

**Westbourne Orchestral Society**

1 of 100 orchestras taking part in The Battle of the Somme Centenary Tour

Part of the Somme100 FILM project

**85th**  
anniversary  
season

Conductor: Lee Marchant

Leader: Stefan Defilet

# The Battle of the Somme

## Commemorative concert

The Imperial War Museums' (IWM) 1916 film  
The Battle of the Somme  
by Geoffrey Malins and J B McDowell

Music by  
**Laura Rossi**

Photograph © IWM 0 079501



**Saturday November 12th 2.30pm & 7.30pm**  
Pavilion Dance South West, Bournemouth BH1 2BU

Tickets £13.50 (Students and under 16s £5)  
from 01202 203630 or [www.pdsw.org.uk](http://www.pdsw.org.uk)

[www.somme100film.com](http://www.somme100film.com)



## THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME FILM CENTENARY TOUR

Live Film Screening with music by  
Westbourne Orchestral Society



### About the Music

Laura Rossi's new score was commissioned to mark the 90th anniversary of The Battle of the Somme as a soundtrack for the digitally restored film. When embarking on her research on the film and the battle in preparation for her composition, Laura discovered her great uncle, Fred Ainge, (whom she knew as he survived the war) was a stretcher-bearer attached to the 29th Division on 1 July 1916. In preparation for composing the new score she visited the Somme Battlefields, using Fred's diaries to locate the areas in which he served. The re-mastered film was screened for the 90th anniversary of the Battle to a full house at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with the premiere of Laura's orchestral score, performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra and received a glowing 5 star review in The Times.

*"And these troops in the mud grinned or stared at us to a new music score by Laura Rossi, brilliantly effective."* Geoff Brown, The Times. \*\*\*\*\*

### About The Composer: Laura Rossi - Biography

Laura Rossi has written music extensively for film and television, including the critically acclaimed London to Brighton, The Eichmann Show, starring Martin Freeman and Anthony LaPaglia and Song for Marion, starring Vanessa Redgrave and Terence Stamp.

She has also scored many silent films including the British Film Institute's Silent Shakespeare and the famous IWM 1916 films The Battle of the Somme and The Battle of the Ancre.

Her latest work Voices of Remembrance is a choral/ orchestral work featuring war poems read by Ralph Fiennes and Vanessa Redgrave. The music was commissioned by Boosey and Hawkes to mark the Centenary of the First World War.

Laura's music has been recorded and performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra, the London Musici Orchestra, London Contemporary Orchestra and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Her works have been performed at the Barbican, the Royal Festival Hall and the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London. Laura is also lecturer for film music at the London Film Academy. For more information please visit Laura's website: [www.laurarossi.com](http://www.laurarossi.com)

## **Notes on the Battle of the Somme Film...**

### **Purpose of the film**

The producers of the film had expected that the offensive on the Somme would be a great success, so the film was to record the victory and demonstrate the effectiveness of the British Army. It was hoped that the example of the brave soldiers would rally civilian support for the war effort, and in particular the people working in munitions, reflected in the film by a focus on the importance of good quality and plentiful shells of all sizes and guns.

Kitchener had banned all photography and film from taking place until late 1915. The War Office agreed to the presence of cameramen at the front before the 'Battle of the Somme' following the lobbying of the British Topical Committee for War Films and pressure from the film industry who were keen to respond to the public appetite for real footage from the front.

British soldiers are portrayed as well-fed, well-motivated, well-clothed and well-equipped. There is an emphasis on the care and medical assistance that the soldiers received, and indeed the chivalry shown to enemy prisoners.

It would also have been hoped that the film would help with recruiting in Dominion and Empire countries where men volunteered to fight. This was particularly the case in Ireland, where conscription had not been introduced because of the Easter Uprising.

A further purpose would have been to encourage British men to respond to their call-up papers, as many did not come forward after conscription was introduced; 93,000 men failed to appear at the recruiting office when called-up.

Although understood to be a propaganda film in its nature, much of the style of the filming is documentary.

### **Making of the film**

The film was shot by just two cameramen; Geoffrey Malins and J B McDowell. Malins was attached to the 29th division and McDowell to the 7th division.

Filming took place between 25 June and 9 July 1916 therefore covering the buildup and opening stages of the Battle of the Somme.

The cameramen were given an official pass to the battle zone although they were only permitted access to particular areas and were always accompanied by an officer. As well as the censorship imposed by the military, the cameramen themselves would have exercised some self-censorship. Identifying with the troops among whom they were 'embedded', they would have wanted to portray the campaign in an overall positive light.

The equipment used to film the Battle of the Somme consisted of large, hand-cranked cameras requiring a tripod for stability. The equipment was heavy and the cameras could only be loaded with a few hundred feet of film at a time. It was very difficult to film in poor light or at great distance.

## Credits

### The Battle of the Somme

The IWM 1916 silent film by Geoffrey Malins and John McDowell  
With live music composed by Laura Rossi

### 1916 Film Credits The Battle of the Somme (Duration 74 minutes)

Sponsor - War Office

Production Company - British Topical Committee for War Films

Producer - William F. Jury

Cameramen - Geoffrey H. Malins and J.B. McDowell

Editors - Charles Urban and Geoffrey H. Malins

### Restoration Credits

Restoration by Dragon

Supervised by David Walsh, Imperial War Museums (IWM)

Film with click track created with the generous assistance of Mike Eden, Matthew Lee and The Film Archive, IWM

### Part of Somme100 FILM - The Battle of the Somme Centenary Tour

**Somme100 FILM** is an international project, working with IWM as part of the First World War Centenary Partnership to mark the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. We are aiming to bring together 100 live orchestral performances of the iconic 1916 film The Battle of the Somme with composer Laura Rossi's acclaimed score, commissioned by the Imperial War Museums. [www.somme100film.com](http://www.somme100film.com)

### Somme100 FILM team:

Artistic Director – Laura Rossi

Producer – Melanie Crompton

PR Consultant – Jane Nicolson, Arts PR

Tour Projectionist/ film technician – Mike Eden

Graphic Designer – Isobel Stuart

Project Manager – Neill Quinton

Education Consultant – Ellen Thomson

Arts administrator – Bright Ivy

Web design – Mike Outram

We would like to thank the generous support from our partners and funders:

Music commissioned with the generous support of The Eric Anker-Petersen Charity

Thanks to the Imperial War Museums for permitting use of The Battle of the Somme film and for all their support. [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

Thanks to Faber Music for supporting the tour.

Thanks to Arts Council of England for supporting the Centenary tour. [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

About IWM's First World War Centenary Partnership:

IWM is leading the First World War Centenary Partnership, a network of local, regional and international cultural and educational organisations. Together, the Partnership is presenting a vibrant programme of cultural events, activities and digital platforms, enabling millions of people across the world to discover more about life in the First World War.

IWM established the First World War Centenary Partnership in 2010. The founding ambition for the Partnership was that its members would collectively organise and present a vibrant, diverse and far-reaching programme to reflect how people want to remember, commemorate and debate the conflict in their own communities, in a way that is meaningful for them.

For more information about First World War Centenary Partnership activities visit [www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org)

FABER *ff* MUSIC



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



LED BY IWM