

Benjamin Britten

*a selection of works including
A Ceremony of Carols and
Hymn to St Cecilia*



The Tudeley Singers

Alex Trigg Conductor

Victoria Longhurst Harp

Chris Pelmore Tenor

Saturday 7th

December, 6pm

All Saints' Church,

Tudeley, TN11 0NZ



Programme - £1

Welcome

All Saints' Church, Tudeley, is one of the most beautiful sacred spaces in the world. It's such a privilege not just to live nearby, but to be able to perform in this stunning venue. That's why I'm delighted to welcome you all to this concert tonight, in aid of the Chagall Window Preservation Trust. Benjamin Britten is one of my absolute favourite composers, and his choral works are appropriately resplendent for this church. I do hope you all enjoy the music, and that you'll join us for refreshments at the end. – **Alex**

Ceremony of Carols

1. Procession
2. Wolcum Yole!
3. There is no rose
- 4a. That yongë child
- 4b. Balulalow
5. As Dew in Aprille
6. This Little Babe
7. Interlude
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9. Spring Carol
10. Deo gracias
11. Recession

Soloist - Rachel Balcombe

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(harp solo)

Soloists - Rachel Balcombe, Roland Miller

Soloists - Deborah Bruce, Sarah Walker

Overture

(from *Suite for harp*)

Choral Dances from “Gloriana”

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

I wonder as I wonder

(tenor solo)

Nocturne

(from *Sonatina Romantica* for piano)

Hymn to St Cecilia

*Soloists - Sarah Walker, Deborah Bruce,
Natasha Caisley, Richard Field,
Paul Weaser*

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Harpist

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Programme notes

A Ceremony of Carols



In April 1939, Benjamin Britten and his partner Peter Pears set sail for North America. As pacifists, they didn't truly feel at home in England anymore, just like their friends W.H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, who had made the same voyage three months previously. Britten was also tired of the musical scene in England and fed up of hostile reviews. Knowing how well the music of his mentor, Frank Bridge, had been received in the US, he was hoping for great success in the new world.

Although Britten's time in the US was altogether very successful, he missed his fatherland dearly, later recalling that America had "all the faults of Europe and none of the attractions." When, in 1942, he read *The Borough* by George Crabbe, he knew he had to return home. Set in coastal Suffolk, the poems reminded him vividly of his hometown of Lowestoft, and inspired him to write his most famous opera *Peter Grimes*, which many believe to be a deep reflection of Britten's own psyche. Britten and Pears set sail for England that same year, stopping *en route* at Nova Scotia, where Britten discovered a collection of mediaeval texts called *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*. On the voyage home, Britten set many of these to music for boys' choir and harp, later calling the collection *A Ceremony of Carols*. Britten had been intending to write a harp concert for quite some time, and thus his writing for the instrument in this cantata is masterful and idiomatic. The version for mixed choir, performed tonight, was arranged by Julius Harrison in 1943.

1. Procession

The cantata begins with the choir, unaccompanied and in procession, singing *Hodie Christus natus est*, a Gregorian chant for Christmas day.

Hodie Christus natus est:
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt angeli:
laetantur archangeli:
hodie exultant justi dicentes:
gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia!

*Today, Christ is born:
Today, the Saviour appears:
Today, the angels sing on earth:
The archangels rejoice:
Today, the righteous rejoice, saying:
"Glory to God in the Highest.
Alleluia!"*

2. Wolcum Yole!

Arpeggiated chords in the harp and a strident welcome in the voices set a joyful tone to welcome the new year. The choir splits into three parts for the second verse (a technique used frequently throughout the cantata), but comes together again for a change of texture in the third. The final verse ends with an *accelerando* towards a final enthusiastic "*Wolcum!*"

Anon., 14th Century

Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be thou hevenè king,
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum, born in one morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!

Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon,
Wolcum, Innocentes every one,
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,
Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere,
Wolcum, Twelfth Day both in fere,
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dare,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!

Candelmesse, Quene of Bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be ye that are here, Wolcum Yole,
Wolcum alle and make good cheer.
Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole. Wolcum!

3. There is no Rose

Ostinato octaves resonate in the bass of the harp throughout the movement, while the right hand and the upper voices explore a range of keys, separated by unison Latin interjections from the whole choir. Increasing dissonance against the ostinato builds tension through the movement, which gradually subsides. The ostinato finally stops as we transcend into heaven.

Anon., 14th Century

There is no rose of such vertu
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in litel space,
Res miranda, Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma, pares forma.
The aungels sungen the shepherds to:

Gloria in excelsis, gloria in excelsis
Deo!
Gaudeamus, gaudeamus.

Alleluia, Alleluia,

O wondrous thing, O wondrous thing.

Equal in form, Equal in form.

Glory in the highest, glory to God in the
highest!
Let us rejoice, let us rejoice.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
*Transeamus, Transeamus,
Transeamus.
Alleluia, Res miranda, Pares forma,
Gaudeamus,
Transeamus.*

*Let us transcend, let us transcend, let us
transcend.
Alleluia, O wondrous thing, equal in form,
let us rejoice,
Let us transcend.*

4a. That yongë child (Soloist: Rachel Balcombe)

Soprano soloist and harp describe the scene as the virgin Mary sings her baby to sleep. The solitary repeated harp figure at the start sounds like just two different pitches (D flat and C natural), but it is actually played on three different strings (D flat, C sharp and B sharp), to save damping the string and to allow more resonance. This, combined with the modal harmonies and feeling of total rhythmic freedom create an atmosphere of ethereal mystery.

Anon., 14th Century

That yongë child when it gan weep
With song she lulled him asleep:
That was so sweet a melody
It passèd alle minstrelsy.

The nightingalë sang also:
Her song is hoarse and nought thereto:
Whose attendeth to her song
And leaveth the first then doth he wrong.

4b. Balulalow (Soloist: Rachel Balcombe)

This lullaby is sung through the voice of Mary, represented by a soprano solo. The gentle, swinging melody, the alternation between major and minor, and the playful conflict between minim and dotted minim beats all lend a feeling of childish innocence to the song, which ends with deep and soft harmony as the choir divides into nine parts and Mary's voice soars gracefully above.

James, John and Robert Wedderburn (1548), 1561

O my deare hert, young Jesu sweet,
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,
And I sall rock thee to my hert,
And never mair from thee depart.

But I sall praise thee evermoir
with sangës sweet unto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert sall I bow,
And sing that richt Balulalow!

5. As dew in Aprille

After a declamatory opening, the choir separates into a two-part canon shared out between the four voices. The simile, comparing Christ at Mary's breast to the April dew, is heard three times in all, with subtle differences in the text each time. This is accompanied by a quiet, murmuring effect in the harp, called *bisbigliando* (literally "whispering"). These effects represent rumours about the birth of Christ being shared around excitedly by the local people, before the voices fall back into sync for a joyful conclusion.

Anon., c. 1400

I sing of a maiden
That is makèles:
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came al so stille
There his moder was,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the grass.

He came al so stille
To his moder's bour,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the flour.

He came al so stille
There his moder lay,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the spray.

Moder and mayden
was never none but she;
Well may such a lady
Goddess mother be.

6. This little Babe

Presto con fuoco is the tempo marking at the start of this movement: "very fast, with fire." The excitement from the previous movement is continued as the choir sings in unison about Christ's coming "to rife Satan's fold." This is accompanied by a heavy repeating chord figure in the harp, over a tonic pedal note. The choir splits into two-part canon for the second verse, and then into three parts for the third. The voices come together again for the final verse, as the text urges us to join the fight against evil. Finally, in the last two lines, all the voices return to unison to celebrate Christ's eternal triumph over death with a shift to the major as we finally break free from the restrictions of the tonic pedal.

Robert Southwell (1561? - 1595)

This little Babe so few days old,
Is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake,
Though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmèd wise
The gates of hell he will surprise.

With tears he fights and wins the field,
His naked breast stands for a shield;
His battering shot are babish cries,
His arrows looks of weeping eyes,
His martial ensigns Cold and Need,
And feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.

His camp is pitchèd in a stall,
His bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes;
Of shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound,
The angels' trumps alarum sound.

My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
Stick to the tents that he hath pight.
Within his crib is surest ward;
This little Babe will be thy guard.
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy,
Then flit not from this heavenly Boy!

7. Interlude (harp solo)

After the drama of the previous few movements, there is a distinct change of mood with this interlude for harp. Rich, gentle chords in the right hand are accompanied by soft, bell-like harmonics in the left. The movement builds as deeper bass notes and thicker chords are used, but subsides to its original stillness as increasingly long glissandi are played over the repeating harmonics.

8. In Freezing Winter Night (Soloists: Rachel Balcombe, Roland Miller)

The stillness of the interlude is maintained through this poem, which is full of concern for the new-born child. The echo-like canon, and the ancient Phrygian mode (characterised by its distinctive semitone between tonic and supertonic) create an atmosphere of unearthly mystery. The harp shivers throughout the movement, which eventually shifts to the major, as Christ's stable is compared to a royal throne-room. We return to the home key as the two soloists are accompanying by the humming choir, which eventually resolves onto a G major triad.

Robert Southwell (1561? - 1595)

Behold, a silly tender babe,
in freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies
Alas, a piteous sight!

The inns are full; no man will yield
This little pilgrim bed.
But forced he is with silly beasts
In crib to shroud his head.

This stable is a Prince's court,
This crib his chair of State;
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,
The wooden dish his plate.

The persons in that poor attire
His royal liveries wear;
The Prince himself is come from heav'n;
This pomp is prizèd there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight,
Do homage to thy King,
And highly praise his humble pomp,
wih he from Heav'n doth bring.

9. Spring Carol (Soloists: Deborah Bruce, Sarah Walker)

Here, the harp is at its most playful, dancing around its upper register with glissandi and acciaccaturas. The spritely soprano duet represents nothing but pure pleasure, ending with a call to thank God, which leads appropriately into the penultimate movement.

William Cornish (14? - 1523)

Pleasure it is to hear iwis the Birdès sing,
The deer in the dale, the sheep in the vale,
the corn springing.

God's purvayance For sustenance.
It is for man.

Then we always to him give praise,
And thank him than.

10. Deo Gracias

A unison cry of "*Deo gracias!*" is heard several times in this macaronic movement, interspersed with verses of urgently uttered English text. The choir comes together with joyful syncopation to rejoice in man's original sin. The movement ends with the

refrain being repeated over and over again in close canon, accompanied by rapid glissandi in the harp.

Anon., 15th Century

Deo gracias! Deo gracias! *Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God!*

Adam lay i-bounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not too long.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias! *Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God!*

And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
As clerkès finden written in their book.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias! *Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God!*

Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil takè ben
Ne haddè never our lady a ben hevenè quene.

Blessèd be the time that appil takè was.

Therefore we moun singen.

Deo gracias! *Thanks be to God!*

11. Recession

The cantata ends as it began - the choir processes out singing unaccompanied Gregorian chant: "Christ is born today!" After such an eclectic feast, the words now seem truer and more purposeful.

Hodie Christus natus est:

hodie Salvator apparuit:

hodie in terra canunt angeli:

laetantur archangeli:

hodie exsultant justi dicentes:

gloria in excelsis Deo.

Alleluia!

Today, Christ is born:

Today, the Saviour appears:

Today, the angels sing on earth:

The archangels rejoice:

Today, the righteous rejoice, saying:

"Glory to God in the Highest.

Alleluia!"

Overture (from Suite for harp)

Britten's early plans to write a harp concerto were scrapped, and it wasn't until twenty-seven years later, in 1969, that he wrote his difficult Suite for Harp. Britten, who was always enthusiastic to compose works for his friends and colleagues, was delighted when the suite was requested by celebrated Welsh harpist Osian Ellis. Despite being remarkably virtuosic, displaying all of the harp's signature capabilities (glissandi, arpeggios, etc.), the suite has something of an 18th Century feel to it. Tonight, we hear the Overture - the grandest movement of the suite, which Britten described as "A classical 'Overture', with dotted rhythms and trumpet chords."

Choral Dances from *Gloriana*

Gloriana is one of Britten's larger, yet less frequently performed operas. Set to a libretto by William Plomer, and composed for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, it depicts the relationship between Queen Elizabeth I and the Earl of Essex. The nickname *Gloriana* came from Edmund Spenser's poem *The Faerie Queene*, but quickly became a popular pseudonym for Elizabeth. Indeed, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, the queen was hailed with cries of "Gloriana, Gloriana, Gloriana!" by the troops at Tilbury. The six choral dances are often performed as unaccompanied choral works, but tonight you are hearing them in alternation with episodes performed by the tenor and harp. As explained in the Boosey and Hawkes edition:

"At the opening of Act II of the opera *Gloriana*, Queen Elizabeth I is on a state visit to the city of Norwich. After a formal address of welcome, she is entertained by a Masque, a sequence of Choral Dances, introduced and linked by the Spirit of the Masque (tenor) to which dancers representing Time and Concord, country girls, and young rustics and fishermen all pay homage and tribute to the Queen."

The introduction sets the scene, and the excitement builds up with the increasingly long glissandi in the harp, and the tenor enthusiastically repeating the phrase "'Tis Time!"

1. Time

The first dance contains two very different styles in alternation. The first is marked "Quick and gay" by the composer, characterised by lively cross rhythms and syncopations throughout. The second, marked "Grotesque," features heavy, homophonic writing. A few bars from the tenor and harp lead us into our second dance.

2. Concord

Stillness is the defining characteristic of the second dance. The beat is so slow, it almost feels as though the music is not moving. There is no increase in dynamic, nor even any phrasing for the first few lines until a large crescendo halfway through. This does not last long though - within just a few bars we have returned to unwavering stillness. The tenor soloist dances unaccompanied, the joy clear in his voice.

3. Time and Concord

The third dance swings gently in compound time, a close canon between upper and lower voices. The two parts converge to proclaim the name "Gloriana," but two bars later split into canon again and die away. A loud scale in the harp suddenly awakens us, and the tenor leads us towards the young country maidens.

4. Country girls

This quick dance is full of pure, innocent joy, as the maidens list the many different flowers that make up the Queen's garland. No sooner have they finished than the tenor leads us on towards the "rustic swains," with a *bisbigliando* ("whispering") accompaniment in the harp.

5. Rustics and fishermen

The gentlemen of the choir sing a lively song about the various gifts presented to Elizabeth. The quaver rest at the start of each bar creates a sense of eager excitement, and the tenor proclaims that all will unite in homage to Gloriana.

6. Final dance of homage

Gentle polyphonic writing in the choir is accompanied by arpeggiated chords in the harp and floating top Gs in the tenor. The tune emerges every few bars from a different voice (or sometimes two) in the choir, before being passed on to another part. The parts all gradually get softer, as the people of Norwich encourage Gloriana to take their gifts so that she will always remember them. The movement slows and comes to rest on a soft major third, which dies away to nothing.

I wonder as I wander

Britten wrote dozens of song cycles over his lifetime, starting from a very young age. He always had a brilliant eye for poetry and was very skilled at picking out texts to set to music. His settings include texts from a great variety of poets, including John Donne, Thomas Hardy and William Blake.

I wonder as I wander is taken from one of the eight books of British and French Folksong arrangements written by Britten over the course of his life. Like almost everything he ever wrote for tenor soloist, he had the voice of Peter Pears, the love of his life, in mind when he wrote this song. Indeed, the two of them performed it frequently, all around the country, but it was never published or recorded in Britten's lifetime, since the tune was only published by John Jacob Niles in 1934 and was thus was not public domain.

The song starts with a simple, ornamental melody in the right-hand of the piano, before the tenor sings the first verse of Niles' plaintive melody completely unaccompanied. The pianist plays another similar phrase, louder this time, but again, the tenor sings the second verse alone. The pattern continues until the final verse is complete, and the song ends with a final phrase from the piano. The exposed nature of this song reflects loneliness: that of the narrator as he wanders and wonders beneath the sky, and that of Jesus, born to die.

Nocturne (from *Sonatina Romantica* for piano)

Although Britten did complete all four movements of his *Sonatina Romantica*, he decided to reject it upon revising the finale. The work wasn't performed as a whole until George Benjamin (now a respected composer in his own right) played it at the Aldeburgh Festival in 1983, six and a half years after Britten's death. As Britten's partner, Peter Pears, recalled in the programme notes for that event:

"During our stay in America in the early years of the war, Ben and I lived for much of the time with William and Elizabeth Mayer in Amityville. Dr. Mayer was the senior

neurologist at the Long Island Home, the Director of which was Dr. William B. Titley. In 1940, Ben interrupted work on *Sinfonia da Requiem* to compose this little *Sonatina* for Titley, who was a keen amateur pianist. He had been struggling with the *Invitation to the Waltz* and Ben presented the *Sonatina Romantica* as a tactful suggestion that he change his tune! But the doctor, I seem to remember, remained determined to master the Weber."

The writing in this *Nocturne* is remarkably harp-like. The left-hand semiquavers are marked *bisbigliando* – an instruction normally only seen in harp music. A gentle melody is introduced above this accompaniment, before the semiquavers take over and lead us to a section of soft chordal writing. Here, Britten instructs for the *una corda* pedal to be used, which shifts all the piano hammers to the right so that they only strike one of the strings tuned to each note, not all three. The dynamic increases and the harmony becomes bolder, leading us to a *forte* statement of the original melody. The piece gradually dies away and settles on a gentle C major chord.

Hymn to St Cecilia

*"Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire."*

A devout Christian in the 2nd Century, the young Cecilia was forced to marry a pagan nobleman, against her sacred vow of virginity. At their wedding, she sat apart from the groom and sang to God in her heart, thus earning her later canonisation as the patroness of musicians.

Many centuries later, a boy was born on the feast day of Saint Cecilia (22nd November), who would show extraordinary talent for composition as he grew up. Britten had always felt the influence of Saint Cecilia, but struggled to find a suitable text to set to music in her honour. He abandoned his search in 1935 until five years later, when Britten's close friend W.H. Auden sent over three short, separate poems, titled "Three Songs for St Cecilia's Day," along with some advice on how Britten could be a better artist. Although Britten had always revered Auden's advice (most significantly the belief that all art should have political motivation), he probably grew weary of it, for this was to be the last of their projects, before Auden became one of Britten's "corpses" – former close friends from whom he cut off all contact once they had outlived their usefulness to him or somehow offended him. As Peter Pears later put it, "Perhaps he may be said to have said goodbye to working with Wystan with his marvellous setting of the Hymn to St Cecilia."

Britten began work on Hymn to St Cecilia in 1941 while he and Pears were living in the USA, and completed it onboard the MS *Axel Johnson* (the same voyage one which he wrote *A Ceremony of Carols*). Unfortunately, Britten's manuscripts were all confiscated by customs before boarding, for fear that they were some kind of code, and had to be rewritten before the work could be completed. Auden's representation of Cecilia is remarkable and unusual, best summed up by Paul Kildea: "Auden's St Cecilia is a sort of

organ-playing superhero who can summon pagan goddesses with her beauty and angels with her song; she can harness the trumpets of the apocalypse and has dominion over the fires of hell."

Britten's setting of the text begins with simple parallel movement in triads (the building blocks of harmony), exploring various keys and gradually building up to the flickering flame of hell, before quickly dying away again. The tenors and basses in this section represent the pedals of an organ, moving three times slower than the upper voices.

The voices all enter in unison, as softly as possible, beseeching Cecilia to descend from heaven and inspire mortal musicians with her fire. These lines were the final stanza of Auden's first short poem, though Britten treats them as a refrain, setting them twice more over the course of the anthem, using the same material but developing it differently each time.

Auden's second poem is set as a quick dance - a three-part canon between sopranos parts and tenors, accompanied by soft, slow, phrases in the altos and basses. The drama builds as the narrator exclaims "I am defeat," before dancing away into stillness.

The "Blessed Cecilia" refrain is repeated, but this time louder and fuller. The first sopranos and tenors sing in octaves, accompanied by slow harmony in other voices.

Britten's setting of Auden's third poem is characterised by a repeating, descending scale in the basses, where each note is marked percussively. The other parts move slowly over the top, leading to a beautiful and simplistic soprano solo. The other voices accompany with uninterrupted stillness, only moving occasionally to highlight the soloist. The solo ends and attention returns to the basses, who attack their descending scales with more aggression. The next few minutes of music include a solo from every voice part, each representing a different instrument of the orchestra: an alto mimics a violin tuning, a bass imitates a timpano, a high soprano soars like a flute, and a tenor enters like a glorious trumpet, before the upper voices stop and the lower voices die

away with a closed hum. Each of these solos is accompanied by an unwavering chord in the other voices, inspired by the *organum* effect in mediaeval polyphony, where the accompanying voices would settle on a single note or chord, and a soloist would improvise, dancing around it, creating fleeting wild harmonies.

The anthem ends with a final statement of the refrain, presented just like the opening of the work, and ending on a quite E major chord marked "dying away."



Benjamin Britten and W.H. Auden

The Windows at All Saints' Church



All Saints' Tudeley is the only church in the world where every window was designed by the Russian artist Marc Chagall. The east window was commissioned as a memorial tribute to Sarah, the daughter of Sir Henry and Lady d'Avigdor-Goldsmid, who lived at the nearby house of Somerhill. Sarah died, aged just 21, in a sailing accident off the Sussex coast. Chagall was at first reluctant to take on the commission, but was eventually persuaded, and created the east window before visiting Tudeley. Upon seeing the church, at the dedication of the window in 1967, he declared, "It's magnificent! I will do them all." The other eleven windows were designed over the following 10 years and the last four installed just before Chagall's death in 1985.

Biographies



Alex Trigg Conductor and pianist

Alex's musical journey began as a chorister in the world-renowned King's College Choir, where he sang for daily services in the chapel and regular concerts around the world. He is now the organist of St Lawrence Church, Seal Chart, where he plays for regular services and helps to direct the choir. As well as deputising at several other local churches, he performs recitals around the country, with upcoming venues including Hereford and Blackburn cathedrals, and St Lawrence Church, Jewry.

Alex founded the Tudeley Singers last year, and has since led them in several cathedral services, including Evensong at Westminster Abbey, where he was the youngest person ever to conduct a service. He has also conducted the choir in two concerts before this one: Duruflé's *Requiem* in September, and Fauré's *Requiem* and Bruch's *First Violin Concerto* in March, with the Orchestra of St Augustine and young violin soloist Jonathan Hayward. This concert attracted an audience of well over three hundred people, and raised nearly £4000 for Child Action Lanka.

Alex regularly performs with several local orchestras, as a violinist, oboist and percussionist. He is also Orchestral Manager of the Lydian Youth Orchestra, with which he has played since their 40th anniversary concert in 2016, including on their two recent

tours to France. He is heavily involved in the music at Tonbridge School, where he is a music scholar in his final year.

In July, Alex achieved his Associateship of the Royal College of Organists, gaining the highest marks in the country for the practical exam that season. Most recently, Alex was awarded the position of Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle – a post which he will assume in September 2020.



Victoria Longhurst Harpist

Victoria studied the harp with Sioned Williams and Cathy White at Trinity College of Music, graduating with a London University BMus (Hons) degree, before embarking upon a busy and successful career as a freelance harpist.

She regularly played with Tenerife and Galicia Symphony Orchestras and as a background music soloist on cruise ships for Cunard, Swan Hellenic and Saga, before deciding to spend more time at home playing for private functions and weddings and taking up an afternoon tea residency at The Sheraton Park Tower and Grosvenor House Hotels.

Since relocating to Tunbridge Wells, Victoria continues to enjoy playing for weddings, shows and concerts, along with teaching both harp and piano at The Mead, Walthamstow Hall and The New Beacon.



Christopher Pelmore Tenor

Christopher Pelmore is a lyric tenor based in the South of England, though works full time in the construction industry when not on stage.

Following time at university in Bristol, over the past few years he has performed regularly in the South West, in Frome and Bath with the Oakfield Choir, the Bath Cantata Group and others in performances including Mozart's *Requiem*, Bach's *St John Passion*, *Magnificat in D* and *Christmas Oratorio*, Handel's *Joshua* and *Saul*, Haydn's *Creation*, and Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne*.

On the operatic stage he has performed at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall as Snout in Surrey Opera's sold out production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other performances include Verdi's *Macbeth* for Kentish Opera, Acis in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* at the Somer Valley Weekend of Opera and Tom Rakewell in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* with Bristol Opera.

The Tudeley Singers

Soprano

Rachel Balcombe
Deborah Bruce
Claire Evans
Frania Hall
Alice Walker
Sarah Walker
Jo Willoughby

Alto

Marion Ansell
Natasha Caisley
Jayne Crookshank
Deborah Knox Watson
Mandy McLeod
Sarah Trigg
Sarah Walker

Tenor

Richard Field
John Goudie
Chris Jeffery
Roland Miller
Christopher Thompson

Bass

John Morris
Matthew Trigg
Paul Weaser
Ian Woods

The Tudeley Singers was founded in April 2018, and has since sung many services and a wide range of repertoire in cathedrals around Britain, including Southwark, Rochester, and Westminster Abbey. The choir also sings a number of concerts every year in aid of various charities, and in summer 2020 will be going on tour to Liverpool and the Isle of Man. More details can be found on the website: thetudeleysingers.com

If you are interested in joining the choir, please contact Director of Music, Alex Trigg: alex@thetriggs.com. We would welcome singers of all voice parts, especially tenors.



The Tudeley Singers of the chancel steps of Westminster Abbey, August 2019.
Photo credit: Annette Mobbs.

Forthcoming events

J.S. Bach: Christmas Oratorio (parts 1-3)

Cantate Choir

Saturday 14th December, 7:30pm, Tonbridge Parish Church

Tickets £15 Adults, £7.50 U18s

eventbrite.co.uk

Bernstein: Overture to Candide

The Lydian Orchestra

Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme (with solo cellist Felix Rosenboom)

Schwertsik: Baumgesänge

Beethoven: Symphony no. 5

Saturday 21st December, 7:30pm, Pamoja Hall (Sevenoaks)

Tickets £15 Adults, £6 U18s, £1 U16s

thespacesevenoaks.co.uk

Ensemble Bash – Percussion Quartet

Tonbridge Music Club

Saturday 18th January, 7:30pm, Tonbridge Parish Church

Tickets £20 Adults, FREE Students and U18s

tmc.org.uk

AND **Family Concert**, 3pm

Tickets £5 children, £15 family of four, FREE U5s

Shostakovich: Symphony no. 5

Tonbridge Philharmonic Orchestra

Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition

Saturday 22nd February, 7:30pm, Tonbridge Parish Church

Tickets £17 Adults, £16 O60s, £8 Students, FREE U18s

tonphil.org.uk

Thank you

Thank you all so much for coming to the concert tonight – I do hope you've enjoyed it as much as we have. You're all very welcome to join us for refreshments in the Arnold Cooke Hall after the concert. Since the hall is quite small, we ask that you pick up a drink and snack and then head straight back into the church. Please donate as generously to the Chagall Window Preservation Trust as you feel able.

As with any concert, there are a lot of people to thank. In particular, I'd like to mention:

Laurie, Patricia and Jo for their endless help and infinite wisdom,

Madeline and her team for organising all the refreshments,

Deborah, for decorating the church so beautifully,

the parking stewards, ushers and front of house team, for all their hard work,

the soloists, who all performed wonderfully,

and **the choir**, for working so hard in preparation for this concert.

We wish you all a safe journey home, a merry Christmas, and a happy new year!

***Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole. Wolcum!***

