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**ANZAC**  
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2014 - 2018



# CHRISTOPHER BOWEN AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

A WORLD PREMIERE

**SYDNEY**  
UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE **CHOIR**

ORCHESTRA  
& GUEST CHOIR

**CHRISTOPHER BOWEN**  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

**WAITARA VOICES**  
WAITARA PUBLIC SCHOOL

**FORT STREET HIGH SCHOOL**

**CELESTE LAZARENKO** SOPRANO  
**AYSE GÖKNUR SHANAL** SOPRANO  
**HENRY CHOO** TENOR  
**ADRIAN TAMBURINI** BASS  
**CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON** BASS

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**AUSTRALIAN  
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We are also grateful to the Federal Department of Veterans' Affairs for their guidance throughout and approval to use the closely guarded Anzac Logo for this event.



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PRIME MINISTER

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER**

**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CHOIR  
AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM**

I am pleased to provide this message to everyone attending the Sydney University Graduate Choir's *An Australian War Requiem*.

The story of the Australians who served during the First World War is one of great triumph and tragedy. It is also one of almost unimaginable losses to a young nation.

From a population of just under five million; 417,000 enlisted; 332,000 served overseas; 152,000 were wounded and 61,000 never came home. Of the 270,000 who returned, more than half had been wounded – and others had mental scars that never healed.

The impact of their experiences is captured in the letters of servicemen and women to their families.

Some of these letters are at the heart of Christopher Bowen's *An Australian War Requiem*. Setting their lines to music gives further poignancy to expressions of loss, hardship and yearning.

Commemorative music is a worthwhile and necessary tradition. Edward Elgar, Charles Villiers Stanford, Hubert Parry and Benjamin Britten – all composers affected by war – wrote music to help us mourn and remember.

As we begin to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, we honour all who have been prepared to put their lives on the line for our country.

This premiere of *An Australian War Requiem* by the Sydney University Graduate Choir, guest choristers and orchestra is a fitting tribute to the sacrifices our forebears made for our prosperity and freedom.

The Hon Tony Abbott MP  
Prime Minister of Australia

3 July 2014





Devastation of Chateau Wood Ypres 1917, Australian Soldiers from the 4th Division





# AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

music by **CHRISTOPHER BOWEN**

text by **PAMELA TRAYNOR**

for soloists, mixed choir, semi-choir, children's choir and orchestra

## "A MEDITATION ON CONFLICT AND LOSS"

1-10

**TABLEAU 1: THE HORROR OF WAR**

11-18

**TABLEAU 2: SONS AND MOTHERS**

19-32

**TABLEAU 3: REFLECTIONS ON LOSS**

to commemorate the centenary of World War I in 2014  
and of the Gallipoli campaign in 2015.

Commissioned by the Sydney University Graduate Choir.

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World War I – a global war: Australian troops in Egypt in front of the Sphinx and the pyramids during the First World War.

## A SHORT HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE IN WORLD WAR I

### *"Lest we forget"*

As the last links to living memory of the events of 1914–1918 have gone, it becomes too easy to consider the events of World War I – the Great War of its time – through an academic, even impersonal lens. We see archival film footage of Diggers moving like clockwork figures through a smoke-filled moonscape terrain of black and white devastation, and feel that it's somehow not 'real'. It's history: the

past. And yet the reality is that the effects of this first truly global conflict are reverberating still, that we are living with the consequences, the changes wrought through such enormous sacrifice and loss.

It's easy to forget what this war represents. It was the first war of the industrialised age, and the first which gave meaning to the concept of total war. For the first time civilian populations were directly impacted by hostilities on a large scale, their homes, livelihoods – and lives – destroyed. Populations on the home front were also galvanised to support the war effort financially and through organisations such as the Australian Red Cross and the Australian Comforts Fund.

The war gave impetus to already rapid developments in technology: in transport, including vehicular (cars and trucks) and the development of road systems and the rapid expansion of train networks which meant that millions of troops could be moved with ruthless efficiency; of weaponry that could kill with indiscriminate and cruel efficiency; of the use of aircraft in a military context; of radio and wireless; of tanks; and even of submarines.

It's easy to forget the precise reasons why the Great War is significant to Australia. Australia followed Great Britain to war on 4 August 1914, with Labor Prime Minister Andrew Fisher pledging support *'to the last man and the last shilling'*. The volunteer force (the proposal to introduce conscription was put to referendum twice over the four-year period, and both times defeated) served in every major theatre of the war. Initial action in Rabaul (German New Guinea) in 1914 was followed, in 1915, by the Gallipoli campaign against the Turks. Following the withdrawal from the Dardanelles at the end of 1915, the Australian Infantry Forces were deployed to the Western Front – to Flanders Fields in Belgium, the Somme region of northern France – and the cavalry units (the Light Horse) remained in Egypt fighting in campaigns there – Sinai, Libya, Gaza (including the capture of Beersheba), and Jerusalem.

As a new nation, participation in this conflict was seen by many as the first opportunity to prove that nationhood on the world stage. A new sense of national identity emerged, and a confidence that Australia could stand as a nation rather than a colony.

## "Requiem Aeternam"

Australian forces landed at Anzac Cove in the early hours of 25 April 1915, and for eight months (until being withdrawn in December) clung tenaciously to the ridges and valleys in that rugged terrain. Strategically the Dardanelles campaign was a failure, but the Australians emerged from it with a strong reputation as courageous fighters. The Anzac legend was born.

If Gallipoli provided the first opportunity for the fledgling force to test its mettle, action on the Western Front pushed that to the extreme. The names are familiar: the First Battle of the Somme (Fromelles, Pozières, Mouquet Farm, Fiers) in 1916, Bullecourt and the Third Battle of Ypres (Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele) in 1917, and Villers-Bretonneux, Le Hamel and the Second Battle of the Somme (Mont St Quentin and Péronne) in 1918.

The war on the Western Front was one of stalemate and attrition, with hostilities see-sawing back and forth over the same few miles of tortured earth: a long straggly line that stretched like an open wound through Belgium and France.

**"We wonder when this nightmare will end. We see no light. Look where we will, we find the same dark clouds of tragedy."**

As at Gallipoli, the armies dug in – a vast and complex system of trenches was created. Usually some six feet deep (an average man's height), they allowed for housing troops, communications and so on. The sides overran and moved in and out of each other's trenches with each successful advance.

Outside the trenches lay No-Man's-Land, littered with massive tangles of barbed wire and other war detritus, including the dead and dying. The distance between one side and the other was around two hundred and fifty metres (roughly the distance between the Sydney Town Hall and Market Street in the Sydney CBD, or the width of the Queen Victoria Building). At Gallipoli the two sets of trenches were often much closer.

Once the whistle blew to 'go over the top', soldiers

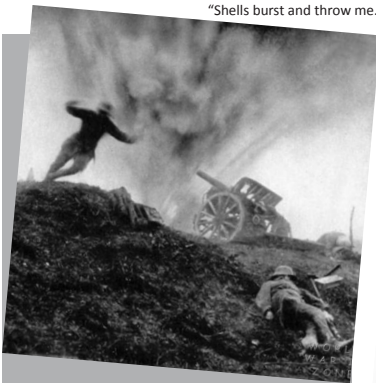
climbed out of the trenches and advanced over No-Man's-Land towards the enemy, through the barbed-wire entanglements that had – theoretically – been cut during the preliminary high-explosive artillery-shell bombardment. In many cases, however, the wire wasn't cut at all, creating a dreadful obstacle course for soldiers to try to navigate, with too many becoming caught in its vicious web.

**"Shells burst and lift me. Shells burst and throw me. All around lay dead and dying. I've lost my mates, I've lost my mates."**

Charles Edward Woodrow (CEW) Bean, the official Australian war correspondent with the AIF troops, provides a haunting description of the relentless and remorseless nature of the bombardment, of thousands of guns firing millions of shells, every minute of every hour of every day.

*The shells ... are beginning to fall more thickly ... Suddenly there is a descending shriek, drawn out for a second or more, coming terrifyingly near; a crash far louder than the nearest thunder; a colossal thump to the earth which seems to move the whole world about an inch from its base ...*

*"Shells burst and throw me..."*





Australian Army medical Corps soldiers carry men suffering from trench foot. France: Picardie, Somme, Albert Combes Area, Bernafay, December 1916.

*... Night and day ... men live under the unceasing sound of guns ... there is not an interval of a second in that continuous roar; hour after hour.*

CEW Bean, Letters from France, 1916

Soldiers suffered horrific injuries from sniper fire, shrapnel, mines and from the wire. Many were simply obliterated, others maimed and seriously disabled, suffering to an unthinkable degree before receiving aid.

***“Life is a living hell – men blown to pieces, blown away. Horror is all around me. Madness consumes the earth.”***

It's almost impossible to grasp the sheer scale of this conflict, the vastness of its suffering and loss. Action on the Western Front accounted for the vast majority of Australians killed and wounded during this conflict: in total, just over 60,000 killed and 152,000 wounded in the whole conflict.

Soldiers in the trenches were at the mercy of the elements as well as all the forces that humans could throw at them. On the Western Front, trenches quickly became water logged to knee- and sometimes waist-depth. Trenches were also populated as much by the dead as by the living – corpses, body parts embedded in the mud. The winter of 1916–1917 was one of the worst on record, with driving rain, gale-force winds, severe frosts and snow, from which there was no shelter.

Soldiers' companions included rats, lice, and disease caused by proximity to unburied human remains. They were constantly exposed to damp, freezing conditions (causing 'trench foot' and frostbite). There was no proper sanitation, and this exacerbated problems caused by high levels of dysentery. And in the confusion, there was ample potential for friendly fire, both from artillery and from gas.

Equally damaging were the psychological wounds caused by being subjected to constant fear: enduring a bombardment that at any moment could claim their lives; witnessing the most horrific sights – mates maimed and mutilated; and having to leave them without being able to assist. And all around was the most catastrophic devastation of a landscape that could be imagined.

***“Eyes looked down, weeping, seeping, their bodies were bowed, flesh burned and blistered, with the horror of the battle buried deep within ... He said, ‘Get your gas helmets on, boys. I’m done.’”***

The scream of the shells signified a number of things to those in the trenches. First, that an infantry attack was imminent. And second, that among the explosive shells and the shrapnel might be gas. The Great War marked the use of chemical weapons on a wide scale: tear gas, and mustard, phosgene and chlorine gases. The prospect of gas created terror for the soldiers – not only were protective masks rudimentary and liable to fail, but the gas itself could be slow-acting, and could contaminate not just the air but also water and food supplies. Effects ranged from eye irritation and blindness, to blistered and burned skin, to asphyxiation and an agonising death.

***"Dear Mother, I am so homesick. Your words were always brave and oh so tender. Full of courage and strength. ... I would give anything to have you here again at home with me."***

For the families at home, the true picture of what had occurred was only revealed after their sons came home. And in many cases mothers went to their own graves still searching for answers.

***"We will remember them"***

So many voices were stilled in this four-year period; so much potential was lost, engulfed by a storm of warfare that, until that point, was simply inconceivable.

So many never came home. And with the loss of one or more sons many family lines simply ... stopped. Memories of those boys faded until the only hints left of their existence might now be a

name on a local war memorial, or a gold-lettered inscription on a school Roll of Honour. Across Gallipoli, France and the Middle East they lie. Not all have graves, some few have no place of commemoration—they are truly "known only unto God".

"AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM" honours those young men, and the mothers who said farewell to them. Through this work we reflect on the shared experience of all countries affected by this global conflict, the loss shared by mothers everywhere.

We also reflect on why so many Australian young men went so far away to fight for the ideals of freedom and peace, ultimately dearly bought on all sides. We must remember. We must not repeat that agony.

Rosalie O'Neale  
July 2014

Graves of Australian soldiers being tended by French children, Adelaide Cemetery, Villers-Bretonneux, France, August 1919



Messages from representatives of those foreign governments which have supported this project, and on whose soil Australians fell.



**Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Canberra**

**.be**



The Great War will forever be a defining moment in the world's history. This was indeed the opening act of a very murderous century in Europe, one that scarred my country forever. Cities like Ypres, Passchendaele amongst so many others on the Western Front were razed to the ground. The landscape, 100 years later, sometimes still bears testimony of the savagery of this fight, as was so elegantly represented in the video footage shown in the opening act of today's concert.

Of the more than 290.000 Australian soldiers who served in this theatre of war, 46.000 were either killed in action or died of their wounds. Many Australian soldiers still lie buried in hundreds of war graves across my country, some remaining unidentified and "known only to God". The many memorials and museums in Belgium pay tribute to the Diggers' sacrifice, one that Belgium and its people shall never forget. Belgium is forever grateful for their commitment and bravery.

The traumatizing experience of WWI directly contributed to forging the idea of a European community, one rooted around the idea of peace between long-standing enemies. It took unfortunately two world wars to achieve it but the "old European continent" has now enjoyed peace for more than 50 years. But peace came to a dramatic human cost and it is therefore crucial to keep the war memory alive and pass it on to further generations. Today's requiem is very important in that sense and I would like to commend the Sydney University Graduate Choir for taking the initiative and for turning this interesting project into a musical success.

H.E. Mr. Jean-Luc Bodson  
Ambassador of Belgium to Australia



Consulate General  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Sydney



"The beginning of the war 100 years ago, the collapse of the fragile European balance of power in summer 1914, is an onerous story about the failure of elites, the military and diplomacy" (German Federal Foreign Minister Dr. Steinmeier). Learning lessons from the past means remembering the past. This is ever more important at times when many young people particularly in Europe take a stable peace for granted because they never experienced the atrocities of war.

The German Consulate General in Sydney is proud to be associated with the project "An Australian War Requiem" of the Sydney University Graduate Choir. The universal language of music is well suited to remember the millions of deaths on all sides and at all fronts.

Hans-Dieter Steinbach

Consul General





NEW ZEALAND  
Consulate-General SYDNEY  
TE AKA AORERE



11 July 2014

Sydney University Graduate Choir  
PO Box 289, Enmore  
NSW 2042

As we approach the Centenary of ANZAC, we are reminded of the extraordinary sacrifices made by the Australians and New Zealanders who fought side by side when the ANZACs landed at Gallipoli, and those who have served in military conflicts since World War I to keep secure the freedoms we all enjoy today. The Gallipoli campaign has come to be regarded both in New Zealand and Australia as a hugely significant moment in the forging of our national consciousness and identity, and is also where the unique ANZAC relationship was founded, which endures to this day and underpins the extraordinarily close relationship between our two countries. In that spirit, I am delighted to have the opportunity to lend support to the performance of "An Australian War Requiem", which you are hearing for the first time this evening, and I congratulate the Sydney University Graduate Choir on this important initiative.

Martin Welsh  
New Zealand Consul General for New South Wales and Queensland

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CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
SYDNEY

Sydney, 08 July 2014

The Battles of Çanakkale shaped the course of the First World War and changed the destiny of many nations around the world, including Turkey. Despite the cruelty of war, in Gallipoli, Turkish and Anzac soldiers established permanent and strong friendship between their nations. This sacred place, where young people from diverse nations are lying side by side, is a unique example that reminds humanity of the value and meaning of peace in the face of the bitter truths of war. In 1934, great leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk wrote the famous words that reached out to the mothers who sent their sons from far away countries. *"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears. Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."*

We would like to congratulate the creators of "An Australian War Requiem" for their dedicated work which honours Anzac spirit and wish them every success

Dr. Seyda HANBAY ARCA  
Consul General





Christopher Bowen  
Music Director and composer

## CHRISTOPHER BOWEN OAM

Music Director and Composer

CHRISTOPHER BOWEN was born in Melbourne and studied music at Melbourne University and the *Konservatorium der Stadt Wien* (Vienna Conservatorium), where he studied conducting with Reinhard Schwarz and participated in master classes directed by Gennady Rozhdestvensky. He has worked with many organisations including the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia, the Victorian State Opera and the Conservatoriums in Sydney and Vienna.

His conducting repertoire embraces the major orchestral and choral works from the sixteenth century to contemporary music and through his innovative programming he has introduced many new and neglected works to audiences – in particular the choral works of Camille Saint-Saëns, such as *Le Déluge*, *“Requiem”*, *“Oratorio*

*de Noël”* and the *“Mass Opus 4”*. In 2006, he conducted the first Australian performance of Beethoven's forgotten masterpiece *“Cantata on the death of Joseph II”*.

Christopher's considerable body of composition comprises orchestral and choral works, instrumental and chamber music. He has also written two works, *“Nosferatu”* and *“Casablanca”*, for the stage. His compositions and arrangements have received critical and public acclaim and have been broadcast on the ABC, ORF (Austrian Radio) and 2MBS-FM, and performed by orchestras such as the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. In recent years major commissions have produced works such as *“Triste, Triste”*, *“Chorea”*, the *“Liberdade Requiem”* (dedicated to those who died whilst fighting for East Timor's independence), the satirical *“Democratie”*, based on Arthur Rimbaud's prose-poem, *“Tenebrae”*, and an extended setting of Christopher Brennan's evocative poem *“Sweet silence after bells”*. In 2011 he was commissioned by the Sydney University Graduate Choir to compose *“Songs of the Heart”*, which was dedicated to Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO. The premiere of this work, a setting of five poems by Brennan, was greeted with acclaim.

Christopher has released a number of CDs of his works, including a recording by the Australian National Orchestra and Choir. In 2011 a recording of Saint-Saëns's *“Mass Opus 4”* was released, featuring the Sydney University Graduate Chamber Choir.

In 2008, Christopher was made an Honorary Fellow of the University of Sydney in recognition of his contribution to its cultural life. That same year he also received the Stephen Lardner award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to adult education, and in 2009 he received an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for his services to music.

# PAMELA TRAYNOR

Librettist

PAMELA TRAYNOR's love of the arts from a young age has been influential in her career, leading her to work in diverse roles ranging from writing and filmmaking to classical music and acting.

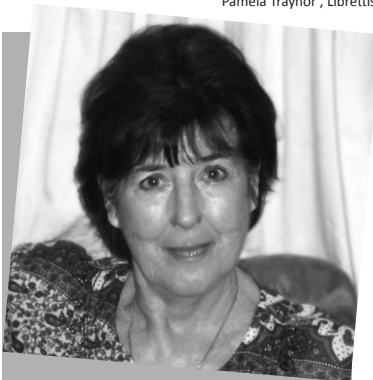
Her work in Concerts at the ABC consolidated her passion for classical music and her writing and producing have won a number of awards for film, including the American Film Festival; Silver Medal Houston International Film Festival; New York Film and TV Festival; Silver Screen Award USA Film Festival; International Peace Award – Moscow Film Festival; Australian Media Peace Prize and four AFI nominations including Best Screenplay.

Her book *Roads to Recovery*, which examines the lives of those who survived illness, accident and loss, was published by Allen and Unwin both in Australia and the UK. In the UK she has worked for the BBC and ATV (ITC) and in Australia, ABC-TV, ABC Radio, the former Film Australia and the commercial networks.

Her documentary special for ABC Radio about the Australian writer, Dymphna Cusack, won a Gold Citation Media Peace Prize award. The marriage of words and music is a unique art form and her collaboration as librettist with Christopher Bowen OAM has been most rewarding.

The idea for the AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM began in 2011 when Christopher first suggested the idea of a music composition inspired by the letters written by Australian soldiers to their mothers during World War I. The research and writing of the text was a highly emotional journey: Pamela read hundreds of letters written by these soldiers – many of whom died in combat – and a small number of letters written by mothers to their sons which luckily survived the battlefields. Pamela and Christopher's hope is that this work will be a legacy for generations of audiences in a quest for peace. They plan to collaborate on future projects.

Pamela Traynor , Librettist





Dmitri Shostakovich

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Composers and War

The twentieth century was marked by the biggest military conflicts in history and a number of its famous composers reflected on war's tragic and powerful impact. Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975) was living in Leningrad when the German Army began its siege of the city in the summer of 1941. As well as serving as a volunteer firefighter, he began to compose his "*Seventh Symphony*", the "*Leningrad*", and had composed a good deal of it before being evacuated to Kuibyshev, behind the battlefield, where he completed it. A performance of the symphony in besieged Leningrad in August 1943 caught the imagination of people in the Soviet Union and around the world.

If the "*Leningrad Symphony*" excites partly because of the immediacy of its composition to the contention of conflict, the "*Metamorphosen*" of Richard Strauss (1864–1949), dating from 1945, gives the composer's response to the defeat of Germany and particularly to the destruction and damage of places that were familiar to and loved by him, including Munich and its opera house. In this sparingly scored work (for twenty-three solo strings), the eighty-year-old composer eschews the opulent excess of so much of his output and achieves a bleakly powerful expression of grief and despair.

The "*Sixth Symphony*" of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958), dating from 1948, has no literary program and the resolutely modest composer resisted all efforts to get him to reveal what it is about. The symphony, however, is widely seen as Vaughan Williams's response to World War II and the rise of totalitarianism. It is a moving and inspiring work, one of this unfairly neglected composer's greatest. (The choir will include some of his music in its next concert on 7 December.)

Arthur Honegger (1892–1955), born of Swiss parents but resident for most of his life in France and a member of the famous French group of composers, Les Six, composed some of his most famous works during and in the aftermath of World War II. His "*Symphony for Strings*", dating from 1940 to 1941,

is a portrayal of the misery, violence and pervasive depression that afflicted Paris and its citizens during the Occupation. Honegger's "Symphonie Liturgique" (1946) has an explicit program:

*In this work I wanted to symbolise the reaction of modern man against the tide of barbarity, stupidity, suffering, mechanisation and bureaucracy which have been with us for several years.*

Honegger's music also merits more attention and performance than it is currently receiving.

Some twentieth-century composers also produced works in response to specific events of war: for example, the great Czech, Bohuslav Martinu (1890–1959), who was in exile in the United States, wrote in 1943 "Memorial to Lidice", a powerful musical response to the German destruction of the Czech village of Lidice, carried out in reprisal for the assassination in occupied Prague of the senior Nazi official Reinhold Heydrich; and, in 1960, the important contemporary Polish composer, Krzysztof Penderecki (born in 1933), came to international attention through his "Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima". In Penderecki's case, the work was composed before the Hiroshima subject matter was assigned to it.

One of the largest works on the theme of war is the "War Requiem" of Benjamin Britten (1913–1977). Like his life partner, Peter Pears, the famous English tenor, Britten was a pacifist and conscientious objector who had the courage to openly avow this position unpopular during the years of World War II. In 1961, Britten gave expression to his views in the "War Requiem", a powerful expression of anti-war feeling, in which the liturgy of the requiem is combined with the moving, tragic war poetry of Wilfred Owen. Britten had the brilliant idea of underlining this message by having the three solo roles taken by famous singers from three of the major European participants from both sides of the two world wars – as well as Pears, these were the great German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya.

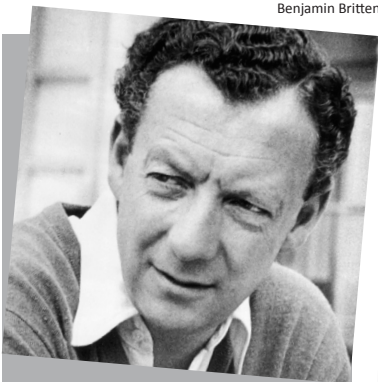
This brief account of musical responses to last century's wars by English, Czech, French, German, Polish and Russian composers leads to the thought that it may be somewhat surprising that those

events, which left such an imprint on our national formation and culture, should not to date have led Australian composers to write much music about them. One can point to the "Elegy In Memoriam Rupert Brooke for Harp and Strings" of 1915 by the Sydney-born Frederick Septimus Kelly (1881–1916), who served at Gallipoli and was killed on the Somme. And Peter Sculthorpe includes a reference to an Anzac Day ceremony in his "Small Town" of 1976, which is really a reflection on Australian community life rather than on military conflict.

In the mid-1940s, Roy Agnew (1891–1944) was considering the composition of an Anzac Symphony but death denied him the opportunity. Christopher Bowen's new work, therefore, premiered today, breaks ground in our musical repertoire as a large-scale work dealing with Australia's involvement in World War I and the Anzac story.

John Bowen  
August 2014

Benjamin Britten





Christopher Bowen, composer

Photographer: Tom Williams

## THE COMPOSITION BY THE COMPOSER

After one hundred years since the outbreak of a “war to end all wars”, our world seems to be as far removed as ever from achieving enduring peace.

So why write a work that commemorates such an appalling event while never seeking to glorify it? Obviously, music cannot prevent the tragedy of war, but it can distil its essence.

In 2000, I composed the “*Liberdade Requiem*”, dedicated to those brave and selfless East-Timorese who had sacrificed their lives in order that their country could emerge as an independent and democratic nation.

After its successful premiere performance, I reflected on our own nation’s democratic heritage, traditions and commitment, no matter the cost, to support and defend the principles of self-determination and freedom. My thoughts immediately turned to composing a suitable work for the one-hundredth anniversaries of the Great War in 2014 and Gallipoli in 2015.

I wanted to write a work that would both capture the essence of this momentous event and honour those Australians and indigenous Australians who had to endure and suffer so much death and destruction and, above all, I wanted it to be a work that would not only speak to our nation but also to those nations on whose soil so many of our soldiers shed their blood and which now provide their final resting place.

At the War Memorial in Canberra the librettist Pamela Traynor and I began researching hundreds of letters written to mothers and sent back home by soldiers in Gallipoli and on the Western Front – the Somme and Flanders. What struck us was the tenderness and love expressed by so many young men towards their mothers and how they spoke so honestly of their experiences, their many hopes and fears, with such a heart-rending sense of poetry.

Soldiers, long dead and frozen in history, whose names were recorded with their rank and service number, gradually emerged as being something more than tragic statistics.

A humble dairy farmer from South Australia was a sensitive poet. An avowed pacifist, he enlisted in the 7th Field Ambulance and on the battlefields forged a lifelong friendship with a man who later contributed greatly to the mining industry in Australia and was appointed CBE in 1957. They died within a year of each other. There are many such stories still to be told. In 2012, inspired by these very moving letters and in order to gain a sense of perspective, I decided I had to visit some of the places which are now such an integral part of

our nation's history: Gallipoli, Villers-Bretonneux, Pozieres, Passchendaele, Tyne Cot and Ypres.

On my return I wrote:

*I have just returned from a very intensive twelve-day pilgrimage which has provided me with so much inspiration and material for this composition and has moved me to my very core.*

*Something quite extraordinary has happened in these places and bears testimony to our capacity to turn such death, destruction and despair into bonds that inextricably unite nations with one another and ennoble our common sense of humanity.*

*I have never seen so many names etched into gravestones, the walls and panels of memorials and I have never seen so many inscriptions expressing gratitude and thanks to Australians who travelled from so far away, who cared enough to make the ultimate sacrifice so that others could enjoy peace and be free of tyranny. From the shores and surrounding hills of Gallipoli to the fields of the Somme and Flanders, these graves, all alike and instantly recognisable, are to be found in the most unlikely of places.*

*There are literally hundreds of such places to be found in this area. From a distance a cross can often be discerned on the horizon rising up to the heavens and it is inconceivable, beyond comprehension, that once, such a gentle and beautiful landscape was a quagmire, a sea of mud, trenches, craters, a place where the stench of death was all around.*

*I cannot forget the cemetery just outside Villers-Bretonneux. Set on a gentle slope and with a cold wind blowing in the early morning light, I was profoundly moved as I stood there in deep contemplation.*

*In the village there is the Victoria school, its hall's interior built with wood from Daylesford, Victoria and from within looking out through the windows onto the playground, there is the sign "Do not forget Australia". There is such a moving and tender sincerity here with the flags of France and Australia fluttering together in the wind side by side.*

As a child, I remember being taken by my parents to the National Gallery of Victoria, where I was captivated by a small and exquisite painting by an anonymous fifteenth-century Flemish painter. The poignant scene depicted Mary with the infant Jesus in her lap. To this day I have always found the sight of a mother tending her child to be one of the most tender and profound experiences in life.

It was always my intention to use part of the Latin Sequence "Stabat Mater" as part of this War Requiem because of its allegorical potential. The grief of the mother of Christ, standing at the foot of the cross, looking up at her dying son, was shared by many mothers whose sons were sacrificed on the battlefield. This powerful juxtaposition is relevant today.

This idea was confirmed during the time I spent in the Somme and I wrote the following in my journal:

*Not far away there is the town of Albert and from the distance a statue covered in gold leaf gleams in the sunlight and can be seen from all around. It is a powerful image which will undoubtedly be incorporated into my work. The statue is huge and sits on top of the cathedral's spire and depicts Mary, the mother of Christ, holding her son high above her head reaching into the sky.*

This causes me to remember the words of Atatürk, who commanded the Turkish forces at Gallipoli and became the architect of the modern Turkish state:

*The losses of this war are lamentable for all nations that fought in the war. I am calling to Australian and New Zealander mothers who all shed tears for their sons and think of taking their graves back to their homeland. Wipe away your tears, your sons are now lying in our bosom and are at peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.*

This is a short extract from an Australian mother's reply:

*The warmth of your words eased our sorrow for our sons that vanished in Gallipoli and our tears ended.*





Adelaide Cemetery near Villers-Bretonneux, Somme, France.

*Your words are a consolation to me as a mother. Now we are sure that our sons rest in their eternal peace.*

These moving words form an important part of the text; and I have also tried to include a ritualistic element within this work, inspired by my time spent at the Australian War Memorial and Ypres (Ieper) in Belgium.

Again I refer to my journal:

*I could write so much about my experiences during this journey, all of which have presented material for the formation of my composition, but I will never forget the Last Post ceremony which takes place every evening at eight o'clock at the Menin Gate in Ypres and witnessed by hundreds and often thousands of people. The haunting music of a lone piper, the sound of bugles and the recitation of the oath, all remain vivid in my memory.*

This extended composition is not just dedicated to the memory of those who perished and made the supreme sacrifice on the shores of Gallipoli or on the bloody fields of Flanders and the Somme. Monuments with the names of fallen soldiers inscribed in stone are to be found in cities, suburbs and rural towns throughout Australia and bear testament to a hidden, less obvious tragedy suffered by those who returned and those who were touched by the death of a son, husband, father, friend or relative. The war cast a very long and enduring shadow over the men, women and children of a young nation who tried to either forget that which could not or should not be forgotten or to make sense of the incomprehensible. It must also be remembered that the ramifications of war are not frozen in history but continue to be experienced by those involved in contemporary conflicts.

It is my hope that this "War Requiem" speaks a universal language and reinforces those qualities which bring all people together and enable them to share a common humanity in peace.

In closing I would like to extend my special thanks to the Sydney University Graduate Choir for their absolute belief in and dedication to the realisation of this commission. Without their commitment and enthusiasm this work would not have been possible and the State of New South Wales and indeed Australia are fortunate to have such an organisation which contributes so much to its cultural life.

Christopher Bowen  
8 July 2014





An Australian soldier offers a drink to a wounded Turkish soldier, Gallipoli, 1915.



Celeste Lazarenko

## CELESTE LAZARENKO

Soprano

CELESTE LAZARENKO is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under the vocal tuition of Rudolf Piernay and from the Sydney Conservatorium Opera School. She has a Masters Degree in Performance from both colleges.

While in the UK, Celeste sang for Opera North in the role of NINFA in "*L'Orfeo*" and covered the lead role of ELMIRA in Keiser's "*Croesus*". She also worked extensively for English National Opera covering the title role in "*Partenope*", the role of NORA in "*Riders to the Sea*", soprano solo in "*Luonnotar*", Clemence in "*L'Amour de Loin*" and Polisenna in "*Radamisto*".

Highlight performances have included MEDEA in "*Giasone*" and TELAIRE in "*Castor et Pollux*" (Pinchgut Opera); DONNA ANNA in "*Don Giovanni*" (Oz Opera tour); CELIA in "*Lucio Silla*" (Angers Nantes, Opera de Rennes); PAMINA in "*Die Zauberflöte*" in concert (Opera de Rennes); MARY in "*Hugh the Drover*" (East Sussex Opera Company); "*The Seasons*" (Dijon Opera); MORGANA in "*Alcina*" (English Touring Opera); SANDRINA in "*La finta giardiniera*" (Opera de Bauge); principal soprano in "*Hydrogen Jukebox*" by Phillip Glass (Angers Nantes Opera); "*Messiah*" (Sydney and Melbourne Symphony orchestras); Mahler's "*Symphony No 4*" (Melbourne Symphony) and Brahms's "*German Requiem*" (Sydney Philharmonia), and Verdi's "*Requiem*" (Sydney University Graduate Choir).

In 2014, Celeste's engagements include an appearance at Symphony in the Domain for Sydney Festival, KATE PINKERTON in "*Madama Butterfly*" for Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, "*Messiah*" with Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Birtwistle's "*The Io Passion*" for Sydney Chamber Opera and a recital with AriSong NSW.

# AYSE GÖKNUR SHANAL

Soprano

AYSE GÖKNUR SHANAL's performance in "AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM" is sponsored by Dincel Constructions.

Born in Brisbane, Ayse Göknur Shanal has won awards and scholarships nationally and internationally in voice, including the Australian Singing Competition, Dame Joan Sutherland Scholarship and Award, Opera Foundation's Metropolitan Opera Award (New York), McDonald's Operatic Aria, Queen's Trust for Young Australians, Symphony Australia's Young Performers Award Vocal Category, Australian Music Foundation Award (London), Countess of Munster Scholarship (London) and Lorelei Prize at Neue Stimmen International Singing Competition (Germany), to name a few. In 2013, she received the Most Outstanding Singer Award in Sydney Eisteddfod's coveted Victoria Jennifer Warren Accompaniment Award. That year, she won the National Liederfest Competition and the Australian Opera Awards Committee's full scholarship to Lisa Gasteen National Opera School.

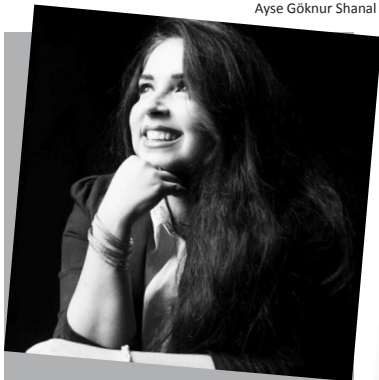
As a soloist, Ayse has appeared with some of the major symphony orchestras in Australia, notably Sydney, West Australia, Melbourne, Adelaide, Willoughby Symphony, Sydney Sinfonia, and has an extensive repertoire. She has also performed with Opera Australia's touring company, singing the role of Mimi in "La Bohème" to great acclaim.

During a break from singing, Ayse completed a Graduate Law Degree at University of Western Sydney. In 2013, she made a highly successful and unprecedented return to the music profession, and her performance schedule rapidly filled up. She has recently appeared with NSW Doctors Orchestra, Opera New England's production of "La Bohème"

in the lead role and at Blacktown Arts Centre. Ayse made her debut with the Sydney University Graduate Choir in May in a Mozart and Michael Haydn program. She is due to perform in Melbourne with Bradley Gilchrist, further appearances with John Martin, as well as solo engagements with Penrith Symphony Orchestra. She will be performing the role of Lia in Debussy's "L'Enfant Prodigue" for Harbour City Opera in October.

Ayse is the Senior Ambassador for Finemusic FM Young Virtuosi and she will be releasing her debut CD with Bradley Gilchrist, produced by Finemusic.

Ayse Göknur Shanal





Henry Choo

## HENRY CHOO

Tenor

HENRY CHOO is one of Australasia's most outstanding and popular tenors.

He made his career debut as ERNESTO in Opera Queensland's production of *Don Pasquale*, and made his principal debut with Opera Australia as the ITALIAN SINGER in *Der Rosenkavalier*.

His many roles for the national company have included: TAMINO in *The Magic Flute*, ACIS in *Acis and Galatea*, ALMAVIVA in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, FERRANDO in *Così fan tutte*, RINUCCIO in *Gianni Schicchi*, ORONTE in *Alcina*, NADIR in *The Pearl Fishers*, DON OTTAVIO in *Don Giovanni*, THE DEFENDANT in *Trial by Jury*, THE HERALD in *Rinaldo*, BENVOLIO in *Romeo et Juliette*.

Henry's concert repertoire includes Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St John Passion* and Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle*. He has been a frequent guest artist with the Sydney, Queensland, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, Sydney Philharmonia and The Australia Ensemble.

Since 2010, Henry has undertaken a range of major roles for Opera Australia - DON OTTAVIO, NADIR, ALMAVIVA, THE ITALIAN SINGER in *Der Rosenkavalier*, LYSANDER in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, CAMILLE in a new production of *The Merry Widow* and ALDO/NIGEL in *Bliss* in Sydney, Melbourne and at the Edinburgh Festival. He sang NADIR and DON OTTAVIO for West Australian Opera and took the tenor solos in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under Maestro Edo de Waart. He sang in the Sydney University Graduate Choir's performance of Bach's *St. John Passion* in 2013.

In 2014, Henry Choo sings CASSIO in *Otello* for West Australian Opera and The Perth Festival and appears as soloist with the Queensland and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras and the Melbourne Bach Choir.

# CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON

Bass-Baritone

Sydney-based CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON commenced studies in pianoforte at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music, however he changed his major to voice, studying with Marilyn Smith, and graduating with a Bachelor of Music in Classical Vocal Performance in 2003. Since then, Christopher has studied with renowned Australian soprano Jane Edwards, tenor Glenn Winslade, voice coach Sharolyn Kimmorley and at the Lisa Gasteen National Opera School. He has also been the recipient of the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Aria Award.

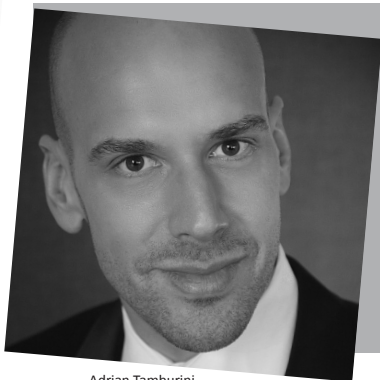
Christopher appears regularly on the concert and opera stage as soloist in oratorio, opera, music theatre, recital and radio broadcasts. Performance highlights include Haydn's "*Creation*" with the Canberra Choral Society, Handel's "*Messiah*" with St Andrews Cathedral Choir, Sydney, and Newcastle University Choir and Orchestra, Mozart "*Requiem in D minor*" with Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra, and "*Abandon*" (Handel arr. Crabb) with Opera Queensland and DanceNorth, which premiered in Townsville last year and was featured at the Brisbane World Theatre Festival in February this year. Christopher appeared with the Sydney University Graduate Choir in May 2014 in a program of Mozart and Michael Haydn.

Christopher's future performances will include soloist in "*Sing Along Messiah*" with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, "*Alexander Balus*" (Handel) with Canberra Choral Society, THOMAS in "*Iphigénie en Tauride*" (Gluck) for Pinchgut Opera and a recital for the Wagner Society NSW.

He has also featured as guest soloist with Melbourne-based Syzygy Ensemble, in the chamber opera "*The Apology of Bony Anderson*" (Conyngham) at the 2013 Metropolis New Music Festival and with Arco Symphonic Project in the world premiere of "*KURSK: an Oratorio Requiem*" by David Chisholm at the Melbourne Festival.

Christopher Richardson





Adrian Tamburini

## ADRIAN TAMBURINI

Basso Cantante

ADRIAN TAMBURINI undertook his early vocal training in Melbourne, his home town, and is now with Opera Australia. Along the way, he has been the recipient of many prizes, and finalist in a number of Australia's most prestigious vocal competitions. He has won Lygon Street Festa Aria Competition, 2003; Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Aria Award, 2007; Lythgo Trust Operatic Aria Award, 2007; Melbourne Welsh Male Voice Choir Singer of the Year Competition, 2007; John Tallis Singing Competition, 2008; Acclaim Awards Pergolesi-Spontini Festival Baroque Scholarship, 2010.

Adrian has been a finalist in the German Australian Opera Grant, Hessisches Staatstheater, Wiesbaden in both 2008 and 2011, as well as in the Lady Fairfax New York Scholarship, 2010 and Music and Opera Singers Trust Opera Awards, 2011.

Adrian's Operatic experience with Opera Australia has been as ZARETSKY in "*Eugene Onegin*"; ZUNIGA in "*Carmen*"; SECOND ARMED MAN in "*The Magic Flute*"; FIRST SOLDIER in "*Salome*"; ALCINDORO in "*La Bohème*"; MESSENGER and ASSASSIN in "*Macbeth*"; BASS CHORUS in "*The Love of the Nightingale*"; THE OFFICER OF THE WATCH in "*The Barber of Seville*"; PICKPOCKET in "*Lakmé*"; SARASTRO in "*The Magic Flute*"; LEPORELLO in "*Don Giovanni*"; FIGARO in "*The Barber of Seville*".

With other companies he has taken the roles of FIGARO and BARTOLO in "*The Marriage of Figaro*"; COUNT CEFRANO in "*Rigoletto*"; LEPORELLO in "*Don Giovanni*"; YAKUSIDE, LO ZIO BONZE and IL COMMISSARIO in "*Madama Butterfly*"; DR GRENVIL in "*La Traviata*"; FIORELLO in AMBROGIO and THE OFFICER in "*The Barber of Seville*"; ALFIO in "*Cavalleria Rusticana*"; TADDEO in "*The Italian Girl in Algiers*"; COLONNA in "*Rienzi*"; AENEAS in "*Dido and Aeneas*"; THE LAWYER and THE DOCTOR in "*Gianni Schicchi*"; PAPAGENO and SARASTRO in "*The Magic Flute*"; UBERTO in "*La Serva Padrona*"; COLATINUS in "*The Rape of Lucretia*"; JERVIS in "*Nelson*"; MR GOBINEAU in "*The Medium*"; DANDINI in "*La Cenerentola*"; COUNT RODOLFO in "*La Sonnambula*"; SIR JOHN FLUSTAFF in "*The Merry Wives of Windsor*"; USHER in "*Trial by Jury*".

His concert repertoire includes Handel's "*Messiah*", Haydn's "*Creation*", Verdi's "*Requiem*", Bach's "*St John Passion*", "*Easter Oratorio*", "*Magnificat*" and "*Ich habe genug*", Berlioz's "*L'Enfance du Christ*" and Mahler's "*Symphony No 8*".

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AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM



# AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

The text for "AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM" was inspired by the hundreds of letters written during World War I by young soldiers on the battlefields and their mothers at home in Australia.

## PROLOGUE

### Letter 1

Alice Crowley's letter to her son Lieutenant Clive Stanley Crowley (read by Amy Kersey)

*My very dear Clive,  
I am feeling awfully low spirited dearest since  
hearing such very terrible news relating to this fearful  
war. It just feels too heavy to bear. Whenever will  
it end and I am always wondering how you are, my  
poor dear Clive away over in that wretched place. I  
have never felt my old self since you left us.*

*I've safely received all your dear photographs. I try  
and imagine you at home here with us again and see  
your dear good face as in the happy days of yore.*

*We did not sufficiently appreciate those happy days I  
fear dearest Clive and I would give anything to enjoy  
such very happy times again together.*

*I hope that you will continue to get your parcels  
safely that are being sent regularly to you. I will now  
close dear for the present sincerely hoping and ever  
praying for your safety.*

*With fondest love to you dear from us all and  
abundance of good wishes from all our friends  
around.*

*I am dear Clive, ever your loving and faithful mother,  
Alice.*

*May God bless and protect my brave son.*

That letter was dated 31 March 1918; Lieutenant Crowley died on 25 June 1918.

Lieutenant Clive Stanley Crowley





A fellow officer wrote:

Vivian Neville Main

*At daybreak during an early-morning bombardment at Villers-Bretonneux in June 1918 I met Lieutenant Crowley coming out walking from the front line. He was badly gassed but just able to speak to me and I heard that he died at the Dressing Station the same afternoon. He was a friend of mine.*

Another officer reported:

*I saw Lieutenant Crowley walking out and heard him say, "I'm done. Get your gas helmets on, boys."*

## Letter 2

Vivian Neville Main's letter to his mother  
(read by Ben Jesinowski)

*Christmas Day, 1917*

*My dearest Mother;*

*We're somewhere in France and I've just finished Christmas dinner. I've been thinking of you all at home today. Oh! How I would like to be there with you all.*

*Had my birthday in the trenches in none too comfortable a spot but one must put up with these sort of things in these hard times.*

*By jove it has been cold over here. Everything frozen and the water in my water bottle was one hard lump.*

*I had a very narrow squeak this time: A piece of shrapnel came and tore my clothes and then went in to the ground. It was quite near enough.*

*You should have seen me this morning. No bath or shave for a couple of weeks. I looked like Robinson Crusoe.*

*From your loving son,*

*Vivian*



Vivian was killed in action later that Christmas Day, aged twenty-four.

## TABLEAU 1 THE HORROR OF WAR



Australian infantry wounded at a First Aid Post near Zonnebeke Railway Station. Western Front (Belgium), Passchendaele Area.  
12 October 1917.

# AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

## LIBRETTO & TRANSLATION

music by **CHRISTOPHER BOWEN**  
text by **PAMELA TRAYNOR**

for SSTBB soloists, SATB choir,  
semi-choir, children's choir and orchestra

## TABLEAU 1 THE HORROR OF WAR

### 1 **Ataturk (Bass)**

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their  
lives ... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly  
country.

#### **Chorus**

Requiem aeternam

*Eternal rest!*

### **Ataturk (Bass)**

Therefore rest in peace.

#### **Children's Choir**

Requiem

*Rest!*

### 2 **Semi Chorus (Voices of the Dead)**

There is no difference between us and the  
Mehmets, where we lie side by side in this land  
of ours.

#### **Ataturk (Bass)**

You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far  
away countries, wipe away your tears, your sons  
are now lying in our bosom and have become our  
sons as well.

#### **Chorus**

Requiem aeternam

*Eternal Rest!*

### **Ataturk (Bass)**

Our sons are now in peace.  
They are now in peace.

### **Children's Choir**

Requiem

*Rest!*

### 3 **Soprano and Chorus**

Stabat mater dolorosa  
lucta cruce lacrimosa  
Dum pendebat Filius

*The grieving mother stood  
weeping beside the cross  
while her son was hanging there*

### 4 **Soldier (TENOR)**

Oh mother, it would melt a heart of stone! – I've  
seen a side of war in all its horror. There is no hope  
at all.

I wonder when this nightmare will end? I can see  
no light.

Look where I will – I find the same dark clouds of  
tragedy.

#### **Chorus**

Requiem aeternam

*Eternal rest!*

### 5 **Death March (Soloists and Chorus)**

Men have fallen and died every hour of the day,  
every day of each year.  
Yet the nations are no nearer their goal.






---

**Soldier (TENOR)**

Oh mother, it would melt a heart of stone!  
– I've seen a side of war in all its terror.  
There is no hope at all.

---

**6 Chorus**

We wonder when this nightmare will end?  
We see no light.  
Look where we will – we find the same dark clouds  
of tragedy without a silver lining.

---

**Soldier (TENOR)**

Each side knows the price of war  
and each rues the day they went to battle.  
But no one will stretch out the hand of peace.

---

**Chorus and Soldier (TENOR)**

There is too much hate and too much suspicion.

---

**Soldier (TENOR)**

And yet the people yearn for peace and an end  
to this needless slaughter.  
Every hour of the day, every day of each year the  
very best of men, they lie bleeding and dying.

---

**Chorus, Children's Choir and Soloists**

We yearn for peace every hour, every day.

---

**7 Mother (SOPRANO)**

When men open their hearts and minds, they will  
turn away from tragedy and be wiser;  
But still they fight and suffer.

---

**Chorus and Children's Choir**

*Dona nobis pacem  
Grant us peace*

---

**8 Soldier (TENOR)**

Oh mother

---

**Mother (SOPRANO)**

Oh my dearest son

---

**Soldier (TENOR)**

It would melt a heart of stone  
I see so much of war with all its tragedies

---

**Mother (SOPRANO)**

Is there any hope at all?

---

**9 Chorus**

*Cuius animam gementem  
Contristatam et dolentem  
Pertransiit gladius*

---

*Her sighing soul  
anguished and lamenting  
was pierced by a sword.*

---

**10 Soldier (TENOR) and Chorus**

Shells burst and lift me and throw me ...  
All around lay dead and dying. I've lost my mates.

---

Life is a living hell – a hellhole.  
Men blown to pieces, blown away  
Sightless eyes of faceless soldiers staring,  
spattered in blood

---

Screaming voices pleading for mercy,  
pierce the air.

---

Horror is all around me  
War has changed me.  
Mother!

---

Madness consumes the earth!  
What is its meaning?  
Fly in a fury and ask: "Why weren't we warned?"  
Why?

---

**Soloists, Chorus & Children's Choir**

Men have fallen and died every hour of the day,  
every day of each year.  
The truth cannot be known by the rest of the world.

---

**11 Interlude**

TABLEAU 2  
SONS AND MOTHERS

Studio portrait of 7251 Private (Pte) Louis Frederick Cooper, 12th Battalion, of Longford Tasmania, with his mother, Fanny Maria Cooper. Pte Cooper died of pneumonia at Tidworth Military Hospital on 24 July 1918 and was buried with full military honours.

# TABLEAU 2 SONS AND MOTHERS

## 12 Chorus and Children's Choir

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater unigeniti!

*Oh, how sad and afflicted  
Was that blessed mother  
Of the only Son!*

## Semi-Chorus, Children's choir and Chorus

Quae moerebat et dolebat  
Pia Mater dum videbat  
Nati poenas inclyti.

*She mourned and grieved,  
the devoted Mother, as she saw  
the torment of her renowned Son.*

## 13 Soldier (TENOR)

Mother, it is now midnight  
And all around me I hear the sound of guns.  
I'm writing you this letter, I hope you get it safely.  
Don't worry all is well.

I wonder dear mother if you're well,  
not lonely or sad.

How long will it be till we see each other again?  
I don't like this separation, it makes me so sad.

Oh my dearest mother,  
I am so home and mother-sick  
All my love for you my mother, I send to you.

## Mother (SOPRANO)

Oh my son, how I long for you and to have you  
here at home with me  
And hear your happy laughter  
and your wild music again.

You must come back to me,  
how I long to have you home again.

## 14 Chorus

Quis est homo qui non fleret  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?

*Who would not weep  
seeing the Mother of Christ  
in such torment?*

## Soldier (TENOR)

The war must be over soon, don't worry  
Believe me when I say my thoughts are always  
with you and the joy when we're together

How I long for war's end and to be at home  
again.

## Chorus

Quis non posset contristari  
Christi Matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?

*Who could not be saddened  
on beholding the Mother of Christ  
suffering with her Son?*

**15 Mother (Soprano)**

Oh my dear son, my spirits are so low since hearing  
all the news of this fearful war.

It is too heavy a burden to bear. Whenever will it  
all end? I wonder how you are, so far away. Life  
has never been the same since you left.

When will it all end?  
I would give anything to have you here again at  
home with me.

**16 Bass**

How I pity the women in this war

**Soprano**

How I pity the men in this war

**Tenor**

How your hearts have ached for years

**Soprano, Bass and Chorus**

Pity the mothers,  
Pity the fathers,  
Pity the children,  
Pity all the people in this war-torn world.

**17 Children's Choir, Semi-Chorus**

Miserere, miserere, miserere

*Have pity*

**18 Soldier (Tenor)**

How your poor heart has ached for years.  
Even though it was breaking,  
Your words were always brave and oh so tender  
Full of courage and strength and love.

**Mother (Soprano)**

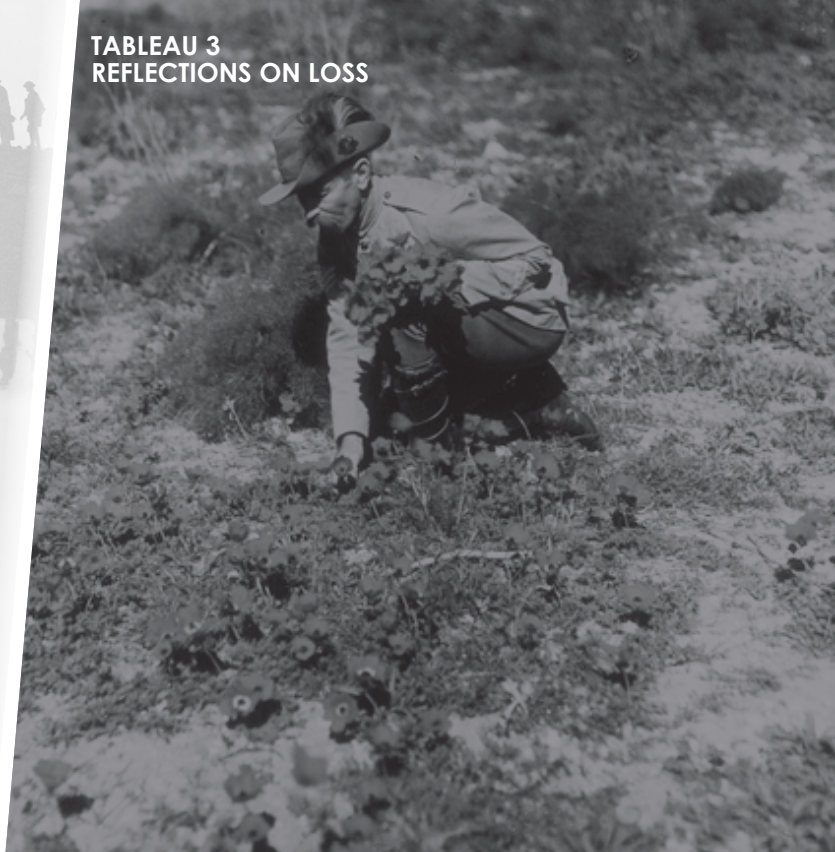
But as each year passes with no end in sight,  
I almost give up hope, give up hope of ever  
seeing you,  
Of ever seeing you again

**Chorus**

Dreams will live forever  
With the noblest things e'er done  
And even death shan't sever  
A mother – from her son.

**19 Interlude**

## TABLEAU 3 REFLECTIONS ON LOSS



An Australian Light Horseman collecting anemones near Belah in Palestine", 1918.



# TABLEAU 3 REFLECTIONS ON LOSS

## 20 **Chorus and Children's Choir**

Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Vidit Jesum in tormentis  
Et flagellis subditum.

*For the sins of his people  
she saw Jesus in torment  
and subjected to the lash.*

## 21 **Battle Music**

## 22 **Officer (Bass)**

At daybreak, when all was silent,  
I saw them coming from the front line,  
Barely walking, barely talking, half alive.  
Eyes looked down, weeping, seeping,  
Their bodies were bowed, flesh burned and blistered.

With the horror of the battle buried deep within.  
I then saw a friend of mine – from out Inverell way.  
He looked up and smiled at me and then he said:

### **Soldier 2 (Bass)**

Put your gas helmets on, boys, put your gas  
helmets on.

### **Officer (Bass)**

And as he walked away I heard him say:

### **Soldier 2 (Bass)**

I'm done, boys, I'm done ...

## 23 **Nurse (Soprano)**

Soon after he came to us;  
I saw him every day and sat by his bedside while  
he lingered.

He was such a quiet lad, gentle and good.  
He knew that he was dying but did not say so.

I held his hand while he lingered.  
No words were spoken ...

## 24 **Chorus**

Vidit suum dulcem natum  
Moriendo desolatum  
Dum emisit spiritum

*She saw her gentle Son  
dying, forsaken,  
as He gave up his Spirit.*

## 25 **Soldier (spoken)**

The last, sad duty was performed.  
It was a heavy job and with the horror of it all,  
I thought then, how man proposes and God  
disposes every time.

But mother dear, it was brightened with the hope  
of something better beyond the grave.

## 26 **Soldier (Tenor) and Chorus**

### ON A DYING SOLDIER

Dying but in ev'ry stir  
Fighting death the arbiter  
As the hours go slowly by  
Ever fearless, comes no sigh

Lips are firm and teeth are set  
Yet there comes not one regret  
Cheeks are pale and eyes are dim  
Yet no murmur comes from him.

Dying, yes but like a man  
Knowing now that life's short span  
Full of tears, draws to a close,  
Cherished hopes and mingled woes.





Noble sacrifice to Maker  
Thy life is given for freedom's sake.  
Duty done brave soldier blest  
Thy battle's fought, for thee is rest.

*Poem by Reginald James Godfrey (1892–1979)  
Contained in a letter of Asdruebal James Keast  
(1892–1980) from Heliopolis, 6 July 1915*

### **Officer (Bass)**

Mrs Jackson, judging your sorrow by my own feelings  
May I offer you my deepest sympathy  
And great though my loss is, yours is so much greater.

### **Chorus**

It is a terrible price that we're all paying

### **27 Officer (Bass)**

I see so much of death here but it never ceases  
to touch me,  
when a boy like yours, an Aussie boy – goes west!

### **28 Semi-Chorus**

Eia mater, fons amoris  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

*Oh, Mother, source of love,  
make me feel the power of your grief  
so that I may mourn with you.*

### **29 Ataturk (Bass)**

The losses of this war are lamentable for all nations  
that fought in the war.

### **Chorus**

Requiem aeternam

*Eternal Rest*

### **Ataturk (Bass)**

I am calling to all mothers who've shed tears for  
their sons and want to take them back to their  
homeland. Wipe away your tears, your sons are  
now lying in our bosom and are at peace.

After having lost their lives on this land they have  
become our sons as well.

### **Children's Choir, Chorus**

Requiem

*Rest*

### **Mother (Soprano)**

The warmth of your words have eased our sorrow  
and our tears they all have ended.  
Ev'ry hour of the day, ev'ry day of each year,  
for we are sure that our sons now rest in their  
eternal peace.

### **30 The Last Post**

### **31 Children's Choir**

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

### **Chorus, Soloists and Children's Choir**

At the going down of the sun,  
And in the morning,  
We will remember them.

### **32 The Lament of the Lone Piper**

## NOTES ON THE TEXT

The poem "On a Dying Soldier" by Godfrey (Tableau 3) was written after a burial at sea. It was contained in a letter written by Asdruebal James Keast to his mother at home in Australia. The letter was sent from Heliopolis on 6 July 1915. Keast and Godfrey embarked at the same time on HMAS Geelong in Adelaide on 31 May 1915 and remained best friends for the rest of their lives.

Lines at the end of Tableau 2 come from a poem by Private Cyril Oehlman of Toowoomba, who enlisted in September 1916 aged nineteen. He was a very gifted musician. Cyril Oehlman's mother, Hannah Oehlman, wrote to him in August 1917:

*I often long for your dear face near me, I hear your happy laughter in the home and your wild beautiful music. Oh Cyril you must come back to me for I long for you dear one. No one here knows how I long for you dear boy.*

### France 1917–1918

*God bless and keep you mother  
My truest friend on earth  
I do not want another  
'Twas you who gave me birth  
And fondled me and fed me  
Through childhood's troublous hour  
And ever since have led me  
To love the guiding power.*

*And in my dream I saw you  
Athwart your washing board  
And there I stood before you  
My patience well nigh bored  
"And is you nearly finished?"  
Impatiently I cried  
For the heap seemed scarce diminished  
In the clothes bag by your side.*

*That was my fair dream's ending  
Grim war raged all around  
And my comrades stood defending  
Our Line of conquered ground  
But dreams will live forever  
With the noblest things I've done  
And death e'en shall not sever  
A mother – from her son.*

Private Cyril Oehlman was wounded twice in action: in 1917 at Zonnebeke, Belgium, and again in August 1918 near the Somme, France. He served from 1916 to 1919. He was invalided home after the armistice and reached Brisbane in March 1919. Upon his return home, Cyril Oehlman became a schoolteacher and taught for many years in Toowoomba.

Cyril Oehlman



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Letters and Images

The text for “AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM” was inspired by the hundreds of letters written during World War I by young soldiers on the battlefields and their mothers at home in Australia.

In particular, the composer, Christopher Bowen OAM, and librettist, Pamela Traynor, are grateful for the letters written by: Lance Sergeant Asdruebal James Keast; Private Vivian Neville Main; Private Henry Anthony Beresford Maning; Lieutenant Clive Stanley Crowley and his mother, Alice Crowley; the poetry of Private Reginald James Godfrey AM; and the letters and poetry of Private Cyril Oehlman, and his mother, Hannah's, letter.

The Australian War Memorial holds these letters and we express our gratitude to the director, The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, his staff and, in particular, the Research Department and Assistant Curator, Jane Robertson and the Curator of Photographs, Alison Wishart, and Assistant Curator, Laura Wiles.

We acknowledge the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, UK (Peter Francis, Media and Marketing Manager) for use of images from their website.

We would also like to thank Dawn Kenyon for providing material about her uncle Private Cyril Oehlman of 4th Division AIF.

We are grateful for the valuable assistance of: South Australian historian Glenys Edwards; and we thank the families of Private Reginald James Godfrey, Lance Sergeant Asdruebal James Keast, Lieutenant Clive Stanley Crowley and Private Vivian Neville Main. For their photos and stories, we thank the families of Private Llewelyn Hughes and Mrs Ada Lewis, who lost two sons in 1915.

Reginald James Godfrey and his dear friend Asdruebal James Keast died within a year of one another. Jamie, Godfrey's grandson, and his family will travel from South Australia for this premiere of “AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM”.

## Major Sponsors

We are extremely grateful for the contributions of our major sponsors:

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In addition to our major sponsors, whose logos appear earlier in this program, the Sydney University Graduate Choir Inc acknowledges with sincere thanks for their support:

**Dincol Constructions**, for support for soprano Ayse Gökknur Shanal

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**Mr Sandy Hollway AO**, for guidance throughout the project

**Ms Kathryn Greiner AO**, for advice

**Majgen Dave Chalmers AO, CSC:** Federal Dept of Veterans' Affairs,

**Ms Jane Spring**, Director, NSW Centenary of Anzac Program Management Office.

**Tim Becker**, for audio-visual advice

**Kate O'Donnell**, for program editing

**Kate Taylor**, for advice on Australia Council grant application

**Shaun Gibbons**, the Projection Sequence Editor for pre-concert image projections

**Legacy**, for their support and the support of Legatees.

**Returned and Services League (RSL)**: for support and providing the red poppies for the performance: Jeff O'Brien, Membership Services Manager, NSW; Mark Lee, NSW Corporate Communications Manager;

**Doyalson-Wyee RSL Club; Castle Hill RSL Club** for their donations.

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**Ben Jesinowski** | Reading of Vivian Neville Main's letter

**David Canato, Gane Djukic (Haycom)**  
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**Stage Door Recording Studio, Steve Surmely**

**Technical staff of the Sydney Town Hall**

**The Choir's rehearsal pianists**, particularly **Amy Putt**, regular accompanist for the Main Choir.

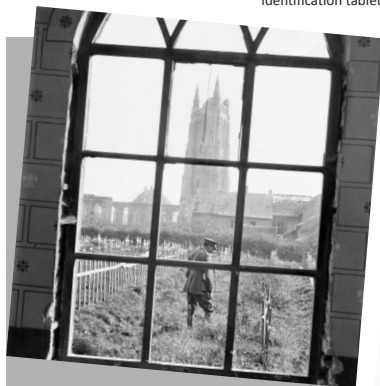
## Images and References

All images used in this booklet are listed on our website, [www.AustralianWarRequiem.com.au](http://www.AustralianWarRequiem.com.au) together with links to the source material, when available.

We are indebted to the Australian War Memorial and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The organisers were not able to contact copyright holders for all material contained in "AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM". If you have any information that would assist with locating the holders, please contact the organisers.

A view of the military section of the graveyard in the village of Vlamertinghe, near Ypres. Seen here is Lieutenant George Hubert Wilkins, an Australian Official Photographer, inspecting the crosses, to each of which is affixed a name and identification tablet.



## PERFORMERS

### SYDNEY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CHOIR

The SYDNEY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CHOIR was established in 1952 as the graduate group of the Sydney University Musical Society (founded in 1878). Today the Choir has over one hundred singers and is committed to high-quality performance of great choral music. Its extensive, versatile and innovative repertoire ranges from the grand works of the established masters to the music of contemporary composers. The Choir's Patron is Her Excellency, Professor the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD, CVO.

Since its inception the Choir has continued to provide opportunities for chorists, instrumentalists,

soloists and conductors to widen their repertoires and expand their local and international careers as professional musicians. The Choir presents a regular program of three major choral performances each year, but has also performed in popular shows such as "Scotland the Brave" and fund-raising events such as the concert for the Royal Flying Doctor Service at the Angel Place Recital Hall, and provided singers for the soundtrack of the Oscar-winning Australian films "Happy Feet" and "Happy Feet 2".

The Chamber Choir, established in 2004, is a subgroup of the **larger Choir**, comprising around thirty singers chosen through an annual audition process, and increases the Choir's performance flexibility and choral repertoire. The Chamber Choir sings varied repertoire in separate concert performances and also provides the more intimate and transparent sound sometimes required in sections of the major works being performed by the main Choir.

Premiere of "AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM" on 10 August 2014 at the Sydney Town Hall.



The Choir sings under the direction of the highly respected conductor and composer Christopher Bowen OAM, an Honorary Fellow of the University of Sydney, who has been Music Director since 1992. Christopher has established a very strong partnership with the Choir, enriching its repertoire and setting new performance standards. Under his leadership the Choir has given several Australian premiere performances of choral works and, as part of its commitment to Australian music and composers, has commissioned many outstanding new works.

In recent years the Choir has produced a "Sydney Sings..." series of concerts in the Sydney Town Hall, with three very well-received performances of Handel's "Messiah" in 2007, 2010 and 2012, and a performance of Verdi's "Requiem" in 2013. All concerts in the "Sydney Sings..." series have included a large guest Choir, soloists and full orchestra. The premiere of "AN AUSTRALIAN

WAR REQUIEM", a newly commissioned work by Christopher Bowen to mark the centenary of the outbreak of World War I and the Gallipoli campaign, presented in the form of a meditation on conflict and loss, with a uniquely Australian perspective, was a very memorable and moving event for the Choir.

The Choir's Patron,  
Her Excellency Professor  
Marie Bashir AD, CVO



# SYDNEY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CHOIR & GUEST CHOIR

## SOPRANOS | SUGC

\*Janet Axon  
Sally Banfield  
Wen Dai  
\*Bryony Drayson  
\*Jacqui Dropulic  
Marilyn Gosling  
Siân Griffiths  
\*Maree Higgins  
Janette McDonnell  
\*Ros Moxham  
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SUGC Chamber Choir, December 2012





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McDonald's Sydney Eisteddfod 2013

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Maria Lindsay  
Rebecca Gill  
Teri Singer  
Michele O'Young

**VIOLIN II |** Alastair Duff-Forbes – *Principal*  
Anita Beuthien  
Tracy Wan  
Madeleine Slaughter  
Kelly Tang  
Michele Jackson

**VIOLA |** Robert Harris – *Principal*  
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Robyn Botha  
Georgina Price  
Jill Quin  
Carl Lee

**CELLO |** John Benz – *Principal*  
Steve Meyer  
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Dorit Herskovits

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James Fortune

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Anna Rodger

**CLARINETS |** Deborah de Graaff – *Principal*  
Zhu Xing Cao

**BASSOONS |** Gillian Smith – *Principal*  
Long Nguyen



**TRUMPETS |** Rainer Saville – *Principal*  
David Pye

**FRENCH HORN |** Graham Nichols – *Principal*  
Bourian Boubbov  
Paul Stiles  
Stephen Smith

**TROMBONES |** Michael Wyborn – *Principal*  
Elna Suuronen  
Ben Turner

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**CELESTE |** Amy Putt

**TIMPANI |** Steven Machamer

**PERCUSSION |** David Manuel  
Gabriel Fischer

**BAGPIPES |** Courtesy of The Scots College,  
Bellevue Hill



# AN AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

music by **CHRISTOPHER BOWEN**

text by **PAMELA TRAYNOR**

for soloists, choir, semi-choir, children's choir and orchestra

## TABLEAU ONE: THE HORROR OF WAR

- 1 THOSE HEROES THAT SHED THEIR BLOOD
- 2 VOICES OF THE DEAD
- 3 STABAT MATER
- 4 OH MOTHER
- 5 DEATH MARCH
- 6 WE WONDER WHEN
- 7 WHEN MEN OPEN THEIR HEARTS
- 8 OH MOTHER (REPRISE)
- 9 CUIUS ANIMAM
- 10 SHELLS BURST

### 11 INTERLUDE

## TABLEAU TWO: SONS AND MOTHERS

- 12 O QUAM TRISTIS
- 13 MOTHER, IT IS NOW MIDNIGHT
- 14 QUIS EST HOMO
- 15 OH MY DEAR SON
- 16 HOW I PITY THE WOMEN IN THIS WAR
- 17 MISERERE
- 18 HOW YOUR DEAR HEART HAS ACHED

### 19 INTERLUDE

## TABLEAU THREE: REFLECTIONS ON LOSS

- 20 PRO PECCATIS SUAE GENTIS
- 21 BATTLE MUSIC
- 22 AT DAYBREAK
- 23 SOON AFTER HE CAME TO US
- 24 VIDIT SUUM DULCEM NATUM
- 25 THE LAST DUTY WAS PERFORMED
- 26 DYING BUT IN EV'RY STIR
- 27 I SEE SO MUCH OF DEATH
- 28 EIA MATER, FONS AMORIS
- 29 THE LOSSES OF THIS WAR ARE LAMENTABLE
- 30 THE LAST POST
- 31 THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD
- 32 LAMENT OF THE LONE PIPER

Live recording of the premiere performance on Sunday 10 August 2014 at the Sydney Town Hall.

[AustralianWarRequiem.com.au](http://AustralianWarRequiem.com.au)

[SydneyUniversityGraduateChoir.com.au](http://SydneyUniversityGraduateChoir.com.au)

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UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE **CHOIR**

ORCHESTRA  
& GUEST CHOIR

**CHRISTOPHER BOWEN**  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

**WAITARA VOICES**  
WAITARA PUBLIC SCHOOL

**FORT STREET HIGH SCHOOL**

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**AYSE GÖKNUR SHANAL** SOPRANO  
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**ADRIAN TAMBURINI** BASS  
**CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON** BASS