



Feedback from our summer concert 2024: Fauré / Blackford

I shall not be at tomorrow's rehearsal as I'm going to my grandson's school concert. Maggie will return my music (in a much cleaner state than I received it!). I thoroughly enjoyed the concert and so did my guests. There was praise for the choir, which gets better and better under Mark's leadership, and for the wonderful soloists and orchestra. One friend said she absolute loved the Blackford and was rushing home to buy the CD. Another remarked "How do you fill the church with music lovers like me who are not at all confident in making sense of modern music?" Answer: put on a well-loved classic like Fauré's Requiem, and accompany it with an approachable modern work with recognisable themes and their development. Congratulations, and please repeat!

Ruth Dawe

I had six friends at the concert - they were all very complimentary, appreciated the performance, and said how good it was to go out to hear such good music close to home. We do seem to be building up quite a local following now.

Any success, surely, apart from our own efforts, is down to Mark for his never-ending encouragement, justified nagging! and great choice of guests and accompanists. Appreciation too, for those in the choir who have come up with some inspired suggestions of music for us to perform. Not forgetting the hard work of the committee and other volunteers who "got the show on the road". Already looking forward to the next one!

Jan Messeder

Feedback from my trusty neighbour (who sings with a London-based choir, and is a regular at our concerts: "what an excellent concert. Your best yet I think. I loved the first new piece and the Fauré was as beautiful as ever, Well done "

Brenda Little



Beckenham Chorale

All of my guests said how much they had enjoyed the evening. Most came for the Fauré, but said how much they enjoyed the Blackford! So - good to include new pieces in the repertoire!

Carolyn Knight

I spoke to a lady at the bus stop who had just been at the concert. She told me she thoroughly enjoyed the Blackford even though she had never heard it or indeed heard of it. She also said although she had heard the Fauré hundreds of times before, she thought we did it extremely well and that the soloists were superb. A friend who attended the concert was very complimentary about all of it!

Helen Oliver

I had several friends in the audience. They all said how much they enjoyed the concert. Given that none of them would have heard the Blackford before I think that is quite an achievement. I would like to particularly thank Mark. It must be very hard work for him to get us to that standard. We all do our bit but he never gives up trying to get the best out of us. I spoke to John Nightingale and he said he could really tell that we had been well rehearsed. We are very fortunate to have a professional orchestra and professional soloists who do a great job for us. A most enjoyable evening.

Kate Wilcox

What a wonderful evening - it made such a difference singing the Blackford with an orchestra - it brought the whole piece to life for me. People I spoke to in the interval thought it was wonderful - very exciting, very different and lots of different styles within one piece. Personally, I thought the orchestra was excellent and the strings sounded so rich and mellow in both works. The soloists were brilliant and perfect for the 2 pieces. All in all a lovely, and successful evening, and great to sing to a packed house.

Maggie Greenwood



On feedback on the concert, people I spoke to afterwards really enjoyed both pieces, one lady was going to suggest to her own choir that they do the Blackford themselves. For myself, the soloists were both pretty fabulous, but I was particularly in awe of Emma's wonderful ringing top notes, as a soprano myself!

Ann Edet

I enjoyed this enormously. I suspect the Blackford came as something of a surprise to everybody. Perhaps, over nearly thirty years since its composition, the acres of mostly Italian text might have proved a barrier for some, but other than that it's hard to understand why the piece - not to mention its composer - has not 'caught on' more than it seems to have done. And this especially as it's so approachable musically, requires only fairly modest resources, delivers a 'message' as relevant for today as it was in the thirteenth century, and of course in programming terms goes so well with the Fauré - which is perhaps what he had in mind all along!

Very impressive sounds from the choir, especially the high sopranos and, predictably, orchestra and soloists equally so - an easy all-round match for Blackford's own performance. What a pity he couldn't come to hear it Absolutely beautiful performance of the Fauré too - wonderful control throughout. And Emma's 'Pie Jesu', at least from where I was sitting, nothing short of world-class - but that's not to detract from anybody else. And congratulations to Mark too, for fashioning such compelling performances. I know a lot of background work had been done. Choirs' fortunes fluctuate over the years. But this seemed to me to be further evidence - were any more needed - that the Chorale is currently on quite a 'high'. Long may it continue!

John Nightingale. One of our Honorary Life Presidents

Dear Sally, Thank you for all your hard work and coordination. I cannot be with you tonight but my score is being returned.

Feedback from concert:

Lovely programme would like to listen to Blackford again as it had so many different colours in it. Lovely soloists in both Pieces, Violinist and Harpist for Fauré and Pie Jesu. Chorus did well in demanding works but performance had energy and character. Looking forward to spring concert.

The Venerable Carol Coslett.