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PRESS RELEASE

History to be made in Oxford as Bob Chilcott's *Requiem* premières at the Sheldonian Theatre

Music at Oxford is pleased to announce the **World Première** of **Bob Chilcott's *Requiem***. The first-ever live performance of this piece will take place on **Saturday 13th March 2010, 7.30pm** at the **Sheldonian Theatre**, Oxford. The evening will include performances by the **Oxford Bach Choir** and the **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Nicholas Cleobury**; and by internationally acclaimed vocalists **Elizabeth Atherton** (soprano), **Wendy Dawn Thompson** (mezzo soprano), **Andrew Kennedy** (tenor) and **Derek Welton** (baritone).

Former King's Singer, conductor and full-time composer since 1997 Bob Chilcott has had a wide-ranging career in choral music, having combined work with top professional ensembles alongside a lifelong commitment to children's music-making. As one of Britain's most active composers and choral conductors, Chilcott has been pouring his energy into choral composition, conducting, and promoting choral singing throughout the world.

Of his larger works, *The Making of the Drum*, a cantata for choir and percussion, has been extensively performed by choirs including The BBC Singers, the Tower New Zealand Youth Choir, the Chamber Choir of Europe and the Taipei Chamber Singers. His two larger sacred works, *Jubilate* and *Canticles of Light* have also been performed extensively, in venues such as **New York's Carnegie Hall**. Chilcott has also written works for professionals and amateurs to perform together, such as *Tandem*, a work for two orchestras commissioned in conjunction with **BBC Radio Three**. It comes as no surprise then that Chilcott has received rave reviews in the press, being described as '*one of the finest choral composers at work in Britain today*' by Gramophone Magazine and as '*a contemporary hero of British choral music*' by The Observer.

Chilcott's *Requiem* will be performed in the first part of the concert, followed by a performance of **Beethoven's *Mass in C*** in the second. These two pieces programme well together and give the audience a chance to travel through time and emotions. In his *Requiem* (a 35-minute work for SATB choir, soprano and tenor soloists and classical orchestra) Chilcott has explored the large-scale liturgical genre and gives a new slant to the standard texts of the Missa Pro Defunctis (Mass for the Deceased). This results in a compelling piece which reveals itself as momentous and somber at times; yet moving and uplifting at others.

Music at Oxford is proud to be presenting the World Premiere of Bob Chilcott's Requiem teamed with Beethoven's Mass in C in its 2009/10 International concert Season. Other concerts in March presented by Music at Oxford include a **Chapel Series** concert featuring cellists **Pei-Jee Ng and Pei-Sian Ng** with masterworks including two Bach cello suites on **Friday 19th March 2010**; and something for families with the **Galliard Ensemble** performing for the younger generation i.e. 0-10 year olds on **Sunday 28th March 2010**. Tickets for all concerts are available on 01865 242865 or online at www.musicatoxford.com or at The Oxford Playhouse.

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Notes to Editors: Music at Oxford is Oxford's premier classical concert promoter, bringing a prestigious selection of world-class artists to the city. Our season of concerts runs October to June. For more information visit our website www.musicatoxford.com or email Joy Castleton, Sales & Marketing Administrator joy@musicatoxford.com. To arrange press tickets for reviewers please email joy@musicatoxford.com or call 01865 242865.