

Saturday 28 June 2025, 7.30pm

St Andrew's Church,
Maple Road, Surbiton KT6 4DS



Rhymes & Charms

Kerry Andrew *Rhymes & Charms for Flyaway Things*

John Rutter *The Sprig of Thyme*

A selection of madrigals

Libby Burgess Piano

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 spectacular *Venetian Vespers*, featuring music by Monteverdi and his contemporaries.

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.

~ ~ NEXT KCS CONCERT ~ ~

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Concert for St Cecilia's Day

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Vaughan Williams: *Serenade to Music***

Thames Camerata

Andrew Griffiths - Conductor

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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

MADRIGALS

Anon: *Sumer is icumen in*

John Bennet: *All Creatures Now*

Orlando Gibbons: *The Silver Swanne*

Thomas Vautor: *Sweet Suffolk Owl*

Josquin des Prez: *El Grillo*

Rev Charles Butler: *The Bee's Madrigall*

FLORENCE PRICE: *CLOUDS* (PIANO)

KERRY ANDREW: *RHYMES & CHARMS FOR FLYAWAY THINGS*

I Ladybird

II Magpie & Dove

III Bat

IV Bee

V Cuckoo

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR: *DEEP RIVER* (PIANO)

JOHN RUTTER: *THE SPRIG OF THYME*

I The bold grenadier

II The keel row

III The willow tree

IV The sprig of thyme

V Down by the sally gardens

VI The cuckoo

VII I know where I'm going

VIII Willow song

IX O can ye sew cushions?

X The miller of Dee

XI Afton Water

THE MADRIGAL

Madrigals, from the Italian '*madrigale*,' are secular songs, originating in the mid-14th century in Northern Italy. They were sung by two or more voices and, typically, comprised two or three short stanzas. For the most part sung to the same music, the final two lines received a different rhythmic treatment. Their subject was usually an amorous one but could be satirical or political, the words being illustrated with a strong sense of musical wit.

Little is recorded about Italian secular music of the 15th century. However, it seems that madrigals, as a popular art form, all but disappeared. So-called carnival songs, associated with major festivals in the large cities, enjoyed wide public appeal. Usually sung by groups of men in costumes and bawdy in content, the words were often denigrating of women. In 1533, following the publication of a volume of 20 excellent madrigals by Valerio Dorico (?-1565), and coinciding with a growing backlash against the frivolity and vulgarity of carnival songs, a reinvigorated form of madrigal emerged.

Within the aristocratic circle, the revived madrigal form utilised a more refined and tasteful poetry. According to a literary authority of the time, '*the madrigal is bound by no rule as to the number of its lines or the arrangement of its rhymes*.' The poet had freedom to create and rhyme, so long as the last two lines rhymed together. In its new incarnation, the music often also benefitted from the newer, more sophisticated, counterpoint technique. This was imported via migrant musicians from Northern Europe, who had travelled to the rich Italian courts thereby enhancing their career prospects and quality of life. Under their musical influence, the lines of the madrigal's different voices were more equal in melodic value and moved at different times from one another, ie contrapuntally.

In the first half of the 16th century, madrigals had been written for up to four vocal parts. Typically, the uppermost voice held the chief melody and the lower performed a simpler, accompanying role. Moreover, all parts tended to move to the same rhythm at the same time - homophony. In some instances, one or more of the lower parts would be played by instrumentalists, not sung. The later 16th century madrigal form developed, imaginatively, to include five- and six-part compositions. Painting a picture of the words with the music, however, remained the genre's trademark. This was to '*emphasize the rhetoric of the words and illustrate the sighs and groans of unsatisfied desires*.' Romantic love, as in the past, was often the subject matter but the natural world and everyday social situations were also depicted to ironic, tragic or comic effect.

In England, records show that Italian madrigals were being sung as early as 1564 and, two decades later, the English singer and publisher, Nicholas Yonge (c 1560-1619), produced a volume of fine examples. Entitled *Musica Transalpina* (1588), the texts were available in English and the music establishment's enthusiastic reception of them resulted in a swift flowering of the art form. As in Italy, the poetry deployed for the madrigals often concerned sensual love. Likewise, the erotic or emotive elements were conveyed by expressive musical treatments of key words, such as 'love', 'pain', 'sigh' and 'die'.

In the hands of acclaimed English composers, such as John Wilbye (1574-1638), Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623) and Thomas Morley (1557-1602), the works showed originality, and were not simply copies of the Italian. The heyday of the English madrigal, between 1585 and 1635, saw many other composers contribute works of high quality and wit, guaranteeing the madrigal's survival into modern times.

Sumer is icumen in (Anon, c 1261-1264) is a 13th century English round or canon by an unknown composer, written for six voices. Except for the lowest voice, all sing the same music, entering one after the other. The musical structure is simpler than that of the earliest, 14th century Italian madrigals but considerably older.

John Bennet (c 1575-1614) produced 'Madrigals to Fovre Voyces' in 1599. His texts were often derived from Yonge's *Musica Transalpina* or those used by Thomas Morley. **All Creatures Now**, which is not scored for four but for five voices, is one of Bennet's best-known works.

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) produced his, 'First Set of Madrigals and Motets', in 1612. It includes **The Silver Swanne**. Not strongly contrapuntal, since the topmost voice claims greatest melodic interest, the composer's mastery of the madrigal form is evident, especially in depicting the swan's last moments.

Thomas Vautor (c 1580-1620) is mostly remembered for his 1619 publication, 'The First Set of divers Ayres and Nature, of Five and Sixe parts.' His **Sweet Suffolk Owl** is scored for five voices. The text's musical treatment achieves a fine balance between light-heartedness and melancholy, evidence of his illustrative skill.

Josquin des Prez (c 1450-1521), of Flemish Extraction, was one of the greatest composers of the Renaissance period. A professional singer throughout his career, and working across Europe, he paid close attention to the relationship between text and music. An acknowledged exponent of word painting, his **El Grillo** (The Cricket) is scored for four voices. This witty and onomatopoeic piece, dating from the 1490s, anticipates the early 16th century madrigal revival.

Reverend Charles Butler (c 1560-1647) is remembered for writing 'The Principles of Musik in Singing and Setting' (1636). A clergyman, he maintained wide interests, including bee-keeping. He was author of 'The feminine Monarchie; or, a Treatise concerning Bees' (1634), which extols the virtues of bees. Unusually, for an academic text, it also included **The Bee's Madrigall**, which contains an imitation of the actual piping sound made by a queen bee!

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Florence Price (née Smith) was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, into a mixed-race family. Her father was the only African-American dentist in the town and her mother was a music teacher. Under the latter's tuition Florence first played the piano in public, aged just four years old. At 11, a piece she had composed was published. When only 15, she entered the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, passing as Mexican to avoid discrimination and thereby gain acceptance. Four years on and graduating with honours, she had an artist's diploma and a teaching certificate. Florence returned briefly to Arkansas to teach, before moving to Atlanta, Georgia, as Head of Music at Clark College.

That same year, 1910, Florence's father died, and her mother abandoned the family, never resuming contact with her daughter. In 1912, after such an unsettling period, Florence married a lawyer, Thomas J. Price.

As his practice was in Little Rock, the couple moved there to live but, in this racially segregated community, Florence was unable to find work. She became a stay-at-home mother of two daughters, a son having died in infancy. Following a series of local race-motivated attacks, including the lynching of a black man, the family moved to Chicago, where Price seized the opportunity to rekindle her music career. Enrolling in the Chicago Music College she undertook further classes in composition and was welcomed into the vibrant black community of musicians and artists.

Entering her fifth decade, her creative flame still burning, Price again saw her music published. In 1930, her piano suite, *Negro Fantasy* (1929), was performed to great acclaim by the black pianist and composer Margaret Bonds (1913-1972). At 44, however, with financial difficulties and suffering domestic abuse, Price divorced her husband. She worked as an organist, playing for silent films, and earned money from composing music for radio adverts to try to make ends meet.

Price was, however, reliant upon the support of friends, none more so than Margaret Bonds, with whom she and her daughters were invited to live. This successful domestic arrangement produced an enduring professional partnership between the two women, raising Price's profile as a composer in the process. One of many ensuing high points was the performance of Price's *Symphony in E minor* by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (15 June 1933) the first major US orchestra to perform a work composed by an African-American woman.

Florence Price composed over 300 works in all, including four symphonies, four concertos, choral and chamber works, and pieces for solo instruments, especially organ and piano. They are characterised by her integration of the rhythms and melodies of African-American spirituals, blues and folk. Many remained unpublished in her lifetime. In 1953 she suffered a stroke and died, her music thereafter being largely forgotten.

In 2009, however, a large number of her works were found by chance in her former holiday home, during its renovation by new owners. Subsequently, many of them have been published and performed, her talent recognized and her reputation as composer reinstated. (One of the young finalists in Channel 4's 'The Piano', May 2025, performed one movement of Price's *Negro Fantasy*).

CLOUDS

Clouds (c 1940) was uncovered among the 2009 haul. This solo piano work displays Price's lively imagination in its swift transitions between contrasting moods: deeply meditative, sweetly lyrical and intensely passionate. The music reveals not only 20th century African-American influences, but also her indebtedness to late romantic European composers - Dvořák, Debussy, Ravel and Rachmaninov. Price's integration of these disparate elements transports the listener from one emotional atmosphere to another, as if part of a dynamic, shifting skyscape. Her music seems to encounter no obstacles. Ironic, perhaps, given the multiple strictures and censures imposed upon, and endured by, this remarkable African-American woman.

KERRY ANDREW (b 1978)

Kerry Andrew is a multi-talented English artist. As well as an established classical music composer, they are a published novelist, short story writer, performer of alt-folk music and former vocalist with the Juice Vocal Ensemble - among other musical and educational activities. Born in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, Andrew's family moved to Canada when they were three years old, returning three years later to the UK. The family was not especially musical, although their parents enjoyed Country music. Back in Buckinghamshire, something of a culture shock for Andrew, their father joined a church choir, where they soon followed, thereby acquiring the rudiments of church choral music.

Andrew attended a local Grammar School and won a contemporaneous music scholarship, which involved extra tuition on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. Armed with the relevant A level grades, and being a proficient vocalist, pianist and flautist, they obtained a place at the University of York to read music, having been advised to pursue an academic music route into music. After obtaining a bachelor's degree, Andrew stayed in York to study for a master's degree, followed by a doctorate, both in composition. Prof Roger Marsh (b 1949), one of their York tutors and a noted composer of ensemble and choral works, was an important influence.

For Andrew, the text is often the source of inspiration. The exciting challenge is, '*... to try to find a way of making the words as interesting and illuminating as possible.*' In 2010, Andrew won the first of their four 'British Composer Awards' for the choral work *Fall*, which had been inspired by a poem by Robin Robertson (1735-1790), a scholarly clergyman and champion of civil and religious liberty. Two more awards followed, both in 2014, within the 'Stage Works' category, for their wild swimming chamber opera *Dart's Love* and, in the 'Community or Educational' category, for their community chamber opera, *Woodwose*. Their fourth award, in the 'Music for Amateur Musicians' category, was for *Who We Are*. This piece was for the massed National Youth Choirs of Great Britain and premiered at the Royal Albert Hall in 2016.

Andrew had accepted the position of 'Composer in Residence' at the Handel House Museum, which they occupied 2010-2012. Subsequently, they were appointed Visiting Professor of Music at Leeds College of Music (now Leeds Conservatoire), a post they held twice, 2015-16 and 2017-18. During the latter period, Andrew's *No Place Like*, was written for the 'BBC Ten Pieces' scheme, it being performed at one of the BBC Promenade concerts. They have also been involved in producing large-scale works for non-professional ensembles and children, the latter including a work performed by primary school children at the Royal Festival Hall.

Alongside the use of traditional musical forces are Andrew's experimental and improvisatory ventures, many of which address and explore current ethical or moral issues. They were a multi-instrumentalist with the band DOLLYman from 2007-18, all five performers being fellow composers. The music was described in the Guardian newspaper, as '*eclectic punk-jazz*', in which the members, '*splice jazz, pop and classical music.*' Time Out referred to '*punky jazz ... offering broken themes full of menace and mischief.*' During the same period, Andrew was vocalist with a contemporary song-based jazz/folk sextet who played original music by Laura Cole (another acclaimed composer and improvising pianist).

Andrew performs with the *a cappella* vocal trio Juice Vocal Ensemble, who specialise in vocals with an experimental edge. Their album *Songspin* won the 'Best Contemporary Classical Album' in 2012.

Andrew also performs solo alt-folk under the name 'You Are Wolf'. Their debut album, *Hawk to the Hunting Gone* (2014, Stone Tape), explores the mythic status of birds, as recorded in folklore. In their alt-folk incarnation, Andrew blends different literary and musical strands - folk with alternative rock elements - and uses raw lyrics to relate stories in the folk tradition. The Observer, described the album as 'English *avant-folk* at its finest.' Their second album, *Keld* (Firecrest, 2018), chosen by the Guardian as a 'Top Ten Folk Album 2018', was also awarded fRoots magazine's 'Editor's Choice Album of the Year 2018'.

In a published interview, Andrew commented that it was stories that attracted them to folk. Folk tales and folk songs are '*there to be responded to however you like*', which notion is a thread connecting many of Andrew's creative projects. The album, *Keld*, for example, is an old story told in a contemporary way, via mixing traditional and original music to tell stories of water spirits, witches, spells and curses. According to the newspaper interviewer, Andrew's bright and pure vocals brought a contemporary feeling, '*infused with a wild otherness*', and combined to, '*create a timeless quality*'. The message of the work was a plea for this and future generations to respect and celebrate the natural world.

Andrew's 2023 solo album *You Are Wolf: Hare // Hunter // Moth // Ghost* (Firecrest, 2023) was the Guardian newspaper's 'Folk Album of the Month'. Joined by Sam Lee and Robert Macfarlane, their gift for experimentation was aptly demonstrated via deploying playground rhymes and birdsong. Andrew is drawn to folk songs that represent metamorphosis, recognising the opportunities they confer for musical invention. This 2023 album celebrates such transformative experiences, partially inspired by Andrew's own experiences of debilitating illness and their non-binary identity.



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RHYMES AND CHARMS FOR FLY-AWAY THINGS

Rhymes and Charms for Fly-Away Things (2010) was commissioned by the Music Publishers Association as a prize for Kerry Andrew winning the Making Music Award at the 2010 British Composer Awards. It is a set of five choral songs, scored for SATB choir and keyboard accompaniment, which draws together some traditional rhymes and sayings from around the UK. All refer to what the composer calls, '*flying beasties*,' since one of their, '*chief artistic occupations is the intersection of the natural world and folklore*.' Featured are: 'Ladybird'; 'Magpie and Dove'; 'Bat'; 'Bee' and 'Cuckoo'.

Andrew suggests some texts will be familiar to the listener, such as the rhyme about ladybirds, others less so, for example, '*how bees sing at Christmas time, and when it's good or bad luck to have bats in the house!*' These apparently naïve literary creations, composed and passed down by our forebears, betray hopes and fears of ordinary people for their own unknowable futures. Albeit indirectly, the omens and portents associated with Andrew's flying creatures address some of life's fundamental issues: romance, birth of children, death and the life hereafter. None of us knows what the future holds. This music invites us to ponder such matters, via immersing ourselves in the composer's flight of musical fancy, if only for a short while. Kerry Andrew has personally expressed their, '*huge thanks to Andrew Griffiths and the choir for performing this work*.'

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR (1875-1912)

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born in Holborn, London and spent most of his life living and working in the Croydon area. Daniel Taylor, his father, had been born in Freetown, Sierra Leone, but trained in medicine at King's College, London, qualifying as a doctor in 1874. He had left England for a medical position in his native country seven months before his son was born, perhaps, never knowing of his existence. Samuel's mother, Alice Martin, gave birth at 18. The name she provided on the baby's birth certificate was 'Alice Taylor'. With the assistance of others, the true circumstances of Samuel's illegitimate conception, and the implied but non-existent marriage contract, were concealed.

Samuel Taylor, known within his family as 'Coleridge', showed prodigious musical talent. He played the violin and, from the age of 10, sang in the local church choir. At 15, with the financial backing of a wealthy governor of his secondary school, he enrolled as a student at the Royal College of Music (RCM). In his nine years there, he studied the violin and was tutored in composition by the famous composer, Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924), gaining a Composition Scholarship in 1893.

Coleridge-Taylor's works featured prominently in the RCM students' concerts, with an early composition, the *Clarinet Quintet in F sharp minor*, being performed in Germany (1898) by the famous violinist Johann Joachim (1831-1907) and his ensemble. Although he did not travel widely himself, he undertook three visits to the US, which included being received in the White House. Coleridge-Taylor is best remembered for *The Song of Hiawatha*. The first section of this trilogy, *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, was penned in 1898, while he was still a student.

It was not until the following year, as reported much later by his half-sister, that the hyphen in 'Coleridge-Taylor' was acquired. According to her, it resulted from a music publisher's printing error. Thereafter, styling himself in that fashion, he went on to have considerable professional success. This included incidental music for London plays, as well as sacred and secular choral music and instrumental works.

An accomplished pianist, he composed for the instrument. While the titles of his compositions often bore an African stamp, his overall style was essentially European, being especially influenced by the music of Dvořák (1841-1904).

Coleridge-Taylor did not always enjoy robust health, even during his student years, and he was subjected to not infrequent racial abuse in the streets of Croydon, along the corridors of the RCM and among the so-called educated classes. Tragically, Coleridge-Taylor died young, from a serious infection involving both lungs. He left a widow Jessie, herself a former RCM student, and their two children, both of whom pursued notable music careers.

DEEP RIVER

'Deep River' (1905) is one of Coleridge-Taylor's 24 *Negro Melodies Transcribed for the Piano*. In his own words, it was '*the most beautiful and touching melody of the whole series.*' The first few bars of the spiritual of the same name, which serve as inspiration, are treated to a rich improvisation, the thematic material being restated intermittently throughout the piece. The associated lyrics of the song express hope, longing and the desire for freedom, both in the present and afterlife. Sometimes the theme is declared emphatically, though more often engulfed by modulating, often dark, harmonies. The whole work betrays a flowing yet restless character, as if swirling eddies direct the music's path, causing it to veer into different keys and harmonies. Dramatic and fanfare-like episodes punctuate the piece before it finds its way to a calm, final resting place.

JOHN RUTTER (b 1945)

Sir John Rutter is an English composer, conductor, arranger and record producer. Being interviewed in front of an audience, almost 10 years ago (Andrew Burdett, 2015), he described how, when he was three or four years old, and his peers were kicking footballs about, he was, '*... picking out tunes [on the piano], with one finger, from Swan Lake and so on.*' He added, '*That's when my parents realised, they had an oddity.*' Rutter's parents were not musicians, although his father, an industrial chemist, was fond of music.

Rutter's musical development met with encouragement at Highgate School. As a chorister there, in 1963, he had sung in a performance of the *War Requiem*, under its composer, Benjamin Britten (1913-1976). It had been an utterly inspiring experience. Not all, however, had been in favour of him pursuing a career in music. His headmaster, for one, had expressed his disapproval, believing that the profession was not a financially viable choice!

While an undergraduate at Clare College, Cambridge, one of Rutter's earlier compositions, *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*, was published. He had been encouraged to put the piece forward by one of his tutors, David Willcocks. Subsequently, the student and this eminent fellow of the neighbouring King's College, world-famous for its choral tradition, worked together. They produced the immensely popular series of 'Carols for Choirs' (Oxford University Press), a most rewarding endeavour.

Some criticise Rutter's own music for being 'light', his song writing style seen as owing something to the North American tradition. Willcocks, however, is on record as saying of John Rutter that he was, '*the most gifted composer of his generation.*' A music reviewer for the Evening Standard of 25 September 2005 also praised, '*... the infectiousness of his [Rutter's] melodic invention...*'

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His melodies are often capable of being hummed on one's way home from a concert, which is not true of the works of many of his generation. Understandably, Rutter is best known for his choral music and, as the BBC's Sean Rafferty commented '... *not just carols, but wonderfully great things for the human voice.*'

Rutter, having graduated from Clare College, returned there to take up the post of Music Director (1975-79). In that position, even though his tenure was brief, he developed its choristers into an internationally renowned choir. He was also married in the College Chapel, to Joanne, during this busy period! Having given up his Cambridge post and its teaching commitments, however, he was freer to focus his energies on composition, for which he was becoming renowned. This led to the formation of his own choir, The Cambridge Singers and his ownership of a record label, Collegium, to release recordings of sacred choral music.

Life has brought some darkness and heaviness into Rutter's life. From 1985 to 1992, he suffered from myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME, or chronic fatigue syndrome), which severely restricted his productivity. For seven years he experienced a wide variety of symptoms, which conspired to sap him of his usual zest for life, as well as seriously curtailing his professional activities. In March 2001, Rutter and his wife sustained the painful loss of their 19-year-old son. He was killed in a road traffic accident, not far from Clare College, where he was also an undergraduate.

Following this tragedy, for more than two years, Rutter was unable to compose. When he did emerge sufficiently from his grief, he wrote *Mass of the Children* (2003). His desire was to compose a piece that, as Britten's *War Requiem* had done, required children and adults to join together to sing in its performance. Later Rutter confided to an interviewer, '*The dark loss of bereavement did teach me that life is sacred and life is good... Don't waste it.*'

Rutter has received many accolades for his musical achievements, both in the UK and abroad. In 2007, he received the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, in the Queen's New Year's Honours, with respect to Services to Music. At the coronation of King Charles III, May 2023, Rutter's arrangement of Hubert Parry's '*I Was Glad*', was sung. It contains the dramatic cry, '*Vivat Rex*' (Long Live the King), which was proclaimed by the scholars of Westminster School. Rutter was knighted in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours, again, for Services to Music.

Rutter's major choral works, *Gloria* (1974), *Requiem* (1985), *Magnificat* (1990) and *Mass of the Children* (2003) are established within the repertoires of professional and amateur choirs alike. His music is not beyond the skills of the talented amateur. It is aptly described as eclectic, influenced not only by the rich English choral tradition but that of 20th century France and the American art-song style. He is, unashamedly, a magpie and prepared to incorporate attractive musical morsels from wherever he finds them. To keep his choral works current and widely accessible, he produces a range of instrumental accompaniments, as well as the conventional piano/organ. This is most advantageous to amateur choirs with limited instrumental resources at their disposal.

THE SPRIG OF THYME

The Sprig of Thyme: a cycle of folk-song settings (1994) is written for a mixed choir with chamber ensemble or chamber orchestra, as alternatives to keyboard accompaniment. The 11 traditional songs in this cycle, pieces from a former era in danger of being forgotten, are revived via Rutter's arrangements of them. He views such songs as having created a shared musical culture. Rutter's selection includes, '*love songs of the most exquisite and fragile beauty such as The Sprig of Thyme, drinking songs of picaresque humour such as The Miller of Dee [and] lullabies of heart-easing tenderness, such as O can ye sew cushions.*'

In arranging the music and compiling the cycle, Rutter pays tribute to the original poets and composers, most of whom were obscure or unknown, albeit their songs once famous. The view that their compositions are lightweight or trivial is not shared by Sir John Rutter.

Programme notes courtesy of Kingsley Norton

MADRIGALS

***Sumer is icumen in* - Anon**

Sumer is icumen in,
Loude sing cuckou!
Groweth seed and bloweth meed,
And springth the wood anew.
Sing cuckou!

Ewe bleteth after lamb,
Loweth after calve cow,
Bulloc sterteth, bucke verteth,
Merye sing cuckou!
Cuckou, cuckou,
Wel singest thou cuckou:
Ne swik thou never now!

***The Silver Swanne* - Gibbons**

The silver swan, who living had no note,
When death approached unlocked her silent
throat.
Leaning her breast against the reedy shore,

Thus sang her first and last and sung no more:
Farewell all joys, O death come close mine
eyes,
More geese than swans now live, more fools
than wise.

***All Creatures Now* – Bennet**

All creatures now are merry minded
The shepherd's daughters playing
The nymphs are falalaing
Yon bugle was well winded
At Oriana's presence each thing smileth
The flow'rs themselves discover
Birds over her do hover
Music the time beguileth
See where she comes
With flow'ry garlands crowned
Queen of all queens reknowned
Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana
"Long live fair Oriana"

***Sweet Suffolk Owl* – Vautour**

Sweet Suffolk Owl, so trimly dight
With feathers like a lady bright,
Thou singest alone, sitting by night,
Te whit, te whoo! Te whit, te whoo!

Thy note, that forth so freely rolls,
With shrill command the mouse controls;
And sings a dirge for dying souls,
Te whit, te whoo! Te whit, te whoo!

El Grillo – Josquin

*El grillo è buon cantore
Che tienne longo verso
Dalle beve grillo canta*

*Ma non fa come gli altri uccelli
Come li han cantato un poco
Van' de fatto in altro loco
Sempre el grillo sta pur saldo*

*Quando la maggior è'l caldo
Al' hor canta sol per amore*

The cricket is a good singer
Who can hold long a note
After drinking the cricket sings.

But he doesn't do as other birds do.
When they have sung a little
They go and do it somewhere else;
The cricket always stands firm.

When the heat is at its greatest,
Then he sings only out of love.

The Bee's Madrigall - Butler

As of all states the Monarchy is best,
So of all Monarchies that Feminine,
Of famous Amazons excels the rest,
That on this earthie Sphere have ever bin,
 Whose little hearts in weaker sex
 (So great in field)
 No powers of the might'est Males
 Can make to yield:
They living aye, most sober and most chaste,
Their paine-got goods in pleasure scorn to
 waste.

When so increased is this prudent Nation,
That their owne limits cannot them suffice;
To seeke new Cities, for new habitation,
They send abroad their num'rous Colonies:
 Antiope the prime Prince gone,
 Orithya soone,
 Of hir Queene-mother, making moan,
 Begg the like boone:
That with hir traine hir fortune she may seeke;
And this she sings in measures mournfull
 sweete.

To whose grave accents if hir Princely Grace
Vouchsafe with Trine Aspect reply to make,
To sweetest Treble tuning sweeter Base;
Hir mournfull suit a joyfull end doth take:

And then, when fit time they espy,
 Some thousands strong,
 This Armie royall gallantly
 Doth march along.
Harke, harke, me thinkes I heare in Notes of
 choice,
This fairest Ladies sweetest mournfull voice.

[Soprano queen bee 'piping']

But all this while shee doth chant it alone,
Most humbly begging in hir Dorik straines,
Of hir deare Liege leave to be gone,
But comfort none she yet obtaines.

Hir Mothers silence makes hir much to doubt,
Hir Grace unto hir will this grace denie:
But still hir suit shee doth hold out,
In hope at last to move pittie.

[Chorus of queen bees piping]

Importunate Orithya now hath wonne
Hir sterne Queene-Mothers grant to hir desire:
For Joy, hir Sisters all as one
With cheerefull tones fill up the Quire

RHYMES AND CHARMS FOR FLY-AWAY THINGS – KERRY ANDREW

I Ladybird

Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home
Your house is on fire, your true love is gone

Reed, reed sodger, fly away
And make the morn a sunny day

Fly away east, fly away west
Show me where lives the one I love best

Bishy-bishy-barnabee,
Tell me when your wedding be;
If it be tomorrow day,
Take your wings and fly away

Lady-cow, lady-cow, fly away, flee!
Tell me which way my wedding's to be
Uphill, or downhill, or towards the brown Clee!

II Magpie & Dove

One for sorrow
Two for joy
Three for a girl
And four for a boy
Five for rich, six for poor
Seven for a witch, I can tell you no more

One for sorrow
Two for mirth
Three for a wedding
And four for death
Five for silver, six for gold
Seven for a secret not to be told
Eight for heaven, nine for hell
And ten is for the Devil's own sel'

Bad luck to the bird that flies widdershins

Clean birds by sevens, unclean by two
The dove in the heavens is the bird I choose.

III Bat

Black bat, bear away,
Fly over here away,
And come again another day
Black bat, fly away.

Airy mouse, airy mouse, fly over my head
And you shall have a crust of bread,
And when I brew and when I bake,
You shall have a piece of my wedding cake.

IV Bee

Little bird of Paradise
She works her work both neat and nice;
She pleases God, she pleases men,
She does the work that no man can.

Bees, bees, bees, your master is dead,
and you must work for me instead.

V Cuckoo

The Cuckoo sings in April
The Cuckoo sings in May
The Cuckoo sings at midsummer
But not upon the day

In April, come he will,
In May, he sings all day
In June, he changes his tune
In July, he prepares to fly
In August, go he must
If he stays until September
Tis as much as the oldest man can remember

The cuckoo is a bonny bird, he sings as he flies
He brings us good tidings, he tells us no lies.

October his feathers begin to grow
November his eye burns yellow,
December his plumage turns as white as the snow
And he flies through the winter as a hawk-fellow
and soars

THE SPRIG OF THYME – JOHN RUTTER

I The bold grenadier

As I was a-walking one morning in May,
I spied a young couple a-making of hay.
O one was a fair maid and her beauty shone
clear,
And the other was a soldier, a bold grenadier.

'Good morning, good morning, good morning,'
said he:

'O where are you going, my pretty lady?'
'I am going a-walking by the clear crystal
stream,
To see cool waters glide and hear nightingales
sing.'

'O soldier, O soldier, will you marry me?'
'Oh, no my sweet lady, that never can be:
For I've got a wife at home in my own country;
Two wives and the army's too many for me.'

As I was a-walking one morning in May
I spied a young couple a-making of hay.
O one was a fair maid and her beauty shone
clear,
And the other was a soldier, a bold grenadier.

II The keel row

As I came through Sandgate,
I heard a lassie sing:
O weel may the keel row
That my laddie's in.

O who's like my Johnny,
Sae leish, sae blith, sae bonny,
He's foremost of the mony
Keel lads o'coaly Tyne.

He'll set and row so tightly,
Or in the dance so sprightly,
He'll cut and shuffle sightly,
'Tis true, were he not mine.

He wears a blue bonnet,
A dimple in his chin.
And weel may the keel row
That my laddie's in.

III The willow tree

O take me to your arms, love,
For keen doth the wind blow,
O take me to your arms, love,
For bitter is my deep woe.
She hears me not, she heeds me not,
Nor will she listen to me,
While here I lie alone
To die beneath the willow tree.

My love hath wealth and beauty,
Rich suitors attend her door,
My love hath wealth and beauty,
She slights me because I'm poor.
The ribbon fair that bound her hair
Is all that is left to me,
While here I lie alone
To die beneath the willow tree.

I once had gold and silver,
I thought them without end,
I once had gold and silver,
I thought I had a true friend.
My wealth is lost, my friend is false,
My love hath he stolen from me,
While here I lie alone
To die beneath the willow tree.

IV The sprig of thyme

Once I had a sprig of thyme.
It prospered by night and by day
Till a false young man came a-courting to me,
And he stole all this thyme away.

The gardener was standing by:
I bade him choose for me.
He chose me the lily and the violet and the pink
But these I refused all three.

Thyme it is the prettiest thing,
And time it will grow on,
And time it will bring all things to an end,
And so does my time grow on.

It's very well drinking ale,
And it's very well drinking wine:
But it's far better sitting by a young man's side
That has won this heart of mine.

V Down by the sally gardens

Down by the sally gardens my love and I
did meet.

She passed the sally gardens with little
snow-white feet.

She bid me take love easy,
As the leaves grow on the tree.
But I being young and foolish,
With her did not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand.
And on my leaning shoulder she placed her
snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy,
As the grass grows on the weirs.
But I was young and foolish,
And now am full of tears.

W. B. Yeats, 1865–1939

VI The cuckoo

O the cuckoo she's a pretty bird, she singeth
as she flies;
She bringeth good tidings, she telleth no lies.
She sucketh white flowers, for to keep her
voice clear;
And the more she singeth cuckoo, the summer
draweth near.

As I was a-walking and a-talking one day,
I met my own true love, as he came that way.
O to meet him was a pleasure, though the
courting was a woe,
For I found him false-hearted, he would kiss
me and go.

I wish I were a scholar and could handle the pen,
I would write to my lover and to all roving men.
I would tell them of the grief and woe that attend
on their lies,
I would wish them have pity on the flower when
it dies.

VII I know where I'm going

I know where I'm going,
And I know who's going with me,
I know who I love
But the dear knows who I'll marry!

I have stockings of silk,
Shoes of fine green leather,
Combs to buckle my hair,
And a ring for every finger.

Some say he's a rogue,
But I say he's bonny,
The fairest of them all
My handsome, winsome Johnny.

Feather beds are soft,
And painted rooms are bonny,
But I would leave them all
To go with my love Johnny.

I know where I'm going,
And I know who's going with me,
I know who I love
But the dear knows who I'll marry!

VIII Willow song

A poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing willow, willow, willow!
With his hand in his bosom and his head
upon his knee.

O willow, O willow my garland shall be.
Sing all a green willow,
Ah me! the green willow my garland must be.

He sighed in his singing and made a great moan,
Sing willow, willow, willow!
I am dead to all pleasure, my true love is gone!
O willow, O willow my garland shall be.
Sing all a green willow,
Ah me! the green willow my garland must be.

IX O can ye sew cushions?

O can ye sew cushions,
Or can ye sew sheets,
Or can ye sing balaloo
When the bairn greets?
And hee and baw birdie,
And hee and baw lamb,
And hee and baw birdie,
My bonnie wee lamb.

I placed my cradle
On yon holly top,
And ay as the wind blew
My cradle did rock.

And hush a baw birdie,
And balilee loo,
And hee and baw birdie,
My bonny wee doo.

X The Miller of Dee

There was a jolly miller once,
Lived on the River Dee.
He danced and sang from morn till night,
No lark more blithe than he.
And this the burden of his song
Forever used to be:
'I care for nobody, no, not I,
If nobody cares for me.'

I love my mill, she is to me
Both parent, child and wife.
I would not change my station
For another one in life.
Then push, push, push the bowl, my boys,
And pass it round to me;
The longer we sit here and drink,
The merrier we shall be.

Then like the miller bold and free
Let us rejoice and sing.
The days of youth were made for glee,
And time is on the wing.
This song shall pass from me to thee
Around this jovial ring:
Let heart and voice and all agree
To sing 'Long live the King!'.

XI Afton Water

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise.
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far marked with the courses of clear winding rills.
There daily I wander as dawn rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow!
There oft as mild evening creeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays.
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Robert Burns, 1759–96

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, 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 regularly 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 the Music Summer School at Gresham's, and has appeared as a guest conductor with the BBC Symphony Chorus, the choirs at Dartington, 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.

Engagements during the current season include conducting contemporary opera scenes at the National Opera Studio directed by Keith Warner, a return to Bampton Classical Opera for Salieri's *La locandiera*, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* at Gresham's, assistant conductor for *Il trovatore* at The Royal Opera, and chorus-master for Boulez's *Cummings ist der Dichter* with the BBC Singers.

LIBBY BURGESS - Piano



Pianist Libby Burgess is well-known on concert stages across Britain, playing regularly as song specialist and chamber musician in the country's major halls and festivals, and on Radio 3. Equally admired for her programming, Libby is the founding Artistic Director of New Paths Music, curating 14 festivals of song, chamber music and community outreach, and from 2018 to 2022 was Co-Artistic Director with Martin Roscoe of the Beverley Chamber Music Festival.

Libby's recent calendar includes song recitals at Wigmore Hall with Alessandro Fisher, Oxford Lieder with Ailish Tynan, Southwell Festival with Mark Padmore, Leeds Lieder with Claire Barnett-Jones, Temple Music with Ashley Riches, and Aldeburgh Festival with Ben Hulett; The Rite of Spring in duet with Chris Hopkins; recitals with Julian Bliss, Matilda Lloyd and Laura van der Heijden; a complete Beetho-

ven cello sonata project with five cellists; and frequent broadcasts with the BBC Singers. Working often with living composers, Libby has most recently premiered Stephen McNeff's *Three Pieces for Piano* and, with regular collaborator baritone Marcus Farnsworth, *Everything Grows Extravagantly* by Cheryl Frances-Hoad – selected by The Times as a highlight of the year.

Libby is sought after as a vocal coach, and is particularly fascinated by the intersection of music and language. The seeds of her love for working with voices were sown as organ scholar at Christ Church, Oxford, where she read music, followed by postgraduate piano studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Libby was formerly Head of Keyboard at Eton College, is in demand as speaker and writer, and loves working in outreach contexts that seek to overcome barriers and share the power of music with everyone.

Currently undertaking a nationwide Bach marathon, 'Project 48', Libby is performing the whole of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* ('The 48') in every one of England's 48 counties, in venues ranging from cathedrals and concert halls to houses, schools, barns and gardens. To date the project has raised over £32,000 for Help Musicians, Live Music Now, Future Talent and Youth Music.

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