

# *The Chantry Singers*

## **VSENOSHCHNOE BDENIE**

All-Night Vigil

Rachmaninov

and anthems by Tchaikovsky, Kalinnikov and  
Górecki

Conductor ... Peter Coulson

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford  
Tuesday 11th March, 1997

## Programme

Vsenoshchnoe Bdenie  
(All-Night Vigil)

Sergei Rachmaninov  
(1873-1943)

1. Priidite poklonimsya  
(O come, let us worship)
2. Blagoslovi, dushe moya  
(Bless the Lord, O my soul)  
(Alto: Emma Anderson)
3. Blazhen muzh  
(Blessed is the man)
4. Svete tikhii  
(Gladsome light)  
(Tenor): Kevin Jacot)
5. Nyne otpushchaeshi  
(Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart)
6. Bogoroditse Devo  
(Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos)

Hymn to the Trinity

Pyotr Tchaikovsky  
(1840-1893)

7. Slava v Vyshnikh Bogu  
(Glory to God in the highest)
8. Khvalite imya Gospodne  
(Praise the name of the Lord)

Totus Tuus

Henryk Górecki  
(b. 1933)

INTERVAL OF TWENTY MINUTES

To thee, O Lord  
(Soprano: Claire Rennison)

Sergei Rachmaninov

9. Blagosloven esi, Gospodi  
(Blessed art Thou, O Lord)

10. Voskresenie Khristovo  
(Having beheld the resurrection of Christ)

11. Velichit dusha moya  
(My soul magnifies the Lord)

12. Slava v Vysshnikh Bogu  
(Glory to God in the highest)

I will love thee

Vasily Kalinnikov  
(1866-1901)

13. Dnes spasenie  
(Today salvation has come to the world)

14. Voskres iz groba  
(Thou didst rise from the tomb)

15. Vzbrannoy voevode  
(To Thee, the victorious Leader of triumphant hosts)

**This evening's performance aims to recreate something of the devotional aspect of Russian Orthodox worship. In order not to disturb this atmosphere, you are asked to refrain from applauding until the very end of the concert.**

*The Text of the All-Night Vigil*

1. Come, let us worship God, our King.  
Come, let us worship and fall down  
before Christ, our King and our God.  
Come, let us worship and fall down  
before the very Christ, our King and our God.  
Come, let us worship and fall down before Him.
2. Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
O Lord my God, Thou art very great.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
Thou art clothed with honour and majesty.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.  
The waters stand upon the mountains.  
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.

The waters flow between the hills.  
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.  
In wisdom hast Thou made all things.  
Glory to Thee, O Lord, who has created all!

3. Blessed is the man, who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish. Alleluia ...

Serve the Lord with fear

and rejoice in Him with trembling. Alleluia ...

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.

Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God! Alleluia ...

Salvation is of the Lord;

and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia ...

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to Thee, O God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to Thee, O God!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to Thee, O God!

4. Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal One -  
the Heavenly Father, holy and blessed -  
O Jesus Christ!

Now that we have come to the setting of the sun,  
and behold the light of evening,

we praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - God.

Thou art worthy at every moment

to be praised in hymns by reverent voices.

O Son of God, Thou art the Giver of Life;

therefore all the world glorifies thee.

5. 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 -  
a light to enlighten the Gentiles,  
and the glory of Thy people Israel.
6. Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,  
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with Thee.  
Blessed art Thou among women,

and blessed is the Fruit of Thy womb,  
for Thou hast borne the Saviour of our souls.

7. Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace,  
good will among men.  
O Lord, open thou my lips,  
and my mouth shall proclaim Thy praise.
8. Praise the name of the Lord. Alleluia.  
Praise the Lord, O you His servants. Alleluia, alleluia.  
Blessed be the Lord from Zion,  
He who dwells in Jerusalem. Alleluia.  
O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
For His mercy endures for ever. Alleluia.  
O give thanks unto the god of Heaven.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
For His mercy endures for ever. Alleluia.

9. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

The angelic host was filled with awe,  
when it saw Thee among the dead.  
By destroying the power of death, O Saviour,  
Thou didst raise Adam, and save all men from hell!

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

In the tomb the radiant angel cried to the myrrhbearers:  
"Why do you women mingle with your tears?  
Look at the tomb and understand!  
The Saviour is risen from the dead!"

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.

Very early in the morning  
the myrrhbearers ran with sorrow to Thy tomb,  
but an Angel came to them and said:

"The time for sorrow has come to an end!  
Do not weep. but announce the resurrection to the apostles!"

**Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.**

**The myrrhbearers were sorrowful  
as they neared Thy tomb,  
but the Angel said to them:  
"Why do you number the living among the dead?  
Since He is God, He is risen from the tomb!"**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

**We worship the Father, and His Son, and the Holy Spirit:  
the Holy Trinity, one in essence!  
We cry with the Seraphim:  
'Holy, Holy, Holy art Thou, O Lord!'**

**Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

**Since Thou didst give birth to the Giver of Life, O Virgin,  
Thou didst deliver Adam from his sin!  
Thou gavest joy to Eve instead of sadness!  
The God-man who was born of Thee  
has restored to life those who had fallen from it!**

**Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Glory to Thee, O God!**

- 10. Having beheld the resurrection of Christ,  
let us worship the holy Lord Jesus,  
the only Sinless One.  
We venerate Thy Cross, O Christ,  
and we hymn and glorify Thy holy resurrection,  
for Thou art our God, and we know no other than Thee;  
we call on Thy name.  
Come, all you faithful,  
let us venerate Christ's holy resurrection.  
For behold, through the cross  
joy has come into all the world.  
Ever blessing the Lord,  
let us praise His resurrection,  
for by enduring the cross for us,  
He has destroyed death by death.**

11. My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour.

Refrain: More honourable than the Cherubim  
and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim,  
without defilement thou gavest birth  
to God the Word, true Theotokos, we magnify Thee.

For He has regarded the low estate of His handmaiden.

For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is His name, and His mercy is on those  
who fear Him from generation to generation ...

He has put down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has exalted those of low degree;  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent empty away.

He has helped His servant Israel,  
in remembrance of His mercy,  
as He spoke to our fathers,  
to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.

12. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,  
Good will toward men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee,  
we worship thee, we glorify Thee,  
we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.  
O Lord, Heavenly King, God the Father almighty,  
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ  
and the Holy Spirit.  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.  
Thou who takest away the sin of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou who sittest at the right hand of the father,  
have mercy on us.  
For Thou alone art holy,

Thou alone art the Lord, Jesus Christ,  
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day I will bless Thee  
and praise Thy name for ever and ever.  
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, God of our fathers,  
and praised and glorified is Thy name for ever. Amen.

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us,  
as we have set our hope on Thee.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes.  
Lord, Thou has been our refuge  
from generation to generation.  
I said: Lord, have mercy on me,  
heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.  
Lord, I flee to Thee,  
teach me to do Thy will,  
for Thou art my God;  
for with Thee is the fountain of life,  
and in Thy light we shall see light.  
Continue Thy mercy on those who know Thee.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,  
have mercy on us.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.  
Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.  
Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,  
have mercy on us.

13. Today salvation has come to the world.  
Let us sing to Him who rose from the dead,  
the Author of our life.  
Having destroyed death by death,  
He has given us the victory and great mercy.
14. Thou didst rise from the tomb and burst the bonds of Hades!  
Thou didst destroy the condemnation of death, O Lord,  
releasing all mankind from the snares of the enemy!  
Thou didst show thyself to Thine apostles,  
and didst send them forth to proclaim Thee;  
and through them Thou hast granted Thy peace to the world,  
O Thou who are plenteous in mercy!

15. To Thee, the victorious Leader of triumphant hosts,  
we Thy servants, delivered from evil,  
offer hymns of thanksgiving,  
O Theotokos!  
Since Thou dost possess invincible might,  
set us free from all calamities,  
so that we may cry to Thee:  
"Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!"

### *Hymn to the Trinity*

Blessed angel spirits offer praise undying,  
Ever crying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Saints and Martyrs praise thy name, Trinity life-giving,  
Earth-borne sorrow leaning before Thy throne  
Every crying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Father omnipotent, mighty in glory,  
Christ Thy Son, our Saviour, who died that we might live,  
Holy spirit, mystic dove, dwelling with us evermore,  
We praise Thee, we praise Thee, Blessed Trinity.  
With the angels' sacred hymn, all Thy might proclaiming,  
With the mystic cherubim; in songs of praise we join,  
Holy, Holy, Holy join we all in songs of praise,  
In songs of praise for ever.  
Hallelujah, Lord God of Sabaoth.

### *Totus Tuus*

I am wholly thine, Mary,  
Mother of our Redeemer,  
Virgin of God, Holy Virgin,  
Mother of the world's Saviour,  
I am wholly thine, Mary.

*Maria Boguslawska*

### *To Thee, O Lord*

To Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul;  
My God, I trust in Thee.

### *I will love Thee*

I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength,  
I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength;  
The Lord is my rock and my fortress,  
My Saviour, my God, and my strength,  
In whom I will trust.

I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy  
to be praised,

I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord,  
And sing praises unto Thy Name.  
I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength,  
And sing praises to thy Name.

Rachmaninov's *Vespers* (as they are more commonly known) was composed at great speed in less than two weeks in Moscow between January and February 1915. A review of the first performance said, 'Rachmaninov's new composition, *All-Night Vigil*, is undoubtedly a contribution of great importance to our church's musical literature'.

The work is in fact a setting not only of the Vespers, but also Matins and the First Hour as they are celebrated in the Russian Orthodox Church, known as *Vsenashchnoe Bdenie*, the *All-Night Vigil*. The services of Matins and the First Hour are those of the following day, and are sung directly after Vespers (which is begun approximately at sunset) "by anticipation".

*The Vigil* is dedicated to the memory of the theorist and scholar, Stephen Vasilevich Smolensky (1849-1909). He introduced Rachmaninov to the sacred repertoire at the Moscow conservatory. The first performance was given on 10th March 1915 by the Moscow Synodal Choir under the direction of Nikolai Danilin. It was extremely well received by both public and critics.

Nine of the fifteen sections are built on chants drawn from the various repertoires of the Russian tradition. One of the leading composers of the day - Kastalsky - said after the premiere, 'One must hear for oneself how simple, straightforward chants have been transformed in the hands of a great artist'. The characteristics of Rachmaninov's own melodies are intoned with the spirit of the chant. He referred to this as 'a conscious counterfeit of the ritual'. A good example of this can be found in no. 10: *Voskresenie Khristovo videvshe*.

Rachmaninov particularly liked the fifth movement (the *Nunc Dimittis*), and he recounted the time when he played through this piece to Kastalsky and Danilin: 'Towards the end, there is a passage sung by the basses - a scale descending to the lowest B flat in a very slow pianissimo. As I played this passage, Danilin shook his head and said, "Where on earth are we going to find such basses? They

are as rare as asparagus at Christmas!" Of course he did find them. I knew the voices of my countrymen, and well knew what demands I could make of Russian basses!' Rachmaninov wanted this piece to be sung at his own funeral - though it proved impossible in the event.

Tonight's performance opens with the introductory exclamations which are intoned by the deacon and the priest: *Bless master, Glory to the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-creating and Undivided Trinity, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.* The choir then sing the opening call to worship: '*Priidite poklonimsya*'. Numbers two to six form the Vespers section of the work, and numbers seven to twelve make up the Matins section. This latter section marks a change of mood from contemplation to celebration. Number nine tells the story of the Resurrection, and forms the central dramatic point of the whole work. There are contrasting vocal groupings within the choir to reflect the meaning of the words. The sopranos and altos represent the sorrowful women who fear that their Saviour is dead. The solo tenor represents the angel who brings them glad tidings. The last three canticles represent the final section of the *All-Night Vigil* and return to the quieter mood of the Vesper settings.

In an actual celebration of the *All-Night Vigil*, the setting would be interspersed with psalms, prayers, readings, and litanies. In tonight's performance, we shall hear anthems by Tchaikovsky, Górecki, Rachmaninov and Kalinnikov.