

# *The Chantry Singers*

## A celebration of English Music

Organ :            Andrew Daldorph

Conductor :        Peter Coulson

Chilworth Friary

Saturday 3rd December, 1994 at 8.00 p.m.

## Programme

Set me as a seal  
A litany  
What cheer?

William Walton  
(1902-1983)

Take him, earth, for cherishing

Herbert Howells  
(1892-1983)

Organ solo:

Psalm Prelude Set 2, no. 3

Herbert Howells

Choral Dances from *Gloriana*

Benjamin Britten  
(1913-1976)

1. Time
2. Concord
3. Time and Concord
4. Country Girls
5. Rustics and Fishermen
6. Final Dance of Homage

### Interval of twenty minutes

Hymn to the Mother of God  
The Lamb

John Tavener (b. 1944)

Organ solo:

Two Dialogues

Peter Hurford (b. 1930)

Mass in G minor

Ralph Vaughan Williams  
(1872-1958)

1. Kyrie
2. Gloria in excelsis
3. Credo
4. Sanctus - Osanna I - Benedictus - Osanna II
5. Agnus Dei

Soprano Emma Gibbs  
Alto Jennifer Nicholas

Tenor <sup>Richard Woodhead</sup> Murray Goldstone  
Bass Simon Brennan

Set me as a seal

Set me as a seal upon thine heart,  
As a seal upon thine arm;  
For love is strong as death;  
Many waters cannot quench love,  
Neither can the floods drown it.

from *The Song of Solomon*

A litany

Drop, drop slow tears,  
And bathe those beauteous feet  
Which brought from heav'n  
The news and Prince of Peace.  
Cease not, wet eyes,  
His mercies to entreat;  
To cry for vengeance  
Sin doth never cease:  
In your deep floods  
Drown all my faults and fears;  
Nor let his eye see sin,  
But through my tears.

Phineas Fletcher (1582-1650)

What Cheer?

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?"  
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?"  
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!  
from Richard Hill's *Commonplace Book* (16th century)

Take him, earth, for cherishing

Take him, earth, for cherishing,  
To thy tender breast receive him.  
Body of a man I bring thee,  
Noble even in its ruin.

Choral Dances from *Gloriana*

1. Time

Yes, he is Time,  
Lusty and blithe!  
Time is at his apogee!  
Although you thought to see  
A bearded ancient with a scythe,  
No reaper he  
That cries, 'Take heed!  
Time is at his apogee!  
Young and strong in his prime!  
Behold the sower of the seed!

2. Concord

Concord, Concord is here.  
Concord, Concord is here  
Our days to bless  
And this our land,  
Our land to endue  
With plenty, peace and happiness.  
Concord, Concord and Time,  
Concord and Time  
Each needeth each:  
The ripest fruit hangs where  
Not one, not one but only two can reach.

3. Time and concord

From springs of bounty,  
Through this county,  
Streams abundant  
Of thanks shall flow.  
Where life was scanty,  
Fruits of plenty  
Swell resplendent  
From earth below!

No Greek nor Roman,  
Queenly woman,  
Knew such favour  
From Heav'n above  
As she whose presence  
Is our Pleasance.  
Gloriana! Gloriana

Hath all our love!

**4. Country Girls**

Sweet flag and cuckoo flower,  
Cowslip and columbine,  
Kingcups and sops-in-wine,  
Flower de luce and calaminth,  
Harebell and hyacinth,  
Myrtle and bay,  
With rosemary between,  
Norfolk's own garlands  
For her Queen.

**5. Rustics and Fishermen**

From fen and meadow  
In rushy baskets  
They bring ensamples  
Of all they grow;  
In earthen dishes  
Their deep-sea fishes!  
Yearly fleeces,  
Woven blankets,  
New cream and junkets  
And rustic trinkets  
On wicker flaskets,  
Their country largesse,  
The best they know.

**6. Final Dance of Homage**

These tokens of our love receiving,  
O take them, Princess great and dear;  
From Norwich city you are leaving,  
That you afar may feel us near.

William Plomer

Once was this a spirit's dwelling,  
By the breath of God created.  
High the heart that here was beating,  
Christ the prince of all its living.

Guard him well, the dead I give thee,  
Not unmindful of His creature  
Shall He ask it: He who made it  
Symbol of His mystery.

Comes the hour God hath appointed  
To fulfil the hope of men;  
Then must thou, in very fashion,  
What I give, return again.

Not though ancient time decaying  
Wear away these bones to sand,  
Ashes that a man might measure  
In the hollow of his hand.

Not though wandering winds and idle  
Drifting through the empty sky  
Scatter dust was nerve and sinew,  
Is it given to man to die.

Once again the shining road  
Leads to ample Paradise;  
Open are the woods again  
That the Serpent lost for men.

Take, O take him, mighty Leader,  
Take again thy servant's soul.  
Grave his name, and pour the fragrant  
Balm upon the icy stone.

By the breath of God created,  
Christ the prince of all its living.  
Take, O take him,  
Take him, earth, for cherishing.

Prudentius (348-413)  
from *Hymnus circa Exsequias Defuncti*  
translated by Helen Waddell

## Hymn to the Mother of God

In You, O Woman full of Grace,  
the angelic choirs, and the human race  
all creation rejoices.

O sanctified Temple, mystical Paradise,  
and glory of Virgins.

In You, O Woman full of Grace,  
all creation rejoices.

All praise be to You.

from the Liturgy of St. Basil.

## The Lamb

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice,  
Making all the vales rejoice?  
Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb.  
He is meek, and he is mild,  
He became a little child.  
I, a child, and thou, a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
Little Lamb, God bless thee!  
William Blake

## **Mass in G minor**

### **1. Kyrie**

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

### **2. Gloria in excelsis**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo  
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.  
Laudamus te,  
benedicimus te,  
adoramus te,  
gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus, rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens,  
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.  
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus,  
Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu: in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.**

### 3. 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:

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,

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 baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum,  
et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

### 4. Sanctus - Osanna I - Benedictus - Osanna II

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.

Osanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

Osanna in excelsis.

### 5. 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.

Tonight's programme celebrates the works of English composers from this century. Three works by William Walton begin the concert; like all the choral items you will hear this evening, they are unaccompanied. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart* was written in 1938 as a wedding anthem. It is a quiet and devotional setting of words from the *Song of Solomon* with short solos for tenor and soprano. Walton wrote *A litany* when he was a chorister at Christ Church, Oxford, at the age of fifteen. It was his first published composition, and by any standards, it is a remarkably accomplished piece. The expressive harmonies and the word-painting (the slow dropping of tears) display an innate sensitivity to the text. *What cheer?*, composed in 1961, sets words by the 16th century writer, Richard Hill. It is an attractive carol for four parts, with syncopated rhythms and chromatic harmonies.

*Take him, earth, for cherishing*, written in November of 1963, was a commemorative American commission on the assassination of President Kennedy. The text is a translation by Helen Waddell of words from *Hymnus circa Exsequias Defuncti* by Prudentius (348-413). The motet begins with bare octaves, which sets the serious tone for the piece. This theme is then repeated with fuller harmony, and then an increase in tempo leads to a chilling section, *Comes the hour God hath appointed*, which uses the tritone. The piece ends in B major with a sense of hope and security.

Howells was also a prolific composer for the organ, and we hear tonight one of his more lively psalm preludes. The inspiration behind this piece is Psalm 33:3, *Sing unto Him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.*

Britten's *Choral Dances* appear in Act 2, Scene 1 of his opera *Gloriana*, which is set in Norwich. They form part of a masque in honour of Queen Elizabeth I. These dances were taken from the opera by Britten and turned into *a capella* choral pieces for the opening of the Queen Elizabeth Hall, in the presence of another Elizabeth, Her Majesty the Queen. A major strength of Britten's

skill as a composer is his ability to capture the essence of what has to be said by the simplest of means. A good example of this can be seen in the second movement. *Concord*, where the diatonic chording conjures a magical sense of serenity.

Tavener's music since 1977, when he became a member of the Orthodox church, has been influenced by the chants of the liturgy. *Hymn to the Mother of God* is one of two hymns composed in 1985, and first performed in Winchester Cathedral. They were written in memory of Tavener's mother. *Hymn to the Mother of God* is for double choir, and is a setting of a text from the Liturgy of St Basil. John Tavener writes, 'It speaks of the almost cosmic power attributed to the Mother of God by the Orthodox church'. His setting of *The Lamb* from William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* (1789) was also written in 1985. The carol is based on a simple melodic idea and its inversion.

Peter Hurford is chiefly known as a concert organist, but he has also composed a number of pieces which are worthy of note. His *Two Dialogues* are both very lively, with the second one based on a folk-song theme.

Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G minor* was dedicated 'To Gustav Holst and his Whitsuntide Singers', who, together with Westminster Cathedral choir, were the inspiration for the work. Sir Richard Runciman Terry gave the first liturgical performance of the piece at Westminster Cathedral on 12th March, 1923. The mass is in the manner of great Elizabethan liturgical music, with its use of imitative entries for the voices, melodies which are derived from plainchant, and modal harmonies. The work is scored for two antiphonal groups with four soloists, which is the same as that used for strings in Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, which he was revising at the time of the composition of the mass.

**The next Chantry Singers' concert will be a performance of Handel's *Messiah* with orchestra. This will take place at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, on Tuesday 21st March, 1995 at 7.45 p.m. This event is part of the Guildford International Music Festival.**