



Chamber Choir Ireland

Conducted by Paul Hillier

Friday 27th October 2023, 6pm

King's College Chapel, University of Aberdeen

Programme

David Fennessy	<i>Letter to Michael*</i> [9']
Thomas Tallis	<i>Lamentations of Jeremiah</i> [8']
Rhona Clarke	<i>Requiem</i> [20']
Cassandra Miller	<i>The City, Full of People**</i> [16']

**Letter to Michael* was co-commissioned by Chamber Choir Ireland and the Cork International Choral Festival through funds from the Arts Council / an Chomhairle Ealaíon.

***The City, Full of People* was commissioned by Eamonn Quinn of Louth Contemporary Music Society with funding provided by the Arts Council of Ireland and Robert D. Bielecki Foundation.

In Association with Chamber Choir Ireland with support from The Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon and Culture Ireland / Cultúr Éireann



Programme notes

David Fennessy *Letter to Michael*

A few years ago I came across an extraordinary image by a woman named Emma Hauck (1878-1920). It was of a page of text written so densely in pencil that it was almost completely black and more or less illegible. Hauck was a patient in the psychiatric hospital of the University of Heidelberg and in the summer of 1909 wrote many similar pages in the form of letters to her husband Michael, begging him to come and collect her. The text consists simply of the phrase 'Herzenschatzi Komm' (Sweetheart come) written over and over again, many hundreds of times or simply 'Komm' (Come). It seems the letters were never sent and her pleas were left unheard.

David Fennessy, March 2014

Thomas Tallis *Lamentations of Jeremiah i. Incipit lamentatio*

Incipit lamentatio Jeremiæ prophetæ: *Here begin the lamentations of the prophet Jeremia*

ALEPH

Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo!
Facta est quasi vidua domina gentium;
princeps provinciarum facta est sub tributo.
*How lonely sits the city that was full of people!
How like a widow has she become, she who was great among the nations!
She who was a princess among the provinces has become a slave.*

BETH

Plorans ploravit in nocte, et lacrimæ ejus in maxillis ejus:
non est qui consoletur eam, ex omnibus caris ejus;
omnes amici ejus spreverunt eam, et facti sunt ei inimici.
*She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers she has none to comfort her;
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies.*

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum. *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God.*

Lamentations 1:1-2

Rhona Clarke *Requiem* (Ireland, b. 1958)

I Introit

Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine: Eternal rest give to them, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis. and let perpetual light shine upon them.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion, It is fitting to sing a hymn to you, O God, in Zion;
et tibi reddetur votum in Ierusalem: and to you a promise will be given in Jerusalem:
exaudi orationem meam, hear my prayer;
ad te omnis caro veniet. all flesh will come to you.
Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine: Eternal rest give to them, O Lord,
et lux perpetua luceat eis. and let perpetual light shine upon them.

II Lux Aeterna

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine: May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord:
Cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum: quia With your Saints for eternity: you who are
pius es. gracious.
Requiem aeternam dona eis, Eternal rest give to them, O Lord,
Domine: and may perpetual light shine upon them:
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum: quia With your Saints for eternity: you who are
pius es. gracious.

III Pie Jesu

Pie Iesu Domine, dona eis Merciful Jesus, grant them rest,
requiem.
Dona eis requiem sempiternam. Grant them eternal rest.

IV In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant te Angeli: May the Angels lead you into paradise:
in tuo adventu suscipiant te may the Martyrs receive you at your coming,
Martyres, and lead you into the holy city of Jerusalem.
et perducant te in civitatem sanctam
Ierusalem
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat, May the choir of Angels receive you,
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere and with Lazarus, who once was poor,
aeternam habeas requiem may you have eternal rest.

***The City, Full of People* Cassandra Miller (Canada, b. 1976)**

This rounding-turning music emerges from the concluding refrain of Thomas Tallis' Lamentations of Jeremiah I – made from my own automatic-singing as I traced canons of the original Tallis in meditation.

I remember the first time I heard the Tallis Lamentations as a teenager; the choir singing from the back of the church in a dark service during Holy Week.

I don't remember if I knew in that moment – the moment where Tallis' music pauses for the striking call to return – that the words meant 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God', or if I knew about the destruction of the First or Second Temple, or if I had any way to understand these ancient laments for Jerusalem, “How lonely sits the city that was full of people!” (Lamentations 1:1).

What I do remember is the clarity of that message through the music. Tallis' setting of the word 'Jerusalem' is enough to make anyone yearn to come back to a long forgotten god. I suppose I've become a non-believer over the years; always holding a vague but deep-felt sense that I might need to return one day. In my wanderings (certainly aimless when compared to my youth), I have turned to company and community in lieu of a spiritual life. This composition – with each duo and trio as a congregation of its own – celebrates that scenario, both for its beauty and its incompleteness.

Cassandra Miller, 2023

Biographies

Paul Hillier - Artistic Director

Paul Hillier is from Dorset in England and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. His career has embraced singing, conducting, composing, and writing about music. He formed the Hilliard Ensemble in 1973 and was its musical director for 17 years. In 1990 he created a new group called Theatre of Voices, which he continues to direct today. He has taught in the USA at the University of California campuses of Santa Cruz and Davis, and from 1996-2003 was Director of the Early Music Institute at Indiana University, Bloomington.

He was Principal Conductor of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (2001-2007) and has been Chief Conductor of Ars Nova Copenhagen since 2003. His books about Arvo Pärt and Steve Reich are published by Oxford University Press. In 2006 he was awarded an OBE for services to choral music. In 2007 he received the Order of the White Star of Estonia, and was awarded a Grammy for Best Choral Recording.

In 2008 he became Chief Conductor of Chamber Choir Ireland and was appointed artistic director of the newly formed Coro Casa da Musica in Porto. That same year he also created his own music publishing company, Theatre of Voices Edition (www.tov-edition.com). During 2009 he was artist in residence at Yale University's Institute for Sacred Music. In 2010 he was awarded his second Grammy - for David Lang's *The Little Match Girl Passion*. In 2013 he was awarded the Order of Dannebrog (the Danish knighthood) by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe of Denmark. Paul is represented worldwide by Konzertdirektion Hörtnagel, Berlin.

Chamber Choir Ireland

'A sheerly beautiful immersion in choral sonority' IRISH TIMES, MARCH 2019

Garnering a strong reputation for its unique approach to creative commissioning, recording and programming, Chamber Choir Ireland is the country's flagship choral ensemble and national chamber choir under the Artistic Direction of the multi-award-winning conductor, Paul Hillier. The Choir's programmes span from early renaissance to the present day, incorporating established choral classics with cutting edge commissions,

and a style of performance that incorporates versatility, dynamism and often vocal pyrotechnics.

Chamber Choir Ireland performances have been described as having a tone which is 'liquid in its power and purity' with a 'strong vocal flexibility of style' (Belfast Telegraph). The Choir has a strong commitment to touring in Ireland and continues to develop its touring network in order to present high quality choral concerts to audiences around the country. International touring has included the USA, UK, Belgium, Russia, Germany and South America.

The choir has previously recorded for the Harmonia Mundi, RTE Lyric FM labels including the world premiere recording of works by Gerald Barry, Barry meets Beethoven, featuring the Crash Ensemble and Stephen Richardson on the Orchid Classics label. The most recent release garnering a 5-star review in the Irish Times was Letters which included the CCI commission Triptych by David Fennessy and A Letter of Rights by Tarik O'Regan & Alice Goodman on the Naxos label (November 2020).

Chamber Choir Ireland has a strong Learning and Participation programme, which delivers projects for Next Generation singers and composers, a schools composition programme, Continuing Professional Development for professional composers, bespoke workshops for amateur choirs throughout the country and a series of in-person and online lectures and interviews to bring the audience closer to choral music in Ireland.

Chamber Choir Ireland receives principal funding from the Arts Council/ an Chomhairle Ealaíon and support from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through its National Lottery fund. They are a resident ensemble at the National Concert Hall of Ireland, Associate Artists to Dublin City University, and a member of TENSO – the network of professional chamber choirs in Europe. In 2021, Chamber Choir Ireland welcomed President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins as Patron.

Sopranos

Abbi Temple
Felicity Hayward
Charlotte O'Hare
Sarah Keating

Altos

Christina Whyte
Stephen Wallace
Mark Chambers
Iris Oja*

Tenors

Edward Woodhouse
Paul Bentley-Angell
Jack Granby*
Matthew Howard*

*Deputy

Chief Executive

Majella Hollywood

Marketing and Development Manager

Aoife Cuthbert

Basses

Jeffrey Ledwidge
Eoghan Desmond
William Gaunt
Adrian Horsewood

Operations Manager

David Darcy

Production Co-ordinator

Conleth Stanley

This year's **soundfestival** is dedicated to the memory of Angela Michael and of Ian Spink. We very much valued each of their contributions to **sound**, and they will be greatly missed.

Follow us on social media for up to date information and festival news

 soundscotland  @soundfestival  @soundscotland

#soundfest23

sound is a new music incubator based in north-east Scotland encouraging new music creation and discovery. We run the annual **soundfestival**, as well as year-round activity supporting a wide range of composers, engaging with local communities and providing educational opportunities

Find out more: www.sound-scotland.co.uk

soundfestival 2023 gratefully acknowledges the support of:

