



ELGAR

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS

PARRY

I WAS GLAD
BLEST PAIR OF SIRENS
JERUSALEM

ROBERT MURRAY **tenor**
VICTORIA SIMMONDS **mezzo-soprano**
GARY GRIFFITHS **baritone**
SOMERSET CHAMBER CHOIR
BERLINER KANTOREI
SOUTHERN SINFONIA
GRAHAM CALDBECK **conductor**



SATURDAY 26 JULY 2014, WELLS CATHEDRAL at 7pm

TICKETS: £30, £27, £22, £18 (reserved), £14, £10 (unreserved)
available from Taunton TIC Tel: **01823 336344** or **book online:**

www.somersetchamberchoir.org.uk

In celebration of our 30th Anniversary, Somerset Chamber Choir presents an evening of iconic English choral music by **Elgar** and **Parry**. We welcome **Southern Sinfonia**, three outstanding young soloists, and the additional choral contribution of the **Berliner Kantorei** (with whom we successfully collaborated in two performances of Haydn's *Creation* in Berlin last November).

The Blessed John Henry Newman's poem *The Dream of Gerontius* was already a well-known and much-loved work in its own right by the time Elgar came to set it to music in 1900. From it the composer created a masterpiece - arguably his finest choral work and certainly one of the greatest by any English composer.

Newman's poem is a powerful spiritual vision of one man's journey from this world to the next. It is set in some of Elgar's most magnificent music, including the terrifying Demons' chorus, the thrilling setting of *Praise to the holiest in the height* sung by the Angelicals, Gerontius's progress towards the presence of God and the Judgement, and the guiding Angel's moving farewell. A work of great operatic immediacy, *The Dream of Gerontius* impresses with its orchestral brilliance, choral drama and hugely engaging solos.

The concert opens with three of Sir Hubert Parry's most famous works - *I was glad*, originally composed for the Coronation of Edward VII in Westminster Abbey in 1902 and performed at every Coronation since; *Blest Pair of Sirens* - a magnificent Milton setting imbued with a similar Wagnerian spirit to *The Dream of Gerontius*, and then, as part of the choir's birthday celebrations, everyone present will have the rare opportunity of joining together to sing *Jerusalem* in Elgar's stirring orchestration.

Somerset Chamber Choir (1984 – present) – Happy Birthday!



“This is the best of me...this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory.”

Elgar on *The Dream of Gerontius*

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