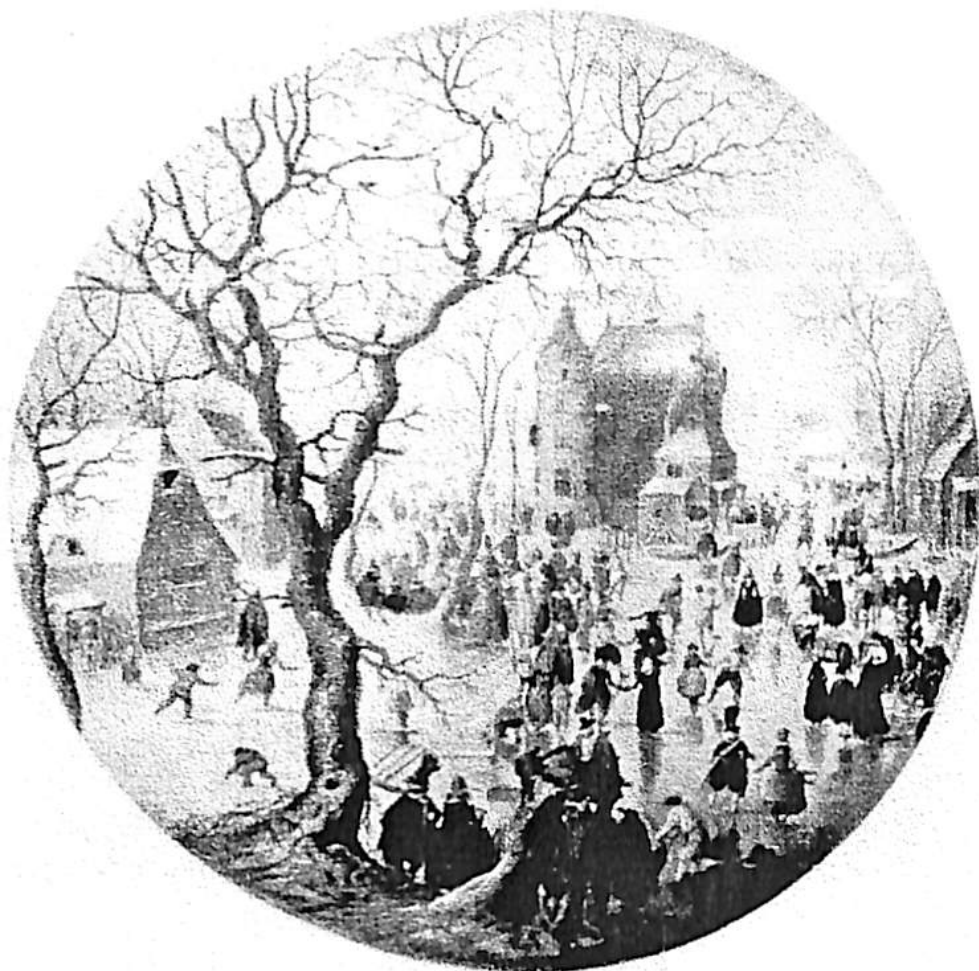


Kingston Philharmonia & Kingston Choral Society



Hendrick Avercamp (1585-1634)

Christmas Concert

Conductors: Robin Page (KCS)
Stephen Whittaker (KP)

Leader/Violin: Clare Howick

Organ: Jason Edge

Harpsichord: David Hoyland

Kingston Parish Church

23rd December 1995

7:30 pm

Price: 50p

Order of Program

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|--|
| 1 | Carol for all | The first Nowell |
| 2 | Two carols for choir | Coventry Carol |
| 3 | | Il est né le divin enfant |
| 4 | Orchestral item | "March" and "Waltz of the Flowers" from Nutcracker Suite (Tchaikovsky) |
| 5 | Carol for all | Ding Dong Merrily on High |
| 6 | Rutter | When Icicles Hang |
| 7 | Two carols for choir | Here We Come A-Wassailing |
| 8 | | The 12 Days of Christmas |
| 9 | Orchestral item | Skater's Waltz (Waldteufel) |
| 10 | Carol for all | Hark, the Herald Angels Sing |

— Interval —

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 11 | Carol for all | O Come all ye Faithful |
| 12 | Orchestral item | Overture "La Cenerentola" (Rossini) |
| 13 | Three carols for choir | Masters in this hall |
| 14 | | Shepherds' Farewell |
| 15 | | Torches |
| 16 | Orchestral item | "Winter" from the Seasons (Vivaldi) |
| 17 | Medley for choir and audience | |
| 18 | We wish you a Merry Christmas | |

The Christmas Carol

In common use, carol is the name given to a type of simple, traditional, essentially rhythmic song, particularly one whose words concern the Nativity. Obscure in origin, the term has been conclusively traced only so far as the Old French form *carole*.

In England, from their first appearance in the fourteenth century, carols were marked by a characteristic refrain intended for dancing. Early use (1470) of the term *carol* for "a ring of standing stones" (OED) reflects this implicit meaning. There is thus a clear distinction between a carol and a Christmas hymn.

The great age of the English carol was the fifteenth century - the age of humanism and the emergence of the ballad. Subjects treated include many beside the Nativity. Some are purely secular - the Agincourt Song is an example. Others are intended to celebrate particular seasons of the year, particularly from Advent to Candlemas. A third type retells in many-versed form a Christian legend (*The Cherry Tree*) or propounds a homily (*Remember, O thou man*). Akin, though hardly to be considered a true carol, is the *Wassail Song* - pagan in origin, but made respectable by its commendation of the virtue of hospitality.

The impact of the Reformation and the consequent growth of Puritanism in this country changed the nature of the English carol, without causing its disappearance. After the ban imposed upon Christmas festivity during the Commonwealth was lifted, the singing of folk-carols was revived, to last in dwindling popularity throughout the eighteenth century.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century a flood of so-called carols issued from the pens of an army of would-be composers, some of whose effusions are still unfortunately current. Modern composers have shown that they are able to present the simplicity, strength and honesty requisite in a true carol; but the modern commercialisation of Christmas has also encouraged the production of a repertoire of spurious carols of a type as sickly, sentimental and inappropriate as anything produced during the decadence of a century ago.

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Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Suite: The Nutcracker

The Nutcracker is one of Tchaikovsky's best loved works, although the composer himself did not rate it highly — perhaps in part because he was given, not only a specific text to work with, but also a detailed description of the moods and dances his music was to fit. This need not detract from our pleasure tonight. The "March" follows the overture; its brisk theme is given by clarinets, horns and trumpets; in the trio part, woodwind and strings exchange a lively staccato subject. The "Waltz of the Flowers" opens with a waltz tune in horns, followed by clarinets. There follow two subjects in contrasting styles, after each of which the waltz is repeated.

John Rutter (1945 –)

When Icicles Hang (1973)

Rutter is an English composer; he studied at Cambridge University, and is Director of Music at Clare College, Cambridge. He has a special interest in composing for young people and amateurs.

When Icicles Hang was written at the request of the late Russell Burgess, then conductor of Wandsworth School Boys' Choir, for a seasonal concert given by them in the Queen Elizabeth Hall in December 1973. The texts are taken from various sources as follows:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 | When Icicles Hang | William Shakespeare, from <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> |
| 2. | Winter Nights | Thomas Campion |
| 3. | Good Ale | English, 15th Century |
| 4. | Blow, blow thou winter wind | William Shakespeare, from <i>As you like it</i> |
| 5. | Hay, ay | English, c16th Century |

Emil Waldteufel (1837 – 1915)

Skaters' Waltz

Waldteufel was an French Alsatian pianist and composer of waltzes and other dance music. He was pianist to the Empress Eugénie of France.

Gioacchino Rossini (1792 – 1868)

Overture: La Cenerentola

La Cenerentola is one of Rossini's finest comic operas — consistently lyrical, gay, and effervescent. The overture is one Rossini had previously used for another opera, *La Gatta* (1816). In lightness of touch and infectiousness of spirit, it is completely in tune with the Cinderella text. An extended slow section opens with soft phrases in lower strings and woodwind, separated by vigorous chords. The principal subject in this introduction is a romantic episode for the woodwind. Four chords bring on the main section in which two graceful melodies are presented, the first in strings, the other in woodwind. A Rossini *crescendo*, and *brio* passages, inject dramatic interest. An extended *crescendo* sweeps toward an exciting conclusion.

Antonio Vivaldi (1675 – 1741)

The Seasons: No. 4 in F minor L'Inverno (Winter)

Vivaldi composed nearly 400 concertos for strings and solo instruments. *The Four Seasons* is one of his most enduring works. It forms part of a dozen concertos entitled *The Strife between Harmony and Invention*.

Winter's opening movement, *Allegro non molto*, paints a vivid picture of shivering cold, biting wind and fallen snow. The *Largo* is the most beautiful part, in which the solo violin sings over a pizzicato background and offers some respite. In the final *Allegro*, four solos and four tutti show all the four winds at work.

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Kingston Choral Society

Patron	The Worshipful Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
President	Honorary Alderman W James Daly KCHS FICE
Vice president	Richard Tracey NIP JP
Musical director	Robin Page MA (Hons) (Cantab) LRAM
Chairman	Anne Miller
Honorary members	Mrs A Jolinson, Miss O Lofts

The Society, organises a minimum of four concerts a year and performs a wide range of music dating from the seventeenth century to the present day. Last season the repertoire ranged from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* in December, to Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* for the Kingston 'Music in May' Festival, and Gershwin in the summer. 1994 saw the choir exploring new avenues, with its first ever scratch concert — of Fauré and Vivaldi — and additional concerts in support of the centenary celebrations of St Agatha's Church, Kingston.

New members are always welcome. Rehearsals take place every Thursday evening at Hollyfield School Hall, Surbiton Road, from 7.45pm to 10.00pm.

For further information about the choir, please contact the Membership Secretary, Valerie Mocri, on 0181 643 3595.

Kingston Philharmonia

Chairman Charles Wroth

Kingston Philharmonia was founded in 1974 by Walter Wurzbürger, who was conductor and chairman until his retirement in 1992. It gives three to four concerts a year, normally in Kingston Parish Church. Its concerts are often adventurous and wide ranging, including a considerable number of 20th century works, and it has given a platform to a number of local artists, as well as players of wide renown.

The Orchestra has enjoyed a successful 3 years under its departing conductor, Stephen Whittaker, and is now seeking a new conductor and musical director.

New members are always welcome. Rehearsals take place every Friday evening at St John's School Hall, Portland Road, from 7.45pm to 10.00pm.

For further information about the orchestra, please contact the Chairman, Charles Wroth, on 0181 390 3711.

We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to **Stephen Whittaker** as permanent conductor of Kingston Philharmonia, although we hope that his association with the Orchestra will continue.

Steven has spent most of his 20-year musical career as an instrumentalist, culminating in a 3 year stay at the Royal Opera House as principal percussionist. He subsequently embarked upon a new career as a conductor of both professional and amateur orchestras. Recent professional engagements have included the Nutcracker at the Royal Festival Hall, concerts with the Guildford Philharmonic, the Birmingham Royal Ballet and London City Ballet, and a trip to Turkey to prepare a local orchestra for a visit by the Royal Ballet. Recently he conducted a studio recording with the BBC Concert Orchestra, which was broadcast as part of Richard Baker's programme on Radio 2 in July.

Kingston Philharmonia will for ever be indebted to Stephen Whittaker. He took over at a uncertain point in the Orchestra's history and, it is agreed by players and audiences alike, transformed it into a first class amateur orchestra. Through meticulous preparation, endless patience and a sheer and infectious love of music, he ran each rehearsal as a musical workshop from which the participants emerged both refreshed and enlightened. Each successive concert has been the "best ever", and he now leaves a confident orchestra with a secure future. We wish him every success in his future career.

Robin Page is Conductor and Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society, as well as Thames Symphony Orchestra, Thames Sinfonia and the Purcell Orchestra. He was educated at Magdalen College School, Oxford, and Cambridge University. He then studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and continued there as a professor until 1990. He now lectures at Kingston University and is Principal Conductor to British Youth Summer Music. Robin specialises in the Nordic repertoire, giving acclaimed performances of Sibelius and Nielsen symphonies, and conducting the inaugural concert of the UK Sibelius Society. He has also given first UK performances of many Scandinavian works including such composers as Stenhammer, Rosenberg, Lidholm and Bortz. Earlier this year he travelled to Sweden as guest conductor with the Sundsvall Kammarorkester. The performances were broadcast on Swedish Radio, on Good Friday.

Clare Howick, the Orchestra's permanent leader since 1992, was first introduced to the Orchestra when she played the Kabalevsky concerto with them at the age of fourteen. Clare has since completed her studies with Maurice Hasson at the Royal Academy of Music, where she won several major prizes and was awarded the Dip. RAM (the Academy's highest award). She is rapidly establishing herself as a solo artist, playing with orchestras such as The Philharmonia at venues all over Europe. Her most recent appearance with the Kingston Philharmonia was in The Lark Ascending in 1995.

Jason Edge, tonight's organist, has a BA in music with Kingston University, where he teaches and is conducting research towards a PhD on Algorithmic Composition.

David Hoyland, continuo player, is a talented exponent of this art form, both here and on the Continent. As well as composing, he also has wide experience as organist and conductor.

Next Concerts

Kingston Choral Society's next concert — a performance of the **Bach B Minor Mass** — will be at Kingston Parish Church on Saturday 4th May, 1996. See the press for details.

Kingston Philharmonia's next concert will be at Kingston Parish Church at 8pm on Saturday March 16th. The principal works will be **Beethoven's Eroica Symphony**, and the **Brahms Double Concerto** for violin and cello, featuring the talented local performers Laura and Naomi Samuels.

Acknowledgements

Kingston Philharmonia is affiliated to the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Arts Council and the National Federation of Music Societies.

Kingston Choral Society is affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies.

The National Federation of Music Societies represents and supports amateur choirs, orchestras and music promoters throughout the United Kingdom

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