

VI. IN PARADISEM
The Rheindahlen Choral Society

Andante moderato ♩ = 60

SUBITO

♩ = 60

Present




CAPILLUS CANIS

Or "The Hair of the Dog" (Our antidote for too much Christmas)



Under the Musical Direction of
Ray Ross



Keith Lowe - Organist



Suzannah Pinkney - Soprano

Adrian Brind - Baritone

Capillus Canis

Welcome to our programme “Capillus Canis”, which is designed to provide an antidote to holiday over indulgence, during which we hope to delight both the ear and the spirit with works both secular and sacred. This selection of choral works is entirely my responsibility, being a “farrago” or a mixed bag of my favourites. My school music master was, forty or so years ago, an inspiration to me, having introduced me to a majority of the music in the first part of the programme, the content of which I had been contemplating since, several years ago, I had first been asked to direct the Rheindahlen Choral Society. The choice of the Faure Requiem was made before my recent bereavements, but proves to be a timely opportunity to pay tribute to the lives of my mother and my sister, both of whom were deeply musical and contributed in no small measure to the building of my interest in, and subsequent career in music making. The programme divides roughly into three sections:

A group of four songs in Italian on various subjects

A group of English songs on romantic themes

Interval

Sacred works by Faure

*Dedicated to the memory of
my mother, Rochel Ross, and my sister, Reva Friedman.*

However, as I hinted in the title of the concert, I do not intend this to be a sombre occasion; on the contrary, in my experience, music making of all kinds has always been accompanied by joy, merriment, and not infrequently, mischief making! Therefore, let us launch into the Italian group with the emphatically rapturous hymn of praise.

*Come ye with joyfulness, come, sing ye,
O come ye, sing a new song to your maker,
O praise him with the saintly congregation.*

*Israel, be joyful and glad in him who made Israel,
And children of Sion, be joyful,
Rejoice and be glad in your King.*

CANTATE DOMINO GIUSEPPE OTTAVIO PITONI (1657 - 1743)

There follows an antiphonal song in which the large choir sings the part of a boy alone in the mountains shouting arguments at his echo, sung by the small choir. "Hello!" he says, "what a nice echo," and so forth in an amicable fashion until in frustration he shouts "Enough!" and "be quiet", finally departing muttering "enough", patiently mimicked by the echo:

O LA, O CHE BUON ECCHO! ORLANDO DI LASSO (1532 - 1596)

In the next song, a five part madrigal, (the choir divides into five vocal lines instead of the usual four), a frustrated lover cries out:

*Let me die! Let me die!
I would rather die than let the world see how ill I am treated,
And what a martyr I am to my feelings.
Rather let me die!*

LASCIATE MI MORIRE! CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI (1567 - 1643)

Josquin Desprez, though born in Flanders, spent most of his working life in Italy writing both sacred and secular music. Over 100 settings of the mass, motets and secular partsongs formed the greatest part of his output, and like all great artists, he both set and followed the fashion trends. El Grillo was modelled on the most fashionable style of the moment, the "frottola", which was the immediate predecessor of the ubiquitous 16th century pop form, the madrigal. Concluding our Italian group is this nonsense song, explaining that the cricket has a fine singing voice with a great and varied expressive range.

EL GRILLO E BUON CANTORE JOSQUIN DESPREZ (1440? - 1521?)

The second group of songs begins with a work by a composer whose roots were deep in the English folk tradition, and whose compositional style is informed by the misty eyed warmth of the Edwardian age which preceded the Great War. Evocative and nostalgic, this song is best appreciated by those who reject the rat race and hanker after a golden age and the quiet solitude of the pre-industrial countryside. That would be most of us at one time or another!

LINDEN LEA RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872 - 1958)

Charles Villiers Stanford was a prolific and well regarded composer of songs in the high Victorian manner, of which this is an excellent example. The lyric is a snapshot of a moment in the life of a bird, caught and lovingly described by the observer, Mary Coleridge. The music evokes the stillness, the light, and the fragility of the moment caught once briefly, then forever vanished:

THE BLUE BIRD CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD (1852 - 1924)

Looking forward, Elgar's sudden squall and lush overflowing of streams is the very essence of an English summer. The added mystery of watercourses filling on an apparently cloudless summer's day receives a fantastical explanation, buoyed along on Elgar's deliciously turbulent setting. Like a summer shower, the song's storminess arises quickly, lasts but a moment, and disperses in an instant:

AS TORRENTS IN SUMMER EDWARD ELGAR (1857 - 1934)

As a finale to the first half of the concert, here is a very short and exuberant set of Hungarian folk songs written by Matyas Seiber, one of many Hungarians who were forced out of their homeland by oppressive regimes. Like Bartok and Kodaly, in the previous generation of Hungarian composers, and also like Vaughan Williams, Seiber was attracted to the music of his ancestors, and celebrated this style of music in his own compositions. The songs tell a story of seduction, regret, and consequences which is universal and brutal:

THREE HUNGARIAN FOLK SONGS MATYAS SEIBER (1905 - 1960)

The Handsome Butcher Apple, Apple The Old Woman

Gabriel Faure's elegant, understated style has produced sacred works which dwell not on the profound, shattering effects of life's major rites, but on the essential tranquillity and restfulness commended in the words of the Requiem Mass. There is little drama but much quiet contemplation and an occasional outburst of restrained emotion. The music here is the servant of the texts and does not draw undue attention to itself, but this very reverent attitude and the limits within which the composer chooses to work, contribute moments of simple beauty which are unequalled in the sacred repertoire:

CANTIQUE DE JEAN RACINE GABRIEL FAURE (1845 - 1924)

*O divine Word above, our hope and consolation,
Eternal light of the heavens and the earth:
Our voices greet the morning;
Look down, O Lord, and hear thy people's prayer!*

*Inspire us, Lord, we pray,
With the power of thy Spirit,
That hell may flee before thy mighty word.
From slumber waken us, our weary souls reviving,
That we may never forget thy laws!*

*Lord Jesus Christ,
Have mercy on thy congregation
Now gathered here in the sight of thy throne
Receive the hymns they offer to thy endless glory,
Renewed by thy gifts may they go forth in peace*

REQUIEM

*Introit - Kyrie
Offertorium
Sanctus
Pie Jesu (Soprano Solo)
Agnus Dei
Libera Me (Baritone Solo)
In Paradisum*

Programme Notes supplied by Ray Ross

I hope that you have enjoyed this evening's concert, which was by kind permission of The Garrison Commander. In order that this evening's performance could come to fruition, many individuals have made invaluable contributions. Principal among these contributors are: The Church Centre and padres for use of the Garrison Churches, Our Musical Director Ray Ross for his unbounded enthusiasm and encouragement, Our Organist, Keith Lowe for his continued support and last but by no means least, The Rheindahlen Choral Society Committee, Graham Howe, Linda McGarry & Jenny Todd.

In common with most organisations of a similar nature, we would welcome new members. Should you be interested in membership, in any capacity, please contact the Chairman on 02161 955886.

Nigel Pinkney
Society Chairman

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