

Leatherhead Choral Society Composition Competition

Description

Leatherhead Choral Society is a successful non-auditioned amateur choir in Surrey with about 70 members. It was founded in 1928 and so 2018 marks its 90th anniversary. The focal point of the celebrations is to be a gala concert in the beautiful Chapel of St. John's School, Leatherhead on July 7th 2018. The main work in the programme is Haydn's Nelson Mass and, to demonstrate the choir's forward-looking ethos and support for new music, we want to include in the concert the premiere of a new work specially written for the occasion, hence this competition.

Criteria

Competition entries should be scored for SATB choir a cappella or with piano accompaniment. Compositions should last no longer than 4 minutes and must not have been previously published or performed in public.

The winning entry will be of a celebratory nature suitable for marking the choir's 90th birthday.

Text: Any text may be used, sacred or secular, with the proviso that language should be English or Latin. It is the composer's responsibility to ensure that the text is either in the public domain or that appropriate copyright permission has been granted (in the latter case proof must be provided).

Optionally, the composer may use one of the suggested texts below [A Birthday by Christina Rossetti and Pied Beauty by Gerard Manley Hopkins].

Difficulty level: When planning their piece, composers should bear in mind the choir's skill level which is that of a good non-auditioned amateur adult choir of between 60-70 voices; SATB with occasional *divisi*, moderate vocal ranges and harmonic language.

Prize

The composer of the winning entry will be presented with a cash prize of £350 and a performance by the choir at their concert on July 7th 2018 which it is hoped the composer will attend. Two complimentary tickets will be provided (but the choir is unable to pay travel expenses).

Composers of all shortlisted works will receive short written feedback from the chief judge, Alan Bullard.

The winning composer will also be invited to workshop the piece with the choir during the rehearsal period.

The choir reserves the right not to award the prize in the event that no work is considered suitable.

Eligibility

All composers are eligible except for people directly associated with the choir or the competition.

Judging panel

Submitted works will be evaluated initially by the choir's musical director, award-winning composer Ian Assersohn, and chair Lindsay Sampson, who will draw up a shortlist.

Shortlisted works will then be passed to the chief judge, composer **Alan Bullard**.

Alan is a British composer, known mainly for his choral and educational music. His compositions are regularly performed and broadcast worldwide, and appear on a number of CDs.

How to apply

- *Deadline:* Compositions must be received by midnight on October 31st 2017. There is no entry fee and composers may submit more than one work.
- *Format:* Applications should be submitted electronically in the form of a PDF file to competition@leatherhead-choral.net. An accompanying recording or MIDI file would be appreciated but is not essential. Scores must be clear and ready for duplication and performance, using one of the standard music printing programs (Sibelius, Finale, Dorico etc.). A completed copy of the application form must accompany each submission.
- *Anonymity:* Please remove all identifying marks from submitted scores as the judging will be conducted anonymously.
- *Copyright:* All works submitted remain the copyright of the composer.

Timeline

- Compositions must be received by midnight on October 31st 2017.
- The shortlisted pieces will be announced on the choir's web page and social media, and shortlisted composers notified by email by November 30th 2017.
- The winner will be announced before the end of December 2017.

Suggested texts

Composers may use one of these texts, or any other suitably celebratory text, subject to normal copyright rules

A Birthday by Christina Rossetti

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.
Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

Pied Beauty by Gerard Manley Hopkins

Glory be to God for dappled things -
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced -
fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.