

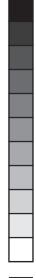


Solace and Celebration

Sunday 24th March 2019 St Augustine's Church, Kilburn Park Road



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Queen's Park Singers Spring Concert

with Queen's Park Singers conductor Oliver Till

Queen's Park Junior Singers conductor Mary Phillips

Concert management Rebecca Sheridan

Programme notes Monica Healy Katherine Lawson Carey Smith Tania Spooner Glyn Jones

Sunday 24th March 2019

St Augustine's Church,

Dear all

Welcome to Queens Park Singers' Spring Concert.

We are performing an intriguing mixture of music tonight. The main piece, the *Requiem* in F minor, was written in 1692 by Heinrich Biber who was Kapellmeister to the Archbishop of Salzburg and a master of contemporary counterpoint and choral music. This is accompanied by music from three giants of English music; Elgar, Holst and Britten. For two centuries after Purcell there were numerous English musicians and England itself was a significant centre for the making of musical instruments but there was nobody to challenge the great composers from Europe until Elgar and Holst in the late nineteenth century overturned the German view that England was a "land without music".

The music we perform tonight goes from the great joyous anthems of Elgar and Britten to the complex rhythms of Biber and the beautiful poignancy of the Holst.

We welcome as always Mary Phillips and the Queen's Park Junior Singers who will perform three songs from Britten's *Friday Afternoons*, a collection of pieces for children full of inventiveness to engage young voices.

We thank Mother Christine and the staff of St Anne's Church, Salusbury Road for their hospitality in providing rehearsal space and Father Amos and the staff of St Augustine's for their welcome and support in allowing us to use this unique church for tonight's concert.

Our heartfelt thanks are due, as always, to our Music Director Oliver Till, for his choice of programme and work with the choir and to our accompanist Hamish Brown. Both of these talented young men bring a tremendous amount to the choir and are a joy to work with.

This is fitting music for the season of Lent and we hope tonight's programme does indeed bring Solace and Celebration.

Moníca Healy

Chair Queen's Park Singers **Benjamin Britten** (1913 - 1976) *Jubilate Deo* in E flat with Queen's Park Junior Singers

Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934) Ode to Death

Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934) Great is the Lord

🗞 Interval 🗞

Benjamin Britten Songs from Friday Afternoons Queen's Park Junior Singers

A New Year Carol

Cuckoo

Old Abram Brown

Heinrich Biber (1644 - 1704) Requiem in F minor

- I. Introit & Kyrie
- II. Dies Irae
- III. Offertorium
- IV. Sanctus & Benedictus
- V. Agnus Dei & Communio

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) Jubilate Deo in E flat

Given that Benjamin Britten is one of the most widely performed 20th-century composers, it is hard to believe that the *Jubilate Deo in E flat* was never performed in his lifetime. Indeed it was not published till 1984, eight years after his death. Britten actually wrote it in 1934 as a companion canticle performed alongside *Te Deum in C* at the now deconsecrated St Mark's Church, North Audley Street, Mayfair, London. It is not known why he withdrew it.

The Jubilate Deo in E flat is an uplifting, celebratory canticle, offering thanks to God, setting words of Psalm 100, 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands'. The rousing accompaniment was written for the organ.



Benjamin Britten

Gustav Holst (1874 - 1934) Ode to Death

Composed in 1919, Ode to Death is a setting of a passage from Walt Whitman's 1865 elegy *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd*, which was written to mourn the death of American president Abraham Lincoln.

At the onset of World War I Holst was declared medically exempt from military service, but had composer friends who served, including Ralph Vaughan Williams and George Butterworth. He wrote little during the war itself that directly reflected the conflict, but in 1919 wrote Ode to Death to mourn friends who were killed. It was written on his return from Thessaloniki, where he had been helping to organise musical entertainment for the troops, and was a response to what was recognised as the immeasurable suffering of World War I. Holst's daughter, Imogen believed the Ode expressed Holst's private attitude to death.

Ode to Death is a single-movement piece for mixed chorus and orchestra; we will be performing a version by the composer for chorus and organ. With its quiet, resigned mood, and luminous open chords suggestive of infinite space, it evokes a haunting impression of unfathomable loss and waste. It has long been considered by many to be Holst's most beautiful choral piece.

Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934) Great is the Lord

Elgar was born in 1857 in the sight of the Malvern Hills and Gloucester cathedral that meant so much to him. He was a competent organist and an outstanding violinist but was largely self-taught, vet his work had an enormous influence on English music. He was knighted in1904 and made Master of the Kings Musick in 1924. His genius was recognised in his lifetime by Strauss who called him a "progressive composer". Hans Richter referred to him as the "greatest modern composer" and the critic Frank Howes said he "restored England to the comity of musical nations". His work received recognition with the publication of the Enigma Variations, which was followed by his three great Oratorios – The Apostles, The Kingdom and Dream of Gerontius – which contributed hugely to the English choral tradition. In 1907 the popular First Symphony established him as an orchestral composer.

Great is the Lord was started in 1910, but being without a commission was not published until 1912. It was first performed in Westminster Abbey in July 1912. In this setting of Psalm 100 Elgar explores a wide range of choral and organ effects to create some vivid word painting. The anthem divides into a number of sections each using new material. It starts with a majestic theme sung by the lower voices in unison, interrupted by a delicate melody floated by the female voices. A passage in staccato portrays the dismayed kings who "hasten away" and a beautiful poignant line of a "woman in travail" is swept away by the east wind that

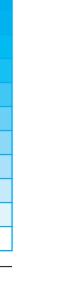
"breaketh the ships of Tarshish". The basses sing a reflective melody on the central text and then the music builds to a grandiose ending. It is a piece of beautiful contrast and mastery of choral writing.

Benjamin Britten Songs from *Friday Afternoons*

Performed this evening with organ accompaniment rather than the piano that Britten originally had in mind, these three songs come from the engaging Friday Afternoon collection, written for the pupils at the prep school in Prestatyn, Wales, where Britten's brother was Headmaster. They are sung here by Queen's Park Junior Singers.

Britten loved writing for children, believing them capable of singing far more sophisticated music than many would believe. Mixing humour with the serious, the songs are short but not without their challenges. A New Year's *Carol* is a beautiful, reflective piece, sung in unison, while *The Cuckoo* is a delightful word painting, tracing the cuckoo's activities, month by month through the summer. It is based on a poem by the 18th-century poet Jane Taylor who also wrote Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. Old Abram Brown is based on a 19th-century American nursery rhyme. It opens as a funeral march and builds into a rousing four-part canon, enlivened by octave leaps. Both The Cuckoo and Old Abram Brown featured in Wes Anderson's film Moonrise Kingdom.





Heinrich Biber *Requiem in F minor*

Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber was born in Wartenburg, Bohemia in1644. Little is known of his early life, which suggests that he was of humble origin. He is thought to have studied and presumably to have learnt music at a Jesuit Gymnasium and his obvious talent and virtuosity, particularly on the violin, led to his employment by the Bishop of Olmutz. However his most productive era of composition was when he illegally entered the employ of the Archbishop of Salzburg in 1670, where he remained for the rest of his life. Sent off to negotiate the purchase of some instruments by his previous bishop he never returned. The bishop and archbishop were friends and so the Bishop of Olmutz refrained from taking any action, but he was hurt and took six years to release his papers.

Under the patronage of the Archbishop of Salzburg, Biber became one of the most important composers for the violin in the history of the instrument. His technique led him to easily reach the sixth and seventh positions, to employ multiple stops in intricate polyphonic passages and to explore the various possibilities of scordatura tuning. He wrote one of the earliest known pieces for solo violin, the monumental passacaglia of the *Mystery Sonatas*.

Biber also composed many vocal works, particularly towards the end of his career when the accession of a more piously inclined Bishop led to a focus on sacred music. He composed his *Requiem* in F minor around 1692. It is scored for five voices: two soprano parts, alto, tenor and bass. The musical figurations expressing grief, lament and consolation include some of the most impressive and intense of all requiem settings. This intensity came from the application of already established baroque compositional principles concerning the relationship between words and music. A good example can be heard in the music for the phrase "Lacrimosa dies illa" (that day of tears and mourning) in the *Dies Irae* where an ascending semitone followed by a descending passage of half notes beautifully portrays both passion and sadness.

During Biber's lifetime, his music was known and imitated throughout Europe. He died a fulfilled, honoured and wealthy man in Salzburg. He married there and four of his surviving children also became successful musicians.



Heinrich Biber

The words

Benjamin Britten Jubilate Deo

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his children and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Psalm 100

Gustav Holst Ode to Death

Come, lovely and soothing death, Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,

In the day, in the night, to all, to each, Sooner or later, delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe, For life and joy, and for the objects and knowledge curious,

And for love, sweet love – but praise! For the sure-enwinding arms of coolenfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,

Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?

Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,

I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

Approach strong deliveress,

When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,

Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee, Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death. From me to thee glad serenades, Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, And the sights of the open landscape And the high-spread sky are fitting, And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star, The ocean shore and the husky whisp'ring wave whose voice I know, And the soul turning to thee O vast and wellveil'd death,

And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song, Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide, Over dense-packed cities and the teeming wharves and ways,

I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee, O death. Come, come.

From When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd, Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892)



Gustav Holst



Edward Elgar Great is the Lord

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness.

Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.

God hath made Himself known in her palaces for a refuge.

For lo! the kings assembled themselves, they passed by together; they saw, then were they amazed; they were dismay'd, they hasted away; trembling took hold of them there, pain as of a woman in travail, as with the east wind that breaketh the ships of Tarshish.

As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.

We have thought on thy loving kindness, O God, in the midst of Thy temple: as is thy name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth; Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

Let mount Zion be glad, because of Thy judgements, let the daughters of Judah rejoice; walk about Zion and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death. Amen.

Psalm 48

Benjamin Britten Songs from Friday Afternoons

A New Year Carol

Here we bring new water from the well so clear

For to worship God with, this happy New Year

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water and the wine;

The seven bright gold wires and the bugles that do shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her toe,

Open you the West Door, and turn the Old Year go.

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, etc.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her chin,

Open you the East Door, and let the New Year in.

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, etc.

Anon.

Cuckoo

Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! What do you do? In April, I open my bill In May, I sing night and day In June, I change my tune In July, far far I fly In August, away I must! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! What do you do? In April, I open my bill In May, I sing night and day In June, I change my tune In July, far far I fly In August, away I must! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Jane Taylor (1783 - 1824)

Old Abram Brown

Old Abram Brown is dead and gone, You'll never see him more. He used to wear a long brown coat That button'd up before,

And on his feet two silver shoon And buckles by the score. Old Abram Brown is dead and gone. Never, never, never more. Anon.

Heinrich Biber Requiem

I. Introit & Kyrie

aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion, et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem. Exaudi orationem meam, ad te omnis caro veniet. Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. Kyrie, eleison. Christe, eleison. Kyrie, eleison.

II. Dies irae

Dies irae, dies illa Solvet saeclum in favilla, teste David cum Sibylla.

Quantus tremor est futurus, quando judex est venturus, cuncta stricte discussurus!

Tuba mirum spargens sonum per sepulcra regionum, coget omnes ante thronum.

Mors stupebit et natura, cum resurget creatura, judicanti responsura.

Liber scriptus proferetur, in quo totum continetur, unde mundus judicetur.

Judex ergo cum sedebit, quidquid latet, apparebit, nil inultum remanebit.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus? quem patronum rogaturus, cum vix justus sit securus?

Rex tremendae majestatis, qui salvandos salvas gratis, salve me, fons pietatis.

Recordare, Jesu pie, quod sum causa tuae viae; ne me perdas illa die. Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them. You are praised, God, in Zion, and homage will be paid to You in Jerusalem. Hear my prayer, to You all flesh will come. Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Day of wrath, day of anger will dissolve the world in ashes, as foretold by David and the Sibyl.

Great trembling there will be when the Judge descends from heaven to examine all things closely.

The trumpet will send its wondrous sound throughout earth's sepulchres and gather all before the throne.

Death and nature will be astounded, when all creation rises again, to answer the judgement.

A book will be brought forth, in which all will be written, by which the world will be judged

When the judge takes his place, what is hidden will be revealed, nothing will remain unavenged.

What shall a wretch like me say? Who shall intercede for me, when the just ones need mercy?

King of tremendous majesty, who freely saves those worthy ones, save me, source of mercy

Remember, kind Jesus, my salvation caused your suffering; do not forsake me on that day.

Quaerens me, sedisti lassus, redemisti crucem passus; tantus labor non sit cassus.

Juste judex ultionis, donum fac remissionis ante diem rationis.

Ingemisco, tamquam reus: culpa rubet vultus meus; supplicanti parce, Deus.

Qui Mariam absolvisti, et latronem exaudisti, mihi quoque spem dedisti.

Preces meae non sunt dignae, sed tu, bonus, fac benigne, ne perenni cremer igne.

Inter oves locum praesta, Et ab haedis me sequestra, Statuens in parte dextra.

Confutatis maledictis, flammis acribus addictis, voca me cum benedictus.

Oro supplex et acclinis, cor contritum quasi cinis, gere curam mei finis.

Lacrimosa dies illa, qua resurget ex favilla judicandus homo reus.

Huic ergo parce, Deus, pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen.

III. Offertorium

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu. Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas Tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum. Sed signifer sanctus Michael repraesentet eas in lucem sanctam. Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus. Hostias et preces tibi, Domine, laudis offerimus. Tu sucipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam facimus. Fac eas, Domine, de morte transire ad vitam, Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus. Faint and weary you have sought me, redeemed me, suffering on the cross; may such great effort not be in vain.

Righteous judge of vengeance, grant me the gift of absolution before the day of retribution.

I moan as one who is guilty: owning my shame with a red face; suppliant before you, Lord.

You, who absolved Mary, and listened to the thief, give me hope also.

My prayers are unworthy, but, good Lord, have mercy, and rescue me from eternal fire.

Provide me a place among the sheep, and separate me from the goats, guiding me to Your right hand.

When the accused are confounded, and doomed to flames of woe, call me among the blessed.

I kneel with submissive heart, my contrition is like ashes, help me in my final condition.

That day tears and mourning, when from the ashes shall arise, all humanity to be judged.

Spare us by your mercy, Lord, gentle Lord Jesus, grant them eternal rest. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, liberate the souls of the faithful, departed from the pains of hell and from the bottomless pit. Deliver them from the lion's mouth, lest hell swallow them up, lest they fall into darkness. Let the standard-bearer, holy Michael, bring them into holy light. Which was promised to Abraham and his descendants. Sacrifices and prayers of praise, Lord, we offer to You. Receive them on behalf of those souls we commemorate today. And let them, Lord, pass from death to life, which was promised to Abraham and his descendants.



IV. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

V. Agnus Dei - Communio

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,

cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es. Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine, et Lux perpetua luceat eis,

cum sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, Grant them eternal rest. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest forever. Let eternal light shine on them, Lord, as with Your saints in eternity, because You are merciful. Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them, as with Your saints in eternity, because You are merciful.



Oliver Till is a conductor and repetiteur praised by The Times for 'ambitious, intelligent programming'. Musical Director of the Asyla Ensemble and Queen's Park Singers, Ollie's musical life started as a chorister at Westminster Cathedral. Having studied composition and piano at the Royal College of Music Junior Department, Ollie gained his bachelor's at the University of Manchester and received further training at Dartington, RNCM and the Järvi Academy, Estonia.

Recent highlights include conducting Mozart's Da Ponte operas from the harpsichord, the UK premiere of CPE Bach's St John Passion (1772) on period instruments, and assisting Gergely Madaras at the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Dedicated to new music Ollie has conducted over 60

works by living composers including 40 world premières.

Upcoming projects include conducting the London Medical Orchestra, a new community opera in Hackney, Schoenberg's Piano Concerto at the Waterloo Festival and the new community opera *The Queen's Park* by Mary Phillips.

Mary Phillips played the clarinet in the National Youth orchestra of Great Britain before reading music at the University of York. After winning the John Lobb Memorial Prize for singing, she went on to study with Corinne Shirman-Sarti and then Liz Brice.

For many years she has sung with London Voices, London Sinfonietta and the BBC Singers as well as the Electric Voice theatre, Britten Sinfonia and Opera Ra Ra, and is a regular soloist in oratorio and recitals at home and abroad.

She is director of the Queen's Park Junior Singers who recently performed Benjamin Britten's Noyes



Fludde (2013) and *The Happy Prince* by Malcolm Williamson (2014). QPJS has recently completed a recording project of *The Happy Prince*. Although the opera was written for children's voices, this is the first recording including children. The CD of this recording is now available. Mary has recently written an opera called *The Queen's Park*, a community chorus project for the Brent Borough of Culture celebrations in 2020.

Mary teaches singing at South Hampstead High school and Trevor-Roberts Preparatory school and freelances as a choral conductor.



Queen's Park Singers accompanist **Hamish Brown** was born in 1993 and grew up in Marlborough, Wiltshire. From 2011-14, he read music at the University of Manchester,



studying piano with

Andrew Wilde, graduating with First Class Honours.

He continued his studies as a postgraduate at the Royal College of Music, where his support included a Help Musicians UK Harrison Award, studying Piano Accompaniment with Simon Lepper and Roger Vignoles, graduating in July 2016 with Distinction. During his studies, he won first prizes for accompaniment in all of the RCM vocal competitions.

In June 2016, he was selected as a student of the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme in Aldeburgh, supported by a Viola Tunnard Scholarship. Hamish has also performed at the Leeds Lieder, Oxford Lieder and Deal festivals, and at venues including Cadogan Hall, Wigmore Hall, V&A Museum, Royal Over-Seas League, Royal Festival Hall and Elgar Room. Queen's Park Junior Singers is a choir open to children between the ages of eight and 18.

Serious choral skills are at the core of Queen's Park Junior Singers. The choir's director Mary Phillips imparts vocal training with the belief that children are quite easily capable of handling more challenging music than they are usually given credit for.

As well as performing in concert, children are also given the chance to take part in fully staged opera productions.

Performing this evening:

Emily Alexander Natasha Alexander Axelle Benoit Ava Beech-Jones Estelle Bulku Mylo Kirsten Raffi Melkonian-Payne Evie Morris Katie Tan Khoo Hannah Sheridan



Queen's Park Singers are a friendly choir based in Queen's Park London NW6. Our aim is to sing to a standard that gives pleasure to our audiences and is rewarding for us. Our repertoire ranges from choral music from the Tudor period to works by contemporary composers. We often perform with a chamber orchestra.

The choir was founded over 20 years ago by David Till and later directed by Peter Burtt-Jones. Our Music Director since October 2016 is Oliver Till.

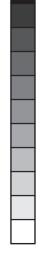
We usually give three concerts each season, in December, March/April and June. We welcome new members who share our aims. If you would like to sing with us please contact **membership@queensparksingers.org.uk** or via the contact form on our website: **www.queensparksinger.org.uk**.

Soprano

Louise Clark Gabrielle Crockatt Adrienne Fresko Hinda Golding Tabea Grimm Lizzie Howard Jo Hurley Una O'Gara Katy Payne Stella Ruszczynski Emma Skala Alto Josephine Alexander Louise Coopman Graziella Doardo **Rachel Donnison** Helen Dymond Frances Freeman Monica Healy Nuria Inglada Rahel Ira Reiko Kimura Katherine Lawson **Catherine Marris** Denise O'Reilly Tania Spooner Liz Till **Evelyn Velleman**

Tenor Nick Dibb Cathie Hammond Glyn Jones Julie Krausz-Rogerson Maria Phelan Colin Porter Amanda Robinson Bass Roger Bloomfield Marc Fresko Simon Judge Stephen Morrall Liam O'Brien Adam Ritchie Richard Scottow Peter Walter Peter Weigall





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For another opportunity to hear this great music...

Saturday 13th April 2019, 7.30pm

Holy Trinity Church, Prince Consort Road London SW7 2BA

Britten Jubilate Deo Holst Ode to Death Elgar Great is the Lord Biber Requiem in F minor

A reprise of tonight's concert as part of the BRANDENBURG Choral Festival. Visit queensparksingers.org.uk for tickets

...and for your diary:

Sunday 23rd June 2019

Our summer concert - music from many lands, including:

Clara Schumann arr. Hamish Brown Ich stand in dunklen Träumen trad. Bulgarian Ergen Deda Grieg arr. Oliver Till Ein Traum Xixian Qu Pastoral trad. American arr. Ringwald Deep River trad. Scottish arr McGlynn Fionnghuala Scriabin arr. Oliver Till Romance Kuula Suojeluskuntien marssi Kodaly Esti Dal trad. English arr. Rutter Dashing away with the smoothing iron



