

ETCETERA – THE UK CIVIL SERVICE CHOIR

STEPHEN HALL OBE – Conductor

ALAN BOWDEN – Piano

ST WALBURGA CHURCH, BRUGES

6 OCTOBER 2018 - 17:00



PROGRAMME

The Turtle Dove arr Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)

The Lover's Ghost arr Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)

Early One Morning arr Rutland Boughton (1878 – 1960)

Seal Lullaby Eric Whitacre (b.1970)

Sleep Eric Whitacre (b.1970)

I Love My Love arr Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

Swansea Town arr Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)

Irish Tune from County Derry (Londonderry Air) arr Percy Grainger (1882 – 1961)

Interval (10 minutes)

In Flanders Fields
The first performance in Belgium Caz Besterman

Five Days that changed the World Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

A Little Jazz Mass Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

Welgekomen! Goeije 'n avend.

We are delighted to have the privilege of singing in this beautiful 17th century church and we welcome you to our concert.

We shall be performing arrangements of folk songs from the British Isles by some of the UK's best loved composers and two pieces by American composer Eric Whitacre (now resident in the UK).



We are delighted to be performing the Belgian premiere of Caz Besterman's setting of five poems from the First World War, *In Flanders Fields*. We gave the first London performance last year. It is believed that John McCrae began the draft for his famous poem of this name (the second of the set) on the evening of the 2 May, 1915 during the Second Battle of Ypres, and that the inspiration for this was the death of his friend, Alexis Helmer.

We conclude with two pieces by Bob Chilcott, who having been always immersed in the British choral tradition has been described as a hero of British choral music. His *Five Days That Changed the World* is a journey through five events: invention of printing, abolition of slavery, first powered flight, discovery of penicillin, and the first man in space. We conclude with his *A Little Jazz Mass*, which is a highly original and effective concert setting of the Latin *Missa Brevis* in which the various movements embrace a variety of jazz styles.

Etcetera was founded nine years ago as a small staff choir covering three government ministries. With responsibilities for the environment, transport and communities, it is from these ministries, and a purposeful loss of a space, that it derives its name: Environment, Transport, Communities to ETC to Et[]cetera. However, now with a membership of over 140 singers spanning over 30 government ministries and agencies, we can be rightly called the Civil Service Choir. Membership ranges from administrators to senior civil servants and from those who have not previously sung in a choir through to experienced choral singers. We rehearse together for one hour on Monday lunchtimes.

The choir is conducted and managed by founder music director Stephen Hall, who is himself a civil servant. Etcetera was his first regular experience of directing a choir. Stephen has since conducted the choir for over 30 public concerts and 55 other events, including major choral works such as Beethoven's Mass in C, Mozart's Great Mass in C minor and Poulenc's Stabat Mater in one of London's most prestigious of concert venues, St John's Smith Square.

Stephen was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's 2018 Birthday Honours for his voluntary and charitable service.

As well as performing beautiful music, the choir aims to raise money for charities. So far through collections our concerts have raised the equivalent of over 35,000 euros. There will be a collection as you leave the church. All the money will be donated to a local charity.

We should like to extend our grateful thanks to the President of the Board of Trustees, Mr Luc De Schepper and his colleagues, for giving us the opportunity to perform in St Walburga's Church.

