

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Directed by Michael Harris

For All the Saints

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The National Federation of Music Societies,
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Saturday 19th November 2005 8.00pm
St Giles' Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Director: Michael Harris
Organist: Peter Backhouse

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913–1976)

REJOICE IN THE LAMB (Op.30)

SOPRANO PHILIPPA WOOD
ALTO ANNE BARKER
TENOR ANDREW POLSON
BASS MIKE ARTHUR

FRANK BRIDGE
(1879–1941)

ALLEGRETTO GRAZIOSO FOR ORGAN

JAMES MACMILLAN
(b. 1959)

CHRISTUS VINCIT

SOPRANO ANNE McALISTER

C.V. STANFORD
(1852–1924)

MAGNIFICAT FOR EIGHT-PART CHORUS (Op.164)

I N T E R V A L of 15 minutes

GERALD FINZI
(1901–1956)

LO, THE FULL, FINAL SACRIFICE

TENOR MALCOLM WOOD
BASS GEORGE BURGESS

KENNETH LEIGHTON
(1929–1988)

SEQUENCE FOR ALL SAINTS

INTROIT
GRADUAL
OFFERTORY
COMMUNION
FINALE

BARITONE ANDREW O'NEILL

PROGRAMME NOTES

Benjamin Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb* (Op.30)

Benjamin Britten's Festival Cantata, *Rejoice in the Lamb*, is the product of a prolific period of choral writing for the composer. It was composed not long after Britten's return from self-imposed exile in the United States at the beginning of World War II. The commission for the work came from Walter Hussey, at that time Vicar of St Matthew's Church Northampton, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the consecration of that church. Walter Hussey, later to become Dean of Chichester Cathedral, was to become one of the most influential arts patrons of the mid-twentieth century, commissioning not only famous composers such as Britten and Bernstein, but also art and sculpture from Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore among others.

For the text of his cantata, Britten selected words from the eccentric eighteenth-century poet Christopher Smart, using ten sections of Smart's poem, *Jubilate Agno*. In Walter Hussey's words, the message of the poem "is the worship of God by all created beings and things, each in its own way". The musical structure of the work is governed by the text, the central sections being given over to soloists, followed by a dramatic choral recitative. There are two vibrant choral sections, the first of which, *Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter*, is based on an asymmetrical rhythmic motif, and the second, towards the end of the piece, is a celebration of the instruments of music. Britten has often been referred to as the greatest English composer since Henry Purcell, and was himself interested in and studied Purcell's idiom – there is a hint of it in the two *Hallelujah* sections that appear in the work, with their poised dotted rhythms providing a sense of quiet joy.

Frank Bridge *Allegretto grazioso for organ*

Frank Bridge was a composition student of Stanford, whilst studying violin and piano at the Royal College of Music. His *Allegretto grazioso for organ* is the first of three pieces published in 1905, two years after he graduated. In these early years of his career he was much involved in playing violin or viola in the London orchestras and also played in the British premiere of the Debussy String Quartet. Later, he gave much more attention to composition, as well as tutoring the young Benjamin Britten, his only composition student.

James Macmillan *Christus vincit*

James Macmillan's double choir anthem, *Christus vincit*, setting a text from the twelfth-century Worcester Acclamations, was written for St Paul's Cathedral, London, and was first performed at the St Cecilia's Day service in November 1994. The motet makes use of the resonance of the original performance space, with many moments of silence punctuating the flow of the opening phrases. The simple opening lines give way to some melismatic embellishment in solo lines before the concluding *Alleluias* produce a sonorous climax, after which a single soprano voice is left floating in space.

Charles Villiers Stanford *Magnificat for eight-part chorus* (Op.164)

Born in Dublin, Stanford's career was marked by a meteoric rise as a student and his appointment as a Professor of Composition at the newly-founded Royal College of Music in 1883, followed by his election as Professor of Music at Cambridge University in 1887 at the age of only 35. Through his studies abroad, he managed to avoid the insularity of many of his contemporaries and, although his name is often linked to that of Hubert Parry, it was Stanford who probably had the more lasting influence, especially through his students, among whom numbered Vaughan Williams, Holst, Ireland and Howells. Unfortunately, posterity has not been so kind, particularly to the neglected instrumental music: there are, for instance, seven symphonies and four concertos, not to mention six organ sonatas and eight string quartets.

His *a cappella* Latin *Magnificat* Op.164 is a choral tour de force, harmonically owing a considerable amount to Brahms and the German Romantic tradition. It was composed in 1918, and was dedicated to Parry with a Latin inscription "This work, which death prevented me from giving Charles Hubert Hastings Parry in life, I dedicate to his name in grief. C.V.S". The grief was all the greater for the fact that Stanford and Parry had fallen out not long before the latter's death and had never had the opportunity to make up their differences.

The setting makes full use of the double choir forces, with a main theme of great vitality, and many examples of word-painting, the mighty being put down from their seat at *Deposuit potentes* with considerable vigour. Stanford then executes a very deft harmonic turn at *Et exaltavit* to lead into a lilting ballad-style section at *Esurientes implevit bonis*, where the hungry are filled with good things both harmonically and spiritually. The conclusion is reached through an extended crescendo, leading to the *Gloria* where the opening material returns. Stanford has one last surprise in the final *Amen*, which takes a turn in the key of C flat major before finally resolving on the tonic of B flat major.

Gerald Finzi *Lo, the full, final Sacrifice*

The text for Gerald Finzi's *Lo, the full, final Sacrifice* is Richard Crashaw's seventeenth-century hymn of the same name, itself a version of two hymns by St Thomas Aquinas, *Adoro Te* and *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*. Like Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Finzi's composition is one of the commissions from Walter Hussey. Finzi's work was first performed in 1946 and is typical of his kaleidoscopic style and taste for ever-changing colour. The climactic moments that do occur are short-lived and the general picture is of meditative calm, the conclusion being a ravishing eight-part setting of the *Amen*.

The work dates from a period when Finzi's career was just beginning to take off, although he had spent many years championing young composers. His founding of the Newbury String Players in 1940 gave many young professionals such as Julian Bream and Kenneth Leighton early opportunities. Tragically Finzi's career was cut short with the diagnosis of Hodgkin's disease just at the time that he was becoming fully established.

Kenneth Leighton *Sequence for All Saints*

Kenneth Leighton spent a large proportion of his career in Edinburgh, from his first appointment as a Lecturer in the Music Faculty of Edinburgh University in 1955 to his return there in 1970 as Reid Professor following a short sojourn in Oxford. *Sequence for All Saints* was written in 1977, and first performed at the West Riding Festival in October 1978 in Wakefield Cathedral, perhaps especially fitting as Wakefield was Leighton's home city and he himself had been a cathedral chorister there.

The five movements of the Sequence are designed to follow each other without a break. The first movement, *Introit*, establishes bold contrapuntal textures after the almost mysterious opening, with the second part featuring a rhythmical organ accompaniment so typical of Leighton's choral writing. The concept of the second movement, *Gradual*, is a simple one, the main motif being introduced by the baritone soloist and later taken up by the lower voices before the whole choir enters, with an inexorable drive towards the conclusion. This hectic activity is replaced by the much more expressive and calmer atmosphere of the third movement, *Offertory*, which, apart from the concluding *Alleluia*, is sung by the sopranos alone. *Communion* is introduced by an improvisatory organ solo, leading eventually to a dialogue with the baritone soloist. The chorus follows with a contrapuntal working of the same material that reaches a powerful climax before subsiding into tranquillity. The *Finale* is introduced by a reprise of the beginning of the opening movement, soon followed by a typically rhythmic and exuberant passage that finally opens out into the Gibbons tune to *Give me the wings of faith* in a magnificent unison line, interspersed with *Alleluias*.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

BRITTEN REJOICE IN THE LAMB

Chorus

Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues; give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb.
Nations, and languages and every Creature, in which is the breath of Life.
Let man and beast appear before him, and magnify his name together.
Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter, bind a Leopard to the altar, and consecrate his spear to the Lord.
Let Ishmael dedicate a Tyger, and give praise for the liberty in which the Lord has let him at large.
Let Balaam appear with an Ass, and bless the Lord his people and his creatures for a reward eternal.
Let Daniel come forth-with a Lion, and praise God with all his might through faith in Christ Jesus.
Let Ithamar minister with a Chamois, and bless the name of Him that cloatheth the naked.
Let Jakim with the Satyr bless God in the dance.
Let David bless with the Bear – The beginning of victory to the Lord – to the Lord the perfection of excellence – Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the heavenly harp in sweetness magnifical and mighty.

Soprano solo

For I will consider my Cat Jeffrey.
For he is the servant of the Living God, duly and daily serving him.
For at the first glance of the glory of God in the East he worships in his way.
For this is done by wreathing his body seven times round with elegant quickness.
For he knows that God is his Saviour.
For God has blessed him in the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter than his peace when at rest.
For I am possessed of a cat, surpassing in beauty, from whom I take occasion to bless Almighty God.

Alto solo

For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour.
For – this a true case – Cat takes female mouse – male mouse will not depart, but stands threat'ning and daring . . . If you will let her go, I will engage you, as prodigious a creature as you are.
For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of an hospitable disposition.

Tenor solo

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels even the words of God's Creation.
For the flower glorifies God and the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ.

Chorus

For I am under the same accusation with my Saviour –
For they said, he is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace are at variance with me, and the watchman smites me with his staff.
For Silly fellow! Silly fellow! is against me and belongeth neither to me nor to my family.
For I am in twelve HARDSHIPS, but he that was born of a virgin shall deliver me out of all.

Recitative (Bass solo) and Chorus

For H is a spirit and therefore he is God.
For K is king and therefore he is God.
For L is love and therefore he is God.
For M is musick and therefore he is God.
For the instruments are by their rhimes.
For the Shawm rhimes are lawn fawn moon boon and the like.
For the harp rhimes are sing ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth suit mute and the like.
For the Bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place beat heat and the like.
For the Clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound soar more and the like.
For the TRUMPET of God is a blessed intelligence and so are all the instruments in HEAVEN.
For God the father Almighty plays upon the HARP of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases and the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

Chorus

Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the heavenly harp in sweetness magnifical and mighty.

Text from *Jubilate Agno* by Christopher Smart

MACMILLAN CHRISTUS VINCIT

*Christus vincit,
Christus regnat,
Christus imperat.*

Christ conquers,
Christ is King,
Christ is Lord of all.

Alleluia!

Alleluia!

Worcester Acclamations (10th century)

STANFORD MAGNIFICAT

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum, et exultavit
spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo;*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord: my
spirit rejoices in God my saviour;

*quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae.
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes.*

for he has looked with favour on his lowly
servant. From this day, all generations will call
me blessed.

*Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est, et
sanctum nomen eius, et misericordia eius a
progenie in progenies timentibus eum.*

The Almighty has done great things for me, and
holy is his name. He has mercy on those that
fear him in every generation.

*Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit
superbos mente cordis sui.
Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.*

He has shown the strength of his arm: he has
scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has lifted up the lowly.

*Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit
inanes. Suscepit Israel, puerum suum,
recordatus misericordiae suae,*

He has filled the hungry with good things, and
the rich he has sent away empty. He has come
to the help of his servant Israel, for he has
remembered his promise of mercy,

*sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et
semini eius in saecula.*

the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham
and his children for ever.

*Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in
saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and
shall be for ever. Amen.

FINZI LO, THE FULL, FINAL SACRIFICE

Lo, the full, final Sacrifice,
On which all figures fix't their eyes.
The ransomed Isaac, and his ram;
The Manna, and the Paschal Lamb.

Rise, Royal Sion! rise and sing
Thy soul's kind shepherd, thy heart's King.
Stretch all thy powers; call if you can
Harps of heaven to hands of man.
This sovereign subject sits above
The best ambition of thy love.

Jesu Master, just and true!
Our Food, and faithful Shepherd too!

Lo the Bread of Life, this day's
Triumphant Text provokes thy praise.
The living and life-giving bread,
To the great twelve distributed
When Life, himself, at point to die
Of love, was his own Legacy.

O let that love which thus makes thee
Mix with our low Mortality,
Lift our lean Souls, and set us up
Convictors of thine own full cup,
Coheirs of Saints. That so all may
Drink the same wine; and the same Way.
Nor change the Pasture, but the Place
To feed of Thee in thine own Face.

O soft self-wounding Pelican!
Whose breast weeps Balm for wounded man.
All this way bend thy benign flood
To a bleeding Heart that gasps for blood.
That blood, whose least drops sovereign be
To wash my worlds of sins from me.
Come love! Come Lord! and that long day
For which I languish, come away.
When this dry soul those eyes shall see,
And drink the unseal'd source of thee.
When Glory's sun faith's shades shall chase,
And for thy veil give me thy Face.
Amen.

O dear Memorial of that Death
Which lives still, and allows us breath!
Rich, Royal food! Bountiful Bread!
Whose use denies us to the dead!

Live ever Bread of loves, and be
My life, my soul, my surer self to me.

Help Lord, my Faith, my Hope increase;
And fill my portion in thy peace.
Give love for life; nor let my days
Grow, but in new powers to thy name and praise.

From Richard Crashaw's versions of the Hymns of St Thomas Aquinas:
Adoro Te and *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

LEIGHTON SEQUENCE FOR ALL SAINTS

I Introit

Gaudeamus.

Rejoice we all and praise the Lord: celebrating a holy day in honour of All Saints: in whose solemnity the Angels are joyful, and glorify the Son of God.

Gaudeamus.

II Gradual

O fear the Lord, all ye saints of his:
For they that fear him lack nothing.

[Alleluya]

But they that seek the Lord
shall want no manner of thing that is good.

Alleluya.

The saints shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people
and their Lord shall reign for ever.

III Offertory

O God, wonderful art thou in thy holy places
even the God of Israel, he will give strength and power unto his people;
blessed be God. Alleluya.

IV Communion

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God
and there shall no torment touch them.

In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die,
but they are in peace.

V Finale

Gaudeamus.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous:
For it becometh well the just to be thankful.

Rejoice we all, and praise the Lord: celebrating a holy day in honour of all saints,
Alleluya.

Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their joys,
How bright their glories be.

I ask them whence their victory came;
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to His death.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise
For his own pattern given;
While the long cloud of witnesses
Show the same path to heaven.

Since its formation in 1968, the **Scottish Chamber Choir** has performed throughout Scotland and Northern England to great acclaim. Each season the choir presents four concerts in Edinburgh, climaxing with an appearance at the Festival Fringe. These are usually supplemented by a Christmas concert and guest appearances at local Music Societies and Festivals throughout the year, keeping members quite busy!

The choir sings both shorter items from the chamber choir repertoire and more extended works, such as the Bach *St John Passion* at our Festival Fringe concert in 2004. Whilst some concerts are given a *cappella*, at others we are joined by a variety of instrumental forces, making possible an exceptional freedom of programming and great interest for both participants and audience.

The choir's hallmark has always been its breadth of repertoire, encompassing a wide range of music from the 16th century to the present day, with music by living composers featuring in programmes during most seasons. Often there is a thread linking a series of concerts, encouraging regular attendance. The highly successful and critically praised Silver Jubilee season, for example, concentrated on 20th century British music, and was recognised by an Enterprise Award from the Performing Rights Society – one of only three such awards in Scotland.

From time to time, vacancies occur in all sections of the choir. Any singer interested in obtaining further details should contact Bill Wood, the President, on 0131 339 7663. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings in the Ian Tomlin School of Music at Napier University's Craighouse campus.

Michael Harris received his earliest musical education as a chorister of Gloucester Cathedral. He was Organ Scholar of St Peter's College, Oxford, and continued his studies at the Royal College of Music. He studied organ with Nicholas Danby and has taken part in masterclasses given by, among others, Nicolas Kynaston, Daniel Roth and Piet Kee.

Michael has been Organist and Master of the Music of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, since November 1996; he is also a Lecturer at the Ian Tomlin School of Music in Napier University, Edinburgh. Prior to moving to Edinburgh he held posts as Sub-Organist of Leeds Parish Church and Assistant Organist of Canterbury Cathedral. As Organist of St Giles' Cathedral he hosts many organ concerts on the famous Rieger organ (built 1992) and his work has involved him in numerous recordings and broadcasts, for both television and radio. A solo recording, *The Organ at St Giles'*, was released in Summer 2002 and under his direction the Cathedral Choir has recently recorded *An Edinburgh Celebration* to mark its first tour of the USA in Autumn 2004.

Elsewhere, Michael has given recitals at many venues including Germany, Italy and the USA, as well as in the UK. He has been Musical Director of the Scottish Chamber Choir since 1998. He is also much involved in organ education and is Director of the Edinburgh Organ Academy, an international annual Springtime organ course founded in 1998.

Peter Backhouse was appointed Assistant Organist at St Giles' Cathedral in August 2000, a post he combines with teaching music at The Edinburgh Academy. His musical training began as a chorister in the choir of York Minster. Later he studied music at Edinburgh University where he graduated BMus (Hons), having won the 3rd Year Class Medal as well as the Tovey Memorial Prize for his organ playing. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists and holder of their Choir Training Diploma, as well as an Associate of the Royal College of Music. He has played for services and given recitals in many cathedrals, including Westminster Abbey, Canterbury Cathedral, York Minster, Durham Cathedral and St George's Chapel Windsor. As a continuo player he has played with all the major professional ensembles in Scotland.

He was appointed Assistant Organist at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in 1977. This post, with its daily accompaniment of services, as well as many concerts, recitals, broadcasts and recordings, kept him busy for over 20 years until he retired in 1997. He has served on the Council of The Edinburgh Society of Organists for many years, including two as President. He supports the work of the Royal School of Church Music and has been an organ adviser in the Edinburgh area for the Scottish Federation of Organists.

Railways have interested him all his life and he is a qualified signaller on the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway. His photographs, principally of organs, choirs and churches, continue to be published and he tries to find time to enjoy cricket and walking.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Sopranos	Alison Bishop	Sasha Salinasova
	Adrienne Burgess	Jacobine Scott
	Lorraine Fraser	Adriana Skaraas
	Anne McAlister	Philippa Wood
	Pauline McClellan	Milda Zinkus
	Jenny O'Neill	
Contraltos	Anne Barker	Myra Brown
	Bridget Beagan	Marjorie Lobban
	Jean Brodie	Sheila Robertson
Tenors	Andrew Polson	Bill Wood
	James Verge	Malcolm Wood
Basses	Mike Arthur	Frank Lucas
	George Burgess	Andrew O'Neill
	Bryan Campbell	Martin Tarr

Come and celebrate with the Scottish Chamber Choir!

Christmas at Lauder

Director: Michael Harris

Organist: Brigitte Harris

A programme of carols, seasonal motets and organ music

Lauder Parish Church

Saturday 10 December 2005 6.00pm

A retiring offering will be taken

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Directed by Michael Harris

Season 2005–06

St Giles' Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh

Saturday 11th March 2006 8:00pm

"Death and Resurrection":

Schütz Matthäuspassion and Auferstehungs-Historie

with The Squair Mile Consort of Viols

Saturday 10th June 2006 8:00pm

"Summer Nights": Motets, Chansons and Madrigals by

Palestrina, Josquin, Passereau, Delius, Arcadelt,
Poulenc, Guerrero, Janequin and Lauridsen

Tickets £7 (£5 concessions, under-16s free)

Tickets may be obtained from members of the Choir and
from the St Giles' Cathedral Shop (0131 226 0673)

St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh

Sunday 13th August 2006 8:00pm

Festival Concert

Handel *Dixit Dominus*

Mozart *Vespere Solennes de Confessore* K339

with The St Giles' Chamber Ensemble

Tickets £10 (£7 concessions, under-16s free)

Tickets may be obtained from members of the Choir,
and through the Festival Fringe Society