

CHRIST CHURCH . DOWN STREET, MAYFAIR

LONDON CONCORD SINGERS

Conductor: Malcolm Cottle

CANONBURY WIND PLAYERS

Oboes: Judith Roads and Nicholas Murray

Clarinets: John Candor and Mark Lacey

Horns: Mark Andrews and Anthony Mann

Bassoons: Sam Wiggs and David Newsholme

MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS

WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER, 1983 at 7.30pm

The NFMS, to whom this society is affiliated, supports these concerts with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

London Concord Singers welcome friends wishing to subscribe to increase the activities of their group. Anyone requiring further details please contact the Musical Director.

We would remind members of the public that unauthorised recording of the Concert is not allowed.

Patrons are also kindly requested to refrain from smoking during the performance.

This Day Christ was born

William Byrd

Although most of Byrd's great Church music is written in Latin for Catholic usage, this 'Caroll for Christmas Day' is one of the comparatively few pieces in English. It is taken from Psalms, Sonnets and Songs (1611). The piece is for six voices, two soprano, two alto, tenor and bass, and alternates in the fashion of the day, between common and triple time.

Noe, Noe! Pastores, Cantate Domino

Bouzignac

This charming Christmas piece by a little-known 16th Century French composer is in the familiar form of a dialogue between the archangel Gabriel and the shepherds. The piece is full of humour as the shepherd's peaceful sleep is shattered by the archangel's exultant cry of 'Gloria, gloria', and later when he is trying to explain to them where the Christ-child can be found and the shepherds cannot quite grasp his message, he gets quite short with them and says 'I told you, in Bethlehem'. The piece ends with a hymn of praise to Ludovizo nostro (our King Louis).

Upon the High Midnight

John McCabe

John McCabe is one of the more versatile — and listenable to — of the present generation of British composers. His compositions range from large scale orchestral works to TV themes. He is also well-known as a brilliant concert pianist, particularly noted for his interpretations of Haydn's piano music. He has recently taken up the post of Principal of the London College of Music.

This simple, but effective, set of carols was written in 1974. The first is for SATB soloist and choir and the second also has a soprano solo.

1. A little child there is y-born.
2. Dormi Jesu.
3. In Bethlehem, that fair city.

Chorale prelude 'Gelobet Den Herrn'

J S Bach, arr. Francis Roads

An arrangement for wind octet of the well-known chorale prelude, originally for 2 trumpets and organ.

Serenade in E Flat. K.375

Mozart

The wind serenade was originally a light-entertainment music form but Mozart's K.375 raised the status of the genre to that of his other great music. It was originally written in 1781 for wind sextet ('the six musicians are poor wretches, who play together quite nicely all the same') but modified the next year by adding the oboes. The first movement opens with Mozart's characteristic E Flat dotted rhythm (?Masonic knocks). There are five movements.

1. Allegro maestoso. 2. Menuetto. 3. Adagio. 4. Menuetto and 5. Allegro.

INTERVAL

Wine and mince pies will be served in the Transcept

German Magnificat

Heinrich Schutz

Schutz spent most of his mature creative years at Dresden, in the service of the Elector of Saxony, where he had charge of some thirty singers. His Deutches Magnificat was probably his last work, as the Grimma manuscript is headed 'his final work and his swan song' and it shows that, even at the great age of 87 he was still at the height of his powers. It is almost certainly not a gloomy piece and might well be described as his very personal hymn of praise and thanksgiving at his life's end.

In his younger days Schutz had journeyed to Venice to study with Giovanni Gabrieli and he was largely responsible for introducing the polychoral effects of the Italian composers to Northern Europe. This setting is for two 4-part choirs 'to be placed opposite each other above the altar'.

Canonbury Suite

arr. Francis Roads

There is not a great deal of music composed for Wind Octet so Francis Roads has made this charming suite of Renaissance songs and dances especially for the Canonbury Wind Players.

Mater Ora Filium

Arnold Bax

Arnold Bax, who was born 100 years ago, is perhaps one of the most unjustly neglected of recent English composers, and it is to be hoped that the exposure his music has received in this centenary year will help to bring much of his music back into the public consciousness.

Mater Ora Filium, written in 1921, is generally recognised as a masterpiece of choral writing. Wilfred Mellors wrote of 'the extraordinary efflorescence of its linear rhapsody . . . the enormous rhapsodic growth of the lines, shooting and whirling in tremendous spans . . . the music lives in a wild sumptuous universe of its own creation, a world of fabulous magic which Bax attains to only once or twice in his whole prolific output . . .'

Apparently inspired by Byrd's 5-part Mass, Mater Ora Filium sets a carol taken from a manuscript at Balliol College, Oxford. It has a Latin refrain whilst the main text is in English ('Fair maiden, who is this bairn that thou bearest in thine arm'). The writing is again for two 4-part choirs although there are frequent sub-divisions within those choirs thickening the texture at times to as many as fourteen parts.

THE LONDON CONCORD SINGERS

The choir was started in its present form in 1966. It seeks to maintain a small, well-knit group of some thirty voices, practising and performing a wide range of choral music. Its members come from a great variety of backgrounds, none of them being full-time musicians. The choir's range of activities is equally varied; it has accepted cabaret engagements in and around London and has sung in all three South Bank concert halls, at the Royal Albert Hall and at St John's, Smith Square. The group has travelled widely and has won competitive prizes at home and abroad. Festival appearances include Montreux and Dubrovnik and a short tour of Holland last year. Last Saturday they performed Handel's 'Messiah' with members of the Essex Symphony in Maldon, Essex where they had a most enthusiastic reception.

The choir has recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra and has worked with modern composers on British and world premieres of their compositions. In 1977, in recognition of their continuing support of Contemporary Music, particularly British compositions, they received a Jubilee Award from the Performing Rights Society.

MALCOLM COTTLE

The conductor sang for many years as a boy with the choir of St Paul's Cathedral, London, during which time he sang at the Coronation of The Queen and toured the United States of America. More recently, as well as conducting the London Concord Singers he has worked with the New Opera Company at Sadler's Wells and conducted for Orpheus Opera. He has appeared as Musical Director at the Sheffield Playhouse; the Swan Theatre, Worcester; Nottingham Playhouse and the Wyvern Theatre, Swindon. He is currently directing Pantomime in Stevenage.
