

Civic Chorale to present powerful requiems

The Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra (RICCO) will present a deeply moving and uniquely beautiful concert featuring two powerful works: Herbert Howells' Requiem and Maurice Duruflé's Requiem on May 17 and 18.

On the May 17 the concert will be performed at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 237 Garden Hills Drive, Cranston at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$25 for seniors and \$10 for students. These two extraordinary pieces, composed by contemporaries during the 20th century, are renowned for their rich harmonies and emotional depth. While Duruflé's Requiem is more familiar to American audiences, Howells' Requiem is rarely performed in the U.S., making this concert an exceptional opportunity for lovers of choral music.

"The Howells' Requiem is one of the most gorgeous, otherworldly pieces of mu-

sic in the entire repertoire," says Joshua Rohde, RICCO's Artistic Director. "It's 30 minutes of sheer beauty—ethereal, lush, and incredibly moving."

Both works were written in response to the turbulence of the early 20th century, yet the composers chose to focus on beauty rather than the harshness of the world around them.

"At a time when many composers were writing more dissonant, jarring music reflecting the ugliness of war and loss, Howells and Duruflé turned to rich harmonies and timeless chants," says Rohde. "They sought to create beauty and solace in the face of chaos, making these pieces particularly meaningful and profound."

Duruflé's Requiem is especially notable for its integration of the organ, which plays a central role in the composition. "This isn't a situation where the organ is a substitute for an orchestra—it was specifically writ-

ten for the instrument," Rohde explains. "Duruflé himself was a renowned organist, and his deep understanding of the instrument shines through in this work."

This concert is not only a rare chance to hear the Howells Requiem, but also an opportunity to experience the beauty of these two remarkable works performed together. As Rohde notes, "The harmonies and textures in both pieces are simply stunning. Despite the complexities, they sound effortless and can transport listeners to another world."

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.RICCO.org.

In addition to presenting these two unique requiems, these performances will feature RICCO's Collegiate Vocal Competition winners as soloists. As part of its mission to encourage the vocal arts in the New England region, RICCO holds an annual Collegiate Vocal Competition, now in its 15th

year, which is open to all vocal students, undergraduate or graduate, currently studying at any institution of higher learning in New England. Recent winners performed in November and December with the Chorale's Messiah performances on Block Island, in Providence and in Manville.

Soloists for the upcoming requiem performances will include: Mara Riley, Soprano, from the New England Conservatory; Delaney Finn, Mezzo-Soprano, from Boston University; Zachary Fisher, Tenor, from the University of Massachusetts; and Ziqi Fang, Bass, from Brown University.

"It's thrilling to give these young singers the chance to perform with a large choir and orchestra, often for the first time," said Rohde. "Some of our past winners have gone on to sing in prestigious venues across the globe, so this is a wonderful opportunity for audiences to witness future stars in their early stages."