

## **SIR DAVID WILLCOCKS COMPOSITION COMPETITION 2016**

Some helpful comments from Adjudicator, Jonathan Willcocks:

“There was a pleasing range of settings of the given text submitted again this year, ranging from quite simple unison-with-accompaniment, through unaccompanied choral writing to really quite sophisticated SATB divisi music with organ or piano accompaniment.

The quality of 'polish' and presentation was noticeably higher this year, with many showing commendable ease with Sibelius or Finale music-setting software, which increases the practicability for choirs who may sing the music (and pleasure for the judge reading the scores). The most successful compositions were again were not necessarily the most complex or ambitious - more those settings which established and then maintained a consistent musical style and language.

Also - of great importance - was the extent to which our young composers handled the natural rhythms and emphases of the text - so that words and music live in an easy partnership.

It was pleasing this year that many settings included a good range of interpretative detail (dynamics, phrasing, suggested tempo etc), which gives an added sense of the composer's intentions and adds a welcome extra dimension to the music.

**Although it is inevitable with a competition that some may ultimately be judged as more successful than others, I hope that everyone who submitted an entry found the opportunity to be a helpful stimulus to their creativity - every chorister can be proud of what they have achieved, and I hope that even more will feel tempted to dip their toe into the water as composers next year.**

**You all are gaining so much basic grounding, instinct and fluency in the language of music through your regular singing - and it just needs a little sense of adventure and bravery (and perhaps a few little nudges from your teachers) to use this huge well of musical experience to start the truly creative part of your musical lives.”**

*April 2016*