



presents



Exeter College Chapel, Oxford
Friday 8 December 2006
Directed by Richard Vendome (organ)
with Emma Ramsdale (harp)

*Please stand to sing where indicated and
only applaud at the end of the concert*



God rest ye merry, gentlemen – Audience and choir

God rest ye merry, gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy*

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed Angel came;
And unto certain Shepherds
Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by Name.
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy*

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface.
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy*

Sous le dôme épais (The Flower Duet) from “Lakmé” Léo Delibes (1836-1891)
(sopranos: Alik Salter and Sophie Conlon)

Reading: “Verses Turned...” John Betjeman (1906–1984)
(Eleanor Thompson)

Foundling Hospital Anthem George F Handel (1685-1759)

1. Blessed are they that considereth the poor
(soprano: Hermione Thompson)
2. Comfort them O Lord
3. Hallelujah

On Christmas night all Christians sing (Sussex Carol) – Audience and choir

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before His grace,

Then life and health come in its place.
When sin departs before His grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night.
All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
“Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore, Amen!”

La pastorella delle alpi Gioacchino A Rossini (1792-1868)
(soprano: Gabriella Efthimiou)

Reading: “Ghosties and Ghoulies” Mary F Butts (1890–1937)
(Imogen Gardam)

A Ceremony of Carols (op.28) Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

1. Processional
2. Wolcum Yole
3. There is no rose
4. That yonge childe (alto: Elena Marcus)
5. Balulalow (soprano: Clemency Stephenson)
6. As dew in Aprile
7. This little babe
8. Interlude
9. In freezing winter night
10. Spring Carol (soprano: Emma Gullifer, alto: Rita Oldenbourg)
11. Deo gratias
12. Recessional

O Come All Ye Faithful – Audience and choir

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels:
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin’s womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
'Glory to God
In the highest:'
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory given:
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Foundling Hospital Anthem

“Mr Handel being present and having generously and charitably offered a performance of vocal and instrumental music to be held at this Hospital, and that the money arising therefrom should be applied to the finishing the chapel of the Hospital Resolved - That the thanks of this Committee be returned to Mr Handel for this his generous and charitable offer.”

The outcome was a concert later in May 1749 in which Handel presented a programme of his recent music, culminating with an anthem produced specially for the occasion, "Blessed are they that considereth the poor and needy", now known as the Foundling Hospital Anthem. The event was a success in every respect: it was attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, attracted a capacity audience, and raised more than £350 for the charity.

A Ceremony of Carols

In 1939 Britten and Peter Pears joined W.H. Auden in the United States, but the Bohemian lifestyle he found there did not really 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 finest and 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.

Oxford Girls' Choir

The Oxford Girls' Choir was founded by Richard Vendome in 1984. It was the first choir of its kind in England to develop girls' singing as a musical medium in its own right, and not just as a substitute for the adult or the boy's voice. Together with its associated choirs OGC provides choral training for 130 children aged 4 -18, and has a teaching staff of six.