

The People's Passion

Review by Alison Craswell

The People's Passion came to us from A Chorus of Women on Armistice Day 2018 at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture as an authentic reminder of the importance of love. Composed and reworked by Glenda Cloughley from her earlier community oratorio *A Passion for Peace*, it was under the comprehensive directorship of a very capable musician Johanna McBride.

Glenda Cloughley, a Jungian analyst, knows about love. Generous in its inclusiveness, *The People's Passion* encompasses us all as audience, singers and players, and makes us see that the necessity of peace is never to be forgotten.

It is what women fought for in speaking out against the futility of the First World War. Such serious global suffering was anticipated by those intelligent and far seeing women who knew the power of love and expressed this at their 1915 International Congress in The Hague against the odds of broaching frightened men and angered war makers.

The breadth of the musical work began with lovely instrumental cadences and included sweet children's voices, the chorus, soloists, fine instrumental playing, ending with some outstanding singing. It was all encompassing and led us along through the drums of war to feeling, after all the sadness, the hopefulness of continued peace making. This we received and it softened our hearts and resolve to maintain peace.

It was an emotional journey for all, including a reminder at the end through a tolling bell. *The Passion* is about love, about women and their sorrow for the loss of their men, and about how this musical quest is behind the reason to always engage in seeking peace. And a reminder to value this and not to be cynical.

What better way to do this than through the universal language of musical performance, which came to a large receptive audience on this day from such intelligent hearts.