



DURUFLÉ'S  
REQUIEM

SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

ARTISTIC & MUSIC DIRECTOR BRETT WEYMARK OAM

# Chamber Singers

**Brett Weymark** Artistic and Music Director

**Elizabeth Scott** Associate Music Director

**Tim Cunniffe** Assistant Chorus Master and Principal Rehearsal Pianist

Virtuosic and versatile, SPC's Chamber Singers is a choir of highly skilled singers who specialise in choral repertoire from the Renaissance to the 21st century. They are renowned for their exceptional musicianship and professionalism, and for dynamic performances that are both intimate and powerful. Earlier this season, the Chamber Singers performed Gabriel Fauré's Requiem and John Peterson's *Shadows and Light* at the Sydney Town Hall. Other recent concert highlights include James MacMillan's Stabat Mater, music by Pēteris Vasks, and J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio and Mass in B Minor.

## **SOPRANOS**

Briar Babington

Francesca Bailey

Nikki Bogard

Maria Lopes

Raphaella Mazzone

Stephanie Mooney

Amelia Myers

Jayne Oishi

Katherine Thompson

## **ALTOS**

Kate Clowes

Jessica Farrell

Laura Griffin

Vesna Hatezic

Georgia Luikens

Rachel Maiden

Beverley Price

Megan Solomon

## **TENORS**

Kevin Chan

Matthew Flood

Steven Hankey

Mel Keenan

Rajah Selvarajah

Robert Thomson

Iliia Voronov

Alex Walter

Declan Wildes

## **BASSES**

Edwin Carter

Jason McFarland

Robert Mitchell

James Twemlow

Bruce Watson

Mike Whittaker

Allan Yap



PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

# The Music

Born in what is now French-speaking Belgium, **ORLANDO DI LASSO** (1532–1594) was baptised Roland de Lassus; he adopted the Italian form of his name as a teenage chorister at the court of Mantua. Thus began the career of a Renaissance cosmopolitan – well-travelled, versatile, acclaimed as the most brilliant musician of his day and extraordinarily prolific. A ‘print native’, he published 79 volumes of his own music and appeared in 40 compilations.

After his death, his sons took on the herculean task of issuing his entire backlog before, according to Richard Taruskin, giving up in despair. One volume, *Magnum opus Musicum* (Munich, 1604) was a complete edition of Lasso’s motets, including the four-voice **Adoramus te, Christe**. The text is associated with the Stations of the Cross (We adore thee, O Christ...because by thy holy cross thou has redeemed the world) and Lasso’s simple setting contains echoes of Gregorian melodies. **Ave verum Corpus** is a Eucharistic chant, meditating on Christ’s presence in the Blessed Sacrament and the redemptive meaning of suffering.

The most striking of today’s motets, **Timor et tremor**, was first published in 1564, its extravagant harmonic language and intense word-setting predating Gesualdo’s madrigals by 30 years. Lasso interprets this dramatic text (Fear and trembling... darkness fell over me... Have mercy... you are my refuge... I shall not be confounded) with arresting juxtapositions of style and tempo, abrupt chord changes, and breathtaking syncopations (non confundar).

In stark contrast to Orlando di Lasso, **MAURICE DURUFLÉ** (1902–1986) left a relatively small output – 19 published works. He trained in the French cathedral tradition and was organist at St Étienne-du-Mont in Paris for more than five decades. A composition student of Paul Dukas, he shared with his teacher a perfectionist instinct. In musical temperament he resembles his predecessor Gabriel Fauré: there is an underlying strength to the delicacy, refinement and subtle expression.

It’s not surprising, then, that Duruflé’s best-known work is a **Requiem** setting in which he followed Fauré closely in his selection of texts. He omits the *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath), with the exception of its closing *Pie Jesu* (Merciful Jesus), and borrows the *Libera me* (Deliver me) and *In Paradisum* (May angels lead you into Paradise) from the Burial Service. These choices establish a meditative character, sans the theatrical drama of settings by Verdi or Mozart.

Also in the spirit of Fauré, Duruflé makes Gregorian chant the basis of everything – quoting or taking inspiration from it and aiming ‘to reconcile as far as possible the Gregorian rhythmic patterns...with the demands of the modern bar-structure’. The meditative atmosphere of his choral/instrumental setting never forgets the liturgical purpose, and in most cases the plainchant is heard from one voice before it is adorned. This gives the music a natural flow, as well as rhythmic freedom.

Yvonne Frindle © 2024, with commentary from David Garrett (Duruflé)

Duruflé created three versions of the Requiem: the first with orchestra and organ (1947), followed by today’s version with organ alone (1948), and a third with organ and chamber ensemble (1961).

Friday 24 May 2024 at 7pm  
St Philip’s Church, York Street

## DURUFLÉ’S REQUIEM

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**  
DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON  
and MATTHEW DOYLE

**Tarimi Nulay – Long time living here†**

ORLANDO di LASSO

**Adoramus te, Christe**

(Christ, we adore thee)

**Ave verum Corpus**

(Hail, true body)

**Timor et tremor**

(Fear and trembling)

MAURICE DURUFLÉ

**Requiem, Op.9**

I. Introit: Requiem æternam –

II. Kyrie

III. Domine Jesu Christe (baritone solo)

IV. Sanctus

V. Pie Jesu (mezzo-soprano solo)

VI. Agnus Dei

VII. Lux æterna

VIII. Libera me (baritone solo)

IX. In Paradisum

**Sam Allchurch** conductor

**Laura Griffin** mezzo-soprano

**Declan Wildes** baritone

**David Drury** organ

**Chamber Singers**

† 100 Minutes of New Australian Music  
2020 commission

Duration: 55 minutes, without interval  
The concert will conclude at  
approximately 8pm.

This performance of Duruflé’s Requiem is  
given by permission of Hal Leonard  
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Editions Durand of Paris.

# The Artists



PHOTO: PEDRO GREGG

**SAM ALLCHURCH** is Artistic Director of the Sydney Chamber Choir, directing the choir in a wide range of concerts and collaborations. His repertoire spans the music of Bach and Handel to works by contemporary Australian composers such as Paul Stanhope, Joseph Twist, Brenda Gifford and Brooke Shelley. He is also Director of Music at Christ Church St Laurence, where he conducts the choir in a musical tradition that dates back to 1845. In addition to weekly choral services, he has conducted the CCSL choir in performances of Bach's *St John* Passion with the Muffat Collective and recently completed residencies at Westminster Abbey and the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. As Associate Artistic Director at Gondwana Choirs, he has also prepared choirs for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Opera Australia, and played a key role in presenting the Gondwana World Choral Festival.

*We are grateful to Sam for stepping in at short notice to conduct this concert.*



**DAVID DRURY** is well known to Australian audiences as an organist, choral conductor and composer of choral music. A graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium, he is the only Australian to win the Tournemire Prize for improvisation at the St Alban's International Organ Competition (1987). He has been organist at Christ Church St Laurence as well as Director of Music at St James' King Street and St Paul's College, Sydney University. He has toured England, France, Germany, North America and New Zealand as a recitalist, and appeared as soloist with the Sydney, Adelaide and West Australian symphony orchestras, Opera Australia Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. In addition to Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, he plays regularly with the SSO, Australian Baroque Brass and Camerata Antica.



**Baker  
McKenzie.**



**(Smorgasbord)**

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