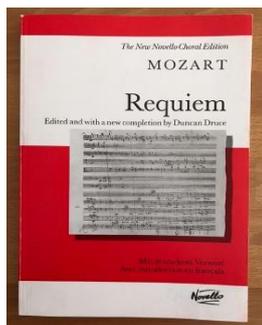




King's Lynn Festival Chorus

NEWSLETTER #11 MARCH 2021

Despite Covid restrictions and very difficult winter weather we 'March' forward towards spring with our heads held high. It is with this sense of optimism that we have continued rehearsing weekly this term via Zoom, guided by Ben Horden. The focus is on the **Mozart Requiem**, a work shrouded in some controversy. We have been examining and learning the version completed by **Duncan Druce** in the 1980s. It is hoped that we might be able to perform it one day.



Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine (1865) is also on the agenda and we aim to record this before Easter. It will be available on our website.

Conquer Covid

Mention must be made of our members who are volunteers in the Covid vaccine rollout, some of whom describe their experiences.

Despite family issues and crises **Gina Hart** says, 'I am working vaccinating people and I'm definitely for team vaccinate the world and then we can all get back to normal!'

Ollie Hendrie registered as a volunteer vaccinator and injected 60 people over a five hour period on the first session. 'There will now be a pause while I recover from a long-booked operation for carpal tunnel decompression but will be back vaccinating in March.'

'I am so pleased to be making a tiny contribution to getting everyone safer and it's been wonderful to see how the NHS and volunteer organisations have made everything run so well. We have given some 1000

vaccinations per week. Each day is split into 3 four-hour shifts and my roles vary from car park and indoor stewarding, greeting, inputting data, to monitoring post job observations for reactions. (None at the centre so far). It is touching to hear patients say how pleased they are just to get out - coming to the centre was the most exciting thing many have done for nearly 10 months!' **Sara Barns**

Farewell

It was with sadness that we learned of the death of **Hilda Pyrah** from cancer. A sad loss to KLFC and the soprano section. Ever friendly and welcoming, Hilda was strong, positive and generous with a huge sense of what was right, kind and good. We will miss her and her lovely strong voice.

New skills for farewells

Over the last year some of the choir have learned new skills in order to contribute to the distanced recordings of various pieces. These skills have been put to use by two choir members who sadly each said final farewells to close family. **Nina Rye** was able to sing the Tallis' Canon in 4 parts with one other voice in Canada for her mother's funeral. Family members in other parts of the world could see and hear. And **Sue Threlfall** also recorded her voice for her mother's funeral and sang the hymn 'God be in my head' loved by her mother.

And welcome

Some members are celebrating expanding families. Grandchildren for some and nephews and nieces for others. With the joy comes the sadness of not being able to meet them and celebrate as a family. We hope that will be behind us soon. Congratulations to all concerned. Maybe they will be the future of KLFC? Let us hope so.

Pieces you have enjoyed singing or would like to sing?

We asked our members this question and had a few suggestions including:



'We strongly recommend a beautiful **Requiem** by **Jean Gilles** the French Baroque composer (1668-1705). As you see, his birth fits in between Purcell and Bach, and he died suddenly in mid 30s like Purcell and Mozart. A dramatic opening in the Introit, but a gentle contemplative work rather than one of woe and misery. It was very popular after his death, as was his 'Diligam te, Domine'. We have sung the Requiem and loved it. We rarely sing French Baroque. There is a Harmonia Mundi CD with Phillippe Herreweghe.' **Mark and Gaynor Scrivenger**

'The piece of music I have enjoyed singing most with KLFC is **Will Todd's Mass in Blue**. It is such an exciting, joyous and uplifting piece. I'll never forget the first time I heard it and it still makes my spine tingle. I was really disappointed when illness prevented me from taking part in the KLFC concert but sitting in the audience was a wonderful experience and made me feel so proud to be a member of the choir. Later that year we had the opportunity to sing it again at Greshams with Will Todd accompanying and this time I was able to take part – it was such a great feeling!' **Gillian Daniels**

Mozart Musings from Grace, a self-confessed Mozart 'nut'.

Mozart (1756-91) settled in Vienna some ten years before his death to seek his fortune as a composer performer, free from being a servant at his master's beck and call. Vienna was a hub of musical excellence at that time, an exciting, buzzing city.

During the first half of that last decade he composed and performed several significant piano sonatas and concertos and established his reputation as the best pianist in town!

The latter half of that decade saw the composition of his greatest operas - Marriage of Figaro (1786), Don Giovanni (1787), Cosi fan Tutti (1789), and Magic Flute and La Clemenza di Tito both 1791 – the year he died. Workings of part of the Requiem, the Rex Tremendae, have been found on the same sheet of manuscript

paper as workings of the Magic Flute. As well as these operas that showed his complete mastery of the genre, he also dashed off three of his greatest symphonies in 1788 (No.39, 40 and the great 41 – Jupiter).

It is well documented that Mozart was commissioned to write a requiem and, as the movie 'Amadeus' portrayed, he was visited by a mysterious stranger on a dark night commissioning a requiem for his master. To Mozart's overworked and fevered mind while working on his last landmark operas and symphonies and with financial challenges and failing health, he took this to be a sign from the other world. Frantically he started to write the requiem but died before completion. He only managed to complete the Introit and Kyrie, leaving sketches of the movements from Dies Irae up to and including Hostias.

It is not often that a major work by a major composer is wrapped up in quite so many controversies about its authenticity and three people became involved in the intrigue. One was an agent who requested the Requiem on behalf of Count Frank von Walsegg. Walsegg was a nobleman and amateur musician, who was in the habit of commissioning composers to write pieces that he could pass off as his own. Another was Mozart's widow Constanza who became the custodian of his life's works after his death. Thirdly was his pupil Sussmayer, who was asked to complete the Requiem. In doing so, he incorporated most of Mozart's work and added his own.

It took a few years for Count Walsegg to admit that the Requiem in his possession was penned mainly by Mozart and not his own work as he had maintained. Constanza declared to publishers Breitkopf and Hartel that Sussmayer's completed version was according to Mozart's wishes, and it was not a forgery as some had claimed. This cleared the way for publication. Sussmayer himself claimed that when Mozart himself was too ill to physically work on it, they had fairly detailed discussions for completing the work. Some have questioned the simplicity of Sussmayer's work and ask if Mozart would approve of or recognise the Requiem if he heard it today.

KING'S LYNN FESTIVAL CHORUS

www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk

King's Lynn Festival Chorus is a registered charity No 292455

During the 1960s a complete 'Amen' fugue movement was discovered. Musicologists have long debated its context. Many have now accepted that it belongs to the Requiem, following on from the Lacrimosa movement, as there are thematic similarities to support this theory. Among these musicologists was



Duncan Druce (1939 – 2015). His version was completed in 1984, performed at the Proms in 1991 and includes the Amen Fugue. We are fortunate that Ben Horden (pictured) has been taking us through the Druce version this term. There

certainly are some unfamiliar twists and turns that trip up those who are more familiar with the Sussmayer version. An interesting challenge.

Zoom

There have been advantages to rehearsing using Zoom. There are not many though!



However, I doubt that anyone would have chosen to drive in the snow and ice of early

February. In fact, we would have cancelled the rehearsal. Another advantage has been the recordings of the rehearsals. Mike Walker (Techie Mike) has kindly recorded them and sent out within 24 hours so that we go over our parts and try to embed the Druce version of the Requiem. But nothing can truly replace the pleasure of singing together in person. We all look forward to that day.

Finances

As more and more of our purchases are made by shopping on the internet using the platform **easyfundraising**. It is 'Easy'!



A small percentage / fixed amount for every order that you make with them will be donated to your favourite charity. And it costs you nothing!

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/klfchorus

Legacies

And while on the subject of finances, the one thing in life that is inevitable is death. Have you or would you consider leaving a legacy to KLFC to help us in the future? This could be relatively small, say £50, or much larger. Either way, I can assure you that the chorus will be very pleased to receive it, and it will be well used to the benefit of KLFC and the future of singing in West Norfolk.

Summer Term

Will we be singing in the King's Lynn Festival this year? That is a very big unknown as the staging of the Festival is still uncertain. We would like to think we could but Covid will dictate.

Data Privacy

All the information you give us is private and secure. We do not sell, rent or share information about our contacts. Under the Data Protection Act 2018, we follow strict security procedures in the storage and disclosure of information which you have given us to prevent unauthorised access.

Should you decide to have your details removed from our database, please contact us via our website: www.kingslynnfestivalchorus.co.uk or 'phone Wendy Hendrie (Hon.Sec) tel 07826 161868