



**FORMBY HIGH SCHOOL
Music Department**

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

**The original 1916 film by
Geoffrey Malins and John McDowell**

Music by Laura Rossi



WELCOME

Starting on 1 July 1916, the Battle of the Somme lasted four bloody months. The epitome of trench warfare, this battle, for many, symbolised the horrors of war and had a marked effect on the overall casualty figures.

By the end of the battle, the British Army had suffered 420,000 casualties, including nearly 60,000 on the first day alone.

For some, going over the top at the Somme was the first taste of battle. Many of these men had, as many were part of "Kitchener's Volunteer Army", been persuaded to volunteer by posters showing Lord Kitchener himself summoning them to arms to show their patriotism. Some soldiers were really still boys as young as 16, and the majority of men going to battle had no idea what warfare entailed.



'The Battle of the Somme' film was shot by just two cameramen, Geoffrey Malins and J B McDowell. Filming took place between 25 June and 9 July 1916, covering the build-up and opening stages of the Battle of the Somme. The film is definitely a propaganda film, though it is filmed and presented in the style of a documentary.

'The Battle of the Somme' was different. It took real life footage and turned it into a main feature with mass appeal. The film showed images of the first week of the 'Big Push', the joint offensive which began in July 1916 where British and French forces hoped to break through the German lines and achieve victory on the Western Front.

Throughout the autumn of 1916, 20 million people flocked to see the silent film. This was nearly half the population of Britain at the time. The film remains one of the most watched in British cinema history, even bigger than Star Wars.

'Whatever piercing image you might pick — the troops' cheerful waves, the mascot dog dead with its master, the trench channel's mud and corpses — Rossi's score and the IWM's new print will help them to reverberate even further into the future.'

Geoff Brown, The Times.



THE COMPOSER: LAURA ROSSI



Laura has written extensively for film and television, including scores for Paul Andrew Williams' critically acclaimed features *London to Brighton*, *The Cottage* and most recently, *Song For Marion* starring Vanessa Redgrave and Terrence Stamp. She has also scored the feature film *The Firm* for Vertigo Films directed by Nick Love, *Broken Lines* by Sallie Aprahamian, *Shooting Shona* by Abner and Kamma Pastoll, and *The Man Inside* directed by Dan Turner. Laura co-wrote the music to the four part BBC Drama series *Prisoners' Wives (series 2)*. She has also written music for ITV (including documentary series *Marking Time* and *Forgotten Pilots*), Fox Searchlight, Carlton TV (*The Real Sir Francis Drake*), HTV (*The Cotswold Canals*), Quintessence Films and the BBC.

Laura has been writing music for the British Film Institute since 1998 for re-releases of early silent movies. These include the best-selling *Silent Shakespeare* (seven short films) which she has toured around cinemas performing live with the films at venues including the Globe and the Barbican, London and Madeira, Belfast and Sao Paulo film festivals.

The Imperial War Museum commissioned Laura to write an orchestral score for the 1916 film *The Battle of the Somme*, which remains one of the most successful British films ever made. The score, which premiered at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, was recorded and performed by the Philharmonic Orchestra and has recently been released on CD and DVD to worldwide critical acclaim. Laura has recently recorded a new score for the digitally restored 1917 film *The Battle of the Ancre* which was premiered at the London Film Festival.

Laura is the course tutor for Music in Film at the London Film Academy and has taken many masterclasses at the Madeira Film Festival and Edinburgh Film Festival, and has appeared as a guest speaker at the International Conference of Philosophy and Literature, The Bird's Eye View Film Festival, The Skillset Screen Academy in Wales, The Imperial War Museum, University of Strathclyde, Liverpool Hope University and Poredenone Film Festival, Italy.

Most recently, Laura has completed *Voices of Remembrance*, a commission from Boosey and Hawkes for orchestra and choir featuring war poems read by Vanessa Redgrave, released and performed live in 2014 to mark the centenary of the First World War.

Other works include music for animation performed live with film by the BBC Concert Orchestra, a commission for a live film score by the London Music Orchestra and many chamber and orchestral works. Her music has been performed at the Barbican, the Royal Festival Hall and the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. Her own ensemble has performed her music in Sao Paulo and across the UK.

MEET THE ORCHESTRA

Soloist	Mrs S Reed	Piccolo	Miss M Hall
Violin 1	Mr L Hogben Mr B Kirk Mr T Sykes Miss E Horswell Miss K Horridge	Contrabassoon	Miss R Jones
Violin 2	Miss A Byrne Miss R Gibson Mrs G Bocker	Bassoon	Mr B Alison
Viola	Mrs D Waite Miss L Godsell-Morris Mrs T Jolley Mrs C Baykal	Trumpet 1	Mr C Ray Ms A Spence
Cello	Ms J McGowen	Trumpet 2	Mrs J Godsell-Morris
Oboe	Mr A Bassey Miss E Jones	Trombone 1	Mr C Hurley
Clarinet 1	Mrs C Wilkins Mr J Hall	Trombone 2	Mr S Cook
Clarinet 2	Mr G Reed Miss E Horridge	Trombone 3	Mr B Knowles
Flute	Miss D Williams-Tranter Miss C Stark Miss S Queen	Tuba	Mr G Waite Mr M Bassey
		French Horn	Mr D Bassey Mr T Bassey
		Percussion	Mr J Martin Mr S Bradley Mr E Bocker
		Piano	Mr R Chesters
		Harp	Mr J Evans-Bloom



PROGRAMME

'**THE SOUNDING OF THE SOMME**' is the music education project of SOMME 100 FILM. The 'Somme Unseen' was an opportunity for some of our young musicians to compose some original music using actual footage filmed on the Western Front in 1916 and 1917. By special permission of the Imperial War Museum, we are able to show you these clips alongside the work of our talented musicians.

- Erin Clarke (Year 12)
- Luke Duale (Year 12)
- Orla Mulrooney (Year 11)

'THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME'

MUSIC BY LAURA ROSSI

'The Battle of the Somme' gave its 1916 audience an unprecedented insight into the realities of trench warfare, controversially including the depiction of dead and wounded soldiers. It shows scenes of the build-up to the infantry offensive, including the massive preliminary bombardment, coverage of the first day of the battle (the bloodiest single day in Britain's military history) and depictions of the small gains and massive costs of the attack.

'The tragedy of the Somme battle was that the best soldiers, the stoutest-hearted men were lost; their numbers were replaceable, their spiritual worth never could be.'

**Refreshments will be served
at the end of the performance.**

**Work from our Year 9 historians
is on display in the foyer.**



THANK YOU

Holy Trinity Church
Staff and volunteers

Composer
Laura Rossi

Conductor
Mr M Horner

Soloist
Mrs Sarah Reed

Administration
Mrs J Howard

Technical support
Mr G Heatherington

Special thanks to;
Sefton Music Hub
Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Orchestra
Southport Symphony Orchestra

The Imperial War Museum

Formby High School Creative Ambassadors



A SOLDIER'S CEMETERY

By John William Streets

Behind the long and lonely trench line
To which men come and go, where brave men die,
There is a yet unmarked and unknown shrine,
A broken plot, a soldier's cemetery.

There lie the flower of youth, the men who scom'd
To live (so died) when languished Liberty:
Across their graves flowerless and adorned
Still screams the shells of each artillery.

When war shall cease this lonely unknown spot
Of many a pilgrimage will be the end,
And flowers will shine in this now barren plot
And fame upon it through the years descend:
But many a heart upon each simple cross
Will hand in grief, the memory of its loss.



On 1 July, 1916 Sergeant John William Streets moved with the 12th Battalion York & Lancaster Regiment into the assembly trenches behind John Cope on the Somme battlefield. The attack was launched at 07.30 hours. Will's battalion went in on the second wave. Will was wounded and made his way back to the British line to get his wound treated. He was seen going to help another wounded man but he subsequently disappeared.

Will's body was missing for 10 months before it was identified; it was found in the area of No-Mans Land.

