

Somerville Chapel Choir

Tim Ambrose, Sophie Armour, Catherine Borg, David Bowe, Joe Burgess, Jennifer Butler, Harry Darkins, Carys Evans, Robert Hazle, Matthew Hawkins, David Hughes, Tal Katsir, Ellen Kempston, Alexander Lau, Ramin Lolachi, Dominic MacBean, Amy McCourt, John McElroy, Tristan Mitchard, Emily Mitchell, Sabine Müller, Alex Parker, Stephanie Peate, James Percival, Clare Phipps, Kate Piddington, Helena Powell, Christoph Schnedermann, Stefan Schwarz, Katherine Travers, Amelia Walsh, Paul Zaba

Somerville College Orchestra

Joe Burgess, Tom Butcher, John McElroy, Sorcha Norris, Stephanie Peate, Joe Rainer, Rosie Shakespear

Organ Scholars

Joe Burgess, Tristan Mitchard (www.oxfordorganist.com)

Director of Chapel Music

David Crown



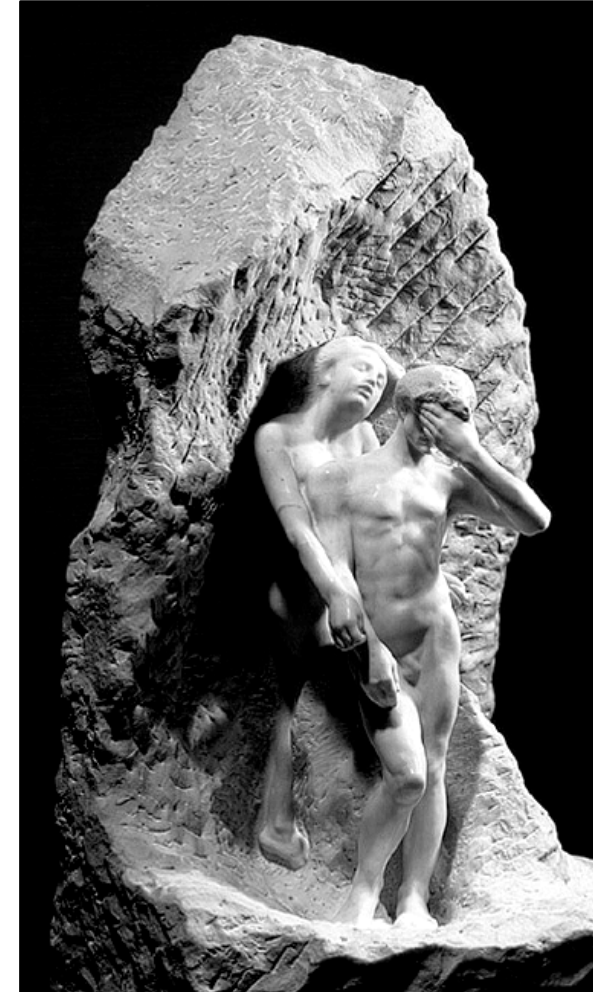
www.somervillemusicsociety.com

Next SMS Event

Friday 12th March 2010, 1:15pm – Organ Recital: Tristan Mitchard
(Works by Berveiller, Shostakovich and Harvey)

Christoph Willibald Gluck

Orfeo ed Euridice



10th March 2010 (Somerville College Chapel, Oxford)
11th March 2010 (Somerville College Chapel, Oxford)
13th March 2010 (St. Nicholas Church, Brighton)

Programme

Charles Wood (1866-1926):
Never weather-beaten sail

Morten Lauridsen (* 1943):
O magnum mysterium

Knut Nystedt (* 1915):
I will praise thee, O Lord

Edward Elgar (1857-1934):
Ave verum corpus

Trad. (arr. Adriano Secco):
Amazing Grace
Nobody knows
Deep River

Trad. (arr. John Frith):
House of the Rising Sun

– Interval –

Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787):

Orfeo ed Euridice

(1762 Vienna Version)

Orfeo #1 - Katherine Cooper

Orfeo #2 - Ellen Kempston

Euridice – Kate Semmens (*Oxford*) / Anna Sideris (*Brighton*)

Amor - Tal Katsir

Somerville Chapel Choir
Somerville College Orchestra
David Crown, conductor

Director: Brian McMahon

Synopsis

Act I

Echoed by the chorus, Orpheus is mourning the death of his beloved Euridice. He begs the gods either to restore Euridice to life or to allow him to die as well. At this point Amor appears and announces to the bereaved husband that the gods have been moved by his sorrow and taken pity on him. He shall have their permission to descend into Hades and lead Euridice back from the dead. The gods, however, have made one condition: Orpheus must not look back at Euridice, nor offer an explanation for his behaviour either, otherwise she will be lost to him forever. Orpheus realises the danger which this condition involves: Euridice will doubt his love when he turns away from her. He is confident, however, that with Amor's help and the strength of his love he will be able to stand the test set him by the gods.

Act II

In Hades Orpheus is greeted by a chorus of furies and demons who describe the kingdom of the dead as a place of terror and torment. Orpheus replies that no torment that the Nether World can offer could equal the fire of his ardent love. The sweetness of his song helps him to overcome the resistance of the furies and they allow him to enter.

The chorus of happy shades sings about the Valley of the Blest, which Orpheus now enters in search of Euridice. He is driven by his longing to find her and begs the spirits to lead him to her. His wish is fulfilled and Euridice is returned from the dead.

Act III

Euridice is overjoyed to be reunited with Orpheus, while he urges her to leave the kingdom of the dead. When he lets go of her hand, she begins to have doubts about his love. She begs him to look at her, but Orpheus remembers what the gods have stipulated and refuses. In the end, Euridice believes that he no longer loves her and refuses to follow him any further.

Orpheus is unable to withstand any longer and turns round. The moment he looks at Euridice, she dies. Orpheus wants to kill himself and follow her down into Hades, but Amor prevents him from doing so, as he is affected by Orpheus' grief and resolution. He rewards him by bringing Euridice back to life.