



Feast!

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Conductor: *Jeremy Backhouse*

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Feast!

Ralph Vaughan Williams

O clap your hands
The Lark Ascending
Five Mystical Songs

Gustav Holst

The Perfect Fool (Ballet Music)

William Walton

Belshazzar's Feast

Thomas Nießer
Samuel Staples

Baritone
Solo Violin

Vivace Chorus

Vasari Singers

National Symphony Orchestra

Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse



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Concert programme

O clap your hands

Ralph Vaughan Williams

O clap your hands is a very appropriate opening piece for a concert that climaxes in Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*. The text of Psalm 47 praises God as King of Israel and of "all the earth". Fearsome and triumphant, he goes up to the Temple in Jerusalem "with a shout ... with the sound of a trumpet", as an earthly king might, but with the right of absolute power. Belshazzar's punishment, in contrast, is specifically for his blasphemous attempt to rival and displace this true God: he enslaves the People of Israel, drinks wine with his wives, concubines and courtiers from the sacred golden vessels that his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar impiously stole from the Temple, leads the praise of the false gods of Babylon, and arrogantly accepts his people's adulation as a "King of Kings" who will "live for ever". Walton's epic cantata sweeps him away with a single, brutal shriek of contempt.

Vaughan Williams's sturdy, straightforward, very "Church of England" interpretation of the King James Bible text of *O clap your hands* is scored in a bright B flat major key, opening with a heart-lifting fanfare of royal trumpets and moving confidently forward in a glorious homophonic texture (the harmonies changing regularly together), and at a cheerful allegro pace. In a slower middle section the voice parts play against each other in a more complex and expansive pattern as God, secure on his throne, surveys the whole earth, including "the heathen" who will one day acknowledge his authority. The anthem ends with the return of the resounding note of praise: "something strong, something simple, something English" (to quote Jimmy

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Porter's rather unexpected comment on Vaughan Williams's music in *Look Back in Anger*) – although this "simplicity" is the result of a subtle craftsmanship and sensitivity as finely tuned to the drama of the text as is Walton's setting of the manic celebrations of Babylonians and Israelites in the great cantata.

*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 to 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.*



The Lark Ascending

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Romance for violin and orchestra

Vaughan Williams's first version of his famous "romance" was conceived for violin and piano, then reworked for violin and orchestra, reaching its final form in 1921. Essential to its structure is the dynamic relationship between the violin, which (as Vaughan Williams's wife Ursula said later) embodies both the song and the flight of the bird, and the piano / orchestra that characterises the landscape below.

In her superb recent book *The Captain's Apprentice* Caroline Davison quotes Ursula Vaughan Williams in noting how familiar the composer was with this pattern: "Vaughan Williams's

Come & Sing

HANDEL:
Dixit Dominus
PERGOLESI:
Magnificat
MONTEVERDI:
Beatus vir



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memories of the walking holidays he took with friends in Wiltshire and Dorset were of 'the green roads and open skies of the Great Plain with its summer flowers, thymey smells, and an infinity of larks rising above the bleached grass and the pale coloured chalk country ...'. George Meredith's poem of 1881, well-known at the time, was quoted by the composer at the head of the score and adds the key element of symbolism: the lark's song, a "silver chain of sound", instils a "love of earth" as he hovers over his nest in the "golden cup" of the valley, until the "wine" of his ecstatic song overflows and the listener rises with him into a state of emotional, and even spiritual, exaltation.

Tasmin Little, a famous performer of the piece, has said that it allows great freedom of interpretation to the violinist and "has a mesmeric quality that gives you space for reflection"; the term "romance" itself suggests a suspension of mundane reality that liberates both imagination and emotion. A lark rises from the ground and can maintain its height for up to fifteen minutes (which, perhaps intentionally, is about the length of the piece) by fluttering its wings, as the ceaseless song cascades to the earth, often while the bird is beyond sight.

The wide-ranging and flickering violin part brilliantly imitates this, while the solid, familiar, austerely beautiful landscape of the "Great Plain" or the downland below is evoked by the gently sustained phrases of the orchestra, sometimes swelling with tender feeling, sometimes reticent or playful, never just "accompanying" but engaging with the soloist. About six minutes into the piece, flute and oboe introduce a lovely folk-song-like melody that dances through the grasslands in delight while the lark hovers above, and it seems as if this moment of connection-in-separation between humanity and the non-human world will never end. At last the song thins and fades into the distance, "lost on his aerial rings / In light", leaving a sense of deep fulfilment and repose.

The Lark Ascending

George Meredith (1828 - 1909)

Read by Selam Adamu

*He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake,
All interwoven and spreading wide,
Like water-dimples down a tide
Where ripple ripple overcurls
And eddy into eddy whirls;
A press of hurried notes that run
So fleet they scarce are more than one,
Yet changeingly the trills repeat
And linger ringing while they fleet,
Sweet to the quick o' the ear, and dear
To her beyond the handmaid ear,
Who sits beside our inner springs,
Too often dry for this he brings,
Which seems the very jet of earth
At sight of sun, her music's mirth,
As up he wings the spiral stair,
A song of light, and pierces air
With fountain ardour, fountain play,
To reach the shining tops of day,
And drink in everything discerned
An ecstasy to music turned,
Impelled by what his happy bill
Disperses; drinking, showering still,
Unthinking save that he may give
His voice the outlet, there to live
Renewed in endless notes of glee,*

*So thirsty of his voice is he,
For all to hear and all to know
That he is joy, awake, aglow,
The tumult of the heart to hear
Through pureness filtered crystal-clear,
And know the pleasure sprinkled bright
By simple singing of delight,
Shrill, irreflective, unrestrained,
Rapt, ringing, on the jet sustained
Without a break, without a fall,
Sweet-silvery, sheer lyrical,
Perennial, quavering up the chord
Like myriad dews of sunny sward
That trembling into fulness shine,
And sparkle dropping argentine;
Such wooing as the ear receives
From zephyr caught in choric leaves
Of aspens when their chattering net
Is flushed to white with shivers wet;
And such the water-spirit's chime
On mountain heights in morning's prime,
Too freshly sweet to seem excess,
Too animate to need a stress;
But wider over many heads
The starry voice ascending spreads,
Awakening, as it waxes thin,
The best in us to him akin;
And every face to watch him raised,
Puts on the light of children praised,
So rich our human pleasure ripens
When sweetness on sincereness pipes,
Though nought be promised from the seas,
But only a soft-ruffling breeze
Sweep glittering on a still content,*

*Serenity in ravishment.
For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup,
And he the wine which overflows
To lift us with him as he goes:
The woods and brooks, the sheep and kine
He is, the hills, the human line,
The meadows green, the fallows brown,
The dreams of labour in the town;
He sings the sap, the quickened veins,
The wedding song of sun and rains
He is, the dance of children, thanks
Of sowers, shout of primrose-banks,
And eye of violets while they breathe;
All these the circling song will wreath,
And you shall hear the herb and tree,
The better heart of men shall see,
Shall feel celestially, as long
As you crave nothing save the song.
Was never voice of ours could say
Our inmost in the sweetest way,
Like yonder voice aloft, and link
All hearers in the song they drink:
Our wisdom speaks from failing blood,
Our passion is too full in flood,
We want the key of his wild note
Of truthful in a tuneful throat,
The song seraphically free
Of taint of personality,
So pure that it salutes the suns
The voice of one for millions,
In whom the millions rejoice*

*For giving their one spirit voice.
Yet men have we, whom we revere,
Now names, and men still housing here,
Whose lives, by many a battle-dint
Defaced, and grinding wheels on flint,
Yield substance, though they sing not, sweet
For song our highest heaven to greet:
Whom heavenly singing gives us new,
Enspheres them brilliant in our blue,
From firmest base to farthest leap,
Because their love of Earth is deep,
And they are warriors in accord
With life to serve and pass reward,
So touching purest and so heard
In the brain's reflex of yon bird:
Wherefore their soul in me, or mine,
Through self-forgetfulness divine,
In them, that song aloft maintains,
To fill the sky and thrill the plains
With showerings drawn from human stores,
As he to silence nearer soars,
Extends the world at wings and dome,
More spacious making more our home,
Till lost on his aerial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.*

George Meredith
Painted by G F Watts
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London





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Soloist: **Antonina Suhanova**
Tchaikovsky Suite No. 1 for Orchestra

Saturday 24 June 2023, 7.30 pm
Holy Trinity Church, Guildford
Sibelius Pélleas et Mélisande
Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending
Solo Violin: **Annmarie McDade**
Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4

Five Mystical Songs

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Poem by George Herbert (1593-1633)

Vaughan Williams was an agnostic, but he responded with sympathy and affection to the beliefs of the Church of England as expressed in the work of the great Jacobean/Caroline poet and priest George Herbert. The songs are "mystical" in a precise sense: their subject is the central doctrines of Christianity – Incarnation, Redemption, Resurrection and the agency of the Holy Spirit in the world – and Herbert explains and explores them with his characteristic blend of rigour, humanity, and the famous "metaphysical" wit of the seventeenth century.

The music here allows verbal details to shine through in all their clarity and complexity while reflecting and supporting them, sometimes through a cheerful wit of the composer's own. A simple example is his setting of the words "... the heart / Must bear the longest part" in the fifth song, ***Antiphon***, where he slips two four-beat bars into the 3/4 time scheme, so that every performer's "part" is briefly longer in that "part" of the score – a joke very much in the spirit of Herbert himself.

Song I, ***Easter***, is full of the joy of the Resurrection, beginning with what the baritone Thomas Allen has called "a wonderful melodic surge" which runs through the whole piece. The poet longs to rise, with Jesus, from the "calcined" ashes of sorrow and be transformed into the "gold" of righteousness – an ingenious metaphor from alchemy to illustrate a spiritual journey. The beautiful *cantabile* section uses the lute (Herbert was a keen musician and played in a consort with friends) to contemplate in fantastical terms the Passion of Christ: Jesus "bore" (carried/suffered) the cross, which taught everything made of wood, including the poet's lute, to "resound" with his praise; his sinews were stretched in agony during his suffering.

so the cords/chords of the instrument must celebrate the Easter triumph that followed. The composer uses the harp here to represent the lute – a simple but touching effect. Finally the poem points out that the basis of harmony is the triad of the common chord: if your consort lacks a player, call on the Holy Spirit to “bear a part” and complete the harmony “with his sweet art”, both in the music and in the human heart.

Song II, *I got me Flowers*, dramatizes disappointment and loneliness struggling with hope as the musical phrases rise and fall. The poet wanted to bring flowers to celebrate Jesus, but he was up too late to catch the early-rising Christ (a characteristic “domestic” reference for Herbert), and even the sun could not outdo Jesus’s thrifty “arising”. A magical moment comes when the key gently changes and the chorus wordlessly supports the soloist’s question: can any daybreak match Easter Day? The final bars give the answer, which was hidden all the time in the desolate harmonies of the song’s opening: the six flats of the E flat minor key reveal themselves to be also the six flats of G flat major, and the piece ends on an enormously satisfying major chord. Vaughan Williams has made the poet’s spiritual journey real in musical terms, both witty and profoundly serious.

Song III, *Love bade me welcome* is a setting of what Simone Weil called “the most beautiful poem in the world”. The “mystical” subject here is the Communion Service that for Christians re-enacts the Last Supper, foretells the great feast that the blessed will enjoy in Heaven, and is related to Jesus’s parable of the Rich Man’s Feast and the stories of the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the Supper at Emmaus. Herbert compares the relationship between God and mankind to the welcome that a generous, “quick-eyed” and sensitive host gives to a nervously self-deprecating guest, and the constant quavers of the 3/4 accompaniment suggest the anxiety that

needs to be reassured by Love's steady vocal line. The crucial musical moment comes when the old plainchant melody *O Sacrum Convivium* (*O Holy Feast*) is sung, wordlessly and as quietly as possible (*pppp*), by the chorus, making clear the spiritual significance of this apparently commonplace, everyday invitation to share a meal. The guest sits and the holy feast calmly proceeds as the ancient hymn gently fades away.

Songs IV and V, *The Call* and *Antiphon*, are dramatically contrasted. The first has a lovely lilting melody that evokes a mind at ease, rejoicing in a confident relationship with the God of Love. Each stanza lists and then develops the spiritual concepts that will act as firm markers on the "Way" to God through Jesus – Jesus who said to Doubting Thomas "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14 1-7) . They form a kind of circling dance of meditation, and the last stanza begins in musical exultation which then sinks to peaceful rest. The accompaniment in *Antiphon* suggests the jubilant ringing of bells, and the chorus are instructed to sing with determination (*risoluto*) as they fill the world with praises that seem to re-echo from the heavens to the earth, growing, flying, and shouted from the church – both the building, even if its doors are shut, and the universal congregation of the faithful. Characteristically of Herbert, however, it is in the individual human heart that the "longest part" will be heard, if only by its most important auditor – God himself.

I. Easter

*Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, Just.*

*Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The cross taught all wood to resound his name
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.*

*Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied,
And multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.*

II I got me flowers

*I got me flowers to strew thy way;
I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.*

*The Sun arising in the East,
Though he give light, and the East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.*

*Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we miss:
There is but one, and that one ever.*

III Love bade me welcome

*Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack*

*From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lack'd anything.*

*A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here:
Love said, You shall be he.
I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
Who made the eyes but I?*

*Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?
My dear, then I will serve.
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:
So I did sit and eat.*

IV The call

*Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life:
Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife:
Such a Life, as killeth death.*

*Come, My Light, my Feast, my Strength:
Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length:
Such a Strength, as makes his guest.*

*Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart:
Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part:
Such a Heart, as joys in love.*

V 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!*

*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!*

Programme notes © Jon Long 2022

.....

Interval

(20 minutes)

.....

Vivace Chorus is proud to support the work of 'Foodwise'!

Martin Vodden will give a short talk about the charity after the interval, and there will be a bucket collection at the end of the concert to support its work. Please give generously to help them give people the skills to prepare their own feasts!

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The Perfect Fool (Ballet Music)

Gustav Holst

The opening ballet sequence of Holst's one-act opera-ballet *The Perfect Fool* is made up of three brilliantly scored and contrasting movements, played continuously. It represents a Wizard summoning up in turn the Spirits of Earth, Water and Fire to create a potion that he hopes will win him the love of a Princess, the main strand of the wildly eccentric plot that follows. Portentously rising trombone phrases, closely related to the opening bars of *Uranus, the Magician* in Holst's recently completed *Planets Suite*, lead straight into the pulsing syncopations and vivid orchestral colours of the *Dance of the Earth Spirits* (later specified as Gnomes and Goblins). Holst's music throughout is ideal for a ballet, strongly rhythmical and with straightforward, immediately appealing melodies that imply eloquent, muscular stage movement in a quickly changing sequence.

The "Wizard" theme is repeated to introduce both of the remaining scenes. The *Dance of the Water-Spirits* is a beautiful example of English pastoralism, with sunlit fields, a flowing river and sparkling fountains touchingly "painted" by harp, celesta and woodwind (Holst notes at one point, with characteristic precision, "the Celesta is more important than the Harp here"). Meanwhile muted strings create the relaxed atmosphere of a bright summer's day. *Mercury* from *The Planets* is recalled more directly here than *Neptune*, perhaps because Holst is aiming at the glancing, quicksilver effects of sunlight on waterdrops.

The *Spirits of Fire* (Salamanders) then come racing in - "burning, scorching, blasting" says the libretto - riding faster and faster on thunderous timpani and great swirls from the string and brass sections of the orchestra, while the xylophone and tambourine create glittering sparks and the crackle of flames. *Mars, the Bringer of War* is not far away here.

Holst's love of the English landscape, his keen sense of drama and even his response to the bitter experiences of the Great War are evoked with extraordinary economy in this music, and the ballet has a depth and seriousness out of all proportion to its brevity – a miniature masterpiece.

Andante (Invocation)

Dance of Spirits of Earth (Moderato – Andante)

Dance of Spirits of Water (Allegro)

Dance of Spirits of Fire (Allegro moderato – Andante)



Belshazzar's Feast

William Walton

The first performance of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* was given in the Great Hall of Leeds Town Hall in 1931. The magnificent building, opened by Queen Victoria herself in 1858, was a monument to the commercial wealth of the city, its classical entrance-front adorned with allegorical figures representing Industry, Science and Culture, each accompanied by attributes that symbolised the sources of this wealth: an anvil, emblem of iron-founding and engineering, plump bales of wool, a roll of the fine printed linen cloth for which Leeds was famous, scientific instruments, and a globe and compasses to represent exploration and Empire. Inside the Hall, with its ninety-foot-high ceiling, huge golden letters were framed by massive, marble-effect pillars whose Corinthian capitals (the most imperial of the classical "orders") also gleamed with gilding, and spelled out the values that underpinned this prosperity and enterprise: INDUSTRY OVERCOMES ALL THINGS;

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY; FORWARD; GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN - and so on. Outside and inside, the confidence and self-belief of the mighty city and the nation and Empire that it embodied were literally written on the walls of the palatial edifice.

As the Queen and Prince Albert left Wellington Station, bound for their newly-completed Scottish-Baronial castle at Balmoral (cheered, it was said, by thirty-two thousand children), it may not have occurred to many in the crowds to see a parallel with "Babylon, the mighty city" in the Old Testament *Book of Daniel*, whose vaunting King Belshazzar was struck down with his kingdom in a single moment of divine revenge. Fewer still might have remembered that the New Testament author of the *Book of Revelation* had returned to the subject of Babylon, using it this time as an avatar of the city of Rome and its Empire under whose power he lived, and prophetically denouncing it for its ungodly materialism, its "merchandise of gold and silver ... of precious stones, of pearls, of fine linen ... of brass, iron and marble ... of slaves, and the souls of men". Fewer again, though surely some, may have pondered whether mid-Victorian Britain, in any sense, traded in "the souls of men" as well as in iron, fine linen and gold, or might, in some terrifying future, be weighed in the balance and found wanting, and suffer a sudden and calamitous fall.

When he was working on his magnificent cantata in 1929 -31 Walton must have been aware that the confident certainties of Victorian Britain were, to many, a distant dream. Born in Oldham in 1902, he had left Lancashire as a boy of ten thanks to the initiative of his music teacher father and the persistence of his mother, and rarely returned. He was a chorister, then one of the youngest ever undergraduates, at Christ Church, Oxford, where he was befriended by Sacheverell Sitwell and, through him, his well-connected and modish siblings Edith and Osbert,



Sir William Turner Walton
By Bassano Ltd (April 1937)
© National Portrait Gallery, London

who took him up and with whom he lived (at first in the attic of their Chelsea house) for more than ten years. As a member of the loosely-defined “set” of sophisticated and culturally daring “Bright Young Things” of post-World War One Britain, Walton won a dazzling reputation with *Façade* (1922), in which Edith declaimed her bizarre poems to the accompaniment of his witty, idiosyncratic music, much influenced by the jazz craze of the day. Meanwhile the country, especially in the Midlands and the

North, was beset by drawn-out industrial decline and repeated economic crises, and the political threats of the 1930s gathered force. An underlying sense of danger, even of approaching apocalypse, was impossible to ignore, and when the time came Walton, who had a talent for riding the wave of cultural opportunity, produced a masterpiece that caught the febrile spirit of the age, dramatizing in *Belshazzar's Feast* not only its enthusiasm for extravagance and risk, but also its anxiety in the face of potentially disastrous social and political change.

Then as now the BBC was a force for innovation as well as continuity, and in 1929 it was in the process of founding its own orchestra, the BBC Symphony, under the direction of Adrian Boult. *Belshazzar* was in fact the first commission given by this major new patron. The request was for a piece for small chorus, one soloist and a maximum of fifteen players, essentially a chamber-work. With typical creative daring Walton allowed his conception to develop until it required

massive and diverse forces: a double chorus and semi-chorus; a commanding dramatic baritone, preferably with experience in opera; and a huge orchestra. The percussion section alone, as the score blithely indicates, needs "3 or preferably 4 players" and lists thirteen instruments ranging from castanets and glockenspiel to military and bass drums by way of gong, xylophone, slapsticks and an anvil (essential to provide just four notes in the praise of the God of Iron).

When the work was taken on, in its swollen state, by the great Leeds Festival, the festival's director Sir Thomas Beecham made a famous comment, half jovial and half brusquely dismissive: "As you'll never hear the thing again, my boy, why not throw in a couple of brass bands?". Nothing daunted, the "boy" from Oldham took him at his word and added two brass ensembles of seven players each to the score. In a performance the crowded opulence of the musical forces is in itself a kind of Babylonian excess, assembled to enact the fall of the biblical king and illustrate what Neville Cardus called "a clear case of a red-hot conception instinctively finding the right and equally red-hot means of expression".

Osbert Sitwell's ingenious selection and arrangement of biblical texts creates a narrative that enables Walton to dramatize a sensational variety of moods. Doom-laden trombones and the male chorus's stark harmonies set up the theme of judgement, followed by a touching sequence of grief, indignation, despair, determination and vengefulness in the choral exploration of Psalm 137 (*By the waters of Babylon*). At every stage Walton's choice of instruments develops the drama: plaintive saxophone for heartbreak, pulsing brass and strings as anger rises, and so on. The soloist emerges as a spokesman for the people, anguished but determined, contrasting with the arrogance of Belshazzar and the superficial confidence of the Babylonians later. In a subtle

effect the chorus in this section merges the grief of the Jews with the pathos of the fallen city at the end of the work.

The story moves swiftly on with the denunciation of Babylon from *Revelation* (*Babylon was a great city*), a glorious opportunity for the baritone soloist with its sweeping, declamatory style and relish for luxury even as it is condemned. The description of the feast is enormously expanded from the account in the *Book of Daniel*, importing a list of instruments from the story of Nebuchadnezzar and



developing the King's character. Walton mockingly builds this section on a repeated four-note "toppling" figure in the orchestra that continually challenges the wildly upward-aspiring confidence of the feasters. The phrase *Yea! Drank from the sacred vessels* is stunningly isolated, summing up the blasphemous outrage against the true God. Ominous chords accompany Belshazzar as he rises to call on his false gods, while thunderous timpani and an extraordinary dissonant blast from the xylophone mock his power.

Walton said that at this point he had a problem: "I got landed on the word 'gold'. I was there from May to December, perched, unable to move either right or left or up or down." His brilliant solution was to write a grand march, parodying but also paying affectionate tribute to the "imperial" manner of Elgar's famous marches (Elgar, for whom Walton said that he had "unbounded admiration.") The God of Gold is introduced with nightmarish magnificence by the "royal" instruments of the brass section, plus gong, tambourine, cymbals and military drum. Silver sparkles with triangle and glockenspiel, Iron with clinks on the anvil, Wood naturally calls for the xylophone and wood block, and Stone the crack of the slapstick. In music that undeniably looks ahead to Walton's great Coronation Marches, *Crown Imperial* and *Orb and Sceptre*, the gods of the doomed city strut tipsily through the score like a parade of clockwork soldiers. The ultimate mockery is the praise of Belshazzar himself as King of Kings.

Sitwell and Walton now compress the narrative, keeping the focus on the avenging triumph of God. The descriptions of the Hand of God and the Writing on the Wall are achieved with tense economy. The soloist's sinister narrative is punctuated by chilling pauses, the terrified chattering of castanets, prowling 'cellos and double-basses and a repeat of the judgemental trombone theme from the opening of the cantata. The chorus starkly translate the famous verdict of God (*Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting*), and after the celebrated cry of "Slain!" the story reaches its final section, the exultant victory-song of the People of Israel.

One of the glories of Walton's score is the variety of dramatic effects that he packs into its thirty-five minute span. The baritone sings for a total of almost exactly five minutes, yet must play the part of a grief-stricken but resolute exile, describe with ironic poise a magnificent culture that both

impresses and repels him, and chill the blood with an unearthly horror-story. The chorus provide passionate narrative, lamentation, high-spirited satire, ferocious denunciation and at the end a vast triumph-scene, nearly one third of the cantata's length and itself encompassing a grim threnody for the fallen city at the heart of its "ecstatic gloating", as *The Times* called it in 1931. The whole is drawn together and driven forward by Walton's spell-binding control of his vast forces. No wonder that Herbert von Karajan once described *Belshazzar's Feast* as the greatest choral work of the Twentieth Century.

Programme notes © Jon Long 2022

Text arranged from Biblical sources by Osbert Sitwell

*Thus spake Isaiah –
Thy sons that thou shalt beget
They shall be taken away
And be eunuchs
In the palace of the King of Babylon
Howl ye, howl ye, therefore:
For the day of the Lord is at hand!*

*By the waters of Babylon
By the waters of Babylon
There we sat down: yea, we wept
And hanged our harps upon the willows*

*For they that wasted us
Required of us mirth;
They that carried us away captive
Required of us a song
Sing us one of the songs of Zion*

*How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?*

*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem
Let my right hand forget her cunning
If I do not remember thee
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth
Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy*

*By the waters of Babylon
There we sat down: yea, we wept*

*O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed
Happy shall he be that taketh thy children
And dasheth them against a stone
For with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down
And shall be found no more at all*

*Babylon was a great city
Her merchandise was of gold and silver
Of precious stones, of pearls, of fine linen
Of purple, silk and scarlet
All manner vessels of ivory
All manner vessels of most precious wood
Of brass, iron and marble
Cinnamon, odours and ointments
Of frankincense, wine and oil
Fine flour, wheat and beasts
Sheep, horses, chariots, slaves
And the souls of men*

*In Babylon
Belshazzar the King
Made a great feast*

*Made a feast to a thousand of his lords
And drank wine before the thousand*

*Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine
Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels:
Yea! the golden vessels, which his father, Nebuchadnezzar
Had taken out of the temple that was in Jerusalem*

*He commanded us to bring the golden vessels
Of the temple of the house of God
That the King, his Princes, his wives
And his concubines might drink therein*

*Then the King commanded us:
Bring ye the cornet, flute, sackbut, psaltery
And all kinds of music: they drank wine again
Yea, drank from the sacred vessels
And then spake the King:*

*Praise ye
The God of Gold
Praise ye
The God of Silver
Praise ye
The God of Iron
Praise ye
The God of Wood
Praise ye
The God of Stone
Praise ye
The God of Brass
Praise ye the Gods!*

*Thus in Babylon, the mighty city
Belshazzar the King made a great feast
Made a feast to a thousand of his lords
And drank wine before the thousand*

*Belshazzar whiles he tasted the wine
Commanded us to bring the gold and silver vessels
That his Princes, his wives and his concubines
Might rejoice and drink therein*

*After they had praised their strange gods
The idols and the devils
False gods who can neither see nor hear
Called they for the timbrel and the pleasant harp
To extol the glory of the King
Then they pledged the King before the people
Crying, Thou, O King, art King of Kings:
O King, live for ever...*

*And in that same hour, as they feasted
Came forth fingers of a man's hand
And the King saw
The part of the hand that wrote*

*And this was the writing that was written:
'MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN'
'THOU ART WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE
AND FOUND WANTING'
In that night was Belshazzar the King slain
And his Kingdom divided*

*Then sing aloud to God our strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob
Take a psalm, bring hither the timbrel*

*Blow up the trumpet in the new moon
Blow up the trumpet in Zion
For Babylon the Great is fallen, fallen
Alleluia!*

*Then sing aloud to God our strength:
Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob
While the Kings of the Earth lament
And the merchants of the Earth
Weep, wail and rend their raiment
They cry, Alas, Alas, that great city
In one hour is her judgement come*

*The trumpeters and pipers are silent
And the harpers have ceased to harp
And the light of a candle shall shine no more*

*Then sing aloud to God our strength
Make a joyful noise to the God of Jacob
For Babylon the Great is fallen.
Alleluia!*

End



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Vivace Chorus - 75 years of music-making



The choir's origins are a bit hazy, but after a trawl through records at Surrey History Centre, the following seems to have been the series of events that led to its formation.

In the aftermath of World War II, Guildford Municipal Corporation accepted the plan of the Corporation's newly appointed Musical Organiser, Jack Crossley Clitheroe, to put on regular orchestral concerts and hold a Summer Music Festival. Integral to his vision was the formation of a choir. The Municipal choir, which became known as the Festival Choir, gave their first performance on 26 January 1946 as part of a victory concert. Crossley Clitheroe didn't hang about and the first Summer Music Festival took place in July 1946, where the Festival Choir brought the proceedings to a close with rousing renditions of Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* and Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*.

By December 1946 the Festival Choir had 190 members, and their performance of Handel's *Messiah* was a sell-out. That year marked the emergence of a choir which would eventually evolve from the Guildford Festival Choir, via the Philharmonic Choir into the new millennium's Vivace Chorus.

In 1949 Crossley Clitheroe formed a second smaller choir, which he called the Philharmonic Choir to undertake shorter, often unaccompanied pieces of music. The repertoire of both choirs continued to expand over the years to include such works as Bach's *Mass in B minor*, Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, Brahms' *Requiem*, and Delius' *Sea Drift*. In 1959 there was a performance of the Verdi *Requiem* in the 'New Cathedral' in aid of the Mayor's Cathedral Building Fund. Every Christmas the choir would perform *The Messiah* at the Technical College, the only Guildford venue large enough to accommodate a choir and an orchestra. The annual music festival also continued to be a huge and increasing success, with famous soloists, like Joan Hammond, coming to Guildford.

Following the sudden death of Crossley Clitheroe in June 1962, the Municipal Corporation appointed Vernon 'Tod' Handley to succeed him as the next Music Director. Soon after his arrival, the name of the orchestra changed to Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra (GPO) and from the beginning of the 1965/66 season, the Festival Choir and the Philharmonic Choir merged to become Guildford Philharmonic Choir (GPC). Tod, as he was known, was keen to put on concerts of unfamiliar music, with many pieces by English composers. He was a charismatic conductor who modelled his conducting style on that of his mentor, Sir Adrian Boult.

Choir rehearsals with Tod were hard work and he could be quite demanding, but they were all laced with humour. He had piercing eyes that seemed to penetrate you and kept you on your toes. His exceptionally clear beat was much appreciated, and he loved telling the choir about his experiences with Sir Adrian Boult. One of his favourite phrases was "It's all in the stick, just watch". After more than two decades as Director of Music for the Council (now Guildford Borough), Tod decided it was time to move onto pastures new.

Following Handley's departure, the Borough brought in a series of guest conductors for both the orchestra and choir. The list is very impressive: Brian Wright, Norman del Mar, Sir David Willcocks, Richard Armstrong, Wilfried Boettcher and En Shao. In September 1984 Simon Halsey became the new Chorus Master. He was also Director of Music at Warwick University and Chorus Master of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. This led to two exciting excursions from Guildford, a performance of Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* at Warwick University's Arts Centre in 1985, and a trip to L'Eglise St Roch, Paris to perform Berlioz *Te Deum* in November the



Guildford Philharmonic Choir, St Roch Paris, November 1986

following year, with the University's choir and orchestra. Simon left in 1987 and Neville Creed, who had been his deputy, took over. Neville stayed with GPC for seven years, preparing the choir for several eminent guest conductors, but also conducting a few concerts himself.

One of the most frequent guest conductors was Brian Wright, who conducted the choir in eight performances between 1984 and 1995. Many of these were of monumental and dramatic

works, such as the Verdi *Requiem* and *Te Deum*, Berlioz, *Grande Messe des Morts*, and *Te Deum*, and Brahms *Requiem*. Goldsmith's Choral Union, Brian's principal choir, joined GPC for most of these concerts bringing the combined number of singers to over 200. In 1989 the choir joined 33 other choirs from across the UK to sing the *Grande Messe* in the Royal Albert Hall, with Brian Wright conducting. There were 1500 voices, more than double the number Berlioz had initially wanted, and he was notoriously ambitious where the number of singers was concerned.

In September 1979, Guildford was formally twinned with Freiburg im Breisgau, a delightful historic city in Baden-Württemberg (South West Germany). To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the twinning, about 80 members of the Freiburg Bachchor travelled to join GPC in a performance of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in the Cathedral on 28 April 1990. Accommodation was provided by choir members in their own homes, an arrangement that would be reciprocated later in the year in Freiburg.

To continue the 10th anniversary twinning celebrations, GPC was invited to sing Handel's *Messiah* on Saturday 1 September 1990 in Freiburg. Apart from the coach breaking down and a five hour wait for a replacement, the trip was a great success and the two choirs continued to have joint concerts for nearly 20 years.

Probably the most memorable concert was the performance of Britten's *War Requiem* in the Stadthalle, Freiburg on 14 November 1993. In rehearsals, the two choirs were sitting mixed together. The Bachchor had been rehearsing with choral scores which had just the choral parts, so when the choirs rehearsed with the tenor and baritone soloists several members of the Bachchor were hearing Wilfred Owens

poems for the first time. They were very moved by the words and realised that the work was written as a reconciliation. When words such as "I am the enemy you killed, my friend" were sung, they understood why one soloist should always be English and the other one German.

In 1986 Guildford was fortunate to find a replacement for Vernon Handley. Sir Charles Groves accepted the position of Principal Conductor of the GPO, and insisted on performing one concert a year with the choir. He frequently took choir rehearsals, with his wife sitting at the back of the hall. Unfortunately he died in 1992, and two years later Neville left to take up the post of Chorus Director of the London Philharmonic Choir.

The choir was very involved in choosing Neville's successor. The Choir's committee sifted through the many applications and came up with a short list of eight candidates, who each took half of a rehearsal in January 1995. The choir chose Jeremy Backhouse, who has been the Music Director ever since. At this point the Borough still engaged guest conductors, including Edward Warren, Grant Llewellyn, and Jonathan Willcocks who conducted his own composition *Great is the Glory* in November 1995. Then everything changed. The Borough Council had supported the choir financially up to this point, but this support was removed in 1998. The choir had the choice of giving up or going it alone. Under the leadership of its Chairman John Trigg, the members decided on the latter course. The Borough funded one of GPC's concerts each year until 2002 but then all ties and funding from the Borough ceased.

As the choir was now an entirely free agent, it was thought that the choir's name should reflect that status. *Vivace Chorus* was finally chosen, and it was hoped it would portray the vitality and enthusiasm the choir members all shared. We have been

performing as Vivace Chorus since the start of the 2005-06 season, and have decided our own programmes, and chosen the orchestra and soloists we wish to perform with.

There have been so many stand-out performances and experiences during Jeremy's tenure as Music Director. The choir has sung three times at the Royal Albert Hall since the Millennium. In October 2001 it was as the backing choir for Russell Watson 'The Voice'; in May 2011 the choir performed Mahler's *Symphony No 8, 'Symphony of a Thousand'*, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and four guest choirs. Altogether there were in excess of 500 performers. Then in May 2014



Vivace Chorus at the Royal Albert Hall, May 2014

Photo © Ash Mills

Vivace was back for a for a magnificent performance of Verdi's *Requiem* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra again. Another memorable excursion was to the Royal Festival Hall in May 2017, where Vivace performed Brahms' *Requiem*, and also a new composition by Francis Pott, called *Cantus Maris*, an atmospheric piece that really portrays a sense of the sea.

Francis has been the choir's rehearsal pianist since 2008.

As Vivace Chorus, the choir has performed a wide range of music in Guildford, from traditional requiems and oratorios to opera hits, programmes including Latin and Jazz rhythms and, just before the first Covid lockdown, the incredible *African Sanctus* by David Fanshawe, complete with the dancers of the Mighty Zulu Nation Theatre Company, enthusiastically wielding their assegais.



During the pandemic the choir did what many choirs had to do – go digital - with weekly rehearsals taking place via Zoom. It was reassuring to see other members on the screen. They also managed to record a version of 'You'll Never Walk Alone' from *Carousel*, a firm favourite of the Liverpool FC supporting Music Director, and a Carol Concert to raise funds for the Mayor of Guildford's Christmas Appeal, both available to view on YouTube at time of writing.

Because of the pandemic, Vivace Chorus is celebrating its 75th anniversary a year late, in November 2022. We hope you will enjoy, along with us, tonight's celebratory concert - a feast of exciting and beautiful music.

Choir history notes © Mary Clayton 2022

Jeremy Backhouse



Photo © Ash Mills

Jeremy Backhouse is one of Britain's leading choral conductors. He began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral where he was Senior Chorister.

Jeremy has been the sole conductor of the internationally-renowned chamber choir, Vasari Singers, since its inception in 1980. Since winning the prestigious Choir of the Year competition in 1988, the Vasari Singers has performed regularly at major concert venues and cathedrals throughout the UK and abroad. Jeremy and the Vasari Singers broadcast frequently on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3 and have a discography of over 25 CDs on EMI, Guild,

Signum and Naxos. Their recordings have been nominated for a Gramophone award, received two Gramophone Editor's Choice awards, the top recommendation on Radio 3's 'Building A Library' and two recent CDs both achieved Top Ten status in the Specialist Classical Charts. He is totally committed to the performance of contemporary music and, with Vasari, he has commissioned over 25 new works.

In January 1995 Jeremy was appointed Music Director of the Vivace Chorus. Alongside the standard classical works, Jeremy has conducted the Vivace Chorus in some ambitious programmes including Howells' Hymnus Paradisi, Szymanowski's Stabat Mater, Mahler's 'Resurrection' Symphony, Prokofiev's Alexander Nevsky and Ivan the Terrible, then Mahler's 'Symphony of a Thousand' and Verdi's Requiem in the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Until July 2022, Jeremy was also the Music Director of the Salisbury Community Choir. In 2013 the choir celebrated its 21st Anniversary with a concert in Salisbury Cathedral, premiering a specially-commissioned work by Will Todd, *The City Garden*, which they toured to Lincoln (2014) and Guildford (2015) cathedrals. A new work from Alexander L'Estrange was premiered in Winchester Cathedral in November 2018.

Jeremy has also worked with a number of the country's leading choirs, including the BBC Singers, the London Symphony Chorus, the Philharmonia Chorus, and the Brighton Festival Chorus.

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membership@vivacechorus.org

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National Symphony Orchestra

Leader: Matthew Scrivener

Principle Conductor: Paul Bateman



The National Symphony Orchestra is one of the longest-established and most versatile professional freelance orchestras working in Britain today. It has an impressive recorded legacy as well as a busy diary of live concert performances. The NSO is admired for both its versatility, its ability to communicate, connecting with audiences with consistent commitment and passion. The orchestra has recently found renewed energy and direction under its managing director, Justin Pearson.

The NSO was founded in the 1940s and immediately became a significant recording orchestra. From the 1980s the reputation and standing of the orchestra surged forwards, successfully performing and recording for audiences in a dynamic range of genres: Classical, Film and TV scores, West End and Broadway musicals, accompanying celebrated international singers, all of which it continues to do to this day.

The NSO has recorded more than 40 complete major classic musicals. This significant legacy means that the NSO is one of the most recorded orchestras at EMI Abbey Road Studios. These musicals, marketed mainly in the USA, often sold more than 1.5 million discs, including recordings of Phantom of the Opera and West Side Story. The Leonard Bernstein Estate remarked: "There is no finer recording of West Side Story than that which was laid down by the NSO"

Though based in London, the NSO performs throughout the United Kingdom, drawing its fine players from all round the country. The NSO prides itself on the huge audiences that regularly support its concerts. The orchestra has performed Opera Evenings with artistes such as Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Lesley Garrett.

NSO has toured to Spain with Katherine Jenkins and Alfie Boe, and was proud to play at the ceremony marking the handover to the nation of the new Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre in Loughborough in the presence of Prince William and the Prime Minister.

Viennese Nights, Tchaikovsky Galas and programmes of popular classics have been performed to capacity houses at prestigious venues including The Royal Festival Hall, Barbican, Royal Albert Hall and Symphony Hall, Birmingham to name but a few.

In 2018, NSO topped the classical charts for weeks collaborating with presenter Alan Titchmarsh and composer Debbie Wiseman for a project named "The Glorious Garden".

The orchestra was chosen to record the scores for Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday celebrations and recently performed on ITV for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 at Windsor Castle.

Thomas Nießer - *Baritone*



Photo © Ben Tomlin

Welsh-German baritone Thomas Nießer was educated at the University of Bristol and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he studied under Professor Janice Chapman and graduated with Honours. As part of his undergraduate degree, he spent a year in Heidelberg where he studied under Ashley Prewitt at the Staatsoper Stuttgart.

He is now making a name for himself both in the UK and on the continent, and has been praised for his 'powerful but richly toned voice'.

Recent opera roles include *Dr Falke* in Johann Strauss's opera *Die Fledermaus* (Schlossfestspiele Ettlingen), *Don Giovanni* in Mozart's opera of the same name (Berlin Opera Academy), *Guglielmo* in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (Love Opera) and *Alfio* in Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* (North Wales Opera).

He is also in demand on the concert stage; his solo oratorio roles have included Bach *Weihnachtsoratorium* (*Christmas Oratorio*), Handel *Messiah*, the *Requiems* of Mozart, Brahms, Duruflé and Fauré, and (with Vivace Chorus) Elgar *The Dream of Gerontius*.

A proud Welsh speaker, Thomas has a passion for Welsh song and enjoys bringing this lesser-known repertoire to a wider audience.

He looks forward to returning to sing with Vivace Chorus once again in tonight's concert.

Samuel Staples

Solo violin

British violinist Samuel Staples was born in London to a musical family and began playing the violin when he was five after a short-lived but enthusiastic career as a 'cellist.



Aged eight he was awarded a place at the Yehudi Menuhin School where he studied with Natasha Boyarsky.

His teachers and mentors since have included András Keller, Boris Kucharsky, Vasko Vassilev, David Dolan, Pavlo Beznosiuk, Andriy Viytovych and Pavel Fisher.

As a soloist and chamber musician he has performed across France, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Norway, Japan and the USA, as well as in many major UK venues including the Wigmore Hall, St. John's Smith Square, Purcell Room, Kings Place, Menuhin Hall, Windsor Castle and Milton Court.

He is a regular guest at many festivals worldwide.

A keen orchestral musician, Samuel is in increasingly high demand as both a leader and director.

He has performed as concertmaster with Orpheus Sinfonia, Outcry Ensemble, Sinfonia One, AIMS Chamber Orchestra,, Agora Festival Orchestra, Bloomsbury Opera and the Orion Orchestra and enjoys collaborating regularly with groups including the Locrian Ensemble, La Nuova Musica, Collegium and City of London Soloists.

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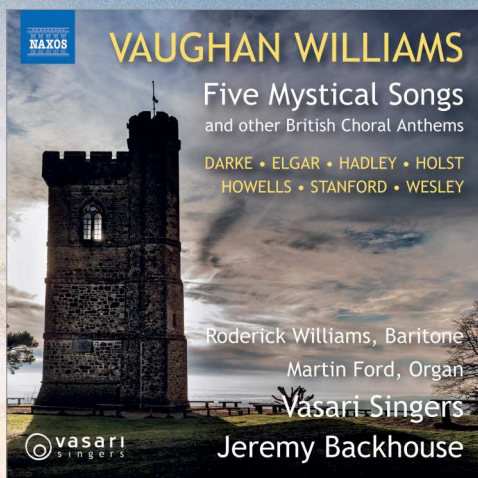
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SCAN ME

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Vasari Singers

Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse



Vasari Singers was founded in 1980 and is regarded as one of the leading chamber choirs in Britain. Under the direction of its founder-conductor Jeremy Backhouse, Vasari Singers performs a wide range of repertoire from Renaissance to contemporary. The choir sings regularly at major concert venues and other locations in London and elsewhere, including abroad, having enjoyed tours to Spain, the Baltic states and Italy in recent years. Cathedral residencies are an important part of the choir's year and it is heard frequently on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3.

Two crucial foundation stones of the choir's history have been the commissioning of new choral works and making recordings: Vasari's extensive discography includes a large collection of premiere recordings, many of which are of works commissioned by Vasari Singers, as well as two collections of Christmas music. Most of the choir's recordings feature 20th and 21st century composers and many have received high acclaim, achieving chart successes and similar recommendations. One such recent review by *Choir and*

Organ described Vasari Singers as 'outstanding, gifted and deeply musical'.

During the moratorium on live choral singing in 2019 and 2020, Vasari turned its attention to online activities, successfully engaging with a worldwide audience through virtual performances and choral workshops. Notable amongst these was a film on French composer Marcel Dupré, praised as 'one of the best pandemic-driven virtual performances'

The choir's latest recording released last month on the Naxos label features a celebration of the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams (in this, his 150th anniversary year). Its centrepiece is a recording of the *Five Mystical Songs* with acclaimed baritone Roderick Williams. It also includes many other choral favourites by Elgar, Wesley, Patrick Hadley and Harold Darke.



First Soprano

Elena Carlton Jones
Victoria Cross
Harriet Gritton
Kate Jurka
Elizabeth Limb

Second Soprano

Rachel Holmes
Elizabeth Isherwood
Rachel Robinson
Jess Stansfield
Laura Stephenson
Susan Waton

First Alto

Elizabeth Atkinson
Julia Field
Stephanie May

Second Alto

Alison Benton
Bridget Coaker
Sarah Mistry

First Tenor

Daniel Burges
Paul Robertson
Julian Washington

Second Tenor

Paul Bradbury
Roger Carpenter
Rihards Saknītis

First Bass

John Hunt
Richard Semmens

Second Bass

Imants Auziņš
Simon Backhouse
Malcolm Field
Keith Long

Vivace Chorus Singers

FIRST SOPRANO

Sandra Adamson
Sel Adamu*
Pam Alexander
Amelia Atkinson*
Jane Barnes
Mary Broughton*
Jo Haviland
Becky Kerby*
Fran MacKay
Suzie Maine
Michelle Mumford
Sue Norton*
Robin Onslow
Gillian Rix
Sarah Smithies
Barbara Tansey
Joan Thomas
Hilary Vaill
Anna Wili

SECOND SOPRANO

Jacqueline Alderton
Anna Arthur
Sarah Badger
Mary Brown*
Scarlett Close*
Ann Fuller*
Isobel Humphreys*
Isabel Mealor
Alex Nash
Gill Perkins*
Kate Peters*
Mary Somerville
Valerie Thompson

Olwyn Westwood
Christine Wilks
Eiri Williams
Fiona Wimblett

FIRST ALTO

Barbara Barklem*
Jackie Bearman
Marion Blair
Monika Boothby-Jost
Judy Brewster
Jane Brooks*
Amanda Burn
Philippa Curtis
Fiona Davidge
Valentina Faedi
Sheila Hodson
Jean Leston

Lis Martin
Penny McLaren
Christine Medlow*
Rosalind Milton*
Lilly Nicholson
Jackie Payne
Catherine Shacklady
Marjory Stewart
Julia Stubbs
Sue Thomas
Hilary Trigg*
Maggie Woolcock*

SECOND ALTO

Geraldine Allen
Evelyn Beastall
Mary Clayton

Andrea Dombrowe
Sheena Ewen*
Valerie Garrow
Liz Hampshire
Pauline Higgins
Penny Macfarlane
Lois McCabe
Kay McManus*
Catherine Middleton
Mary Moon
Pamela Murrell
Sonja Nagle*
Sheila Rowell
Jo Stokes
Rosey Storey*
Pamela Usher
June Windle

FIRST TENOR

Bob Bromham*
Bob Cowell*
Owen Gibbons
Nick Manning*
Barbara McDonald
John Trigg*
Susie Walker

SECOND TENOR

Peter Butterworth
Simon Dillon*
Geoff Johns
Stephen Linton*
Charles Martin*
Peter Norman
Jon Scott*

FIRST BASS

Paul Barnes
Phil Beastall
Richard Broughton
Mark Brown*
Brian John
Jeremy Johnson
Andrew Linden
Jon Long
Malcolm Munt
Chris Newbery*
Robin Privett*
David Ross*
Andrew Skinner
Ben Smithies*
Phil Stanford*
Rob Walker
Kieron Walsh*

SECOND BASS

Peter Andrews
Norman Carpenter
James Garrow*
Stuart Gooch*
Nick Gough*
Mike Johns
Neil Martin
Chris Peters*
Phil Tudor
Richard Wood

* = Semi-chorus
+ = Guest singer



Vivace Chorus presents

THE MAYOR OF GUILDFORD'S CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse

in aid of
The Mayor's Local
Support Fund

Sunday
11 Dec 2022
at 7pm

Holy Trinity Church
Guildford

Vivace
Chorus

Tickets: £15 (Adults); £5 (Children) plus a small
booking fee, includes programme. Tickets available
online at vivacechorus.org or at the door.

Registered Charity No.1026337

Vivace Chorus dates for your diary

The Mayor of Guildford's Carol Concert

Sunday 11th December 2022 7:00 pm Holy Trinity Church, Guildford

One of the highlights of the Christmas season in Guildford is the Mayor of Guildford's annual Carol Concert, in support of this year's selected charity. As always, there will be your favourite audience carols, plus a wonderful selection of traditional and contemporary carols sung by the choir. With wine, soft drinks and mince pies in the interval, this is the perfect way to start your countdown to Christmas.

Come & Sing!

Saturday 28th January 2023 10am Guildford Baptist Church, Millmead

What better way to warm up on a chilly Saturday in January than singing some of the most joyous music in the repertoire? Join us for our always-popular Come & Sing day on January 28th, where we will be singing Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, Pergolesi's *Magnificat* and Monteverdi's *Beatus Vir*. The day will be held at Millmead Church, our regular rehearsal venue, and will be led by Jeremy Backhouse with Francis Pott at the piano. We're excited to be bringing our full-day Come & Sing back to Guildford after a couple of years – book now to secure your place!

Duke Ellington Sacred Concert

Saturday 18th March 2023 7:30 pm

GLive, Guildford

It's not often you get to hear Duke Ellington in Guildford! Join us for his toe-tapping yet moving *Sacred Concert* for jazz band and choir, alongside Bob Chilcott's highly popular *A Little Jazz Mass* and Guildford-based composer Will Todd's *Songs of Peace*, all accompanied by our specially-created jazz band.

Further details at vivacechorus.org

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Pegasus Court, North Lane, Aldershot GU12 4QP. Tel : 01252 330683

Vivace Chorus is a Registered Charity No. 1026337



DUKE SACRED
ELLINGTON CONCERT

Bob Chilcott:
A Little Jazz Mass

Will Todd:
Songs of Peace

Conductor:
Jeremy Backhouse

Saturday
18 March 2023
at 7.30pm

Vivace
Chorus

Tickets: Book online GLive.co.uk
or phone 01483 369350



Guildford's state-of-the-art
entertainment venue

FUTURE CONCERTS



Vivace Chorus presents
**THE MAYOR OF GUILDFORD'S
CHRISTMAS
CONCERT**
Conductor: Jeremy Backhouse
*in aid of
The Mayor's Local
Support Fund*

**Sunday
11 Dec 2022
at 7pm**
Holy Trinity Church
Guildford

**Vivace
Chorus**

Tickets: £15 (Adults); £5 (Children) plus a small booking fee, includes programme. Tickets available online at vivacechorus.org or at the door.
Registered Charity No. 1026337



**Come
& Sing**

HANDEL:
Dixit Dominus
PERGOLESI:
Magnificat
MONTEVERDI:
Beatus vir

**Saturday
28 Jan 2023
10am - 4.30pm**
Guildford Baptist Church, Millmead.

**Vivace
Chorus**

For further details and to book go to
vivacechorus.org
Registered Charity No. 1026337



**DUKE
ELLINGTON** SACRED
CONCERT

Bob Chilcott:
A Little Jazz Mass
Will Todd:
Songs of Peace
Conductor:
Jeremy Backhouse

**Saturday
18 March 2023
at 7.30pm**

**Vivace
Chorus**


Guildford's state of the art
entertainment venue



**THE ITALIAN
JOB** *Allegri, Monteverdi,
Pergolesi, Gabrieli and
Handel: Dixit Dominus*

Conductor:
Jeremy Backhouse

**Saturday
20 May 2023
at 7.30pm**
Holy Trinity
Guildford

**Vivace
Chorus**

Tickets: Book online at
www.vivacechorus.org