

JOHN RUTTER, *Te Deum*

The *Te Deum* was written in 1988 for a service of thanksgiving in Canterbury Cathedral. Liturgical considerations and the spacious acoustics of the great building dictated a brief, straightforward setting of the ancient and inspiring text—not in Latin but, according to Anglican custom, in the lofty, noble translation of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

—Notes by Louise Luegner

Special Acknowledgements:

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OF COMPOSER JOHN RUTTER AND MEMBERS OF THE
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MIDAM INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Peter Tiboris, *Founder, General Director and Music Director*
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Presents
JOHN RUTTER, Conductor
LUCY CROWE, Soprano
Members of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra

JOHN RUTTER: *Requiem*

- I. Requiem Aeternam
- II. Out of the deep
- III. Pie Jesu
- IV. Sanctus (soprano and chorus)
- V. Sanctus
- VI. Agnus Dei
- VII. The Lord is my shepherd
- VIII. Lux aeterna (soprano and chorus)

Participating Choruses:

Sweetwater Singers, Douglasville, GA (Sandra Chandler, Director)
First Presbyterian Church, Bonita Springs, FL (Jeffrey Faux)
Palmetto Voices Spiritual Ensemble, Sumter, SC (Sonja Sepúlveda, Director)

20 Minute Intermission

JOHN RUTTER: *Magnificat*

- I. Magnificat anima mea
- II. Of a Rose, a Lovely Rose
- III. Quia fecit mihi magna
- IV. Et misericordia (soprano and chorus)
- V. Fecit potentiam
- VI. Esurientes (soprano and chorus)
- VII. Gloria Patri

Participating Choruses:

Peninsula Musical Arts Association, Foster City, CA (Mary Lynn Wilson, Director)
Vienna Choral Society, Fairfax, VA (Mike Horanski, Director)
Viva la Musica!, Foster City, CA (Shulamit Hoffmann, Director)

JOHN RUTTER: *Te Deum*
Featuring all combined choruses

Requiem, cont.

Rutter dove into the sources and came up with a reconstruction of the work as of its 1893 state, recapturing a leaner, more intimate and more liturgical texture. This reconstruction has been both published and recorded by Rutter. In addition, Rutter has furthered analogies by preparing his own Requiem in alternate performing editions, one for organ and six instruments, as well as the original, with full-orchestral accompaniment (the one used in this performance).

—Notes by John Barker

JOHN RUTTER, *Magnificat*

The Magnificat, the canticle of the Virgin Mary, is found in the opening chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, at the point where Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth having just learned she is to be the mother of Christ. Traditionally, the words have been ascribed to Mary, though their strong resemblance to the Old Testament Song of Hannah and to various psalms makes it more likely that Luke himself interpolated them to express an appropriate sense of rejoicing and trust in God. Liturgically, the Magnificat belongs to the Office of Vespers (and its Anglican counterpart, Evensong), as well as to feasts of the Virgin Mary, and there are innumerable concise musical settings intended for use in church. Extended concert settings, however, are quite rare, Bach's being the most notable (and even this was designed for use in the Lutheran liturgy); in the general layout of its movements and in its scale and dimensions, Bach's Magnificat provided the obvious precedent for John Rutter's setting. There is even a parallel to Bach's Christmas interpolations in the use of a vernacular text on the Virgin Mary, *Of a Rose, a lovely Rose*, which (like so much medieval religious art) likens Mary and her child to a flower springing from the stem of Jesse. Like Bach, Rutter uses Gregorian themes associated with the text at various points in the work. But there all comparisons end, since the style and content of Rutter's Magnificat are not even remotely neo-Bachian, resting rather within an eclectic amalgam of more recent traditions that characterize much of the English composer's choral writing.

—Notes by Louise Luegner

Requiem, cont.

In style, too, Rutter's Requiem is eclectic. His primary roots, of course, are in the English liturgical tradition, and his choral writing pre-supposes that very pure kind of British choral singing with which he grew up.

At the other extreme, the music has a very contemporary kind of lyricism that at times, especially in the writing for the two soprano soloists, is not too far from the pop-oriented melodic writing of Andrew Lloyd Webber in his own recent Requiem. John Rutter has come by all these sources legitimately. Born in 1945, Rutter was trained at Cambridge University and later held posts there. He began serious composition in his teens, first with arrangements of Christmas carols. He has ranged from choral into orchestral composition, producing concert and film scores and music for the stage. He has been active as a musicologist, as well as a performing musician. But his base of perspective has continued to be the Anglican choral style. He has composed a significant amount of choral music, both sacred and secular. Prior to his Requiem, his most successful composition was his Gloria, composed in a direct concert style. Dating from 1974, it also, like the later work, has American associations, having been composed for and performed first in Omaha, Nebraska.

Another of Rutter's involvements, however, explains qualities of his Requiem. In his capacity as a musicologist, Rutter began exploring the very complicated evolution of Fauré's Requiem score, recognizing that the beloved 1900 version of this work now, a repertoire staple, was only an indirect and several-stages-removed extension of the composer's original ideas. Not only was the work as a whole revised repeatedly, but its original scoring, for small orchestra, was expanded in several stages and finally given its full-orchestra form for the 1900 edition, not by the composer himself, apparently, but by his student, Jean Roger-Ducasse.

MEET THE ARTISTS

JOHN RUTTER, *Composer and Conductor*



John Rutter was born in London and studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. He first came to notice as a composer during his student years; much of his early work consisted of church music and other choral pieces including Christmas carols. From 1975 until 1979 he was Director of Music at his alma mater, Clare College, where he directed the college chapel choir in various recordings and broadcasts. Since 1979 he has divided his time between composition and conducting. Today his compositions, including such concert-length works as Requiem, Magnificat, Mass of the Children, The Gift of Life, and Visions are performed around the world. His music has been featured in a number of British royal occasions, including the two most recent royal weddings. He edits the Oxford Choral Classics series, and, with Sir David Willcocks, co-edited four volumes of Carols for Choirs. In 1983 he formed his own choir the Cambridge Singers, with whom he has made numerous recordings and he appears regularly in several countries, guest conductor and choral ambassador. He holds a Lambeth Doctorate in Music, and in 2007 was awarded a CBE for services to music.



LUCY CROWE, *Soprano*

Born in Staffordshire, Lucy Crowe studied at the Royal Academy of Music, where she is a Fellow.

With repertoire ranging from Purcell, Handel and Mozart to Donizetti's *Adina*, Verdi's *Gilda* and Janacek's *Vixen*, she has sung with opera companies throughout the world, including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Glyndebourne Festival, English

National Opera, the Teatro Real Madrid, the Deutsche Oper Berlin, the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, and the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

In concert, she has performed with many of the world's finest conductors and orchestras. This season Lucy joins the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra on a European tour of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, which also appears at the BBC Proms, the Dunedin Consort for Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor*, Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* with the Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest and with the BRSO, concerts of Haydn and Schubert arias also with the BRSO, *Morgana Alcina* with the Les Violons du Roy in Quebec and Montreal, and her debut with the Cleveland Orchestra for performances selected Mozart arias.

Her recordings include Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the LSO/Gardner; Handel's *Il Pastor Fido* and *Handel & Vivaldi* with La Nuova Musica/David Bates for Harmonia Mundi; works by Lutoslawski with the BBC Symphony Orchestra/Gardner, Handel's *Alceste* with the Early Opera Company/Curnyn and Eccles' *The Judgement of Paris* all for Chandos. Lucy received a Grammy nomination in 2021 for Best Opera Recording for Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* with the London Symphony Orchestra/ Sir Simon Rattle.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

JOHN RUTTER, *Requiem*

Composed in 1985 and first performed in October of that year in Dallas, Texas, the *Requiem* by John Rutter is one of the latest works in a grand tradition of the settings of texts in commemoration of the dead, settings intended essentially or completely as concert works rather than for liturgical usage.

As with many past composers in this tradition, Rutter has treated his texts freely and has used the title of *Requiem* as an umbrella for a work that is not strictly tied to the Roman Catholic Office of the Dead. Rutter specifically cites the examples of Fauré and Brahms as precedents, and his choices put him somewhere between those two. Whereas Fauré's *Requiem* retains the traditional Latin liturgical texts, if in abridged and selected form, Brahms' *A German Requiem* abandons them completely in favor of highly personalized Scriptural selections from the Luther Bible in German, with contemplative rather than liturgical intent.

By contrast, Rutter takes a middle ground, choosing texts both from liturgical Latin and Scriptural vernacular. The selection is, again, highly personal, disposed so as to form "an arch-like meditation on the themes of life and death," to use the composer's own words. "The first and last movements, which are set to the 'correct' liturgical texts [i.e. from the Latin *Requiem Mass*], are prayers to God the Father; the second and sixth movements are English psalm settings, both with important instrumental *obbligato*; the third and fifth (from the *Missa pro defunctis* again) are prayers to Christ, and the central *Sanctus* is an affirmation of divine glory. Texts from the Anglican Burial Service of 1662 [from *The Book of Common Prayer*] are woven into the fifth and seventh movements, as commentary and prelude, respectively."

