

Schoenberg's *Pelleas and Melisande* is not just filled with wrong notes... it is a fifty-minute-long protracted wrong note... What else may hide behind these cacophonies is quite impossible to find out.
– Ludwig Karpath, Signale, Berlin, March 1, 1905.



FROM
Darkness
INTO **Light**

A musical journey for the soul

Sunday 24 June 2012
2PM | CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Newcastle University Choir
Waratah Girls Choir
Christ Church Cathedral Choir

NEWCASTLE
UNIVERSITY
CHOIR
enlightenenrichenjoy™

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Would you like to join the choir? Details on the website
www.newcastleuniversitychoir.com
www.waratahgirlschoir.com.au
www.newcastlecathedral.org.au

From darkness...



In the Bohemian Mountains south-west of Prague, the town of Terezin was home for some 8,000 people before World War II. Now it is better known as Theresienstadt, a concentration camp that housed up to 60,000 prisoners.

Some 15,000 children under the age of fifteen passed through this camp; less than 100 survived. What did survive was a lasting memorial – a suitcase containing their drawings and poems. Rediscovered in 1953, these documents have been published in a book – *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*.

Using the same material, Charles Davidson composed a choral work, parts of which will be performed by the Waratah Girls Choir at our June 24 concert.

Davidson is an American composer, born in Pittsburgh in 1929, and this is his most celebrated work. In 1991, following the collapse of the communist regime and the birth of the Czech Republic, it was performed at a special ceremony in Terezin, presided over by the new president, Václav Havel, and attended by an audience of Holocaust survivors to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the camp and ghetto.

In November, forty members of the choir will tour Rome and Prague, and will visit Terezin, where they will perform this evocative work. We are very privileged to hear them before their departure.

"I never weary of great churches. It is my favourite kind of mountain scenery. Mankind was never so happily inspired as when it made a cathedral."

– Robert Louis Stevenson



Some interesting notes from the Cathedral Choir's website:

The first records of music at Christ Church Cathedral date from 1835, when a barrel and finger organ was in use in the Cathedral.

The Cathedral Organ is one of the finest organs in Australia. The original organ, of which the pipework forms the basis of the present instrument, was built in 1906 by Norman and Beard (UK). The organ was rebuilt in 1963 by J.W. Walker & Sons, and most recently (1997-1998) has undergone refurbishment and the addition of several ranks of pipes, including a 32' Double Ophicleide. The organ contains 2,471 pipes, 58 stops, 13 couplers and two tremulants, and is maintained by Peter D.G. Jewkes Pty. Ltd.

Just in time...

In 1940 Serge Koussevitsky and the trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra commissioned Randall Thompson to compose a work for the opening of the new Berkshire Music Center.

The date for the opening was July 8; the work was to be conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth, the head of the choral department. The choir was ready to rehearse, but by the day of the performance no music had been delivered. With 45 minutes to go, Thompson delivered the score. "Well," said Woodworth, "Text at least is one thing we won't have to worry about."

The piece is Thompson's most memorable work, and consists of the single word "alleluia". Composed at a time when France had just fallen, Thompson explained, "The music in my particular *Alleluia* cannot be made to sound joyous...here it is comparable to the Book of Job, where it is written, 'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

Thompson believed that "A composer's first responsibility is, and always will be, to write music that will reach and move the hearts of his listeners in his own day."

He died in 1984, but his music is absolutely relevant to today – *Alleluia* is still performed every year at Harvard Commencement, and I'm sure you'll be impressed with this performance.

Speaking in tongues...



The Waratah Girls Choir

I'm particularly looking forward to a bracket of songs by the Waratah Girls Choir.

May it Be was written by Enya, with Nicky Ryan, her producer, and Roma Ryan, her lyricist, at the request of director Peter Jackson, and was featured in his film *The Lord of the Rings*. The original lyrics are partly in English, partly in *Quenya* – the fictional Elvish language invented by J.R.R. Tolkien. Here's a sample: Mornië utúlië, translates to "Darkness has come."

Osanna was composed by Danish composer Henrik Colding-Jørgensen, who composed many pieces especially for girl's choirs. One of his compositions, *Diptychon*, is written partly in Aramaic, partly in Latin. Altogether he wrote 127 works in 10 languages. *Osanna*, I'm fairly certain, is written in Latin.

Las Amarillas by Stephen Hatfield is written in Spanish. It is considered to be of the hupango, a southern Mexican style.

Hatfield is a Canadian, who says "My goal is to give every part a melodic line, and to stop the common perception (among sopranos in particular) that sopranos are the first class citizens of the choir. I take particular care that the altos get lots of spotlight, since in my experience they are the section most likely to be passed over by composer and audience alike."

That should make him popular with some!

A young girl who was blown out to sea on a set of inflatable teeth was rescued by a man on an inflatable lobster. A coast guard spokesman commented, "This sort of thing is all too common". - *The Times*