

# WIGMORE HALL

Friday 22 November 2024  
7.30pm

## Le Concert Spirituel at St James's, Spanish Place

### Le Concert Spirituel

Hervé Niquet conductor

Lucile Chionchini viola  
Lucie Uzzeni viola  
Gesine Queyras cello  
Luc Devanne double bass  
Emma Cottet horn  
Yu-Chin Gastebois-Chu horn  
Valeria Kafelnikov harp  
Marie-Pierre Wattiez soprano  
Alice Glaie soprano

Aude Fenoy soprano  
Marie Griffet soprano  
Armelle Marq soprano  
Loutchia Nigohossian mezzo-soprano  
Anne-Fleur Inizan mezzo-soprano  
Alice Habellion mezzo-soprano  
Marie Favier mezzo-soprano  
Gauthier Fenoy tenor  
Nicolas Maire tenor

Randol Rodriguez Rubio tenor  
Martin Candela tenor  
Benoit Descamps bass  
Jérôme Collet bass  
Renaud Brès bass  
Guillaume Olry bass

Philippe Estèphe solo baritone  
Solenne Guilbert solo violin  
François Saint-Yves organ

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

From *Messe dite de Clovis* (1890)  
*Kyrie • Gloria*

Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

O salutaris Op. 37 (1895)

Charles Gounod

Credo from *Messe dite de Clovis*

Louis Aubert (1877-1968)

O Salutaris (pub. 1903)

Charles Gounod

Sanctus et Benedictus from *Messe dite de Clovis*

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Tantum ergo Op. 5 (1856)

Charles Gounod

Agnus Dei from *Messe dite de Clovis*

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Requiem Op. 48 (1893 version) (1887-93)

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Le Concert Spirituel's programme embodies the strength of religious faith held by composers better known today for their secular music. **Charles Gounod**, for instance, became immersed in evangelical Catholicism after he won the coveted Prix de Rome in 1839. Gounod's childhood religiosity deepened during his time as a student at the French Academy in Rome, where he was entranced by the charismatic preaching of Henri-Dominique Lacordaire. The young composer channelled his religious fervour into the creation of church music, emulating the works he heard performed during services at the Sistine Chapel. In his memoirs, Gounod recalled the lasting impression left by the frescoes of Michelangelo and the music of Palestrina, each blessed with 'the same simplicity, the same humility in the use of resources, the same absence of preoccupation with effect, the same disdain for seduction'.

On his return to Paris in May 1843, Gounod became *maître de chapelle* at the Séminaire des Missions Etrangères. His determination to rejuvenate French sacred music was hampered by the church's limited choral resources – two basses, one tenor and a boy chorister – and by the congregation's conservatism. Yet the works he wrote for them, steeped in the Palestrina style, set the foundations for many of his 21 settings of the Latin Mass and other sacred pieces. In 1891, Gounod began work on one of the last of these, the *Messe dite de Clovis*. The title page of its first edition, published posthumously in 1896, records that it was 'Composed for the 14th centenary of the baptism of Clovis at Reims, 25 December 496', a reference to the first king of the Franks. Clovis I, regarded as a unifying figure, was worshipped as a saint in France, not least following the nation's humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. His example was enlisted to strengthen support among French Catholics for the Third Republic, encouraged by Pope Leo XIII's politically divisive encyclical of 1891 in which he called on the faithful to rally behind the secular state.

Gounod's original conception of the *Messe dite de Clovis* included a *Prélude* for choir, eight trumpets, four trombones and organ, printed as an appendix to the work's first edition, separate from the carefully crafted white-note polyphony for choir and organ of the Mass itself. He returned here to the style of his first Mass setting of 1843, creating a work modelled on, but not a pastiche of, Palestrina's music. Its fabric is woven from simple points of imitation and chant-like repetition; for clarity's sake, each syllable of the text is mostly set to a single note. The technique, while musically austere, is used to carry a complex range of expression and rhetorical effects: the *Kyrie*, for example, unfolds more as a dramatic acclamation than as a prayer of supplication, while the *Gloria* builds in grandeur from its threefold statements of 'Gloria in excelsis Deo' and sophisticated modal harmonies in the 'Qui tollis' to an ecstatic closing reflection of God's glory. Bold textural contrasts, akin to those cultivated by Gounod in the theatre, illuminate the *Credo* and the concise *Sanctus*. While Palestrina's spirit runs through the *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei*, Gounod remains their master.

The hymn *O Salutaris Hostia*, written by Thomas Aquinas, became associated with the adoration of the blessed sacrament during Mass. Its text was especially cherished by French composers. **Alexandre Guilmant's** *O Salutaris*, a sophisticated setting for solo baritone, choir, organ, harp and double bass, reflects its composer's feeling for lucid textures and sensitivity as a melodist. **Louis Aubert**, who sang the treble solo in the first performance of Fauré's *Requiem*, directed his considerable skills as a composer of popular songs to the task of setting *O Salutaris* for soprano, violin, choir and organ. It recalls the ethereal music heard from the organ lofts of grand Parisian churches. *Tantum ergo* was written following **Saint-Saëns's** appointment in 1853 as organist of Saint-Merri in the 4th arrondissement. The exquisite hymn's memorable opening melody and straightforward part writing, tinged with chromatic sidesteps, surely heightened the frisson surrounding the adoration of the blessed sacrament.

The origins of **Fauré's** *Messe de Requiem* were obscured by the composer's hazy recollections of its creation and confusion sown by his early biographers, who stated that the work was written between the death of his father in July 1885 and that of his mother in December 1887. While Fauré may have had his parents in mind when composing parts of the *Requiem*, he later recalled that it 'was composed for nothing ... for fun, if I may be permitted to say so!' The work, he noted, was first performed 'in 1890 [...] If my memory serves me right, the deceased ... was a M. Le Soufaché, which is not exactly an ordinary name!' The register of deaths at the Madeleine reveals that the funeral service for the architect Joseph Le Soufaché, held on 16 January 1888, included music for choir and orchestra.

Fauré subsequently chose to extend the piece by returning to sketches for the *Offertory* made in 1887. He completed the *Hostias* setting for solo baritone in 1889 and appears to have fashioned the *Offertory's* sublime opening and closing choral sections in the early 1890s. The 'Liberate me', composed for solo voice and organ in 1877, was revised and added to the *Requiem* in 1891. The work in its expanded form may have been performed for the first time at a grand funeral service in January 1893 at the Madeleine. Hervé Niquet has adapted this version of the score for chamber forces, retaining its nobility while intensifying its *tendresse*.

'It was not the economic aspect that made me choose the "small" form of Fauré's Requiem,' he explains. 'Of course, it is easier to travel with 25 than with 80 musicians, but with its orchestration reduced to a shimmering minimum, these pages are closer to the intimacy of the funeral of a dear friend than to a work intended for a large concert hall. No grandiloquence but tenderness; little noise but much strength. In short, this version is dear to me and above all brings back many personal memories'.

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## Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

### Messe dite de Clovis (1890)

*Liturgical text*

### Kyrie (1890)

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy.
Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy.
Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy.

### Gloria (1890)

Gloria in excelsis Deo!	Glory to God in the highest!
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.	And on earth peace to men of goodwill.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.	We praise you. We bless you.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.	We adore you. We glorify you.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.	We give thanks to you for your great glory.
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens, Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.	Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God the Father. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.	Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	You take away the sins of the world;
Miserere nobis.	have mercy on us.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	You take away the sins of the world;
Suscipe deprecationem nostram.	receive our prayer.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,	You sit at the right hand of the Father;
Miserere nobis.	have mercy on us.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.	For you alone are holy. You alone are the Lord. You alone are the most high, Jesus Christ.
Cum Sancto Spiritu In gloria Dei Patris. Amen.	With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

### O salutaris Op. 37 (1895) O saving Victim

*St Thomas Aquinas*

O salutaris Hostia, Que coeli pandis ostium:	O saving Victim, opening wide the gate of Heaven to man below;
Bella premunt hostilia, Da robur, fer auxilium.	Our foes press hard on every side; thine aid supply; thy strength bestow.
Uni trinoque Domino Sit sempiterna gloria, Qui vitam sine termino Nobis donet in patria. Amen	To thy great name be endless praise, immortal Godhead, One in Three. Oh, grant us endless length of days, in our true native land with thee. Amen

*Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended.*

## Charles Gounod

### Credo from *Messe dite de Clovis*

*Liturgical text*

Credo in unum Deum, patrem omnipotentem, Factorem caeli et terrae, Visibilibus omnium et invisibilibus. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum; Et ex patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, Consubstantialem patri: Per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, Descendit de caelis, Et incarnatus est de spiritu sancto, Ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, Sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas, Et ascendit in caelum, Sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, Judicare vivos et mortuos, Cuius regni non erit finis. Et in spiritum sanctum Dominum et vivificantem: Qui ex Patre filioque procedit Qui cum Patre et Filio Simul adoratur et conglorificatur, Qui locutus est per prophetas. Et unam sanctam catholicam Et apostolicam ecclesiam.	I believe in one God, the Almighty Father, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all time. God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made: of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made. Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate: he died and was buried. And he rose on the third day according to the scriptures and ascended in to heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead: whose kingdom has no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the Prophets. And in one holy, catholic and apostolic church.
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Confiteor unum baptisma In remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.	I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.
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## Louis Aubert (1877-1968)

### O Salutaris (pub. 1903)

*Thomas Aquinas*

O salutaris hostia Quae caeli pandis ostium, Bella premunt hostilia: Da robur, fer auxilium.	O saving victim who opens the gate of heaven, hostile wars press on us: give strength, bring aid.
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## Charles Gounod

### Sanctus et Benedictus from *Messe dite de Clovis*

*Liturgical text*

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus sabaoth: Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.	Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.
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## Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

### Tantum ergo Op. 5

(1856)

*Liturgical text attr. St*

*Thomas Aquinas*

Tantum ergo sacramentu Veneremur cernui: Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat ritui: Praestet fides supplementum Sensuum defectui.	Therefore let us greatly venerate the Sacrament, with bowed heads: And let the old practice give way to the new rite: Let faith provide a supplement for the failure of the senses.
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Genitori, Genitoque Laus et jubilatio,	To the Begetter and Begotten be praise and jubilation,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque Sit et benedictio:	Good wishes, honour and virtue be, and blessing:
Procedenti ab utroque Compar sit laudatio.	To the One proceeding from Both let there be equal praise.
Amen	Amen

## Charles Gounod

### Agnus Dei from *Messe dite de Clovis* (1890)

*Liturgical text*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis.	Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Miserere nobis.	Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, Dona nobis pacem.	Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

## Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

### Requiem Op. 48 (1893 version) (1887-93)

*Liturgical text*

<b>Introit - Kyrie</b>	<b>Introit - Kyrie</b>
Requiem aeternam dona eis Domine, Et lux perpetua luceat eis.	Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them.
Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion, Et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem. Exaudi orationem meam, Ad te omnis caro veniet.	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.
Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.	Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy.

**Offertorium**

**Offertorium**

O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, Libera animas defunctorum De poenis inferni Et de profundo lacu.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the bottomless pit.
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O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, Libera animas defunctorum De ore leonis, Ne absorbeat tartarus.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the lion's mouth, nor let the black abyss swallow them up.
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O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, Ne cadant in obscurum. Hostias et preces tibi, Domine, Laudis offerimus: tu suscipe Pro animabus illis Quarum hodie memoriam facimus: Fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam. Quam olim Abrahae promisisti, Et semini ejus.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, do not let them fall into darkness. We offer unto Thee, O Lord, this sacrifice of prayer and praise: receive it for those souls whom today we commemorate: allow them, O Lord, to cross from death into life which once Thou didst promise to Abraham and his seed.
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O Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, Libera animas defunctorum De poenis inferni et de profundo lacu. Ne cadant in obscurum.	Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell and from the bottomless pit. Do not let them fall into darkness.
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Amen

Amen

### Sanctus

### Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.	Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest.
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*Song continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.*

**Pie Jesu**

Pie Jesu, Domine,  
Dona eis requiem,  
Sempiternam requiem.

**Agnus Dei et Lux  
aeterna**

Agnus Dei,  
Qui tollis peccata  
mundi,  
Dona eis requiem,  
sempiternam requiem.

Lux aeterna luceat eis,  
Domine,  
Cum sanctis tuis in  
aeternum, quia  
pius es.  
Requiem aeternam dona eis,  
Domine,  
Et lux perpetua  
luceat eis.

**Libera me**

Libera me, Domine, de morte  
aeterna,  
In die illa tremenda:  
Quando coeli  
movendi sunt et  
terra;  
Dum veneris  
judicare  
Saeculum per ignem.  
Tremens factus sum ego et  
timeo,  
Dum discussio  
venerit,  
Atque ventura ira.  
Dies illa, dies  
irae,  
Calamitatis et miseriae,  
Dies magna et amara  
valde.  
Requiem aeternam dona eis,  
Domine,  
Et lux perpetua  
luceat eis.  
Libera me, Domine...

**In paradisum**

In Paradisum deducant  
te angeli,  
In tuo adventu, suscipiant te  
martyres,  
Et perducant te in civitatem  
sanctam Jerusalem.

**Pie Jesu**

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

**Agnus Dei and Lux  
aeterna**

Lamb of God,  
that takest away the sins  
of the world,  
grant them rest, eternal  
rest.

May eternal light shine on  
them, O Lord,  
with Thy saints for ever,  
because Thou art  
merciful.  
Grant them eternal rest,  
O Lord,  
and may perpetual light  
shine on them.

**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.  
Grant them eternal rest,  
O Lord,  
and may perpetual light  
shine on them.  
Deliver me, O Lord...

**In paradisum**

May the angels receive  
you in Paradise,  
at your arrival may the  
martyrs receive you  
and bring you into the  
holy city of Jerusalem.

Chorus angelorum te  
suscipiat,  
Et cum Lazaro quondam  
paupere,  
Aeternam habeas  
requiem.

There, may the chorus of  
angels receive you,  
and with Lazarus, once a  
beggar,  
may you have eternal  
rest.

*Translation of Fauré kindly provided by Le Concert Spirituel.*