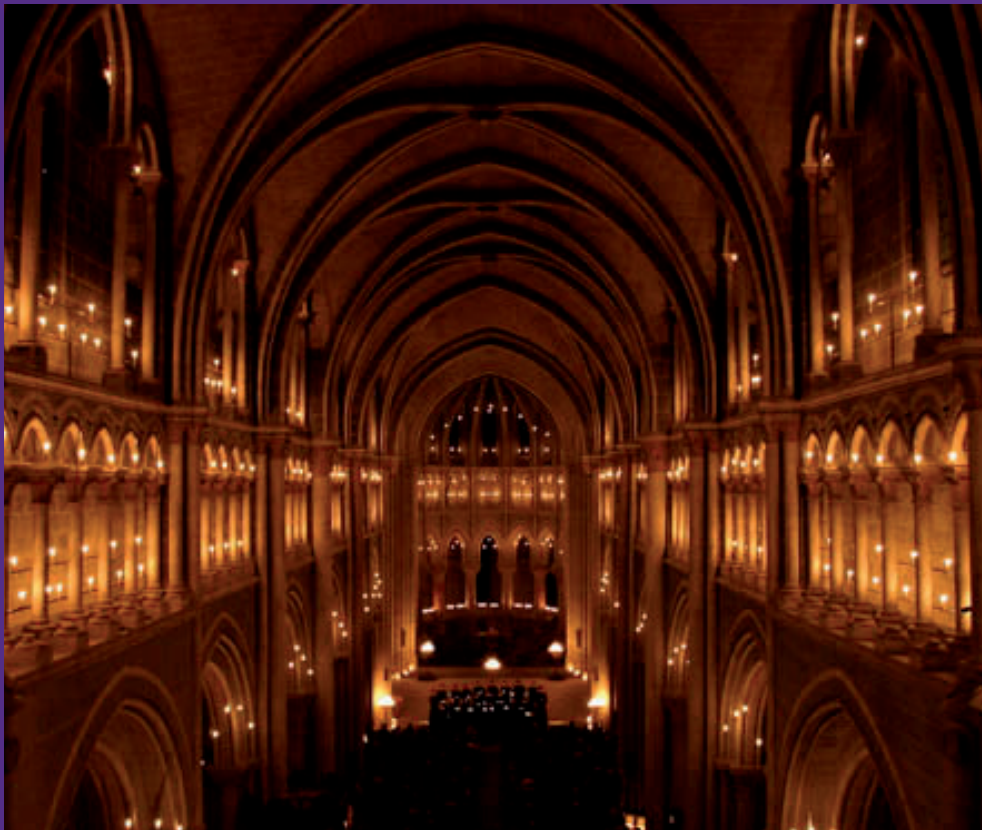


TENEBRAE
PASSION & PRECISION



WWW.TENEBRAE-CHOIR.COM

“... is there any finer chamber choir in Britain today than Nigel Short’s outfit, Tenebrae?”

The Independent

Hailed as “one of the country’s most outstanding vocal ensembles” (Evening Standard), Tenebrae has established itself as the chamber choir of choice for critics and audiences in the UK and around the world. Founded and directed by Nigel Short, the group blends the passion of a large cathedral choir with the precision of a chamber ensemble to create a unique and enchanting sound, one which is as dazzlingly effective in mediaeval chant as it is in contemporary works. With every performance exploiting the unique acoustic and atmosphere of each venue in which they perform with movement and light, often using candlelight as the sole means of illumination, the carefully chosen team of singers enable the audience to experience the power and intimacy of the human voice at its very best.



Formed in 2001, the group was launched to critical acclaim with a performance of Nigel Short’s own composition, *The Dream of Herod*. Since then they have collaborated with Sir John Tavener, Karl Jenkins, Pierre Thillo, Alexander Levine, and Joby Talbot. Their dedication to the music of today is complemented by a commitment to the music of the past; from mediaeval chant to Romantic masterworks, they respond to the demands inherent in whatever they sing with equal passion and musicality.

The group has toured all over the world, visiting Ireland, France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, the USA and Bermuda, performing in many renowned festivals (BBC Proms, Montreux Choral Festival, Edinburgh Festival) and tailoring their distinctive performances to many venues (Royal Albert Hall, King’s College Chapel, Lausannes Cathedral). Working with the LSO under Sir Colin Davis, the English Concert, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Scottish Ensemble, and the Endymion ensemble, the choir have proved themselves as adept at larger orchestral works as the a capella repertoire for which they are so well known.

Recording on the Signum, LSO Live! and Warner Classics labels, the group has so far released twelve albums; from Christmas carols to solemn vespers, their revelatory performances have thrilled listeners across the world and ensured their continued position as one of the world’s favourite choirs.

“For purity and precision of tone, and flawless intonation, Nigel Short’s chamber choir Tenebrae is pretty much unbeatable.”

The London Times



TENEBRAE is a dream realised for Nigel Short. Growing up in the Midlands (UK) Nigel began his musical life as a chorister at Solihull Parish Church going on to study singing and piano at the Royal College of Music in London. As a young counter-tenor he was soon working with various opera companies, was in demand as an oratorio and early music soloist, sang at Westminster Cathedral, with the Tallis scholars and various other specialist choral groups.

In 1993, Nigel joined the world-renowned vocal ensemble the King’s Singers. Whilst touring the world with them Nigel began to seriously consider the possibility of starting up a new choral group which would combine a larger force of singers with movement around the performance venue as well as considerations of lighting, ambience, time and space. It would not only mean that the singers were more physically involved in the performance but also that the audiences could become caught up in the experience. This would be a team that had all the discipline and precision of a world-class ensemble yet with the dynamic power and range of a large choral group. Such a team would be able to use ecclesiastical buildings as a performance space, combining his love of traditional choral repertoire with a more “theatrical” style of performing.

Like many such ideas, the realisation of the dream eventually came about through discussions with like-minded musicians, singers and friends, who together realised the formation of TENEBRAE – a combination of talented composers and arrangers, pianists and organists, specialists of jazz and renaissance, instrumentalists and singers.

Nigel’s conducting work includes working with some of the UK’s notable orchestras such as the London Symphony and the Royal Philharmonic, and next season he will be in Madrid preparing ORCAM for a Mahler Symphony. Nigel is chorus master for the Royal College of Music Chorus, director of music at St Bartholomew the Great in London and also works with the amateur choir Vox Coelestis who put on regular charity performances throughout the UK. He frequently produces CDs for vocal ensembles. Nigel is married to the soprano Grace Davidson, and makes his home in London.

“The...absolute clarity and purity of the sound continue to amaze.”

AllMusic



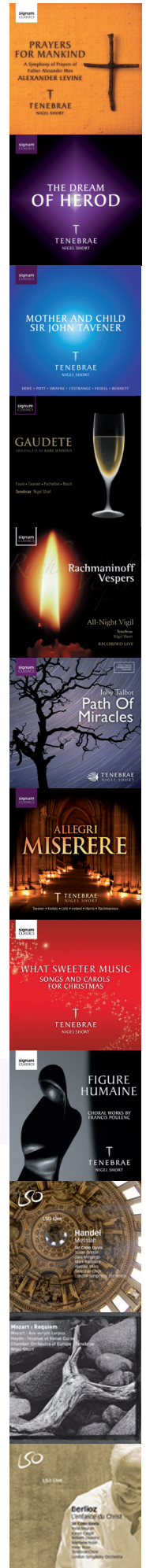
In the decade since the choir was founded, Tenebrae has released 12 albums and featured on two major motion picture soundtracks (*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and *Children of Men*), reaching millions of listeners around the world, and proving the adaptability of their

radiant sound with music from the mediaeval to the twenty-first century.

Beginning with *The Dream of Herod* in 2002, the choir has released the majority of its catalogue on the Signum label: from Sir John Tavener (*Mother and Child*) to John Rutter (*What Sweeter Music*); Joby Talbot (*Path of Miracles*) to Gregorio Allegri (*Miserere*); and Sergei Rachmaninoff (*Vespers*) to Karl Jenkins (*Gaudete*), the choir has explored a huge range of music in discs which have become firm favourites with all kinds of listeners. The discs also represent the first recordings of works by Tavener, Jenkins and Talbot, as well as Francis Pott, Nigel Short, and Peter Wishart.

2010 saw the release of *Figure Humaine*, a recording of music by Francis Poulenc that was nominated for a BBC Music Magazine Award that year, and *Prayers for Mankind*, a world premiere recording of a new work by Alexander Levine. 2011 releases include a new recording of Tomas Luis de Victoria's *Requiem* and works by Alonso Lobo, followed by a disc of C.H.H. Parry's *Songs of Farewell* alongside music by Elgar, Holst and Vaughan Williams.

Two albums featuring the choir have also been released on the LSO Live! label, both with Sir Colin Davis conducting the London Symphony Orchestra: Berlioz: *L'Enfance du Christ* was released in 2006 and was chosen as *The Independent's* 'CD of the Week'; Handel: *Messiah* was released in 2007 and features Susan Gritton, Mark Padmore and Alastair Miles in a performance described as 'jaw-droppingly beautiful' by *The Guardian*.



“Unaccompanied choral music may not be everybody’s idea of heaven but when the music is as imaginatively selected as this, and the choir as egregiously flawless as Tenebrae, the repertoire ought to win over the stoniest hearts.”

Evening Standard

“Combined with the fearlessly virtuosic singing of the 19 voices of Tenebrae, for whom the piece was written a couple of years ago, it was an accomplished and entirely engaging performance.”

The Scottish Herald

“Tenebrae has flawless intonation, exquisitely sculpted phrases and perfectly trimmed attacks and releases. The voices have just a touch of vibrato, adding a richness to the vocal texture without intruding on the seamless blend. A program note states that the goal of the choir is to create “an atmosphere of spiritual and musical reflection.” Certainly that mission was accomplished.”

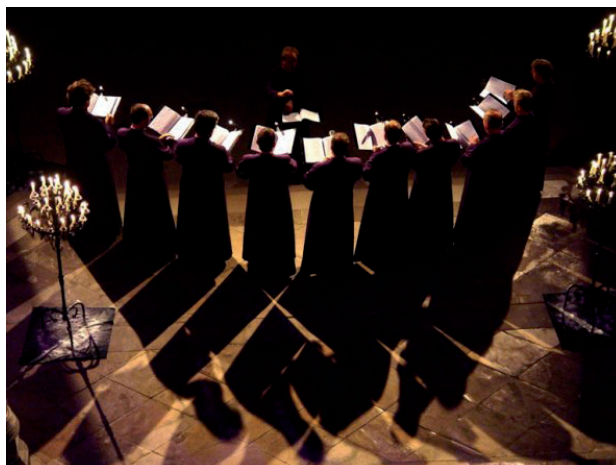
St Louis Post-Dispatch

“It is a very special choir that can sing Machaut and Pérotin as convincingly as it tackles Duruflé and Poulenc. But Tenebrae are special. Directed by Nigel Short, these were exemplary performances, lucid, and so commanding it seemed as if singing perfectly in tune was the most natural thing in the world.”

The Guardian

“There was wonder, too, from Tenebrae, the beautifully modulated chamber choir. To hear them in “The Shepherds’ Farewell” – the sound so poised, so even, the harmonies so balanced, the distinctions in colour and dynamics so subtly varied between verses – was transporting.”

The Independent



"It's hard to imagine them being done better: Tenebrae's tone, balance and intonation are superb."

Classic FM Magazine on Figure Humaine

"Tenebrae's performance, directed by Nigel Short, is gently sustained, immaculately balanced and wrapped in a luminous acoustic ... If you ever developed a resistance to Renaissance polyphony, this could be the disc to make you think again."

The Financial Times on Victoria Requiem Mass

"The choir Tenebrae is unbeatable. Tenebrae is current master of the Russian Sound."

Classic FM on Prayers for Mankind

"Here, the chamber choir Tenebrae excel themselves: wonder radiates from every securely focused, cleanly voiced chord. They're the performance's rock."

The London Times on L'Enfance du Christ

"Tenebrae reveals itself as one of those exceptional choirs whose individual singers have been moulded into a single superbly sensitive and responsive musical instrument."

The Telegraph on Miserere

"This a cappella work is very demanding of its singers and Tenebrae answer every question asked of them. It is a tour de force and absolutely stunning."

Choir and Organ on Path of Miracles

"It's a fabulous disc I can't stop listening to it at the moment, it's practically cemented itself to my CD player, it's beautiful."

Radio 3 CD Review on Figure Humaine

'The choir of 20 mixed voices is rather more than well drilled; more polished choral singing would be hard to find anywhere.'

BBC Music Magazine on The Dream of Herod

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