

Saturday 14 December 2019

St Andrew's Church
Maple Road
Surbiton
KT6 4DS

A bright starburst or star graphic with multiple points, set against a dark blue background with a subtle pattern of stars. A wide, soft beam of light emanates from the star, pointing downwards towards the title.

Christus natus est!

William Vann Organ

Andrew Griffiths Conductor



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 ~ ~

21st March 2020 at 7.30 pm

Handel *Coronation Anthems* & Bach *Magnificat*

Sopranos: Charlotte Bowden, Stephanie Hershaw;

Alto: Emily Sierra; Tenor: Matthew Keighley; Bass: Edward Jowle

With the Purcell Orchestra

Andrew Griffiths - Conductor

All Saints Church, Market Place, Kingston KT1 1JP

For further details contact the Box Office on 07770 932912

If you would like advance notice of concerts by email,
please phone 020 8942 2275 or email info@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk



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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

Archer: Jesus Christ the Apple Tree (KCS)

God rest you merry, gentlemen (All)

Hewitt-Jones: What Child Is This? (KCS)

Readings: John Donne - Annunciation and Nativity

O Little Town of Bethlehem (All)

Wilberg: Wexford Carol (KCS)

Joubert: Torches (KCS)

Reading: TS Eliot - Journey of the Magi

O Come, All Ye Faithful (All)

Thornett: Star of the East (KCS)

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

Carter: A Maiden Most Gentle (KCS)

Unto Us Is Born A Son (All)

Reading: John Betjeman - Advent 1955

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland - Bach (Organ)

Good King Wenceslas (All)

Reading: George Eliot - Mill on the Floss (excerpt)

McDowall: Christus natus est (KCS)

Hark! The herald angels sing (All)

Con brio

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Malcolm Archer (b. 1952) was educated at King Edward VII and Queen Mary School in Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, then at the Royal College of Music. He went on to be organ scholar at Jesus College, Cambridge, where his organ teachers included Ralph Downes, Gillian Wier and Nicolas Kynaston. He studied composition with Herbert Sumsion and Alan Ridout. His first posts were as Assistant Organist at Norwich Cathedral (1978 - 1983), and Bristol Cathedral (1983 - 1990) before he went to work in the US. From 1996 he was Organist and Master of the Choristers at Wells Cathedral. In 2004 he took over as organist and Director of Music at St Paul's Cathedral and in 2007 he became organist and Director of Chapel Music and Organist at Winchester College, in charge of the Winchester College Chapel Choir, as well as teaching the organ. He is a popular composer of church music with over 200 published compositions. His vocal writing is greatly admired, his melodies are very singable with sensitive word setting, rhythmic interest and an imaginative supporting organ accompaniment.

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree is a poem written in the 18th century. Its first appearance in a publication dates from September 1761 in London's *Spiritual Magazine*. It is credited to an "RH" who is believed to be the Rev. Richard Hutchins, a Calvinist Baptist clergyman from Long Buckby, Northamptonshire. Its first appearance in a hymnal dates from *Divine Hymns, or Spiritual Songs: for the use of Religious Assemblies and Private Christians* in America 1784. The song may be a reference to the apple tree in the Song of Solomon 2:3, and to Jesus' representing his life as the tree of life (Luke 13:18-19, and elsewhere). There was a tradition in England of wassailing the health of apple trees on Christmas Eve.

Thomas Hewitt-Jones (b. 1984) was born in Dulwich, South London, into a musical family: both his parents are musicians and his paternal grandparents were composers. He studied at Dulwich College and was organ scholar at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He won the 2003 Young Composer of the year competition. He has written ballet music including a dance setting of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood* for Ballet Cymru, film music, the music for the London 2012 Olympics Mascot animated films, a song cycle *Wildflower Meadows* commemorating the First World War, and numerous Christmas Carols.

The lyrics to **What Child is This?** are taken from the poem *The Manger Throne* written in 1865 by William Chatterton Dix (1837 - 1898). At the time he was the manager of an insurance company and was bed ridden and suffering from depression. He spent his time reading the Bible and was inspired to write several well know lyrics including *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!*, *As with Gladness Men of Old* and *To You! O Lord! Our Hearts We Raise*.

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955) was raised in Castle Dale, Utah, and served as a missionary in South Korea for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). After he returned he studied at Brigham Young University (BYU), earning a bachelor's degree in music in 1979, and at the University of Southern California where he earned a master's degree and a PhD in music. He concentrated on piano and composition and, after gaining his PhD, he returned to BYU as a professor and directed the BYU Concert Choir. He was also a member of the American Piano Quartet, touring throughout the world. In 1999, he became the associate director of the BYU choir, the Music Director of the Temple Square Choir for the LDS and the Associate Music Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, later being appointed as their Musical Director.

The **Wexford Carol** is a traditional Irish carol. It is claimed to be one of the oldest extant Christmas Carols and was made popular by the organist and musical director of St Aiden's Cathedral, Enniscorthy, William Gratten Flood (1859 – 1928). He transcribed it from a local singer and had it published in the Oxford Book of Carols. The tune is in the Mixolydian mode, which is the major scale but with a flattened seventh note.

John Pierre Herman Joubert (1927 - 2019) was born in Cape Town, South Africa, but lived in Moseley, Birmingham, for over 50 years. His father's family were Huguenots who settled in the Cape in 1688 and his mother's family were Dutch. He was educated at the Diocesan College, Rondebosch, founded by the Anglican Church. He originally wanted to be a painter only becoming interested in music aged 15, as a composer rather than a performer. In school he was taught music by Claude Brown, who introduced him to Elgar's choral works and "the idiom of Anglican church music generally - Parry, Stanford, and all the usual blokes". After graduating from the South African College of Music in 1944 he studied composition with William Henry Bell (1873 - 1946) and in 1946 he received a Performing Right Society Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where his teachers were Theodore Holland, Howard Ferguson and Alan Bush and he went on to win further prizes. In 1950 he graduated with a bachelor of music degree from the University of Durham and went on to be appointed as a lecturer at the University of Hull. His carol *Torches* (Op. 7a, 1951) and anthem *O Lorde, the Maker of Al Thing* (Op. 7b, 1952) (a setting of a text by Henry VIII that won the Novello Anthem Competition) and *there is no Rose of Such Virtue* (Op. 14, 1954) became instantly popular. He moved to Birmingham in 1962 when he became a Senior Lecturer at the University of Birmingham, until he retired in 1986.

He received many commissions and has written in all genres: concertos for violin, piano and oboe, two symphonies, operas, oratorios, songs, and much chamber music and choral music. He died on 7 January this year.

Torches (Op. 7a, 1951) was written for Joubert's wife, Mary's pupils and is based on a Galician carol. It rapidly became popular, even before it was published in 1961 in the first volume of Carols for Choirs. Joubert later recalled that "I've even had carol-singers come to the door and singing it, without knowing the composer lives inside". It has a rustic, primitive feel to it, with its unison treatment, falling fourths, dotted rhythms and parallel fifths. It is strophic (the same tune is repeated for each verse), but the accompaniment introduces subtle differences which help pique the interest. Despite being in a minor key, its fast tempo, joyful feel and straightforward tune make it very memorable.

Gordon Thornett (b. 1942) read Music at Manchester University, and has had a long career as a teacher and a music therapist in the UK. As a keen choral singer, he has written a number of new settings of Christmas texts, which have been performed by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra Chorus, of which he is a long-standing member, and other symphony choruses and smaller choirs in the UK, USA and elsewhere.

The text to **Star of the East** is the Epiphany poem *Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning* written in 1811 by the Anglican bishop Reginald Heber (1783 - 1826), the author of many. Thornett's setting makes effective use of arching melodies and a variety of choral textures. It builds to a dramatic final verse with a soprano/tenor descant, before a gentle ending. The accompaniment features bell effects and quotations from *Silent Night* by Franz Gruber (1787 - 1863). It was written for the Boys' Choir of the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, Norway, and was first performed by them in December 2012.

Andrew Carter (b. 1939) was born in Wigston Magna, Leicestershire. He studied at the University of Leeds before joining the choir at the York Minster as a bass. He founded the Chapter House Choir and directed it for 17 years, writing many of his early works for them. He has travelled extensively throughout Europe, the United States and New Zealand, adjudicating, leading workshops, composing and conducting.

He writes choral miniatures, larger scale concert works for chorus and orchestra, and organ works. Works include a mass written for the tercentenary of St Paul's Cathedral (1997), and a 22-variation *Passacaglia* for organ (2007) to mark the 90th birthday of Francis Jackson (b. 1917), the director of music and organist at York Minster for 36 years. He has written many carols, and several have been included in the Christmas Eve broadcast from King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

The text to **A Maiden Most Gentle** is a paraphrase from the Venerable Bede (672 - 735), the English divine who entered a monastery at the age of seven and later made his mark as priest, theologian, scientist and historian. It is set to a traditional French melody, with a sparkling organ accompaniment to alternate verses. This arrangement perfectly catches the mood of the simple Christmas scene and accommodates unaccompanied singing and plenty of contrast between tenors and basses on the one hand and trebles and altos on the other.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1759) Born into a musical family, Bach received his earliest instruction from his father. After his father's death in 1695, Bach moved to Ohrdruf, where he lived and studied organ with his older brother Johann Christoph. 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, Bach's style was influenced by his study of numerous Italian compositions (especially Vivaldi concertos).

Bach's next position, as Music Director for the Prince Leopold of Köthen (1717-1723), involved entirely different activities: the court chapel was Calvinist, so there was no need for church compositions. His new works were primarily for instrumental solo or ensemble, to be used as court entertainment or for instruction.

In 1723, Bach was appointed cantor at the St Thomas Church and School and Director of Music for Leipzig, positions which he retained for the rest of his career. His official duties included the responsibility of overseeing the music in the four principal churches of the city, and organizing other musical events sponsored by the municipal council. In 1729-1737 and 1739-1741, he was director of the Leipzig Collegium Musicum, an organization founded by Telemann in 1704. During the 1730s, Bach renewed his interest in keyboard compositions and prepared the first three volumes of his *Clavier-Übung* (Keyboard Practice) for publication (1731, 1735, 1739); the fourth volume appeared in 1741-1742. In the 1730s, he also showed considerable interest in the royal court at Dresden, and was named "Hofkomponist" (court-composer) in Dresden in 1736.

During Bach's last decade (the 1740s), he completed or revised several large-scale projects that he had started earlier. The Well-Tempered Clavier, Vol. II; a manuscript collection of chorale preludes (known as the "Leipzig 18", comprising revisions of Weimar pieces), and the B minor Mass. Other new works showed an increased interest in fugal and canonic writing: *Musikalische Opfer* (Musical Offering); the canonic variations for organ on "Vom Himmel hoch"; and *Die Kunst der Fuge* (The Art of Fugue).

SURBITON ORATORIO SOCIETY

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Christmas Music

CHRIST CHURCH

KING CHARLES ROAD, SURBITON

Saturday, 20th December, 1952

at 7.30 p.m.

Soprano:

ELIZABETH DAVIES

Contralto:

DELIA WOOLFORD

Tenor:

KENNETH McKELLAR

Baritone:

RANKEN BUSHBY

Organ:

GERALD WHEELER

String Orchestra Leader:

LESLEY WHITE

Conductor:

JOHN WILKINSON

Programme 2/6

Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland, BWV 661 (Come now, saviour of the heathen), BWV 661 is one of the chorale preludes contained in the *Leipzig Eighteen Chorale Preludes*, which Bach prepared during his final decade (1740 – 1750). They hark back to his time in Weimar, when he was 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 *Leipzig 18* forms an encyclopaedic collection of large-scale chorale preludes, in a variety of styles, harking back to the previous century, that Bach had perfected during his career. Together with the *Orgelbüchlein* (Little Organ Book), the *Schübler Chorales* and the third book of the *Clavier-Übung*, they represent the summit of Bach's sacred music for solo organ.

This work is an example of a Cantus firmus chorale prelude. The cantus firmus (literally translated as fixed song) is heard in the pedal beneath a three part keyboard fugue. The fugue is typical of Bach's large scale free organ fugues, with an angular quaver theme derived from the melody. The fugal theme, its counter-subject and their inversions are combined in numerous ways in the course of the piece.

Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951) was born in London. She recalls that there was always music in the house during her youth. Her father was the principal flautist at the Royal Opera House and soloist with all the main London orchestras. He started a couple of chamber ensembles and so there was always lots of rehearsing going on with the likes of Janet Baker, Heather Harper, Julian Bream.

Cecilia studied piano and composition at Trinity College of Music (now Trinity Laban), and has always enjoyed improvising. She taught at Trinity College of Music for many years, and also briefly at the Yehudi Menuhin School. Once her children reached their teens she took a Masters in composition, and decided to focus her energies on writing music. She started writing pieces for the Fibonacci Series, a flexible ensemble founded in 1984, capable of performing concert programs featuring from one to 10 performers. She learnt a lot from experimenting with different instrumental combinations. In 2010 was taken on by the Oxford University Press as a house composer, which proved very useful for her choral compositions.

She has been described by the International Record Review as having "a communicative gift that is very rare in modern music". Often inspired by extra-musical influences, her writing combines a rhythmic vitality with expressive lyricism "which is, at times, intensely moving". She has won many awards and has been short-listed several times for the British Composer Awards. Her music has been commissioned and performed by leading choirs, including the BBC Singers, ensembles and at major festivals both in Britain and abroad and has been broadcast on BBC Radio and worldwide. In 2013 Cecilia McDowall received an Honorary Doctorate from Portsmouth University and in 2017 McDowall was selected for an Honorary Fellow award by the Royal School of Church Music.

Recent important commissions include *When time is broke (Three Shakespeare Songs)* for the BBC Singers and *Adoro te devote* for Westminster Cathedral Choir, London, *A Prayer to St John the Baptist* for St John's College, Cambridge. The National Children's Choir of Great Britain commissioned a work focusing on 'children in conflict', called *Everyday Wonders: The Girl from Aleppo*. This cantata is based on the real-life escape of Nujeen Mustafa (who is wheelchair-bound) and her sister from war-torn Aleppo and has been much performed. Last year the Wimbledon Choral Society commissioned the Da Vinci Requiem, to coincide with the 500th anniversary of Leonardo's death in May 2019; this large-scale work was premiered by the choir and The Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

In the preface to the vocal score of **Christus natus est**, Cecilia McDowall introduces her piece by saying “I have always loved Christmas and the carols we sing at that special time of year, and I wrote the cantata *Christus Natus Est* in response to a commission from conductor George Vass. The work takes the form of a sequence of five Christmas carols: *Personet hodie*; *Entre le boeuf et l’ane gris*; *Gaudete!*; *Infant Holy*, *infant lowly*; and *Angelus ad Virginem*. I have made use of a motif from one of my own original carols, *Of a Rose*, to give an instrumental introduction and as linking material between each section”.

Christus Natus Est was first performed by the St Albans Choral Society, the Choir of St Hilda's School, Harpenden, and Orchestra Nova, conducted by George Vass, on 8 December 2002 at the Alban Arena, St Albans.

It is available in three versions: for chamber orchestra; for organ with brass quintet; or for organ alone. It is scored for SATB choir, soprano solo, and optional children's choir (omitted in tonight's performance).

In this accessible Christmas cantata, McDowall gives the familiar melodies of the five carols a colourful new harmonic treatment, with arrangements ranging in atmosphere from tenderness to joyful exaltation.

Programme notes courtesy of Paul Chambers



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Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

The tree of life my soul hath seen.
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be,
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit does make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive:
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

What Child Is This?

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds worship and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him praise,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the Cross be borne for me, for you:
Hail! hail the Word Made Flesh,
the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own him!
The King of kings salvation brings:
Let loving hearts enthrone him!
Raise, raise a song on high!
The Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy! Joy! for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
What child is this?

Wexford Carol

Good people all, this Christmas time,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done
In sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray
To God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn
There was a blessed Messiah born.

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Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angel did appear,
Which put the shepherds in great fear.
'Prepare and go', the angels said,
'To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn,
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born'.

Torches

Torches, torches, run with torches
All the way to Bethlehem!
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;
Come and sing your song to Him!

Ah, Roro, Roro, my baby
Ah, Roro, my love, Roro;
Sleep you well, my heart's own darling
While we sing you our Roro

Sing, my friends, and make you merry
Joy and mirth and joy again;
Lo, He lives, the King of heaven
Now and evermore. Amen

Star of the East

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star in the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining;
Low lies his bed, with the beasts of the stall;
Angels adore him in slumbers reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
Odours of Edom, and offerings divine,
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
Vainly with gifts would his favour secure:
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star in the east, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

A Maiden Most Gentle

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing:
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.
Ave, ave, ave Maria.

How blest is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.
Ave, ave, ave Maria.

The archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The Lord of creation, and Saviour of all.
Ave, ave, ave Maria.

Three Kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.
Ave, ave, ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless 'Ave'.
Ave, ave, ave Maria.

Christus natus est

Personent hodie

Voces puerulae,
Laudantes jucunde
Qui nobis est natus,
Summo Deo datus,
Et de virgineo ventre procreatus.

Let resound today
the voices of children,
joyfully praising
Him who is born to us,
given by most high God,
and conceived in a virginal womb.

In mundo nascitur;
Pannis involvitur;
Praesepe ponitur
Stabulo brutorum
Rector supernorum;
Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.

He was born into the world,
wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and laid in a manger
in a stable for animals,
the master of the heavens.
The prince of Hell has lost his spoils.

Magi tres venerunt;
Munera offerunt;
Parvulum inquirunt,
Stellulam sequendo,
Ipsam adorando,
Aurum, thus et myrrham Ei offerendo.

Three Magi came,
they were bearing gifts,
and sought the little one,
following a star,
to worship him,
and offer him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Omnes clericuli,
Pariter pueri,
Cantent ut angeli:
'Advenisti mundo:
Laudes tibi fundo
Ideo Gloria in excelsis Deo!'

Let all the junior clerics
and also the boys
sing like angels:
"You have come to the world,
I pour out praises to you.
Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"

Entre le bœuf et l'âne gris
Dort, dort, dort le petit Fils:
Mille anges divins, mille séraphins
Volent à l'entour
De ce grand Dieu d'amour.

Between the ox and the gray donkey,
Sleeps, sleeps, sleeps the little Son:
A thousand divine angels, a thousand seraphs
Fly around this great God of love.

Entre les deux bras de Marie,
Dort le Fruit de la Vie;
Mille anges divins, mille séraphins
Volent à l'entour
De ce grand Dieu d'amour.

Within the two arms of Mary,
Sleeps the Fruit of Life,
A thousand divine angels, a thousand seraphs
Fly around
This great God of love.

Entre les roses et les lys
Dort le petit Fils;
Mille anges divins, mille séraphins
Volent à l'entour
De ce grand Dieu d'amour.

Between roses and lilies,
Sleeps the little Son,
A thousand divine angels, a thousand seraphs
Fly around
This great God of love.

Entre les pasteurs jolis
Dort le petit Fils,
Mille anges divins, mille séraphins
Volent à l'entour
De ce grand Dieu d'amour.

Amidst the gentle shepherds,
Sleeps the little Son,
A thousand divine angels, a thousand seraphs
Fly around
This great God of love.

En ce beau jour solennel
Dort l'Emmanuel;
Mille anges divins, mille séraphins
Volent à l'entour
De ce grand dieu d'amour.

On this beautiful solemn day
Sleeps Emmanuel;
A thousand divine angels, a thousand seraphs
Fly around
This great God of love.

Refrain:

Gaudete, gaudete!
Christus est natus
Ex Maria Virgine:
gaudete!

Rejoice, rejoice!
Christ is born
Of the Virgin Mary:
Rejoice!

Tempus adest gratiae,
Hoc quod optabamus;
Carmina laetitia
Devote reddamus.
Refrain

The time of grace has come,
What we have wished for;
Songs of joy
Let us give back faithfully.

Deus homo factus est,
Natura mirante;
Mundus renovatus est
A Christo regnante.
Refrain

God has become man,
With nature marvelling,
The world has been renewed
By the reigning Christ.

Ezechielis porta
Clausā pertransitur;
Unde lux est orta,
Salus invenitur.
Refrain

The closed gate of Ezekiel
Is passed through;
Whence the light is risen,
Salvation has been found.

Ergo nostra concio
Psallat jam in lustrō;
Benedicat Domino
Salus Regi nostro.
Refrain

Therefore, let our preaching
Now sing in brightness;
Let it bless the Lord
Greeting to our King.

Infant holy, Infant lowly
For His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ, the Babe is Lord of all.

Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ, the Babe was born for you.

Swiftly winging angels singing,
Nowells ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ, the Babe is Lord of all.

Holy, lowly, Nowell,
Holy, lowly, Lord of all.
Swiftly winging angels singing Nowell.
Angels sing Nowell, sing Nowell.

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new;
Saw the glory, heard the story
Tidings of a gospel true.

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Angelus ad virginem,
Subintrans in conclave,
Virginis formidinem
Demulcens, inquit 'Ave!
Ave, regina virginum!
Celi terreque dominum
Concipies et paries Intacta
Salutem hominum;
Tu Porta celi facta,
Medela criminum.'

'Quomodo conciperem
Que virum non cognovi?
Qualiter infringere
Quod firma mente vovi?'
'Spiritus sancti gracia
Perficiet hec omnia.
Ne timeas, Sed gaudeas
Secura, quod castimonia
Manebit in te pura
Dei potentia!'

Ad hec, virgo nobilis
Respondens inquit ei,
'Ancilla sum humilis
Omnipotentis Dei,
Tibi, celesti nuntio,
Tanti secreti conscio,
Consentiens et cupiens videre
Factum quod audio,
Parata sum parere
Dei consilio.'

Eya Mater Domini,
Que pacem reddidisti
Angelis et homini
Cum Christum genuisti,
Tuum exora filium
Ut se nobis propiciam
Exhibeat, et deleat peccata,
Prestans auxilium
Vita frui beata
Post hoc exilium.
Alleluia
Christus natus est!

The angel came to the Virgin,
entering secretly into her room,
calming the Virgin's fear,
he said, 'Hail!
Hail, queen of virgins!
you will conceive the Lord of
heaven and earth and bear him, still a virgin,
to be the salvation of mankind;
you will be made the gate of heaven,
the cure of sins.'

'How can I conceive,
When I have never known a man?
How can I transgress resolutions
that I have vowed with a firm mind?'
'The grace of the Holy Spirit
shall do all this.
Do not be afraid, but rejoice
without a care, since your chastity
will remain in you unspoilt
through the power of God.'

To this, the noble Virgin,
replying, said to him,
'I am the humble maidservant
of almighty God.
To you, heavenly messenger,
and bearer of such a great secret,
I give my consent, and wishing to see
done what I hear,
I am ready to obey
the will of God.'

Hail, Mother of our Lord,
who brought peace back
to angels and men
when you bore Christ!
Pray your son
that he may show favour to us
and blot out our sins,
giving us help
to enjoy a blessed life
after this exile.
Alleluia
Christ is born!

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.

He has conducted productions for The Royal Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Opera Theatre Company, Early Opera Company, Mid Wales Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and Iford Festival Opera. In concert he has appeared with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Swan, Southbank Sinfonia and the Orpheus Sinfonia, and he is regularly engaged to broadcast and record with the BBC Singers.

Andrew has worked at Glyndebourne, ENO, Scottish Opera, Chicago Opera Theatre, Opera Collective Ireland, 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 50 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's engagements for the BBC Singers have included the world première of John Pickard's *Mass in troubled times*, recordings of 20th century American repertoire, and broadcasts of Howells, Parry and MacMillan. He regularly directs the choirs at Dartington International Summer School, and has appeared in concert with the BBC Symphony Chorus, New London Chamber Choir, and Hong Kong's *Tallis Vocalis*. He is Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society and chamber choir Londinium, whose debut recording, *The Gluepot Connection*, was recently released to widespread critical acclaim.

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, before joining the Royal Opera's Jette Parker Young Artist programme. 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 forthcoming engagements include his debuts conducting for The Royal Ballet (*Medusa*, music by Purcell) and the Royal Northern Sinfonia (*B Minor Mass*), a return to the Orchestra of the Swan (Beethoven/Thea Musgrave), Assistant Conductor for *Agrippina* at The Royal Opera, and a programme of Flemish polyphony with the BBC Singers at the Barbican Hall.

WILLIAM VANN - Organ



William Vann is the Organist and Director of Music at the Royal Hospital, the 15th holder of the post since 1692. His musical education began while a Chorister of King's College, Cambridge and continued as a Music and Organ Scholar at Bedford School; he subsequently read Law and held a Choral Scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and studied as a pianist at the Royal Academy of Music with Malcolm Martineau and Colin Stone. He has won many prizes for his piano accompaniment and has recently been made an Associate of the RAM. Gramophone, reviewing *Purer than Pearl*, Albion Records' disc of Vaughan Williams song, reserved "a special word of praise for William Vann's deft pianism".

Performances as a conductor, pianist, harpsichordist and organist have included concerts and recordings with a host of renowned singers and instrumentalists across the world. His discography includes recordings with Albion, Champs Hill, Delphian, Navona and SOMM and in March 2020 his world première recording of Parry's 1888 oratorio *Judith* will be released on Chandos Records. He is an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, the founder and Artistic Director of the London English Song Festival, a Trustee of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, 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 Oxenfoord International Summer Schools. In January 2018 he received the Freedom of the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

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