

Brahms & Mendelssohn

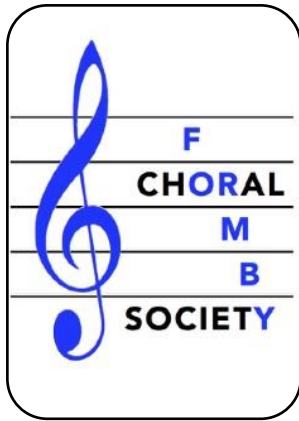
Our Lady's Church

School Lane, Formby, L37 3LW

Saturday

19th November

2022



Formby Choral Society

President

Stephen Threlfall

Chairman

Carol Cairns

Barbara Ruzsics *soprano* **Armand Rabot** *bass-baritone*
accompanists **Jon Barton & Richard Lea**
conducted by **David Holroyd**

The Choral Society is most grateful to Father John Walsh and the People of Our Lady's Church for allowing the use of the Church for this evening's concert.

Formby Choral Society rehearses on Wednesday evenings from September through to June, meeting from 7:30 to 9:30 in Holy Trinity Church Hall, Rosemary Lane, Formby. New members are always welcome. The best time to join is immediately after a concert, when rehearsals start for the next one!

Please visit the website **www.formbychoralsociety.org** and follow the **Join Us** link.

It's really great to be back in Our Lady's Church after such a long absence, and now putting on a completely 'normal' concert. Last season we were thrilled to be able to perform a full season of concerts, but things weren't quite back to normal. Since September we have been delighted to welcome new singers to the choir, and now to have an audience able to enjoy the music without restrictions. Our next concert is the traditional Carols with Brass, and in March we are performing that masterpiece of choral music - Handel's Messiah, and in June we will have Celebrate 2 - to mark the Coronation of King Charles III

David Holroyd - November 2022

Programme

Mendelssohn

Verleih uns Frieden

Armand Rabot:

It is enough (from *Elijah*)

Die Liebende schreibt

Barbara Ruzsics:

Suleika

Wie der Hirsch schreit

Brahms - A German Requiem

Sung in English and using Brahms' own arrangement of the accompaniment for two pianists

- i. Blessed are they that mourn
- ii. Behold, all flesh is as the grass
- iii. Lord, let me know mine end
- iv. How lovely are thy dwellings
- v. Ye now have sorrow
- vi. For we have here no abiding city
- vii. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord

There is no formal interval as such, so if you need to use the facilities, please just slip out and back. They are situated in the corridor to the left, through the door at the back of the church.

Barbara Ruzsics – is a Hungarian soprano who studied music at both the College of Charleston, South Carolina, USA and the Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest. She was awarded her Master's degree with distinction in Singing and Teaching. Barbara has attended masterclasses by Nicolas Clapton, Laszlo Polgar, Krisztana Lakia, Nancy Argenta, Eva Marton and Felicity Lott.

She was awarded second place in The National Association of Teachers of Singing Competition in Norfolk, Virginia, USA in April 2008. The following year Naxos recorded Liszt's Dante Symphony with Barbara as treble soloist.

Since moving to Liverpool in 2010 Barbara has sung for many performances of Lieder and Opera concerts around Merseyside. Recent engagements have included soprano soloists in: Handel's Messiah, Bach's St. John Passion, Mozart's Requiem, Haydn's Creation, the title role of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice, Brahms' Requiem, Strauss' Four Last Songs, Mahler's II and IV Symphony, Beethoven's IX Symphony and Ravel's Scheherazade. Barbara is a regular performer at Hope University concerts, Liverpool, the Music for All Concert Series at the Metropolitan Cathedral, Four Season Opera Concerts in St George's Hall, Liverpool and she is a member of the Liverpool Bach Collective led by Philip Duffy.



Armand Rabot (*bass-baritone*) is an award-winning young Bass-Baritone from the North West of England. He is currently a third-year undergraduate student at the Royal Northern College of Music studying under Quentin Hayes. Armand recently won the prestigious Junior Kathleen Ferrier Bursary award and in the summer of 2020 he was highly commended in the Elsie Thurston Prize. He has also recently won the Charles Wood Junior Song Competition and the Junior Charles Wood Song Prize, the James Martin Oncken Song Prize and placed second in the inaugural Flat Pack Music Opera Competition.

Armand grew up in a musical household in the North-West of England and began playing the violin at an early age. However, seduced by its sound, he soon switched to the viola. He played the viola in several amateur orchestras including the Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, and with EMAE, an early music group, which offers training in historically informed performance (HIP) and chamber music.

Armand also has a strong interest in composition and was on the Rushworth Young Composers scheme run by the



Liverpool Philharmonic. He still composes regularly and has received commissions from the Wilfred Owen foundation and the Associazione Musicale Gabriella Cipriani.

Armand only started singing at the age of 17, having hitherto been busy with viola playing, rugby and cricket, when he joined the Birkenhead School Chapel Choir. This fired in him an enthusiasm for singing and he went on to sing with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Choir, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Liverpool 24, the Liverpool Bach Collective, and the RNCM Chamber Choir. He gained his experience in cathedral music as a choral scholar at Liverpool Cathedral, as a Deputy Lay Clerk at Manchester Cathedral, Bradford Cathedral and Shrewsbury Cathedral and by singing with the Charles Wood Singers under David Hill.

Armand's concert appearances include recitals at Liverpool and Shrewsbury Cathedrals, Mozart Requiem at Liverpool Cathedral, Messiah with the St Peter's Singers (Heswall) and an online recital at the RNCM.

German texts and translations

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich,
Herr Gott, zu unsern Zeiten.
Es ist doch ja kein anderer nicht,
der für uns könnte streiten,
denn du, unser Gott, alleine.

Mercifully grant us peace,
Lord God, in our times.
For there is no other
Who could fight for us
But you alone, our God.

Die Liebende schreibt

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Ein Blick von deinen Augen in die meinen,
Ein Kuß von deinem Mund auf meinem Munde,
Wer davon hat, wie ich, gewisse Kunde,
Mag dem was anders wohl erfreulich scheinen?

Entfernt von dir, entfremdet von den Meinen,
Da führ ich die Gedanken in die Runde,
Und immer treffen sie auf jene Stunde,
Die einzige; da fang ich an zu weinen.

Die Träne trocknet wieder unversehens:
Er liebt ja, denk ich, her in diese Stille,
O solltest du nicht in die Ferne reichen?

Vernimm das Lispeln dieses Liebewehens;
Mein einzig Glück auf Erden ist dein Wille,
Dein freundlicher, zu mir; gib mir ein Zeichen!

The Beloved Writes

English Translation © Richard Stokes

One glance from your eyes into mine,
One kiss from your mouth onto my mouth,
Who, like me, is assured of these,
Can he take pleasure in anything else?

Far from you, estranged from my family,
I let my thoughts rove constantly,
And always they fix on that hour,
That precious hour; and I begin to weep.

Suddenly my tears grow dry again:
His love, I think, he sends into this silence,
And should you not reach out into the distance?

Receive the murmurs of this loving sigh;
Your will is my sole happiness on earth,
Your kind will; give me a sign!

Suleika

Marianne von Willemer

Ach, um deine feuchten Schwingen,
West, wie sehr ich dich beneide:
Denn du kannst ihm Kunde bringen
Was ich in der Trennung leide!

Die Bewegung deiner Flügel
Weckt im Busen stilles Sehnen;
Blumen, Auen, Wald und Hügel
Stehn bei deinem Hauch in Tränen.

Doch dein mildes sanftes Wehen
Kühlt die wunden Augenlider;
Ach, für Leid müßt' ich vergehen,
Hofft' ich nicht zu sehn ihn wieder.

Eile denn zu meinem Lieben,
Spreche sanft zu seinem Herzen;
Doch vermeid' ihn zu betrüben
Und verbirg ihm meine Schmerzen.

Sag ihm, aber sag's bescheiden:
Seine Liebe sei mein Leben,
Freudiges Gefühl von beiden
Wird mir seine Nähe geben.

Suleika

English Translation © Richard Wigmore

Ah, West Wind, how I envy you
Your moist pinions:
For you can bring him word
Of what I suffer away from him!

The movement of your wings
Wakes silent longing in my heart;
Flowers, meadows, woods and hills,
Dissolve in tears where you blow.

Yet your mild, gentle breeze
Cools my sore eyelids;
Ah, I'd surely die of grief,
Did I not hope to see him again.

Hurry, then, to my beloved,
Whisper softly to his heart;
Take care, though, not to sadden him,
And hide from him my anguish.

Tell him, but tell him humbly:
That his love is my life,
His presence here will fill me
With happiness in both.

Wie der Hirsch schreit nach frischem Wasser, so
schreit meine Seele Gott, zu Dir.

Like as the hart desireth the
water brooks, so longeth my
soul after Thee, O God.

Brahms Requiem

Although known as the *German Requiem*, we shall be singing it in English. If you want to see the text, it is available on our website, by following the menu to **/Concerts/Brahms Requiem**

www.formbychoralsociety.org

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897) wrote his *German Requiem* over a period of some eleven years. It had gradually coalesced into its final form by February 1869. Various movements had been performed, and others subsequently added over the preceding years.

Some believe it to have been written in memory of his mother, who died in 1865, whilst others consider it was inspired by the death of Schumann. Whatever the truth, as performances began to take place, Brahms' reputation as the composer often regarded as Beethoven's successor became firmly established.

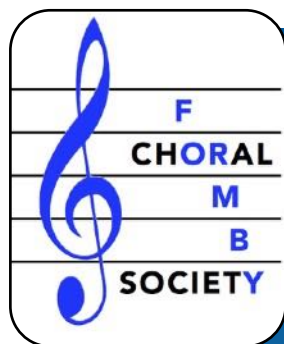
Many church choristers will know the fourth movement which is often used as an anthem (*How lovely are thy dwellings fair*), even if they don't realise that it is but a single movement from one of the great masterpieces of the choral repertoire.

It was not intended as a liturgical piece, in the way that many of his predecessors' masses and requiems were; nor, more particularly, does it even use the traditional Latin texts of the church's mass. It has been suggested that an appropriate title would be "A Protestant Requiem". It is not a *Missa Pro Defunctis* (a mass for the dead); a pedantic liturgicologist would argue that it is not a requiem at all, in that it does not offer up a single prayer for the dead. It is not cast in the typical format of an intercession by the living on behalf of the souls of the departed. "It is rather a benediction of consolation ('blessed are they that mourn'), and a statement of faith ('blessed are the dead who die in the Lord')" (Arthur Jacobs.)

Taking the first lines of each movement provides a summary of the work, and condenses Brahms' 'message':

Blessed are they that mourn ... for all flesh is as grass. Lord, let me know mine end ... how lovely are thy dwellings ... ye now have sorrow: but I will see you again ... for we have here no abiding city ... blessed are the dead.

Throughout the work, Brahms uses phrases and motifs which provide a musical illustration of the text, both in their general feeling, and in the detailed 'gestures'. Another point worth noting, which would have been lost to a non-Lutheran audience, is the melody of an ancient Lutheran chorale (hymn) which is quoted virtually note for note in the 2nd movement. These chorales were a very important musical resource for generations of German composers, providing the inspiration and the foundation of many works. A vast number of works by Bach, for instance, are unified by their basis upon a specific chorale melody.



Carols with Brass

Formby Choral Society
with
Formby Band

Saturday

17th December

7:30 pm

Holy Trinity Church

Rosemary Lane, Formby L37 3HA

Tickets: £12 - Under 19s: Free
from

Choir members

 **0151 929 3617**

www.trybooking.co.uk/35021

