



TENEBRAE

PASSION & PRECISION



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BIOGRAPHY

Described as “phenomenal” (**The Times**) and “devastatingly beautiful” (**Gramophone Magazine**), award-winning choir Tenebrae, under the direction of Nigel Short, is one of the world’s finest vocal ensembles renowned for its passion and precision.

“There is a hunger for what this finely polished group has to offer.” - The New York Times

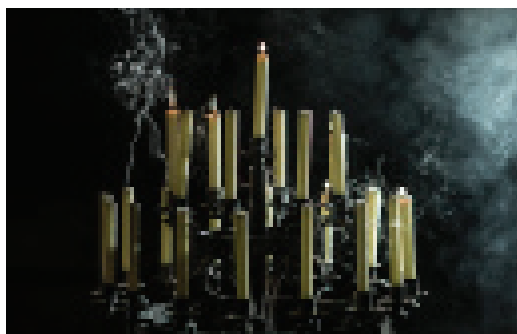
As the first-ever ensemble to be multi-nominated in the same category for the **BBC Music Magazine Awards** (2012), Tenebrae’s recording of Victoria’s *Requiem Mass, 1605* secured the accolade for **Best Choral Performance**. The choir’s recording of Fauré’s *Requiem* with the **London Symphony Orchestra** was nominated for the **Gramophone Awards** (2013), having been described as “the very best Fauré *Requiem* on disc”, so too was *Mother of Child* (2003) for **Choral Disc of the Year** featuring sacred music by living British composers. Tenebrae’s ever-increasing discography has brought about collaborations with Signum, Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI Classics, LSO Live and Warner Classics, with the choir’s recent recording of Russian Orthodox music being launched on its own label, **Bene Arte**, receiving glowing reviews and reaching number 1 on the UK Classical Chart.

“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

Tenebrae is dedicated to supporting contemporary composers, having worked with **Alexander Levine, Paul Mealer, Joby Talbot** and **Will Todd**, in addition to an upcoming releases with **Ola Gjeilo** and **Alexander L’Estrange**. Furthermore, the choir is renowned for its highly-acclaimed interpretations of the choral canon with repertoire ranging from the hauntingly passionate works of Gesualdo and Victoria to the beautiful choral masterpieces of Poulenc and Tavener. This year, Tenebrae also releases a new Christmas recording together with a disc of Brahms and Bruckner motets in benefit of **Macmillan Cancer Support**.

“Choral music doesn’t get more magnificent than this.” - Classic FM

‘Passion and Precision’ is Tenebrae’s motto, and through its continued dedication to performance of the highest quality, audiences around the world experience the power and intimacy of the human voice.





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

Award-winning conductor **Nigel Short** has built up an enviable reputation for his recording and live performance work with leading orchestras and ensembles across the world.

A singer of great acclaim, Nigel was a member of the world-renowned vocal ensemble The King’s Singers from 1994–2000. Upon leaving the group, he formed **Tenebrae**, a virtuosic choir that embraced his dedication to passion and precision. Under his direction, Tenebrae has enjoyed collaborations with orchestras and instrumentalists of various musical genres and now enjoys a reputation as one of the world’s finest choral ensembles.

To date, Nigel has conducted the **Aurora Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Endymion, English Chamber Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Scottish Ensemble** and, for Baroque repertoire, **The English Concert**. He has directed the **London Symphony Orchestra** with Tenebrae in a live recording of Fauré’s *Requiem*, which was nominated for the **Gramophone Awards** (2013). Since then, he has conducted the orchestra alongside Tenebrae for a sold-out performance in **St. Paul’s Cathedral** as part of the **City of London Festival** (UK). Other recordings include Mozart’s *Requiem* and *Ave Verum Corpus* with the **Chamber Orchestra of Europe** and a disc of works by **Paul Mealer** with the **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**.

Nigel has conducted recordings for many of the world’s major record labels including Decca Records, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI Classics, LSO Live, Signum and Warner Classics.

“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



BRAHMS AND BRUCKNER MOTETS

Due for release in Autumn 2015, Tenebrae proudly present its new *Brahms and Bruckner Motets* album, profits from the sales of which will go towards **Macmillan Cancer Support** to aid their fantastic work. The programme, complete with optional organ and trombones, includes Brahms' 'Drei motetten' and 'How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings Fair', and Bruckner's 'Locus iste' and 'Christus factus est'. Furthermore, a mixed *a cappella* programme based on this repertoire and the sublime Renaissance music of Lobo, Victoria and Allegri is available entitled **The Romantic Legacy of Renaissance Polyphony**.

PATH OF MIRACLES: 15TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT SEASON (2016-17)

Recognised as Tenebrae's signature work, 'Path of Miracles' by Joby Talbot was the choir's first commission and is revived to mark its 15th anniversary. The four movements are focused on the main staging posts of the 'Camino Frances' and the most enduring route of the Catholic pilgrimage to Santiago. In concert, the space of the building is used to great effect, demonstrating the progression of the pilgrimage and Tenebrae's dynamic performance style.

"an evocative odyssey" - **The Times**

RUSSIAN TREASURES

This programme was inspired by the rare manuscripts collected by director Nigel Short during his travels around Russia. Russian choral music has been a feature in Tenebrae's concert performances since the choir's inception who have worked extensively with Russian language coaches whilst nurturing its characteristics of passion and precision. This delivers a special and heartfelt tribute to this music, including works from two of the greatest names in Russian music, Rachmaninov and Tchaikovsky, but also some gems by far less well known composers, such as Chesnokov, Golovanov and Kalinnikov, rarely sung outside Russia.

"Majestic interpretations with a beautiful bloom on the recorded sound." - **Choir and Organ**

"Tenebrae is current master of the Russian Sound." - **Classic FM**

A VERY ENGLISH CHRISTMAS

To coincide with release of the choir's new Christmas recording, *A Very English Christmas*, Tenebrae present a programme of Christmas music featuring traditional carols, festive favourites and newer pieces all by English choral composers.





TENEBRAE CONSORT

Tenebrae Consort is an exceptional group of musicians, with singers handpicked from the award-winning choir **Tenebrae**. Focusing on repertoire originally written for consort performance, particularly early music, Tenebrae Consort highlights the vocal quality of the individuals who make up the trademark ‘Tenebrae’ sound whilst creating an intimate concert experience. Known for their combination of instinctive ensemble skills and masterful solo abilities, the singers can also perform alongside small groups of leading instrumentalists and are led from within the Consort by Nigel Short.

“The singing of the gentle psalms is hypnotically pure” - The Observer

In 2014, Tenebrae Consort released its debut disc, *Medieval Chant and Tallis Lamentations*, on Tenebrae’s own label **Bene Arte**, which received glowing reviews from **Gramophone Magazine** and **BBC Music Magazine**, and next year will release a recording of works by **Bob Chilcott**. Recent festival appearances have included Alderney (Channel Islands), Lammermuir and Shropshire (UK) and Zamora (Spain). In 2015 the Consort will perform in Cuenca (Spain) and Swaledale (UK).

PROGRAMMES

MEDIEVAL CHANT AND TALLIS LAMENTATIONS

Thomas Tallis’s intensely moving Lamentations is some of the greatest polyphony of the age and gives us a stark contrast in its richness to the simplicity of the Gregorian chant. Listen to the simple beauty of this timeless music.

SUN, MOON, SEA AND STARS

Choral songs through the ages featuring folk songs and part songs from Britain, North America and around the world, alongside new works and arrangements by Bob Chilcott.

FRENCH MASTERPIECES FOR HEAVEN AND EARTH

Enjoy sacred settings by Duruflé and Séverac through to chansons by Poulenc and Ravel.

ENGLISH GLORIES OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Music from four of the greatest English composers in the Sixteenth Century: William Byrd Thomas Tallis, William Mundy and Robert White.





Tenebrae has performed and recorded with some of world's leading orchestras and instrumental ensembles including the **Aurora Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Endymion, English Chamber Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Scottish Ensemble** and **The English Concert**. Furthermore Tenebrae has its own highly-accomplished group of players called **Ensemble Bene Arte**, selected for their specialities according to the demands of the repertoire, from Baroque through to contemporary.

FAURÉ: REQUIEM

In this programme Fauré's *Requiem* is preceded by a selection of Bach's Chorales interspersed with his *Partita in D minor*. Fauré's *Requiem* favours serenity, joy and liberation over the dread and terror employed by most composers in settings of the *Mass of the Dead*. By adopting a more comforting approach, he crafted music of astonishing beauty, in particular the *Pie Jesu*. Bach's *Partita for Violin No 2*, with chorales interspersed, culminates in a reconstruction of the *Ciaconna*, highlighting the hidden chorale themes within this fascinating work.

"I have no hesitation in labelling this the very best Fauré Requiem on disc" - **Gramophone**

MOZART: REQUIEM

A programme featuring Mozart's *Requiem* and *Ave Verum Corpus* and Haydn's *Insanae et vanae curae* which Tenebrae first performed with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe as part of a recording for Warner Classics, celebrated as Classic FM's 'disc of the week'.

"a first-class, well-drilled ensemble... the effect was magical" - **London Evening Standard**

HANDEL: MESSIAH

The choir has performed Handel's renowned oratorio with some of world's leading orchestras to great acclaim. Tenebrae also offer an alternative Handel programme featuring his *Coronation Anthems* and *Dixit Dominus*.

"The choral singing from Tenebrae is jaw-droppingly beautiful" - **The Guardian** on *Handel: Messiah* with the London Symphony Orchestra

MACMILLAN: SEVEN LAST WORDS

First performed with the Scottish Ensemble, this programme includes James Macmillan's *Seven Last Words* complimented by Nigel Osborne's *7 Words, 7 Icons, 7 Cities*, and Shostakovich's *Chamber Symphony in C minor*. An alternative programme might include Poulenc's *Quatre motets pour un temps de pénitence* and the last set of Victoria's *Tenebrae Responsories*.

TAVENER: THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE

Performed by Tenebrae at Canterbury Cathedral in 2012, *The Veil of the Temple* is Tavener's largest work and is considered one his finest with the composer describing it as *"the supreme achievement of my life"*.

RECORDINGS

Since the choir was founded in 2001, Tenebrae has released over 30 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 its radiant sound with music from the medieval to the twenty-first century. The choir's most recent recordings, *Russian Treasures* and *Medieval Chant and Tallis Lamentations*, were released on its own label, **Bene Arte**.

"I have no hesitation in labelling this the very best Fauré Requiem on disc...a performance of extreme richness and opulence...exquisite singing of Tenebrae...In short, this is a devastatingly beautiful performance" - **Gramophone Magazine** on *Fauré Requiem / Bach Partita*

"phenomenal... the overall sound is gorgeous" - **The Times** on *Russian Treasures*

"Here, the chamber choir Tenebrae excel themselves: wonder radiates from every securely focused, cleanly voiced chord. They're the performance's rock" - **The Times** on *L'Enfance du Christ*

"...the highly impressive Tenebrae directed by Nigel Short pull out all the vocal stops at the right moments" - **Gramophone Magazine** on *A Tender Light*

"It is a tour de force and absolutely stunning" - **Choir and Organ** on *Path of Miracles*

"More polished choral singing would be hard to find anywhere" - **BBC Music Magazine** on *The Dream of Herod*

CONCERTS

Tenebrae has performed at some of the world's most renowned festivals including the **BBC Proms**, **City of London Festival**, **Edinburgh International Festival** (UK) and **Montreux Choral Festival** (Switzerland). The 2013-2014 season saw performances at the **Salisbury Festival** and **Three Choirs Festival** (UK) together with international appearances at the **Lessay Festival** (France) and **Trigonale Festival** (Austria). In 2015 the choir will perform across the UK in Guildford, Hexham, Lammermuir, London, Newbury, Oxford, Reading, Sherborne, Stour and Thaxted, as well as engagements throughout Europe and its fourth USA tour in the autumn.

"...exquisitely beautiful throughout. This is music to carry you to heaven." - **St Louis Today**

"Tenebrae's precision, dynamic range, unanimity of sound and musicality were nothing short of astonishing... It was breathtakingly beautiful. One would be hard pressed to imagine a better performance." - **Cleveland Classical**

"...one of the country's most outstanding vocal ensembles." - **London Evening Standard**

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