

Johannes Brahms

EIN DEUTSCHES
REQUIEM

Saturday 19 February, 7pm

**CITY
RECITAL
HALL**

THE
SONG
CO.

The Song Company

The Song Company belongs to a land whose first peoples have always used songlines and vocal music to pass knowledge and culture from one generation to another. We acknowledge and respect those traditions and are honoured to work together with Indigenous creative artists as part of our artistic mission. As Australia's national vocal ensemble, The Song Company is an elite chamber vocal ensemble demonstrating international excellence and bringing together the country's finest voices in innovative performances, artist development, educational outreach and collaborative music-making – unique in its stylistic diversity with repertoire spanning the 9th century to today.

PRINCIPAL ARTISTS

Roberta Diamond, Chloe Lankshear, Amy Moore, sopranos
Stephanie Dillon, Jessica O'Donoghue, mezzo-sopranos
Dan Walker, Koen van Stade, tenors
Thomas Flint, bass

2022 ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

Janine Harris, Ethan Taylor, Hayden Barrington

2022 ENSEMBLE ARTIST

Elias Wilson

2022 GUEST ARTISTS

Hannah Fraser, Sonya Holowell, Elizabeth Sheppard,
Jenny Eriksson, Robert Macfarlane, Jack Stephens
Christopher Richardson, Paul Capsis, Hylton Mowday,
Gerard Willems, Thomas E.S. Kelly

Led by Artistic Director, Antony Pitts, The Song Company comprises eight Principal Artists and a consort of Ensemble and Associate Artists mentored by Associate Artistic Director, Francis Greep. It is at the forefront of scholarly early music performance and of contemporary vocal music through an extensive commissioning program, and cross-artform collaborations with artists of the highest calibre from across Australia and around the world.

Together we are reshaping the professional vocal landscape in Australia for today and the next generation.

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Eva Frey, Marketing & Development Manager
Sarah Elise Thompson, Production Manager
Jane Diamond, Bookkeeper



The Song Company is assisted by the NSW Government through Create NSW

The Song Company acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and we pay our respect to the Elders both past and present

The Song Company Pty Ltd trading as The Song Company is a non-profit organisation registered as a company of limited guarantee ABN 27 001 577 377

City Recital Hall

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Box Office 02 8256 2222
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Program

BRAHMS: EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM

City Recital Hall

Saturday 19 February 2022, 7pm

The Song Company

The Song Company Apprentices

Members of Conservatorium High School Chorale

Michael Bradshaw, Director

Gerard Willems & Francis Greep, Pianos

Antony Pitts, Conductor

Francis Greep & Roberta Diamond, German Language Preparation

PROGRAM

Sancte Deus

Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)

Tenebrae factae sunt

Marc'Antonio Ingegneri (1535-1592)

Variations on a Theme of Haydn

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

(St Antony Variations) Opus 56b

Interval

Ein deutsches Requiem

Johannes Brahms

(A German Requiem) Opus 45

after the version for two pianos by Heinrich Poos

- i. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen
- ii. Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras
- iii. Herr, lehre doch mich
- iv. Soloist: Christopher Richardson
Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen
- v. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit
Soloist: Amy Moore
- vi. Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Statt
Soloist: Christopher Richardson
- vii. Selig sind die Toten

THE SONG COMPANY

Chloe Lankshear, Amy Moore, sopranos

Hannah Fraser*, Janine Harris, altos

Ethan Taylor, Dan Walker, tenors

Jack Stephens*, Christopher Richardson*, basses

*Guest Artist

THE SONG COMPANY APPRENTICES

Lily Harper, Adele Kozak, Elise Morton, sopranos

Cassandra Doyle, Stephanie Macindoe, Emma Warburton, altos

Alexander Caldwell, Alexander Gorbатов, David Lee, tenors

Lincoln Law, Brendan McRae, Jesse van Proctor, basses

CONSERVATORIUM HIGH SCHOOL CHORALE

Alice Dawson-Damer, Elsa Susnjara, sopranos

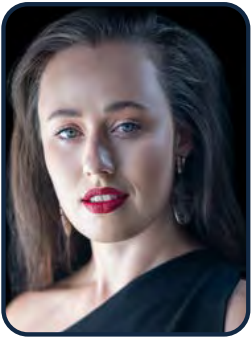
Liam Green, Austin O'Toole, tenors

Archie Tulk, Gabriel Desiderio, Michael Bradshaw, basses

With thanks to

Ian Barker, Julie Symons, Michael Bradshaw, Frances Muecke, Nick Phibbs

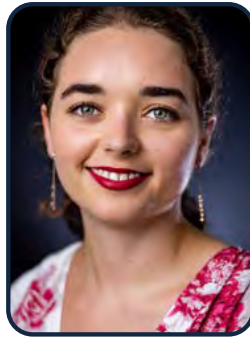
Artists



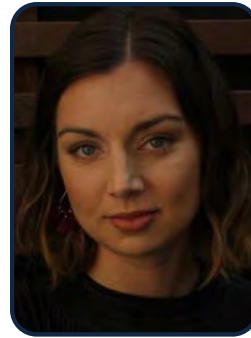
Chloe Lankshear



Amy Moore



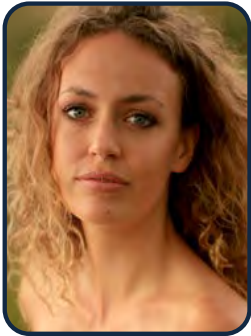
Lily Harper



Adele Kozak



Elise Morton



Hannah Fraser



Janine Harris



Cassandra Doyle



Stephanie Macindoe



Emma Warburton



Ethan Taylor



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David Lee



Jack Stephens



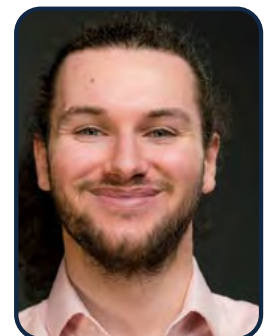
Christopher Richardson



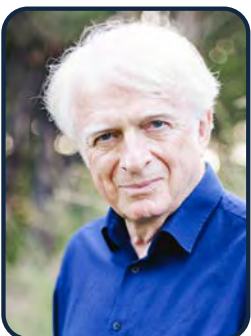
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Apprentice Program



DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF AUSTRALIAN VOCAL TALENT

New in 2022, The Song Company's Apprentice Program sees emerging talent from around the country being mentored by the nation's leading professional vocal ensemble in intensive workshops, rehearsals, masterclasses and performances.

Apprentices also work alongside the company's Principal Artists, who transfer their extensive performance experience that has been gained "on the job" to them. This exchange positively impacts the vocal health and skill development of the Apprentices, who take this learned experience back to their own communities and grow their community's cultural capital.

Apprentices add to The Song Company's capacity to perform large-scale works, such as Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*; perform in the company's new Underground early music series; and help us reach a wider audience.

You can next see The Song Company Apprentices in *Tremors of Earth* in Wollongong, Newcastle and Sydney in April.

To start a conversation about supporting this exciting new initiative from The Song Company, contact Francis Greep
francis.greep@song.company
(02) 9156 2781

Program Notes

This is The Song Company's first MainStage program of the year in a special collaboration with eminent pianist Gerard Willems and students from the Conservatorium High School, in Sydney's City Recital Hall. In our 2022 Season, **Higher Ground**, we are looking for shelter and meaning in the exquisite and intricate works of the polyphonic masters of the Renaissance, as loved and imitated by later generations of composers such as Buxtehude and Brahms, and reimagined in the vital new works of Australian and other composers from today.

Higher Ground encompasses a vast range of repertoire for the human voice – from Philip Glass's Songs from *Liquid Days* and Elliott Carter's *Warble for Lilac Time* to Antoine Brumel's 12-part Renaissance "Earthquake" Mass and Thomas Tallis's infamous 40-part motet *Spem in alium*; in-between are all kinds of music for small vocal consort, including new Australian works by Indigenous composers Elizabeth Sheppard and Sonya Holowell, as well as the long-delayed première of Chris Williams's setting of texts by Kurdish Iranian refugee and journalist Behrouz Boochani, continuing our performances of music focusing on the dispossessed – as in our current digital and vinyl release of Gavin Bryars's choral setting of a homeless man singing in *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*.

BRAHMS AND THE REQUIEM

The Brahms Requiem turns our attention to the ultimate dispossession: the separation of spirit and body at the moment of death, and the consequent separation of loved ones, of the dead from the living, the unique human individual from those bereaved at their passing. The full title Brahms gave it – *A German Requiem, To Words of the Holy Scriptures* – underlines both the use of his vernacular language rather than the Latin of the conventional Roman Catholic Requiem Mass, and also his very careful choice of words from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible in Martin Luther's translation (including two short extracts from the Apocrypha not included in the canonic Biblical text). Despite the focus on the often unspoken subject of death, Brahms's Requiem is incredibly and powerfully affirmative and hopeful.

Throughout his Requiem we are told that present sorrow and weeping will be more than recompensed in a future of everlasting joy and rest taken up with endless songs of praise. Well-known for being agnostic in his personal beliefs, Brahms nonetheless selected texts that underline faith in something very real and very tangible after death:

he specifically includes the encouragement (by the Epistle-writer James) to "be patient until the Lord's coming" and the mysterious exposition (by St Paul) of the Resurrection of the body and the change of the living: "the dead shall be raised incorruptible" and "we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed". The two ideas that permeate the whole work are comfort and return: "they shall be comforted", "I will comfort you, as one that is comforted by his mother", and "the ransomed of the Lord shall return", "I will see you again".

Although Brahms was criticised by some for not mentioning Jesus as the traditional source of redemption and eternal blessedness, he begins the Requiem by quoting Jesus' own words from the Beatitudes: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" and in the added fifth movement (inspired by the death of Brahms's own mother) he takes Jesus' words from the Last Supper on the night before the Crucifixion: "You now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and no one shall take your joy from you". Brahms himself clarified his unique approach to the text, when challenged: "I have no doubt included much because I am a musician, because I required it, because I can neither argue away nor strike out a 'from henceforth' from my venerable poets".

The iconic image of Brahms as an old man with a long beard might give the impression that his Requiem is the work of someone concerned with the prospect of death in the not-distant-enough future, but in fact Brahms was a clean-shaven man of just 33 (approximately the age of Jesus at the Crucifixion) when he directed his energies most intensively on the work – without the incentive of any commission money. The Requiem began life, and was first performed, as the first three movements, then developed into a six-movement form which was again premièred, and finally the exquisite fifth movement was added to form the seven-movement shape we hear tonight.

His close friend Clara Schumann – the widow of Robert Schumann, whose premature death inspired Brahms to begin writing the first movements of the Requiem – was deeply struck: "I am completely filled with your Requiem. It is an immense piece that takes hold of one's whole being like very little else. The profound seriousness, combined with all the magic and poetry, has a wonderful, deeply moving and soothing effect."

BRAHMS AND RENAISSANCE POLYPHONY

The music of Brahms's Requiem is symphonic in its structure, operatic in its drama, and ecclesiastical in its counterpoint. Brahms knew much early music ("early" for him as well as for us) and there are clear resonances with the Lutheran funeral music of the previous centuries, as well as the foundation of traditional counterpoint. The polyphony of the Renaissance right up to J.S. Bach is built on a small number of principles that aim to balance the independence of each individual line with the overall harmonic movement. Brahms's Requiem is almost exclusively in four parts for the singers, and is largely contrapuntal, with just the very occasional splitting of parts on some chords.

The two pieces of 16th-century polyphony by Thomas Tallis and Marc'Antonio Ingegneri which begin our concert are also in four parts – not exactly the more recent traditional Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, as the ranges overlap more and the overall compass of notes is much narrower, but in four parts, nonetheless. Despite such limited means and a less full harmonic palette than Brahms's, both the Tallis and the Ingegneri (which Brahms is thought to have had in his own library of early music) have both drama and harmonic surprises in store.

Tallis's *Sancte Deus* is structured with an opening *trisagion* similar to the *ter sanctus* or "thrice holy" from the Sanctus of the Mass, and then three direct petitions to Christ. Ingegneri's *Tenebrae* is a miniature narrative in itself and culminates in the moment of an actual death – a death of a human being, but one that has been commemorated and reimagined in art, music, literature, films, architecture, etc. far more times than other death in the history of the human race. This moment of actualisation sets the stage for Brahms's great exploration of the tragedy of every death and yet the hope that there is the possibility of reunion and the "blessed"-ness which he underscores in both the first and last movements of his Requiem.

BRAHMS AND THE PIANO

The other world of Brahms's Requiem is to be found in the many works he composed for piano. The first performance in London of the Requiem – at a Sir Henry Thompson's house in 1871 – was, in fact, similar to tonight's performance, in that the orchestral parts were played on the piano by two pianists, Lady Thompson and Cipriano Potter. His only work specifically for two pianos is the *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, written in 1873.

This formal set of theme and variations (with the theme possibly not written by Haydn but by one of his students) was written concurrently with the orchestral version of the work. The piano writing, which directly reflects his orchestration, gives a unique insight into how Brahms conceived his piano music to be "orchestral" in nature. His focus on individual lines, counterpoint and orchestral colours placed him as an outlier of the fashionable 19th Century piano music of Chopin and Liszt.

The first performance of the two-piano version was by Brahms and his beloved Clara Schumann, one of Europe's greatest concert pianists and a composer herself, at a private recital in Bonn in August 1873, with the orchestral version premiering in November of the same year.

The Song Company brings these worlds together in tonight's performance – the intimacy of vocal polyphony, and majesty of his most profound choral work, and the virtuosity of music for two pianos. Old friends, new voices and Australia's finest professional vocal ensemble in a hallowed auditorium – how better to start 2022?

Antony Pitts and Francis Greep

Texts & Translations

SANCTE DEUS

Sancte Deus, Sancte Fortis, Sancte et Immortalis,
miserere nobis.

Nunc, Christe, te petimus, miserere, quaesumus.

Qui venisti redimere perditos,

noli damnare redemptos:

Quia per crucem tuam redemisti mundum. Amen.

TENEBRAE FACTAE SUNT

Tenebrae factae sunt,

dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei:

et circa horam nonam exclamavit Jesus voce magna:

Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti?

Exclamans Jesus voce magna ait:

Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.

Et inclinato capite, emisit spiritum.

EIN DEUTSCHES REQUIEM

1. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen,
denn sie sollen getröstet werden. (Matthew 5:4)

Die mit Tränen säen, werden mit Freuden ernten.
Sie gehen hin und weinen und tragen edlen Samen,
und kommen mit Freuden und bringen ihre Garben.
(Psalm 126:5-6)

2. Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras
und alle Herrlichkeit des Menschen wie des Grases Blumen.
Das Gras ist verdorret und die Blume abgefallen.
So seid nun geduldig, lieben Brüder,
bis auf die Zukunft des Herrn.
Siehe, ein Ackermann wartet
auf die köstliche Frucht der Erde und ist geduldig darüber,
bis er empfahe den Morgenregen und Abendregen.
Aber des Herrn Wort bleibt in Ewigkeit.
(1 Peter 1:24, James 5:7-8, 1 Peter 1:25)

Die Erlöseten des Herrn werden wieder kommen,
und gen Zion kommen mit Jauchzen;
ewige Freude wird über ihrem Haupte sein;
Freude und Wonne werden sie ergreifen
und Schmerz und Seufzen wird weg müssen. (Isaiah 35:10)

3. Herr, lehre doch mich, daß ein Ende mit mir haben muß,
und mein Leben ein Ziel hat, und ich davon muß.
Siehe, meine Tage sind einer Handbreit vor dir,
und mein Leben ist wie nichts vor dir.
Ach wie gar nichts sind alle Menschen,
die doch so sicher leben.
Sie gehen daher wie ein Schemen,
und machen ihnen viel vergebliche Unruhe;
sie sammeln und wissen nicht wer es kriegen wird.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal One,
have mercy upon us.

Now, O Christ, we ask You, have mercy, we beseech You.

You who came to redeem the lost,

do not condemn the redeemed:

For by Your cross You have redeemed the world. Amen.

There was darkness

when Jesus was crucified at the instigation of the Judaeans:

and about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice:

My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?

Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying:

Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit.

And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

A GERMAN REQUIEM

1. Blessed are they that mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

They who sow in tears, shall reap with joy.

They that go forth weeping, bearing precious seed,
shall come again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves.

2. For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.
The grass withers, and the flower falls away.
Therefore be patient, dear brothers,
unto the coming of the Lord.
Behold, the farmer waits
for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient for it,
until he receives the morning and evening rain.
But the word of the Lord endures for ever.

The redeemed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with songs;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
They shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

3. Lord, teach me to know my end, what it must be,
and the measure of my life: that I must depart.
Behold, my days are as an handbreadth for You;
and my lifetime is as nothing before You.
Alas, everyone at their most secure
is but vanity.
Surely they walk about like a shadow,
and rush about in vain;
they heap up riches, and do not know who will gather them.

Nun Herr, wess soll ich mich trösten?

Ich hoffe auf dich. (Psalm 39:4-7)

Der Gerechten Seelen sind in Gottes Hand
und keine Qual rühret sie an. (*Wisdom 3:1)

4. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, Herr Zebaoth!
Meine Seele verlangt und sehnet sich
nach den Vorhöfen des Herrn;
mein Leib und Seele freuen sich in dem lebendigen Gott.
Wohl denen, die in deinem Hause wohnen,
die loben dich immerdar. (Psalm 84:1-2,4)

5. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit;
aber ich will euch wieder sehen
und euer Herz soll sich freuen
und eure Freude soll niemand von euch nehmen. (John 16:22)

Sehet mich an: Ich habe eine kleine Zeit Mühe und Arbeit
gehabt und habe großen Trost funden. (*Ecclesiasticus 51:35)

Ich will euch trösten, wie Einen seine Mutter tröstet.
(Isaiah 66:13)

6. Denn wir haben hie keine bleibende Stadt,
sondern die zukünftige suchen wir. (Hebrews 13:14)

Siehe, ich sage euch ein Geheimnis:
Wir werden nicht alle entschlafen,
wir werden aber alle verwandelt werden;
und dasselbige plötzlich, in einem Augenblick,
zu der Zeit der letzten Posaune.
Denn es wird die Posaune schallen,
und die Toten werden auferstehen unverweslich,
und wir werden verwandelt werden.
Dann wird erfüllet werden
das Wort, das geschrieben steht:
Der Tod ist verschlungen in den Sieg.
Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?
Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg? (1 Corinthians 15:51-52,54-55)

Herr, du bist würdig zu nehmen
Preis und Ehre und Kraft,
denn du hast alle Dinge geschaffen,
und durch deinen Willen haben sie
das Wesen und sind geschaffen. (Revelation 4:11)

7. Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herrn sterben,
von nun an. Ja der Geist spricht,
daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit;
denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach. (Revelation 14:13)

Now, Lord, where can I put my trust?

My hope is in You.

The righteous souls are in God's hand
and no torment shall disturb them.

4. How lovely are Your dwelling places, O Lord of Hosts!
My soul longs, yes, and faints for
the courts of the Lord;
My body and soul cry out joyfully to the living God.
Blessed are they that dwell in Your house;
they praise You forever.

5. You now have sorrow;
but I will see you again
and your heart shall rejoice
and your joy no one shall take from you.

Behold me: I have had for a little time toil and torment,
and now have found great consolation.

I will comfort you, as one is comforted by his mother.

6. For we have here no permanent city,
but we seek the one to come.

Behold, I show you a mystery:
We shall not all sleep,
but we shall all be changed
and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,
at the time of the last trumpet.
For the trumpet shall sound,
and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,
and we shall be changed...
Then shall be fulfilled
the word that is written:
Death is swallowed up in victory.
O Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?

Lord, You are worthy to receive
glory, honour, and power,
for You have created all things,
and by Your will
they exist and were created.

7. Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord
from henceforth: yes, says the Spirit,
that they may rest from their labours,
and their works shall follow them.

*All texts from the Bible except these two from the Apocrypha

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If you enjoyed tonight's performance, consider making a tax-deductible donation to The Song Company, which will directly support the emerging generation of Australian artists. [the.song.company/donate](https://www.thesongcompany.com.au/donate)

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Investment Giving Australia is an independent not-for-profit organisation with the mission to maximise the impact of charities and their supporters by enabling new forms of investment-based philanthropy.

“Investment Giving” is a simple concept: investors donate the income stream from an investment, while retaining ownership of the investment itself. The income is distributed directly to The Song Company at regular intervals, allowing maximum efficiency and impact. Further benefits for investors include tax deductions for the donated investment income, and the flexibility to reallocate capital as required

To register your interest in this innovative investment model, contact Francis Greep:

(02) 9156 2783

francis.greep@song.com.au



BECOMING *Beatrice*



Rising soprano Chloe Lankshear and The Song Company's Associate Artistic Director Francis Greep explore Potter's life through the biographic work of Judy Taylor and Art Song by Robert Schumann, Elliot Carter, George Crumb, Ross Edwards, Sally Whitwell, and Elena Kats-Chernin.

CHLOE LANKSHEAR, SOPRANO
FRANCIS GREEP. PIANO

SUN 27 February, 3PM
Mosman Art Gallery

Tickets: [the.song.company](https://www.the-song-company.com) or call 02 9156 2781

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