



[Amateur choirs debut Arsenal piece](#)

by Colin Paterson

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A piece by a prize-winning composer, inspired by a visit to an Arsenal football match 20 years ago, will premiere in Birmingham this weekend.

Up to 1,000 local people will perform Crowd Out, described by US composer David Lang as being "an orchestra of people using their voices".



Multiple amateur choirs have been rehearsing since last year for the 45-minute concert.

It will take place at Birmingham's Millennium Point on Sunday.

Lang was inspired by his only visit to a football match - at Arsenal's Highbury Stadium in 1994.

But it wasn't what happened on the pitch which interested him.

"I was incredibly excited to hear all of these people in this crowd yelling and singing and screaming," recalls Lang.

"They had these hilarious songs that were incredibly lewd. The sound was amazing. To hear a tune start on one side and circle around was very exciting.

"But thing I really loved the most about it was that everyone seemed to have been invited to join in and be part of this music-making," he told BBC News.

Lang was prompted to write his own piece reflecting how it feels to be in the middle of a crowd.

But those expecting to hear chants about Ian Wright or David Seaman will be

disappointed. Lang says that his football trip was only the genesis of the idea.

"I wanted to make sure that the sound of Crowd Out wouldn't remind us of the kinds of crowds that we might normally be in in our lives.

"It's not a religious crowd. It's not a political rally. It's not a sporting event crowd.

"I just really wanted to pay attention to the things we may lose about ourselves when we decide to join other people to do something. That's why the piece is called Crowd Out."

The majority of the piece is not sung, with the crowd instead speaking, talking and murmuring.

"There are a few moments when it gets loud," says Lang. "I find it very amusing that I have 1,000 people yelling all together 'I am alone'."

According to Lang, there is a very simple reason why a piece inspired by Arsenal is having its premiere in Birmingham:

"It's very difficult to talk people into letting me do a piece for a 1,000 people or more yelling in the street."