

Dream of Gerontius

A setting of the poem by Cardinal Newman

Sir Edward Elgar

Manchester Cathedral
Sunday April 25
8pm

ADRIAN THOMPSON - Tenor
KATHLEEN WILKINSON - Mezzo-soprano
DAVID SOAR - Bass

Angelicals sung by students from the
Royal Northern College of Music
The East Lancs. Sinfonia
(Leader Sally Robinson)
Jeffrey Makinson (Organist)

Conductor: Nigel Wilkinson

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

A warm welcome to our performance of Elgar's great dramatic setting of the words of Cardinal Newman's epic poem, "The Dream of Gerontius". I am sure that you will find tonight's performance worthy of such an iconic work, especially as you will be hearing it here in the magnificent setting of Manchester Cathedral. Our last visit, to perform the wonderful "Requiem" by Verdi, was an enormous success, and we are very pleased to be here again.

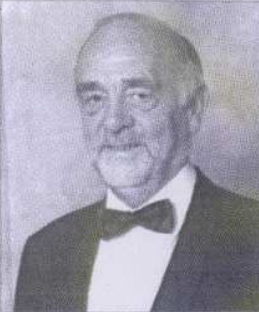
I want to say a sincere thank you to Anthony O'Connor for all his help and support with the arrangements for tonight's event. As I write this, I have just read a report in the Manchester Evening News about the way in which the Cathedral is opening up to many various groups, ranging from Choirs to Pop stars, and Exhibitions to Conferences, and I wish Anthony every success as he spearheads this move.

A Cathedral is the heart of a Community, and the more people that are encouraged to come and enjoy its atmosphere and welcome, the better.

Our thanks also go to our wonderful team of soloists, the students from the RNCM, the marvellous East Lancs. Sinfonia, and to Jeffrey Makinson on the organ.

Our choir, now numbering over 130 voices, will be giving of their best, and we hope that you, our honoured guests and audience, will find the performance enjoyable and we hope, inspiring. Thank you for being with us.

Fred Jones



This performance is dedicated to the memory of Dr. James Eastham ,
who passed away suddenly on April 13th.

'Heir to the noble line of northern choral conductors'

(Sunday Telegraph),

"Proficiscere anima Christiana"

This page has kindly been sponsored by Eric Fallows

OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS

BY SIR EDWARD ELGAR

BASED ON THE POEM BY CARDINAL NEWMAN



SUNDAY
APRIL 25TH
2010

MANCHESTER
CATHEDRAL



SOLOISTS:

ADRIAN THOMPSON (TENOR) - GERONTIUS
KATHLEEN WILKINSON (MEZZO) - THE ANGEL
DAVID SOAR (BASS) - THE PRIEST / ANGEL OF AGONY

CHOIR OF ANGELICALS SUNG BY
STUDENTS FROM THE R.N.C.M
ORGANIST: JEFFREY MAKINSON
THE EAST LANCs SINFONIA
CONDUCTOR: NIGEL P. WILKINSON

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TO THE SILENT MODE OR
SWITCHED OFF COMPLETELY

THERE WILL BE A SHORT PAUSE BETWEEN
PART I AND PART II, DURING WHICH
YOU ARE REQUESTED TO REMAIN IN YOUR SEAT



ADRIAN THOMPSON -TENOR

London-born Adrian Thompson is an artist of extraordinary versatility with a wide-ranging opera, concert and recital repertoire of works from the renaissance to the present day. He trained at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama where he is now a professor of vocal studies.

His opera appearances have included the title role of *Peter Grimes*, Skuratov *From The House Of The Dead* and Canio *I Pagliacci* for Oper Frankfurt; Monostatos *Die Zauberflöte*, Arv in Nielsen's *Maskarade* and Valzacchi *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Florestan *Fidelio* and Scribe *Khovanshchina* for Welsh National Opera, Prologue *The Turn of the Screw* and Michael Jarrell's *Galilée* for Grand Théâtre de Genève, Albert Gregor *The Makropoulos Case*, Erik *Der Fliegende Holländer* and Laca *Jenufa* for Opera Zuid; the title role of Janacek's *The Diary of One*

who Disappeared both in Brussels and the Aix-en-Provence Festival; Zivny in Janacek's *Osud* and Midas in *Die Liebe Der Danae* for Garsington Opera as well as concert performances as Grigory *Boris Godunov* at The Brighton Festival and Bacchus *Ariadne Auf Naxos* at The Barbican. He has also performed with Glyndebourne Festival Opera, English National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera du Rhin, Badisches Staatstheater, Karlsruhe, Oper der Stadt Köln, Staatstheater Stuttgart, Staatstheater Darmstadt, at the Bregenz Festival, Théâtre des Champs Elysées, New Israeli Opera, and The Netherlands Opera. Adrian's recent engagements include appearances as Mr Upfold *Albert Herring* for Glyndebourne on Tour, Monostatos *Die Zauberflöte* and 1st Jew *Salome* for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Monsieur Triquet *Eugene Onegin* for Glyndebourne Festival, Great Convict *From the House of the Dead* for Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Rev. Adams *Peter Grimes* in Geneva (Runnicles) and Snout *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Teatro alla Scala, Milan. Adrian has performed with all the major British orchestras and ensembles and his overseas engagements have taken him all over the world. During his career he has worked with many distinguished conductors: Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Trevor Pinnock, Harry Christophers, Sir Andrew Davis, Richard Hickox, Sir Colin Davis and Philippe Herreweghe. In the contemporary field he has performed Lutoslawski's *Paroles Tisées* with Oliver Knussen and The London Sinfonietta, recorded Judith Weir's *A Night at the Chinese Opera* and given many first performances of works by British and European composers. His recent concert highlights include Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Hallé Orchestra/Mark Elder and Elgar *Dream of Gerontius* with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra/Christopher Seaman. He is particularly associated with the works of Britten and Elgar and his repertoire includes Beethoven *9th Symphony*, Verdi *Requiem* and Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde* as well as the Evangelists of Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*.

A very experienced recitalist, Adrian Thompson has made many appearances at the Wigmore Hall and at festivals in the UK and Europe with pianists Graham Johnson, Iain Burnside and Roger Vignoles and harpist Ossian Ellis, also appearing in recital recently with Roger Braun at the Concertgebouw. He has recorded discs of works by Vaughan Williams and Gurney, a volume in the acclaimed Complete Schubert Edition and Janacek's *The Eternal Gospel* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra for Hyperion, Warlock's *The Curlew* for Collins Classics and Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* for Pickwick. He appears on Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Virgin Classics, Vaughan Williams' *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Sir John in Love* for Chandos and in Handel's *Rodelinda* for Virgin Classics. His discography also includes Britten's *Serenade*, *Les Illuminations* and *Nocturne* and Mendelssohn's *Lobegesang* for Naxos.

Engagements in 2009/2010 include Mime *Das Rheingold* for Nationale Reisopera, *Dream of Gerontius* at the Royal Festival Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall, *War Requiem* at the Barbican Centre, Vitek *The Makropoulos Case* for Angers/Nantes Opera and 1st Jew *Salome* for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Subsequent engagements include Mao *Nixon in China* in Toronto, *Die Meistersinger* at Glyndebourne Festival and Mime *Siegfried* for the Nationale Reisopera.

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KATHLEEN WILKINSON - MEZZO

Kathleen was born into a Burnley mining family of Irish descent, and after gaining considerable experience singing with leading regional amateur / semi-pro companies, she won an entrance scholarship to the Royal Northern College of Music, where she was the recipient of the prestigious Webster Booth Award and Peter Moores' Foundation Scholarships.

She has sung principal roles with virtually all Britain's major opera companies and sung in concert and oratorio throughout the country and in Europe.

Recent work has included Filipyevna the nurse, *Eugene Onegin* for both Glyndebourne and Welsh National Opera.

For the Royal Opera Covent Garden she has sung the roles of the She-Ancient in Tippett's *Midsummer Marriage*, (under the late Richard Hickox), Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress* (under Thomas Ades), and Third Maid in *Elektra* (under Sir Mark Elder); for the Glyndebourne Festival: Filipyevna, Pastuchyna in *Jenufa* and Genevieve in *Pelleas et Melisande*; and for GOT: *Mrs. Herring* in *Albert Herring* and *Mistress Quickly* in *Falstaff*.

For English National Opera, roles have included Mamma Lucia in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, the Cleaning lady in *The Macropulos Case* (Janacek), (under Sir Charles Mackerras), and Pastuchyna in *Jenufa*.

For Scottish Opera she created the roles of Margaret Muir *Friend of the People*, and Mary Lamb *Monster!* at their world premiers.

Other roles for the company include Erda, 1st Norn and Schwertleite in their acclaimed *Ring Cycle*, the nurse / old woman *Ines de Castro*, and major covers such as Amneris *Aida*, Azucena *Trovatore* and Adalgisa *Norma*.

She has also sung principal roles with Grange Park Opera, Opera Holland Park, Opera Ireland and at the Edinburgh International Festival.

In Europe she has sung Nurse / Old Woman *Ines de Castro*, [James MacMillan], at the Teatro Coliseo - Porto, Burya in *Jenufa* at Opera de Lyon, in concert at the Puccini Festival at Torre del Lago, and concerts in France and Poland.

She has also made 6 recordings of complete operas for the BBC, and recorded for the CHANDOS "Opera in English" label including Janacek's *Katya Kabanova* and *The Macropulos Case*.

In 2009 she enjoyed great success in the role of Brigitta in the British premier of *Die Tote Stadt* (Korngold) at the Royal Opera House, and in the role of Erda *Das Rheingold* at the Sopot International Wagner Festival in Poland.

More recently she sang the role of *Mistress Quickly* in Verdi's *Falstaff* at Glyndebourne, and on tour, and in our hugely successful Gilbert & Sullivan Gala with Donald Maxwell.



CHOIR OF ANGELICALS

Students appear by kind permission of the
Principal of the Royal Northern College of Music.

Sopranos: Zoe Milton Brown, Kaoru Shoji

Mezzos: Hanna-Liisa Midwood-Kirsch, Lucy Baines

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DAVID SOAR - BASS

David was born in Derbyshire and studied organ and singing at the Royal Academy of Music. After working as a freelance organist, singer and conductor, he embarked on a full-time singing career and joined the Chorus of Welsh National Opera, where he also performed a number of roles including Captain/Zaretsky **Eugene Onegin**, Doctor Grenvil **La Traviata**, Bertrand **Iolanta** and Sarastro **The Magic Flute**. After studying at the National Opera Studio David returned to WNO as a Principal Artist, where roles include Colline **La Boheme**, Zuniga **Carmen**, Bonze **Madam Butterfly**, Brander **The Damnation of Faust**, Bass **The Seven Deadly Sins**, Ferrando **Il Trovatore**, Alidoro **La**

Cenerentola, The King **Aida**, Lodovico **Otello**, Surin **The Queen of Spades**, 1st Workman and Doctor **Wozzeck** and the title role **Le nozze di Figaro**. Other roles include Banquo **Macbeth**, Alvisè Badoero **La Gioconda** for Opera Holland Park, Donner **Das Rheingold** for the Lucerne Festival, and Alfonso d'Este **Lucrezia Borgia** for Buxton Festival.

David's concert repertoire includes **Messiah**, **Creation**, **Mozart** and **Brahms Requiem**, Beethoven's **Symphony No. 9** and **Missa Solemnis**, **Verdi's Requiem**, Elgar's **The Dream of Gerontius** and **The Apostles**, Rossini's **Petite Messe Solennelle**, Stanford's **Songs of the Fleet**, Bach's **Mass in B minor**, **St John Passion**, **St Matthew Passion**, **Christmas Oratorio** and numerous cantatas including "**Ich habe genug**" for solo bass.

He has recently performed Escamillo **Carmen** for WNO, and future plans include Nightwatchman **Die Meistersinger** and Sparafucile **Rigoletto** for WNO, The Monk **Don Carlo** for Bilbao Opera, Le Duc **Romeo et Juliette** for the Salzburg Festival and his Royal Opera House debut as Quinault **Adriana Lecouvreur**.



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from 0161 633 3597
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Uppermill



ELGAR'S DREAM - THE BACKGROUND

In the summer of 1898, Elgar was asked if he would write a major new work for the 1900 Birmingham Triennial Festival. Now in his forties, he had long wanted recognition from the musical establishment, and with the recent success of works such as the **Enigma Variations** and **Sea Pictures**, he now felt able to undertake a more ambitious project. He had been given a copy of Newman's 900-line poem on man's journey into the afterlife as a wedding present in 1889. In the summer of 1900 he said "*The poem has been soaking in my mind for at least eight years.*" He started work in January of that year and worked on it for about six months. Elgar skillfully

condensed the 7 stanzas of Newman's poem into two parts. He used slightly less than half of the poem, retaining the text of the first section almost in its entirety to form Part 1 of his work, but significantly pruning the remaining sections to form Part 2. Elgar succeeded in focusing on its central narrative: the story of a man's death and his soul's journey into the next world. "*I imagined Gerontius to be a man like us,*" he wrote to his friend, August Jaeger, "*not a priest or a Saint, but a sinner ... no end of a worldly man in his life, and now brought to book. Therefore I've not filled his part with church tunes and rubbish, but a good, healthy, full-blooded romantic, remembered worldliness.*"

THE COMPOSITION

Combining the composition with other commitments: teaching, rehearsals with the Worcestershire Philharmonic and performances of **Sea Pictures** and the **Enigma Variations**, not to mention the odd round of golf and trips to the races and to see his beloved Wolverhampton Wanderers play (he composed the first-recorded football anthem for them), Elgar found it to be a daunting task to undertake and often felt a lack of confidence in his own ability to do it justice. Fortunately, Jaeger, (who worked for his publishers – Novello's), to whom he had sent the manuscript of the first sections of his work in early March, was most encouraging. "*I feel sure you will be equal to it, for ... you seem to grow with the task*", he wrote.

EARLY PERFORMANCES

An unfortunate combination of late completion of the vocal score (in early August), the untimely death of the festival choirmaster, and the failure of both his replacement and the conductor, Hans Richter to appreciate the complexity of the work led to an under-rehearsed and poorly received première at Birmingham Town Hall on October 3rd 1900. Unsurprisingly Elgar's insecurities came to the surface: "*Providence denies me a decent hearing of my work - so I submit. I always said God was against art and I still believe it. My heart is now shut against every religious feeling and every soft, gentle impulse forever*".

Fortunately, a German choirmaster in the audience (Julius Butts, the Director of the Lower Rhine Festival,) recognised the work's considerable merits and produced subsequent sell-out performances in Düsseldorf in each of the following two years, which set the precedent for its place in the established choral repertory.

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THE MUSIC

Elgar followed the practice of Johann Sebastian Bach in dedicating his work "A.M.D.G." (*Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, or "To the greater glory of God").

This is actually the motto of the Jesuit order.

The work opens with an orchestral prelude laying out some of the themes that will take on special significance as the story unfolds. The first voice we hear is that of Gerontius himself who tells us that he is dying and that Jesus is calling him home. Gerontius's friends pray at his bedside with a 'Kyrie eleison' ('Lord have mercy'), that begins with a polyphonic unaccompanied chorus that initially recalls cathedral music of earlier centuries, before becoming increasingly fervent and dramatic in spirit. At the rehearsals for the first performance, Elgar urged the chorus not to sing as though they were in church, but with "more tears in their voices," as though they were "at the side of a dying friend". The friends' prayers rouse Gerontius to a more spirited solo, followed by a second choral section, 'Be merciful, be gracious – spare him Lord', that builds up in intensity, and leads into Gerontius's emotional and passionate statement of faith, 'Sanctus fortis,' ("Firmly I believe and truly").

'Rescue him, O Lord,' sing his friends and Gerontius utters his dying words, 'Novissima hora est,' ('It is the final hour'). After a brief pause, the Priest pronounces the final blessing in the words of the Burial Service: 'Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo' ('Go forth from this world, Christian soul'). Elgar here conveys faith, sorrow and wonder, all at once, in one of the work's most inspired passages. At the words 'Go in the name of Angels and Archangels', the choir join in, building to a triple forte on the words 'Go forth', expressing an affirmative trust in the dying man's new life beyond the grave. The Priest again gives a blessing, the accompaniment softens to a single melody for the first violins, and with one last, gentle swell of orchestra the first part closes on the words 'through Christ our Lord'.

Part Two opens with a new, delicate melody in the strings marked *dolce e legato* whose light 3/4 time, displaying none of the rhythmic pulse that permeates Part One, tells us that time no longer exists, 'I hear no more the busy beat of time ... nor does one moment differ from the next'. His Soul begins to sing: 'I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed'. The discrete physical senses that informed his earthly body are gone, but he is aware of being carried forward and of his Guardian Angel. 'I hear a singing; yet in sooth I cannot of that music rightly say whether I touch or taste the tones'. There follows one of the work's most memorable passages: the dialogue between the Soul and the Angel which Elgar interprets with great imagination. The Soul is hesitant, but curious to know 'a maze of things' about his new condition. The Angel's response is understanding and compassionate: 'You cannot now Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.' Gerontius wonders why he has not already seen God and the Angel explaining that they are fast approaching the place of Judgement, reassures the Soul and the Soul sings of his new-found joy.



The conductor Hans Richter signed the autograph copy of the score with the inscription: "Let drop the Chorus, let drop everybody—but let not drop the wings of your original genius."

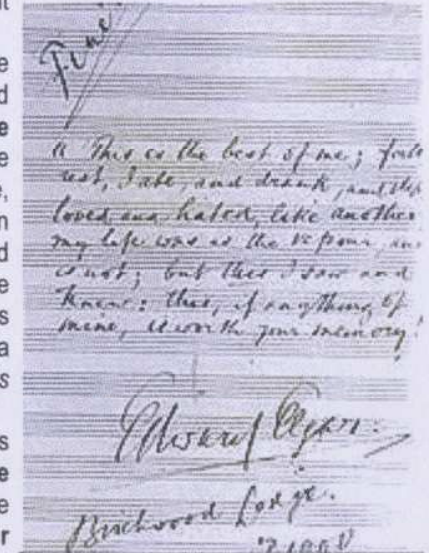
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Close by the Court of Judgement the Soul hears the **choir of demons** singing a fierce, mocking fugue, intensified by cries of sarcastic laughter, complaining at their expulsion from Heaven and expressing cynical disdain for the Saints who have inherited it. As the demons pass, the Soul notices that he has only heard them, not seen them. In one of the most memorable and moving passages Gerontius then asks: 'Shall I see my master?' The Angel says: "Yes – for one moment", but warns that 'the flame of the Everlasting Love doth burn ere it transform.'

There is distant music, Angelical beings singing 'Praise to the Holiest in the height.' There is a great, expectant moment as the Angel sings, ecstatically, 'And now the threshold, as we traverse it, utters aloud its glad responsive chant' when all the voices join together triple-forte, singing 'Praise to the Holiest' with thrilling support from the orchestra. This is the beginning of one of the most elaborate and stirring passages in choral music. Elgar called it 'the great Blaze.' The music swings into gloriously romantic melody in 6/4 time on the words 'O loving wisdom of our God!' and then two subjects blossom and intertwine in soaring four- and eight-part harmonies. As a boy, Elgar had taken advantage of living close to Worcester Cathedral by spending much time listening to the music there. He subsequently developed a familiarity with the choral works of Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Dvořák as a violinist in the Festival orchestras. The knowledge of cathedral acoustics and of choral writing that these experiences gave him is apparent throughout this powerful song of praise.

After a pause, a brief orchestral passage leads to the Judgement scene. **The Angel of the Agony**, (a second part for the bass), pleads with Jesus to 'spare these Souls which are so dear to Thee.' We then hear the voices on earth praying at Gerontius's bedside, indicating that all the events of Part 2 have happened in an instant of time. The Angel sings a last 'Alleluia,' and the Judgement theme builds up throughout the orchestra, as the Soul crosses the threshold and enters the Presence of God. Elgar marks this music *tutta forza*: 'For one moment, must every instrument exert its fullest force.'

The sight of God is so overwhelming that, aware of his unworthiness to be there, the Soul sings 'Take me away,' he needs to join the Souls in Purgatory, who are heard singing the psalm, 'Lord, Thou has been our refuge'. Now comes the great song of compassion that crowns the work, 'Softly and gently, dearly-ransomed soul,' as the Angel leads the Soul across the water. The work draws to a close with the simultaneous singing of 'Praise to the Holiest' by the chorus of Angelicals and the psalm by the Souls, coming together on a repeated 'Amen' to bring this wonderful work softly and serenely to a close.



"This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved and hated, like another: my life was as the vapour and is not; but this I saw and knew; this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory."

On completing his autograph score, Elgar added this quotation from John Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*.

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Elgar's "Catholic problem"

Today, the "Dream of Gerontius" is almost universally acknowledged as a masterpiece, but at its first performance in Birmingham, 110 years ago, the music was thought daring, even difficult, while the subject matter was viewed in some quarters with intense suspicion. One of Elgar's problems was that he was a Roman Catholic composing in a country where the musical establishment was dogmatically Protestant / Anglican.

When Elgar married Alice Roberts, the daughter of a Major General, Lord Roberts, in May 1889, her aristocratic family cut them off completely due to Elgar's origins. He was acutely sensitive of his Roman Catholic working class background, and always felt that there was prejudice against him and his music.



Elgar was given a copy of the "Dream of Gerontius" as a wedding present, and absorbed himself in it. The text of the poem by the Victorian Catholic convert, Cardinal John Henry Newman – is rich in doctrine that had been emphatically rejected by the Protestant church since the time of the Reformation.

Elgar would have felt an affinity with Newman, since whilst a committed Christian and theologian, Newman was an intellectual, always searching deep into his own conscience, and even after his conversion, he was never completely at ease with all aspects of "continental Catholicism". Elgar himself, can perhaps be best described as a "questioning" Catholic. The personal turmoil that he felt comes across in the searching, intense character of his music, and is nowhere better exemplified than in this particular work.

The poem, and Elgar's setting are distinctly Catholic in terms of the religious ideas conveyed, specifically the account of the Soul's need to pass through Purgatory before entering Heaven – a concept alien to Anglican and Protestant theology. For this reason many

contemporaries dismissed the work. Charles Villiers Stanford, the celebrated Irish / Anglican composer, (pictured right), allegedly saying that the work 'stank of incense'.

The central character, Gerontius, (the name derives from the Ancient Greek "gero" n", meaning simply 'old man'), prays for assistance to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to other saints, and after his soul-searing first sight of God, he doesn't go straight to Heaven, but is committed to Purgatory for purification. For many Protestants in Elgar's day, all this would have been pure heresy. Indeed, when a performance of "Gerontius" was proposed for the 1902 Three Choirs Festival, the Bishop of Worcester, (Elgar's home city), objected. Performance in the Cathedral was only permitted once the text had been modified. The words 'Jesus', 'Lord' or 'Saviour' were substituted for 'Mary', 'Souls' for 'Souls in Purgatory', 'prayers' for 'Masses', and so on. It may seem trivial or even petty now, but in early 20th-century England these were acutely sensitive issues.

The "Dream of Gerontius" is not, however, an exposition of Catholic doctrine, but an allegorical representation of the transition from time to eternity, and its pure narrative of faith usually overcomes sectarian objections. A hundred years on, and religious sensitivities have given way to a wider appreciation of the work's greatness, and it is now undoubtedly the most popular and among the most frequently performed of all Elgar's choral works.



This page has kindly been sponsored by Margaret Hood—
'In memory of my dear friend, June Brice'

OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY Provisional programme for 2010 / 11.

**Sunday June 20th at 7.30 at "The Arena" Summer Concert
With Guest soloist: Sean Ruane "The Operatic Voice of Sport"**

A popular programme including Zadok the Priest, (adapted as the Theme for "The Champions League"), folksong arrangements by John Rutter, a selection from "Die Fledermaus", operatic favourites (inc. Nessun Dorma), and Sean's 'Ashes' signature tune – "Jerusalem".

See page 14 for booking details.

Sunday Nov. 21st 7.30 at "The Arena"
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Saturday December 18th 7.30 at Oldham Parish Church
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The Dean and Chapter of for permitting us to perform here in the Cathedral.
Anthony O'Connor and staff at the Cathedral for their assistance and co-operation.
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SUNDAY JUNE 20th at



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OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY
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“SUMMER SERENADE”

An evening of popular choral items with
Special Guest: SEAN RUANE – Tenor
‘THE OPERATIC VOICE OF SPORT’

Sean, a leading operatic tenor, has become well known for his role as “England’s 12th Man” in Team England, singing Jerusalem before the start of each day’s play in the 2 recent Ashes series, and entertaining during the intervals. He has also sung at many other prestigious sporting / musical events. He recently stepped in at very short notice to replace Hayley Westenra at the MEN Arena.

Equally at home performing in front of the cognoscenti of Covent Garden or fervent football fans at Wembley, Seán has worked all over Europe, the United States, Russia, Australia and New Zealand since making his professional debut in 2001.

Highlights of his operatic career include his 2004 debut at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in The Tempest (Thomas Adés), he then moved with the production to the Opéra National du Rhin. Other roles followed at the ROH including a welcome return in the revival of The Tempest.

While opera remains at the heart of his work, Seán has become the voice for many of the national sporting events. He has sung ahead of England football internationals, the Irish Rugby Six Nations internationals and during the last three Ashes series. He has also appeared on the bill of the Teenage Cancer Trust concerts, alongside the likes of Paul Weller, Jools Holland and comedian Johnny Vegas.

This page has kindly been sponsored by Jill Hamnett – ‘In memory of my parents Jack and Lilian Wilson, both of whom sang in the famous Barbirolli recording’

OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY 2010

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BARBARA WILLIAMS §
ANNE WILLIAMSON
JANET WOOD

+ = 20 years service
§ = 30 years service

ALTOS

JANET ALBISTON
MARY ALMOND
SYLVIA ANDREW §
PAT ASHWORTH
MARJORIE BARKER
CAROL BEDFORD
IRENE CADMAN
CAROLE CORMACK
ROSALIND CORSER §
ANDREE COLLOFF
MAGGIE CULKIN
JO-ANNA DOBBS
TRICIA GOLDEN
BRENDA GRIFFITHS
CHRISTINE GRIME +
HELEN HALLIWELL
MURIEL HARDY
BEVERLEY HARPER
BARBARA HATFIELD
MARJORIE HIRST
SUE HOWARD
SUE HUTCHINSON
EILEEN JOHNSON
THELMA JONES +
ANN JOYCE
JAN LOCKWOOD
IVA MOTTLEY
NANCY MURPHY §
LOUISE PADWELL
SUSAN PADWELL
ANN PICKARD
BARBARA PLENDERLEITH
MARGARET RAWLINS
HELEN RIGBY
BRENDA ROBERTS
BRENDA SHARPLES
SYLVIA SMITH +
BARBARA STAMP
JUDITH STOTT
CLAIRE SULLIVAN
CAROL VAUDREY
SALLY WHITEHEAD
ELIZABETH WIENER
JOAN YOUND §

TENORS

DAVID ALLEN
MEL BORSBEY
MICHAEL CLARKE
BARRY COTTON
LAWRENCE CROFT
DEREK CLUTTERBUCK
JOHN DEARDEN
GILES DENNIS
ERIC FALLOWS
PHILIP JOHNSON
ALAN MELLOR §
RODNEY PORTER
JOHN RICHARDS
DAVID RIGG
ALAN SCOTT
PHIL SHAW +
RAY SMITH
HELEN TAYLOR
NEIL TAYLOR
KEITH WIENER

BASSES

ALAN BACON
DAVID BAIRD §
ALAN BARKER
CHRIS BARRATT
VINCENT BIRTLES
PHILIP BLANCHARD
MICHAEL CLEGG
JOHN DAVID
CHRISTOPHER DODD
LIONEL DOSSETT
MIKE EDMONDSON
GEORGE HARDY
MALCOLM HARDY
NORMAN HILL §
HENRY HOPE
FRED JONES §
KEN LEWIS
JOHN LIVESEY
MICHAEL LLOYD
STUART LONGLEY
ALAN MACMILLAN
WILF MURPHY §
ERNIE NORMAN
JOHN PRICE
ALAN ROSE
TERRY QUINN
DAVID SHIPP
JOHN WILLIAMS
ARTHUR WILSON §