

# London Concord Singers

conductor Malcolm Cottle

Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm

St. Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1

## All proceeds to Breakthrough Breast Cancer

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Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976)

Concord

from the Choral Dances from *Gloriana*

Britten's opera *Gloriana* was written to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, to a libretto by William Plomer based on Lytton Strachey's book *Elizabeth and Essex*. Receiving a glittering premiere in the presence of the Queen, the opera got a poor reception from the first night audience. Its reputation never really recovered from this and Britten was reluctant to return to it. In the opera, the Choral Dances form the basis for the Masque that is danced for Queen Elizabeth I whilst she is on progress in Norwich.

Peter Philips (c.1565 - c. 1635)

Ascendit Deus

Peter Philips was born in England, but during the Reformation he moved to the Continent where he remained a practising Catholic. Initial travels to the Netherlands and Rome were followed by a period as organist at the court of Duke Albert at Antwerp. He later entered Holy Orders. Considered one of the great masters of his time, he left a body of work which includes madrigals and instrumental music as well as motets and masses. *Ascendit Deus* comes from his publication *Cantiones Sacrae*, which was published in Antwerp in 1612.

Jacob Vaet (c. 1529 - 1567)

O Quam Gloriosum

Jacob Vaet was a Franco-Flemish composer. He was Kapellmeister to the Archduke Maximilian in Prague from 1554 and when Maximilian succeeded as Emperor in 1564, Vaet became court Kapellmeister in Vienna. His output consists almost entirely of church music, including many parody Masses on models by composers such as Josquin, Mouton and Crecquillon. His earlier work is solidly imitative in the manner of Gombert, but his later music shows the influence of Lassus in its freer textures and bold dissonances, and of the Venetians in his double choir pieces.

Orlandus Lassus (1532 - 1594)

Justorum Animae

Scio Enim

Franco-Flemish composer. Legend holds that as a choirboy with an uncommonly beautiful voice he was thrice kidnapped from his birthplace for service elsewhere. It is not certain, however, that he was ever a chorister in Mons. His first known position was in the service of Ferrante Gonzaga, who passed through the Low Countries in 1544 on his way to Italy. Lassus spent the next decade in Italy, at first with Gonzaga, later in the service of Constantino Castrioto of Naples. By 1553 he was choirmaster at St. John Lateran in Rome, remaining there for a year, then returning to his homeland and settling briefly in Antwerp. His career from 1556 was centred in Munich at the court chapel of Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, as *maestro di cappella* from 1563, with duties that included some travel in Germany, Flanders, France, and Italy. While employed at Munich, he came to know both Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, each of whom spent time in the musical establishment he directed. His accomplishments brought formal recognition from Emperor Maximilian II, the French king Charles IX, and Pope Gregory XIII.

Lassus's production of over 2,000 works in nearly every Latin, French, Italian, and German vocal genre known in his time places him among the most prolific and versatile composers of the era. A close connection between text and music, in both small- and large-scale respects, is perhaps the single most prominent characteristic of his output.

Andreas (Andrzej) Hakenberger (c. 1571 - 1627) Exsultate Justi

Andreas Hakenberger was a Polish composer and lutenist. In 1602 he joined the Royal Chapel in Warsaw as a singer, lutenist and composer. Despite being a Catholic, in 1607 he successfully applied for the post of Kapellmeister at the Lutheran Marienkirche in Danzig (Gdansk). The church was one of the largest in Christendom. Their decision to employ Hakenberger was based mainly on the opulent style of his compositions. But during the 2<sup>nd</sup> decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century tastes began to change and Hakenberger's continued cultivation of the Venetian *cori spezzati* style began to seem outmoded. His final years in Danzig were clouded by personal loss and by furious arguments with the organist appointed in 1623.

## Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 - 1924)

## Justorum Animae

Born in Dublin in 1852, Charles Villiers Stanford established himself in England as a leading figure in the musical life of the country, appointed professor of composition at the Royal College of Music in London at its foundation in 1883 and four years later elected to the chair of music at Cambridge. As a composer he was among the most influential in England in the second half of the nineteenth century, writing music in many genres, including a substantial body of organ music, reflecting in technique something of the formal training he had had as a student in Leipzig and Berlin. His music has undergone something of a revival recently but he is still perhaps best known as an influential teacher of composers such as Vaughan Williams. **Justorum Animae** is a relatively late work and belongs to a group of three motets that Stanford wrote for the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge.

## Franz (Ferenc) Liszt (1811 - 1886)

## Ave Verum Corpus

Born in Hungary in 1811, Liszt was taught the piano by his father and then Czerny (Vienna, 1822-3), establishing himself as a remarkable concert artist by the age of 12. In Paris he studied theory and composition with Reicha and Paer; he wrote an opera and bravura piano pieces and undertook tours in France, Switzerland and England before ill-health and religious doubt made him reassess his career. Although he failed in his aim to revolutionise liturgical music, Liszt did create in his psalm settings, **Missa solemnis** and the oratorio **Christus** some intensely dramatic and moving choral music, which was successful in his lifetime.

## Anton Bruckner (1824 - 1896)

## Ave Maria

Born in Austria, Bruckner was the son of a village schoolmaster and organist, with whom he first studied and for whom he could deputise when he was ten. His father died in 1837 and he was sent at 13 as a chorister to the St. Florian monastery where he could study organ, violin and theory. He became a schoolmaster-organist, holding village posts, but in 1845 returned to teach at St. Florian, becoming organist there in 1851. During these years he had written masses and other sacred works. In 1855 he undertook a counterpoint course in Vienna with the leading theorist, Simon Sechter; the same year he was appointed organist at Linz Cathedral. He continued his studies almost to the age of 40, but more crucial was his contact, in 1863, with Wagner's music - first **Tannhäuser**, then **Tristan und Isolde**; these pointed to new directions for him, as the Masses in d Minor, e Minor and f Minor, and Symphony no.1, all written in 1864-8, show.

## Shostakovich (1906 - 1975)

## Concertino in A minor for 2 Pianos, Opus 94

The Concertino was written in 1953, the same year as his 10<sup>th</sup> Symphony. The piece finds the composer in his overtly theatrical, subtly sardonic frame of mind. Just as Shostakovich once produced a brilliant set of variations on the melody "Tea for Two" as a dare, so the composer here produced a clever, taut composition of apparently shallow emotional content, and yet, there are subtle twists. Not unexpectedly for this most introspective of artists, there are deep pools of angst hidden beneath the superficially jolly surface. The work was premiered at Moscow Conservatoire in January 1954, with the composer's son Maxim playing one of the pianos.

## John Lennon and Paul McCartney

## Eleanor Rigby (arr. Paul Hart)

## Yesterday (arr. Bob Chilcott)

## Can't Buy Me Love (arr. Keith Abbs)

The popular songs, sung in arrangements which were originally made for the Kings' Singers.

## John Rutter (1945 - )

## 5 Traditional Songs

- 1 - The Girl I left behind me
- 2 - O waly, waly
- 3 - The British Grenadiers
- 4 - Golden Slumbers
- 5 - Dashing away with the smoothing iron

John Rutter was born in London in 1945 and received his first musical training as a chorister at Highgate School. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still an undergraduate. His compositional career has embraced both large and small scale choral works, various orchestra and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the King's Singers. From 1975 to 1979 he was Director of Music at Clare College, whose choir he directed in a number of broadcasts and recordings. He gave up this post in order to be able to devote more time to composition.

Written in 1978, the 5 Traditional Songs include songs from a variety of sources. **The Girl I left behind me** is an Irish Folksong and **O waly, waly** is a folk-song from Somerset. **Golden Slumbers** sets 17<sup>th</sup> century words. Neither **The British Grenadiers** nor **Dashing away with the smoothing iron** need any introduction.

## Translations

Peter Philips (c.1565 - c. 1635)

Ascendit Deus

God has ascended with jubilation and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. Alleluia. The Lord has prepared his seat in Heaven. Alleluia.

Psalm 47.

Jacob Vaet (c. 1529 - 1567)

O Quam Gloriosum

O how glorious is the kingdom, where all the saints rejoice in Christ. Dressed in white robes, they follow the Lamb wherever he goes. Alleluia.

Orlandus Lassus (1532 - 1594)

Justorum Animae

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of malice shall not touch them: in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace.

Wisdom, 3.

Orlandus Lassus (1532 - 1594)

Scio Enim

I know that my Redeemer lives and that at the last day I shall rise out of the earth. I shall again be clothed in my body, and in my flesh shall I see God my Saviour, whom I shall see for myself, my eyes looking upon him and no other. This is the hope in my breast.

Job 19.

Andreas (Andrzej) Hakenberger (c. 1571 - 1627) Exsultate Justi

Let the just rejoice in the Lord: it is fitting for the righteous to praise him. Sing to him with the psaltery, the ten-stringed lute. Sing him a new song, sing to him well with strong voice. For the word of God is just and he is faithful in all his works. He loves mercy and justice. The whole world is filled with the Lord's kindness.

Psalm 33.

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 - 1924)

Justorum Animae

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of malice shall not touch them: in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace.

Wisdom, 3.

Franz (Ferenc) Liszt (1811 - 1886)

Ave Verum Corpus

Hail, true Body, truly born of the Virgin Mary mild. Truly offered, wracked and torn, on the Cross for all defiled, from Whose love-pierced, sacred side flowed Thy true Blood's saving tide: be a foretaste sweet to me in my death's great agony. O my loving, Gentle One, Sweetest Jesus, Mary's Son. Amen.

Attributed to Pope Innocent VI (died 1392)

Anton Bruckner (1824 - 1896)

Ave Maria

Hail, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with Thee. Thou art blessed among women and blessed is Jesus, the fruit of Thy womb. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.

Liber Usualis: Offertory of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

Text based in part on Luke 1:42. Final sentence, anonymous, in use since the 16<sup>th</sup> century