



# Oxford Youth Choirs

Patrons: Lord and Lady Berkeley, Mr Roderick Williams

## Christmas Concert 2004

Mansfield College Chapel, 12 December, 4.00pm

Directed by Richard Vendome, Penelope Martin-Smith and Joyce Morris  
with Rupert McShane (harp)

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### *Boys' choir*

1. Quittez pasteurs
2. Noel nouvelet
3. Lord of the dance

### *Junior girls' choir*

1. Brightest and best - Malcolm Archer
2. Ding, dong, merrily on high - Richard Pantcheff, op.31/2

### *Boys' and junior girls' choirs*

1. Quelle est c'est odeur agreable
2. All in tune - Alan Bullard (flute solo: Daisy Venables)

### *Oxford Girls' Choir (and male voices)*

Hymn to St Cecilia - Benjamin Britten, op.27

(Daisy Venables, soprano 1; Catherine Cross, soprano 2; Imogen Carr, alto;  
Nigel Saunders, tenor; Benjamin Thompson, bass)

– interval (15 minutes) –

Steal away - Michael Tippett, from "A Child of Our Time"

(Alicia Clarke, soprano; Nigel Saunders, tenor)

Alleluia - W. A. Mozart, from "Exultate, jubilate" (Katie Birtill, soprano)

A Ceremony of Carols - Benjamin Britten, op.28

1. Processional
  2. Wolcum Yole
  3. There is no rose
  4. That yonge childe (Sophie Kent, alto)
  5. Balulalow (Elizabeth Burnett, soprano)
  6. As dew in Aprille
  7. This little babe Interlude
  8. In freezing winter night
  9. Spring Carol (Emily Moughton, Alik Salter, sopranos)
  10. Deo gratias
  11. Recessional
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In 1939 Britten and Peter Pears joined W.H. Auden in the United States, but the Bohemian lifestyle he found there did not altogether suit his shy and conservative personality. Although he was a conscientious objector Britten decided to forsake exile and return home on a Swedish merchant ship in the Spring of 1942. On the hazardous journey he composed two of his best-loved choral works, the *Hymn to Saint Cecilia* (op.27) and *A Ceremony of Carols* (op.28). The latter was conceived for female (not boys') voices. It opens and closes with a processional Antiphon for Christmas Vespers; other movements are based on Middle English lyrics. Simple but refined in melody and structure, dazzling in its colour and poetry, it combines voices and harp with a sureness of touch rarely heard in modern choral music. Joy and sadness, excitement and serenity, spring warmth and winter frost are all distilled herein.