

Saturday 14 December 2024, 7.30pm

St Andrew's Church

Maple Road, Surbiton KT6 4DS

A classical painting of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child. Mary is shown from the chest up, wearing a blue mantle over a red dress, with a green headscarf. She has a halo and her eyes are cast down. The Christ Child is shown from the waist up, wearing a white cloth, with a halo and looking towards the viewer. He is holding Mary's red dress.

Chilcott *Mary Mother*

with carols for choir and audience

Gavin Roberts Organ

Andrew Griffiths Conductor

Con Irio

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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 100 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 8942 2275 or join@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk for more information and arrange to come to a rehearsal.

~ ~ KCS 75th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT ~ ~

29th March 2025 at 7.30 pm

Brahms *German Requiem* & Poulenc *Gloria*

Sophie Bevan Soprano - Roderick Williams Baritone

Thames Sinfonia

Andrew Griffiths Conductor

Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ

For further details contact the Box Office on 020 7730 4500

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 ~ ~

MARY MOTHER

Personent Hodie (KCS)
Adam lay ybounden (KCS)
Gabriel's Message (KCS)
Linden Tree Carol (KCS)
Once in Royal David's City (All)
I Sing of a Maiden (KCS)
Coventry Carol (KCS)
Myn Lyking (KCS)
O little town of Bethlehem (All)
A Virgin Most Pure (KCS)
The Shepherds' Farewell (KCS)
Demessieux - Prelude on 'Adeste fideles' (Organ)
O come, all ye faithful (All)
Sussex Carol (KCS)

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

Ding Dong! Merrily on High (KCS)
Good King Wenceslas (All)
Sans Day Carol (KCS)
de Grigny - 'Dialogue sur les grands jeux'
from *Ave maris stella* (Organ)
Bob Chilcott - *Mary, Mother* (KCS)
A Child in Galilee
Carpentry Carol
After the Angel
Walking Carol
Dear Heart
Hymn

Hark the Herald (All)

DEMESSIEUX (1921-1968)

Jeanne Demessieux was three years old when taken to hear the opera '*Orphée et Eurydice*'. Back home after the outing the family were amazed to hear Jeanne sing an aria from the piece. Her father, moved to tears by her recital from memory, directed his older daughter, Yolande, who was home-schooled due to illness but very musical, to teach her sister the violin. Jeanne took to this instrument quickly but was soon drawn more to the piano.

After eight years of music tuition from Yolande, Jeanne's musical development having in the meantime accelerated, she enrolled at the prestigious Paris Conservatoire. There, her extraordinary keyboard technique earned her many prizes and her Conservatoire organ tutor, Marcel Dupré (1886-1971) deemed her 'the greatest organist of all generations'. Fulfilling this prophecy, she performed throughout Europe, Great Britain and the US and became a prolific recording artist - the first female organist to acquire a record contract.

Demessieux's study at the Conservatoire had included composition under Henri Büsser (1872-1973) and she composed in many genres. One third of her output was written for the organ but she also wrote for the piano and voice. There are numerous songs and a handful of choral works, including an oratorio *La Chanson de Roland*. However, she is most remembered for eight major organ works. Her *Twelve Choral Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes* (Opus 8) being among these and the *Prelude on Adeste Fideles* is a prime example of the composer's gift for improvisation of an existing theme - the well-known Christmas carol.

Sadly, at the height of her fame and being in great demand as a performer and to record, Demessieux contracted throat cancer. The medical treatment prohibited her from performing and, aged 47, she died. She is buried in the Demessieux family tomb not far from Aigues-Mortes in southern France.

DE GRIGNY (1671-1703)

Nicolas de Grigny was born in Rheims where his father, Louis, was organist of Notre Dame. In 1693 he moved to Paris to study under Nicolas Le Bègue (1631-1702). There he was also organist at the abbey church of Saint-Denis. Returning to his native Rheims in 1695 Nicolas succeeded his father as organist and choirmaster - posts he held until his untimely death at 32, predeceasing his father by six years.

Nicolas de Grigny's music was only published posthumously. This 1711 volume, *Livre d'orgue: Contenant une messe et cinq hymnes pour les principales festes de l'année*, according to critics stands alongside the two organ masses of the much more famous François Couperin (1668-1733) as a distinguished example of French organ school music of the era. De Grigny's music is also known to have been popular with JS Bach who copied out the organ book 'for his entertainment and instruction!'

The *Livre d'orgue* represents De Grigny's collected works. These are divided into two parts. The first is a setting of the mass and the second comprises five hymns. The latter were composed for the principal feast days of the church year. They are: *Veni Creator* (5 versets), *Pange lingua* (3 versets), *Verbum supernum* (4 versets), *Ave maris stella* (4 versets) and *A solus ortus* (3 versets). In all there are 42 pieces.

De Grigny's style incorporates secular influences. However, in his hands, these are refined so as to enliven, but not disturb, the work's intended and overarching spirit of devotion. He achieves this result via using prominent ornamentation to lyrical effect and providing an underlying chromatic harmonisation. These aspects are joyously expressed in his *Dialogue sur les grands jeux*, which is one of the versets of *Ave maris stella*.

CHILCOTT (b. 1955)

Robert Chilcott was born in Plymouth on 9 April 1955. His father was a building inspector and his mother a housewife. The family being a religious one, from an early age Robert attended Sunday services as well as Sunday School. From five, having started piano lessons, he joined the church choir. The assistant church organist, the older brother of one of Robert's friends, was Andrew Davies, later the distinguished and knighted classical music conductor. Evidently, the quality of church music-making was high and it was the vicar who recognised Robert's musical talent and fine voice. On his recommendation the parents entered their son for a choristership at King's College Choir School, Cambridge.

Having been accepted by King's, aged eight Robert boarded in Cambridge, rubbing shoulders with, among others, the sons of some eminent musicians, notably, Sir Neville Marriner and Sir Charles Groves. In those days there was a wide social mix of choristers and the young Chilcott found that the boys all integrated well. It was the place where he realised that music would become his life. He recalls that a performance of Britten's *Spring Symphony*, which incorporates a boys' choir, alongside a mixed choir and soloists, made a huge emotional impact on him. While at King's, he excelled and sang the treble solo, *Pie Jesu*, in Fauré's *Requiem*, under the baton of David Willcocks. (The 1967 recording of this performance is still available on the Warner Classics label, in a series entitled, *Great Recordings of the Century*).

Following his time at the choir school, Chilcott attended the Merchant Taylors' School near London, before returning to King's College in 1973 as an undergraduate and Choral Scholar to read music. He had started composing when still at school but although he continued to compose as an undergraduate, he found that his music was 'off the radar'. Discouraged, his composing fell by the wayside. After Cambridge, however, he enrolled at the Royal College of Music in London to study composition and singing. For the next two years he became a 'jobbing tenor'. In demand, he sang with several choirs, secular and church.

Around this time, Chilcott also obtained work with BBC Radio 2 arranging music for the then Radio Orchestra for programmes such as *Friday Night is Music Night* and *Around Midnight*. During this period he was also approached to arrange some music for the world-famous King's Singers, comprising former members of King's College, Cambridge. A chance vacancy for a tenor voice presented Bob with the opportunity to join the group and he stayed for 12 years. This involved extensive travelling to perform internationally but he managed to carry on composing alongside his performing duties.

At the age of 42, having left the King's Singers, he devoted as much time as possible to composing. His professional relationship with Oxford University Press, which has resulted in a most successful professional partnership, was soon forged.

Subsequently, he has published many choral works. On the back of these, mainly conducting his own compositions, he has obtained great satisfaction in fostering the development of singers, young and old, especially those lacking confidence in their own musical abilities. He delights in helping amateur singers overcome their inhibitions with respect to singing, seeing himself as a 'social musician'.

For the most part, Chilcott has conducted his own music, which he admits facilitated the task of becoming a conductor. Thus, he has been invited to conduct choirs in more than 30 countries, including Russia, Canada, USA, Japan, Germany, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. He is Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers, a post he has occupied since 2002. He is President of Southend Boys' Choir and conducts the Birmingham University Singers. His music has been widely recorded by many choirs and groups including The King's Singers, Tenebrae, and The BBC Singers. In *The Observer* he was described as 'a contemporary hero of British Choral Music', his music having attained global appeal and recognition.

In a 2021 interview with the composer, which appeared in his local *Bridge Magazine*, Chilcott shared that church music has always formed a big part of his life. As a Christian, he believes that music can unite people and change lives. His passionate commitment to young people has resulted in many works for children's choirs, which include, *Can you Hear Me?* and *Be Simple Little Children*. His *The Angry Planet - An Environmental Cantata* is scored for both a children's and an adult choir, emphasising the need for cross-generational communication and collaboration. Whereas, in *Furusato*, a setting of five Japanese songs, Chilcott offers a meeting place of East and West. His *Jazz Folk Songs for Choirs* is an arrangement of nine favourite folk songs from around the world.

Chilcott's output of sacred works, alone, is impressive. His *Requiem* was premiered in 2010. *On Christmas Night* followed in 2011 and, in 2013, his setting of *St John Passion* was published. He was commissioned by the Three Choirs Festival to compose *Christmas Oratorio*, which premiered in 2019. More recently, in 2021, he has written a work drawing attention to sustainability, *The Song of Harvest*. First performed in Durham Cathedral, it was composed for the Royal School of Church Music, of which he is a Fellow. It features Chilcott's new melodies for five well-known hymns, designed to be easily learnt by audience or congregation who are invited to join the choir, a telling example of his ethos of social inclusivity. *Mary, Mother* explores the role of Mary in the Christmas Story, imagining her human responses to the revelation of the divine in her.

Chilcott's works reveal a mastery of different musical styles and genres. To quote Gramophone Magazine, "*Chilcott's music is understandably popular with choirs.... with much emphasis on consonant chords... [but]... he has the skill to make everything just that bit intriguing through the odd harmonic twist here or an unexpected melodic turn there*". During the pandemic, when performances were few, he maintained his compositional activities, working office hours from 09:00-18:00. In an interview he divulged that he composes in his head, before trying it out on the piano. When satisfied, he commits it to paper, handwritten. He shuns the use of a computer for this purpose. The screen causes him to lose his 'sense of dimension' serving to 'cloud and restrict the process of composition'.

For inspiration, Chilcott sometimes turns to poetry. His celebration of the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death, understandably, was a setting of the bard's poems *Shall I Compare Thee?* Admitting that not all texts 'have music in them', some do evoke music very strongly in him.

Texts penned by Charles Bennett, for example, were used for his *Swimming over London*, a piece written for the King's Singers, and for *The Angry Planet*. A poet is sometimes brought in early to fire Chilcott's musical imagination, only a bare outline of an idea having been proffered to inspire the text. The music then derives from the written word, with the result that Chilcott is drawn, creatively, in directions he feels he would not have found for himself.

For the last 40 years, Chilcott has taken root in the Oxford area. He lives with his second wife (the daughter of his erstwhile Director of Music, the late Sir Philip Ledger) and their daughter in a tiny Cotswold village, Ascott-under-Wychwood. It comprises fewer than 600 inhabitants but boasts one castle, one pub, one community shop and a gallery and craft shop. It also has its own railway station. The composer, no doubt, is an easily recognisable figure in his local community. His daily fitness routine includes skipping 2000 times, outdoors, in front of his cottage. Unsurprisingly, this energetic performance gets him a mixed reception from passing pedestrians and motorists, some of whom are happy to contribute verbal feedback.

Programme notes courtesy of Kingsley Norton



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MARY, MOTHER

Bob Chilcott composed *Mary, Mother* in 2022, for the St Martin's Voices - a mixed choir of 10 singers (SATB). This flagship professional choir of the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields premiered the work in December 2022, under the direction of Andrew Earis. The work comprises six sung movements and might be termed a 'carol suite'. Each forms part of a chronological sequence of songs - newly-composed carols - depicting the role of Mary in the Christmas Story. The parts can be performed singly or in their entirety, the voices being accompanied either by piano or organ, plus an optional harp.

The words are penned by the writer Georgia Way (b. 1992) who envisions Mary's life, from incipient adulthood to the divine feminine role she occupies in some Christian cultures. The six parts refer to: Mary as a young person growing up (*A Child in Galilee*); Mary meeting and falling in love with Joseph (*Carpentry Carol*); Mary's encounter with the Angel Gabriel and her realisation of the divine gift bestowed (*After the Angel*); Mary and Joseph's arduous journey to Bethlehem (*Walking Carol*); Mary giving birth to the miracle child (*Dear Heart*); and the praise to God the Father for the Christ-child (*Hymn*).

In the first performance of *Mary, Mother*, the last movement was sung by the 10 voices of St Martin's. However, Chilcott envisages that the voices of an audience or congregation might swell the ranks in the work's final celebratory section. The final movement, '*Hymn*', represents a departure from the composer's prior convention of adopting the words of a traditional hymn in his adherence to Georgia Way's own words.

Way's text is unified, across the six movements, via the symbolism of the sycamore tree. In the courtship phase of Mary's relationship with Joseph, the carpenter, she falls in love '*... watching Joseph shape the sycamore tree*'. Perhaps the poet introduced this symbol, portending the ultimate sacrifice Christ would make, nailed to a tree. However, there are many references to the sycamore outside the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition. This tree has spiritual connotations in human societies ranging from indigenous North American tribes to the Celts, Ancient Greeks, Ancient Romans and some societies in Africa.

Common among the beliefs, across this range of continents and cultures, is the sycamore's 'protective' function - to counteract negative energies or malevolent spirits. In this it stands for a conventional, 'maternal' attribute, reflecting its evident durability, which suggests steadfastness and faithfulness. After all, the sycamore is fast-growing, has expansive roots and is cloaked in the most beautiful, protective and camouflaging, bark.

In the New Testament story, on account of his short stature, Zacchaeus climbs a sycamore tree to view Jesus. A notorious, dishonest tax collector, his almost instantaneous conversion, resolving to make extravagant reparation for his misdeeds and mending his ways, is commemorated by the tree he chose to climb. Thus, the sycamore symbolises transformation wrought by the transmutative power of Christian love for the 'other'. The ubiquity of the sycamore symbol in global religion and folklore, however, shows the richness of the seam that Georgia Way chose to mine. It chimes with the message of the Christmas Story - the inborn potential for humans to grow towards the divine light, thereby transcending their earthly origin. Mary's eventual journey was one of transmutation to the heavenly heights becoming, for many Christians, Mary, Mother of God.

**KCS 75th Anniversary Concert
at Cadogan Hall**

29th March 2025

Brahms *German Requiem* & Poulenc *Gloria*



Sophie Bevan Soprano

Roderick Williams Baritone

Thames Sinfonia

Andrew Griffiths Conductor



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Personent Hodie

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

Let the voices of little children
be heard today,
praising joyfully
He who was born to us,
given by the highest God,
And procreated from a virgin's womb.

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

He is born into the world,
wrapped in cloths
and placed in a manger
In a stable of beasts,
the ruler of the heavens.
The infernal prince lost his spoils.

*Magi tres venerunt,
Parvulum inquirunt,
Bethlehem adeunt,
Stellulam sequendo,
Ipsum adorando,
Aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.*

The three Magi came,
they searched for the Little One,
They go to Bethlehem,
Following the star,
adoring Him,
By offering Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

*Omnes clericali,
Pariter pueri,
Content ut angeli:
Advenisti mundo,
Laudes tibi fundo.
Ideo Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Let all the clerics,
as well as the children,
sing like angels:
You have come to the world,
I praise You from the depths.
Therefore, glory be to God in the highest.

Kingston Choral Society needs your support

It takes lots of resources – talent, volunteers and financial support – to allow the Society to continue to perform and maintain high quality performances.

All donations would be gratefully received. They help us to pay for music, equipment, such as music stands, concert venue hire and professional musician fees.

It's easy to donate by clicking the *Make a Donation* button on our website www.kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk.

Or, to discuss a donation or bequest, please email info@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk

Adam lay ybounden

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden written
In their book.

Ne had one apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had ne'er our Lady
Abeen heavene queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was;
Therefore we moun singen:
Deo gracias!

Gabriel's Message

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame; "All
hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden, Mary, Most
highly favour'd lady,"
Gloria!

"For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold.
Most highly favour'd lady,"
Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To
me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"My soul shall laud and magnify His Holy Name."
Most highly favour'd lady.
Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
"Most highly favour'd lady,"
Gloria!

Linden Tree Carol

There stood in heav'n a linden tree,
But, tho' 'twas honey laden,
All Angels cried, 'No bloom shall be
Like that of one fair maiden.'

Sped Gabriel on wingèd feet,
And pass'd through bolted portals
In Nazareth, a maid to greet,
Blest o'er all other mortals.

'Hail Mary!' quoth the Angel mild,
'Of woman-kind the fairest:
The Virgin ay shalt thou be styled,
A babe although thou bearest.'

'So be it!' God's hand-maiden cried,
'According to thy telling.'
Whereon the Angel smartly hied
Up home-ward to his dwelling.

This tidings fill'd his mates with glee:
'Twas pass'd from one to other,
That 'twas Mary, and none but she,
And God would call her Mother.

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If you would like to sign up or find out more, please email friends@kingstonchoralsociety.org.uk

I Sing of a Maiden

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless;
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came all so still
Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

He came all so still
Where his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she:
Well may such a lady
God's mother be.

He came all so still
To his mother's bower,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flower.

Coventry Carol

*Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
By, by, lully, lullay.*

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling, for whom we do sing,
By, by, lully, lullay?
*Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
By, by, lully, lullay..*

Herod the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight,
All young children to slay.
*Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
By, by, lully, lullay.*

That woe is me, poor child for thee!
And ever morn and day,
For thy parting neither say nor sing
By, by, lully, lullay!

Myn Lyking

I saw a fair mayden sytten and sing.
She lulled a lyttel childe, a sweete Lording.

Refrain:

*Lullay mye lyking, my dere sonne, my sweeting.
Lullay my dere herte, myn own dere derling.*

That same Lord is he that made alle thing;
Of alle lordis he is Lord, of alle kynges Kyng.

Refrain

There was mickle melody at that chylde's birth.
All that were in heav'nly bliss, they made mickle mirth.

Refrain

Angels bright sang their song to that chylde;
Blyssid be thou, and so be she, so meek and so mild.

Refrain

A Virgin Most Pure

A virgin most pure, as the Prophets do tell,
Hath brought forth a baby, as it hath befell;
To be our Redeemer from death, hell and sin,
Which Adam's transgression had wrapped us in.

Refrain:

*Aye, and therefore be merry;
Rejoice, and be you merry;
Set sorrow aside;
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born at this tide.*

In Bethlehem Jewry a city there was,
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,
And there to be taxed, with many one mo,
For Cæsar commanded the same should be so.

Refrain

But when they had enter'd the city so fair,
A number of people so mighty was there,
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all.

Refrain

Then they were constrain'd in a stable to lie,
Where horses and asses they us'd for to tie;
Their lodging so simple they took it no scorn,
But against the next morning our Saviour was born.

Refrain

The King of all kings to this world being brought,
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was sought,
And when she had swaddled her young son so sweet,
Within an ox manger she laid him to sleep.

Refrain

Then God sent an Angel from Heaven so high,
To certain poor Shepherds in fields where they lie,
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay,
Because that our Saviour was born on this day.

Refrain

Then presently after the Shepherds did spy
A number of Angels that stood in the sky;
They joyfully talked and sweetly did sing,
'To God be all glory our Heavenly King.'

Refrain

The Shepherd's Farewell

Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling,
The humble crib, the stable bare.
Babe, all mortal babes excelling,
Content our earthly lot to share.
Loving father, Loving mother,
Shelter Thee with tender care!

Blessed Jesus, we implore Thee
With humble love and holy fear.
In the land that lies before Thee,
Forget not us who linger here!
May the shepherd's lowly calling,
Ever to Thy heart be dear!

Blest are ye beyond all measure,
Thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure,
The Prince of Peace, The Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you,
Guide you safely through the wild!

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

Ding dong! merrily on high

Ding dong! merrily on high,
In heav'n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with angel singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime
Your matin chime, ye ringers;
May you beautifully rime
Your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
Let steeple bells be swungen,
And "Io, io, io!"
By priest and people sung.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Sans Day Carol

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk,
And Mary bore Jesus, who was wrapped up in
silk:

Refrain:

*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!

Now the holly bears a berry as green as the
grass,
And Mary bore Jesus, who died on the cross:

Refrain

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the
coal,
And Mary bore Jesus, who died for us all:

Refrain

Now the holly bears a berry as blood is it red,
Then trust we our Saviour, who rose from the
dead:

Refrain

MARY, MOTHER

1 A Child in Galilee

When Mary was a little girl, a child in Galilee,
She named the grape-vine, named the cedar,
named the olive tree.
'Raise your voice,' called out the olive tree,
'One day I will crown you as Queen of Galilee.'

When Mary was a young girl, a girl in Galilee,
She named chestnut, named the myrtle,
named the apple tree,
'Eat my fruit, young Mary,'
cried out the apple tree,
'One day I will kneel to you as Queen of Galilee.'

When Mary was a woman, all grown in Galilee,
She sought the shade of a sighing sycamore tree.
'If you name me, if you tie yourself to me,
You'll never name the Tree of Life, as Queen of Galilee.'

2 Carpentry Carol

Mary fell in love, watching Joseph shape the sycamore tree.
And while he worked, he started to sing.
O sing, sycamore, sing!
Sing, sycamore, sing!
Building a crib for the future king.

She fell for his hands as gnarled as old roots,
his mind as young as green timber.
All the while he hummed to the tune:
O sing, sycamore, sing!
Sing, sycamore, sing!
Melodies carved for the heav'nly king.

Falling in love is hammer and saw,
chisel and knife, feeling safe in a house on fire,
and wanting more.
O sing, sycamore, sing!
Sing, sycamore, sing!
Nazareth waits for the song of the king.

Mary gave her promise that day to the man
with the tender heart and hands,
Carving joy with a plane and a lathe.
O sing, sycamore, sing!
Sing, sycamore, sing!
Crafting the world for our heav'nly king.

3 After the Angel

And after the angel, Mary dreamt.
Lord, she prayed, you have locked the gate,
locked is the gate to the common pasture,
you have taken away the key to my husband's house
and the door overshadows my heart.
And the Lord appeared, and opened the gate.
Mary, here is the key to the house,
I have opened the door that you dreamt.
Here is paradise in the pasture,
and today I give you the key to heaven in the human heart.

4 Walking Carol

On the road to David's town,
the days are very long.
We count our steps, we count and sing, to speed the miles along:
One for Bethlehem's endless road.
Two for bread to eat as we go,
Three for the times we've lost our way,
Four, cold and hungry all day.
Five for the rain that troubles our eyes,
Six for Mary, frightened and shy,
Seven for Caesar in far off Rome,
Eight for wishing we could all go home.
Nine for the months of growth and pain,
Ten for the census and taxes to pay,
Eleven for Joseph, worried and tired,
And twelve for the joy of the unborn child.
Lord, the road to happiness is long as winter's night.
Send a star to brighten us.

5 Dear Heart

Dear heart, dear heart.
Do you remember before you were here?
The house and the stable, the turn of the year?
Last night I lost my heart to a star.
Lully, lully, lulla.

Dear heart, dear heart,
You are sleeping and hardly stir.
Quietened by frankincense and myrrh.
Last night I lost my heart to a star.
Lully, lully, lulla.

Sheep and shepherds, oxen and kings:
Mortal the gifts that Bethlehem brings.
Your starlight has carried my heart away.
O lovely child, lully, lullay.

Even while sleeping, even so new,
Now and forever my heart is you.
Last night I lost my heart to a star.
Lully, lully, lulla.
Dear heart, dear heart.

6 Hymn

In my heart is a sycamore tree,
Tend it, Lady, Heav'nly Queen.
Sow the seed of love today,
Nurture ev'ry soul, I pray.
O sing alleluia!
In excelsis gloria!

Queen of heaven, pray for me,
Pray for ev'ry sycamore tree,
Pray for ev'ry flow'ring bud,
Ev'ry mother, ev'ry child.
O sing alleluia!
In excelsis gloria!

Hear the angels sing on high,
'Christ the Lord is born this night!'
Born to save the world from sin,
Ev'ry heart shall let him in.
King of Kings, alleluia!
In excelsis gloria!

ANDREW GRIFFITHS – Musical Director



A musician of rare versatility, Andrew Griffiths combines his role as Head Coach at the National Opera Studio with a busy freelance career in the worlds of opera and choral music.

A graduate of the Royal Opera's Jette Parker Young Artist Programme, he has conducted productions for The Royal Opera (Linbury Theatre), The Royal Ballet, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, Opera Theatre Company, Opera Collective Ireland, Early Opera Company, Mid Wales Opera, Bampton Classical Opera and Iford Festival Opera. He has appeared in concert with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, Orchestra of the Swan, Southbank Sinfonia and 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, and with the BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras, and regularly joins the music staff at The Royal Opera, working alongside such conductors as Pappano, Bychkov, 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. He is much in demand as a vocal coach, and works frequently with the Young Artists at The Royal Opera, as well as overseeing the training of the Young Artists at the National Opera Studio.

In constant demand as a choral conductor, Andrew appears regularly with the BBC Singers, for whom his engagements have included the world première of John Pickard's *Mass in Troubled Times*, recordings of Brahms, Hassler, Barber, Ives and Giles Swayne, and broadcasts of Howells, MacMillan and Martinů, as well as a Barbican debut directing music from the Flemish Renaissance. He is Musical Director of Kingston Choral Society and chamber choir Londinium, whose recordings have received wide critical acclaim. He regularly conducts for Dartington International Summer School, and has appeared as a guest conductor with the BBC Symphony Chorus, New London Chamber Choir, and Hong Kong's Tallis Vocalis.

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.

Recent highlights include conducting *Semele* for Opera Collective Ireland, a Sondheim portrait for the National Opera Studio, Monteverdi's *Vespers* at Dartington, and works by Paul Patterson for Orchestra of the Swan, and working as assistant conductor/continuo for *Theodora* and *Alcina* at The Royal Opera. Forthcoming engagements include conducting Baroque and contemporary scenes for the National Opera Studio, directed by Keith Warner.

GAVIN ROBERTS - Organ



Gavin Roberts enjoys an extraordinarily varied career as a pianist, organist, conductor, director and coach. He has appeared at venues and festivals in the UK and abroad including Barbican Hall, Wigmore Hall, The Royal Festival Hall, *Oundle International Festival*, *Dartington International Festival*, *The Ludlow Weekend of English Song*, *The Ryedale Festival*, *Oxford International Song Festival*. He is a professor and staff pianist at the *Guildhall School of Music & Drama* and is the Artistic Director of *Song in the City*.

Gavin has collaborated with numerous singers, conductors, instrumentalists and ensembles including Lucy Hall, Andrew Watts, Rosamund Shelley, Madeleine Holmes, Eleanor Rolfe Johnson, Donna Lennard, Amanda Pitt, Carolyn Sampson, Robin Tritschler, Ailish Tynan, Jess Dandy, Samantha Crawford, David Greco, Gareth Brynmor John, Angus Meryon, Alan Hacker, Clare Hoskins, Libby Burgess, Graham Johnson, Roger Norrington, Richard Hickox, *The BBC Singers*, *The BBC Symphony Chorus*, *The Academy of Ancient Music*, *The National Youth Choir*, *Schola Cantorum of Oxford*, *The Joyful Company of Singers*, *Constanza Chorus*, *Kingston Choral Society* and *Fulham and Hammersmith Choral Society*, often appearing on radio broadcasts and recordings. Recent highlights include a recital of songs by Lili Boulanger in Antwerp with regular recital partner soprano Lucy Hall, and a performance in the *Monodrama Festival*, Luxembourg, with countertenor Andrew Watts.

Gavin is an experienced and creative concert programmer, including five successful seasons as Artistic Director of *The St Marylebone Festival*. His work is often characterised by collaborations with other artistic disciplines. Recent work includes a choreographed performance of Schubert's *Wintereise* at *Rambert*, a *London Fashion Week* show for designer Patrick McDowell at *Guildhall School*, and a Welsh tour of *Novello & Son* with Rosamund Shelley. He has been Artistic Director of *Song in the City* since 2011 for which he has devised more than 150 concerts often on socially-engaged themes, and has pioneered 'Creative Minds in Song' commissioning composers to create new songs on the poems of mental-health service users. Passionate about working with composers he has given numerous premieres of new works, as well as composing a small number of works himself. A recent project was a recording of London-themed song commissions 'Voices of London' for *Song in the City* by composers Raymond Yiu, Joseph Atkins, James Lark and Graham Ross.

Gavin was Organist and Director of Music at St Marylebone Parish Church from 2014-2022. He gained a Masters (distinction) in piano accompaniment from *Guildhall School*, and previously read Music and held the organ scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and a Master's degree (distinction) from King's College London. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and a Trustee of *The Finzi Friends*.

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