

Saturday 20 June 2026, 7.30pm

St Andrew's Church,
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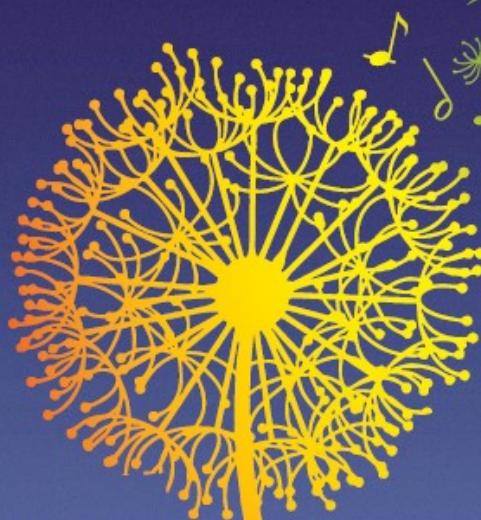
Make Our Garden Grow

Choral music by Stanford, Parry, Dowland,
Elgar, Holst, McDowall & Bernstein

Donna Lennard Soprano

Gavin Roberts Piano & 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 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 ~ ~

21st November 2026 at 7.30 pm

Haydn's *Creation*

Purcell Orchestra

Andrew Griffiths - Conductor

All Saints Church, Market Place, Kingston KT1 1JP

For further details contact 020 8398 0651

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~ ~ PROGRAMME ~ ~

Hadley: *My beloved spake*

Howells: *Like as the hart*

Purcell: *Sweeter than roses* (arr Britten)

Dowland: *Weep you no more, sad fountains*

Dowland: *The lowest trees have tops*

Rorem: *The Silver Swan*

Stanford: *My love's an arbutus*

Parry: *Fair daffodils*

Elgar: *Give unto the Lord*

~ ~ INTERVAL ~ ~

Holst: *Turn back, O man*

Raymond Yiu: *The Earth and Every Common Sight*

Cecilia McDowall: *The Ice is Listening*

- *Solid Waters*

- *The Ice is Listening*

- *Moulin*

Bernstein: *Make our garden grow*

MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

This evening's programme, featuring sacred and secular texts and settings, comprises two contrasting halves. The first is predominantly a musical celebration of the natural world and its joys. The music of the second half explores nature's fragility and the potential for humans to respect, neglect or exploit it. It includes two recent compositions that directly address issues relevant to global warming and climate change.

We begin with two favourite church anthems for choir, by well-known English composers - **Patrick Hadley** (1899-1973) and **Herbert Howells** (1892-1983). Their works are followed by music from much earlier periods by, arguably, the two greatest ever English songwriters, **Henry Purcell** (1659-1695) and **John Dowland** (1563-1626). Their pieces are followed by a solo song composed by **Ned Rorem** (1923-2022). After his contribution, we have choral works from two composers who were close contemporaries: **Charles Villiers Stanford** (1852-1924) and **Hubert Parry** (1848-1918). The first half ends with an uplifting anthem, ***Give unto the Lord***, by **Edward Elgar** (1857-1934). It is a setting of words, taken from Psalm 29, extolling God's ultimate power over all the earth.

The second half gets underway with, ***Turn back, O man***, by **Gustav Holst** (1874-1934). This is an undisguised admonition, composed in 1916, the year that the British army moved from voluntary enlistment to conscription. Holst, himself, had volunteered to serve, in 1914, but had been rejected on health grounds. His work is followed by, ***The earth and every common sight***, by **Raymond Yiu** (b 1973). Scored for solo voice and piano, the text concerns climate change, explicitly, drawing on a wide variety of literary, scientific and folk sources. Next is a cantata, ***The Ice is Listening***, by **Cecilia McDowall** (b 1951), which reflects the composer's preoccupation with global warming; Kate Wakeling's compelling text being especially composed for the purpose. Both these latter compositions focus on the precariously balanced state of our world and, indirectly, issue wake-up calls to preventive and reparative action. The final piece, ***Make our Garden Grow***, taken from the operetta, *Candide*, features music by **Leonard Bernstein** (1918-1990). It provides a hopeful, albeit homespun, reminder of how much might be achieved if everyone rallied round!

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Patrick Hadley and **Herbert Howells** shared an aesthetic language, each being influenced by the musical landscape of their time, the so-called 'pastoral' period. Both were central players in the development of 20th century Anglican choral music. Hadley's style is meditative and somewhat introspective, displaying a lyrical approach unlike that of the avant-garde experiments undertaken by many of his peers. His orchestration often conveys a spare, atmospheric quality. Herbert Howells' music is defined by long, soaring melodic lines and shimmering harmonic colours, achieved in part from his use of antique musical scales, 'modes', to which the listener's modern ear is unaccustomed. Much influenced by the French School, his music can exude a luminous and haunting quality. Both Hadley and Howells incorporate folk influences, as well as those emanating from physical landscapes in which they grew up or became acquainted: Norfolk and Ireland for Hadley; Gloucestershire for Howells, who spent countless hours walking there, occasionally disappearing for days at a time in and around the Severn Valley.

Patrick Hadley's ***My beloved spake***, with organ accompaniment, was written in 1936 for one of his Royal College of Music students, Ursula Grottrian, for the occasion of her wedding.

It is a choral setting of words from the famous *Song of Songs*, or Song of Solomon. It speaks of the awakening of springtime in the garden at the same time referring to the burgeoning love between a loving couple.

Herbert Howells' ***Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks*** (words from Psalm 42) was composed in a single sitting during a snowstorm in Cheltenham on 8 January 1941. He and his family had been bombed out of their home in Barnes. He captures the text's poetic beauty, in likening the human longing for God to the thirst of a deer, an image that unites humans with the rest of the animal kingdom.

John Dowland, who died 400 years ago, and **Henry Purcell**, who was born 33 years after Dowland's death, are widely regarded as representing the two peaks of the English vocal tradition. Dowland was a Renaissance composer, an internationally renowned singer and master of the lute. Surprisingly little is known of his formative years. Purcell was born into a highly musical family, beginning his musical career as a chorister at the Chapel Royal of Charles II during the Baroque period. He soon achieved fame as an organist and composer. Pre-eminent in their own lifetimes, both composers earned the epithet of 'English Orpheus'. They shared a capacity to convey profound melancholy and other plangent emotions. Both Dowland and Purcell could illuminate poetry with music, matching melodic lines to the natural inflections of the language. In different ways, each also reflected continental influences, notably from Italy and France. Dowland travelled widely, to France, Germany, Italy and Denmark. Purcell, however, scarcely left the streets around Westminster Abbey, let alone his native London. Unlike more wealthy citizens, his family remained in the capital, even during the Plague epidemic of 1665.

Purcell's ***Sweeter than Roses***, sung by a soprano soloist, was composed in 1695. For some, the song's images of nature, set alongside those of human love, express the lover's deep affection, longing and devotion, '*Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze, on a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss ...*'. Others, however, see it as a depiction of swooning ecstasies and erotic fervour! The origin of the text may provide a clue. It derives from a play by Richard Norton (c 1666-1732), *Pausanias, the Betrayer of His Country*. Its theme is betrayal and infidelity. In the play, the relevant words are spoken by Pausanias' mistress, who is awaiting the arrival of her latest lover!

Dowland's ***Weep you no more sad fountains*** is a choral version of one of his lute songs, first published 1603, in *The Third and Last Booke of Songs or Aires*. At the time, he was a court musician to King Christian IV of Denmark, albeit making frequent returns to England. Despite his undisputed talents, he never achieved a position in Queen Elizabeth's court. The fact that, aged 17, while working in Paris, he converted to Catholicism may account for his lack of popularity with the Protestant monarch. The timing of his publication, 1603, has led to speculation that the song was written as an anticipatory elegy - to mark the monarch's death. She died the same year, at Richmond Palace, after a protracted period of physical and mental decline, having refused to see doctors or take medicine. *Weep you no more sad fountains* offers comfort to those who are grieving via its gentle, melancholic atmosphere. The mourner is moved from grief to the solace of sleep and acceptance of death. The song makes use of gentle metaphors from nature, '*Weep you no more, sad fountains, what need you flow so fast? Look how the snowy mountains Heav'n's sun doth gently waste ...*'. It is noted for its sublime quality and dignified restraint, eschewing a personal sense of loss, hence more in tune with a nation's grief.

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Dowland's ***The lowest trees have tops***, also published in 1603, sets a text by Sir Edward Dyer (1543-1607). An established poet, he was a member of Elizabeth's court, which made him well-placed to explore and comment on the association between love and social standing. In the poem, he argues that true depth and sincerity are more likely found in quietness and humility than in grand gesture and display. Thus, even the smallest of things – ants, flies, sparks and low trees – display vital qualities, like '*gall*', '*spleen*' and '*heal*'. His inescapable conclusion is that love is a universal emotion that ignores social position and hierarchy, '*... love is love in beggars and in kings*.'

Morem's ***The Silver Swan*** is written for solo voice and piano. It is a reworking of a classic anonymous poem, famously set to music by the Renaissance composer Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625). Morem is highly regarded for matching his music to the natural rhythm of words. In this piece, however, he often uses several notes to emphasise a particular syllable, which harks back to earlier musical forms. In Gibbons' time that technique, '*melisma*', was used strategically for emotional expression or to highlight important words. Here, it helps create the drama and tension of the dying swan. According to legend the otherwise mute swan sings a beautiful melody, but only once, just before it dies. The final lines of this short text, '*Farewell all joys, O death come close mine eyes. More geese than swans now live, more fools than wise*', have been variously interpreted. It may be a critique of the world losing its excellence, swans being rare and refined and geese common and mediocre. Alternatively, as some have considered, it represents the decline of the English madrigal tradition when the piece was first published. Perhaps Gibbons had both ideas in mind.

The words of ***My love's an Arbutus*** are taken from a poem by the Irish poet, Alfred Perceval Graves (1846-1931). Stanford, who was born in Dublin, set them to music in 1882, the piece appearing in his collection *Songs of Old Ireland: A Collection of Fifty Irish Melodies*. His flowing lines and expressive phrasing number the virtues that the young man sees in his beloved. They are so many and marvellous, as to be comparable to those of the amazing arbutus tree. Indeed, the tree boasts many creditable attributes: bearing strawberry-like fruit at the same time as being in flower; a tawny bark that peels away in papery flakes to reveal a coppery pink smooth inner layer; being extremely resilient, able to thrive in harsh rocky and salty environments; and regrowing after being cut down or burned!

Stanford's melody is based on a traditional Irish folk tune. Faithful to the genre, he refined it for the Victorian drawing room and concert hall, where it chimed with the era's preoccupation with death and remembrance. (Prince Albert had died at the age of 42 in 1861). The singer imagines their lover's devotion will be lifelong, '*unranging*' and '*unchanging*', even after the bloom of youth has been lost. Stanford made his choral arrangement of the song in 1922, not long before his own death.

The theme of the transience of beauty and life is maintained in ***Fair Daffodils*** by Parry. He sets the words of Robert Herrick's poem, *To Daffodils*, written in 1648. The short-lived flower is a metaphor for the brevity of human life and its inevitable decay. The poet compares the quick fading of daffodils to the span of life, '*We have short time to stay, as you, we have as short a spring; as quick a growth to meet decay, as you, or anything. We die.*' In its three stanzas, the flower's journey from morning to evening symbolises a full life in a single day. The delicate impermanent nature of existence is represented by the rapid evaporation of the '*summer's rain*' and '*pearls of morning's dew*'. This evocative text is matched by Parry's music, which achieves a balance of rhythmic urgency and structural brevity. A lively, syncopated piano accompaniment supports its short and punctuated vocal lines.



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Edward Elgar frequently drew inspiration, as well as emotional refuge, from the landscape of his native Worcestershire. Although heavily influenced by European musical traditions, his work is viewed as being distinctly English. Some of his compositions are said to capture the 'rural voice' of the Severn Valley and Malvern Hills. ***Give unto the Lord***, composed in 1914, is a powerful choral work, utilising vivid natural imagery to represent the majesty and power of God. The voice of the Lord is omnipotent, more powerful than the most fearsome ravages of nature – thunderstorms, floods, earthquakes and fires. He is to be worshipped and glorified and will grant strength and peace to His people. The composer viewed the natural world as a distinct source for his musical material, once commented that, *'there is music in the air, music all around us, the world is full of it...'*. On another occasion, *'The trees are singing my music. Or have I sung theirs?'*

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The 20th century spawned two World Wars and countless displays of callous destructiveness and neglect, whether of people or the Earth's precious natural resources. Without due regard to regeneration or repair, the consequences of such events have moved some composers to create musical works that make bold statements, and **Gustav Holst's *Turn Back O Man*** is a prime example. He set words by the poet Clifford Bax (1886-1962) to express a clear, anti-war sentiment in the very midst of the Great War. His call was to forsake divisive activities and empire building, *'Age after age their tragic empires rise. Built while they dream, and in that dreaming weep. Would man but wake from out his haunted sleep'*. It argues for a search to find the common good, for people to collaborate in building a more harmonious world.

Raymond Yiu is a composer, conductor and jazz pianist, born in Hong Kong. He started piano lessons aged 4 and began composing in his teens. Meanwhile, having moved to live in London, he studied Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the prestigious Imperial College, University of London. While there he also studied musical scores of established composers to complement the compositional skills he had acquired without formal tuition. Later, having gained a scholarship for the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, he completed his doctoral thesis, *'A composer's imagining of musical tradition and the reinvention of heritage'*. He is a prolific composer in a wide range of genres and has been nominated for or won many awards for his works. Some have been performed around the globe and broadcast by BBC Radio 3. Perhaps the most notable is his orchestral song cycle for baritone voice, which was commissioned for the Manchester International Festival and shortlisted for the 2018 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award.

Yiu's song cycle ***The Earth and Every Common Sight***, was written in collaboration with **Gavin Roberts** (tonight's accompanist), as part of Guildhall School of Music and Drama Creative Voices programme, in 2010, winning the Tracey Chadwell Memorial Prize the same year. It is written for soprano and piano, the inspiration coming from the words of two poets, John Clare (1793-1864) and William Wordsworth (1770-1850). Their contributions form a container for quotations from disparate sources, including works by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), Philip Larkin (1922-1985) and Les Murray (1938-2019). Remarkably, this collage of excerpts provides a penetrating commentary on the interaction of people with the natural world, as well as a condensed summary of how human action might have impacted upon it. The work also serves to enliven Clare's words: *'All nature has a feeling: woods, fields, brooks are life eternal and in silence they speak happiness beyond the reach of books.'* The last word, literally, Yiu reserves for Wordsworth and is apt: *'It is not now as it had been of yore; turn whereso'er I may, by night or day, the things which I have seen I now can see no more'*. Today this sentiment will not be shared by all but is felt keenly by many.

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Cecilia McDowall is a celebrated composer best known for her 'communicative' style, especially in vocal and choral music. Born in London, she studied music at the University of Edinburgh before taking up postgraduate studies at the Trinity College of Music in London and, later, adding an MMus in Composition. Her works have won many awards and she had been nominated multiple times for the British Composer Awards, which she won in 2014 for a choral piece, *Night Flight*. Many of her works are inspired by actual events or historical accounts. *The Shipping Forecast* is but one example of extra-musical influences! Kingston Choral Society has performed several of her works, most recently, the large scale *Da Vinci Requiem*, which uses texts from the artist's famous 'Da Vinci Notebooks'.

McDowall's cantata, ***The Ice is Listening***, was commissioned by Henley Choral Society to feature the River Thames. It comprises three movements. In *Solid Water* the 1684 'frost fair' is depicted, with the frozen surface of the Thames playing host to a wide range of entertainments: '*Roasting, Boyling, Eating, Drinking [and] Rejoicing*'. In the middle movement, *The Ice is Listening*, the choir is joined by a soprano soloist who sings of the ice, which '*has borne time without complaint ... [but, now melting, is] ... pressed at last to speak*'. The chorus supports the soloist commenting, as if on an unfolding tragedy - the depleting of the planet's precious icy store. *Moulin*, the title of the third movement, refers to a geophysical feature, a sign that Greenland's gigantic ice sheet is measurably melting at a faster rate than formerly. Accordingly, McDowall's music presses on, relentlessly flowing, accompanying the text, '*What bright ruin is this rushing place, what untethering of thaw and dazzle that would sweep the earth clean*'. Kate Wakeling's carefully chosen and chilling last words, '*sweep clean*', are repeated and repeated, producing an eerie and foreboding conclusion.

Make Our Garden Grow is the final chorus of **Leonard Bernstein's** satirical operetta, based on Voltaire's 1759 novella *Candide*. The eponymous hero, influenced by his tutor, Dr Pangloss, grows up to believe everything in the world happens for the best. He meets and falls in love with Cunegonde, a rich man's daughter. Consequently, he finds himself banished. Many other tragedies befall Candide – warfare, torture, natural disasters and betrayal. Early on, he has heard of Cunegonde's death but, only much later, finds her alive. She has not only lost her beauty but has had to prostitute herself. In barely recognising her, scales fall from his eyes. The last vestige of his former blind optimism is shed.

The operetta's finale is powerful and moving. Candide and Cunegonde, joined sequentially by all the other members of the cast, sing of their collective resolve, '*To make some sense of Life ... to do the best we know; we'll build our house, and chop our wood, and make our garden grow.*' This is the sentiment expressed in the last section of Voltaire's novella, '*We must cultivate our garden.*' Thus, Bernstein's music has moved from the initial duet between Candide and Cunegonde, to the building of a climax, as the full cast add their voices. This soaring anthem, *Make Our Garden Grow*, is now considered a classic of American musical theatre. It is frequently performed as a stand-alone piece, epitomising resilience and community. Pure Hollywood, you might say. Perhaps also a message for our time?

Programme notes courtesy of Kingsley Norton

HADLEY - MY BELOVED SPAKE

My beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and
gone;
The flow'rs appear on the earth;
the time of the singing of birds is come,
and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,
and the vines with the tender grape give a good
smell.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Song of Solomon 2

HOWELLS - LIKE AS THE HART

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the
living God.
When shall I come to appear before the pres-
ence of God?
My tears have been my meat day and night,
while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy
God?

Psalm 42:1-3

PURCELL - SWEETER THAN ROSES

Sweeter than roses, or cool evening breeze
On a warm flowery shore, was the dear kiss,
First trembling made me freeze,
Then shot like fire all o'er.
What magic has victorious love!
For all I touch or see since that dear kiss,
I hourly prove, all is love to me.

Richard Norton (c 1666-1732)

DOWLAND - WEEP YOU NO MORE, SAD FOUNTAINS

Weep you no more, sad fountains,
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heav'n's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heav'nly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping,
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets.
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at ev'n he sets?
Rest you then, rest sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping
While she lies sleeping,
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

DOWLAND - THE LOWEST TREES HAVE TOPS

The lowest trees have tops, the ant her gall,
The fly her spleen, the little spark his heat,
And slender hairs cast shadows, though but
small,
And bees have stings, although they be not
great;

Seas have their source, and so have shallow
springs,
And love is love, in beggars and in kings.

Where waters smoothest run, deep are the
fords,

The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move:
The firmest faith is in the fewest words,

The turtles cannot sing, and yet they love,
True hearts have eyes and ears, no tongues
to speak:

They hear and see, and sigh, and then they
break.

Sir Edward Dyer (1543-1607)

ROREM - THE SILVER SWAN

The silver swan who, living, had no note,
when death approached, unlocked her silent
throat.

Leaning her breast against the reedy shore,
thus sung 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."

STANFORD - MY LOVE'S AN ARBUTUS

My love's an arbutus
By the borders of Lene,
So slender and shapely
In her girdle of green,
And I measure the pleasure
Of her eyes' sapphire sheen
By the blue skies that sparkle
Thro' the soft branching screen.

But tho' ruddy the berry
And snowy the flow'r
That brighten together
The arbutus bow'r,
Perfuming and blooming
Through sunshine and show'r,
Give me her bright lips
And her laugh's pearly dow'r.

Alas, fruit and blossom
Shall lie dead on the lea,
And Time's jealous fingers
Dim your young charms, Machree.
But unchanging, unchanging,
You'll still cling to me,
Like the evergreen leaf
To the arbutus tree.

Alfred Perceval Graves (1846–1931)

PARRY - FAIR DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
Ye haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

Anon We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick (c 1591–1674)

ELGAR - GIVE UNTO THE LORD

Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,
Give unto the Lord glory and strength,
Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name;
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters:
The God of glory thundereth;
It is the Lord that ruleth the sea.
The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation;
The voice of the Lord is full of majesty;
The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars.
Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
Yea, the voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire;
Yea, the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,
And strippeth the forests bare.

In His temple doth ev'ry one speak of His glory.
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The Lord sitteth above the water-flood;
And the Lord remaineth a King for ever;
The Lord shall give strength unto His people;
The Lord shall give His people the blessing of
peace.

Psalm 29

HOLST - TURN BACK, O MAN

Turn back O Man, forswear thy foolish ways.
Old now is Earth, and none may count her days,
Yet thou, her child, whose head is crowned with
flame,
Still wilt not hear thine inner God proclaim
"Turn back O Man, forswear thy foolish ways!"

Earth might be fair and people glad and wise,
Age after age their tragic empires rise.
Built while they dream, and in that dreaming
weep.
Would man but wake from out his haunted
sleep
Earth might be fair, and all men glad and wise.

Earth shall be fair, and all her people one,
Nor till that hour shall God's whole will be done.
Now, even now, once more from earth to sky
Peals forth in joy man's old undaunted cry
"Earth shall be fair, and all her folk be one!"

Clifford Bax (1886 – 1962)

RAYMOND YIU - THE EARTH AND EVERY COMMON SIGHT

I.

All nature has a feeling: woods, fields, brooks
Are life eternal: and in silence they
Speak happiness beyond the reach of books;
There's nothing mortal in them; their decay
Is the green life of change; to pass away
And come again in blooms revived.
Its birth was heaven, eternal in its stay,
And with the sun and moon shall still abide
Beneath their day and night and heaven wide.

John Clare (1793-1864)

Grease-fungi, scrolls, clenched pipes of bark:
the forest will now be kept like this
for a long time. There are rooms in it
and, paradox for mystery, birds
too tiny, now that we see them, for
their amplitude and carrying flash of song.

Les Murray (1938-2019)

First Intermezzo

II.

The forest, hit by modern use,
stands graced with damage.
Angled plaques
tilt everywhere, with graphic needle crowns
and trinket saps fixed round their year;
vines spiderweb, flowering, over smashed
intricacies; long rides appear.

There are many unknown laws of correlation of
growth, which, when one part of the organisation
is modified through variation, and the modifications
are accumulated by natural selection for the
good of the being, will cause other modifications,
often of the most unexpected nature.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

III.

A bird came down the walk:
He did not know I saw;
He bit an angel-worm in halves
And ate the fellow, raw.

And then he drank a dew
From a convenient grass,
And then hopped sidewise to the wall
To let a beetle pass.

He glanced with rapid eyes
That hurried all abroad, -
They looked like frightened beads, I thought;
He stirred his velvet head

Like one in danger; cautious,
I offered him a crumb,
And he unrolled his feathers
And rowed him softer home.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

IV.

Heaviest of flowers, the head
Forever hangs above a stormless bed;
Hands that the heart can govern
Shall be at last by darker hands unwoven;
Every exultant sense
Unstrung to silence –
The sun drift away.

And all the memories that best
Run back beyond this season of unrest
Shall lie upon the earth
That gave them birth.
Like fallen apples, they will lose
Their sweetness at the bruise
And then decay.

Philip Larkin (1922-1985)

Second Intermezzo

We shall best understand the probable course
of natural selection by taking the case of a
country undergoing some physical change, for
instance, of climate.

The proportional numbers of its inhabitants
would almost immediately undergo a change,
and some species might become extinct.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

V.

Hush, little baby, don't say a word,
Mommy's gonna buy you a mockingbird.
If that mockingbird don't sing,
Mommy's gonna buy you a diamond ring.
If that diamond ring turns to brass,
Mommy's gonna buy you a looking glass.
If that looking glass gets broke,
Mommy's gonna buy you a billy goat,
... cart and bull,
... dog named Rover,
... horse and cart.
If that horse and cart break down,
Still be the sweetest baby in town

Traditional

VI.

There was a time when meadow, grove and
stream,
The earth and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it had been of yore;
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no
more.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

CECILIA MCDOWALL – THE ICE IS LISTENING

SOLID WATERS

Text drawn from 'An Historical Account of the Late Great Frost' (London: D Brown & J Waltho, 1684)

and the river
was all Frozen
the hardest
Weather set in
Tyrannous,
the Frost
altered the
Ancient Government
of this Stream
bound its
Liquid course
to Rigid Laws
and People began
to walk upon
the Ice
a street of Booths
was built

Behold
the thriving Trader
at his Shop
the Sportive
at their Recreations
in all places
Smoaking Fires
on the Solid Waters
Roasting, Boyling,
Eating, Drinking,
others Chariotted
and Coach'd about
nothing heard
but rejoycing intermixt
with Drums
and Trumpets
nothing heard

in the fields
nothing heard
in the fields
starved with Cold
here the severity of the season
bore sway
we are taught the Truth
we must Tread backwards

Kate Wakeling (b 1981)

THE ICE IS LISTENING

When the ocean speaks, the Greenland Ice Sheet listens - Josh Willis, climate scientist and Principal Investigator of the 'Oceans Melting Greenland' mission, 2021.

The ice is listening.
Unblinking,
it waits.
The ice would only hold
its tongue.
So long
it has borne time
without complaint;
history soothed
and made still
by spotless cold

but now the waters
fret at its sides
and the ice
is pressed
at last
to speak.
Sunk low,
for shame,
the ice gives itself up
and everything
is spilled.

Kate Wakeling (b 1981)

MOULIN

Moulins are the conduits that allow water melting on the surface of the Greenland Ice Sheet to drain to its base and cause the ice to flow faster. Forming a moulin in Greenland requires a crack on the surface that becomes filled with enough water to drive the crack all the way through the ice — 'Widespread Moulin Formation During Supraglacial Lake Drainages in Greenland', Hoffman et al. Geophysical Research Letters, 2018.

crick crack
seep and swell
the water is a fist

the water is a fist
that splits the surface
makes its gaping way
by swerve and tumble
gush and roll
to dizzy and set smooth

and all above the rivers run
shrill and terrific
how they rally now to the open mouth
then flush on and down
through maze of noise and blue

what thrall
what bright ruin is this rushing place
what untethering of thaw and dazzle
that would sweep the earth clean

Kate Wakeling (b 1981)

BERNSTEIN - MAKE OUR GARDEN GROW

You've been a fool and so have I,
But let's be man and wife,
And let us try before we die
To make some sense of life.

*We're neither pure nor wise nor good;
We'll do the best we know;
We'll build our house, and chop our wood,
And make our garden grow.*

I thought the world was sugar-cake,
For so our Master said;
But now I'll teach my hands to bake
Our loaf of daily bread.

*We're neither pure nor wise nor good;
We'll do the best we know;
We'll build our house, and chop our wood,
And make our garden grow.*

Let dreamers dream what worlds they please;
Those Edens can't be found.
The sweetest flow'rs, the fairest trees
Are grown in solid ground.

*We're neither pure nor wise nor good;
We'll do the best we know;
We'll build our house, and chop our wood,
And make our garden grow.*

Richard Wilbur (1921-2017)

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.

GAVIN ROBERTS - Organ / Piano



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*.

DONNA LENNARD - Soprano



Donna Lennard trained at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, earning a Distinction. A keen advocate for contemporary music, Donna has premiered many new works by living composers. Her operatic roles include Frog/Ensemble in *How the Whale Became* (Philips, ROH), Selene in *Tycho's Dream* (Styles, Glyndebourne), Alice in *Airborne* (McDowall, Nova Music Opera), Voice 1 in *Voices of the Sands* (Betteridge), The Scientist in *Unsung Heroes of the Planet* (Dodds, Gestalt Arts), and Catfish in *The Catfish Conundrum* (Lambert, The Music Troupe).

In concert, Donna has performed John McCabe's *Notturmi ed Alba* and Judith Weir's *Natural History* with the Kensington Symphony Orchestra at St John's Smith Square, Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Bushey Symphony Orchestra, a selection of *Chants d'Auvergne* with Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra, as a soloist in Jocelyn Pook's *Anxiety Fanfare and Variations* and performed excerpts from Edward Loder's opera *Raymond and Agnes* with the Bath Philharmonia at the Bath Assembly Rooms.

Her oratorio experience includes Beethoven's 9th Symphony for Chester Music Society in Chester Cathedral, *Exsultate, Jubilate* (Mozart) and *Petite Messe Solennelle* (Rossini) with Skipton Camerata, Handel's *Messiah* for the Bradford Festival Choral Society, and the Verdi *Requiem*, *Elijah* excerpts (Mendelssohn) and *Dona nobis pacem* (Vaughan Williams) for the Chester Bach Singers.

Donna works regularly with Luca Silvestrini's Protein performing in their productions *May Contain Food* and *The Little Prince*, and is the co-director of dance theatre company Society of Strays CIC.

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