

Saturday 16 December 2017



A WINTER'S NIGHT

Carols Old and New

William Vann Organ

Andrew Griffiths Conductor



Programme £2.00

www.kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk

Registered Charity 261522



Since its formation in 1949, Kingston Choral Society has earned a reputation for concerts of a high standard and for performing a wide range of music. The Society enjoys singing the familiar favourites of the choral repertoire, but is not afraid of tackling ambitious projects and has, for example, performed a new commission by Peter Maxwell Davies, Prokofiev's Alexander Nevsky in Russian and other pieces in Czech, Hebrew, Finnish and Swedish.

Kingston Choral Society has over 130 members drawn from southwest London and north Surrey. New members are welcome. The choir performs four concerts a year, usually in All Saints Church, Kingston, and St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. Two of the concerts are with a professional orchestra. Rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings (8-10 pm) at The Hollyfield School, Surbiton, in term-time. Kingston Choral Society also holds regular social and fundraising events and occasional musical workshops.

If you are interested in joining, please talk to any member of the choir during the interval or at the end of the concert. You can also contact the Membership Secretary on 020 8949 5253 or join@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk for more information and arrange to come to a rehearsal.

~ ~ NEXT KCS CONCERT ~ ~

24th March 2018 at 7.30 pm

Bach Mass in B Minor

Soprano: Anna Devin; Alto: Katie Bray; Tenor: Nick Pritchard

Bass: Ashley Riches - with The Purcell Orchestra

Andrew Griffiths - Conductor

Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ

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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

Mendelssohn : Weihnachten (KCS)

Of the Father's Heart Begotten (All)

Mendelssohn : There shall a star (KCS)

Brahms : Es ist ein Ros entsprungen (Organ)

Arnold Mendelssohn : Macht hoch die Tür (Organ)

O Little Town of Bethlehem (All)

Eccard : Übers Gebirg Maria geht (KCS)

Buxtehude : Das neugeborne Kindelein (KCS)

O Come, All Ye Faithful (All)

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

Good King Wenceslas (All)

arr. Rutter : Sans Day Carol (KCS)

Bach : Liebster Jesu (Organ)

Bach : In dulci jubilo (Organ)

God rest you merry, gentlemen (All)

McDowall : A Winter's Night (KCS)

Hark! The herald angels sing (All)

MEDELSSOHN - WEIHNACHTEN

We start this evening's concert with a short choral fanfare for Christmas: Mendelssohn's *Weihnachten* (Christmas), Op. 79, No. 1. In the summer of 1843 Mendelssohn was appointed the director of the Berlin Male Voice Cathedral Choir, a choir composed of the most highly trained musicians in the city. The Prussian king, Frederick William IV was embarking on a programme of reforms of the state and the church, which ultimately came to naught. Mendelssohn's response over the next three years was to write six church motets to cover the main feast days for the new church litany (Advent, Christmas, New Year's Day, Holy Week, Good Friday and Ascension). These *Sechs Sprüche* (Six Motets) are very concentrated and demanding works written for double choir, and each lasting only a few minutes.

The first motet in the set, *Weihnachten*, was written on Christmas Day 1843. It is in G major and lasts a mere 33 bars. Mendelssohn uses many of the baroque techniques that he had learnt from his study of the music of Bach, fusing them with his own romantic, expressive sensibilities. *Weihnachten* starts with the high voices calling on the faithful to rejoice. There is a polyphonic feel to the play between the high and low voices that follows. From *der Heiland ist er schienen* the writing becomes homophonic. This is interrupted by a section of imitative writing at *Halleluja*. This canonic effect is repeated and a short coda, with pedal notes in the lower parts, finishes the work. Whilst the melodic style of the piece has a baroque feel, the harmonic language with use of lush 7th, and even 9th chords, and its moving tonal centre, is firmly rooted in the 19th century.

MEDELSSOHN - THERE SHALL A STAR

Mendelssohn wanted to capitalise on the success of his oratorios *Paulus*, Op. 36 (1836) and *Elijah* Op. 70 (1846) with another biblical oratorio. He selected Christian Karl Josias von Bunsen (1791-1860) to prepare the libretto, and started working on it immediately. During a visit to England in May 1847, Mendelssohn met Queen Victoria, who noted in her diary that 'For some time he has been engaged in composing an oratorio but has lost courage. The subject of the oratorio is Earth, Hell and Heaven, and he played one of the choruses out of this to us, which was very fine'. He was deeply affected by the death of his sister, Fanny, later that month and this interrupted his work on the oratorio so that it remained unfinished on Mendelssohn's death in November 1847. The oratorio did not even have a name at this stage, and *Christus* was given to it by Mendelssohn's brother, Paul. What we are left with is about twenty minutes of music depicting: a tenor recitative relating Christ's birth and the arrival of the three wise men, a male chorus *Where is the new-born?* and the full chorus *There shall a star from Jacob come forth*.

There shall a star from Jacob come forth falls into three sections. The first section, at *There shall a star from Jacob come forth*, is characterised by a tune with a rising major triad. The second section, at *And dash them in pieces*, is more dramatic and uses diminished seventh chords. The final section shows how much Mendelssohn had learnt from Bach's music through the incorporation of Philipp Nicolai's well-known Lutheran chorale tune *Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern* (How brightly shines the morning star).

BRAHMS - ES IST EIN ROS ENTSPRUNGEN

On 26 March 1896 Clara Schumann suffered a stroke from which she would not recover. This came as the culmination of several personal losses for Johannes Brahms (1813-1897), including the conductor Hans von Bülow (1830-1894) and the music scholar Philip Spitta (1841-1894). It had a deep effect on Brahms, making him start to think of his own mortality, and acted as a spur for him to write his two final works; *Vier ernste Gesänge* (Four Serious Songs), Op. 121 and the 11 Choral Preludes, Op. 122. He did not start work on the Choral Preludes until May 1896 after Clara's death and 40 years since his last works for the organ. The music is very personal and many of the chorales he chose deal with death. Brahms is known to have played the chorales on the piano privately to his friends, but he did not make any effort to get them published, indeed he wrote in a letter that they were not for publication. However, Brahms did not destroy them, as he had many of his works, and his friend and editor Mandyczewski felt that they deserved to be published posthumously in 1902.

Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen (A rose has arisen from a tender root), is the most famous prelude in the collection. It is a harmonic, four-part setting, with the chorale tune so heavily decorated with appoggiaturas that it is difficult to make out.

ARNOLD MENDELSSOHN - MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR

Arnold Mendelssohn (1855-1933) was born in Racibórz in Silesia, Poland. He was the son of Felix Mendelssohn's cousin. He originally studied law in Tübingen before studying music in Berlin. In 1880 he became organist in Bonn, and taught at the university there. He was musical director in Bielefeld (1882), a teacher at the Konservatorium in Köln (1891), and music teacher at a Gymnasium in Darmstadt (1891) and at the Hoch'schen Konservatorium in Frankfurt am Main (1912) where he included Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) amongst his pupils. He wrote chamber music, folk songs, opera and choral works. His music was banned by the Nazi Party after his death on the grounds of his Jewish heritage.

Macht hoch die Tür (Make high the doors) is based on a tune from a German Advent hymn written in the 17th century. Mendelssohn's setting is an *Allegro* in F major. The top stave has two lines which interweave with one another, with the *cantus firmus* in the tenor line.

Con brio

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JOHANNES ECCARD - ÜBERS GEBIRG MARIA GEHT

Johannes Eccard was born in Mühlhausen in 1553, becoming a chorister in the court of Weimar in 1567. In 1571 he went to Munich where he studied with Orlando de Lassus (1532-1594). From there he went to study in Venice and visited Andrea Gabrieli (1533-1585), Claudio Merulo (1533-1604) and Gioseffo Zarino (1517-1590). After a brief stay in his hometown between 1573 and 1574, he went to work for the Margrave Georg Friedrich von Ansbach-Bayreuth in 1579. He soon became vice-Kapellmeister (1580) and then full Kapellmeister (1604). In 1608 he was summoned to become Kapellmeister to the Elector Joachim Friedrich in Berlin, where he died in 1611.

His chorale arrangements in his *Geistliche Lieder* (1597) and the many fine chorales of his own composition attest to his importance in the development of the chorale. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), who was in Mühlhausen between 1707 and 1708, was influenced by him. He was a versatile and creative composer and Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) placed Eccard's works on a par with those of Andrea Gabrieli and Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672).

The motet *Übers Gebirg Maria geht* was published posthumously in *Preussische Festlieder II* and is a companion piece to the better known "When to the temple Mary went", based on the song of Simeon ("Nunc Dimittis"). It was written for the Feast of the Visitation (May 31), and sets a text based on Mary's visit to Elizabeth as told in Luke 1:39-56. The two stanza poem is by Ludwig Helmbold (1532-1598), a minister at the Marienkirche in Mühlhausen, whom Eccard met during the winter of 1573-74. The first verse depicts Mary travelling over the mountains to meet Elizabeth, culminating in her joyful singing of the Magnificat. The second verse is aimed at the listener, encouraging them to follow Mary's example and be inspired by the spirit, again finishing with the Magnificat. It is scored for five voices (divided sopranos) in E flat major. It starts with the lower four voices in homophony, with the first soprano entering a bar later. The material of the first 7 bars is repeated. The refrain starts with the sopranos and tenors at *Mein Seel den Herrn erhebet* (My soul magnifies the Lord), before the whole choir enter together at *Er ist mein Hieland* (He is my Saviour).

BUXTEHUDE - DAS NEUGEBORNE KINDELEIN

Dietrich Buxtehude (c.1637-1707) was an important composer of the baroque period, yet his music is little known today. Both Handel, in 1703, and Bach two years later, made the journey to hear Buxtehude in Lübeck, with an eye to succeeding him, however, there was a condition attached that the successor should marry Buxtehude's daughter, and this proved too much for them.

There is scant documentary evidence to prove where or when Buxtehude was born, but it is believed to have been in Helsingborg in Denmark, though presumably his ancestors originally came from the town of Buxtehude, south-west of Hamburg. He received his early tuition in music from his father and in 1657 or 1658 he succeeded his father as organist at the church in Helsingborg, moving to the Marienkirche in Helsingør in 1660.

On the death of Franz Tunder (1614-1667), the organist at the Marienkirche in Lübeck, one of the most important and lucrative musical posts in North Germany became available. Several applicants were rejected before Buxtehude was appointed on 11 April 1668. The organist position came with the extra salaried job of *Werkmeister*, a sort of secretary, treasurer and business manager for the church. He became a citizen of Lübeck on 23 July, and on 3 August, in keeping with a common practice of the time, married Anna Margarethe Tunder the younger daughter of his predecessor. In addition to his church organ music and his sacred cantatas, he was famed for organising public concerts, *Abendmusiken*, during the lead up to Christmas.

Das neugeborne Kindelein, BuxWV 13, sets a Christmas hymn published in 1588 by the hymn-writer, composer and theorist Cyriacus Schneegass (1546-1597). Buxtehude set four stanzas from the poem in the manner of a through composed motet, with instrumental ritornelli between each verse. The first verse is set relatively homophonically, all the voices having the same rhythms. The second verse introduces some melismatic decoration to illustrate the angel's singing, which is also reflected in accompaniment. The third verse starts *Adagio* for 6 bars before returning to the original tempo, *Vivace*, and illustrating the battle against hell and the devil with a more fragmented vocal line interrupted frequently by the accompaniment. A change of time signature for the final verse from 4/4 to 3/2 brings us to a contemplation of the trinity. The voices and accompaniment work together to show the significance and meaning of *das neugeborne kindelien*.

BACH ORGAN PIECES

Johann Sebastian Bach was born into a musical family in Eisenach in 1685. He received his earliest instruction from his father, but after his father's death in 1695, he moved to Ohrdruf, where he lived and studied organ with his eldest brother Johann Christoph (1671-1721). Bach's first permanent positions were as organist in Arnstadt (1703-1707) and Mühlhausen (1707-1708). During these years he performed, composed, taught, and developed an interest in organ building. From 1708-1717 he was employed by Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar, first as court organist, and after 1714, as concertmaster. During this period, he composed many of his best organ compositions; in his capacity as concertmaster he was also expected to produce a cantata each month. In Weimar his musical style was influenced by his study of numerous Italian compositions (especially Vivaldi concertos).

Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier (Dearest Jesu, here we are) BWV 633 (distinctus) is one of the Chorale preludes contained in the *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book), composed between 1708-1717, while Bach was court organist at the ducal court in Weimar, in the employ of the devout Lutheran and music lover, Wilhelm Ernst, Duke of Saxe-Weimar. The Duke delighted in Bach's organ playing and, as Bach's son Carl Philip Emmanuel put it, this "fired him to attempt everything possible in the art of how to treat the organ". The dedication on the title page of the *Orgelbüchlein* says "Little Organ Book, in which guidance is given to an inquiring organist in how to accomplish a chorale in all kinds of ways, and at the same time to become practised in the study of pedalling, since in the chorales found therein the pedal is treated completely obbligato".

The *Orgelbüchlein* was originally intended to contain 164 preludes, covering the whole liturgical year. Bach drew staves for all the chorales and added the titles of the chorales he wanted to set, however he only completed 46 of them. The chorale preludes are based on known Lutheran chorale tunes, usually heard in the top part, which are extended and ornamented. This *cantus firmus* is accompanied by highly elaborate lower parts, with lots of harmonic and contrapuntal detail and often containing motifs that are newly composed and not related to the melody.

Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier uses a chorale melody first published in 1664. The chorale was adapted in 1687 to fit the words. The text for the chorale on which this piece is based was published in 1663, by Tobias Clausnitzer (1619-1684), and was designated as a Sunday Hymn for use before the Sermon.

This prelude is the only chorale notated on three staves in the original source manuscript. It has *forte* written above the top staff, *pia*[no] between the staves and *Ped* above the third. The unusual term 'distinctus' may refer to the manner in which the score is written out with the pedal separate from the manuals, or to warn the performer of the distinction between the *forte* and *piano* markings. The chorale prelude takes a simple five bar phrase, repeats them and adds a further five bars as a codetta. Bach treats the pedal part by dividing each phrase in half which gives the piece the form of 'ababcb'.

In dulci júbilo BWV 729: The text of the chorale is a 15th century Latin-German Christmas hymn printed in an early Lutheran Hymnbook. Bach set *In dulci júbilo* as a chorale prelude three times; once in the *Orgelbüchlein* as BWV 608, and as BWV 729 and BWV 751.

BWV 729 was written when Bach was in Weimar between 1708-1718. It is written on two staves and has an improvisatory, fantasia-like feel to it. Each line of the chorale melody is separate by an extended interlude which reflects the jubilant mood of the text with its dense chords, bold harmonies and bell-like interludes. This setting has been made famous by being played every year as the postlude to the Nine Lessons and Carols broadcast from King's College, Cambridge.

A WINTER'S NIGHT - CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Educated at Edinburgh and London Universities, Cecilia McDowall has been described by the International Record Review as having a 'communicative gift that is very rare in modern music. An award-winning composer, McDowall is often inspired by extra-musical influences, and her choral writing combines rhythmic vitality with expressive lyricism. Her music has been commissioned, performed, and recorded by leading choirs, among them Phoenix Chorale and the Choir of New College, Oxford, and is regularly programmed at prestigious festivals in Britain and abroad.

"I love Christmas and have a great fondness for many of the carols associated with such a special time of year so I was delighted to be commissioned by the Worthing Choral Society to write a new cantata, *A Winter's Night*, for mixed chorus, brass quintet, percussion and organ. Selecting carols is half the fun and I have chosen a mixture of English, German and French carols, some of my very favourites. As the commission came from a Sussex town it seemed appropriate to include a carol from this part of the world, the *Sussex Carol*. Ralph Vaughan Williams noted down the tune in 1919 in Horsham, Sussex, hence the name.



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The structure of the cantata is like an arc; jubilant carols at the opening and close of the work with a spirited carol at its heart and in between, carols of a more gentle, contemplative nature. The work unfolds without a break. An instrumental interlude opens *A Winter's Night* with medieval intimations which underlie the three fast-moving carols. Each verse of the joyous *In Dulci Jubilo* is scored slightly differently for voices and accompaniment and the familiar tune is given an overlapping or echoing effect, perhaps suggesting bells ringing out.

The second movement, *O little one sweet*, is an arrangement of a 17th-century German melody, the best known arrangement being by J S Bach, and before him, a simpler setting by Samuel Scheidt. In the third verse the sopranos and altos weave a descant across the melody sung by the men of the choir.

This is followed by a rhythmic and energetic treatment of the traditional French melody *Noël Nouvelet*, written around the same time as the famous 'Agincourt Song' of 1415. Any allusions to the latter are not coincidental. In its original form *Noël Nouvelet* is rather 'march-like' but I have given each phrase a little rhythmic twist, something unexpected.

The title of the cantata comes from the next carol, *Still, still, still*. In 2013 I worked with the American poet, Angier Brock, on a carol she had commissioned for her close friend's 70th birthday, *Advent Moon*. Afterwards I asked Angier if she would make a re-working of the translation of this simple but charming 19th-century Austrian carol; this is her opening line, *Still, still, still, the winter's night is still*.

The instrumental material from the start of the work returns to introduce the final carol, the *Sussex Carol*, this time at a faster pace. The descant of *In Dulci Jubilo* makes a final appearance in the last verse, bringing the beginning and the end of the cantata together in joyful exultation."

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The first performance of *A Winter's Night* was given by the Worthing Choral Society, conductor Aedan Kerney, on 15 November, 2014. A few weeks later, on 5 December, *A Winter's Night* received its US premiere given by the Washington D.C. choir, Choralis, with the Classical Brass Quintet, conductor Gretchen Kuhrmann.

Programme notes courtesy of Paul Chambers

Mendelssohn - Weihnachten

Frohlocket, ihr Völker auf Erden, und preiset Gott!	Rejoice, O ye people on earth, and praise God!
Der Heiland ist erschienen, den der Herr verheißen.	The redeemer is come, whom the Lord has promised.
Er hat seine Gerechtigkeit der Welt offenbaret.	He has revealed his justice to the world.
Halleluja!	Hallelujah!

Mendelssohn - There shall a star

There shall a star from Jacob come forth, and a sceptre from Israel rise up. And dash in pieces princes and nations. How brightly beams the morning star!	with sudden radiance from afar with light and comfort glowing! Thy word, Jesus, inly feeds us, rightly leads us, life bestowing. Praise, O praise such love o'er flowing!
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Eccard - Übers Gebirg Maria geht

Übers Gebirg Maria geht zu ihrer Bas Elisabeth. Sie grüßt die Freundin, die vom Geist freudig bewegt Maria preist und sie des Herren Mutter nennt; Maria ward fröhlich und sang:	Over the mountain young Mary hastes To see her cousin Elizabeth. She greets her friend, who joyfully praises Mary she who has been moved by the Holy Spirit and will be called the Mother of God; Mary was happy and sang:
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Refrain:

*Mein Seel den Herrn erhebet,
mein Geist sich Gottes freuet;
Er ist mein Heiland, fürchtet ihn,
Er will allzeit barmherzig sein*

Refrain

*My soul magnifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God;
He is my saviour, fear him,
He will always be merciful*

Was bleiben immer wir daheim? Laßt uns auch aufs Gebirge gehn, da eins dem andern spreche zu, des Geistes Gruß das Herz auftu, davon es freudig werd und spring, der Mund in wahren Glauben sing: <i>Refrain</i>	Then why sit we idly by? Let us also go to the mountain to speak one to another, to greet the spirit with an open heart, and thereby make it joyful and jump with joy, till we open our mouths and in true faith sing: <i>Refrain</i>
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Sans Day Carol

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk, And Mary bore Jesus, who was wrapped up in silk: <i>And Mary bore Jesus Christ our Saviour for to be, And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly. Holly! Holly! And the first tree in the greenwood, it was the holly!</i>	<i>Refrain</i> Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal, And Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all: <i>Refrain</i> Now the holly bears a berry as blood is it red, Then trust we our Saviour, who rose from the dead: <i>Refrain</i>
Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass, And Mary bore Jesus, who died on the cross:	

A WINTER'S NIGHT – CHRISTMAS CANTATA

In dulci jubilo

In dulci jubilo
Now sing with hearts aglow
Our delight and pleasure
Lies in praeseptio
Like sunshine is our treasure
Matris in gremio
Alpha es et O

O Jesu parvule
For thee I long alway
Comfort my heart's blindness
O Puer optime
With all thy loving kindness
O Princeps gloriae
Trahe me post te.

O Patris caritas
O Nati lenitas
Deeply were we stained
Per nostra crimina
But thou for us hast gained
Coelorum gaudia
Oh that we were there

Ubi sunt gaudia
In any place but there?
There are angels singing
Nova cantica,
And there the bells are ringing,
In Regis curia
Oh that we were there

O little one sweet

O little one sweet, O little one mild,
Thy Father's purpose thou hast fulfilled;
Thou cam'st from heav'n to mortal ken,
Equal to be with us poor men,
O little one sweet, O little one mild.

O little one sweet, O little one mild,
With joy thou hast the whole world filled;

Thou camest here from heav'n's domain,
To bring men comfort in our pain,
O little one sweet, O little one mild.

O little one sweet, O little one mild.
In thee love's beauties are all distilled;
Then light in us thy love's bright flame,
That we may give thee back the same,
O little one sweet, O little one mild.

Noël Nouvelet

Noël nouvelet, Noël chantons ici,
Dévotes gens, rendons à Dieu merci;
Chantons Noël pour le Roi nouvelet:
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.

D'un oisillon après le chant j'ouï
Qui aux pasteurs disait: 'Partez d'ici;
En Bethléem trouverez l'angelet'.
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.

Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.
Noël, Noël,
En Bethléem, Marie et Joseph vy,
L'âne et le boeuf, l'Enfant couché parmi;
La crèche était au lieu d'un bercelet
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.

A new Christmas

A new little carol! A carol let us sing,
Devoted people, give thanks to God;
Sing we a carol for the new born king:
A new little carol! A carol let us sing.

As if from a little bird, the song was heard
Which said to the shepherds: 'Leave here;
In Bethlehem you will find the little angel.'
A new little carol! A carol let us sing.

A new little carol! A carol let us sing,
Noel, Noel,
In Bethlehem, see Mary and Joseph,
The ass and the cattle, the Child lying there;
The manger in place of a crib.
A new little carol! A carol let us sing.

Bientôt les rois, par l'étoile éclaircis,
De l'orient dont ils étaient sortis
A Bethléem vinrent un matin.
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.

L'un portait l'or, et l'autre myrrh aussi
Et l'autr'encens, que faisait bon senti:
Le paradis semblait le jardin
Noël nouvelet! Noël chantons ici.

Soon the kings, by the bright star led,
From the east they set out
To Bethlehem one morning came.
A new little carol! A carol let us sing.

One brought gold, and another myrrh also,
And another incense, which makes sweet
smells:
The little garden seemed a paradise.
A new little carol! A carol let us sing.

Still, still, still

Still, still, still,
the winter night grows still,
and Vesper bells have finished ringing.
Warm in the eaves, the birds hush singing.
Still, still, still,
the winter night grows still.

Sleep, sleep, sleep,
sleep well in Mary's arms.
The star of the Magi shines high above you.
Angels are singing, oh how they love you!
Sleep, sleep, sleep,
sleep well in Mary's arms.

Joy, joy, joy,
Take joy in the greening of love.
God comes to live our human story,
Comes as a child, relinquishing glory.
Joy, joy, joy,
Take joy in the greening of love.

Dream, dream, dream,
Dream now in the fullness of time.
No need tonight for worry or warning.
Winter's sun will rise in the morning.
Dream, dream, dream,
Dream now in the fullness of time.

Sleep, sleep, sleep,
sleep well in Mary's arms.

Sussex Carol

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring
News of great joy, news of great mirth
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
Glory to God and peace to men,
O that we were there,
Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and forever more, Amen.

ANDREW GRIFFITHS – Musical Director

Andrew Griffiths enjoys an enviable reputation as a dynamic and versatile young conductor with a particular flair for opera and choral music.

A graduate of The Royal Opera's prestigious Jette Parker Young Artist Programme, Andrew has conducted productions for The Royal Opera, Opera North, Opera Theatre Company, Early Opera Company, Mid Wales Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and Iford Festival Opera. He has appeared in concert with the orchestras of The Royal Opera and Opera North, Southbank Sinfonia and Orpheus Sinfonia, and is regularly engaged to broadcast and record with the BBC Singers.

Andrew has worked at Glyndebourne, ENO, Scottish Opera, WNO, Chicago Opera Theatre and with the BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras, as well as on numerous Royal Opera productions (including the *Ring* and the world première of *The Minotaur*), under such conductors as Pappano, Bychkov, Elder, Gardiner and Mackerras. He is often engaged for projects outside the standard operatic canon, and is particularly experienced in Baroque repertoire and the music of the last fifty years. Much sought-after as a vocal coach, he works frequently with the singers at the National Opera Studio and The Royal Opera.

In constant demand as a choral conductor, Andrew appears regularly with the BBC Singers, for whom his engagements have included an acclaimed performance of *Gawain* (BBC SO/Brabbins), recordings of twentieth-century American repertoire, and broadcasts of the Howells *Requiem*, Parry's *Songs of Farewell* and MacMillan's *Tenebrae Responses*. He is Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society and chamber choir Londinium, and has appeared as a guest conductor with New London Chamber Choir, Hong Kong's Tallis Vocalis, and the choirs of Dartington International Summer School.

A pianist, viola player and singer by training, Andrew began his musical education as a Quirister and Scholar at Winchester College, and read music at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he held a Choral Exhibition. He studied conducting under Martyn Brabbins in Glasgow, and trained as a répétiteur at the National Opera Studio and at Scottish Opera. He is a former principal viola of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and a founder member of vocal consort Stile Antico. In 2008 he was chosen to receive the Wagner Society's Bayreuth Bursary.

Andrew's recent and future engagements include his Barbican Hall debut conducting the BBC Singers, Handel's *La Resurrezione* with Early Opera Company at Wigmore Hall, the 1589 Florentine Intermedi at Dartington, and Londinium's debut recording, focusing on rare British 20th century repertoire.

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For further information please contact info@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk or phone 020 8942 2275

WILLIAM VANN – Organ

William Vann comes from Bedford and was a Chorister at King's College, Cambridge. He subsequently read law and took up a choral scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he was taught the piano by Peter Uppard, and studied piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music with Malcolm Martineau and Colin Stone. He has recently been awarded an Associateship of the RAM and a Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists.

William has collaborated on stage with a vast array of singers, choirs and instrumentalists, among them Sir Thomas Allen CBE, Mary Bevan, Allan Clayton, James Gilchrist, Thomas Gould, Guy Johnston, Jennifer Johnston, Ann Murray DBE, Brindley Sherratt, Nicky Spence, Andrew Staples, Kitty Whately and the Benyounes and Navarra Quartets. Recent performances have included appearances at Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall, the ROH Crush Room, Sage, Gateshead and St John's, Smith Square, at the Aldeburgh, Edinburgh, Oxford Lieder, Machynlleth, and City of London Festivals and the Northern Ireland Festival of Voice (broadcast on Radio 3) and abroad in South Africa (National Arts Festival), Nigeria, France, Germany (on live ZDF television), Ireland and Sweden. He has been awarded many prizes for piano accompaniment, including the Wigmore Song Competition Jean Meikle Prize for a Duo (with Johnny Herford), the Gerald Moore award, the Royal Overseas League Accompanists' Award, a Geoffrey Parsons Memorial Trust award, the Sir Henry Richardson Scholarship and the Hodgson Fellowship in piano accompaniment at the RAM. His discography includes recordings with Albion Records, Champs Hill Records, Navona Records and SOMM. *Purer than Pearl*, Albion's 2016 release, featured six previously unrecorded songs by Ralph Vaughan Williams. His recordings in 2018 will include discs with Mary Bevan, Thomas Gould, Kitty Whately and Roderick Williams.

He is a Trustee of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, a Samling Artist, the Co-Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Music Society, the Artistic Director of Bedford Music Club and a regular conductor and vocal coach on the Dartington and Oxenford International Summer Schools. He is also the Director of Music at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where he directs the choir and a programme of concerts in the Royal Hospital's Wren Chapel, and the founder and Artistic Director of the London English Song Festival.

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