



Festive Music

**for Choir and Audience
with Surrey Brass**

**Soprano: Ellie Sperling
Conductor: Jack Apperley
Accompanist: Paul Ayres**

**Saturday 4th December, 2021
at 7.30pm**

**St John the Divine, Kew Road, Richmond,
TW9 2NA**

Festive Music

Sir Christèmas William Mathias (1934-92)
The twelve days of Christmas Trad. arr. Rutter (brass arr. Roberts)
Sussex Carol Vaughan Williams, arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

Audience and choir

O come, all ye faithful J F Wade arr. Willcocks

Surrey Brass

Jingle Bells Trad arr. John Iveson
Sussex Mummers' Carol Percy Grainger arr. Michael Allen
A Christmas Carol Zoltan Kodaly arr. Andrew J Walker
Let It Snow Styne/Cahn arr. Dave Gale

Mid-winter Bob Chilcott (b.1955)
Reasons for Singing Paul Ayres (b.1970)

INTERVAL

Adam lay Ybounden Peter Warlock (1894-1930)
Joys Seven Trad. arr. Stephen Cleobury (1948-2019)

Audience and choir

Hark! the herald-angels sing F Mendelssohn v3 arr. Willcocks

Surrey Brass

Santa Claus is Coming to Town Gillespie/Coots arr. Zack Smith
Carol Fantasy Trad arr. John Iveson
Jolly Old Saint Nick Trad arr. Jack Gale
We Wish You a Merry Christmas Trad arr. John Iveson

It's a most Wonderful Time of the year George Wyle arr. Paul Ayres
Winter Wonderland Felix Bernard arr. Paul Ayres
Gloria in D Gordon Thornett (b.1942)

O Come all ye Faithful

18th c. anon arr. Willcocks

All

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the King of Angels:
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore Him

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God, In the highest:
O come, let us adore Him.....

Yea, Lord we great thee, born that happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore Him.....

Reasons for Singing (First performance)

Paul Ayres

In 2019, the eve of our twentieth anniversary year, we commissioned a new work from our Assistant Director of Music and acclaimed composer and arranger, Paul Ayres. We were looking for a piece that would celebrate the joy of singing, and Paul chose as his text 'Reasons for Singing', the preface to William Byrd's collection of "Psalmes, Sonets and Songs of sadnes and pietie (1588)"; "Reasons, briefly set down by the Author, to persuade everyone to learn to sing". Byrd's list of eight reasons covers a broad spectrum of health benefits, wellbeing and the pleasure that singing can bring, both to the singer and to the audience.

Whilst the pandemic put on hold all hopes of celebrating our 20th anniversary as planned, virtual rehearsals of Paul's new piece began as we started to learn it in

the isolation of our own homes. The fact that Byrd, also, was forced to work in isolation not by a global pandemic, but by his Catholic faith, which at the time was prohibited by law, certainly resonates with us today.

Now, finally, the covers are off Paul's new creation and after a term of real life rehearsals we are delighted to be giving 'Reasons for Singing' its World Premiere tonight. It's been a long wait, but never could Byrd's reasons for singing have had more significance or relevance for a group of singers than now!

Reasons briefly set down by the author, to persuade every one to learn to sing.

First, it is a knowledge easely taught, and quickly learned, wher ther is good Master, & an apt Scoler.

2. The exercise of singing is delightful to Nature, and good to preserve the health of man.

3. It doth strengthen all parts of the brest, & doth open the pipes.

4. It is a singuler good remedie for a stutting & stamaring in the speech.

5. It is the best meanes to procure a perfect pronounciation, and to make a good Orator.

6. It is the onely way to know where Nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voyce: which gift is so rare, as ther is not one among a thousand that hath it: & in many that excelent gift is lost, because they want art to expresse Nature.

7. Ther is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of men, wher the voices are good, and the same wel sorted and ordered.

8. The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honour & serve God therewith: and the voice of man is chiefly to be imployed to that end.

Since singing is so good a thing, I wish all men would learne to sing.

Words by William Byrd (1543-1623)

Hark! the herald-angels sing

F Mendelssohn v3 arr. Willcocks

All

Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th'angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.

Christ by highest heav'n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings;
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.

Gloria in D (First UK performance)

Gorden Thornett

This new setting of the Gloria was premièred in Milwaukee, USA by the Bel Canto Chorus with Stained Glass Brass, in December 2014, conducted by Richard Hynson.

The opening section is in a lively 7/8 tempo, and the soloist and chorus are used antiphonally to portray the words Gloria in excelsis Deo ('Glory be to God on high'). In a gentler section, the brass group and organ introduce a new theme which is later taken up by the soprano soloist, echoed by the choir - Laudamus te ('We praise thee'). The main Gloria theme comes back from time to time, and a new descending motif is introduced, for the words. Domine Deus, Agnus Dei ('Lord God, Lamb of God'). Following choral cries of supplication, Miserere nobis ('Have mercy on us'), the tempo eases and leads into the central section which is dominated by the soprano soloist. This is much more contemplative in character, reflecting the words, Qui tollis peccata mundi ('Who bears the sins of the world'). A climax is reached with another impassioned plea for mercy (Miserere nobis). A brief recapitulation of the opening theme with new words leads to a fugal section, still in 7/8 time, Cum Sancto Spiritu in Gloria Dei Patri ('With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father') and a triumphant ending, in which the Gloria theme returns, followed by jubilant reiterations of Amen!

Ellie Sperling

Ellie is a freelance soprano, arts manager, and teacher. Ellie has had the joy of singing with world-class ensembles The Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen and Tenebrae, as well as developing a rich solo career. She works for Royal Holloway University of London as cover Performance Manager and is the Choir Manager of Frideswide Voices, the girl choristers of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

When not singing, Ellie can be found running her small sewing business on Etsy or going on adventures with her dog, Peggy and husband, Jamie.

Jack Apperley

Jack Apperley is a London based freelance conductor. Under the tutelage of Patrick Russill, he graduated from the Royal Academy of Music where he obtained a Masters in Choral Conducting. He was awarded a Distinction and received the Sir Thomas Armstrong Choral Leadership Prize. Prior to this, Jack read Music at the University of Birmingham where he was mentored by Simon Halsey CBE. In 2019 he received the Choir Prize at the Jazep Vitols International Choral Conducting Competition in Latvia and was a Semi Finalist in the World Choral Conducting Competition in Hong Kong. In 2018, Jack was awarded Second Prize at the inaugural London International Choral Conducting Competition.

Jack is the Music Director and Conductor of the Imperial College Chamber Choir, Concordia Voices and University Upper Voices at the University of Birmingham. Jack is an Assistant Chorus Master of the London Symphony Chorus. This role has seen Jack prepare the chorus for performances of Adams' El Nino, Liszt's Faust Symphony, Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Britten's Spring Symphony, Bartok's Cantata Profana, Mahler's Eighth Symphony and Orff's Carmina Burana.

Highlights for 2021/22 include engagements with the Choeur de Radio France, the Hungarian National Choir, a series of concerts in Germany with The Strand Consort and conducting the Sopranos and Altos of the London Symphony Chorus in the world premiere of Thomas Ades' ballet, "The Dante Project" at the Royal Opera House.

Paul Ayres

Paul Ayres was born and bred in the suburbs of London, studied music at Oxford University, and now works freelance as a composer & arranger, choral conductor & musical director, and organist & accompanist. His works have been awarded prizes in composition competitions in Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, New Zealand, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, the UK and the USA, and he has received over one hundred commissions from musical groups of all shapes and sizes.

Most of Paul's output is choral, vocal, small-scale instrumental, and music for theatre. He genuinely finds as much joy in writing a very simple arrangement of, say, a nursery rhyme for beginner violinists as in constructing a large-scale score for professional performers. A particular creative interest of Paul's is exploring the interplay between popular styles and baroque/classical forms, and his works frequently use cross-reference, numerical patterns, and humour.

Paul conducts City Chorus and Questors Choir, accompanies Concordia Voices and Harrow Choral Society, and is a frequent deputy with many other choral ensembles in the London area. He enjoys leading music workshops with children, playing keyboards for improvised comedy shows, and devising cryptic crosswords. Please visit www.paulayres.co.uk to find out more.

A CD of Paul's music, recorded by the chapel choir of Selwyn College Cambridge, has recently been released on the Regent label. The disc contains 21 compositions and arrangements, including "Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs" which we commissioned for Neil Ferris's final concert as conductor of Concordia Voices. Copies are on sale tonight.

Surrey Brass

Surrey Brass, the innovative and entertaining brass ensemble is a well-established group with a reputation that exceeds its 15 years. Inspired by the line-up and style of the famous Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, the group programmes exciting and eclectic arrangements from the Baroque to Jazz, with a line-up of professional and semi-professional performers.

Tonight's performance is by the Surrey Brass Quintet.

John Goodwin, Lindsay Marns (Trumpets), Tim Costen (Horn), Michael Straker (Trombone), Adrian Warren (Tuba)

Concordia Voices

Concordia Voices is a well-established chamber choir of about 30 mixed voices and is currently directed by Jack Apperley. Our regular accompanist is the composer and arranger Paul Ayres.

The choir performs regularly in south-west London where it is based. We have also toured abroad and to other locations in the UK as well as taking part in local musical events. Concordia Voices enjoy performing music from a wide repertoire ranging over 4 centuries and we have a keen interest in performing the work of contemporary composers.

Concordia Voices rehearse on Sunday evenings from 6.45pm to 9pm in Hampton Hill. We are a small, friendly choir and new singers are warmly welcome. If you are interested in joining us please contact our secretary for more information at, secretary@concordiavoices.org or visit our web site for information on how to join the choir. www.concordiavoices.com

<i>Soprano</i>	<i>Alto</i>	<i>Tenor</i>	<i>Bass</i>
Jackie Allen Lynda Beament Julia Lavery Margaret Lord Ruth Parker Fiona Rowett Helen Sugiyama	Lindsey Baldwin Rebecca Bevan Julie Hall Peggy Hannington Jane Newman Barbara Orr Jane Purser Anne Rowett Janet Taylor	Barry Fisher Colin Flood Clive Hall David Wilson	Geoff Ashman Alan Baldwin Alex Bower-Brown* Adam Brown Philip Congdon Tim Rowett Jamie Sperling * *Guest singers

Future Concerts

Saturday, 2nd April, 2022, St John the Divine, Richmond

Saturday, 25th June 2022, St Mary's, Twickenham

Saturday, 26th November 2022, St John the Divine, Richmond