

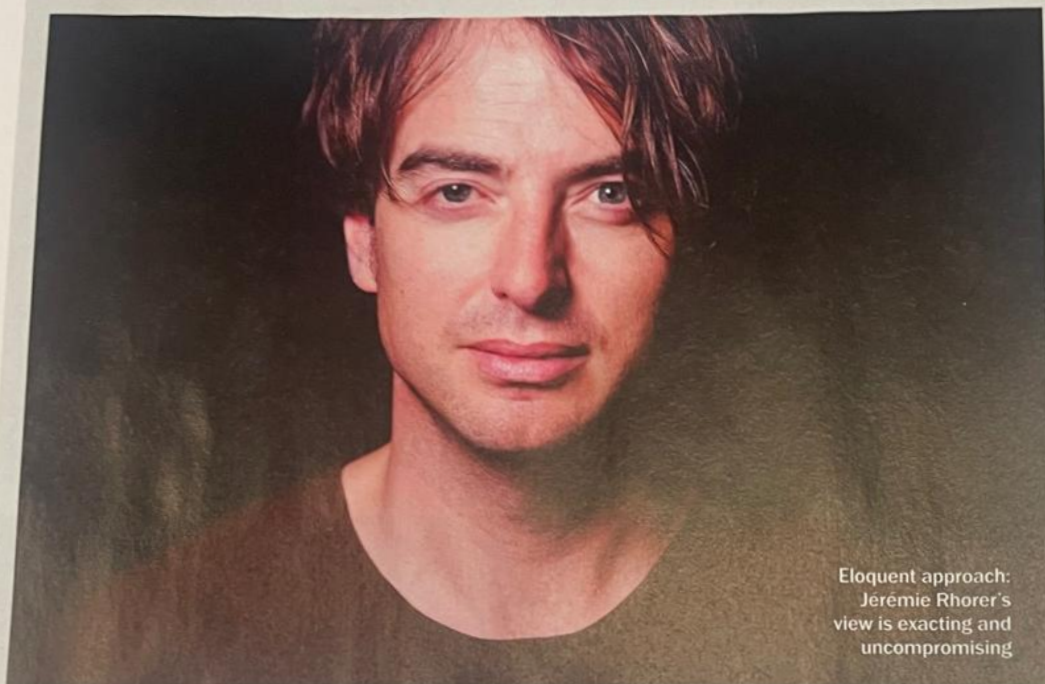
Choral & Song

CHORAL & SONG CHOICE



A visionary interpretation of Beethoven's great mass

Michael Jameson is thrilled by Jérémie Rhorer's take in this sublime performance of the *Missa Solemnis*



Eloquent approach:
Jérémie Rhorer's
view is exacting and
uncompromising

Beethoven

Missa Solemnis

Chen Reiss, Varduhi Abrahamyan, Daniel Behle, Tareq Nazmi; Le Cercle de l'Harmonie et al/Jérémie Rhorer
Alpha Classics ALPHA1111 71:40 mins

This is the second historically informed recording of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* to have appeared within the past 18 months. With four radiantly voiced soloists and the combined forces of Le Cercle de l'Harmonie and the Audi Jugendchorakademie under Jérémie Rhorer's leadership, this traversal readily surpasses Jordi Savall's *Alia Vox* account (with Le Concert des Nations and Capella Nacional de Catalunya), offering superior recorded sound (from a live performance given at the Philharmonie de Paris in April 2024) and an interpretation that's never less than visionary.

The trenchant demands of Beethoven's monolithic fugues (especially the 'Et vitam venturi saeculi' section of the Credo) pose no obstacles for the excellently drilled Audi Jugendchorakademie, though Jérémie Rhorer's exacting tempos also impose

searching demands upon his musicians, who play with unwavering clarity and conviction throughout.

As Maynard Solomon writes, Beethoven 'stretches the expressiveness of his music beyond the boundaries set for liturgical music by his contemporaries.' That's most apparent in the Sanctus, its heavenly violin solos played with elegant simplicity by Jonathan Stone. His solo lines intertwine with the entreaties of the vocal soloists plaintively enough, though it is Jérémie Rhorer's uncompromising eloquence

which bespeaks faith in the sublime greatness of this work, imparting its mysteries to the listener in ways that are as personally touching as they are revelatory. As Beethoven himself wrote of the *Missa Solemnis*, 'it comes from the heart... may it return to the heart.'

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★★
★★★★★

Beethoven's demands pose no obstacle for the excellent Audi Jugendchorakademie

You can access thousands of reviews from our extensive archive on the BBC Music Magazine website at www.classical-music.com