

Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943)

Lux Aeterna, for Chorus and Chamber Orchestra

We are privileged this evening to be performing this piece for the first time. Having sung Lauridsen's beautiful Christmas motet *O Magnum Mysterium* many times, and seeking a choral work to pair with Dvořák's Symphony no. 9 in this concert, we were drawn to Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna* with its message centring around light. It seems appropriate to evoke symbols of hope in times of darkness, danger and sorrow.

As an introduction to this work, we could do no better than to present Morten Lauridsen's own notes, taken from his score. He writes:

Lux Aeterna for chorus and chamber orchestra was composed for and is dedicated to the Los Angeles Master Chorale and its superb conductor, Paul Salamunovich, who gave the world premiere in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on April 13, 1997. Each of the five connected movements in this cycle contains references to Light assembled from various sacred Latin texts. The piece opens and closes with the beginning and ending of the *Requiem Mass* with the central three movements drawn respectively from the *Te Deum* (including a line from the *Beatus Vir*), *O Nata Lux*, and *Veni, Sancte spiritus*.

The instrumental introduction to the *Introitus* softly recalls motivic fragments from two pieces especially close to my heart (my setting of Rilke's *Contre Qui*, *Rose* from *Les Chansons des Roses*, and *O Magnum Mysterium*) which recur throughout the work in various forms. Several new themes in the *Introitus* are then introduced by the chorus, including an extended canon on *et lux perpetua*. In *Te, Dominum, Speravi* contains, among other musical elements, the cantus firmus *Herzliebster Jesu* (from the *Nuremberg Songbook*, 1677) and a lengthy inverted canon on *fiat misericordia*. *O Nata Lux* and *Veni Sancte Spiritus* are paired songs, the former a central *a cappella* motet and the latter a spirited, jubilant canticle. A quiet setting of the *Agnus Dei* precedes the final *Lux Aeterna*, which reprises the opening section of the *Introitus* and concludes with a joyful *Alleluia*.

The first three movements proceed without a break, as do the final two. The words and a translation are printed below.

1. Introitus

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion, et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem. Exaudi orationem meam: ad te omnis caro veniet.

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may eternal light shine on them. Thou, O God, art praised in Sion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.

Hear my prayer: unto Thee shall all flesh come.

2. In te, Domine, speravi

Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti Virginis uterum. Tu devicto mortis aculeo, aperuisti credentibus regna coelorum.

To deliver us, you became human, and did not disdain the virgin's womb. Having blunted the sting of death, You opened the kingdom of Heaven to all believers. A light has risen in the darkness for the upright. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy.

Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis.

Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos,
quemadmodum speravimus in te.
In te, Domine, speravi: non confundar in
aeternum.

3. O nata lux

O nata lux de lumine, Jesu, redemptor
saeculi, dignare clemens supplicum
laudes preces que sumere.
Qui carne quondam contegi dignatus es pro
perditis.
Nos membra confer effici, tui beati corporis.

4. Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Veni, Sancte Spiritus, Et emitte coelitus
Lucis tuae radium.
Veni, pater pauperum, Veni, dator
munerum, Veni, lumen cordium.
Consolator optime, Dulcis hospes animae,
Dulce refrigerium.
In labore requies, In aestu temperies,
In fletu solatium.
O lux beatissima, Reple cordis intima
Tuorum fidelium.
Sine tuo numine Nihil est in homine,
Nihil est innoxium.
Lava quod est sordidum, Riga quod est
aridum, Sana quod est saucium.
Flecte quod est rigidum, Fove quod est
frigidum, Rege quod est devium.
Da tuis fidelibus, In te confidentibus,
Sacrum septenarium.
Da virtutis meritum, Da salutis exitum,
Da perenne gaudium.

5. Agnus Dei - Lux aeterna

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis
requiem. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata
mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine: cum sanctis
tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux
perpetua luceat eis.
Alleluia. Amen.

Let thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, as we have
trusted in thee.
In thee, O Lord, I have trusted, let me never
be confounded.

O Jesus, born light of light, redeemer of the
world, mercifully deem worthy and accept
the praises and prayers of your supplicants.
Thou who once deigned to be clothed in flesh
for the sake of the lost ones.
Grant us to be made members of your holy
body.

[Pause]

Come, Holy Spirit, send forth from heaven
The ray of Thy light.
Come, Father of the poor, Come, giver of gifts,
Come, light of hearts.
Thou best of consolers, Sweet guest of the soul,
Sweet refreshment.
In labour, Thou art rest, In heat, the tempering,
In grief, the consolation.
O light most blessed, Fill the inmost heart
Of all thy faithful.
Without your grace, There is nothing in us,
Nothing that is not harmful.
Cleanse what is sordid, Water what is dry,
Heal what is hurt.
Flex what is rigid, Warm what is cold,
Correct what goes astray.
Grant to thy faithful, Those trusting in thee,
Thy sacred seven-fold gifts.
Grant the reward of virtue, Grant the
deliverance of salvation, Grant everlasting joy.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the
world, grant them rest. Lamb of God, who
takest away the sins of the world, grant them
everlasting rest.

May eternal light shine on them, O Lord: with
Thy saints for ever, because Thou art merciful.
Grant the dead eternal rest, O Lord, and may
perpetual light shine on them.
Alleluia. Amen.



Interval of 20 minutes
Refreshments will be served



Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Symphony no. 9 in E minor, op. 95 (“From the New World”)

- I Adagio - Allegro molto
- II Largo
- III Scherzo: Molto vivace
- IV Allegro con fuoco

The beautiful, nostalgic, yearning melody from the Largo of the Ninth, recognisable to many of us as the tune from the old Hovis advert, is probably the most famous extract of Dvořák’s orchestral music. But there is much more to discover and enjoy.

We previously performed the 9th Symphony in this church in 2019, and it seemed the perfect choice for a concert reflecting on displacement and longing for home. It is packed full of melodies, some recalling the folk and dance melodies of Dvořák’s native Bohemia, as well as some dramatic and powerfully emotional moments. We have very much enjoyed revisiting it and uncovering more of its subtleties as we have been rehearsing.

Dvořák’s last and most popular symphony was composed during a three-year stay in New York (1892 to 1895), where Dvořák was director of the National Conservatoire of Music. He had been invited to help set up the conservatoire by Jeanette Thurber, a wealthy patron of the arts. The symphony was composed relatively quickly, being ready for performance by early 1893, and is both a tribute to the novelty and excitement of America, and a display of homesickness and nostalgia for what he had left behind. Dvořák was often homesick, and took great pleasure in visiting the Bohemian colony at Spillville. However, New York’s bustling vibrancy made a great impression on Dvořák, who came from the comparatively quiet and provincial Prague. Furthermore, his trip coincided with celebrations marking the 400th anniversary of Columbus’s voyage to ‘the new world’. His admiration for America and his interest in the music and poetry of American Indians and African Americans, coupled with his love of homeland, inspired this symphony, which he subtitled “From the New World”.

Though composed in and influenced by America, the Ninth is grounded firmly in the late-Romantic European tradition. Dvořák uses European compositional techniques of thematic development and integration, most impressively in the finale, which seamlessly and thrillingly blends together melodies from across the whole work.

Although influenced by the songs and spirituals that Dvořák heard from his students, he frequently felt the need to stress that he created his own original melodies in this E Minor symphony. The connection between the symphony’s themes and a broader community of

folk melodies is its modality – principally the use of the pentatonic scale and the flattened seventh – which are not only redolent of many Celtic and European, as well as indigenous American, traditions, but also of the emerging music of jazz.

I Adagio – Allegro molto

The Adagio introduction establishes a melancholy sound world, the cellos accompanied softly by the other strings. The horn announces a short, striking fanfare. Woodwind echo the melancholy theme, before the music becomes stormier and more energetic. Themes are introduced which will be heard repeatedly over the course of the symphony. The timpani, featured in this introduction, enhance the drama throughout the work.

The Allegro begins with the main theme played on the French horn. We seem to be carried off into the American West, and a number of folk-like melodies are passed around the orchestra. One section resembles a Czech polka. The movement is in sonata form, concluding with a boisterous coda typical of the composer.

II Largo

This movement begins with a brass chorale, before we are introduced to what is possibly the most famous cor anglais solo of all western classical music. The tune is original, but redolent of spirituals. At the end of this first episode, woodwind restate the opening chorale. The strings are muted, and remain so throughout this movement.

The composer then takes his melody and begins to develop it, through several poetic central episodes, where graceful woodwind and gentle strings take turns with the themes in a mood of poignancy and serenity. By way of contrast, over tremolo strings, the flute and oboe make a statement of seeming desolation, and the lower strings pick up a walking pizzicato bassline. A short, dance-like passage is interrupted by a dramatic reminder of previous themes. Finally, the cor anglais solo returns, echoed in the strings and punctuated by sobbing silences. The movement concludes with the brass chorale, and shimmering strings.

III Scherzo : Molto vivace

This movement is, in structure, a model scherzo and trio. It passes through a number of moods, and includes simple folk-inspired dance-like sections. The opening is reminiscent of Beethoven's 9th symphony with its intervals of fourths and fifths, with added glittering triangle. Key to the movement are statements and developments of previous themes. The impetus of the full orchestra contrasts with passages of sparser orchestration, for example in the trio section. The movement ends, as it began, ominously.

IV Allegro con fuoco

The fourth movement is in sonata form. After a threatening introduction, the trumpets state the first theme, which is immediately extended by the strings. The second theme is full of energy; the third, played by the clarinet, is more lyrical, with the cellos galloping into the limelight between the clarinet's phrases. We hear the horns play the trumpets' earlier theme amidst rustling strings, and then the master stroke of the whole symphony: the ingenious transformation and combination of themes from all four movements of the symphony, working up to a series of climaxes, before the recapitulation gives us yet another chance to hear some of these wonderful and memorable melodies, re-orchestrated. In the coda, the themes pour out again and again, as if the composer cannot let go, until finally, and in the major key, he reaches resolution, or resignation: unexpectedly, the symphony ends quietly.

Programme notes: Rachel Mathieson, Mary Mead and Kathleen Nield.

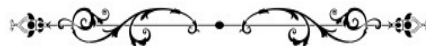
The Orchestra of *INVITATIONE*

Violin	Carolyn Bailey Lesley Finlayson Edwin Mowthorpe Patrick Plunkett	Adhel Cadle Alex Hunt Sophie Nichols Jenny Taylor	Alan Deighton Sally Millington Amy Parkin Andrew Ward-Campbell
Viola	Helen Keep	Helen Booth	
Cello	Clare Allan Sue Sidwell	Alan Edgar	Julie Hancocks
Bass	Jane Durkin	Sue Morgan	
Flute	Margaret Pearson	Kate Lutley (and piccolo)	
Oboe	Gabriella Haynes	Martin Lutley (and cor anglais)	
Clarinet	Anne Whiteside	Daniel Barker	Emma Dawber
Bassoon	Matthew Morgan	John Morrison	
Horn	Sue Berrieman Simon Neligan	Katrina Hampton	Chris Leathley
Trumpet	Ken Fergusson	Ian Reid	
Trombone	James Hargreave	David Clarke	
Tuba	Andrew Garbutt		
Timpani/Percussion	Daniel Barker	Hannah Parkin	

The Chamber Choir of *INVITATIONE*

Tony Ashbridge	Chris Bates	Suzanne Brown	Louise Coulter
Emma Dawber	Granville Dransfield	Claire Foley	Elizabeth Franklin
Mike Harding	Jan Hayton	David Machin	Mary Mead
George Myers	Kathleen Nield	Amy Parkin	Hannah Parkin
Patrick Plunkett	Ian Reid	Martin Sadler	Clare Todd
John Tordoff			

If you are interested in being part of *Invitatione*, or booking us for an event, please email md@invitatione.org.



Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the clergy and church wardens at St. Alban's for hosting this concert in their church, and for allowing us free use of the church for rehearsals. We are also grateful to all the supporters who assist with programmes, stewarding and refreshments for our events, and to the many singers and players who give their time to support, manage and participate in our projects. Special thanks to Mary Mead, Emma Dawber, Lesley Finlayson, Daniel Barker, Martin Lutley and Ian Franklin for their assistance with the logistics involved in this concert.

Invitatione was established in 2011 by a group of local musicians and music teachers. We aim to provide high quality live music in local venues, seeking avenues for creative ways of presenting classical music to a wider audience; to create enjoyable and varied performing experiences for our players and singers; and to promote a life-long love of music and music making, and an appreciation of the emotional and social benefits which this can provide. Our members have ranged from those as young as 11 to those in their retirement. This mix of ages and range of experience amongst members enables the youngest and the least experienced of our group to enjoy the support of others and to tackle challenging repertoire with confidence. Working and developing alongside one another, the experience for all of us is one of exploration and discovery.

We have performed large- and small-scale concerts in churches in Hull, Beverley and Driffield, raising money for charities and good causes. Highlights include a concert for Amnesty International which raised over £2,000 (January 2012); the semi-staged 'Messiah' performed in the Church of All Saints, Great Driffield, and then in Hull Minster (Easter 2018); a collaboration with East Riding Theatre using the words of, and music inspired by, Shakespeare (June 2013); and thrilling performances in Beverley Minster of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony (2013), his Tenth Symphony (2015), Strauss's 'Four Last Songs' and Bernstein's 'Chichester Psalms' (2014); the Requiems of Brahms (2016), Duruflé (2017 and 2019) and Mozart (2016); Dvorak's Seventh and Eighth Symphonies (2016); and Kurt Weill's Windband Suite from 'The Threepenny Opera' (2017). We also enjoy singing unaccompanied repertoire from the Tudor and early Baroque periods, and some of our favourite performances have explored vocal and chamber works by Gesualdo, Byrd and Purcell. In 2022, we performed a concert entirely of works composed by our own members and friends.

Rachel Mathieson graduated with a first class BMus in 2007 and a PhD in Music in 2016 from the University of Hull. She also has a BA in Modern Languages and a DPhil in Education from the University of Oxford. For over a decade, up to 2018, Rachel taught music privately and in schools in the Hull and East Riding area. She then spent several years as a Research Fellow in the School of Education, University of Leeds, and two years teaching in West Yorkshire. She is now Evidence, Impact and Learning Manager for an education charity.

A pianist, singer and conductor, Rachel has performed over the years with many Hull and East Riding groups and societies. With the Hessle Sinfonia, she has been piano soloist in Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue', Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor, and Mozart's Piano Concerto no. 20 in D minor, and has been a guest conductor of a number of choirs and orchestras. Rachel is now accompanist to the Cawthorne Choral Society, and, when time permits, she plays the cello with the Hessle Sinfonia.

Rachel can be contacted at md@invitatione.org, rachel@truenorthed.org, or via Facebook.