

the hythe singers autumn concert

st. mary's church, thorpe, tw20 8tq

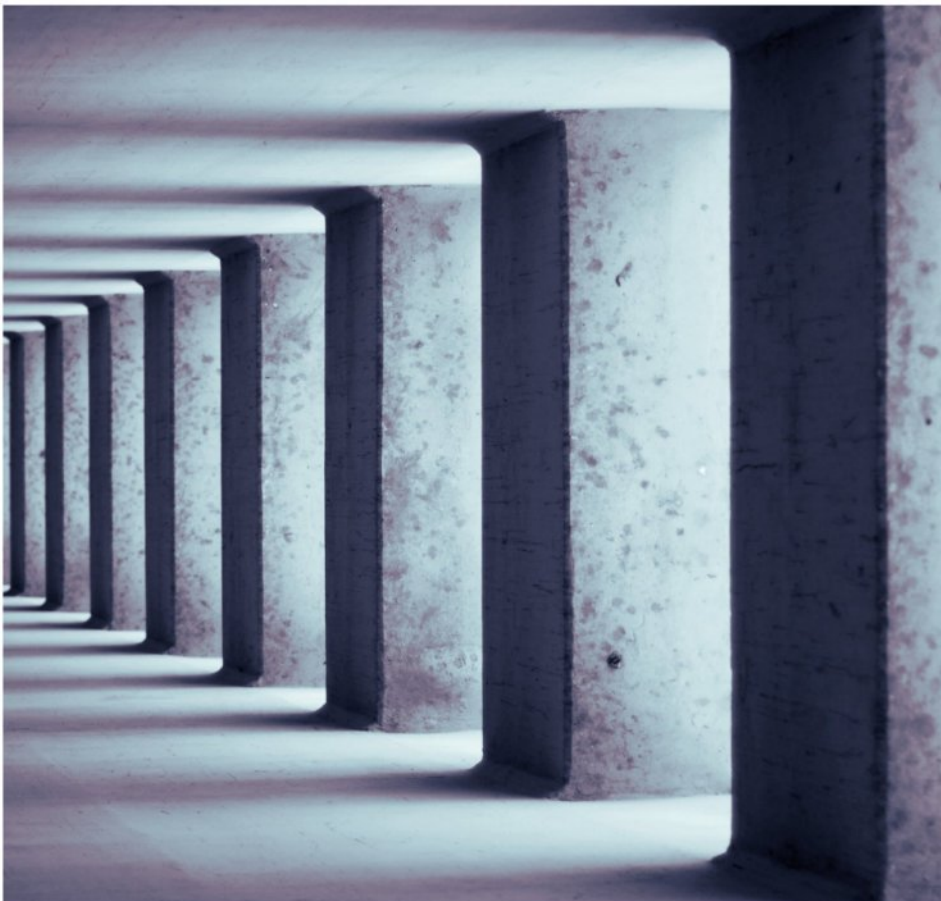
29 nov 2025 | 7:30pm



howells | victoria

requiem

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Howells & Victoria - Requiem

The Hythe Singers Autumn Concert

Saturday 29th November 2025,
7:30pm at St. Mary's Church, Thorpe

(Patrons – Cecilia McDowall, Richard Mothersill and Ben Spencer)

Soprano

Alice Allan
Melanie Andriesma
Kate Brady
Demelza Coppin
Joan Hellyer
Jo Ive
Mary Morris
Myra Owen
Sofie Palmer
Rebecca Saunders
Cathy Villiers
Carolyn Walters
Suzy Wood

Alto

Vivien Ambery-Smith
Eileen Bruce
Sarah Morris
Robin Ridehalgh
Elaine Sturman
Chris Thomas
Susi Thornton
Jenni Whiteside

Tenor

Jason Crampton
Tony Dowson
David Moncur

Bass

Daniel Brown
Kiran Chatterjee
Rüdiger Schack
Andrew Seidler

Cellist: Andy Coleman

Musical Director: Richard Harker

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José de Torres y Martinez Bravo (1665 – 1738) *Taedet animam meam*

José de Torres was born in Madrid and served as organist in the Royal Chapel from 1697 until he was briefly expelled from the position as a consequence of the War of the Spanish Succession and the rise of the House of Bourbon. Subsequently rehabilitated, he served Philip V of Spain as both chapel master and rector of the boys choir. He established the first music printing press in Iberia in 1702, holding a virtual monopoly until his death, in 1738.

*Taedet animam meam, vitae meae.
dimittam aduersum me eloquium
meum, loquar in amaritudine animae
meae.*

My soul is weary of life;
I will leave my complaint upon myself;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

*Dicam Deo : Noli me condemnare:
indica mihi cur me ita iudices.*

I will say unto God: do not condemn me;
shew me wherefore thou contendest
with me.

*Numquid bonum tibi videtur, si
calumnieris me et opprimas me, opus
manuum tuarum, et consilium
impiorum adjuves?*

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst
oppress, that thou shouldst despise the
work of thing hands, and shine upon the
counsel of the wicked?

*Numquid oculi carnei tibi sunt? Aut
sicut videt homo, et tu videbis?*

Hast thou eyes of flesh? Or seest thou as
man seeth?

*Numquid sicut dies hominis dies tui, et
anni tui sicut humana sunt tempora,
ut quaeras iniquitatem meam, et
peccatum meum scruteris?*

Are thy days as the days of man? Are
thy years as man's days, that thou
enquirest after mine iniquity, and
searchest after my sin.

*Et scias quia nihil impium fecerim,
cum sit nemo qui de manu tua possit
eruere.*

Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and
there is none that deliver out of thine
hand.

[Job 10:1-7]

Alonso Lobo (1555 – 1617)

Versa est in luctum (1602)

A highly regarded composer of the late Renaissance, Lobo was born in Osuna, in the province of Seville, and rose to hold two of the most prestigious musical posts in Spain: chapel master of Seville Cathedral, and then Toledo Cathedral in 1593. *Versa est in luctum* is his most famous work, written for the funeral rites of Philip II in 1598.

*Versa est in luctum cithara mea, et
organum meum in vocem flentium.*

My harp is turned to grieving and my
flute into the voice of those who weep.

*Parce mihi Domine, nihil enim sunt
dies mei.*

Spare me, O Lord, for my days are as
nothing.

[Job 30:31 & 7:16]

Bernadino de Ribera (ca. 1520 – 1580)

Dimitte Me, Ergo

While well known in his time, de Ribera's music descended into obscurity when the primary source for his works – the *Toledo Polyphonic Codex Number 6* – which he completed in 1570 while chapel master of Toledo Cathedral, was vandalised in the 18th century. Illuminated initials and page headings were cut out, destroying the music on the reverse, and it has taken substantial musical detective work, principally by Bruno Turner, to recreate them. As well as holding the position of chapel master at the cathedrals of Ávila, Toledo, and Murcia, de Ribera was teacher and mentor to Tomás Luis de Victoria, who composed the Requiem that forms the second half of this programme.

*Dimitte me, ergo, ut plangam
paululum dolorem meum antequam
vadam, et non revertar, ad terram
tenebrosam et opertam mortis caligine,*

Send me away, therefore, that I may
lament my sorrow a little before I go,
without return, to a land that is dark and
covered with the mist of death.

[Job 10:20-21]

Herbert Howells (1892 – 1983) Psalm Preludes for Organ Set One (1931)

The first three of Howell's Psalm Preludes, were written between 1915 and 1916, at a time of both national and personal stress. Howells had recently been diagnosed with Graves' disease, a thyroid disorder that would have been

terminal had he not been one of the first in the country to receive radium treatment for the condition.

The Preludes were composed while Howells was a student at the Royal College of Music, and are dedicated to members of his RCM “family” – Sir Walter Parratt, a teacher; Harry Stevens-Davis, a fellow organ pupil; and Sydney Shimmin, a fellow student. Each is a tone poem inspired by a single Bible verse:

No.1: Psalm 34, verse 6: This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

No. 2: Psalm 37, verse 11: But the meek-spirited shall possess the earth, and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace.

No. 3: Psalm 23, verse 4: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou are with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

Herbert Howells CH CBE (1892 – 1983)

Requiem (1932)

Born in Gloucestershire, Howells showed early musical talent, studying first as an articled pupil to Herbert Brewer at Gloucester Cathedral alongside Ivor Gurney and Ivor Novello, and then at the Royal College of Music (RCM), where he studied under Charles Villiers Stanford and Hubert Parry. After recovering from Graves disease, Howells returned to the RCM to teach composition in 1920—a post he held for nearly sixty years.

The Requiem was composed in 1932 as a commission for King’s College, Cambridge, albeit it was never submitted and remained unknown as a standalone piece until 1980, when Howells published it, just three years before his death.

The reason for this hiatus may lie in the death of Howells’ nine-year-old son, Michael, from polio, in 1935. As yet unperformed, the Requiem became the source for much of the *Hymnus Paradisi*, his masterwork, which was written in Michael’s memory but not completed and performed until 1950. Together, they now serve as a very personal memorial to his son.

INTERVAL

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611) *Officium Defunctorum* (1605)

Victoria is considered the most significant Spanish composer of the Renaissance and a leading figure of the Counter-Reformation in music. Born in Ávila, Spain, he was a gifted singer and organist who began his musical training at the local cathedral. Around 1565, he travelled to Rome on a grant from King Philip II to study at the Collegium Germanicum, a Jesuit seminary, where he combined his musical and religious studies.

While in Rome, he succeeded Palestrina as music director of the seminary's chapel in 1571, and in 1575 was ordained a priest, devoting his creative energy exclusively to sacred polyphony with Latin texts. He returned to Spain in the mid-1580s and served as chaplain to Empress María of Austria at the Descalzas Reales convent in Madrid until her death in 1603. He remained at the convent as an organist until his own death in 1611.

Victoria's last collection and one of his most celebrated works is the *Officium Defunctorum*, published in Madrid in 1605. It was composed for the funeral of the Empress María, who died in 1603, and encompasses the entire Office of the Dead, including a Requiem Mass, a funeral motet, a lesson from Matins, and the ceremony of Absolution.

Considered one of the greatest works of sacred choral music of the Renaissance, and a pinnacle of Spanish polyphony, the work was dedicated to Princess Margaret, the daughter of the Empress, who was a nun at the same convent.

1. **Taedet animam meam:** My soul is weary of life
2. **Requiem aeternam:** Grant them eternal rest, O Lord
3. **Kyrie:** O Lord, have mercy upon us.
4. **Requiem aeternam:** Grant them eternal rest, O Lord
5. **Domine Jesu Christe:** O Lord, Jesus Christ
6. **Sanctus:** Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth
7. **Benedictus:** Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord
8. **Agnus Dei:** O Lamb of God
9. **Lux Aeterna:** Let light perpetual shine upon them
10. **Versa est in luctum:** My harp is tuned to mourning
11. **Libera me, Domine:** Deliver me, O Lord from eternal death

Richard Harker (Musical Director)

Richard is musical director of The Hythe Singers, Henley Choral Society and Henley Youth Choir. He is a Chorus Master at Opera Holland Park and works as a music teacher in schools. Richard is an organist and accompanist, and graduated with an MA in Choral Conducting from the Royal Academy of Music. Richard read music at, and was organ scholar of, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

At Opera Holland Park, Richard has worked on *Pagliacci*, *La Bohème*, *La Traviata*, *Eugene Onegin* (Assistant Conductor & Chorus Master), *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Manon Lescaut* and *Un ballo in maschera* (Chorus Master), *Ruddigore* and *Pirates of Penzance* (Chorus Master and Assistant Repetiteur). Other operatic engagements have included *L'Elisir d'amore* for West Green House Opera (Chorus Master), *HMS Pinafore* for Windsor and Eton Opera (Conductor), Terterian's *Fire Ring* at the Grimeborn Festival with London Armenian Opera (Conductor).

Andy Coleman (Cellist)

Andy began learning the 'cello at age 11, benefitting from the then well-funded music teaching system. Living in Dorking he has played with many orchestras in the south-east, but his chief love has always been chamber music, playing and occasionally performing with a number of string quartets and piano combinations. Andy has received coaching with members of prominent quartets, including the Maggini, Piatti, Coull, Wihan and the Primrose piano quartet, and also in baroque playing with members of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Programme: Daniel Brown



Choir in Residence, St. George's Chapel, Windsor

The Hythe Singers is the choir in residence at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, on Ash Wednesday, 18th February 2026.

Attendance at services at St. George's Chapel is free, and all are welcome to join us for evensong (5pm for 5.15pm).

Acknowledgements

The Hythe Singers is grateful for the support of the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust, without which this concert would not be possible.



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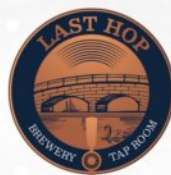
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2025



DECEMBER	17	WEDNESDAY
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THE HYTHE SINGERS SPRING CONCERT



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Saturday 28th March 2026

St. Mary's Church, Thorpe, TW20 8TQ

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