



From British Shores . . .

# Christmas Across the Pond

*A Gift Basket of Less Familiar Choral Works*



## San Francisco Lyric Chorus

*Robert Gurney, Music Director*

*Jonathan Dimmock, Organ & Piano*

*Saturday, December 7 & Sunday, December 8, 2013*

*St. Mark's Lutheran Church,*

*San Francisco, California*

# SAN FRANCISCO LYRIC CHORUS

Robert Gurney, *Music Director*

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Welcome to the Fall 2013 Concert of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus.

Since its formation in 1995, the Chorus has offered diverse and innovative music to the community through a gathering of singers who believe in a commonality of spirit and sharing. The debut concert featured music by Gabriel Fauré and Louis Vierne. The Chorus has been involved in several premieres, including Bay Area composer Brad Osness' *Lamentations*, Ohio composer Robert Witt's *Four Motets to the Blessed Virgin Mary* (West Coast premiere), New York composer William Hawley's *The Snow That Never Drifts* (San Francisco premiere), San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem's *Christmas the Morn, Blessed Are They, To Music* (San Francisco premieres), and selections from his operas, *John Brown* and *The Newport Rivals*, our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commission work, the World Premiere of Illinois composer Lee R. Kesselman's *This Grand Show Is Eternal*, Robert Train Adams' *It Will Be Summer—Eventually* and *Music Expresses* (West Coast premieres), as well as the Fall 2009 World Premiere of Dr. Adams' *Christmas Fantasy*.

And now, join us as we explore wonderful holiday music from our British neighbors across the pond!

*Please sign our mailing list, located in the foyer.*

*The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a member of Chorus America.*

*We are recording this concert for archival purposes.*

*Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the concert.*

*Please, no photography or audio/video taping during the performance.*

*Please, no children under 5.*

*Please help us to maintain a distraction-free environment.*

*Thank you.*

# PROGRAM

*Jubilate Deo in C*  
*A Boy Was Born* (theme)  
*Jubilate Deo in E Flat*  
*Hymn for St. Cecilia*

Benjamin Britten  
Benjamin Britten  
Benjamin Britten  
Herbert Howells

*Ave Maria*  
*Caput Apri Defero*  
*In Dulci Jubilo*

Robert Parsons  
Robert Lucas Pearsall  
Robert Lucas Pearsall

*Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C*

Bryan Kelly

## *Intermission*

*Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day*  
*Lully, Lulla, Lullay*  
*Wexford Carol*

Philip Stopford  
Philip Stopford  
Philip Stopford

Kevin Baum, tenor

*Christus Est Stella*  
*The Christ Child*  
*None Other Lamb*

Will Todd  
Will Todd  
Will Todd

*Benedicamus Domino*  
*Adam Lay Ybounden*  
*Three Carols*

Peter Warlock  
Peter Warlock  
Peter Warlock

*Tyrley Tyrflow*  
*Balulalow*

Kevin Baum, tenor

*The Sycamore Tree*

*All This Time*  
*What Cheer?*

William Walton  
William Walton

Jonathan Dimmock, Organ and Piano

# PROGRAM NOTES

Our Fall 2013 trimester program, *From British Shores... Christmas Across The Pond*, celebrates holiday works, *a cappella* and accompanied, by 20th and 21st century British composers, including Britten, Howells, Kelly, Stopford, Todd, Warlock, and Walton, with a small touch of 16th century Parsons and 19th century Pearsall.

## PROGRAM

### Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Considered by many as the most important 20<sup>th</sup>-century English composer, Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft, England. His mother was an amateur singer, and he began composing at the age of five. English composer Frank Bridge noticed the talented youth at the 1924 Norwich Festival, and accepted young Britten as a pupil. Bridge helped Britten to develop excellent compositional technique, and introduced him to the music of other composers, from England as well as from abroad.

In 1930, Britten entered the Royal College of Music. There, he studied piano with Harold Samuel and Arthur Benjamin as well as composition with noted composer John Ireland. In 1935 he began composing music for documentary films created by England's General Post Office. It was during this period that Britten met and began collaborating on works with poet W. H. Auden. In the late 1930s Britten moved to the United States with his partner, the well-known tenor, Peter Pears. In 1942, he read an article about the English poet George Crabbe and, realizing that he missed his home, returned to England. The ship taking him and Pears home stopped in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where Britten bought a book of English poetry, *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*. The book inspired him to compose *A Ceremony of Carols* on board the ship.

The period 1936-1945 was a fruitful one for Britten, with a varied outpouring of music, including the song cycle with orchestra, *Our Hunting Fathers*, the opera *Paul Bunyan*, and *Rejoice in the Lamb*, which was published in 1943. During the war years, Britten and Pears, both conscientious objectors, gave many public concerts as their contributions to the community in those dark days.

During and after the war, Britten continued his compositional activities in a wide variety of genres, including opera, instrumental music, music for children, and choral music. His 1945 opera, *Peter Grimes*, based on characters in the poems of George Crabbe, led to Britten's consideration as the most important English musical dramatist since Henry Purcell. His other operas composed during the 1940s and 1950s include *The Rape of Lucretia* (1946), *Albert Herring* (1947), *Billy Budd* (1951), and *Turn of the Screw* (1954). During this period, he also composed many of his most familiar works, including the cantata *St. Nicholas*, the *Spring Symphony*, the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and *Noye's Fludde* (the latter two for children).

During the 1960s Britten composed the choral parable *Curlew River* and the opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 1962, his monumental *War Requiem*, a setting of poems by the young World War I poet Wilfred Owen, celebrated the consecration of the new Coventry Cathedral. In 1970, he wrote the opera *Owen Wingrave* for BBC Television, and his opera *Death in Venice* was produced in 1973. Thereafter he wrote no more large-scale works, concentrating on smaller instrumental, choral, and song compositions until his death in 1976.

Michael Dawney comments, "Any survey of what Britten has contributed to English music is naturally dominated by his outstanding achievement in opera, on account both of its sheer magnitude and of the 'pioneering' element in it. This has slightly drawn attention away from the hardly less remarkable character, importance (and volume) of his output in the field of choral music, where the originality of his contribution, instead of standing out starkly against an

almost blank background, is more subtly thrown into relief against, and merged into, a securely established and respectable tradition of composition.”

## Jubilate Deo in C

Benjamin Britten’s *Jubilate Deo in C* is his second composition on the *Jubilate Deo* text. The Duke of Edinburgh commissioned it in 1961 for performance at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor. He wanted it as an accompaniment for the 1934 *Te Deum in C*.

The *Jubilate Deo in C* is playful. It was written in an A B A B configuration. The organ in this *Jubilate* does not just accompany, but is an equal participant in the composition—an additional voice. **Section 1** begins the work with a light-hearted organ introduction. Its short runs and staccatos are a nice contrast to the simpler structure of the vocal parts, in which sopranos and tenors engage in a dialogue with the altos and basses.

**Section 2** is much quieter and more harmonic in the expression of thanks (*Be thankful unto him...*) But, no one can quiet the merry organ, which seems to be asking questions and going its own way. As in the *Jubilate Deo in E Flat*, Britten sets the text *and his truth endureth* in an ascending, crescendoing line. **Section 3** is a return to the pattern of Section 1, except that the voices are in harmony, rather than in dialogue. **Section 4** uses a similar pattern to **Section 2**, ending with a quiet *Amen*. But, Britten does not end the composition quietly. He emphatically continues the *Amen* in a dialogue pattern similar to that used in **Section 1**, with voices ending the work in unison.

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands:  
serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.  
Be ye sure that the Lord he is God:  
it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving,  
and into his courts with praise:  
be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.  
For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting;  
and his truth endureth from generation to generation.  
Glory be to the father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:  
world without end.  
Amen.

## A Boy Was Born (theme)

Benjamin Britten composed *A Boy Was Born* in 1933 and published it in 1934, the same year he composed the *Jubilate Deo in E Flat*. It was given its first performance in 1934 by the BBC Singers, and is the first of Britten’s works to receive widespread acclaim.

*A Boy Was Born* is a set of theme and variations. We sing the original theme/chorale, *A Boy Was Born*. Keyte and Parrott comment that Britten used as a text Percy Deamer’s translation of the German chorale, *Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem*, that he found in the 1928 edition of the *Oxford Book of Carols*. The text and original tune come from a 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century Latin original, *Puer natus in Bethlehem*. One hears hints of the original melody in this theme section.

The entire work is in seven sections—a theme and six variations. The variations are as follows:

Variation 1. *Lullay, Jesu*, an anonymous 16<sup>th</sup> century poem

Variation 2. *Herod*, an anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> century poem.

Variation 3. *Jesu, As Thou Art Our Savior*, anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> century poem

Variation 4. *The Three Kings*, anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> century poem

Variation 5. *In The Bleak Midwinter*, a setting of the Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) poem

Variation 6. *Noël*, combining an anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> century text with texts by English poets Thomas Tusser (1524-1580) and Francis Quarles (1592-1644).

The *A Boy Was Born* theme is structured with three different phrases, each separated by *alleluias*. The first phrase is in an ascending note pattern. The second is in reverse, in a descending setting. The third is a combination of an ascending and descending pattern, and is done in unison. The soprano line is an octave higher. The final *alleluia* repeats the notes of the first phrase.

A Boy was born in Bethlehem;  
Rejoice for that, Jerusalem.  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya.  
  
He let himself a servant be,  
That all mankind he might set free:  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya.

Then praise the Word of God who came  
To dwell within a human frame:  
Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya, Alleluya,  
Alleluya.

## Jubilate Deo in E Flat

In August 1934, Benjamin Britten composed his first setting of the *Jubilate Deo*—the *Jubilate Deo in E Flat*. He wanted it to be a companion piece to his *Te Deum in C* that he had composed three weeks earlier for Maurice Vinden and the Choir of St. Mark's, North Audley Street, London. But, Britten was not pleased with this composition and withdrew it from publication. It was not published until 1984, eight years after his death.

The *Jubilate Deo in E Flat* is a much more stately, ceremonial interpretation of the text than Britten's second *Jubilate Deo*, the 1961 *Jubilate Deo in C*. It is divided into three sections, and makes much use of unison singing. The organ is used as an accompanying instrument, rather than another voice.

**Section 1** alternates joyous unison and part-singing. In **Section 2** (*Be thankful unto him...*), Britten creates a quiet dialogue between two voices—altos/basses and sopranos/tenors. He elaborates the structure of this section at *and his truth endureth...* by having altos, tenors, and basses continue the dialogue while the sopranos divide into two parts, singing an ascending, crescendoing line. **Section 3**, beginning at *Glory be to the Father...* repeats the melody, intensity, and pattern of Section 1, only it is in unison and slower in tempo. The composition ends with an exultant, unison *Amen*.

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands:  
serve the Lord with gladness and come before his presence with a song.  
Be ye sure that the Lord he is God:  
it is he that hath made us and not we ourselves;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving,  
and into his courts with praise:  
be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.  
For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting;  
and his truth endureth from generation to generation.  
Glory be to the father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be:  
world without end.  
Amen.

## Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Herbert Howells was born in Lydney, Gloucestershire, England, in 1892. The son of an organist, he was a talented youth who knew from an early age that he would become a composer. In 1910, a local landowner funded his opportunity to serve as a chorister in the Gloucester Cathedral Choir where he studied composition with Sir Herbert Brewer. Howells and fellow students Ivor Gurney and Ivor Novello were privileged to be seated next to Ralph Vaughn Williams at the premier of Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. The beauty of the work amazed the young men and the experience reinforced Howells' desire to become a composer.

In 1912, Howells won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he studied composition with Charles Villiers Stanford and counterpoint with Charles Wood. Howells cherished his relationship with Stanford, who called Howells his 'son in music'. C. Hubert Parry, another major English composer, had a significant influence on Howells as well.

Howells was appointed sub-organist at Salisbury Cathedral in 1917; however, a life-threatening illness cut short his employment after just a few months. During his three years of convalescence, he worked for the Carnegie Trust, assisting an editor of Tudor manuscripts. His love of Renaissance English music, history and culture began during this time. He continued to compose, particularly music for the English Church, the genre for which he is best known today.

By 1929, Howells' health had returned enough for him to accept a position as a professor of composition at the Royal College of Music. He held that position until 1972, when he turned 80. In 1936, Howells succeeded composer Gustav Holst as Director of Music at St. Paul's Girls' School, Hammersmith, a position he held until 1962. Between 1941 and 1945, he was Acting Organist at St. John's College, Cambridge. Much of Howells' orchestral and chamber music was composed between 1917 and 1950. He loved working with students and amateur musicians, finding that such interactions stimulated his own creativity and imagination.

In 1950, Howells was appointed King Edward VII Professor of Music at London University, a position he held concurrently with his position at the Royal College of Music. In addition to his work as a noted teacher, Howells held many appointments as president of various organizations. In 1931, he became the first John Collard Fellow of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, for which he composed the *Hymn for St. Cecilia* that we perform today.

In addition to suffering debilitating illness, Howells experienced other tragedies that influenced his composition. He was horrified by the carnage of World War I and dedicated his 1917 orchestral work, *Elegy*, to the memory of a dear friend killed in the war. In 1935, his beloved nine-year-old son, Michael, died after contracting polio. Howells had begun a *Requiem* in 1932 and he poured his profound emotions into the completion of the piece. He considered the *Requiem* a private statement of grief and did not allow it to be published until 1980. The *Requiem* led to the composition of his 1938 *Hymnus Paradisi*, which Howells felt was also a personal and private expression of grief. Only gentle persuasion by his idol, Ralph Vaughan Williams, convinced him that it should be performed. *Hymnus Paradisi* premiered at Gloucester Cathedral in 1950 and is considered his masterpiece. When President John F. Kennedy died, Howells responded to the world's grief with his motet, *Take Him, Earth, For Cherishing*, commissioned by Washington's National Cathedral and premiered there in 1964.

Howells had a major effect on the composition of English church music. Biographer Christopher Palmer notes, "He was drawn to the church principally by three things: by friendships with clergy and with musicians within the church, both amateur and professional; by the architectural magnificence of our churches, cathedrals and Collegiate chapels, and the marvelous way their acoustical properties diffused, refined and enhanced what he termed the 'immemorial sound of voices'; and by the no less 'immemorial' qualities of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer considered purely as compendia of the choicest English, rich in poetry and sonority."

Herbert Howells composed in many different genres, including works for orchestra, organ, piano and clavichord, works for orchestra and chorus, hymn tunes, chamber music, secular and sacred choral music, and songs for solo voice and piano. He received many honors and awards, including honorary doctoral degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. He wrote a number of articles and was a participant on many radio broadcasts. He died in 1983.

### **Ursula Vaughan Williams (1911-2007)** [wrote words of Hymn for St. Cecilia]

Poet, novelist, librettist, music patron and second wife of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Ursula Lock was born in Malta in 1911. The daughter of an officer in the Royal Artillery, she spent much of her youth moving from one place to another. She was educated by governesses, but did spend one year at school in Brussels when she was sixteen. Her formal education was completed a year later. Ursula was a bright, talented young woman and she continued learning on her own, studying archaeology and becoming involved in amateur theatre.

In 1932, Ursula moved to London and studied acting at the Old Vic Theatre. In 1933, she married Michael Forester Wood, an officer in the Royal Artillery. He was a talented watercolor painter and they had many creative and cultural interests in common. At this time, she began to write poetry, create poetry programs for the BBC, and review literature for the *Times Literary Supplement*. Her first book of poetry, *No Other Choice*, was published in 1941.

Ursula Wood attended many cultural events in London. While she was a student at the Old Vic, she saw a performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams' ballet, *Job*, and was extremely impressed. In 1937, although she did not know Ralph Vaughan Williams, she sent him an outline for a ballet, hoping he would set it to music. He was not impressed, but she persisted and sent him another based on Edmund Spenser's *Epithalamium*. Vaughan Williams approved of that sketch and from it created *The Bridal Day*, a masque. The two met in 1938 and began a long and close friendship. She was 29 and he was 69.

Ralph Vaughan Williams married Adeline Fisher in 1897. Over the years, severe arthritis took a toll on her health and she became an invalid. The Vaughan Williams lived in Dorking, a town 25 miles south of London. Ralph was very attentive to his wife, restricting his travel and attendance at cultural activities. Michael and Ursula Wood moved frequently due to Michael's position in the Royal Artillery. When he finally became stationed in London, Ursula found a part-time job as a secretary-receptionist for a pediatrician. She became good friends with Adeline and Ralph Vaughan Williams and they often invited her to visit them in Dorking. Adeline was happy to have Ursula act as a companion for Ralph when he went to London to conduct or attend cultural events.

In 1942, Ursula Wood's husband died of a sudden heart attack. Ralph and Adeline Vaughan Williams invited her to stay at Dorking with them and she became a very close member of the family. Robert Ponsonby notes "The relationship of the two women who, in whatever sense, shared Ralph for 13 years, was civilized, apparently affectionate..." After Adeline died in 1951, Ursula spent half of each week at Dorking, managing Ralph's affairs. The two married in 1953 and resided in London. With Ursula's support and encouragement, Ralph Vaughan Williams once again began to travel widely and attend a variety of cultural events. They opened their home to friends and had a constant stream of visitors. They enjoyed this life until Ralph's death in 1958.

Throughout the rest of her life, Ursula Vaughan Williams continued to pursue her creative endeavors. In 1964, she wrote a major and substantial biography of her husband: *RVW, a Biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. She encouraged and supported performances of Ralph Vaughan Williams' music. She continued in her own career as well, writing libretti and texts for operas by David Barlow, Roger Steptoe, Elizabeth Maconchy and Anthony Scott. She composed texts for choral works/songs by Malcolm Williamson, Byron Adams, Gerald Finzi, Alun Hoddinott, Herbert Howells, Elisabeth Lutyens, Anthony Milner, Alan Ridout, Phyllis Tate and Patric Stanford. In 1972, she wrote her own autobiography, *Paradise Remembered*, although it was



not published until 2002. Her collected poems were published in 2002 as well.

Ursula Vaughan Williams wrote three novels, many poems, and a history of the London Bach Choir. One writer commented that her book of poems, *The Dictated Theme*, written soon after Ralph Vaughan Williams' death, contains some of the most moving love poems written by a woman. She was a generous supporter of musical causes and a champion of young musicians. She died on October 23, 2007.

## St. Cecilia

Who was she? Cecilia, a Christian virgin in Roman times, was forced by her parents to marry Valerian, a pagan youth. On their wedding night, she converted him to Christianity, thus saving her chastity. She later converted his brother, as well. All three went about preaching, doing good deeds and helping the poor, for which they were executed by the Romans.

Cecilia is considered the patron saint of music, which has had a tremendous influence on the arts. She is an inspiration to poets, as reflected in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Second Nonne's Tale* in *Canterbury Tales*, John Dryden's *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*, Alexander Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, Tennyson's *Palace of Art*, and many others. We honor and commemorate today Ursula Vaughan Williams, who wrote the poetic text for Herbert Howell's *Hymn for St. Cecilia*.

Painters and other artists have employed Cecilia's image, often accompanied by one or more musical instruments. Great masters such as Raphael, Rubens and Dante Gabriel Rossetti have crafted wonderful works of art depicting scenes from her life. Churches, schools and other organizations have been named in her honor.

Cecilia's connection with music is somewhat tenuous, such as legends about her singing to God during her time of trial and having invented the organ. Actual celebrations of her as the patron saint of music seem to begin in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The first musical festival in her honor was held in France in 1570.

Many composers have set texts about St. Cecilia, including English composers who composed works for St. Cecilia's Day on November 22. In England, annual public musical celebrations of St. Cecilia's Day began in 1683. They were initiated by the Musical Society, a group of gentlemen amateur and professional musicians who came together in order to celebrate this day. The festivities included a musical church service with chorus and orchestra, often with a special anthem composed for the occasion. The sermon usually dealt with the defense of church music. Special odes were composed as well. There was a grand feast after the event. Major court singers participated, as well as a chorus drawn from the Choirs of St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal. They were accompanied by instrumentalists from the monarch's musicians as well as theatre orchestras. Henry Purcell was the first composer chosen for this honor, composing *Welcome to all the Pleasures*. John Blow followed with *Begin the Song* in 1684, a work we sang in our Summer 2007 concert. Both composers created works for several of the St. Cecilia's Day celebrations throughout the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The annual musical celebrations of St. Cecilia's Day declined in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; however, English composers in succeeding centuries continued to compose works for this day. George Frideric Handel's 1739 *Ode to St. Cecilia* is a substantial setting of Dryden's poem. William Boyce also composed an *Ode to St. Cecilia*. Other English works set to Cecilia texts include C. Hubert Parry's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, Gerald Finzi's *For St. Cecilia*, Benjamin Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia*, and Herbert Howells's *Hymn for St. Cecilia*, which we are performing today.

St. Cecilia settings are not limited to English compositions. From Italy come Alessandro Scarlatti's *St. Cecilia Mass* and Licinio Refice's opera *Cecilia*; from France, Charles Gounod's *Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cécile*; from the United States, Norman Dello Joio's *Hymn to St. Cecilia*. She even is the subject of a 1984 Swedish popular song, *Sankta Cecilia*, sung by Lotta Pedersen and Göran Folkestad.

## A Hymn for St. Cecilia

Howells' *Hymn for St. Cecilia* was commissioned by the Livery Club of The Worshipful Company of Musicians to mark Howells' Mastership of the Company in 1959-1960. It was published in 1961. The work is powerful in its simple melody augmented by a descant. Barry Rose comments, "His *Hymn for St. Cecilia* is a happy collaboration with Ursula Vaughan Williams, the widow of the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, and was specially written for the St. Cecilia-tide (November) Evensong held each year in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, attended by members of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, of which Howells was a member. The extended poem is an ideal vehicle for Howells' long melodic lines which, in turn, are first sung in Unison, passed from the Tenors and Basses to the Sopranos in the second verse, and gloriously decorated by a flowing descant in the final verse."

Sing for the morning's joy, Cecilia, sing,  
in words of youth and phrases of the Spring,  
walk the bright colonnades by fountains' spray,  
and sing as sunlight fills the waking day;  
till angels, voyaging in upper air  
pause on a wing and gather the clear sound  
into celestial joy, wound and unwound,  
a silver chain, or golden as your hair.

Sing for your loves of heaven and of earth,  
in words of music, and each word a truth;  
marriage of heart and longings that aspire,  
a bond of roses, and a ring of fire.  
Your summertime grows short and fades away,  
terror must gather to a martyr's death  
but never tremble, the last indrawn breath  
remembers music as an echo may.

Through the cold aftermath of centuries  
Cecilia's music dances in the skies,  
lend us a fragment of the immortal air,  
that with your choiring angels we may share,  
a word to light us thro' time-fettered night,  
water of life, or rose of paradise  
so from the earth another song shall rise  
to meet your own in heaven's long delight.

### Robert Parsons (ca. 1535-ca. 1572)

Little is known about Robert Parsons until 1560-1561, when his name appears on a list of employees of the Chapel Royal. He is listed as making a payment to the supervisor of the Children of the Chapel Royal, implying that he had a position other than, or in addition to, a musical one. In 1563, he became one of the professional singers of the Chapel Royal. He also may have worked some with the boy choristers, perhaps composing songs for their plays and other activities, as well as composing sacred music for services.

In 1567, Parsons was given a 21-year Crown lease for three rectories near Lincoln. He married in 1571. A composer of substance and promise, in 1572, he tragically drowned in the River Trent, and was succeeded by William Byrd. The eulogy given at his funeral indicates how much his talents were recognized:

*Qui tantus primo Parsons in flore fuisti,*

*Quantus in autumnno in morere fores.*

Parsons, you who were so great in the springtime of life,  
How great you would have been in the autumn, had not death intervened.

## Ave Maria

Parsons' most famous composition is his five-part motet, *Ave Maria*. Dennis Shrock calls it "one of the most beautiful motets of the entire English Renaissance". John Bryan and Rory McCleery comment that late 16<sup>th</sup> century Latin motets are rare in England, since the country was under the rule of Protestant Elizabeth. The occasion for the work's composition is unknown, but John Caldwell notes that it is not a liturgical form of the text, since it does not contain the phrase, "*Sancta Maria Mater Dei; ora pro nobis...*"

Underlaid by a rich texture of imitative voices, the soprano part rises one note at each entrance. The text is an Antiphon at the Feast of the Virgin Mary.

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum:  
benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui. Amen.*

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you;  
Blessed are you among women,  
And blessed is the fruit of your womb. Amen.

### Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856)

Robert Lucas Pearsall was the son of an army officer, who was an amateur musician. Robert was born in Clifton in 1795, and in 1802, the family relocated to Bristol. The Pearsall ancestors had made money in the iron industry and had built a home in Willsbridge, near Bristol. Pearsall's father died in 1813, and in 1816, his mother bought the Willsbridge house from her brother-in-law. By 1817, Pearsall and his mother lived in Willsbridge. That same year, he married Harriett Elizabeth Hobday, daughter of painter William Armfield Hobday. They had three surviving children (one died in infancy)—Robert Lucas (1820), Elizabeth Still (1822), and Philippa Swinnerton (1824).

Pearsall's mother wanted him to become a lawyer and paid for him to be privately tutored. He was admitted to the Bar in 1821 and practiced law in Bristol from 1821 to 1825. In 1825, he suffered a slight stroke. Doctors recommended that he live abroad in order to recover his health. He and his family moved to Mainz, Germany, where they lived from 1825 to 1830.

In Mainz, Pearsall studied composition with Joseph Panny. In 1825, he wrote his earliest known composition—a Minuet and Trio in B flat. He continued composing, including an overture, Latin motets, and part songs.

In 1829, Pearsall returned to England for a year, leaving his family in Mainz. In 1830, he moved back to Germany, relocating his family to Karlsruhe. Karlsruhe was a wonderful base for Pearsall's many interests, which included travel, genealogy, heraldry, painting, and music. He also believed his children would receive a better education there.

The family remained in Karlsruhe from 1830 to 1842. Pearsall visited libraries in Paris, Munich and Nuremberg to research his topics of interest. In 1832, he met Kaspar Ett in Munich. Ett helped him learn early music by explaining the notation system. In 1834, Pearsall arranged the medieval carol, *In Dulci Jubilo*. That same year, he built a small theater at his home and composed his ballad-opera, *Die Nacht eines Schwärmers*. He and his family continued to take part in the intellectual life of Karlsruhe.

In 1836, Pearsall inherited his mother's house in Willsbridge. He returned to England for a year, selling the property in 1837. During that time, he apparently found a copy of Elizabethan composer Thomas Morley's *Balletts* and composed a madrigal using the text of *My bonny lass*. He

continued to compose madrigals, 22 in all, sometimes using his own texts and sometimes using the texts of others.

The English madrigal revival had begun in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and by the time Pearsall began composing madrigals, there were societies all over the country. The Bristol Madrigal Society was founded in January 1837, with Pearsall, a tenor, one of its first members. In addition to singing the classic Elizabethan madrigals, the Bristol singers were able to try out Pearsall's compositions.

Pearsall returned to Karlsruhe in the summer of 1837. Between 1837 and 1841, he continued to compose madrigals and part-songs for the Bristol Madrigal Society. Those works remained in the Society repertoire, even when Pearsall was largely unknown elsewhere. *Lay a Garland*, his most famous part-song, was composed in 1840.

Family troubles mounted between 1837 and 1842, and Pearsall could no longer afford to live in Karlsruhe. His son had acquired debts, and his wife had become a Roman Catholic. In 1842 or 1843, Pearsall separated from his wife and moved with his daughter, Philippa, to Schloss Wartensee, near Lake Constance in Switzerland. He developed friendships with priests at nearby Catholic churches and began composing music for the Catholic service, in addition to composing for the Anglican church in Bristol.

After spending ten rather lonely years in Wartensee longing for more of a community, he moved to a small house in the city of St. Gall at the suggestion of his friend, that city's Catholic Bishop. He gave Schloss Wartensee to his wife and son. He spent two years in St. Gall before taking ill and returning to Schloss Wartensee to be cared for by his wife. He died in August, 1856, converting to Catholicism three days before his death.

Robert Pearsall composed in a variety of genres—sacred music for both Anglican and Catholic church services, 22 madrigals, over 60 partsongs, ballad-operas, solo songs, a symphony, overtures, chamber music, a string quartet and trio, and dramatic works with music. He was an essayist and wrote articles on a variety of topics. In addition, he was an excellent translator, publishing translations of Schiller's *William Tell*, and Goethe's *Faust*. He has a wonderful sense of melody and harmony, and brought historic music forms and melodies into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Pearsall's name has been found in two forms—Robert Lucas Pearsall and Robert Lucas de Pearsall. The 'de' was added by his daughter, Phillipa, after his death.

## Caput Apri Defero

The English tradition of serving a boar's head at Christmas time has existed since the Middle Ages, when a wild boar's head was served at a Christmas feast, especially in the north of England. The English probably did not originate this custom, but borrowed it from the Scandinavians, who at the winter solstice sacrificed a wild boar to Freyja, the goddess of fertility.

There are several versions of *The Boar's Head Carol* text. The most familiar one was first published by Wynken de Worde in his 1521 *Christmase Carolles*. That text was not accompanied by music. The melody with which we are familiar probably dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The ceremony of the boar's head has taken place at Queen's College, Oxford since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. A Queen's student supposedly was walking in the woods on Christmas Day, reading Aristotle, when he was attacked by a wild boar. Shouting "Graecum est" ("It's Greek to me")--although he shouted the comment in Latin, the student shoved his book of Aristotle down the boar's throat and choked it to death. He brought it back to the college to be served at a feast that night.

Queen's College holds an elaborate boar's head feast every year. It is full of ceremony, beginning with a trumpet fanfare. The Provost and Fellows of the College process in and take their places at the table. The Provost says grace. Then the boar's head procession begins. A solo singer appears, singing the first verse of this jolly secular carol. He is followed by the choir, walking backwards

and facing three chefs carrying a silver platter with a boar's head wearing a crown with flags, an orange in its mouth, and garnished with bay and rosemary. The procession only moves during the singing of the refrain, "*Caput apri defero...*," and pauses during the singing of the verses. The carol ends by the time the platter is set in front of the Provost, who gives the orange to the soloist and the bay and rosemary to the choristers.

There is a serious/sacred version of *The Boar's Head Carol*. Composer Richard Smert (ca. 1400-ca. 1478), an English priest and professional singer at Exeter Cathedral (1427-1430 and 1449-1478), as well as Rector of St. John's Church, Plymtree from 1435-1477, created a number of carols. He composed several Christmas ones, including *Nowell: The Borys Hede*, also called *The Exeter Boar's Head Carol*. William Crump, in *The Christmas Encyclopedia*, notes that "this carol is quite unique in that it reveres the boar's head as a symbol of Christ".

Robert Pearsall published his version of *The Boar's Head Carol* in 1846. Entitled *Caput Apri Defero*, Pearsall did not use the traditional text or form. Instead, he composed a Romantic era, flowing partsong, with a variation of the text and melody. The partsong is a short, usually secular *a cappella* work that includes glees, madrigals, and even anthems. It was especially popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century England. Pearsall's composition is not meant to be used for the Boar's Head ceremony.

Pearsall sets his composition in 6/8 time, rather than the 4/4 of the original carol. This tempo makes it much more dance-like. He begins the partsong with the refrain, *Caput apri defero...* One verse follows, with staggered entrances by the four voices, Bass, Tenor, Alto, Soprano. You will hear traces of the familiar carol in both the verses and the refrain. The refrain appears a second time in a different configuration. The second verse is structured similarly to the first. There is no third verse. A slow phrase, *servite cum cantico!*, serves as a bridge to the last appearance of the refrain, heard again in a different configuration.

*Caput apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.*  
(I bring in the boar's head, giving thanks  
to the Lord).

The boar's head in hand bring I,  
With garlands gay and rosemary,  
I pray you all sing merrily,  
*Qui estis in convivio.*  
(As many as are at the feast).

The boar's head, I understand,  
Is the chief service in this land;  
Look, wherever it be fand,  
*Servite cum cantico!* (Serve it with singing)!

*Caput apri defero,*  
*Reddens laudes Domino,*  
*Qui estis in convivio,*  
*Servite cum cantico!*

## In Dulci Jubilo

One of the most familiar of English carols, Robert Pearsall's 1837 arrangement of *In Dulci Jubilo* is No. 2 on the December 2008 *BBC Music Magazine's* list of 50 all-time favorite carols and motets, as chosen by 50 major British and American choral conductors. There are many arrangements of this beloved carol, but *BBC Music Magazine* felt Pearsall's version stood out above the others. The editors comment, "With its intriguing mix of Latin and English words, Pearsall's music builds up from a straight-forward hymn tune in the first two verses, through some exquisite counterpoint for soloists in the third, before the full, unaccompanied choir gathers together for a rousing finale—when we reach the words 'There the bells are ringing' a peal-like phrase in the treble line soars thrillingly. '*In Dulci Jubilo* is probably my favourite carol of all,' says Robin Tyson, King's Singer and a former King's College, Cambridge choral scholar. 'It's a forward-moving carol with an ancient and beautiful melody and rich, lush harmonies that swim round a church.'" Keyte and Parrott note, "*In Dulci Jubilo*' is usually said to have been taught to the mystic Heinrich Seuse (Suso) by angels. Suso (ca. 1295-1366) was a German Dominican monk... [who] studied with the great mystic Meister Eckhart". *In Dulci Jubilo* is one of the oldest German hymns, found in

a Leipzig University manuscript about 1400. Robert Pearsall did his own translation of the carol from a 1570 German service book written for the Protestant congregations of Zweibrücken and Neuburg. He says, “Even there it is called ‘a very ancient song for Christmas eve’ so there can be no doubt that it is one of those very old Roman Catholic melodies that Luther, on account of their beauty, retained in the Protestant service.”

The original composition, *In Dulci Jubilo*, is a dance song, written in 3/4 or 6/8 meter. The original is *macaronic*--written in two languages—Latin and German. Throughout the centuries, its melody has been set by many composers, including Michael Praetorius, Hieronymus Praetorius, Samuel Scheidt, Johann Sebastian Bach, John Rutter, Marcel Dupré and Robert Lucas Pearsall. John Mason Neale translated the original words freely into a very familiar carol, *Good Christian Men/Friends, Rejoice*. The work has been set in many variations, from one accompanied voice to many voices, both a *cappella* and accompanied.

Robert Pearsall’s arrangement in 3/2 meter leaves the work in its dance song format. It also remains *macaronic*, with verses in Latin and English. Pearsall translated the German part of the text into English. There are several variants of the English text. When sung slowly and lyrically, it shows Pearsall’s ability to bring dynamics and emotion, depth and texture to the work, true hallmarks of the Romantic period.

*In dulci jubilo* (In sweetest jubilation)  
 Let us our homage shew (show)  
 Our heart’s joy reclineth  
*In praesepio*, (In a manger)  
 And like a bright star shineth  
*Matris in gremio*. (On his mother’s lap)  
*Alpha es et O!* (Thou art Alpha and Omega)

*O Jesu, parvule*, (O tiny Jesus)  
 My heart is sore for Thee!  
 Hear me, I beseech Thee,  
*O puer optime*, (O best of boys)  
 My prayer let it reach Thee,  
*O princeps gloriae*. (O prince of glory)  
*Trabe me post te!* (Draw me after Thee)

*O Patris caritas!* (O love of the Father)  
*O Nati lenitas!* (O gentleness of the Son)  
 Deep were we stained  
*Per nostra crimina;* (Through our sins)  
 But Thou hast for us gained  
*Coelorum gaudia*. (The joy of heaven)  
 O that we were there!

*Ubi sunt gaudia* (Where are joys)  
 If that they be not there?  
 There are angels singing  
*Nova cantica* (New songs)  
 There the bells are ringing  
*In regis curia*. (In the king’s court)  
 O that we were there!

### Bryan Kelly (1934- )

Born in Oxford, England in 1934, composer/teacher/pianist Bryan Kelly began his musical career as a boy chorister at Oxford’s Worcester College. Between 1951 and 1955, he attended the Royal College of Music in London, studying composition with Gordon Jacob (1895-1984) and Herbert Howells (1892-1983). He then went to Paris, where he studied composition briefly with famed teacher Nadia Boulanger (1887-1979). He became a faculty member at the Royal Scottish Academy, and in 1963 returned to the Royal College of Music as a professor of harmony, counterpoint, and composition. During the early 1980s, he was President of the City of Oxford Choirs.

In 1984, Kelly moved to Umbria in Italy. During his time in Italy, he taught and gave recitals in Rome, as well as conducting the United Nations Choir. In addition, he was a composer-in-residence at Castiglione del Lago. At a later date, he moved to France. He also taught one year at the American University in Washington, D.C. In recent years, he lived in Cairo, Egypt, where he taught orchestration and served as an accompanist for various organizations. He worked on several projects at the Cairo Opera, as well as working on various projects sponsored by the American University in Cairo. Most recently, he has divided his time between France, Great Britain, and the

Middle East. He has performed as a piano soloist, and is co-founder of the Zodiac Ensemble.

Bryan Kelly composes in a wide variety of genres. He has composed works for orchestra; chamber music; works for brass and wind ensembles; works for solo instruments and works for solo instruments accompanied by keyboard; works for keyboard; choral works, sacred and secular, *a cappella* and accompanied; opera, and musical theatre. He has written a large number of sacred choral works for the Anglican Church, including three *Magnificats/Nunc Dimittises*, a *Stabat Mater*, a *Missa Brevis*, and a *Communion Service*, as well as other service music, hymns, and carols. He also has written secular choral music. His music often incorporates traditions and musical patterns from different cultures. He is fond of using syncopation and jazzy rhythms.

## Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C

Composed in 1965 for the Southern Cathedrals Festival, the *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C* is one of Bryan Kelly's most popular sacred works. He comments that the work is based on Latin American rhythms, and those pulsating rhythms are especially noticeable in the accompaniment. The *Magnificat* is bright and energetic, with both chorus and accompaniment engaged in the syncopation. The *Nunc Dimittis* is slower, more reflective, with subdued syncopation in the accompaniment while the chorus sings in straight tempi. The *Nunc Dimittis* begins quietly, but builds intensity on the phrase *to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel*. Suddenly, the chorus returns to the energy and power of the instrumental introduction to the *Magnificat*, and a repeat of the *Glory be to the Father* section, concluding the work with power and joy.

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.  
For He hath regarded the lowliness of His hand-maiden.  
For behold, from henceforth, all generations shall call me blessed.  
For He that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is His Name.  
And His mercy is on them that fear Him, throughout all generations.  
He hath showed strength with His arm:  
He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.  
He remembering His mercy hath holpen His servant Israel,  
as He promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

### Philip Stopford (1977- )

Composer/conductor/organist Philip Stopford began his musical career as a chorister in London's Westminster Abbey. A talented youth, he won a music scholarship to the historic Bedford School, an independent public school for boys, dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Bedford School has an extensive music program.

Stopford then became an Organ Scholar, a part-time assistant organist, at Truro Cathedral, the home of the original Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols. The Organ Scholar position gives a student studying the organ the opportunity to play the organ during church services, direct

a choir, and gain administrative experience. Stopford composed service music for Truro, as well as conducting one of the choirs.

Continuing his education, Stopford studied music at Oxford's Keble College, serving as an Organ Scholar while a music student at Keble. He recruited singers for the College's Chapel Choir, which he directed. He also directed *Musica Beata*, a chamber chorus. He made two recordings of sacred music while at Keble.

Between 1999 and 2000, Stopford was the Organ Scholar at Canterbury Cathedral. He then was appointed Assistant Organist at Chester Cathedral. Between 2003 and 2010, he served as Director of Music at St. Anne's Cathedral (Anglican) in Belfast, Ireland. He recruited, trained, and directed members of the Cathedral Choir, as well as composing music for services and other events. Beginning in 2003, he composed a new Christmas work every year for the St. Anne's Cathedral Choir. In addition, he accepted commissions from individuals, churches, and choruses. Since 2003, he also has conducted *Ecclesium*, a professional chorus. At present, he is a full-time composer and conductor, creating new works by commission, and giving various workshops around the world. He is noted for his lyrical settings of Christmas and sacred texts.

## Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

*BBC Music Magazine* editors in the December 2008 issue, comment, "Though thought to find its roots in the world of medieval mystery plays, this Cornish carol was first published in 1833, when it appeared in William Sandys's volume *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern*. Describing the life of Christ in the form of a dance, the text has been set by composers from Gustav Holst to Igor Stravinsky..."

The origin of the term 'carol', shrouded in speculation, is explained in various theories. One definition relates it to ritual song and dance, beginning with the Greek *choros*, a circle dance accompanied by singing, used in dramatic performances, religious ceremonies, and fertility rites. It then became the Latin *choraula* which transformed into the medieval French *carole*, a French circle dance-song that was equally popular in court and country. The *carole* was written with a light-hearted dance rhythm, and was quite different from the more solemn music used in religious services. Most of these early carols were known as crèche dances, because they were meant to be sung as people danced around the crèche/manger.

The complete carol of *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day* has eleven stanzas, reviewing the life of Jesus from birth to ascension. The carol can be divided into sections. The first four stanzas cover the Nativity; the next three refer to Lent, and the final three describe Easter and the Ascension. Most composers prefer to set the Nativity portion only. Philip Stopford's composition follows this pattern.

The original carol text and setting, as found in the *Oxford Book of Carols* or *The New Oxford Book of Carols*, can be sung straight through or truncated at various stanzas, since it contains the same musical structure throughout. Keyte and Parrott comment, "It seems possible that 'Tomorrow shall be' was devised to be sung and danced at the conclusion of the first day of a three-day drama, translated from the Cornish... The actor portraying Christ would have sung the verses and the whole company and audience the repeats of the refrains."

Other composers have set this text, including John Gardner, David Willcocks, John Rutter, Ronald Corp, Andrew Carter, Sydney Carter, and Philip Stopford. The Gardner and Holst settings probably are the most familiar. John Gardner (1917-2011) created a light-hearted, jazzy version of the first four stanzas. Gustav Holst (1874-1934) set the entire text in an original composition using the same dance rhythm as the Cornish carol in his version, *This Have I Done For My True Love*. He sets the entire text. Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) set the text for tenor and chamber ensemble in a 12-tone style as *Ricercar II* in his composition, *Cantata*, 1952. English composer Sydney Carter (1915-2004) created a variant of the text in his 1963 original composition, *Lord of the Dance*, which he set to the tune of *Simple Gifts*.



Philip Stopford also chooses to set the Nativity portion of this carol. In his tempo marking, he comments, “Alive and dance-like.” Although the composition is dance-like, Stopford constantly changes the tempo, using syncopation and other musical formats to increase or slow the rhythm. The composition begins with sopranos paying homage to the original carol melody as set by Gustav Holst. Gavin Plumley comments, “...the swung rhythms give way to the text and snatches of melodic material being passed from voice to voice... A more hushed, less busy middle section is followed by a rousing declamatory close; the final cadence is reminiscent of Peter Warlock’s jazzy music for the festive season.”

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:  
I would my true love did so chance  
To see the legend of my play,  
To call my true love to my dance:

Refrain:

Sing O my love,  
Sing O my love,  
Sing O my love,  
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
Of her I took fleshly substance;  
Thus was I knit to man’s nature,  
To call my true love to my dance:  
Sing O my love...

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,  
So very poor, this was my chance  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass  
To call my true love to the dance:  
Sing O my love...

Then afterwards baptized I was;  
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,  
My Father’s voice heard from above,  
To call my love to the dance,  
My love, my love, my love, my love.  
This have I done for my true love.

## Lully, Lulla, Lullay

This familiar text also is known as *The Coventry Carol*, since it comes from *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors*, one of the 1392 set of medieval mystery plays performed in the town of Coventry on the Feast of Corpus Christi. The mystery plays were dramatizations of biblical stories, performed in the streets using special carts/wagons as stages, or performed in front of the Cathedral. Some of the plays were comedies; others were dramas or tragedies. Various work/artisan guilds sponsored the individual plays. In this case, the shearmen (artisans who refinished cloth) and tailors sponsored this play about the annunciation to Mary, the Nativity, the annunciation to the shepherds, the adoration by the three kings, the flight into Egypt, and the massacre of the innocents. *The Coventry Carol* text comes from near the end of the play, where Herod the King is searching for the children to slay them. A mother sings this lullaby to quiet her child so that Herod’s soldiers will not hear it cry.

Although the medieval plays were written and performed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the first extant text of this carol dates from Robert Croo’s 1534 manuscript. Keyte and Parrott note that the original manuscript of *The Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors* was destroyed in an 1879 fire at the Birmingham Free Reference Library, where it was housed. *The Coventry Carol* and *The Coventry Shepherd’s Carol* were the only two early English language texts with accompanying scores saved from the burned manuscript.

*Lully, Lulla, Lullay* is probably the most familiar and most popular of Philip Stopford’s carol settings. It is simple and straight-forward. Stopford notes, “The 16<sup>th</sup> century words associated with Coventry are haunting, depicting Herod and the slaying of children. However, the lullaby quality of the text is predominant in the music, matched by a glorious soprano descant during the last chorus.” He says also, “Just before one recording session, the carol *Lully Lulla Lullay* popped into my head. There was very little effort required. I simply went home from lunch and wrote it out. It is moments like that which inspire a composer, and the reaction it receives is very humbling.”

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

O sisters too, how may we do  
For to preserve this day?  
This poor youngling, for whom we sing  
By by, lully lullay

Herod the King, in his raging,  
Charged he had this day,  
His men of might, in his own sight,  
All young children to slay.

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

## The Wexford Carol

*The Wexford Carol* is an Irish Christmas carol, also called *The Enniscorthy Carol*, from the town of Enniscorthy in County Wexford. The text and the melody date back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. While the melody is Irish, the text is English. Dr. William Henry Grattan Flood (1857-1928), an Irish historian and musicologist copied the words and melody down from a singer near Enniscorthy. He edited them slightly and then sent the carol to the editors of the 1928 *Oxford Book of Carols* for publication. Ralph Vaughan Williams also copied the first verse from an English singer in Derbyshire. *The Wexford Carol* is one of four selections in Philip Stopford's *A Celtic Christmas...* Stopford says, "The opening soprano verse highlights the large vocal range of this melody, and the harmonically twisting lines. The simple accompaniment of the choir counterbalances this."

Good people all, this Christmas time,  
Consider well and bear in mind  
What our good God for us has done,  
in sending His beloved Son.  
With Mary holy we should pray  
To God with love this Christmas day;  
In Bethlehem upon that morn  
There was a blessed Messiah born.

The night before that happy tide  
The noble virgin and her guide  
Were long time seeking up and down  
To find a lodging in the town.  
But mark how all things came to pass:  
From ev'ry door repelled, alas!  
As long foretold, their refuge all  
Was but a humble oxen stall.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep  
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;  
To whom God's angels did appear  
Which put the shepherds in great fear.  
"Prepare and go," the angels said,  
"To Bethlehem, be not afraid;  
For there you'll find this happy morn,  
a princely Babe, sweet Jesus born."

With thankful hearts and joyful mind,  
The shepherds went the Babe to find  
And as God's angel had foretold,  
They did our Savior Christ behold.  
Within a manger He was laid,  
And by His side the virgin maid  
Attending to the Lord of Life,  
Who came on earth to end all strife.

## Will Todd (1970-)

Born in 1970 in Durham, England, composer/pianist Will Todd has been playing piano since he was three and composing since he was seven. He attended Durham School, and joined the St. Oswald's Church Choir as a boy chorister, singing with the Choir through his mid-20s. He began his composition studies with church organist David Higgins. He studied music at the University of Bristol, where he received his 1991 Honors Degree in Music and his 1993 Master's Degree.

Will Todd composes in a wide variety of genres, including many works for chorus. He is best known for his jazz mass, the *Mass in Blue*. He has composed works for orchestra, stage, oratorios, operas, a clarinet concerto, a Requiem, works for chorus and orchestra, for chorus with small ensemble accompaniment, and for a cappella chorus. He was commissioned to write the anthem, *The Call of Wisdom*, for Queen Elizabeth II's 2012 Diamond Jubilee. The Symphony Silicon Valley Chorale commissioned his 2012 *Songs of Love*, a work for chorus and jazz trio, for their

Silver Anniversary. Will Todd also is a jazz pianist and performs regularly with his Will Todd Trio.

## The Venerable Bede (673?-735)

Considered “The Father of English History”, this English Benedictine monk and most famous Anglo-Saxon scholar was born in Northumbria around 673. His early history is unknown. He may have come from a wealthy family. When he was seven, he was sent to the monastery of Monkwearmouth for his education. In 682, he transferred to the nearby monastery of Jarrow, where he remained for the rest of his life. In 692, when he was 19, he was ordained a deacon, and in 702, he became a priest. About this time he began his scholarly writing. He completed over 40 books during his lifetime, covering all areas of knowledge at that time. His books included studies of such topics as astronomy, poetry, the natural world, and the nature of time/chronology. For many years, his book on the nature of time was a standard work on the subject. He wrote the first book on the lives of the saints. His most famous book is *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, in which he documented Anglo-Saxon culture, the growth of Christianity in England, and the political events of the times. In addition, he wrote biographies of St. Cuthbert and of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow. *The New Columbia Encyclopedia* notes that he ‘was considered the most learned man in Western Europe in his day’. In 836, the Catholic Church declared him ‘venerable’. In 1899 he was made a saint. He is the only British native to be designated a Doctor of the Church. Both he and St. Cuthbert are buried in Durham Cathedral.

## Christus Est Stella

Composed in 2000 for The Durham Singers, Todd created a passionate setting of this beautiful prayer by St. Bede. The text of the prayer, along with the English translation, appears on a plaque above St. Bede’s tomb in Durham Cathedral.

*Christus est stella matutina, Alleluia;*  
*Qui nocte saeculi transacta, Alleluia;*  
*Lucem vitae sanctis promittit, Alleluia;*  
*Et pandit aeternam, Alleluia.*

Christ is the morning star, Alleluia;  
Who when the night of this world is past,  
Alleluia;  
Promises and reveals to his saints, Alleluia;  
The everlasting light of life, Alleluia.

## Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936)

G.K. Chesterton was a man of letters, a literary jack-of-all-trades, or a combination of both. This novelist, short story writer, poet, essayist, dramatist, journalist, speaker, illustrator, and literary/art critic was born in London in 1874. He first attended Colet Court School and transferred to St. Paul’s School when he was 12. He attended St. Paul’s between 1887 and 1892, especially interested in his drawing and English literature classes. He enjoyed participating in the Junior Debating Club. His first prose writings and poetry were published in the Club’s newsletter, *The Debater*, for which he wrote a number of essays on English literary figures.

After graduating from St. Paul’s, Chesterton enrolled in the Slade School of Art, planning to become an illustrator. Slade was one of the departments of University College, London, so Chesterton was able to take courses in English literature as well. He dropped out of school before finishing a degree. One of his Slade classmate’s family owned the publishing firm of Hodder and Stoughton, and his friend was able to help him get a job at the firm reviewing art books. At the same time, he began working for another publisher, T. Fisher Unwin, a job he continued until 1902. In addition, he began to work as a freelance art and literary critic. He also began to write, starting with weekly essays in various publications and branching into other forms of literary expression.

Chesterton loved to debate publicly, an activity he continued into his adult life. One of his favorite sparring partners was his good friend, the Irish playwright/essayist/social activist, George Bernard Shaw. Their differing views on the issues of the day made for wonderful entertainment. Chesterton, known as the “prince of paradox” for his zinging one-or-two liners, was a **VERY** big

man. He was about 6'2" and weighed almost 300 pounds. He was easily located in a crowd. He wore a flowing cape and a wide-brimmed, floppy hat, at the same time carrying a walking stick and smoking a cigar. George Bernard Shaw, while about the same height, was a slender man. In one of the typical exchanges between the two, Chesterton said to Shaw, "To look at you, anyone would think a famine had struck England." Shaw answered, "To look at you, anyone would think you have caused it."

A deeply religious man, Chesterton converted to Catholicism in 1922. His religious and social beliefs underlay much of his writing. And, his legacy is his prolific writing on a number of topics. He wrote eight novels. *Napoleon of Notting Hill* (1904) and *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1908) are the best known. He wrote over 200 short stories. The most popular is the Father Brown mystery series with Catholic priest and amateur detective Father Brown as the mystery solver. Chesterton also was a poet, writing over several hundred poems. *The Christ-Child* is one of his most familiar poems. In addition, Chesterton was an essayist and literary critic, writing over 4,000 essays and columns in various journals and newspapers. He wrote full-length critical studies on a number of literary figures, including Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, William Blake, George Bernard Shaw, Geoffrey Chaucer, Robert Louis Stevenson, and William Shakespeare. He wrote biographies of St. Francis and St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as other miscellaneous writings. From 1932 until his death, he was a regular commentator on BBC Radio, delivering about 40 lectures per year. He died in 1936.

## The Christ-Child

In 1997, Todd composed for the St. Oswald's Church Choir this simple, tender setting of G.K. Chesterton's loving poem.

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap,  
His hair was like a light.  
O weary, weary were the world,  
But here is all aright.

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,  
His hair was like a fire.  
O weary, weary is the world,  
But here the world's desire.

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,  
His hair was like a crown.  
And all the flowers looked up at Him,  
And all the stars looked down.

## Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Youngest of the precocious Rossetti children, Christina Rossetti was born in London in 1830. She was close to her mother, who educated her at home. Frances Rossetti had been a governess, and was well qualified to teach her children. As a young child, Christina Rossetti spoke English and Italian fluently, and read French, Latin and German. She began writing when she was seven. Her first poem was a birthday verse for her mother, written on April 27, 1842. In 1845, her father, Gabriele, became ill and had to leave his position as Professor of Italian at Kings College, London. This action put a severe financial and emotional stress on the family. Despite difficult circumstances at home, Christina Rossetti continued to write. In 1847, her Grandfather Polidori printed privately a volume of her poems.

Christina Rossetti was an attractive young woman, and her brother, Dante, as well as other members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, often used her as a model. She, her mother, and her older sister, Maria, were devout High Anglicans, and were influenced greatly by the Oxford Tract Movement, which sought to bring some Roman Catholic practices back into the Anglican Church. In 1848, she fell in love with and became engaged to painter James Collinson, one of the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. She broke off the engagement when Collinson joined the Catholic Church.

In 1850, Christina Rossetti had seven poems published in *The Germ*, using the pseudonym

“Ellen Alleyne”, as her brother, Dante, requested. Her father’s illness continued during this time. In 1853 and 1854, Christina and her mother founded a day school in the town of Frome in Somerset, hoping to support the family by this means. The school failed, and they returned to London in 1854. Her father died that same year. Christina continued to write during this time. From 1859 to 1870, she worked as a volunteer at the St. Mary Magdalene Church “house of charity”, a refuge for former prostitutes. In 1861, she took a six-week vacation to Normandy and Paris, her first trip abroad.

In 1862, Christina Rossetti fell deeply in love again, this time with linguist Charles Bagot Cayley. She rejected marriage for a second time, because Cayley had no strong religious attachment. In spite of her romantic loss, Rossetti had a successful year in 1862. She published her first collection of poetry, *Goblin Market and Other Poems*. That collection included the poem, *Remember*. *Goblin Market*, a fairy tale in verse, is considered one of Rossetti’s finest works, and established her as a major Victorian female poet. She followed that publication with *The Prince’s Progress and Other Poems*, (1866) and *A Pageant and Other Poems* (1881), both highly successful. She also published other volumes, including *Commonplace*, a book of short stories (1870), *Sing-song: A Nursery Rhyme Book* (1872), and *Speaking Likenesses*, a book of tales for children (1874). Children especially loved her simple, direct, cheerful, yet eloquent poems. They are easy to read and understand.

Between 1871 and 1873, Rossetti was stricken with a severe case of Graves’ disease, a thyroid disorder. After a long and arduous recovery, she began to write again. Between 1874 and 1893, she published a number of books on religious topics. For the last 15 years of her life, she was a recluse. She died in 1894. Her last book of poems, *New Poems*, was published posthumously in 1896.

Christina Rossetti has been compared to Emily Dickinson in terms of her influence on Victorian era poetry. Where Dickinson was more experimental in form and structure, Rossetti expressed her talents through traditional formats, such as the sonnet. She was a woman aware of the social issues of her era, and was anti-war, anti-slavery (as seen in the American South), against cruelty to animals, against the entrapment of young girls into prostitution, and against military aggression. Many of Rossetti’s poems have been set by composers, including *In The Bleak Midwinter*, *Remember*, *Love Came Down At Christmas*, *Silent Noon*, *Who Has Seen The Wind?*, *None Other Lamb*, and *Before The Paling Of The Stars*.

## None Other Lamb

Composed in 1998 for the St. Oswald’s Church Choir, Todd sets this Christina Rossetti poem in angular, chant-like phrases and tonalities,

None other Lamb, none other Name,  
None other hope in Heav’n or earth or sea,  
None other hiding place from guilt and shame,  
None beside Thee!

My faith burns low, my hope burns low;  
Only my heart’s desire cries out in me  
By the deep thunder of its want and woe,  
Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life, though I be dead;  
Love’s fire Thou art, however cold I be:  
Nor Heav’n have I, nor place to lay my head,  
Nor home, but Thee.

## Peter Warlock (pseudonym of Philip Heseltine, 1894-1930)

“Strictly speaking, there was no such person. ‘Peter Warlock’ was a persona, a Rabelaisian alter ego, created by the composer, writer and scholar Philip Heseltine—but his name is much more famous than Heseltine’s own, principally for his brilliant output of songs.” So says Calum MacDonald in his Christmas 2011 *BBC Music Magazine* article on Peter Warlock.

Born in 1894 in London’s Savoy Hotel, composer/writer/scholar/editor Peter Warlock/Philip Heseltine came from a wealthy family. His father, a lawyer, died when young Philip was two, and he was reared by his Welsh mother. He attended English public schools in the beginning, first attending a school near his home. In 1903, he entered Stone House Preparatory School, a private school in Broadstairs. A good student, he won many prizes. He had a special interest in music, inspired by a player piano. That same year, his mother remarried, and the family moved to Wales, where her second husband had property.

In 1908, Warlock was sent to Eton, where he studied general subjects, including music. His piano teacher, Colin Taylor, noted and encouraged the boy’s musical interests. Aside from his piano studies with Taylor, Warlock had no formal musical education. In 1909, he discovered the music of English composer, Frederic Delius (1862-1934). Piano teacher Taylor received permission from Eton for young Philip to attend a 1911 concert of Delius’ music, at which time the youth met the composer he so admired. They became close friends during the next seven years, with Delius serving as Warlock’s composition mentor. Warlock began creating arrangements of Delius’ music. Although distances separated them at a later time, Warlock and Delius continued regular correspondence during the rest of Warlock’s lifetime.

After Warlock finished at Eton, he spent a few months in Cologne, Germany, studying German and piano. Calum MacDonald notes that while Warlock was in Germany, the 17-year-old youth “wrote his first published article—one of the first serious studies of Schoenberg in English”. He also wrote some of his first songs. But, neither Germany studies nor piano were satisfactory, so Warlock returned to England in 1913, enrolling in the classics program at Oxford’s Christ Church College. He didn’t like the program, so dropped out after a year and enrolled at the University of London in a language, literature, and philosophy program. At the same time, he conducted an amateur orchestra in Windsor, even though he knew nothing about conducting.

Formal academic studies did not suit Warlock, and he dropped out of the University of London’s program in 1915 to take a position as a Music Critic for the *Daily Mail* newspaper. His reviews often were controversial, and Warlock lasted about four months. For a long time, Warlock had had an interest in the artistic productions of the Elizabethan period—literature, music, etc.—and since he was unemployed, he began spending time at the British Museum, examining and editing Elizabethan era music.

It was about this time that Warlock began to move in artistic circles. He met author D.H. Lawrence and thought so much of Lawrence’s work that he developed a plan to publish Lawrence’s writings, a plan that never materialized. He met many of Lawrence’s acquaintances, including composer Henry Balfour Gardiner, conductor Sir Thomas Beechem, sculptor Jacob Epstein, painter Augustus Johns, and critics Ernest Newman and Cecil Gray.’

In Summer 1915, Warlock met Minnie Lucy Channing (also known as Puma), one of Augustus Johns’ models. They became involved in a passionate love affair, and she gave birth to his child, This child was only one of several children resulting from Warlock’s various liaisons. Warlock and Puma were married in December 1916. D.H. Lawrence used them as the unlikeable models for the characters of Jacob Halliday and Minette in his novel, *Women in Love*. Warlock threatened to sue, but Lawrence changed the characters and the issue never went to court.

War was on the horizon in 1916, and Warlock was found unfit for military service. He still registered as a conscientious objector. At this time, composer/critic Cecil Gray introduced him to

Dutch composer/critic/author Bernard Van Dieran (1887-1936), who was to have almost as much influence on Warlock as Delius.

In 1916, Philip Heseltine began to compose in earnest. He used the pseudonym 'Peter Warlock' as the composer of his musical works. He used several other pseudonyms for differing purposes, including Roger A. Ramsbottom, Mortimer Cattley, and Rab Noolas (Saloon Bar spelled backwards). His scholarly work appeared under his real name.

Warlock and Puma moved to Dublin, Ireland, in 1917, since Warlock wanted to avoid a military draft. He began exploring the world of the occult, as well as various religious philosophies and Celtic life and lore. While in Ireland, he met poet W.B. Yeats. He also composed ten very fine songs within a very short period of time and sent them off to London publisher Winthrop Rogers, listing Peter Warlock as the composer. In 1918, he, as Philip Heseltine, gave a lecture on music at Dublin's Abbey Theatre. In August 1918, he returned to England.

For a long time, Warlock had thought about creating his own music journal. Winthrop Rogers already owned *The Organist and Choirmaster*, a journal he revamped and replaced with a new journal, *The Sackbut*. He invited Warlock to be the editor. The journal promoted contemporary British music and published nine issues between 1920 and 1921. The articles were controversial, whether scholarly or critical, and Rogers worried about the controversy. He stopped publishing after five issues, and Warlock published four more at his own expense before publisher John Curwen took over the publication and fired him. Neither Rogers nor Curwen ever paid Warlock for his editorial work.

In 1921, Warlock moved back to his family home in Wales, where he lived for the next three years, writing and composing. Puma left in 1922, taking their child with her. They never resumed their relationship. But, it was during this time that Warlock did some of his finest and most intense work. He created his songs cycles *Lilligay* and *The Curlew*, a setting of W.B. Yeats poems, considered his masterpiece. In 1924, *The Curlew* was chosen to represent contemporary British music at the Salzburg Festival. In addition, he composed a number of songs and choral works. He edited a number of songs from the Elizabethan era, as well as writing an important study of Elizabethan music, *The Elizabethan Ayre*. In 1922, he composed a string serenade to honor Frederic Delius' 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. He also completed a biography of Delius, which was published in 1923, and collaborated with Cecil Gray on a biography of the Italian Renaissance composer Carlo Gesualdo, *Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Venosa: Musician and Murderer*. That work was published in 1926, and in the same year published what is probably his best known work, the *Capriol Suite*, arrangements of Renaissance music.

Warlock moved to the town of Eynsford in Kent in 1925, renting a cottage with his close friend, composer E.J. Moeran. In addition to composing and writing, Warlock also spent time having wild parties with his friends. By 1928, he could no longer afford to live in Eynsford, so he moved back to Wales for a short time before renting a flat in London. Under the pseudonym Rab Noolas, he edited *Merry-Go-Down*, an anthology praising drinking. In 1927, he composed the music for the Christmas carol, *Bethlehem Down*, setting the words of his friend, poet Bruce Blunt. He and Blunt composed the carol in order to get money for their drinking sprees.

In 1927, Conductor Sir Thomas Beecham founded the Imperial League of Opera. The League published a journal, and in 1929, Beecham invited Warlock to be its editor. He also asked Delius to help him organize a festival that would honor Frederic Delius. Warlock was delighted, and took on the challenge of the journal, as well as working with Delius to find compositions that were unpublished and/or unheard. He found several such works, and wrote the program notes as well as a biography of the composer. In Summer 1929, he conducted a performance of the *Capriol Suite* in a Proms Concert, his first public conducting engagement.

The Delius Festival was a great success, but the Imperial League of Opera journal did not succeed. Beecham had to close the League in January 1930, and Warlock was unemployed once again. In

April of that year, his wealthy uncle died, leaving a fortune to be divided among members of the Heseltine family. Warlock was not included. He composed a few works in July, but not many. In September, he moved to a flat in Chelsea. He spent time at the British Museum, transcribing music by English composer Cipriani Potter, and created a solo song version of *Bethlehem Down*. He became increasingly despondent and depressed. On December 17, 1930, his landlady smelled gas coming from his flat. The doors and windows were bolted shut, so she called the police. They broke into the apartment and found Warlock deceased on the sofa. No definitive decision has ever been made as to whether or not his death was accidental or suicide. Commentators note that he put the cat out before retiring.

Peter Warlock/Philip Heseltine was a multi-talented, multi-faceted individual—composer, scholar, writer, critic. His musical output is staggering, considering he basically was self taught—over 500 published musical transcriptions and editions of compositions, a few orchestral and chamber works, choral/vocal chamber music, over 150 solo songs, a number of works for mixed chorus, and Christmas carols. In addition, he published numerous letters to the press, concert program notes, book and concert reviews, introductions to a number of books, seventy-three articles, nine books, and many other writings. His appreciation for music of earlier times opened a window to the little known compositions of the English Renaissance, as well as making available his own contemporary music, and that of his colleagues.

## Benedicamus Domino

Published in 1918, *Benedicamus Domino* is Warlock's only setting of a Latin text. This joyful carol setting of the Christmas story text finishes each stanza with exuberant praise. The last stanza, especially, demonstrates Warlock's ability to create contemporary, jazzy sounds.

<i>Procedenti puero</i>	A boy comes forth,
<i>Eya, nobis annus est!</i>	Indeed, this is our year!
<i>Virginis ex utero</i>	From the virgin's womb
<i>Gloria! Laudes!</i>	Glory! Praise!
<i>Deus homo factus est et immortalis.</i>	God is made man and immortal.
<i>Sine viri semine</i>	Without the seed of a man
<i>Eya nobis annus est!</i>	Indeed, this is our year!
<i>Natus est de virgine</i>	He is born of a virgin
<i>Gloria! Laudes!</i>	Glory! Praise!
<i>Deus homo factus est et immortalis.</i>	God is made man and immortal.
<i>Sine viri copia</i>	Without the means of a man
<i>Eya, nobis annus est!</i>	Indeed, this is our year!
<i>Natus est ex Maria</i>	He is born of Mary
<i>Gloria! Laudes!</i>	Glory! Praise!
<i>Deus homo factus est et immortalis.</i>	God is made man and immortal.
<i>In hoc festo determino</i>	On this appointed Feast Day
<i>Eya, nobis annus est!</i>	Indeed, this is our year!
<i>Benedicamus Domino!</i>	Let us bless the Lord!
<i>Gloria! Laudes!</i>	Glory! Praise!
<i>Deus homo factus est et immortalis.</i>	God is made man and immortal.

## Adam Lay Ybounden

This anonymous 15<sup>th</sup> century carol is found in the British Library's Sloane Manuscript. The text refers to Adam's consumption of the apple, an act that kept mankind in bondage until the coming of Jesus. However, if Adam HADN'T eaten the apple, Mary never would have become the Queen of Heaven. Keyte and Parrott comment that no contemporary settings of the text exist, but that



many 20<sup>th</sup> century composers set it including Peter Warlock, John Ireland, Benjamin Britten (entitled *Deo Gracias* in his *Ceremony of Carols*), and Boris Ord. Warlock originally set this text as a solo song with accompaniment. Arrangers also have created various choral settings.

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

And all was for an apple,  
An apple that he took,  
As clerkès finden  
Written in their book.

Né had the apple taken been  
The apple taken been,  
Né had never our lady  
Abeen heavené queen.

Blessèd be the time  
That apple taken was.  
Therefore we moun (*must*) singen  
Deo Gracias!

*Adam (and through him all mankind) lay constrained,  
Bound by a tie, a cord (by the sin which Adam had committed in the Garden of Eden).  
Humanity lived with this sin for four thousand winters (until The Messiah was born.)  
It all was because of an apple, the apple that Adam took,  
As clerics and scholars have discovered written in their book (the Bible?)*

*If Adam hadn't eaten the apple (to set the stage for the coming of The Messiah),  
Mary never would have become Queen of Heaven (Mother of Jesus, the Redeemer.)*

*Blessed was that time when Adam ate the apple (because it led to the coming of The Messiah).  
Thus we may sing, Thanks be to God!*

### Three Carols

Warlock's *Three Carols* were not composed as a set. Each was composed as an individual composition. *Tyrley, Tyrlow* was composed in 1922, and *Balulalow* was composed in 1919. Ralph Vaughan Williams, conductor of the Bach Choir in 1923, suggested that Warlock compose a set of three carols. Warlock composed *The Sycamore Tree* and added to the other two to create the trilogy.

### Tyrley, Tyrlow

*Tyrley, Tyrlow* is an anonymous 16<sup>th</sup> century carol. Warlock sets the text in a rollicking, 6/8 tempo, as alternating tenor/bass and soprano/alto voices tell the story of the annunciation and the trip to Bethlehem to see the newborn child, ending the carol with good wishes in the joy of the season.

About the field they pipèd right,  
So merrily the shepherds began to blow.  
A-down from heaven that is so high.  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

Of angels there came a company  
With merry songs and melody,  
The shepherds anon gan them aspy  
(*began to see them*).  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

The shepherds hied them to Bedlem  
(*took themselves to Bethlehem*)  
To see that blessèd sun his beam.  
And there they found that glorious leme.  
(*radiant light*)  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

Now pray we to that mekè child,  
(*humble child*)  
And to his mother that is so mild,  
The which was never defiled  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

That we may come unto his bliss,  
Where joy shall never miss.  
Then may we sing in Paradise.  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

I pray you all that be here  
For to sing and make good cheer  
In the worship of God this year.  
Tyrley, tyrlow.

## Balulalow

*Baloo* and *Balulalow* mean *lullaby* in old Scottish. Benjamin Britten (in *A Ceremony of Carols*) and Peter Warlock use only the last two verses of this 1567 Scottish translation of Martin Luther's Christmas Eve hymn for children, *Vom Himmel Hoch*, a lullaby to the Christ Child. James, John and Robert Wedderburn, three brothers, were Scottish poets and religious reformers, who lived from the latter part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup>. All three brothers attended St. Andrews University in Scotland. They were iconoclasts, and all three were accused of heresy at different times, fleeing to France and Germany. John Wedderburn went to Wittenberg, Germany, where he met the German reformers and became acquainted with Lutheran hymns, which he brought back to Scotland. He is considered one of the major authors of the 1567 *Compendious Book of Psalms and Spiritual Songs*, which contains (among other things) hymns translated from German, metrical versions of the Psalms, and a variety of ballads and satirical poems against the Catholic church and clergy. His brother, Robert, also was involved in the publication of this work.

Warlock first published this song in 1919 as a unison/solo song with piano. It is one of the most gentle and popular of his Christmas carol settings. A number of other composers have set this text, including American Virgil Thomson.

O my deare hert, young Jesu sweat,  
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,  
And I sall rock thee to my hert,  
And never mair from thee depart.  
But I sall praise thee evermoir  
With sanges sweet unto thy gloir:  
The knees of my hert sall I bow,  
And sing that richt Balulalow.

James, John and Robert Wedderburn

Warlock varies the text very slightly:

O my dear hert, young Jesus sweet,  
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,  
And I sall rock thee in my hert  
And never mair from thee depert.  
But I sall praise thee evermore  
With sangis sweet unto thy glor.  
The knees of my hert sall I bow,  
And sing that richt Balulalow.

Translated as:

*O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet  
Prepare thy cradle in my spirit,  
And I shall rock thee in my heart  
And never more from thee depart.  
But I shall praise thee evermore  
With sweet songs to thy glory:  
The knees of my heart shall I bow  
And sing that good lullaby.*

Martin Luther's original text:

*Ach, mein herzliebtes Jesulein,  
Mach dir ein rein sanft Bettelein,  
Zu ruben in mein's Herzens Schrein,  
Dass ich nimmer vergesse dein.*

*Davon ich allzeit froehlich sei,  
Zu springen, singen immer frei  
Das rechte Susannine schon,  
Mit Herzen Lust den suessen Ton.*

Translated by Catherine Winkworth in 1855:

*Ah, dearest Jesus, holy child,  
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,  
Here in my poor heart's inmost shrine,  
That I may evermore be thine.*

*My heart for very joy doth leap,  
My lips no more can silence keep,  
I too must sing, with joyful tongue,  
That sweetest ancient cradle song.*

These texts would fit Peter Warlock's music for *Balulalow*.

## The Sycamore Tree

The text for this anonymous carol is one of many that refer to ships (usually three) appearing on Christmas Day, carrying a combination of Jesus, Joseph, Mary, and/or various saints. The ships might be sailing to or from Bethlehem (a land-locked town, but this is a story). The most familiar English language version of this carol is *I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In*. The story may be based on the legend of The Three Wise Men, the Magi, thus the three ships. One story tells of the bones of the Magi being located by Empress Helena, (mother of Constantine the Great and discoverer of the True Cross), who had them sent across the Mediterranean Sea to Constantinople. Later, St. Eustorgius (Archbishop of Milan, 343-349) took them to Milan. In 1164, they were a gift to Germany's Cologne Cathedral from the German Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick 1 Barbarossa (1122-1190), who confiscated them from Milan. The ship might refer to the ship sailing up the Rhine River to deliver the relics to the Cathedral.

The bones of the supposed Magi reside at Cologne Cathedral to this day. The Shrine of the Three Kings is the largest reliquary in the Western world and is located behind the high altar. The casket was opened in 1864, and there were bones that could be assembled into three almost complete bodies—a youth, a young man, and an older man, along with 12th century coins.

In Warlock's version of the story, the inhabitants of the ships are the Virgin Mary and Christ. Warlock again uses a 6/8, dance-like tempo, dividing the story telling between tenors/basses, and sopranos/altos. Several versions of the carol have the phrase:

He did whistle and she did sing  
And all the bells on earth did ring.

Warlock finishes the carol with wishes for Christmas joy and a happy New Year.

As I sat under a sycamore tree,  
I looked me out upon the sea  
A Christmas day in the morning.  
I saw three ships aailing there,  
The Virgin Mary and Christ they bare  
A Christmas day in the morning.

He did whistle and she did sing,  
And all the bells on earth did ring,  
A Christmas day in the morning.  
And now we hope to taste your cheer,  
And wish you all a happy new year,  
A Christmas day in the morning.

### William Walton (1902-1983)

Born in 1902, William Walton is one of England's noted composers who appeared during the era of musical giants Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten. The son of a choir conductor and a singer, he sang in his father's church choir and at age 10 won a scholarship as a chorister in Oxford University's Christ Church Cathedral. Enrolled as a cathedral choir student until 1918, he sang in the choir and studied violin and piano, as well as starting to compose music. *A Litany*, his choral work written in 1916 and revised in 1930, is a remarkably mature work for a 14-year-old youth. In 1918, Walton entered Oxford University but left in 1920 before receiving his degree. He spent a lot of time in the university library, studying music of such contemporaries as Debussy, Richard Strauss, Schönberg, Ravel, Prokofiev and Stravinsky, as well as learning about orchestration. While at Oxford, he met the literary Sitwell family (Osbert, Edith and Sacheverell), who invited him to live in their home free of charge. He did so for more than ten years, spending much of his time composing music. He also was able to attend the ballet and opera and go to jazz clubs. Support from the Sitwells allowed him to compose as well as to meet such musical and literary luminaries as Ernest Ansermet, Peter Warlock, Frederick Delius, Igor Stravinsky, George Gershwin, T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. He began his first major work, a piano quartet, as an Oxford student, completing it for performance in 1923. During the mid-1920s, Walton played piano with a jazz band for a year. *Façade*, an instrumental setting for a concurrent

reading of Edith Sitwell's poetry, was presented to the public in 1926, and became popular almost immediately. It established Walton's reputation as a talented composer. His concert overture *Portsmouth Point* (1926), expressive *Viola Concerto* (1928-1929) and his dramatic cantata, *Belshazzar's Feast* (1930-1931), enhanced his growing reputation.

In the early 1930s, Walton left the Sitwell circle to explore other opportunities. He had several other patrons, including Siegfried Sassoon, Mrs. Samuel Courtauld and Lady Alice Wimbourne. At this time, in addition to composing in traditional forms of music, he began composing scores for radio and for motion pictures, later composing for television. He would compose for "the media" throughout the rest of his career. His motion picture scores include *Escape Me Never*, *The Foreman Went to France*, *The First of the Few*, *As You Like It*, *Major Barbara*, *Henry V* (nominated for an Academy Award), *Richard III*, *The Battle of Britain*, and *Three Sisters*. Television scores include *March: A History of the English-speaking People* (ABC-TV), *Preludes*, *Call Signs and End Music* for Granada TV, and Title Music for the *BBC Shakespeare Series*. Between 1947-1954, he composed an opera, *Troilus and Cressida*. The opera was a success at its Covent Garden premiere, as well as in New York and San Francisco productions, although it was not a success at La Scala. It was revised several times, the last between 1972-1976. His second opera, *The Bear*, was completed between 1965-1967.

Walton excelled in many different genres. He was known for his stately ceremonial music, similar to that of Edward Elgar. He wrote one of his most popular works, the *Crown Imperial March*, for the coronation of George VI in 1937 and the *Orb and Sceptre March* for the coronation of Elizabeth II. He also wrote very expressive works for solo instruments, including the *Viola Concerto* (1928-1929), *Violin Concerto* (1936-1939), and *Cello Concerto* (1955-1956), chamber music, such as his *String Quartet in A Minor* and the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, two symphonies and other orchestral music, music for band and brass ensembles, choral music and solo vocal music. He was knighted in 1951, and died in 1983.

## All This Time

William Walton's 1970 setting of this 16<sup>th</sup> century carol text resembles an early English carol in tempo and structure. It also has a *macaronic* refrain (in English and Latin): "All this time this song is best: *Verbum caro factum est*," i.e., "All this time this song is best: the word is made flesh." The refrain is set in *hemiolas*, a syncopated rhythm typical of Renaissance dance and dance-based music.

Refrain: All this time this song is best: '*Verbum caro factum est*.'

This night there is a child yborn

That sprang out of Jesse's thorn; (*Jesse, son of Obed and father of David, from whom the Messiah descends*)

We must sing and say therefor,

All this time this song is best: '*Verbum caro factum est*.' (The word is made flesh)

Jesus is the childes name,

And Mary mild is his dame;

All our sorrow shall turn to game:

All this time this song is best: '*Verbum caro factum est*.'

It fell upon high midnight:

The starres shone both fair and bright;

The angels sang with all their might,

All this time this song is best: '*Verbum caro factum est*.'

Now kneel we down on our knee,

And pray we to the Trinity

Our help, our succour for to be;

All this time this song is best: '*Verbum caro factum est*.'

## What Cheer?

William Walton's *What Cheer?* was commissioned for the initial volume of Oxford University Press' choral series, *Carols for Choirs*. This hugely popular series, *Carols for Choirs* 1-5, plus *100 Carols for Choirs*, contains mainly English language Christmas carols, hymns, and anthems, and is used all over the world by church choirs, choruses, schools, and singers who want to go Christmas caroling. The initial editors were Reginald Jaques, conductor of The Bach Choir, and David Willcocks, Organist at King's College, Cambridge. Later editors include composers John Rutter and Bob Chilcott.

Jacques and Willcocks asked William Walton to composer a carol for that 1961 first volume (known to singers as The Green Book). Walton took his text from Richard Hill's early 16<sup>th</sup> century commonplace book, a notebook with all sorts of jottings, including transcripts of late medieval poems and carols. Walton's setting of this anonymous text follows the joyous spirit of the words—happiness for the wonder of Christmas, joy in family and friends, and best wishes for the New Year.

The members of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus follow that text and wish you happiness of the season, joy in family and friends, and best wishes for the New Year.

What cheer? Good cheer!  
Be merry and glad this good New Year!  
'Lift up your hearts and be glad  
In Christ's birth', the angel bade,  
Say each to other, if any be sad:  
'What cheer? What cheer?'

Now the King of heav'n his birth hath take,  
Joy and mirth we ought to make:  
Say each to other, for his sake:  
'What cheer? What cheer?'  
I tell you all with heart so free;  
Right welcome, welcome ye be to me:  
Be glad and merry, for charity!  
What cheer? Good cheer!  
Be merry and glad this good New Year!

## Program notes by Helene Whitson

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# PERFORMERS

## Robert Gurney, Music Director

Music Director Robert Gurney is Organist-Choir Director at San Francisco's historic Trinity Episcopal Church, Assistant Organist at San Francisco's St. Mary's Cathedral, Organist at Marin County's Temple Rodef Sholom, and one of the Museum Organists at the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. Mr. Gurney is the Co-Founder of the San Francisco Lyric Chorus and served as Music Director from its inception in 1995 through Summer 2009.

A resident of San Francisco since 1978, he has been an active church musician, organ recitalist, vocal coach, and has served as Interim Assistant Organist at Grace Cathedral, and Assistant Conductor-Accompanist for the San Francisco Choral Society, the Sonoma City Opera and the Contra Costa Chorale.

A native of Ohio, he received his education at Youngstown State University and the Cleveland Institute of Music, studying conducting with William Slocum. At Youngstown, he served as Student Assistant Conductor of the Concert Choir that won first place in a college choir competition sponsored by the BBC. In Summer 1997, he was invited to participate in an international choral music festival Music Of Our Time, held in Parthenay, France, and directed by John Poole, Conductor Emeritus, BBC Singers. He studied again with Maestro Poole in a June 2003 workshop sponsored by the San Francisco Lyric Chorus.

Robert Gurney has directed the San Francisco Lyric Chorus in innovative performances of little-known works by composers of exceptional interest. The Chorus' *Discovery Series* has introduced an eight-part *Ave Maria* by Tomás Luis de Victoria, the West Coast premiere of *Four Motets To The Blessed Virgin Mary*, by Robert Witt, music of Amy Beach, including her monumental *Grand Mass in E Flat* and the *Panama Hymn*, written for San Francisco's 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, premieres of works by San Francisco composer Kirke Mechem, and the San Francisco Lyric Chorus' 10th Anniversary commissioned work, *This Grand Show Is Eternal*, a setting of naturalist John Muir's texts, by Illinois composer Lee R. Kesselman.

## Jonathan Dimmock, Organ and Piano

Organist Jonathan Dimmock is well-known internationally as a recitalist, choral conductor, accompanist, continuo player, ensemble musician and church organist. A graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and Yale University, he has held musical posts at Westminster Abbey (London), and three American cathedrals: St. John the Divine (New York), St. Mark's (Minneapolis), and Grace (San Francisco). He is currently the organist for the San Francisco Symphony, and Organist & Choir Director at St. Ignatius Church and Congregation Sherith Israel (both in San Francisco). A Grammy Award winner for his work with the San Francisco Symphony, he has recorded more than 35 CDs and toured widely on five continents. He has been interviewed and featured on numerous radio and television stations including National Public Radio, Radio France, BBC3, ABC (Australia), MTV2 (Budapest), BCC (Barbados), and SABC (South Africa). His teachers and mentors include Gillian Weir, Simon Preston, Jean Langlais, Peter Hallock, Haskell Thomson, William Porter, Thomas Murray, Harald Vogel, J. Franklin Clark, Paul Halley, Naji Hakim, and Frédéric Blanc. He is co-founder of the highly acclaimed American Bach Soloists, founding director of Artists' Vocal Ensemble (AVE), and founding President of Resonance, using music in international conflict resolution. He is deeply committed to healing our broken world through the beauty of music, and talks eagerly on the subjects of spirituality, psychology, aesthetics, and the Arts. He has accompanied the San Francisco Lyric Chorus in performances of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Messe de Minuit pour Noël*, Jean Langlais' *Messe Solennelle*, André Campra's *Requiem*, and Maurice Duruflé's *Requiem*.



## Kevin Baum, Tenor

Kevin Baum currently sings as a choirman with the choir of men and boys at Grace Cathedral; he also sings as cantor at St. Ignatius Catholic Church. Kevin is a founding member of Clerestory, a nine-voice male ensemble which will begin its eighth season this fall and an auxiliary member of the Philharmonia Baroque Chorale. He has performed with many other ensembles including Schola Adventus, Pacific Collegium, Artists' Vocal Ensemble (AVE,) the Sanford Dole Ensemble. He is a sixteen-year veteran of the ensemble Chanticleer. Mr. Baum has been the tenor soloist in the San Francisco Lyric Chorus performances of Marc Antoine Charpentier's *In nativitatem Domini canticum, H314*, Joseph Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, Michael Haydn's *Requiem*, Anton Bruckner's *Mass No. 1 in D minor*, Thomas Tallis' *Missa puer natus est nobis*, Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, Ludwig Altman's *Choral Meditation*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Missa Solemnis, K. 337*, Gaspar Fernandes' *Xicochi, Xicochi* and *Tleicantimo Choquiliya*, J. David Moore's *Annua Gaudia*, Chen Yi's *Arirang*; Zhou Long's *Words of the Sun*, Se Enkhbayar's *Naiman Sharag*, John Blow's *Begin the Song*, the World Premiere of Lee R. Kesselman's *This Grand Show Is Eternal*, the West Coast Premiere of Robert Train Adams' *It Will Be Summer—Eventually*, J. David Moore's *How Can I Keep From Singing*, George Frideric Handel's *Te Deum in A Major*, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore, K. 339*, Franz Schubert's *Mass in G*, Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*, Felix Mendelssohn's *Te Deum*, John Corigliano's *Fern Hill*, and the baritone soloist in Johannes Brahms' *Ein Deutesches Requiem*.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is chartered by the State of California as a non-profit corporation and approved by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501c(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible as charitable donations.

The San Francisco Lyric Chorus is a completely self-supporting independent organization, with a budget of about \$60,000 per year. Chorus members pay dues of \$100 for each four-month concert season, providing about a quarter of our income. Ticket sales account for another quarter. But half of our income comes from donations made by chorus members and by friends and supporters like those of you attending this concert.

Monetary gifts of any amount are therefore most welcome. All contributors will be acknowledged in our concert programs. For further information, e-mail [info@sflc.org](mailto:info@sflc.org) or call (415) 721-4077. Donations also may be mailed to the following address: Treasurer, San Francisco Lyric Chorus, 1824 Arch St., Berkeley, CA 94709.

### Adopt-a-Singer

For as little as \$30, you can support the San Francisco Lyric Chorus by “adopting” your favorite singer. For \$100 or more, you can sponsor an entire section (soprano, alto, tenor, or bass!) For \$150 or more, you can adopt our fabulous Music Director, Robert Gurney.

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Our performances often require us to hire professional singers as soloists, as well as other professional musicians. You may sponsor our engagement of such musicians for a special donation of \$400.

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The San Francisco Lyric Chorus sends a warm, special thanks to:

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## *Adopt-A-Singer Contributions* (December 2013)

Julie Alden adopts *the Bass section*

Jim & Carolyn Losee adopt *the Tenor section*

Lois Kelley adopts *the First Soprano section*

Valerie Howard adopts *the Second Soprano section*

Anonymous adopts *the Alto section*

Connie & Ed Henry adopt *their "wonderful, talented daughter-in-law, Sophie Henry"*

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## *Thank you!*

*The listed choristers wish to thank those individuals who have inspired our efforts and have supported our singing commitment to the Lyric Chorus.*

### **Shirley Drexler**

*Thank you, Mary Lou, for the treasured transportation which you graciously provide me.*

*Thank you, Valerie for your inspired duet and piano playing.*

### **Nanette Duffy**

*Good luck in New York, Joe! The tenors will miss you!*

### **Sophie Henry**

*Thank you, Dylan & Evelyne for letting me escape every Monday night!*

### **Anthony Vrondisis**

*Thanks to Janet Houser, Margaret Gordon, Jano Kornfeld and Cathy Witzling for all you've done!*

### **Kristen Schultz Oliver**

*Thanks, David, my light & love, for being the best support a singer could hope for.*

*Thanks, Mom & Dad, for the piano lessons early in life & coming to all my performances growing up*

*Thanks, Jenny, for visiting especially to attend this concert*

*Thanks to Karen Stella, for being the most amazing alto rep and role model for the rest of us*

*Thanks, Bill & Helene, for all you do*

*Thanks, Robert, for your artistry & the inspiration!*

### **Helene Whitson**

*What fun we have had, bringing this beautiful holiday music to life! Thank you to all our wonderful singers who have studied and worked hard so that we can share this joyful and inspiring music with our audience members! It has been such a treat to explore this lovely repertoire. Without you, there would be no music!*

*Our chorus wouldn't be what it is without our wonderful and inspiring Music Director, Robert Gurney. Thank you, Robert, for your passionate devotion to music, and your sensitive and skillful teaching and conducting. You challenge us to be the very best we can be, so that we can share beautiful music with our community.*

*Thank you, Bill for everything. You are bedrock, a foundation that helps the SFLC be the very best it can be. Thank you for all that you do for the chorus. You make an incredible difference!*

*We couldn't do what we do without the fabulous support, ideas, and work of our Board of Directors. We are so grateful to have such a dedicated group of volunteers, willing to share their time, knowledge, and expertise so that we can bring wonderful choral music programs to our audiences.*

*Thank you also to our dedicated fabulous Section Representatives. They are our eyes and ears, working with their sections and our Music Director to create beautiful music.*

*Thank you to our wonderful donors and contributors and our marvelous audiences, who make our concerts possible. We appreciate your confidence in us and in our music, and we look forward to sharing exciting music with you in the future.*

*Thank you to our valiant volunteers, who generously give of their time to help with our chorus tasks. All the work that you do makes a difference.*

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Mary Lou Myers  
Liz Podolinsky  
Ellen Riotto  
Kathryn Singh  
Helene Whitson #  
Laura Wolfram

## Altos

Amy Bilyk  
Annette Bistrup  
Carol Douglass  
Shirley Drexler  
Nora Klebow #  
Barbara Landt  
Kristen Schultz Oliver #  
Karen Stella \*#

## Tenors

Kevin Baum +  
Nanette Duffy  
Joe Goetz  
Jim Losee \*  
Reuben Schwartz  
Anthony Vrondisis

## Basses

Albert Alden  
Jim Bishop #  
Kelly Corso +  
Matthew Lulofs +  
Jyri Tuulos  
Bill Whitson #

# Board of Directors

\* Section Representative

+ professional singer





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