

Hailsham Choral Society



A German Requiem

by

Johannes Brahms

7.30pm Saturday 11th November 2017

All Saints' Church

Eastbourne

Hailsham Choral Society is a
Registered Charity
No: 1100408

www.hailshamchoral.org


**Making
Music**
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
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Dedication

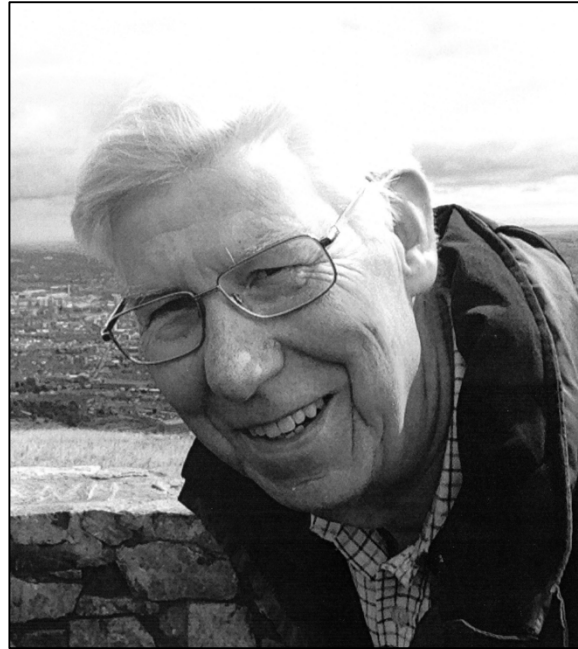
This evening's concert is dedicated to the memory of Brian Maskell, who died in July this year.

Brian was a much-valued member and one-time Secretary of the choir. He sang with us for many years and provided online teaching material to help choir members learn their parts.

For over a decade, Brian was a popular volunteer at the Orpheus Centre in Surrey, where young people with learning and/or physical disabilities are helped to lead fulfilling and independent lives.

He loved time away on his narrow-boat, was a great fan of *The Archers* and his solo monologues were legendary.

He is fondly remembered and greatly missed.



Support

We wish to acknowledge and thank both Hailsham Town Council and the Co-op Local Community Fund for the grants they have awarded the choir.



Hailsham
TOWN COUNCIL



P R O G R A M M E

For the Fallen

Douglas Guest

Please do not applaud after For the Fallen

Romance from Suite No 2 for Two Pianos

Sergei Rachmaninov

Ein Deutsches Requiem - *A German Requiem*

Johannes Brahms

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 1. | Selig sind, die da Leid tragen
<i>Blessed are those who mourn</i> | Choir |
| 2. | Denn alles Fleish, es ist wie Gras
<i>For all flesh is as the grass</i> | Choir |
| 3. | Herr, lehre doch mich
<i>Show me. Lord, my life's end</i> | Baritone
& Choir |
| 4. | Wie lieblich sind Deine Wohnungen
<i>How lovely is Your dwelling place</i> | Choir |

-- I N T E R V A L --

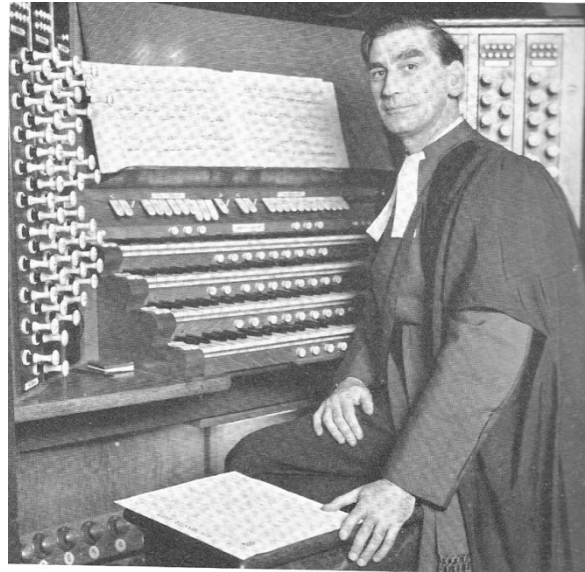
- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 5. | Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit
<i>Now is your time of sorrow</i> | Soprano
& Choir |
| 6. | Denn wir haben hier keine bleibende Statt
<i>For here we have no enduring home</i> | Baritone
& Choir |
| 7. | Selig sind die Toten
<i>Blessed are the dead</i> | Choir |

For the Fallen

Douglas Guest (1916–1996)

Douglas Guest was primarily an organist, conductor and teacher. He held many important Church and Cathedral appointments before becoming Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey.

He was quite a stickler for discipline, promising his choir that misbehaviour would 'result in a reign of terror to make the French Revolution look like a tea party'!



As a composer, he wrote little, but when he did it was always beautifully crafted with a natural feel for the words.



During WW2, Guest served in the Honourable Artillery Company and was mentioned in dispatches. He was severely wounded twice and eventually invalided out of the army. It is little surprise then, that his best-known composition is an act of remembrance for the victims of war. *For the Fallen* was written in 1971 for the annual Remembrance Day service in Westminster Abbey. The words were extracted from Laurence Binyon's poem of the same name.

This beautiful and moving anthem now features regularly in Remembrance Services throughout the world.

*They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them, we will remember them.*

Laurence Binyon (1914)

Please do not applaud after the singing of *For the Fallen*.

'Romance' from Suite No.2 for Two Pianos **Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)**

Sergei Rachmaninov was a Russian composer and virtuoso pianist. He was born into an aristocratic family of declining fortune and emigrated to the United States at the time of the Russian Revolution.



His musical abilities were recognised early and he entered the St Petersburg Conservatory at ten years old. He finished his musical education at Moscow Conservatory and had a successful early career.

Sadly, this did not last. His Symphony No.1. was premièred at St Petersburg in 1897 and was a complete disaster. Reasons for this included a woefully under-rehearsed orchestra and a conductor who could not cope and was probably drunk. The failure severely affected Rachmaninov; he fell into a deep depression and for three years,

composed virtually nothing, earning a living by giving piano lessons. By 1900 he was so unwell that family and friends sought professional help, and after three months of hypnotherapy and psychotherapy he started to recover.

By 1901 he was back on form and completed both his celebrated 2nd *Piano Concerto* and the *Suite No.2 for Two Pianos*, the latter being composed during a visit to Italy in the early months of 1901. The work has been described as '*one of his most successful masterpieces, completely effective on every level*'. When it was premièred in November that year at a concert in Moscow, one writer described it as '*symbolic of the renewal of life for its once-despondent creator*'.

The *Romance*, which we are to hear this evening, is the third of the four movements and has a title which effectively describes the emotional qualities of the piece. It is beautifully written and very lyrical.

German Requiem

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Johannes Brahms was born into a poor family in a slum district of Hamburg. His father was a mediocre itinerant musician who eventually became a double bass player at the Hamburg Opera. As a child, Johannes showed early musical promise and was given piano lessons. He also started composing, to the extent that in 1842 his piano teacher remarked: *'he could be such a good player, but he will not stop his never-ending composing'*. Nevertheless, he made rapid progress and gave some recitals, but no rich patron showed an interest in the boy and he had to make his living the hard way. As a teenager, this meant three years of playing in Hamburg's seedy waterfront bars. Later in life he was to say this affected his relationships with women and caused an acute aversion to matrimony.



Despite such an inauspicious start, Brahms became a fine pianist and his big breakthrough came in 1853 when he went on a concert tour with Eduard Remenyi, a well-known Hungarian Romany violinist. Remenyi introduced him to the celebrated violinist, Joseph Joachim, who became a lifelong friend and in turn introduced him to Liszt and Schumann. The meeting with Liszt did not go well; Brahms did not like his music and (according to legend) managed to fall asleep while he played. The meeting with Schumann was altogether more positive, the two had a strong artistic kinship and the older composer was sure he had found the man whose *'destiny should be to express the spirit of the age in the highest and most ideal fashion'*. In a remarkably prophetic statement Schumann also wrote:

'When he lowers his magic wand on the masses of choir and orchestra whose powers endow him with strength, we shall await wondrous glimpses into the world of the spirit.'

This was written in 1853, many years before Brahms even started planning his *German Requiem*.

Sadly, by the following year, Schumann was suffering hallucinations, attempted suicide and entered an asylum. Brahms was concerned for

Schumann's wife, Clara, and took an apartment over hers, supporting her and her children through the last two years of her husband's life. Clara Schumann was one of the finest pianists of her age, a kindred spirit who became dependent on the emotional support of the young Brahms. Perhaps inevitably, he fell in love with his friend's wife, fourteen years his senior.

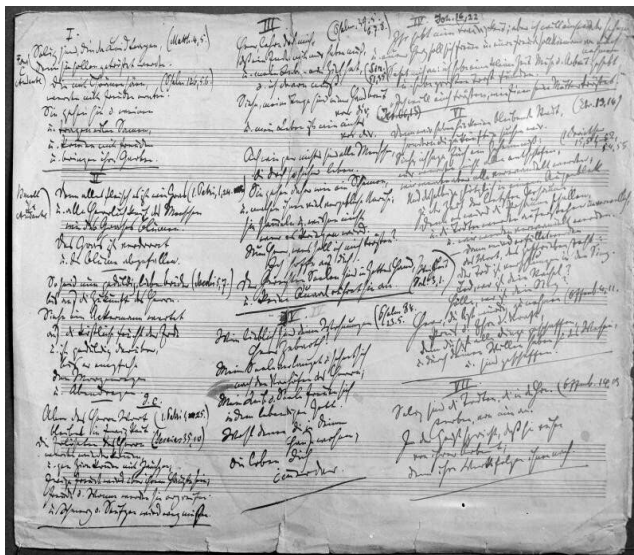
We will never know what was said between Johannes and Clara as they struggled to deal with Brahms' feelings, but we do know the two remained friends for the next forty years. She was often the first to hear a new composition and give advice, which was frequently taken; she also remained one of the composer's favourite interpreters of his music. Despite having relationships with other women over the years, the middle-aged Brahms still wrote to Clara in affectionate terms: *'I love you more than myself and more than anybody and anything on earth'*.



For some years after the death of Schumann, Brahms led a peripatetic existence, conducting here and there, performing on the piano and composing with growing assurance. In 1863, he hoped to be named conductor of the Hamburg Philharmonic, but did not get the job. For a while he was bitter at the snub, feeling it condemned him to the uncertainties of a free-lance musician's career. Having been brought up in relative poverty, he no doubt viewed the Hamburg post as offering a measure of financial security and social respectability.

As a composer, Brahms was conservative, swimming against the tide of more radical composers of the New German School like Liszt and Wagner. Instead, he made a great study of earlier composers, such as Beethoven and Bach, going as far back as the music of the Renaissance. He was steeped in tradition and saw himself as the summation of that which came before, rather than as an *enfant terrible* breaking new ground and striding into the future. Although influenced by the techniques and forms of music from the past, he always wrote in his own voice. For example, there are Baroque-influenced chorales, fugues and other devices in the *German Requiem*, but the musical language is always and unmistakably that of Johannes Brahms.

It was characteristic of Brahms never to produce anything he considered second-rate and compared with (say) the mercurial Mozart, was something of a 'plodder', refining and perfecting his ideas over weeks and sometimes years. Anything promising was doggedly reworked and recast until he was satisfied, and he probably threw away much more than he kept - including completed early works that failed to meet his later standards. He finished the *German Requiem* in 1869, yet its composition occupied Brahms over many years, with some of the musical material (originally intended for another work) going back as far as 1854. Later in life, he delighted in showing his friends the original manuscript with its many different paper sizes, explaining that in those days he was unable to afford more than a few sheets of paper at a time.



The texts of the *German Requiem* were selected by Brahms himself and are different in outlook from those of the Catholic Latin Requiem Mass. Quite apart from the words being in the German language, the Latin Requiem is a plea for the peace of the soul of the dead, whereas the *German Requiem* seeks to provide comfort for the bereaved. Even Brahms' depiction of the resurrection is

not to summon the dead before the judgement throne, but to proclaim the hope of reunion after death. The texts are in keeping with Protestant Lutheran theology which rejected many elements of the Catholic rite.

Though not an orthodox believer, Brahms was an avid student of the Lutheran Bible and his copy is covered in pencil annotations. He also kept a notebook with details of potentially useful texts (above left).

The *German Requiem* is often associated with the death of Brahms' mother, but the composer rejected this notion and we can be sure it was not the primary reason for its composition. His mother died in 1865, by which time plans for the work were already far advanced. It seems likely that only the fifth movement, a later addition with a specific reference to motherly love, can have been influenced by his bereavement: '*As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you*'.

Later in life, Brahms admitted to Joachim, that the work was closely tied up with the memory of Schumann and even wrote that the work 'belonged' to his old friend.

The first three movements of the *German Requiem* were performed in Vienna in 1867 and were not a success, probably because the third movement was ruined by the timpanist who, misreading his part, played *fortissimo* throughout. The next performance, in Bremen Cathedral, added what we know as movements four, six and seven, and was met with great acclaim. There were over 2000 people in the audience, including many of the most influential figures in German musical life. Brahms was now seen as a composer of genius. Over the next ten years, the *German Requiem* was performed more than a hundred times throughout Europe. The addition of what we know as the fifth movement followed and the work was premièred complete for the first time at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 18th February 1869.

This evening's performance uses an accompaniment arranged for piano duet by Brahms himself. This version became known as the *Londoner Fassung* – the 'London Version' because it was used at the work's London première in July 1871.

Did you know?



Brahms once gave his father a copy of Handel's *Saul*, saying that if the old man were depressed he would find comfort in it. When his father finally did open the score, he found banknotes hidden between the pages.

Later in life, Brahms became a great friend of Johann Strauss II and in autographing a fan for Strauss's wife, Adele, wrote the opening notes of *The Blue Danube Waltz*, adding the words, 'unfortunately not by Johannes Brahms'.

Brahms did not grow his 'signature' beard (above) until 1881, at the age of 48.

It was the 19th century conductor, Hans von Bulow who invented the idea of the 'Three Great Bs' – Bach, Beethoven and Brahms.

German Requiem

English Translation and Biblical References

- I. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
(*Matthew 5:4*)

Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow,
will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.
(*Psalm 126:5-6*)

- II. For all flesh is as the grass,
and the glory of man like flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall.
(*1 Peter 1:24*)

Be patient, dear brothers, for the coming of the Lord. See how
the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop,
patiently waiting for the morning and evening rains. (*James*
5:7)

But the word of the Lord endures forever.
(*1 Peter 1:25*)

The redeemed of the Lord will come again,
and enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.
Joy and gladness will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.
(*Isaiah 35:10*)

- III. Show me, Lord, my life's end and the number of my days;
let me know how short my life must be.
My days are a mere handbreadth;
and the span of my life is as nothing before You.
Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure.
They go around like a shadow;
in vain they rush about, heaping up wealth
without knowing whose it will finally be.
But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in You.
(*Psalm 39:4-7*)

The righteous souls are in God's hand and no torment shall stir
them. (*Apocrypha – The Wisdom of Solomon 3:1*)

- IV. How lovely is Your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!
 My soul yearns, even faints for the courts of the Lord;
 My heart and flesh cry out for the living God.
 Blessed are those who dwell in Your house;
 they are ever praising You.
(Psalm 84:1-2 and 4)
- V. Now is your time of sorrow; but I shall see you again and you
 will rejoice, and no one shall take away your joy. *(John 16:22)*
- See for yourselves how little were my labours compared with
 the great peace I have found. *(Apocrypha - Ecclesiasticus
 51:27)*
- As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you. *(Isaiah
 66:13)*
- VI. For here we have no enduring home, but are looking for the
 home that is to come. *(Hebrews 13:14)*
- Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we
 shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
 at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound and the dead
 shall be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. Then the
 saying that is written will come true: death has been
 swallowed up in victory.
- Where O death, is your sting? Where O grave is your victory?
(1 Corinthians 15:51-51, 54-55)
- Lord, You are worthy
 to receive all glory, honour and power,
 for You created all things,
 and by Your will they were created
 and have their being.
(Revelation 4.11)
- VII. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from now on."
 "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labours, and
 their deeds will follow them." *(Revelation 14:13)*

Soloists

Noa Lachman – Soprano

Noa studied music in Tel Aviv and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, before coming to London in 1992. In Israel, she performed on TV and radio and sang in prestigious choirs under conductors such as Zubin Mehta, James Levine and Daniel Barenboim.



Noa has performed in concerts and opera, and given recitals throughout Europe. A recital given in Germany commemorating the persecution of Jews during the Third Reich was particularly well received.

Alongside her many musical qualifications, such as BMus from King's College London, Singing Diploma from Trinity College London and MA from Sussex University, Noa is also a qualified RGRM practitioner. The RGRM (Ronnie Gardiner Rhythm Music) method is used to help people suffering from distressing conditions such as brain injuries, autism, Parkinson's disease, and the after-effects of strokes.

Andrew Rupp - Baritone



Andrew Rupp was born in Canterbury and started singing there as a Cathedral Chorister. He was subsequently a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge, where he also studied Natural Sciences.

In 1996, he made his operatic debut as The Vicar in Britten's *Albert Herring* for British Youth Opera and also joined the Glyndebourne chorus. Since then he has performed widely, with a variety of solo roles at Glyndebourne, English National Opera, and throughout Europe. Recently, he sang the role of the High Priest in ENO's award-winning production of *Castor and Pollux*, and returned to sing the role of the Bosun in their new production of *Billy Budd*.

Andrew has a wide concert and oratorio repertoire, performing in the UK, USA, the Far East and Europe. A highlight was performing Vaughan Williams' *Sea Symphony* at both the Royal Festival Hall and the work's Chinese première at the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. He also had the privilege of performing with L'Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris and Cologne under the direction of Pierre Boulez in a series of concerts celebrating the conductor's 85th birthday.

Andrew has worked with some of the country's top choral ensembles, including The King's Consort, Tenebrae, English Concert and Polyphony. He is also a member of the BBC Singers. He was a soloist at two of the 2016 Proms, including the last night.

Guest Accompanist

Will Hancox - Piano

We are pleased to welcome Will Hancox to join our regular accompanist, Colin Hughes, in playing Brahms' piano duet version of the *German Requiem* and the Rachmaninov *Romance*.

Will was educated at Cambridge University and subsequently studied with the Hungarian pianist Joseph Weingarten, himself a student of Dohnanyi, Bartok and Kodaly.

Will's musical interests have always ranged widely, taking in solo concerts, chamber music, duo work and vocal coaching. He made a trip to China which exemplifies this approach, with masterclasses for singers and pianists, a recital of English and American songs, and a performance of Constant Lambert's *The Rio Grande* in the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing. In the field of contemporary music he has premièred works by Roxanna Panufnik and Richard Blackford at the Cheltenham Festival and London's South Bank, recorded the complete works for piano of the Icelandic composer, Jon Asgeirsson, and recently recorded contemporary cello sonatas with Rohan de Saram. Other recordings include the complete *Moirke* songs of Hugo Wolf and a disc of classical lullabies with soprano Esther Levin. He has broadcast for the BBC and Classic FM.



Jozik Kotz **Conductor and Musical Director**

Jozik was born in Oxford of Polish-Australian parents. After reading music at the University of York and singing as a lay-clerk at York Minster, he won a postgraduate scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier, Royal Overseas League and Richard Tauber competitions. In 1993 he was winner of the South East Arts competition, which led to his debut at the Wigmore Hall.



Jozik subsequently performed operatic roles with English National Opera, Royal Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera Factory, Garsington and Grange Park; and in Paris, Vienna, Zurich, Madrid, Aix-en-Provence and Lisbon. He has appeared as a soloist at the Proms and with the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia and English Chamber orchestras. His CD recordings include baroque cantatas for Hyperion, Turnage's *The Silver Tassie* and Gavin Bryar's *Dr Ox's Experiment* for Deutsche Grammophon, and Paray's *Mass* with the Scottish National Orchestra, which was nominated for a Grammy award.

We are very pleased that Jozik has been musical director of Hailsham Choral Society since 2006.

Colin Hughes **Rehearsal & Concert Accompanist**

Colin trained at Trinity College of Music, London, where he studied Violin and Piano. He has played in venues such as The Royal Albert Hall, The Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Glyndebourne. Whilst living in North London he held positions as Choirmaster and Organist at a number of churches, as well as playing in orchestras and chamber groups, giving solo recitals and drumming for a rock band.



Colin subsequently moved to Eastbourne where he has become well known and respected as a teacher, accompanist and performer. We are delighted that since 2012 he has been Hailsham Choral Society's regular rehearsal and concert accompanist. He will be playing one of the two piano parts in this evening's concert.

Hailsham Choral Society

Sopranos

Jane Allen
Christine Baelz
Trish Brown
Kathy Castell
Rachel Chilton
Jenny Clay
Pat Collingwood
Janet Cox
Barbara Edwards
Liz Furlong
Nancy Gillio-Terry
Hilary Hartley
Linda Healey
Jane Hickling
Val Hyland
Christina Lynn
Jennie Mansfield
Val McIntosh
Lynn Petit
Pam Powell
Sue Simpson
Lis Turner
Sally White

Altos

Jane Aldred
Helen Baldwin
Milly Clarke
Jan Boyes
Fiona Dundas
Barbara Fry
Charlotte Foord
Aruna Green
Liz Hews
Doris Jung
Helen Leeds
Pam Mayhew
Wendy Pengelly
Jane Reynard
Pam Russell
Liza Stewart
Rosalind Taylor-Byrne

Tenors

Nigel Baelz
Mick Bridges
Nick Castell
Judith Clarke
Marcus Haddow
David Nicholson
Peter Puttock
Vaughan
Reynolds
Andrew Wicks

Basses

Shaun Clay
Ian Fry
Stan Gater
Peter Gilbert
Robin Hooper
Graham Keeley
Simon Marsden
Ken Mayhew
David Nunn
Rob Read
Chris Taylor

Assistant Musical Director

Barbara Edwards

Staging

David Semmens and team

*We wish to thank All Saints' Church Administrator,
Andy Anderson, for his help with arrangements for this concert.*

Hailsham Choral Society online: www.hailshamchoral.org



@ HailshamChoral



Hailsham Choral Society

If you are interested in singing with the choir, or even 'just looking', please contact our Membership Secretary, Jan Boyes: tel. 01323 870515, or email:

info@hailshamchoral.org

We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7.30 – 9.30pm in the
Community Hall, Hailsham.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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CHRISTMAS CAROL
CONCERT

Thursday 21st December 2017
7.30pm

Hailsham Parish Church

* * * * *

SPRING CONCERT

St John Passion

by J.S. Bach

with Baroque Orchestra

Saturday 17th March 2018
7.30pm

All Saints' Church, Eastbourne