

THE CHOIR OF



**ST JOHN'S
CAMBRIDGE**

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
MASS IN G MINOR
NETHSINGHA



MASS IN G MINOR

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Mass in G Minor

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| 1 | Kyrie | [4.42] |
| 2 | Gloria in excelsis | [4.18] |
| 3 | Credo | [6.53] |
| 4 | Sanctus – Osanna I – Benedictus – Osanna II | [5.21] |
| 5 | Agnus Dei | [4.41] |
| 6 | Te Deum in G | [7.44] |
| 7 | O vos omnes | [5.59] |
| 8 | Antiphon (from <i>Five Mystical Songs</i>) | [3.15] |
| 9 | Rhosymedre | [4.40] |
| 10 | O taste and see | [1.46] |
| 11 | Prayer to the Father of Heaven | [5.39] |
| 12 | O, clap your hands | [3.20] |
| 13 | Lord, thou hast been our refuge | [9.17] |

David Blackadder *trumpet*

Total timings: [67.32]

THE CHOIR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
JOSEPH WICKS ORGAN
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VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: MASS IN G MINOR

Vaughan Williams wrote of music as a means of 'stretching out to the ultimate realities through the medium of beauty', enabling an experience of transcendence both for creator and receiver. Yet – even at its most personal and remote, as often on this disc – his church music also stands as a public testament to his belief in the role of art within the earthly realm of a community's everyday life. He embraced the church as a place in which a broad populace might regularly encounter a shared cultural heritage, participating actively, whether by singing or listening, in practical music-making. Such social concerns help us to fathom why the 'confirmed atheist' described by philosopher Bertrand Russell devoted so much attention to the composition not simply of liturgical music, but of a host of works associated in some way with the Judeo-Christian tradition.

It is surely no coincidence, though, that it was only after active service during the First World War that Vaughan Williams turned in earnest to the cultivation of liturgical music. Following his demobilization in 1919, a

string of works broadly appropriate to worship appeared in quick succession (more than half of the music recorded here emerged during this period). Some pieces were commissioned for specific events, or were inspired by particular performers. But the role of the War in prompting the intensified devotional fervour apparent in many of the works he composed in its wake should not be overlooked. As a wagon orderly, one of Vaughan Williams's more harrowing duties was the recovery of bodies wounded in battle. Ursula Vaughan Williams, his second wife and biographer, wrote that such work 'gave Ralph vivid awareness of how men died'. It is perhaps unsurprising that in many of the texts to which he turned after the 1918 Armistice, the fragility and weakness of humanity becomes a recurrent theme.

Although Vaughan Williams supposedly drifted toward agnosticism as the inter-war years progressed, he was never a practicing Christian, and recognized the validity of all religious faiths. His heightened exploration of Christian texts, symbols, and images after the War might rather be understood both as an attempt to grapple anew with what might lie, as he put it, 'beyond sense and knowledge',

and to search for consolation in religious and other inherited traditions amid a world irrevocably changed.

The influence of sixteenth-century English church music has long been heard in the searing, luminous **Mass in G minor** (1920–21). Doubtless its association with Richard Terry's choir at Westminster Cathedral (who gave the work its first liturgical performance in 1923) has reinforced such assessments. Terry had garnered a reputation during the first two decades of the century as a pioneering presence in the revival of music by Tallis and Byrd, among others. Yet, Vaughan Williams's Mass is stylistically more eclectic than has generally been acknowledged, as recent scholarship suggests. If its imitative textures and contrasts between soloists and full choir betray a debt to Renaissance traditions, its peculiar modal harmony takes inspiration from Debussy's music. But the Mass is above all a major landmark in the emergence of a new direction in Vaughan Williams's own, increasingly individualistic style, already apparent in such works as the *Four Hymns* for viola, tenor, and, piano (1914). The timeless oscillations heard at the beginning of the Sanctus recall the opening of *A Pastoral*

Symphony (1916–21), which casts a long shadow over much of the interwar music. Extreme dynamics, such as the *pppp* found in the Credo, tell of a heightened search for expressive intensity. The Agnus Dei brings the work to a close with a suddenly impassioned, urgent plea for peace.

The **Te Deum in G** (1928) adopts an altogether more public tone, suitable to its composition for the enthronement of Cosmo Lang as Archbishop of Canterbury. The choir sings first in celebratory unison, after which antiphonal writing displays a characteristic play with space and resonance. A flowing 6/4 section brings contrast (with 'Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory'). In noisier moments, this music prefigures the slightly later *Benedicite* (1929), especially in its almost strident attempts to muster exuberance. Muted prayers form a reticent and rather ambivalent conclusion, of a kind often found in Vaughan Williams's post-War works.

The pale, mysterious motet **O vos omnes** (1922) is frequently heard as a companion piece to the Mass. A setting of words from the Book of Lamentations, it was first performed during Holy Week in 1922. The verses are

sung by upper voices, punctuated by a solo alto's expressive declamations. With 'Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum' tenors and basses are heard, darkly, for the first time. It is both a consoling and a disquieting entry.

Antiphon (1911) brings the ardent George Herbert settings, *Five Mystical Songs*, to their conclusion, shifting to a more immediate, present, joyous realm than that traversed earlier. The organ's introduction mounts from a pregnant murmur into an energetic pealing of bells. The musical evocation of bells is often heard in Vaughan Williams's works, especially at moments of conclusion. As in real life, they issue a call to act – to gather, to respond. They function here to underscore the choral culmination (where in previous songs the choir is limited to supporting a baritone's solos). Voices and bells thus work self-consciously to enact the demands of the text – 'Let all the world in every corner sing'.

From *Three Preludes Founded on Welsh Hymn Tunes*, **Rhosymedre** (1920) was dedicated to Alan Gray, Vaughan Williams's erstwhile organ teacher. Perhaps Gray had encouraged a student for whom the instrument inspired limited interest, prompting the beneficent

celebration of musical craftsmanship conveyed as this prelude unfolds. The tune upon which it is based was composed by John David Edwards (1805–85), vicar of Rhosymedre, North Wales, and had appeared in *The English Hymnal*, a project to which Vaughan Williams devoted considerable time as editor between 1904 and 1906. After a simple introduction, the hymn tune enters in the tenor voice, thereafter singing more roundly in an upper register. A quiet repeat of the opening communicates a sense of endurance and security in cyclical return.

O Taste and See (1952) was composed for the Coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953. The fragile, angelic treble solo with which it begins is a poignant reinterpretation of a melodic fragment present in many of Vaughan Williams's early works, where it often appears in a more robust and jubilant guise. It is derived, in turn, from the hymn tune 'Sine Nomine', composed by Vaughan Williams for *The English Hymnal*.

Prayer to the Father of Heaven (1948) sets the texts of John Skelton (c. 1463–1529), to whose earthy, ribald poems Vaughan Williams had earlier been drawn in his 1935 choral suite

Five Tudor Portraits. This work is different both in scale and tone, however. Composed to mark the centenary of Hubert Parry's birth, the eloquent dedication pays homage to 'the memory of my master, Hubert Parry, not as an attempt palely to reflect his incomparable art, but in the hope that he would have found in this motet (to use his own words) "something characteristic"'. It is indeed difficult to discern the influence of Parry's music here. But in the beautiful, strange harmonic shifts, enlisted in the service of a nuanced and individual response to the text, it becomes a fitting tribute.

O clap your hands (1920) is the first of the two large motets composed by Vaughan Williams immediately after the War (the other forms a conclusion to this disc). Its clarity and simplicity mark the turn toward a new economy of means that characterized much of his music at this time.

More ambitious both in design and in expressive intensity, **Lord, thou hast been our Refuge** (1921) combines a setting of Psalm 90 (in the prayer-book version) with the first verse of Isaac Watts's poetic paraphrase of the same psalm. To the prose text Vaughan Williams devotes a dark, modal plainchant; to Watts's poem he assigns the

lighter, diatonic 'St Anne' hymn tune (which, as combined with Watts's words, had been included in *Hymns Ancient & Modern* in 1861). The quotation of a popular hymn tune is a familiar trope in Vaughan Williams's work, and points to his participatory ethos: he would almost certainly have expected listeners to recognize the tune and to follow its progression toward the final, blazing apotheosis (reminiscent of a similar 'breakthrough' moment in the earlier choral work, *Toward the Unknown Region* (1905–6)).

The hymn tune's first iteration, in response to the opening chant, appears *pianissimo*, as though at a distance. An organ interlude later ushers in a more determined repetition of the opening chant, the choir now united. A climactic restatement of the hymn, reinforced by the trumpet, is almost unbearably dignified, and leads to the choir's final, celebratory counterpoint – an aptly fecund musical response to the text's pleas 'O prosper Thou the work of our hands'. In its trajectory from darkness into light, this motet conveys a sense both of strength in the shared endurance of adversity, and, as so often in Vaughan Williams's work, of salvation in the very act of making music.

Ceri Owen

CONDUCTOR'S REFLECTIONS

No bombs can rob us of the human voice.

The voice can be made the medium of the best and deepest human emotion.

These quotations from Vaughan Williams date from the Second World War and from 40 years earlier. Of the eight friends who volunteered together for the First World War, six were killed (including his friend and fellow composer, George Butterworth.) Much of the music on this disc dates from the years immediately after the 1918 Armistice; the recording is released as we commemorate the centenary of that event. I hope the music will resonate with listeners of many nationalities. One thinks of the words of Eric Milner-White, written for the first King's College Christmas Eve service in 1918, just weeks after Armistice Day: *Let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number*. Vaughan Williams returned from the war a different man – profoundly damaged and altered by the horror, desolation and futility of what he had witnessed.

For me it was a revelation to learn of the way in which the composer may have actively sought to create music that was *not* goal-directed, at least not in a conventional sense. Far from the oft-quoted Warlock description of Vaughan Williams's style as being *like a cow looking over a gate*, in fact the meandering phrases can conjure up a profound sense of the mental state of a person with shell-shock. In his orchestral music, Vaughan Williams invests solo viola lines with personal significance; could the solitary altos at the start and end of *Kyrie* represent the composer himself, lost in a destroyed landscape, such as those where he had to collect up body-parts after battle? Many have written of the bleakness in Vaughan Williams's music; at times there is almost *no* hope. I find the ending of *O vos omnes* especially emotive; after much searching and meandering, the startling harmonies and silences create both a sense of utter desolation and also an intense, unfulfilled longing for stability. The author of *Lamentations* bewails the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the desertion of the city by God. These sentiments prove singularly appropriate to the composer striving for meaning after the Great War. The music is left hanging, as at the end of

A Pastoral Symphony. William Byrd had set a similar text some 300 years earlier in *Civitas sancti tui*, with comparable effect and personal significance. The Israelites' yearning for their holy city served as a metaphor for Byrd's longing for a return to Catholicism.

At the end of 1907 and the beginning of 1908 Vaughan Williams spent three months in Paris studying orchestration with Ravel, after Elgar had declined to find the time to teach Vaughan Williams. It was far-sighted of Vaughan Williams to have gone to Ravel at a time when Ravel was considered by British composers to be a controversial, avant-garde figure. Vaughan Williams's former teacher, Parry, would have been astonished and disapproving! Of his study with Ravel, Vaughan Williams wrote: *he showed me how to orchestrate in points of colour rather than in lines. Manuel Rosenthal quoted Ravel as saying orchestration is when you give the feeling of the two pedals at the piano; that means that you are building an atmosphere of sound around the written notes - that's orchestration*. It is also a felicitous description of what one is trying to achieve as a conductor of choral music within the liturgy, though one is not just seeking to build

an atmosphere of *sound* around the notes but also a sense of the divine. I feel sure that what he learnt from Ravel later helped the composer to create the extraordinarily imaginative and numinous choral textures of *Mass in G minor*. As an extension of orchestration Vaughan Williams loved the acoustical, atmospheric possibilities in buildings like Gloucester Cathedral and utilised them in such works as *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. I have sought to make use of spatial effects in our Chapel during the Mass, with soloists' positions ranging from close to very distant. For instance the treble and tenor solos near the end of *Agnus Dei* are sung from the far end of the Chapel - the sound of souls floating over the battlefield. When *Mass in G minor* received its German premiere in 1923, the Leipzig audience thought the expressive intensity of the music to be extraordinary. Vaughan Williams must have been pleased by this acceptance in such a place, not least because of his admiration for the Lutheran choral tradition.

Te Deum in G, written for an Archbishop's Enthronement, conveys not only the pomp and ceremony of the post but also the prayerfulness. In the final section (*O Lord,*

save thy people) the text looks forwards but the music sounds nostalgic – perhaps a reminder to the new Primate of the long succession, past and future, of which he was becoming a part. The change from plural to singular in the final words of the ancient hymn - *keep us this day without sin...let me never be confounded* – seem to suit the public and personal nature of the Episcopal role. In contrast to the ending of Stanford's *Te Deum in B flat*, Vaughan Williams allows us, in his closing bars, to hear the new Archbishop's innermost thoughts swirling around.

A few years ago we recorded a disc of Jonathan Harvey's works. At the time I wrote that I felt commentators tended to downplay the significance of his liturgical works compared to his instrumental music. I have similar feelings with Vaughan Williams – during my background reading I have been struck by how much less has been written about the Mass than about various orchestral works. The same critical neglect used to beset Vaughan Williams's songs. It is my belief that the *Mass in G minor* is one of the great British liturgical masterpieces of the twentieth century, just as significant and innovative in the choral canon as the symphonies are in twentieth-

century symphonic repertoire. I know of nothing remotely like it in previous British *a capella* music. I hope that musicologists will come to share this view at some point in the future! As for the end of *Lord, thou hast been our refuge*, I struggle to think of any moment in the Anglican repertoire that has greater inner strength, visceral energy and sheer ecstasy.

Andrew Nethsingha

As from 10 Hanover Terrace,
London,
N.W.1.

Dictated. May 22nd, 1954.

Dear Master,

I hope you will not think that I am interfering in other people's business. I have received a letter from Professor Hadley asking me to tell you my opinion on the proposed abolition of the St John's College Choir School, and this I willingly do.

Our English Choir Schools are one means of preserving the great and unique tradition of English Church music which has persisted through the centuries from the time of Ikenham down to the present day. This tradition was, as you of course know, fostered and strengthened by Dr Cyril Hooper, so that in his day the Choir of St John's College was second to none, and I believe that excellence has persisted at the hands of his successors. To abolish the Choir School would, it seems to me, destroy that tradition, and with it one of the most precious things which our universities can offer to our cultural tradition.

The experiment has, I believe, been tried of substituting for a special choir school a series of choral scholarships to be held by boys of the local grammar schools. But so far as I know, this has nowhere been a success, largely because it destroys the corporate feeling which binds together the participants in our church music; and thus helps to build our church music on a sure foundation.

Yours sincerely,
RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS.

Letter from Ralph Vaughan Williams to the then Master of St John's, John Sandwith Boys Smith. Owing to financial difficulties, the College was considering the possibility of closing the Choir School in the early 1950s. With the support of such an influential public figure, the decision was made that the school would remain open, preserving the Choir in its current form to the present day. Published by permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge.

1 - 5 MASS IN G MINOR

KYRIE

Kyrie, eleison.
Christe, eleison.
Kyrie, eleison.

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
et in terra pax
hominibus bonae voluntatis.

*Glory be to God on high,
and in earth peace,
good will towards men.*

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te,
gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam,
Domine Deus, rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.

*We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee, we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee
for thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty.*

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe,
Domine Deus, agnus Dei,
Filius Patris:
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis;
qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram;
qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

miserere nobis.

*O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand
of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.*

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe,
cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

CREDO

Credo in unum Deum,
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae,
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum;
et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula,
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero,
genitum, non factum,
consubstantialem Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines et propter
nostram salutem descendit de caelis,
et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine
et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilato;
passus et sepultus est,

*For thou only art holy,
thou only art the Lord;
thou only [art most high, Jesus] Christ
with the Holy Ghost,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

*I believe in one God
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:*

*And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man,
and was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,*

et resurrexit tertia die
secundum Scripturas
et ascendit in caelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
iudicare vivos et mortuos,
cuius regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem:
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio
simul adoratur et conglorificatur:
qui locutus est per prophetas.

Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et
apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptismum
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum
et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

SANCTUS – OSANNA I – BENEDICTUS – OSANNA II

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth:
pleni sunt caeli
et terra gloria tua.

*and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead:
whose kingdom shall have no end.*

*And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
together is worshipped and glorified,
who spake by the prophets.*

*And I believe one [holy] catholic and
apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism
for the remission of sins.
And I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

*Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth
are full of thy glory.*

Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.

Osanna in excelsis.

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

[Hosanna in the highest].

*Blessed is he that cometh
in the name of the Lord.*

Hosanna in the highest.

*O Lamb of God
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God
that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.*

*O Lamb of God
that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.*

TE DEUM

We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee
to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship thee: the Father
everlasting.

To thee all Angels cry aloud, the Heavens and
all the Powers therein.

To thee Cherubin, and Seraphin continually
do cry,

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of
thy Glory.

The glorious company of the Apostles: praise
thee.

The goodly fellowship of the Prophets: praise
thee.

The noble army of Martyrs: praise thee.

The holy Church throughout all the world
doth acknowledge thee;

The Father of an infinite Majesty;
Thine honourable, true and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

Thou art the King of Glory O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver
man:

thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of
death:

thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all
believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the
glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come to be our
Judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants:
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious
blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints
in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people and bless thine
heritage.

Govern them and lift them up for ever.

Day by day we magnify thee;

And we worship thy Name ever world
without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord to keep us this day
without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy
upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us as our
trust is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never
be confounded.

*Prayer c. 4th Century,
translation from Book of Common Prayer*

7 O VOS OMNES

O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam,
attendite, et videte si est dolor
sicut dolor meus: quoniam vindemiavit me,
ut locutus est Dominus in die irae furoris sui.

De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis,
et erudit me: expandit rete pedibus meis,
convertit me retrorsum; posuit me desolatam,
tota die moerore confectam.

Vigilavit jugum iniquitatum mearum:
in manu ejus convolutae sunt et impositae
collo meo: infirmata est virtus mea: dedit me
Dominus in manu, de qua non potero surgere.

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

8 ANTIPHON

Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.
The heavens are not too high,
His praise may thither fly:
The earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?
behold, and see if there be any sorrow [like] unto my
sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord
hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

From above hath he sent fire into my bones,
and it prevaieth against them: he hath spread a net
for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me
desolate and faint all the day.

The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his
hand: they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck:
he hath made my strength to fall, the Lord hath delivered
me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up.

Jerusalem, turn back to the Lord your God.

Lamentations 1 vv. 12–14

The Church with Psalms must shout,
No door can keep them out:
But above all, the heart
Must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
My God and King.

Words: George Herbert (1593–1633)

10 O TASTE AND SEE

O taste and see how gracious the Lord is:
blest is the man that trusteth in him.

Psalms 34 v. 8

11 PRAYER TO THE FATHER OF HEAVEN

O radiant Luminary of light interminable,
Celestial Father, potential God of might.
Of heaven and earth, O Lord incomparable,
Of all perfections the Essential most Perfite!

O Maker of mankind, that formed day and night,
Whose power imperial comprehendeth every
place!
Mine heart, my mind, my thought, my
whole delight
Is, after this life, to see Thy glorious Face.

Whose magnificence is incomprehensible,
All arguments of reason which far doth exceed;
Whose Deity doubtless is indivisible,

From whom all goodness and virtue doth
proceed:

Of thy support all creatures have need;
Assist me, good Lord, and grant me of thy grace
To live to thy pleasure in word, thought and
deed,
And, after this life, to see thy glorious Face.

John Skelton (c.1463–1529)

12 O, CLAP YOUR HANDS

O, clap your hands, all ye people;
shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

For the Lord most high is terrible;
He is a great King over all the earth.

God is gone up with a shout,
The Lord with the sound of a trumpet.

Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises unto our King, sing praises;

For God is the King of all the earth;
Sing ye praises, every one that hath understanding.

God reigneth over the heathen,
God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.
Sing praises unto our King, sing praises.

Psalms 47

**13 LORD, THOU HAST BEEN
OUR REFUGE**

O God our help in ages past, our hope for
years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our
eternal home.

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one
generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever the earth and the world were made,
Thou art God from everlasting and world
without end.

Thou turnest man to destruction; again Thou
sayest

Come again ye children of men
For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as
yesterday,
seeing that is past as a watch in the night.

As soon as Thou scatterest them they are even
as a sleep
and fade away suddenly like the grass.
In the morning it is green and growth up,
but in the evening it is cut down, dried up
and withered.

For we consume away in Thy displeasure,
and are afraid at Thy wrathful indignation.
For when Thou art angry all our days are gone;
we bring our years to an end as a tale that
is told:
so passeth it away and we are gone.
The years of our age are three score years and ten,
and though men be so strong that they come
to four score years,
yet is their strength but labour and sorrow.
Turn Thee again O Lord at the last.
Be gracious unto Thy servants.
O satisfy us with Thy mercy and that soon.
So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days
of our life.

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one
generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever the earth and the world were made,
Thou art God from everlasting and world
without end.

And the glorious Majesty of the Lord be
upon us.
O prosper Thou the work of our hands, O
prosper Thou our handywork.

Psalm 90

First two lines metrical version by Isaac Watts

THE CHOIR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Trebles

George Balfour ^{1 5}
Matthew Brown ⁴
James Buttery
William Buttery
Alan Chen
Blake Chen
Jaylen Cheng
Adam Chillingworth
Charles Cobb
Lewis Cobb
Alfred Harrison ^{5 10}
James Lewis
Alexander Tomkinson
Philip Tomkinson
Thomas Watkin

Counter Tenors

Daniel Brown ^{2 13}
Hugh Cutting ^{1 3 4 7}
Daniel Gethin
Jack Hawkins ^{3 5}
Thomas Lilburn

Basses

James Adams ^{2 13}
Matthew Gibson
Simon Grant
Piers Kennedy
Peter Lidbetter ^{1 3}
Louis Marlowe
Oliver Morris ⁴
Stephen Matthews

Tenors

William Ashford ^{2 3 5}
James Beddoe ⁴
Michael Bell ^{1 2 3}
Gopal Kambo ^{3 5 13}
Louis Watkins

Organ Scholar
Glen Dempsey

Assistant Organist
Joseph Wicks

Director of Music
Andrew Nethsingha

*Numbers indicate soloist credits
for each CD track*



The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge is one of the finest collegiate choirs in the world, known and loved by millions from its broadcasts, concert tours and over 90 recordings. Founded in the 1670s, the Choir is known for its distinctive rich, warm sound, its expressive interpretations and its breadth of repertoire. Alongside these musical characteristics, the Choir is particularly proud of its happy, relaxed and mutually supportive atmosphere. The Choir is directed by Andrew Nethsingha following a long line of eminent Directors of Music, recently Dr George Guest, Dr Christopher Robinson and Dr David Hill.

The Choir is made up of around 20 Choristers and Probationers from St John's College School and 15 Choral Scholars who are members of St John's College, its primary purpose being to enhance the liturgy and worship at daily services in the College Chapel. The Choir has a diverse repertoire spanning over 500 years of music. It is also renowned for championing contemporary music by commissioning new works, including recent compositions by Joanna Ward, Nico Muhly, James Burton and the College's Composer in Residence Michael Finnis.

The Choir regularly sings Bach Cantatas liturgically with St John's Sinfonia, its period instrument ensemble.

The Choir brings the 'St John's Sound' to listeners around the world through its weekly webcasts (available at sjchoir.co.uk). In addition to regular radio broadcasts in this country and abroad, the Choir usually makes two CD recordings each year. In May 2016 the College launched its new 'St John's Cambridge' recording label (in conjunction with Signum Classics) on which the Choir has released the BBC Music Magazine Award winning recording of Jonathan Harvey's music: *DEO; Christmas with St John's*; and *KYRIE* (works by Poulenc, Kodály and Janáček).

The Choir also maintains a busy schedule of concerts and tours internationally twice a year. Recent destinations include Denmark, Germany, Hungary, and France, the USA, the Far East and the Netherlands. It also performs regularly in the UK, with venues including Symphony Hall, Birmingham and Royal Festival Hall, London.

ANDREW NETHSINGHA DIRECTOR OF MUSIC ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Performing in North America, South Africa, the Far East, and throughout Europe, Andrew Nethsingha has been Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge since 2007. He has helped to set up a new recording label, 'St John's Cambridge,' in conjunction with Signum. His first disc on the new label, *DEO* (music by Jonathan Harvey), was a 2017 BBC Music Magazine Award winner.

Andrew Nethsingha was a chorister at Exeter Cathedral, under his father's direction. He later studied at the Royal College of Music, where he won seven prizes, and at St John's College, Cambridge. He held Organ Scholarships under Christopher Robinson at St George's Windsor, and George Guest at St John's, before becoming Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral. He was subsequently Director of Music at Truro and Gloucester Cathedrals, and Artistic Director of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival.



© James Beddoe

Andrew's concerts conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra have included: Mahler's 8th Symphony, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Britten *War Requiem*, Brahms *Requiem*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom*, Walton *Belshazzar's Feast*, Poulenc *Gloria* and Duruflé *Requiem*. He has also worked with: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Britten Sinfonia, Orchestra of St

Luke's (New York), Aarhus Symfoniorkester, BBC Concert Orchestra. Venues have included the BBC Proms, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Verbier Festival and Tokyo Suntory Hall.

Concert venues this season include Royal Albert Hall, Konzerthaus Berlin, Müpa Budapest, Royal Festival Hall, Singapore Esplanade, Birmingham Symphony Hall and Hong Kong City Hall.

JOSEPH WICKS ASSISTANT ORGANIST

Joseph Wicks is now Assistant Director of Music at Truro Cathedral, a post that he took up in September 2017. He is also Musical Director of St Mary's Singers, the cathedral's voluntary choir, sings tenor in The Gesualdo Six, and has founded his own chamber choir, The Beaufort Singers. Joseph's duties at Truro include assisting the Director of Music, Christopher Gray, in the training of the boy and girl choristers, conducting services and mentoring of the choral and organ scholars, as well as playing the world-famous Father Willis organ for the majority of daily sung services.



© Benjamin Ealovega

Prior to this Joseph was Assistant Organist of St John's College, Cambridge, having been its Herbert Howells Organ Scholar. While at St John's, Joseph played the organ for a large proportion of the daily services sung by the world-famous Choir of St John's College, Cambridge and also accompanied them on their busy broadcast, recording and international tours, including to Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, The Netherlands, Singapore, Switzerland and the USA. Joseph also conducted the College Choir frequently, and for his final two years was Musical Director of the Gentlemen of St John's with whom he recorded a CD entitled *White Christmas*.

Joseph began his musical education as a Chorister, later Bishop's (Head) Chorister, of Salisbury Cathedral. He moved on to Lancing College as a Walter Stanton Music Scholar, and was later awarded their Sixth Form Organ Scholarship. He then spent a gap year as Organ Scholar of Hereford Cathedral before moving to St John's in 2013. Joseph is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists (FRCO) winning the Limpus, Shinn and Durrant prize for the highest mark in the practical examination. Joseph has given recitals in Westminster Abbey, King's College, Cambridge, several other Cambridge colleges, and various cathedrals, municipal halls and churches across the UK.

In addition, Joseph maintains a freelance career as a singer. He is a graduate of Genesis Sixteen, a training scheme for young singers run by The Sixteen and its director Harry Christophers. Joseph has sung with groups such as Alamire and Polyphony, and is a founding member of The Gesualdo Six, a vocal ensemble who specialize in both renaissance polyphony and modern works. Having performed several times on BBC Radio 3 and given concerts across the UK and more widely in Europe, the group

have released their debut CD recording of English renaissance masterpieces.

Joseph's concerts are advertised at www.organrecitals.com and on his own website at www.joseph-wicks.co.uk

DAVID BLACKADDER TRUMPET

David took up the trumpet aged nine following in the footsteps of his grandfather who was a bandmaster in the North East. He joined the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra and went on to study at the Royal College of Music with Michael Laird.

After a season as guest principal trumpet with Scottish Opera, he joined the English Baroque Soloists and Orchestre Revolutionnaire et Romantique as principal trumpet under Sir John Eliot Gardiner and also became principal trumpet with the Academy of Ancient Music with Christopher Hogwood. During this time he performed extensively at major concert venues throughout the world and took part in numerous recordings for CD, radio, television and video.



In 1993 he formed the groundbreaking group Blackadder Brass which quickly became the resident educational ensemble at Symphony Hall in Birmingham, playing to over 40,000 children in its first three years. He is also a professor at Birmingham Conservatoire.

David is now also principal trumpet with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and is renowned as a soloist, having performed and recorded many of the great trumpet masterpieces with conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Roger Norrington, Franz Brüggen, Vladimir Jurowski and Stephen Cleobury. He has performed the Haydn Trumpet Concerto to great acclaim at major venues across Europe, including at the Edinburgh festival, Kings College Chapel and the Esterhazy Palace in Hungary.

His recordings of Handel arias with singers such as René Fleming and Kiri Te Kanawa have received particular critical acclaim.

Acknowledgements

“This recording is dedicated to the former Dean of Chapel, the Revd Duncan Dormor, in recognition of his part in creating the distinctive ‘St John’s Cambridge’ record label in collaboration with Signum Records. The label has been an enormous success, with the first – *DEO* – winning a BBC Music Magazine Award; it has also enabled outstanding young musicians at St John’s to showcase their abilities, as with Julia Hwang and *SUBITO*.

Duncan’s support of the Choir first as Chaplain (1998-2002) and then as Dean (2002-2017) could not be more greatly appreciated. We wish him every success in his new role as Chief Executive Officer of
United Society Partners in the Gospel.”

Prof Christopher Dobson, Master of St John’s College, Cambridge, January 2018

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Editor – Matthew Bennett

Vocal Consultant – David Lowe

Project Manager – James Beddoe

Dean – The Revd Duncan Dormor

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Andrew Nethsingha *Director*

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Andrew Nethsingha *Director*

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