



The Barnes Choir
conducted by Julian Collings
invites you to

Come and Sing VERDI'S REQUIEM

on Saturday 5th April 2025, at All Saints Church,
East Sheen Avenue, East Sheen. SW14 8AX

A special choir will be formed for the day, involving members of The Barnes Choir and you, our guests. Julian Collings, our director, will be working intensively with us on the music and will provide performance insights, and we will be accompanied on the piano by Elspeth Wilkes.

We will be working from the Ricordi Edition, and a score can be hired for the day if you don't have your own.

The timetable is:

09.30 - 10.00 Registration. Tea/coffee available.

10.00 - 13.00 Rehearsal with a break for tea/coffee at 11.30.

13.00 - 14.15 Lunch. Bring your own and eat it in the church, or take a short walk into East Sheen and try one of the cafes or restaurants.

14.15 - 15.30 Rehearsal followed by tea/coffee.

16.00 - 16.45 Performance. No dress code.

Please invite family and friends free of charge.

Singing tickets are £20, score hire is £2

Book your place at
<https://www.barneschoir.org.uk/tickets> or scan:

Enquiries: singingday@barneschoir.org.uk



VERDI'S REQUIEM



Verdi was a mature composer when he wrote his *Requiem* in 1874, by which time he was already in his early sixties, and although he lived for another 27 years, it can be regarded as a late work. It was written in honour of the writer and humanist Alessandro Manzoni, who had died the year before, and whom Verdi had much admired.

Three other works are important antecedents to this *Requiem*: Mozart's *Requiem* of 1791, Berlioz's *Requiem* of 1837, and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solonelle* of 1863. Both Verdi and Rossini were Italian 19th-century composers chiefly known for their operas, who wrote a major choral work distinctly operatic in style. Verdi's *Requiem* is regarded as so operatic that it is rarely performed in a religious context, but in a dedicated concert. A notable exception will be remembered by many: the *Libera Me* was sung in Westminster Abbey at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997.

The *Requiem* premiered at the church of San Marco in Milan, and performed at La Scala soon afterwards where it was very well-received. It is not difficult to hear why it has become an indisputable choral classic, replete with beautiful melody, daring musical escapades, respectful bows to its antecedents and great emotional intensity. The *Dies Irae* is probably the best-known movement of the work. The music can be described as terrifying, and undoubtedly nods to the equivalent movement in Mozart's *Requiem*, but goes further in terms of its manic quality, before eventually calming down.

The *Requiem* is recognisably the work of an operatic master and we should be grateful that he took time off from his often exhausting schedule of opera composition to write it. It requires more musical resources than most works of the choral repertoire, but will undoubtedly prove rewarding to both perform and hear.

Barnaby Marder