four- and eight-part harmonies.

A brief orchestral passage leads to the Judgement scene. The Angel of the Agony, a second part for the bass, pleads with Jesus to 'spare these souls which are so dear to Thee.' We then hear the voices on earth praying at Gerontius's bedside, indicating that all the events of Part 2 have happened in an instant of time. The Angel sings a last 'Alleluia,' and the Judgement theme builds up throughout the orchestra, as the Soul crosses the threshold and enters the Presence of God. Elgar marks this point *tutta forza*, 'For one moment, must every instrument exert its fullest force.'

The sight of God is so overwhelming that, aware of his unworthiness to be there, the Soul sings 'Take me away,' he needs to join the Souls in Purgatory, who are heard singing the psalm, 'Lord, Thou has been our refuge'. Now comes the great song of compassion that crowns the work, 'Softly and gently, dearly-ransomed soul,' as the Angel leads the Soul to Purgatory. The work draws to a close with the simultaneous singing of 'Praise to the Holiest' by the chorus of Angelicals and the psalm by the Souls, coming together on a repeated 'Amen' to bring this wonderful work softly and serenely to a close.

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Libretto

PART ONE

Gerontius

Jesu, Maria - I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now.
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my brow, -
(Jesu have mercy! Mary, pray for me!)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more,
'Tis this strange innermost abandonment,
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to Thee,)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.
Pray for me, O my friends; a visitant
Is knocking his dire summons at my door,

The like of whom, to scare me and to daunt,
Has never, never come to me before;
So pray for me, my friends, who have not strength to pray.

Assistants

Kyrie eleison.
Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him.
All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy Virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Gerontius

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man;
And through each waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod,

Voices on Earth

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

Angel

... Praise to His Name!
O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe,
Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance
of God.

Soul

Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night-watches
keep,
Told out for me.
There, motionless and happy in my pain
Lone, not forlorn, -
There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,
Until the morn,
There will I sing, and soothe my stricken
breast,
Which ne'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish, till
possest
Of its Sole Peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love:
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting
day.
Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be.

Souls in Purgatory

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge: in every
generation;
Before the hills were born, and the world
was, from age to age Thou art God.
Bring us not, Lord, very low: for Thou hast
said, Come back again, O Lord! how long:
and be entreated for Thy servants.

Angel

Softly and gently, dearly-ransomed soul,

In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold
thee.

And carefully I dip thee in the lake,
And thou, without a sob or a resistance,
Dost through the flood thy rapid passage
take,
Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim
distance.

Angels to whom the willing task is given,
Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as
liest;
And Masses on the earth, and prayers in
heaven,
Shall aid thee at the Throne of the Most
Highest.
Farewell, but not for ever! brother dear,
Be brave and patient on thy bed of
sorrow;
Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,
And I will come and wake thee on the
morrow.
Farewell! Farewell!

Souls

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge, etc.
Amen

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest, etc. Amen.



Richard Pearce, musical director

Richard Pearce has been Musical Director of Romsey Choral Society since 2019, and since then has enjoyed leading the choir in performances of works including Handel's *Messiah*, Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, and Schubert's *Mass in G*, working with the City of Southampton Orchestra and the Chameleon Arts Ensemble, and with our regular organist, Richard McVeigh.

He was organ scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. After graduating with first class honours in music, he studied piano accompaniment for two years at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, where he developed his work with solo singers. He is now a professor at the GSMD, coaching singers and instrumentalists for careers in opera and the concert platform, and is a trustee of the Josephine Baker Trust, which supports young soloists at the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music in London.

Richard is busy as a conductor, pianist and organist with professional choirs. He records and broadcasts regularly with the BBC Singers, and particularly enjoys the challenge of preparing an extremely wide variety of repertoire, including contemporary and new music. As organist and pianist he has performed with many of the UK's best-known choral conductors, including David Hill, Stephen Cleobury, Paul Spicer, Bob Chilcott and Sofi Jeannin.

Richard has a long-standing association with the Royal Choral Society, and performs with them many times each year at the Royal Albert Hall in London. In addition he makes twice-yearly trips to Sweden to work with groups in the Stockholm and Malmö areas.

Richard is also Musical Director of the Waverley Singers, based in Farnham, Surrey, who are collaborating with us for this performance. Particular highlights with them have been concerts in Guildford Cathedral of Monteverdi *Vespers*, Verdi *Requiem*, Beethoven *Mass in C*, Brahms *Schicksalslied*, Mozart *Requiem* and Bach *Magnificat in D*. Alongside these major works he has introduced new and varied repertoire to the choir, including commissions by composer Will Todd, and many newly-written compositions.

Richard is regular organist with the Philharmonia and BBC Symphony Orchestras in London; with them he has performed with many inspirational conductors including established maestri Lorin Maazel, Pierre Boulez, Oliver Knussen, Andrew Davis, Sakari Oramo, Marin Alsop and Ed Gardner, as well as up-and-coming stars such as Santtu-Matias Rouvali and Valentina Peleggi. Recent performances have included the solo organ part in the European première of Unsuk Chin's *Le Chant des Enfants des Étoiles* with Esa-Pekka Salonen in London's Royal Festival Hall, and a tour of China performing Saint-Saëns *organ symphony* with Vladimir Ashkenazy. He also performs regularly in Promenade concerts and recordings, including at the Last Night of the Proms, to a worldwide television audience.

Richard frequently conducts and plays for services at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster and at the Houses of Parliament.



Jessica Gillingwater,
mezzo soprano

London-born mezzo soprano Jessica Gillingwater studies with David Pollard and is a member of the BBC Singers. Recent performance highlights include the role of Lavinia in Errollyn Wallen's *Dido's Ghost* with Dunedin Consort at Buxton International Festival, Bernstein's *Jeremiah* symphony with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at Saffron Hall, Duruflé's *Requiem* with Stephen Cleobury and the BBC Concert Orchestra at King's College Cambridge and Mrs Noye in Britten's *Noye's Fludde* with Martyn Brabbins at Southwark Cathedral.

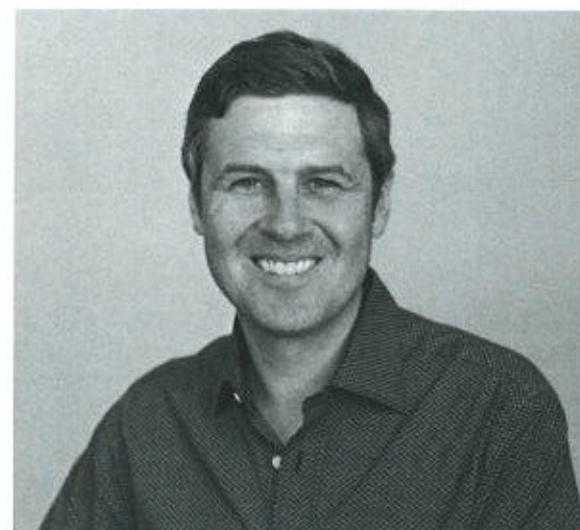
Jessica also has a keen interest in contemporary music and has recently performed Boulez's *Le Marteau Sans Maître* and Ligeti's *Aventures* and

Nouvelles Aventures with the Psappha Ensemble at Hallé St Peter's.

Jessica has recently established an online song recital series, "Proud Songsters", with colleagues from the BBC, highlights of which have included Elgar's *Sea Pictures*, Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* and Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*.

Jessica's oratorio repertoire includes Handel's *Messiah*, Elgar's *Apostles* and *Dream of Gerontius*; Bach's *Passions* and *B Minor Mass*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and *Stabat Mater* and Verdi's *Requiem*.

Jessica also performs regularly with ensembles including Dunedin Consort, Exaudi, Solomon's Knot, The Marian Consort, Alamire and The Choir of the Enlightenment.



Christopher Bowen,
tenor

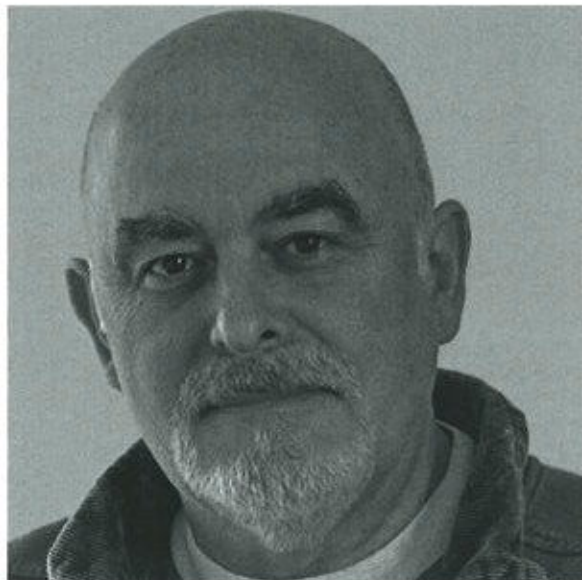
Tenor Christopher Bowen is from New Zealand. He has performed a broad array of music, from the role of Daniel in the 12th-Century *Play of Daniel* to creating the role of Rawley Beaunes in Alasdair Nicolson's opera *The Iris Murder*.

His diverse concert appearances include Handel's *Solomon* at the Dublin Handel Festival, Vaughan Williams' *On Wenlock Edge*, Elgar's

Dream of Gerontius at the RNCM Concert Hall, Orff's *Carmina Burana* in the Albert Hall and Britten's *War Requiem* at the New Zealand Airforce Museum. He recently premiered Ina Boyle's *Lament for Bion* and recorded songcycles by Scottish New Zealand composer Lyell Cresswell for *The Art of Black and White*. Other CD appearances include Delius' *Song of the High Hills* and the world premiere recording of Vaughan Williams' *A Cambridge Mass*.

Recent opera appearances include the role of the Queen in Todd's *Alice in Wonderland* with Opera Collective Ireland, Samuel Beckett in Smail's *Blue Electric* and a staging of Britten *Canticles* at the Cheltenham and Presteigne festivals. He was the Black Monk in Maxwell Davies' *Taverner* and Acteon in Charpentier's *Acteon*.

Christopher has shown a commitment to new music over ten years in the BBC Singers and in performance with groups such as The Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Theatre of Voices and the Hebrides Ensemble. Noted for his fluent tenor evangelist in Bach's passions and cantatas, he performed Bach's *Weihnachts-Oratorium* with the Academy of Ancient Music, Schütz's *Weihnachtshistorie* with the BBC Singers and *A Patchwork Passion* at the BBC Proms.



Michael Pearce, bass-baritone

Bass-baritone Michael Pearce was a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, then Head of Mathematics at a comprehensive school in West Sussex before moving to London to start his life as a singer. He joined the professional choir at Westminster Abbey and sang with various vocal groups and choirs before embarking on a solo career. His debut recital on the BBC was soon followed by first prize in the initial English

Song Award at the Brighton Festival. As part of his prize he gave a critically acclaimed debut recital in the Wigmore Hall.

He has given solo performances at most of the major festivals throughout Europe, and his numerous London appearances include Haydn's *Creation* at the Barbican, Verdi's *Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall and Mahler's *8th Symphony* at the Royal Festival Hall.

Michael's commercial recordings include Handel's *Coronation Anthem* and Bach's *B minor Mass*. He has also recorded the part of Bam in Holliger's opera *What Where*. He has given numerous radio broadcasts and recitals, both on the BBC and abroad, whilst his TV appearances include Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* at the RTÉ Irish Proms.

At the Royal Opera House, he has given solo performances in *Thérèse*, *Capriccio*, *Die Meistersinger* (Ortel) and *Salome*. He was Dr P in *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat* (Music Theatre Wales), Herald in *The Burning Fiery Furnace* and Balstrode in *Peter Grimes*, both with Kent Opera, Becket in *Assassinio nella Cattedrale* with Oper Bergen in Norway and Tonio in *I Pagliacci* with Pimlico Opera. In his Scottish Opera debut, he created the role of Dundas in Horne's *Friend of the People* for its world premiere in 1999.

Michael's recent concert performances included Elgar's *Gerontius* in Tunbridge Wells, Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ* in Canterbury, Verdi's *Requiem* in Salisbury, Guildford and Aberystwith, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Folkestone.



The Waverley Singers

The Waverley Singers is a friendly and enterprising choral society based in Farnham in Surrey. With about 100 singers, we give four or more concerts a year, in Farnham, Alton and elsewhere in West Surrey and East Hampshire. We enjoy performing to a high standard with professional orchestras and soloists. In recent years, our repertoire has included Bach's *Mass in B minor*, Monteverdi's *Vespers*, Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, and Mozart's *Mass in C minor*. As well as our orchestral concerts, we tackle a varied

selection of smaller choral works, from the sixteenth century to the present. We have commissioned new compositions and always enjoy the challenge of a great variety of music, including Tudor motets and Opera choruses.

We are delighted to be singing with the Romsey Choral Society in this performance of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* under Richard Pearce, who is also our musical director. This is our second joint venture since we performed the Verdi *Requiem* together, in Romsey Abbey and Guildford Cathedral in 2017/18.

We have made several very successful foreign tours, most recently to Vienna and Bratislava in 2019.

Despite the devastating restrictions of the pandemic, we continued to learn new music via Zoom and are now delighted to have returned to our regular pattern of concerts.

For further information please visit the choir website: www.waverleysingers.com

Sopranos: Nicola Anderegg, Sara Burnie, Janet Carne, Joy Cartwright, Johanna Clift, Anneliese Handley, Rosemary Heasman, Carolyn Heathcote, Pat Martin, Catherine May, Carolyn Patey, Louise Pearce, Vivien Rieden, Alison Stickland, Joanne Watson, Margaret Weaver, Sally Wooding

Altos: Juliana Baxter, Jill Denbigh, Fiona Dick, Sylvia Ellison, Catherine Hadfield, Maureen Jackson, Jane Kenney, Gillian Phelps, Gillian Pickering, Pamela Poust, Esther van Rooyen, Joan Warren, Christine Wilmshurst, Liz Witham

Tenors: Tim Devis, David Edwards, Robert Gussman, Jo Huddleston, David Martin, Alan Mort, Simon Paterson

Basses: Mike Aaronson, Andrew Baxter, David Budd, Derek Fisher, Hugh Gammell, Iain Gammell, Bill Griffin, Max Hadfield, Graham Hey, John Holden, Jeremy Keep, Mark Penfold, John Rowland, Simon Rycroft



Established in 1981, Romsey Choral Society numbers close to 100 singers - drawn from all over Hampshire and as far afield as Wiltshire and Dorset - and presents four concerts each year, two of which are in the historic surroundings of Romsey Abbey. The Society is now widely recognised as one of Hampshire's most interesting and vibrant choral groups, having programmed a wide range of music, with everything from plainchant to jazz.

From time to time, the choir joins forces with other groups to mount large-scale works, most recently with the Waverley Singers from Farnham to sing Verdi's *Requiem* in Romsey Abbey (November 2017) and again in Guildford Cathedral (January 2018), and

both ensembles are joining forces again to sing Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*. Notable other joint concerts have included Bach's *St Matthew and St John Passion* (with Romsey Singers), and Mahler's *8th Symphony* in the Royal Albert Hall (with Guildford based Vivace Chorus, the London Chorus, the London Symphony Chorus and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra).

After a period that has been complicated for all musical ensembles, Romsey Choral Society is celebrating its 40th season.

First Sopranos	Sonia Barros D'Sa, Sue Harder, Clare Hogger, Cheryl Irons, Pam Leech, Di McDonald, Linda Stafford, Karen Trewinnard
Second Sopranos	Sarah Andrews, Sarah Cornforth, Joanna Dalgarno, Nikki Damment, Anne Goodswen, Joy Hill, Liz Holton, Helen Jeanes, Julia Loescher, Kathryn McCormac, Helen Palmer, Rosemary Powell, Elizabeth Pratt, Sybil Warner
First Altos	Pippa Ankur, Sue Billett, Elisabeth Bouynot, Jane Bull, Julie Carlton, Ursula Gentle, Ruth Leu, Clare Loadman, Hilary Mitchell, Norma Parrack, Karen West, Claire Wickens
Second Altos	Pauline Brooks, Catherine Chatters, Angie Eason, Sue Forsey, Myra Glover, Sue Hutchinson, Margaret Olney, Glenys Rigby, Juliet Tulloch
First Tenors	Roger Hopper, Bernadette O'Sullivan, Peter Philips, Christine Sprott
Second Tenors	John Bailes, Nick Bailes, Clive Collier, Andy Holton, Paul Kyte,
First Basses	Andrea Finn, Jim Madge, Bob Ormiston, Chris Pettet, John Tilling
Second Basses	Andrew Hill, Philip Lawson (guest), David Litherland

And our accompanist, Richard McVeigh, is playing the organ



City of Southampton Orchestra

City Of Southampton Orchestra is one of the leading non-professional orchestras in the south of England, performing a wide variety of popular and interesting music from across the orchestral repertoire. We have been established for fifty years and perform five concerts each year, including one concert designed specifically to introduce children to orchestral music.

Violins:

Mary Andrew
Rachel Barlow
Louise Coggins
Sue Dancer
Philippa Headley
Brian Hodgson
Ingrid Isaac
Kinga Kowalczyk
Debra Lain
Hannah Martin
Jane Nunn
Sue Osmond
Christa Porter (Leader)
Ruth Powell
Clare Prest
Kathy Smalley
Gordon Thick
Emma Watson
Paul Watson

Violas:

Jane Andrews
Samantha Cleverley
Vanessa Jarvis
Sandra Littler
Ruth Morrish
Emma Moules
Hywel Roberts

Cello:

Bernard Postlethwaite
Anna Bell

Jenny Bleack

Ilfra Carlick
Graham Dudding
Caeli Quiter
Simon Wilkins
Geoff Willshire

Double Bass:

Peter Hill
Carole Dowding
Norman Levy

Flutes:

Gina Briant
Sue Edmonds
Piccolo:
Sue Edmonds

Oboes:

Lucy Cox
Sarah Salmon

Cor Anglais:

Elinor Irish

Clarinets:

Anton Crout
Elizabeth Wood

Bass clarinet:

Paul Layland

Bassoons:

Juliette Whatmore
Helen Trounson

Contrabassoon:

John Athersuch

Horns:

Trevor Grant
Peter Hackston
Judith Houghton
Tim Jones

Trumpets:

Wayne Landen
Andrew Salmon
Sue Williams

Tenor Trombones:

Dave Cole
Kevin Withel

Bass Trombone:

Adrian Cleverly

Tuba:

Dave Kendall

Harp:

Angela Moore

Timpani:

Naomi Maddick

Percussion:

Ava Kinninmonth
Grace Lane
Ella Walker

Richard McVeigh, organist

Richard says "being brought up as a chorister, I was introduced to the intoxicating sound world of choirs, organs and acoustics at a very early age. The first CD I ever bought was a recording of St Paul's Cathedral Choir under the inspirational late John Scott. I was hooked on choral and organ music and have never looked back".

During his time reading music at Hull University Richard was Assistant Organist at Beverley Minster and received organ lessons from John Scott-Whitely. Following university, Richard held organ scholarships at Chester Cathedral and York Minster before becoming Assistant Organist at Winchester Cathedral in 2008.

Being an accompanist and a recitalist, Richard has performed and played up and down the UK and has worked with many professional choirs as well as orchestras such as the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Britten Sinfonia. He has also played in the band Jethro Tull in Winchester Cathedral – a particular highlight!

As a conductor, Richard was the founding Director of the Winchester Cathedral Chamber Choir and Musical Director of Froxfield Choral Society. In 2018 Richard formed CONSORT SW1, who have performed in such places as Westminster Abbey, Winchester and Salisbury Cathedrals along with other prestigious venues around the country.

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