

KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, TAUNTON

Sunday 15 February 2009 at 3pm

This Amazing Day

Choral and guitar classics from the Americas

**Samuel Barber
Eric Whitacre
Morten Lauridsen
Matthew Harris**

Spirituals arranged by:

Michael Tippett, Roderick Williams & Bob Chilcott

Guitar solos by:

Villa-Lobos, Lauro & Alvarez



SOMERSET CHAMBER CHOIR

"One of the finest groups of singers in the region" Somerset County Gazette

Charles Ramirez *guitar*
Graham Caldbeck *conductor*



www.somersetchamberchoir.org.uk

Welcome from the trustees of *Somerset Chamber Choir*



Thank you for coming to support us this afternoon and we hope you enjoy the concert. We also offer a very warm welcome to our guitar soloist, Charles Ramirez – we hope that you will enjoy the variety that the guitar pieces will bring to this afternoon's programme.

It is very exciting for us, in our 25th Anniversary year, to be performing a concert that includes a huge amount of American music that was completely unknown to most of us only a few months ago! When we passed our 20th Anniversary we asked Graham to introduce us (and you, of course) to some new and unfamiliar repertoire, whilst not neglecting some of the old faithfuls that we know people continue to enjoy. We hope that those of you who have supported us over these past five years have enjoyed some of the new music you will have heard for the first time during that period, this might perhaps have included music by such composers as Barber, Jonathan Dove, Du Mont, Kodaly, Lalande, James MacMillan, Arvo Pärt, Poulenc, Rossini, Domenico Scarlatti, John Taverner, Viadana and Villetta. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Graham for all the work he puts into not only finding new works for us to sing, but also for continuing to integrate them into programmes that are constantly fascinating and enjoyable – this is no mean feat and requires a great deal of homework!

Looking ahead to the summer, you will find full details on the back cover of our 'official' anniversary concert in Wells Cathedral on Saturday 25 July, when we are joined once again by the wonderful Emma Kirkby and a team of brilliant young soloists, plus our favourite baroque orchestra, Canzona. We are sure that you will find the mix of some of the most exciting and wellknown baroque music ever written, plus a dash of something different in Jonathan Harvey's short work, *The Angels*, commissioned by Kings College Cambridge for Christmas Eve 1994, an irresistible combination, and we look forward to seeing you there.

We want to say a huge thank you to our Friends who give vital support to the choir we are extremely grateful to you all. Quite amazingly, some of you have been on board with us since 1988 when we started the Friends Scheme, not least our Honorary Life Friend, Dorothy Tullett, who still travels to our concerts from Wales whenever she can under her husband Bob's direction, many of us sang in the Somerset Youth Choir where the foundations of this choir were laid. We really would like to thank you all sincerely for your goodwill and support – how we could have achieved all that we have done these past years without you, we cannot possibly imagine!

You can contribute further to our continuing success by...

- recommending us to talented singers, encouraging them to visit our website at www.somersetchamberchoir.org.uk and apply for membership;
- sending us your contact details, if you wish to be kept informed about our concerts;
- bringing your friends to concerts;
- offering financial support, large or small! We are a registered charity and there are a number of ways you can help us:
 - would you like to join our Friends Scheme (see details later in this programme)?
 - could you make an individual donation (under gift aid) or a business donation (tax relief and ticket/entertainment packages available) towards a concert?
 - would your business consider placing an advert in a concert programme (rates start at just £35)?
 - could you or your business offer to do something for us at a discount or *gratis* (for example, process some of our direct mail publicity through your company postroom, etc).
 - if you feel you can help, please contact us at trustees@somersetchamberchoir.org.uk

*We very much hope that you will come to hear us again in the future,
and we look forward to seeing you again soon!*

*After the concert, the choir looks forward to meeting members of the Friends Scheme and their guests in the Refectory
(access through the side door at the rear of the Chapel)*

PROGRAMME

Eric Whitacre

i thank You God for most this amazing day

...

Sir Michael Tippett

from *Five Spirituals*

Steal away • Nobody knows • Go down, Moses

...

Solo guitar

Jesús Eduardo Alvarez

from *Serenata for Guitar*

Bolero • Copla • Pasaje

...

Morten Lauridsen

Ubi caritas et amor

...

Sir Michael Tippett

from *Five Spirituals*

By and by • Deep river

...

Solo guitar

Antonio Lauro

Two Waltzes

...

Eric Whitacre

Water Night

INTERVAL (15 MINUTES)

Samuel Barber

HeavenHaven • To be sung on the water

...

Eric Whitacre

Three Flower Songs

I hide myself • With a lily in your hand •

Go, lovely Rose

...

Solo guitar

Heitor Villa-Lobos

Prelude No 4 in E minor

Etude No 12 in A minor

...

Matthew Harris

Shakespeare Songs (Book 1)

Hark, hark! the lark • Full fathom five •

Who is Sylvia?

...

Two Spirituals

Bob Chilcott Didn't it rain?

Roderick Williams I got a robe

...

Morten Lauridsen

O magnum mysterium

Programme Notes

INTRODUCTION

This afternoon's concert celebrates some of the 20th century's greatest music for choir and guitar from the Americas. Within the programme, a compositional line can certainly be traced from Negro spirituals, through Samuel Barber, Morten Lauridsen, Matthew Harris to Eric Whitacre, although North American music has also absorbed musical influences from South America and from the AfricanAmerican jazz tradition.

The works to be performed draw upon a variety of cultures and languages in an excitingly eclectic fashion. There are settings of North American poets Louise Bogan, ee cummings and Emily Dickinson, together with the anonymous but often powerfully poetic lyrics of the spirituals; of the Mexican poet Octavio Paz in English translation, with further Spanish connections provided by Lorca and famous South American guitar music by VillaLobos from Brazil, and Antonio Lauro and Jesús Alvarez from Venezuela. Also represented are the poets William Shakespeare and Edmund Waller from late 16th/early 17th century England, Gerard Manley Hopkins from the 19th century, and finally there are ancient liturgical texts in Latin with a modern musical twist. So, three Americans set quintessentially English poems, and three Englishmen make arrangements of American spirituals.

There are many connecting threads of subject matter and emotion to be discovered within the programme, too – not only in the words themselves but also in the musical languages employed. However, I don't intend to provide a detailed guide to these here. Undoubtedly, it will, instead, be much more exciting and rewarding if everyone here (audience member and performer alike) finds personal resonances in the works performed and makes his or her own emotional discoveries and connections.

Graham Caldbeck

The right is reserved, without incurring liability, to substitute artists and to vary the programme for reasons beyond our control, although these details are correct at the time of going to print. Please note that photography (with or without flash) and/or recording of any sort during the performance is forbidden without the prior consent of the Somerset Chamber Choir.

i thank You God for most this amazing day

Eric Whitacre (b1970)

Jen Botterill *soprano*

An accomplished composer, conductor and lecturer, Eric Whitacre has quickly become one of the most popular and performed composers of his generation. The *Los Angeles Times* has praised his compositions as “works of unearthly beauty and imagination, with electric, chilling harmonies”; while the BBC raves that “what hits you straight between the eyes is the honesty, optimism and sheer belief that passes any pretension. This is music that can actually make you smile.”



Though he had received no formal training before the age of 18, his first experiences singing in college choir changed his life, and he completed his first concert work, *Go, Lovely, Rose*, at the age of 21. Eric went on to the Juilliard School, earning his Master of Music degree and studying with Pulitzer Prize and Oscarwinning composer John Corigliano.

Upcoming commissions include works for The King's Singers with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and an oratorio featuring full orchestra, choir, and soloists – celebrating the opening of the new Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin, Texas.

Eric Whitacre lives in Los Angeles with his wife, celebrated soprano Hila Plitmann, and their son.

This now famous setting of cummings' striking and original poem ***i thank You God for most this amazing day*** was first performed in 1999. Of it, Whitacre writes, “the poetry strikes me as shiny and brilliant and many of the chords (especially settings of the words painting the indescribable, e.g., ‘infinite’, ‘You’, ‘opened’, ‘God’) are intentionally designed to shimmer; they will only do so if the clusters are meticulously balanced and tuned. The performance should be dynamic and flexible, taking great care to paint each word of this magnificent poem.”

i thank you God for most this amazing day

i thank You God for most this amazing day:
for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing anylifted from the no
of all nothinghuman merely being
doubt unimaginably You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

ee cummings (1894-1962)

from Five Spirituals

Sir Michael Tippett (190 -9)

Stephanie Walker *soprano*

Adele Reynolds *alto*

Nick Bowditch *tenor*

John Broad *bass*

- **Steal away**
- **Nobody knows**
- **Go down, Moses**



In the early 19th century, African Americans were involved in the “Second Awakening”. They met in camp meetings and sang without any hymnbook. Spontaneous songs were composed on the spot. They were called “spiritual songs” and the term “sperichil” (spiritual) appeared for the first time in the book *Slave Songs of The United States* (by Allen, Ware, Garrison, 1867).

As negro spirituals are Christian songs, most of them concern what the Bible says and how to live with the Spirit of God. For example, the “dark days of bondage” were enlightened by the hope and faith that God will not leave slaves alone.

African Americans also used to sing outside church; during slavery and afterwards, slaves and workers who were working at fields or elsewhere outdoors, were allowed to sing “work songs”. Besides these, some “drivers” also allowed slaves to sing “quiet” songs. Such songs could be sung either by only one soloist or by several slaves. They were used for expressing personal feeling and for cheering one another. So, even at work, slaves could sing “secret messages”. This was the case of negro spirituals, which were sung at church, in meetings, at work and at home.

The meaning of these songs was most often covert. Therefore, only Christian slaves understood them, and even when ordinary words were used, they reflected a personal relationship between the slave singer and God. The codes of the first negro spirituals are often related to an escape to a free country. For example, a “home” is a safe place where everyone can live freely. So, a “home” can mean Heaven, but it covertly means a sweet and free country, a haven for slaves.

The English composer, Sir Michael Tippett began his oratorio *A Child of Our Time* as the Second World War broke out and its composition gave the composer a creative outlet for his pacifism (he was later imprisoned as a conscientious objector). Central to the oratorio are the *Five Spirituals* which provide moments of reflection in a manner similar to the chorales in Bach's Passions. In 1958 Tippett extracted the spirituals from the oratorio and rescored them for voices alone. The genius of these arrangements lies in Tippett's ability to take orchestral accompaniments and to make them work as vocal lines. The effect is a grand one in which Tippett retains the directness of expression of the spirituals, while lovingly adorning each one with musical gestures which were very much of his own time.

Steal Away

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;
O steal away home, I han't got long to stay here.
My Lord, he calls me, he calls me by the thunder;
the trumpet sounds within my soul,
I han't got long to stay here.
Green trees abending, poor sinner stands a
trembling;
the trumpet sounds within my soul,
I han't got long to stay here.

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,
nobody knows like Jesus.
O brothers, pray for me,
and help me to drive old Satan away.
O mothers, pray for me,
and help me to drive old Satan away.

Go down, Moses

Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt land;
tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.
When Israel was in Egypt land,
oppressed so hard they could not stand,
'Thus spake the Lord,' bold Moses said,
'If not, I'll smite your firstborn dead.'

Guitar solo from Serenata for Guitar

Jesús Eduardo Alvarez

Bolero • Copla • Pasaje

The guitar has a central role in the music of South America, and Venezuela's rich guitar culture finds expression in the concert music of Lauro and Alvarez. Jesús Eduardo Alvarez, who now lives in Italy, dedicated the *Serenata for Guitar* to Charles Ramirez, who gave the first performance in 2004. The movements are short a refined and elegant distillation of Venezuelan influences.



Ubi Caritas et Amor

Morten Lauridsen (b1943)

Byron Adams has written, 'Vaughan Williams once asserted that the 'object of art is to stretch out to the ultimate realities through the medium of beauty'. No composer working today exemplifies Vaughan Williams's dictum more than Morten Lauridsen, whose music – sonorously beautiful and immaculately crafted – reaches out toward hitherto unknown regions of emotion and contemplation. Working deliberately and carefully, Lauridsen has created a body of vocal and choral music that enriches the experience of performers and listeners alike through its remarkable ability to communicate clearly what Wordsworth once identified as 'thoughts too deep for tears'. Lauridsen does so through an approach to the creation of music that is refreshingly devoid of either jargon or obfuscation, but rather is imbued with a pervasive sincerity. In other words, Lauridsen's music transcends labels, fashionable or otherwise; he is neither a 'modernist' nor a 'postmodernist', but rather remains true to an inimitable inner singing.'



'Lauridsen is first and foremost a composer for the voice, and the creation of beautiful melodic lines is one of his highest priorities; as he once stated, 'I constantly sing each line as I am composing to make sure that each part is lyrical and gracious for the singer'. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the American composer has immersed himself in plainchant and the music of the Renaissance, and that this ongoing study has had a deep impression upon his style. This engagement with the past never approaches pastiche, however, for Lauridsen assimilates both chant and 16th-century music into a personal idiom that has been formed through an abiding love of lyricism as found especially in classical art-song and that of the American musical theatre. Among the several techniques that Lauridsen has assimilated from the music of the Renaissance is the ability to create flexible counterpoint based on intricate canonic procedures, formal concision, and an almost preternatural sensitivity to textual nuance, whether sacred or secular. The composer himself has noted that his 'passion, second to music, is poetry'.'

Ubi caritas et amor was written in 1999 in memory of the choral conductor and scholar, Richard H Trame. In this motet, Lauridsen subtly adapts the plainchant melody, adorning it with contrapuntal elaborations that create a glowing nimbus of sound.

Ubi caritas et amor

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsultemus et in ipso iucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur;
Ne nos mente dividamur caveamus.
Cessent iurgia maligna, cessent lites.
Et in medio nostri sit Christus Deus.
Amen.

Where charity and love are found, there is God.
The love of Christ has brought us together into one.
Let us rejoice and be glad in that love itself.
Let us fear and love the living God,
And let us love Him from a pure heart.
When we are gathered together in one place:
Let us take care that we be not divided in mind.
May evil quarrelling cease, may litigation cease.
And may the God Christ be among us.
Amen.

Antiphon for Maundy Thursday

from Five Spirituals

Sir Michael Tippett

By and by • Deep river

O by and by

O by and by, I'm going to lay down my heavy load.
I know my robe's going to fit me well,
I've tried it on at the gates of Hell.
O Hell is deep and a dark despair,
O stop, poor sinner, and don't go there.

Deep river

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,
Lord, I want to cross over into camp ground.
Oh chillun! Oh don't you want to go to that gospel feast,
that promised land, where all is peace.
Walk into heaven and take my seat,
and cast my crown at Jesus' feet.

Guitar solo

Two Waltzes

Antonio Lauro (1917-19 6)

Andreina • Natalia

Antonio Lauro's Waltzes are an attractive fusion of the Chopinesque and the Viennese, with all the verve of Venezuela's vital rhythms an eclectic combination that makes them ever popular in the guitar's repertoire.



Water night

Eric Whitacre

Water Night (1995) is a subtle, ecstatically poised response to a remarkable poem by the Mexican, Nobel Prizewinning writer Octavio Paz (1914–98). Whitacre wrote: *'The poetry of Octavio Paz is a composer's dream. The music seems to set itself (without the usual struggle that invariably accompanies this task) and the process feels more like cleaning the oils from an ancient canvas to reveal the hidden music than composing. Water Night was no exception, and the tight harmonies and patient unfolding seemed to pour from the poetry from the first reading, singing its magic even after the English translation. Water Night is simply the natural musical expression of this beautiful poem, and is dedicated with my greatest sincerity to my friend and confidant Dr. Bruce Mayhall.'*



The feel of this music, its reflective poise and its moments of mystical wonder, encourage the thought that it is overtly religious. But Whitacre refutes this: *'I'm not Christian, nor do I consider myself to be religious. The poetry that I choose simply speaks deeply to me, and I just do my best to illuminate the words with music.'*

Water night

Night with the eyes of a horse that trembles in the night,
Night with eyes of water in the field asleep
Is in your eyes, a horse that trembles,
Is in your eyes of a secret water.

Eyes of shadowwater,
Eyes of wellwater,
Eyes of dreamwater.

Silence and solitude,
Two little animals moonled,
Drink in your eyes,
Drink in those waters.

If you open your eyes,
Night opens, doors of musk,
The secret kingdom of the water opens
Flowing from the center of night.

And if you close your eyes,
A river fills you from within,
Flows forward, darkens you:
Night brings its wetness to beaches in your soul.

Octavio Paz translated by Muriel Rukeyser

Interval 15 mins

Heaven-haven

Samuel Barber (1910- 1)

Wilfred Mellers has written, 'Choral music...was still relished in Philadelphian parlours during Sam's [i.e. Barber's] boyhood, as were piano-partnered songs. It is not therefore surprising that in adolescence and in his early twenties Barber composed many songs and transcribed some of them into choral numbers, with or without piano. A key piece is ...'HeavenHaven'..about a young nun taking the veil, but construed by Sam as an appeal for the enfolding security of Mother and Home, in the face of 'sharp and sided hail' and the minatory [menacing or threatening] 'green swell and surge of the sea'....The music's tenderness springs from the sung rhythms' mirroring of the spoken inflections, and from the luminously spaced harmony that allows delicate chromatics to intrude without destroying the modal austerity of simple triads in false relation. The piece fades, rather than ends...'

Heaven-haven

I have desired to go
Where springs not fail,
To fields where flies no sharp and sided hail
And a few lilies blow.

And I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb,
And out of the swing of the sea.

Gerard Manley-Hopkins (1844-89)

To be sung on the water

Samuel Barber

Barber finished *To Be Sung on the Water* on 12 December 1968. An unusual love song, it was apparently written for no other reason than his own desire to do so. The water imagery of the poem is reflected in the repeated threenote motives in the men's voices that gently underlie the composition like placid waves under a boat, ever repeating the words "beautiful, my delight." Barber considered adding *To Be Sung on the Water* to his opera *Antony and Cleopatra* but never did so. It was one of the works performed at his memorial service at St Bartholomew's Church, New York.



To be sung on the water

Beautiful, my delight,
Pass, as we pass the wave,
Pass, as the mottled night
Leaves what it cannot save,
Scattering dark and bright.

Beautiful, pass and be
Less than the guiltless shade
To which our vows were said;
Less than the sound of the oar
To which our vows were made,
Less than the sound of its blade
Dipping the stream once more.

Louise Bogan (1887-1970)

Three Flower Songs

Eric Whitacre

I hide myself • With a lily in your hand • Go lovely rose

Rebecca Elderton soprano, Andrew Coombs tenor

I hide myself

Whitacre's choice of texts, the way he explains such choices, and his performance instructions are refreshingly direct and uncomplicated. For *I hide myself*, an Emily Dickinson setting, he writes: 'Just a simple song, really. All of the musical suggestions come from a careful study of the poem, a quiet, passionate soul occasionally speaking a little bolder than the age will allow. She loves almost to the point of distraction, and this mood must prevail in the performance: shy and sullen, her passion surging to the surface only to sink back into the silence that is herself.'

I hide myself within my flower,
That wearing on your breast,
You, unsuspecting, wear me too
And angels know the rest.
I hide myself within my flower,
That, fading from your vase,
You, unsuspecting, feel for me
Almost a loneliness.

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Three Flower Songs

Eric Whitacre

I hide myself • With a lily in your hand • Go lovely rose

With a lily in your hand

In his performing notes, the composer has written, *'Water and Fire. If the performance connects these contrasting elemental ideas, its success is guaranteed.'*

[With a lily in your hand
I leave you,] O my night love!
Little widow of my single star
I find you.

Tamer of dark
butterflies!
I keep along my way.
After a thousand years have gone
you'll see me,
O my night love!

By the blue footpath,
tamer of dark
stars,
I'll make my way.
Until the universe
can fit inside
my heart.

*Federico Garcia Lorca (1898–1936):
Curva translated by Jerome Rothenberg*

Go, lovely Rose

The composer has written: *'The piece is structured around the cyclical life of a rose, and is connected throughout by the growing 'rose motif', a seed that begins on the tonic and grows in all directions before it blossoms, dies and grows again. Each season is represented – spring, summer, autumn, then spring returns. The form is based on the Fibonacci sequence (the pattern found in plant and animal cell divisions) – its 55 measures are a perfect Fibonacci number. The Golden Mean appears at bar 34 as all parts are reunited to complete the flower before its final blossom and inevitable cycle of death and rebirth.'*

'Each performance should be approached with the child-like innocence and naivety that allows us to marvel at the return of the rose each spring.'

Go, lovely Rose
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller (1606–1687)

Guitar solo

Prelude No 4 in E minor Etude No 12 in A minor

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1 7-19 9)

The Brazilian, Heitor VillaLobos, is often referred to as the father of South American music. A larger than life character, his music gloriously combines native and popular motifs with the European tradition, especially the music of Bach. His Preludes and Etudes have become iconic in the guitar's repertoire highly original in technique and sonorities, their virtuosity and range of expression refreshed and modernised the guitar's repertoire in the 20th century.

Shakespeare Songs (Book 1)

Matthew Harris (b19 6)

Hark, hark! the lark • Full fathom five • Who is Sylvia?

Luisa Puddy *alto*

The American critic, Kathryn Parke has written of Harris's Shakespeare settings, '*Juillard-trained though he may be, Matthew Harris came of age in the late 60s and early 70s, and his distinctive voice, perceivable throughout his several books of Shakespeare Songs, is coloured by the influences of rock and roll and jazz.*'

Hark, hark the lark

Hark! Hark! the lark has been called '*the finest aubade in the English language*'; Harris composed this setting for his own wedding.

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chalic'd flowers that lies;
And winking Marybuds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise!

Cymbeline, Act II, Scene 3

Full Fathom Five

This setting, almost shockingly simple to those who know that by Vaughan Williams, is built upon short, rising bass patterns and modal scales. Rather like a simple image by Matisse or Picasso, the music is pared down to its absolute essentials, and is thus distinctive because of this approach.

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.

The Tempest Act I, Scene 2

Who is Silvia?

A misleadingly pompous and clangorous opening, leads into a jazzy setting far from the mood of those wellknown solo settings by Schubert, Sullivan and Finzi. The soloist 'sings the blues' over a rhythmic background chanted by the choir. At the end, Harris brings back the opening style, combining it this time with the soloist's final jazzy iteration.

Who is Silvia? What is she?
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona Act IV, scene 2



Didn't it rain?

arr **Bob Chilcott (b19)**

The English singer, composer and arranger, Bob Chilcott, was once a member of the choir of King's College, Cambridge (as a chorister and, later, as an undergraduate) and then *The King's Singers*, for which latter ensemble he made many arrangements. His choral music is very popular, particularly in the USA and the UK, and from this simple but effective arrangement it is easy to see why.



Didn't it rain?

Didn't it rain
Forty days forty nights
When de rain kept afalling,
De wicked climbed thee tree,
And for help kept acalling,
For they heard the waters wailing
Didn't it rain, rain
Didn't it rain,
Tell me Noah, didn't it rain

Some climbed the mountain,
Some climbed the hill,
Some started sailing
An' arowing with a will;
Some tried swimming
And I guess they're swimming still,
For they heard de waters roaring
Didn't it rain, rain, didn't it rain,
Tell me Noah, didn' it rain,
Didn't it rain.

I got a robe

arr **Roderick Williams (b196)**

Rebecca Tamplin *soprano*, Nick Bowditch *tenor*,
Simon Francis *bass*

Although perhaps best known as an excellent solo singer, Roderick Williams has also developed a parallel career as an arranger and composer. His own singing experience tells in this lively arrangement of one of the most popular spirituals, in which two *tempi* are engagingly juxtaposed and the soloists are put through their paces.



I got a robe

I got a robe,
You got a robe,
All of God's children got a robe.
When I get to heaven gonna put on my robe,
I'm gonna shout all over God's heaven,
Everybody talking 'bout heav'n ain't goin' there,
Gonna shout all over God's heaven.

I got a harp,
You got a harp,
All of God's children got a harp.
When I get to heaven gonna play on my harp,
I'm gonna play all over God's heaven,
Everybody talking 'bout heav'n ain't goin' there,
Gonna play all over God's heaven.

I got shoes,
You got a shoes,
All of God's children got shoes.
When I get to heaven gonna put on my shoes,
I'm gonna walk all over God's heaven,
Everybody talking 'bout heav'n ain't goin' there,
Gonna shout all over God's heaven.

O magnum mysterium

Morten Lauridsen

O magnum mysterium is pervaded by the same tenderness and refinement found in the composers's *Lux aeterna*; indeed, this refulgent work was written in 1994, just before Lauridsen began to contemplate the composition of the larger score. The composer has disclosed that this motet is an 'affirmation of God's grace to the meek... a quiet song of profound inner joy'. With a text from Christmas Matins that has been set by such disparate composers as Victoria and Poulenc, Lauridsen's *O magnum mysterium* expresses mystical awe at the mystery of the Incarnation, as well as the very human tenderness of the Virgin Mary for her newborn child.

O magnum mysterium

O magnum mysterium, et admirabile sacramentum,
O great mystery and wondrous sacrament,

ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
that the animals watched the Lord's birth,

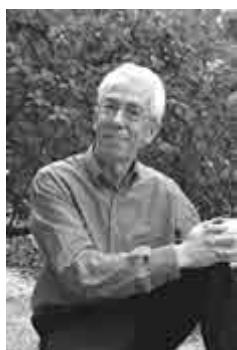
iacentem in praesepio:
lying in a manger:

Beata Virgo, cuius viscera meruerunt
Blessed Virgin, whose womb was worthy

portare Dominum Christum. Alleluia!
to bear the Lord Christ. Alleluia!

BIOGRAPHIES

GRAHAM CALDBECK *conductor* is one of Britain's



leading conductors of amateur choirs, known for his wide-ranging musical skills, innovative programming and stylish performances. He studied music at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was a Choral Scholar under Richard Marlow, and has sung with the Cathedral Choirs of Guildford and Winchester. He holds both the Fellowship and Choir Training diplomas of the Royal College of Organists, is a former Assistant Organist at St. Martin in

the Fields and is currently Director of Music at St Mary The Boltons, SW10. For fifteen years, Graham held senior positions at the Royal College of Music and he now pursues a freelance career as conductor, organist, vocal coach and teacher.

Graham, who has conducted Somerset Chamber Choir since 1990, is also conductor of Nonsuch Singers, a London-based chamber choir whose concerts are regularly highlighted by the national press, and the Mayfield Festival Choir in East Sussex. Recent conducting highlights have been a programme of music from England's 'Golden Age' with Dame Emma Kirkby and lutenist Jakob Lindberg in the newly refurbished St Martin in the Fields and a highly acclaimed performance of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* in Southwark Cathedral. Future projects include concerts in St Giles, Cripplegate, Barbican, and a concert in St Martin in the Fields with Nonsuch Singers to celebrate James MacMillan's 50th birthday.

CHARLES RAMIREZ *guitar* was taught the guitar by



William Gomez MBE. During his further studies, at the Royal College of Music, he won the guitar prize and was the first guitarist to be chosen for a concerto performance with the college orchestra. He made his professional debut on London's South Bank during his third year at college and has since played extensively in both Britain and abroad giving the first performances of major works by such eminent composers as Erica Fox, Jeremy Dale Roberts, Naresh Sohal, John Lambert and Jesus Alvarez.

Charles and his wife Helen Kalamuniak became well known, as a guitar duo, for their original programmes that included the first ever transcriptions for two guitars of J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* and Manuel de Falla's complete ballet *El Amor Brujo*, amongst others. Their reputation was such that during his last visits to London the legendary guitarist, Andres Segovia, would call on the duo for private performances of these works. Charles was appointed professor of guitar at the Royal College of Music in 1978, where he also teaches in the college's Junior Department.

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You do not have to be rich to leave a legacy and make a real difference everyone who leaves a gift to the Somerset Chamber Choir will be helping us to fund the charity into the future so that coming generations will continue to perform the most beautiful choral music for the people of Somerset for decades to come. Please call the box office or email us at trustees@somersetchamberchoir.org.uk if you would like to discuss this with us.

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SOMERSET CHAMBER CHOIR – we were founded in 1984 by former members of the Somerset Youth Choir and are firmly established as one of the most exciting choirs in the area, continuing to recruit from among the most talented singers in the region. We are known for our innovative and eclectic programmes of music devised by our conductor, Graham Caldbeck, and we regularly perform with many of the UK's top professional soloists and orchestras.

We are a very friendly choir and place a great emphasis on having fun while, at the same time, working hard to prepare the music we have to sing. We do not hold weekly rehearsals, but instead run six full rehearsal weekends in midSomerset every year. If you now live outside the County, don't be deterred – the choir has many members who were formerly based in the area but who are now based outside the County – many of our members travel hundreds of miles to attend rehearsals, perhaps combining their weekend with a visit to family or friends, a fact that perhaps speaks louder than words.

Among our choir's social and musical activities are an annual residential course last Autumn the choir held this at Halsway Manor, in the Quantock Hills, where we worked on new music with Graham and enjoyed professional voice training and other musical workshops, including African Drumming (quite a problem for the more rhythmically challenged as it turned out!). This year's course, based at the beautiful Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, will see the choir studying Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and the more contemporary works of Jonathan Dove and Tarik O'Regan, composers whose fine music will probably feature in some of our future concert programmes.

MEMBERS OF SOMERSET CHAMBER CHOIR

Soprano

Jenn Botterill
Susan Crennell
Emily Dingle
Helen Dunnett
Rebecca Elderton*
Kathy Fear
Jane Harris
Emma Killick
Judy Male
Pennie Pinder
Claire Satchwell
Deborah Shepperd
Liz Stallard
Rebecca Tamplin
Julie Taylor
Stephanie Walker
Lin Winston*
Rosie Woodall

Alto

Jenny Abraham
Fran Aggleton
Sylv Arscott
Wendy Baskett
Sarah Brandhuber
Jenny Candler*
Gay Colbeck
Janice Collins*
Janet Dunnett
Esther Edwards
Joy Fletcher
Kate Golding
Hazel Lockwill
Gemma Okell
Rachel Pillar
Luisa Puddy*
Melanie Rendell
Adele Reynolds
Katie Robertshaw
Rosie Whittock
Helen Wilkins

Tenor

Nick Bowditch
Dominic Brenton

Andrew Coombs*

Tim Donaldson
Laurence Hicks
Nigel Hobbs
Keith Hunt
Adrian Male
Russell Smith
Robert Tucker

Bass

Andrew Bell
Philip Bevan
John Broad
Ian Bromelow
Simon Bryant
William FordYoung
Robert Fovargue
Simon Francis
Benjamin Gravestock
Anthony Leigh*
Tim Lewis
Robert Martin
Roland Smith
Benomy Tutchter
Martin Warren

Treasurer

David Hallett*

* = trustee

VOLUNTEERS

We are very grateful to the large number of volunteers who assist us with numerous aspects of the choir's administration.

If you would like to volunteer to help us in any way, please leave a message on our Box Office voicemail on 01275 349010 and we will contact you.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE ADVANCE DETAILS OF OUR CONCERTS BY EMAIL?

If so, please send your email address to email@somersetchamberchoir.org.uk. We undertake to use your email address only to inform you of our future events we will not divulge your details to third parties without your prior consent for any reason. Joining the emailing list does not give you priority booking rights, for which you must join our Friends Scheme.



Friends

Your choir needs you!

Our popular Friends Scheme has five different membership levels, each giving a different range of benefits. The scheme now has over 130 members and each of these is acknowledged by name in our concert programmes twice a year. For venues where this is possible, all Friends have the opportunity to book tickets before the general public this is often vital for getting the best seats in the house. We arrange regular receptions at which you can get to know the conductor, the members of the choir and other members of the Friends Scheme. We should like to invite you to support the choir by joining the scheme.

All members receive:

- ~ Free mailing of advance publicity
- ~ Your name in major concert programmes
- ~ Invitation for you and your guests to post-concert drinks with the choir
- ~ Twice-yearly newsletter

There are various subscription levels to choose from so that you can choose the level of support that suits you best full details are available on our website www.somersetchamberchoir.org.uk, from Lin Winston, 3 Parkland Drive, Campion Meadow, Exeter, Devon EX2 5RX, or from MusicBox on 01275 349010

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Our new scheme will be launched shortly, featuring generous discounts on tickets.

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We look forward to meeting you soon!

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Mrs Thomas Semple

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David & Margaret Hunt
Mrs Janet Stallard
Ms Susanna Van Rose

Patrons

Mr Ian Beech
Mr Rowley Cantello
Mrs Jessica Clinch
Mrs AT Colbeck
Mrs Annie Collins
RevA & Mrs C Cordy
Rev David Fletcher
Lady Elizabeth Gass
Bernard R Gildersleve
Mr Roy C Hatch
Geraldine Ingram
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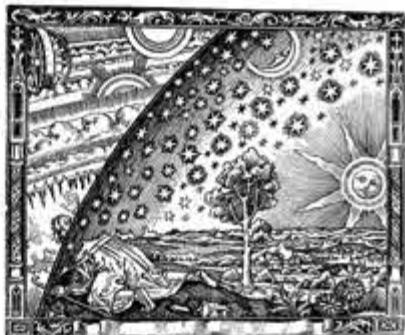
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Brilliant Baroque!

Charpentier: Te Deum

Handel: Dixit Dominus

Vivaldi: Gloria

Harvey: The Angels

Emma Kirkby (soprano) • Sophie Bevan (soprano) • Tim Mead (countertenor)

Nathan Vale (tenor) • Derek Welton (baritone)

Graham Caldbeck (conductor)

Next summer's mouthwatering programme of baroque 'classics', plus a little piece to celebrate British composer Jonathan Harvey's 70th birthday, sees us again performing with the outstanding period instrument orchestra, **Canzona**. Joining us will be **Emma Kirkby**, **Sophie Bevan** and **Tim Mead**, who have all been outstanding soloists for us in the past, together with two hugely talented recent winners of the London Handel Singing Competition – **Nathan Vale** and **Derek Welton**. This concert marks the 25th anniversary of the choir's foundation – a remarkable achievement that we're celebrating by performing some wonderful music. Emma & Canzona enjoyed our 20th anniversary concert so much that they leapt at the chance to return for our 25th!

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the Headmaster and Chaplain of King's College for their assistance in the use of the chapel. We are very grateful for the support we receive from our Vice Presidents, Sir David Willcocks, Benjamin Luxon, Adrian Male and Chris Cutting. Programme notes were written and compiled by Graham Caldbeck; the programme booklet was compiled and edited by Anthony Leigh, designed by Kate Davies (kate@kdgd.co.uk) and printed by Wessex Malthouse Direct.

Printed music for this concert has been provided by Somerset Libraries, Nonsuch Singers, Romsey Choral Society, Sherborne Choral Society and Southern Voices.