Saturday 9 December 2023 West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Antonín Dvořák Stabat Mater

Cambridge Philharmonic Chorus Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra Harry Sever *conductor*



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Cambridge Philharmonic presents

Stabat Mater Antonín Dvořák

Soprano: Esther Mallett Mezzo Soprano: Hanna Hipp Tenor: Tom Smith Bass: Tristan Hambleton

Cambridge Philharmonic Chorus Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra Conductor: Harry Sever Leader: Paula Muldoon

Thank you

We are very grateful to **The Pye Foundation** and the **Garfield Weston Foundation** for their generous support this season.

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Programme notes

by Jeremy Harmer

Love and grief

Quis est homo qui non fleret, matrem Christi si vidéret in tanto supplício?

Is there one who would not weep, whelmed in miseries so deep, Christ's dear Mother to behold?

The agony of a parent losing a child, of being forced to see their child suffer, is almost impossible to contemplate. But almost on a daily basis, it seems, such tragedies are forced into our consciousness, whether in Ukraine, Israel or Palestine – or even nearer home with occasional outbursts of knife crime, a rise in mental health issues amongst young people and 'lifestyle choices' (an appalling suggestion) of those at the end of their tether, in a society that does not know how to care for them properly.

So yes, how could anyone not weep, forced to confront the agony of Mary



at the foot of the cross – or indeed any mother or father made to experience the unthinkable? Such a scene encapsulates one of our greatest fears.

What consolation can we find for such suffering? How can we balance the love and hope which approaching Christmas brings, with the great pain that such love can involve? The answer, perhaps, comes from the healing balm that beautiful words and music can offer, gorgeously reimagined by one of Bohemia's greatest musicians, Antonín Dvořák.

Grief and love are both common features in the wild tapestries that make up our lives, which perhaps explains our need to be calmed and purified by the music that this evening's great work offers us and, in the end, to feel gratitude for its healing balm.

Stabat Mater

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904) 1 Andante con moto 2 Andante sostenuto 3 Andante con moto 4 Largo 5 Andante con moto, quasi allegretto 6 Andante con moto 7 Largo 8 Larghetto 9 Largo 10 Andante con moto

The London premiere of Antonín Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* took place at the Albert Hall in 1883 and was a huge success. It propelled the composer into a long association with Britain where, in Cambridge in 1891, he received an honorary doctorate. Indeed, by the time he died at the age of 62, Dvořák was massively popular all over the world, including in the United States of America where he was an inspirational promoter of that country's own music roots (indigenous and from the black community) – forging what he proposed as a strong national musical tradition.

His funeral in Prague was a national event. His *Stabat Mater*, provoked by personal tragedy, grief and a profound religious sensibility, has not only remained one of his most popular works but also serves to remind us what a wonderful composer he was.

Dvořák's father, František, was variously an inkeeper, a butcher and a professional zither player in Nelahozeves, near Prague where the composer was born. He was the first of fourteen children, which must have been quite something for his mother Anna, especially since she lost six of them in their infancy. Child mortality, as we shall see, was a constant feature of nineteenth century life.

Young Antonín showed an early talent for the violin which he started learning at primary school. His father, however, determined he should learn the organ too, since it could provide a regular source of income. Settled in Prague the young student earned extra money playing the viola in various bands and, on graduation, he joined the orchestra of one Karel Komzák, which performed in restaurants and at balls, before joining the the Provisional Theater Orchestra. This is where he heard a whole range of (mostly) opera music, developing, as so many before and since have done, a profound respect for the music of Richard Wagner.

In 1862 he composed his first string quartet, but being short of money, he started teaching piano and fell in love with Josefína Čemákovà. She didn't return his affections, however, and he married her younger sister Anna! Whatever Anna thought about this, his love for Josefína never really waned, something we see in his lament upon her death, which he includes in the last movement of his wonderful cello concerto. But Antonín and Anna had nine children and were, as far as we can tell, pretty happy in their way, despite three of the children not making it through to adulthood.

By 1874 Dvořák had left Komzák's orchestra and obtained a job as a church organist, whilst all the time continuing to compose. In that year he won the Austrian State Prize for composers, submitting fifteen works, including his third and fourth symphonies. One of the judges of that competition was Johannes Brahms, who became a lifelong admirer and champion of the Czech composer.

However, a year later, Anna gave birth to Josefa, her second child and sister to little Otakar. The poor little thing only lasted two days. As a deeply religious man, the composer turned to the *Stabat Mater* and started sketching out a work for soloists, chorus and piano.

The *Stabat Mater* consists of 20 three-line verses, in which a mother (Mary) grieves for her dying son (Jesus). It was written sometime in the thirteenth century, perhaps by the monk Jacopone de Todi, though other authors, including two popes, two saints and even an English monk, have been suggested. It has been set to music by countless composers including Rossini, Pergolesi, and a host of others.

Setting the lines to music must have seemed a natural response to the Dvořáks' understandable grief. A year later, however, tragedy struck again. Eleven-month-old Ruzena swallowed phosphorus (used for making matches) and died, closely followed by three-year-old Otakar who succumbed to smallpox. Now the composer's work on his *Stabat Mater* intensified and what emerged was a 10-movement work for four soloists, chorus and full orchestra. He completed it in the autumn of 1877 and at its premiere, three years later, it was an immediate hit. One year after its London premiere, Dvořák conducted the *Stabat Mater* for the Three Choirs Festival and had yet another success. Sitting in the first violins of the orchestra that night was a young musician called Edward Elgar who, in a letter to his friend Dr Buck after the concert, wrote: "I wish you could hear Dvorak's music. It is simply ravishing. So tuneful and clever, and the orchestration is wonderful. No matter how few instruments he uses it never sounds thin. I cannot describe it: it must be heard."

Perhaps Elgar's delight had something to do with the supremely consoling and finally life enhancing nature of Dvořák's masterpiece. Yes, there is sorrowful lamenting in the plangent theme which dominates the opening movement – and which returns again in the magnificent *Finale* – and there is certainly darkness and torment in the bass aria of the fourth movement, *Fac ut ardeat cor meum, in amando Christum Deum* (Set my heart aflame, with love for Christ my God); but this transitions into the angelic voices of the sopranos as they intone the words *Sancta Mater* (Holy mother), only to be interrupted by a brief moment of anguish.

There is the folk style of the tenor and male choir singing *Fac me vere tecum flere* (Make me share your tears) and the *a capella* wonder of *Virgo Viginum* (Virgin of Virgins). But the grief and tenderness, once recapped in the *Finale*, change to a sublime D major affirmation of faith; a journey to paradise and a compelling peace which consoles and soothes, leaving us transfigured. If, as psychiatrist Colin Murray Parkes says, "grief is the price we pay for love," then it is that love which finally triumphs, as the chords drift away.

What else to listen to: String Serenade, Cello Concerto, numerous chamber music offerings including the Dumky Trio, a String Sextet and The American (String Quartet No 12), Symphonic Variations, nine symphonies (notably No 9 From the New World).

Text

1. Andante con moto

Stabat mater dolorosa Juxta crucem lacrimosa Dum pendebat filius.

Cujus animam gementem, Contristatam, ac dolentem Pertransivit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta Fuit illa benedicta Mater unigeniti.

Quae moerebat et dolebat Et tremebat, cum videbat Nati poenas inclyti.

2. Andante sostenuto

Quis est homo qui non fleret Christi matrem si videret In tanto supplicio?

Quis non posset contristari, Piam matrem contemplari Dolentem cum filio?

Pro peccatis suae gentis Vidit Iesum in tormentis et flagellis subditum.

Vidit suum dulcem natum Morientem desolatum Dum emisit spiritum.

3. Andante con moto

Eja mater fons amoris Me sentire vim doloris Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

4. Largo

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum In amando christum deum, Ut sibi complaceam.

Sancta mater istud agas Crucifixi fige plagas Cordi meo valide.

Soloists and choir

A sorrowful mother stood Beside a cross, weeping, While her son hung.

A sharp sword stabbed her heart As, crying out in pain, She suffered with her son.

How utterly afflicted Was that blessed mother Of God's only son.

How she mourned and suffered, And trembled to behold His suffering, borne of love.

Soloists

Who is the man who would not weep To see the mother of the Christ Suffer?

Who is the man who would not weep To see the woman with her son Suffer?

For the sins of His own nation, She saw Jesus wracked with torment, All with scourges rent

She watched her gentle son Die, alone, His spirit leaving him.

Choir

Mother of Love, make me Feel your sorrow's strength; Let me lament with you.

Bass solo and choir

Set my heart aflame With love for Christ my God, That I may do His will.

Mother, let my heart Be pierced as yours was pierced By his crucifixion.

5. Andante con moto, quasi allegretto

Tui nati vulnerati Tam dignati pro me pati Poenas mecum divide.

6. Andante con moto

Fac me vere tecum flere Crucifixo condolere Donec ego vixero.

Juxta crucem tecum stare Te libenter sociare In planctu desidero.

7. Largo

Virgo virginum praeclara Mihi jam non sis amara Fac me tecum plangere.

8. Larghetto

Fac ut portem christi mortem Passionis fac consortem Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari Cruce hac inebriari Ob amorem filii.

9. Andante maestoso

Inflammatus et accensus Per te virgo sim defensus In die judici.

Fac me cruce custodiri Morte christi praemuniri Confoveri gratia.

10. Andante con moto

Quando corpus morietur Fac ut animae donetur Paradisi gloria. Amen.

Choir

For me your son endured Torment; share with me The weight of my own sin.

Tenor solo and choir

Let me truly share, With you, his loving wounds As long as I shall live.

Unite me with the cross! I would stand with you And share the load of grief.

Choir

Holy virgin, mother, Do not reject my pleas, Let me weep with you.

Soprano and tenor soloists

Let me bear Christ's death, Let me share his passion, Let me touch his wounds.

Let his distress wound me, His cross inebriate My soul with his great love.

Alto solo

Aflame, kindled by you, Virgin, my defense In the Day of Judgment.

Let his cross so guard me, Let his death defend me, Cherished by his grace,

Quartet of soloists and choir

That when my body dies, My soul may then receive Paradise's glory. Amen.

Translation by Paula Muldoon

Esther Mallett (soprano)



Soprano Esther Mallett recently graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where her studies were supported by a scholarship and the VEC Acorn Trust. Prior to this she trained with English National Opera on their Opera Works programme. She also holds an undergraduate degree in Music from Oxford University.

This season she will cover Fifth Maid Elektra at the Royal Opera House (Sir Antonio Pappano/Christof Loy), as well as appearing in the chorus there throughout the season. Recent operatic roles have included Midinette *II Tabarro* and Suor Osmina (cover) *Suor Angelica* as part of

Scottish Opera's critically acclaimed 2023 production of *II Trittico*; Giannetta *L'elisir d'amore* with CHROMA; Barbarina *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Grimeborn Festival); Coridon *Acis and Galatea* and First Witch *Dido and Aeneas* (Vache Baroque Festival); and First Bridesmaid *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Georgette *La Rondine* and Johanna (cover) *Sweeney Todd*, (all for West Green House Opera).

Recent concert engagements have included Bach *B Minor Mass, Cantata No 51* and *Magnificat,* Brahms *Requiem,* Britten *Les Illuminations,* Handel *Messiah,* Haydn *The Creation,* Mozart *Exsultate Jubilate* and *Mass in C Minor,* and Poulenc *Gloria.* She also participated in in a filmed recording of Handel *Dixit Dominus* with The English Concert and Harry Bicket.

Passionate about community music-making, Esther has also recently performed as part of ENO's Opera Squad, taking high quality opera into schools. For more information please see www.esthermallett.com.

Hanna Hipp (mezzo-soprano)



Hanna Hipp's ardent and impassioned singing make her a favourite for the leading lyric mezzo repertoire around the world, with her recent roles including a critically acclaimed portrayal of Offred in The Handmaid's Tale at Royal Danish Theatre (Jessica Cottis), Der Komponist in Ariadne auf Naxos at Glyndebourne Festival Opera (Cornelius Meister) and Opera North (Antony Hermus), Dorabella in Così fan tutte at Seattle Opera (Paul Daniel), English National Opera (Kerem Hasan) and New Zealand Opera (Natalie Murray Beale), Cherubino in Le nozze di Figaro with Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (Antonio Pappano).

Increasingly in demand on the concert platform, in the 2023/24 season Hanna Hipp will join Marc Soustrot and Malmo Symphony Orchestra for *Viva España* featuring De Falla's *El amor brujo*, Dinis Sousa with Royal Northern Sinfonia for Bruckner's *Mass No 3* at Sage Gateshead and will reunite with Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra for concert performances of *Jenůfa* after her recent performance of Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater* at the Barbican.

This season Hanna Hipp joins Welsh National Opera and Pacific Opera Victoria as Frederico Garcia Lorca in two new productions of Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* and a return to the Royal Opera House for *Hänsel und Gretel* under Mark Wiggleswoth.

On disc, Hanna has appeared as Anna in Berlioz's *Les troyens* with Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg under John Nelson on Warner Classics, Flora in Verdi's *La traviata* at the Glyndebourne Festival under Sir Mark Elder on Opus Arte DVD, and released her debut recital album featuring the songs of Ildebrando Pizzetti with pianist Emma Abbate on Resonus Classics, garnering praise for her "gleaming sound and declamatory fire." (Gramophone).

Tom Smith (tenor)



Hartlepudlian tenor Tom Smith earned his Master's in Operatic Performance from the Royal Welsh College of Music in 2017, under the tutelage of Eric Roberts and Ingrid Surgenor. Since then, he has forged a thriving career as a freelance soloist, gracing stages at various opera houses and festivals worldwide.

Tom has performed at some of the finest opera companies, including Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Bergen National Opera, Welsh National Opera, and the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. He has also had the privilege of working with worldrenowned conductors such as Carlo Rizzi, Valery

Gergiev, and Sir Charles Mackerras. His repertoire spans baroque, classical, contemporary, and musical theatre, with roles in *La Traviata, Semele, Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, Falstaff, Ruddigore, Candide*, and *The Magic Flute*.

Tom is also an accomplished recitalist, well-versed in song repertoire, and has been recognized as a Samling Young Artist and a Yehudi Menuhin Live Music Now Artist. He is proud to have been awarded the Worshipful Company of Musicians' coveted Silver Medal.

Notably, Tom had the honor of performing twice for His Royal Highness King Charles, at his private residence in Wales and at Buckingham Palace, experiences he cherishes.

In August 2023, Tom joined The Chorus of Opera North, taking immense pride in being part of this esteemed company renowned for bringing world-class theatre to the North of England.

Tristan Hambleton (bass)



Born in London, Tristan Hambleton read Art History at St John's College, Cambridge University and Heidelberg Universität, and studied singing at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

Recent and future engagements include Envy and High Priest in *The Indian Queen* at Operá de Lille, Théâtre de Caen, Vlaamse Opera Antwerp and Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg with Emmanuel Haïm and Le Concert d'Astree, Marchese d'Obigny in *La Traviata* for Opéra de Bordeaux and Madman/Witness 3 in *Lessons in Love and Violence* with George Benjamin and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra in a tour of Germany, Father Truelove in

The Rake's Progress with Barbara Hannigan and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and King Priam in *Les Troyens* with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique at the Berlin Philharmonie and the BBC Proms.

In new productions Tristan has created Tom in *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Sir David Pountney and Carlo Rizzi for Welsh National Opera, Karl in the world premiere of David Bruce's *Nothing for Glyndebourne*, Marullo in *Rigoletto* and Angelotti in *Tosca* for Oliver Mears' productions at Nevill Holt Opera and Hermann Ortel in the Hallé's concert performance of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* with Sir Mark Elder.

Concert engagements include Mozart's *Requiem* with the Hallé, Haydn *Theresienmesse* and Elgar *The Apostles* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, *St Matthew Passion* with the Academy of Ancient Music, *Messiah* and *St John's Passion* with the Hanover Band, Handel's *Solomon* with the London Mozart Players, Purcell *Verse Anthems* with Le Banquet Céleste and Locke's *Pysche* with Ensemble Correspondances at the Cologne Philharmonie.

Harry Sever (conductor)



BBC Music Magazine 'Rising Star' conductor Harry Sever studied at Oxford University and trained at the Guildhall School of Music & Royal Academy of Music. A finalist in both the LSO's Donatella Flick and the Athens International Conducting Competitions, recent and upcoming engagements include Cavalleria Rusticana/Aleko/ Carmen (Opera North), Die Walküre/ Siegfried/The Fairy Queen (Longborough Festival Opera), Siegfried (Sønderjyllands Symfoniorkester/Den Ny Opera), Fantasio (Garsington), La Traviata (Opera Holland Park), concerts with the orchestra of

Welsh National Opera and recordings with the orchestra of Opera North.

He is currently the Ring Cycle Conducting Fellow at Longborough Festival Opera, and Music Director of the Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus.

As an assistant conductor and member of music staff, Harry works in the coming season with Scottish Opera (Strauss *Daphne*), the Kammerphilharmonie Potsdam, and Opera North (Strauss *Ariadne auf Naxos*). He has worked with English National Opera, the Royal Danish Opera, Den Jyske Opera, Garsington, Opera Holland Park, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at the Grange Festival, and the Britten Sinfonia at Sadler's Wells. His education work has included projects with The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, The Royal Opera Academy, Copenhagen, British Youth Opera, Birmingham Conservatoire and Trinity Laban Conservatoire.

Paula Muldoon (leader)



Paula Muldoon is a violinist, software engineer, and composer based in Cambridge, UK. The leader of the Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra since 2017 and a Lead Software Engineer at Zopa Bank, she thrives on the intersection of music and programming.

As leader of the Cambridge Philharmonic, Paula's interpretation of the solo part to Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* was lauded as having "impressive sensitivity". Paula enjoys guest leading other orchestras in East Anglia; highlights include performing the solo violin part to

Scheherazade with the Norfolk Symphony Orchestra.

Paula loves teaching both violin and programming. Her violin lessons focus on breath, effective practising, and historically informed bow usage. Much of her teaching of programming comes by volunteering with her community MusiCoders, which she founded in 2020.

Paula is a former member of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and subsequently spent several years living in London and performing with ensembles including the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, along with conductors such as Andris Nelsons, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Marin Alsop, and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Highlights of her musical career include guest leading the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra in China, recordings at Abbey Road Studios, and performances at Carnegie Hall.

Paula has composed music for solo violin, string quartet and string trio. You can hear her play her own piece, *Get Outside*, on Spotify and iTunes. She is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama (MMus 2012) and the University of Michigan (B.M. 2010).

While at the University of Michigan, she won the Undergraduate Award for Classics Translation and was a semi-finalist in the prestigious Hopwood writing competition.

Cambridge Philharmonic Chorus

Soprano 1

Jane Cook Susan Farnshaw Flora Griffin Nicki Lythgoe Carole MacBrayne Jan Moore Penny Mullock Chessie Nour **Caroline Potter** Susan Randall Marv Richards Sheila Rushton Anne Sales Pat Sartori Laura Simmons Linda Stollwerck Boulton

Soprano 2

Cathy Ashbee Steffi Campbell Smith Gertrud Hill Wren Khouri Masako Narito Jo Pinfield Pip Smith Sheila Stephens Diana Sutton Catharine Warren

Alto 1

Flizabeth Anderson Helen Black Alexandra Bolton Caroline Courtney **Elaine Fulton Rachel Haynes** Flaine Kinsella Jan Littlewood Alice Parr Alison Russell Caroline Shepherd Sarah Upjohn Alison Vinnicombe Yana Welch Helen Wheatley Anne Willitts Susan Wilson Joanna Womack

Alto 2

Jane Bower Margaret Cook Helen Cross Elisabeth Crowe Rose Eichenberger Stephanie Gray Hilary Jackson Veronika Lorenser Lynne McClure Sue Purseglove Chris Strachan Kate Wootton

Tenor 1

Doug Addy Pete Alexander Aviva Grisby Sylvia Hearn Chris Schaefer Peter Scholten John Williams

Tenor 2

Aidan Baker Jeremy Baumberg Adam Higgins Andy Pierce Chris Price Ben Womack

Bass 1

Chris Coffin Andrew Dobson Matt Freeman Patrick Hall Lewis Jones Roger McClure Mike Ruffle Martin Scutt

Bass 2

Richard Birkett Peter Campbell Smith Neil Caplan Richard Coleman Max Field Tom Wale

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

Violin 1

Paula Muldoon (leader) Kate Clow (co leader) Margaret Scourse Sebastian Bechmann Amy Kent Ariane Stoop Anne McAleer Abigail Tan Manon Couvignou Joanne Funk

Violin 2

Chris Lin-Brande Emma Lawrence Hilary Crooks Sabine Lindner David Favara John Richards Sarah Ridley Leila Coupe Roz Chalmers

Viola

Ruth Donnelly Peter Conlon David Yadin Emma McCaughan Jeremy Harmer Mari O'Neill

Cello

Daniel Coldridge Angela Bennett Lucy O'Brien Isabel Groves Catherine Wilson Helen Davies Helen Hills Jess Llewellyn

Double Bass

Sarah Sharrock Tony Scholl Sophie Rudge Susan Sparrow Alan Blackwell

Flute Cynthia Lalli Samantha Martin

Oboe

Rachael Dunlop Charlotte Ewins

Cor Anglais Charlotte Ewins

Clarinet David Prozesky David Hayton

Bassoon Neil Greenham Jenny Warburton

Horn

Gareth Edwards Chris Wykes Peter Roberts Helen Black

Trumpet Colin Bloch Neil Thornton

Trombone Denise Hayles Ryan Higgin

Bass Trombone Gary Davison

Timpani Derek Scurll

Organ Tom Primrose

Saturday 16th December 2023, 7:30pm West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge Leipzig at Christmas Bach (BWV 40, 91), Telemann & Kuhnau



Collegium Laureatum Ian Cobb, conductor

soloists: Catherine White Charlotte Clapperton Sam Harris Michael Roche





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