



A Breath of French Air

West Cork Choral Singers present the Fauré Requiem and songs of love and loss

18th June 2022

8pm

Abbeystrewry Church,
Skibbereen

Musical Director:	Susan Nares
Soprano:	Orlaith Horan
Baritone:	Michael Krauss
Organ and piano:	Colin Nicholls
Violin:	Nora Killeen
Cello:	Diana Llewelyn
Harp	Ann-Marie Papin Labazordiere
Double Bass:	Micael Riordan
Choir accompanist	Kevin Lewis

Many thanks to our friends and sponsors, including Courtyard Crafts in Schull, who have supported this concert.

Part One

Two pieces for choir

Dirait-on by Morten Lauridsen, *Sung by the choir, Accompaniment by Kevin Lewis*

'So they say'. This piece comes from a set of 5 lyrical pieces for choir, called 'Les Chanson des Roses', were composed in 1993. Lauridsen was inspired by Rilke's 1927 poems, Les Roses, that lovingly and elegantly explore the beautiful rose. In this movement, the lyrics reflect on the way the rose's delicate petals enfold each other so lovingly. Complete unto itself, unlike Narcissus, it is redeemed.

'Plaisirs d'Amour' by Jean-Paul Martini (arr. King's Slinger's),

'The pleasure of Love'. A cautionary tale on the fleeting quality of love of a faithless lover and the enduring pain that can follow. This setting of the poem 'Célestine' by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian was composed in 1784.

Sung by the choir, Accompaniment by Kevin Lewis

À Chloris by Reynaldo Hahn, *Baritone Michael Krauss, Accompanist Colin Nicholls*

Hahn set this poem by the 17th Century poet Théophile de Viau in 1916. It is based on love for the beautiful Chloris, a nymph associated with Spring, flowers and new growth. The joys of reciprocal love makes the young lover feel like a king! The Accompaniment is based on Bach's 'Air on a G string'.

Après un Reve opus 7 by Fauré, *Soprano Orlaith Horan, Accompanist Colin Nicholls*

'After a dream', composed from 1870 to 77, is an example of the lyricism of Fauré's early works. In this well-loved piece, the lyrics describe a dream of romantic flight away from the earth 'towards the light'. Wakefulness threatens the dream state and the singer pleads for the night to return.

'La Source' Opus 44 by Alphonse Hasselmans, *Harp Solo Ann-Marie Papin Labazordiere*

Hasselmans taught harp at the Paris Conservatoire and did much to promote the popularity of modern harp playing. This virtuosic piece, composed in 1898, is evocative of a fresh Spring scene, with bubbling water, green grass and fresh flowers.

'C' from Deux Poèmes by Francis Poulenc, *Soprano Orlaith Horan, Accompanist Colin Nicholls*

Composed in 1943, 'C' is a setting of a poem by Louis Aragon. Poulenc was troubled by the depth of conflict and destruction going on in France at this time. The poem portrays a love of country and nostalgia for memories of happier times. The title 'C' refers to an area of France called 'The Bridges of Ce' where battles ancient and modern were fought.

Lydia opus 4 no2 by Gabriel Fauré, *Baritone Michael Krauss, Accompanist Colin Nicholls*

Another early song by Fauré was written in 1884, Lydia is a setting of a poem by Charles-Marie-René Leconte de Lisle (1818-1894). It is a particularly reflective and gentle love song. The lover describes his beloved's hair as 'liquid gold' and calls her a goddess. He feels he is 'dying' for love of her.

Meditation from Thais by Jules Massenet, *Violin solo Nora Killeen, Accompanist Susan Nares*

This piece was written as an intermezzo between the first and second acts of Massenet's opera Thais in 1894. Here, the heroine, tries to meditate and align herself to spiritual belief and service. She attempts to revoke her previous life of parties and courtly pleasures. We hear and feel her struggles in this exquisite piece of romantic writing.

'Le Papillon et la fleur' opus 1 no1 by Fauré, *Soprano Orlaith Horan Accompanist Susan Nares*

'The Butterfly and the Flower' was Fauré's first published composition (1865). The song, or mélodie, as he took to is a skilful rendering of Victor Hugo's poignantly quaint poem. Although simpler in form and harmony than his later works, it is full of charm. We hear the flight of the butterfly while the flower laments her earth bound existence. She longs for her beautiful butterfly to grow roots like her or for her to grow wings like him. "Prends comme moi racine ou donne-moi des ailes comme à toi!"

'Pleurs D'Or' op.72 by Fauré,

Soprano Orlaith Horan, Baritone Michael Krauss, Accompanist Susan Nares

The lyrics of this delicious duet are based on a text by Albert Victor Samain entitled "Larmes", (Tears) from Au jardin de l'Infante, first published 1893. Fauré changed the title of this later work to "Pleurs d'or" "Golden tears", published in 1897. The music and text weave a tapestry evocative of water, bells, starlight and love.

Part Two

Requiem in D minor opus 48 by Gabriel Fauré

*Soprano soloist Orlaith Horan, Baritone Soloist Michael Krauss
accompanied by organ, harp, violin, cello and double bass.*

So many composers have been inspired to compose settings of the Requiem Mass. Fauré's requiem of 1888 stands apart in its gentle intensity. He wanted to create something that was consoling and helpful, in which people can rest in peace at the end of their lives. This amazing work depicts the timelessness of human existence, the procession of generations, human longings, profound sorrow, fear of the unknown, as well as light, hope, the ultimate joys of heaven, and, above all, peace. In 1924 the Requiem, in its full orchestral version, was performed at Fauré's own funeral.

1] Introit and Kyrie

Grant them eternal rest, o Lord,
and may perpetual light shine upon them
Thou, o God, art praised in Sion, and unto Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

2] Offertorium

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hells and the bottomless pit.
Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory,
Deliver them from the lion's mouth, nor let them fall into darkness, neither the black abyss swallow them up
We offer unto Thee this sacrifice of prayer and praise Receive it for those souls
whom today we commemorate.
Allow them, o Lord, to cross from death into the life which once Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.

3] Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth heaven and earth are full of Thy glory Hosanna in the highest.

4] Pie Jesu

Merciful Jesus, Lord, grant them rest grant them rest, eternal rest.

5] Agnus Dei

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant them rest, everlasting rest.
May eternal light shine on them, o Lord, with Thy saints for ever,
because Thou are merciful.
Grant them eternal rest, o Lord,
and may perpetual light shine on them.

6] Libera Me

Deliver me, o Lord, from everlasting death
on that dreadful day
when the heavens and the earth shall be moved when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire
I quake with fear and I tremble
awaiting the day of account and the wrath to come.
That day, the day of anger, of calamity, of misery, that day, the great day,
and most bitter.

7] In Paradisum

May the angels lead you into paradise;
may the martyrs greet you at your arrival
and lead you into the holy City of Jerusalem.
May the choir of Angels greet you
and like Lazarus, who once was a poor man,
may you have eternal rest.

The Soloists



Orlaith Horan is a classically-trained soprano who hails from Co. Kerry. She currently works as a Maths and Music teacher in Pobalscoil na Tríonóide, Youghal where she teaches students of all ages. She is a previous prize-winner at Killarney Rotary Club's Young Musician of the Year, Feis Maitiu & Sligo Feis Ceoil. In 2015, Orlaith was a recipient of a Donal Doc Gleeson award from University College Cork, an award which honors exceptional results in performance. Orlaith has performed in numerous CSM Opera Platform concerts at venues such as MTU CSM Curtis Auditorium, NMCI Ringaskiddy, Salterbridge House Lismore, Watergrasshill Arts Centre, to name but a few. She sang in the chorus of MTU's production of *Marriage of Figaro* and also performed in *The Stalls*, a contemporary opera composed by Tom Lane as part of the Cork Midsummer Festival. Orlaith is currently working towards her Masters in Performance at MTU Cork School of Music where she is training under the guidance of Mary Mac Sweeney.

Michael Krauss was born in Baden-Württemberg in Germany. He sang with several semi professional choirs in Germany including the Bach Chor, Tübingen and the Bach Chor in Heilbronn. He studied singing with Gabriele Salzmann.

Michael moved to Ireland in 2014 and joined the East Cork Choral Society while becoming a student of Mary McSweeney at the Cork School of Music. He then joined the Opera Platform of the CSM in 2016. Michael has sung solo roles in Bach's Matthew Passion, and the Cantata „Wachet auf...“; in Händel's Messiah and also works by Elgar & Cornelius as well as taking the part of Papageno in Mozart's Die Zauberflöte.



Ann-Marie Papin Labazordière started the harp when she was 9. After obtaining a Premier Prix de la ville de Paris in Harp performance at 17, she decided to focus on language studies in university, choosing English and Russian.

It is when she started playing with the Choeur et Orchestre des Grandes Ecoles in Paris, that she decided to concentrate solely on music. She attended the Royal College of Music in London and after a Postgraduate Diploma in Harp Performance, won a scholarship to start a Masters in Harp Performance.

Anne-Marie moved to Ireland in 2007 and has since performed with different orchestras such as Cork Opera House Orchestra, RTE Symphony Orchestra, RTE Concert Orchestra, and Ulster Orchestra. She teaches the harp in Cork School of Music.

Nora Killeen was born in Belfast and started learning the violin aged 7. She studied at the Royal College of Music and went on to play with 'La Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia' in La Coruna, Spain for 6 years. Nora then went on to play in the newly formed Malaysian Philharmonic for nearly four years in Kuala Lumpur. On returning to Ireland she joined the Ulster Orchestra as sub-principal. Nora gave up her professional career to devote herself to her family and is only now returning to performing and teaching as a way of supporting the arts in her local West Cork area.