

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Directed by Michael Harris

A Song for Summer

A Sacred and Secular Serenade

Saturday 7th June 2008 8.00pm

St Giles' Cathedral, High Street, Edinburgh

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Director: Michael Harris

FRANK MARTIN
(1890–1974)

MASS FOR UNACCOMPANIED DOUBLE CHOIR

KYRIE

GLORIA

SANCTUS

AGNUS DEI

MAURICE DURUFLÉ
(1902–1986)

QUATRE MOTETS SUR DES THÈMES GRÉGORIENS

UBI CARITAS

TOTA PULCHRA ES

TU ES PETRUS

TANTUM ERGO

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

TROIS CHANSONS DE CHARLES D'ORLÉANS

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER!

QUANT J'AI OUY LE TABOURIN

Soprano Kate Rigg

YVER, VOUS N'ESTES QU'UN VILLAIN

Soprano Julie Morrice

Contralto Marjory Lobban

Tenor James Verge

Bass George Burgess

INTERVAL of 15 minutes

Programme notes

Frank Martin: *Mass for unaccompanied double choir*

Frank Martin's *Mass for unaccompanied double choir* has over the past thirty to forty years become recognised as one of the finest pieces of twentieth-century sacred choral music. The work was composed in 1922, and was the composer's only work for the medium, but remained unpublished and un-performed until 1963, mainly because Martin found it such a personal expression of his deeply-held faith, something that he didn't feel should be heard by the public.

Born in 1890 in Switzerland, to the family of a Calvinist minister, Frank Martin initially pursued studies in Mathematics and Physics, following his parents' wishes. He was supported early on in his composing career by the conductor Ernest Ansermet. Like Duruflé, his close contemporary, he was a precise and fastidious composer who was continuously revising his work, gradually developing his own distinctive voice.

The intensity of the setting of the Mass is marked by a fresh approach to setting these texts, taking a Calvinist rather than Catholic standpoint as a point of departure. Here there is no use of plainchant for inspiration, but the idea of supplication is often present, particularly in the gradually developing *Kyrie* and the *Agnus Dei*. This last movement was written in 1926, four years after the rest of the mass, and the two choirs are deployed in clear juxtaposition, with a regular flow to the second choir against the more continuous line of the first choir with its references back to the *Kyrie* material. Other highpoints are the gradual blossoming of the choral texture at the opening of the *Gloria*, and the colourful opening to the *Sanctus* with the ostinato accompaniment of the tenors and basses.

Maurice Duruflé: *Quatre Motets sur des thèmes Grégoriens*

Born in January 1902 in Louviers in northern France, Maurice Duruflé was involved in church music from an early age, attending the local choir school, and becoming the organist at the church of Notre-Dame in Louviers at the age of seventeen. In preparing for entrance to the Paris Conservatoire he studied with both Tournemire, Organist of Ste. Clotilde in Paris, and Louis Vierne, two very contrasting characters with very different methods of teaching. After graduating he was appointed Organist of the church of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont in Paris, where he remained in post until his death, sharing some of the duties with his wife Marie-Madeleine in later years.

Duruflé's compositions are all characterised by their use of plainsong as the main source of inspiration. There is something slightly austere about his style, and even in the virtuoso organ works there is an underlying sense of restraint. As Roger Nichols wrote in an article in *Choir and Organ* (May/June 1996) "Duruflé's lifelong devotion to plainsong in his music did not, understandably, leave much room for humour."

Duruflé published his *Quatre Motets sur des thèmes Grégoriens* in 1960. These four miniatures, for unaccompanied choir, have become a central part of the choral repertoire. Apart from *Tota pulchra es*, which is scored for upper voices, they are all conceived for four-part choir. As the title indicates, all are founded on plainsong themes, but they display considerable variety, from the mellow *Ubi caritas*, where the altos have the main share of the melodic material, to the incisive and very short *Tu es Petrus*.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913–1976)

CHORAL DANCES FROM GLORIANA

TIME

CONCORD

TIME AND CONCORD

COUNTRY GIRLS

RUSTICS AND FISHERMEN

FINAL DANCE OF HOMAGE

ERIC WHITACRE
(b. 1970)

SLEEP

FRANK BRIDGE
(1879–1941)

FOUR PART-SONGS

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

HILLI-HO! HILLI-HO!

O WEARY HEARTS

THE BEE

Acknowledgement

This concert is subsidised by Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies, with funds provided by the Scottish Arts Council.



Texts and translations

FRANK MARTIN: MASS FOR DOUBLE CHOIR

Claude Debussy: *Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans*

Claude Debussy's *Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans*, given their first performance in 1909, are the only a cappella choral works that he wrote. They enjoyed immediate popularity, and display a variety of styles and moods. The first song is closest in harmonic idiom to the music of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. In the second song, which omits the sopranos, the lower voices represent the drums of Mayday festivities. The last song *Yver, vous n'êtes qu'un villain* is once more in the madrigalian idiom, with winter set in a contrapuntal minor key texture to contrast it with summer and its major homophony.

Benjamin Britten: *Choral Dances from Gloriana*

The *Choral Dances* by Benjamin Britten are extracted from his opera, *Gloriana*, commissioned by Covent Garden to celebrate the Coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953. The complex undertones of Britten's setting of the opera, based on the life of Queen Elizabeth I, meant that it met with a cool reception, but the six part-songs that make up the *Choral Dances* have found a firm place in the a cappella choral repertoire. In the opera they serve as the music for a masque performed for the Tudor Queen as she visits the city of Norwich, during which dancers representing the allegorical and rustic characters of the titles pay the Queen homage.

Britten's writing is full of vibrant character. *Time* is represented by a bell-like swinging refrain, which is disturbed by the menacing dotted rhythms of the "bearded ancient with a scythe". *Concord* is perhaps the most naïve of the settings, whilst *Time and Concord* employs a canonic technique between upper and lower voices. *Country Girls* is full of rustic spirited innocence, whilst *Rustics and Fishermen*, set for men's voices has a sense of rustic fulfilment after a good day's work.

Eric Whitacre: *Sleep*

Eric Whitacre has quickly become one of the most successful and celebrated young American composers. His a cappella choral works have included *Water Night* (1995) and his extensive setting of *When David Heard. Sleep*, to a poem by Charles Anthony Silvestri, is typical of his immediately engaging writing, which makes use of subtle changes of sonorities and an ever-increasing intensity to create an enthralling tone picture which eventually dissolves into nothing.

Frank Bridge: *Four part-songs*

Frank Bridge, who had studied with Stanford, forged a career as a viola player, composer and conductor. He was much in demand as a chamber music player, and his masterful chamber compositions reflect this. Changes of fashion in musical style in the mid-twentieth century meant that much of his music was forgotten after his death. He had though had a lasting influence as a sought-after teacher – Benjamin Britten was a composition pupil.

The four part-songs heard here were not published until many years after his death, finally seeing the light of day in the 1980s. Written between 1904 and 1913, they owe a debt to the English pastoral idiom of the early twentieth century. They were not intended as a set, but as a group they work well in displaying contrasting moods, the intensity of Longfellow's *O weary hearts* dispersed by the energy of Tennyson's *The bee*.

Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison,
Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison.*

Lord have mercy,
Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy

Gloria

*Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis.*

Glory be to God in the highest and in earth
peace, good will towards men.

*Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te,
glorificamus te.*

We praise thee, we bless thee, we adore thee,
we glorify thee.

*Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam
tuam, Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, Deus Pater
omnipotens.*

We give thee thanks for thy great glory, O Lord
God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.

*Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe,
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis
peccata mundi, miserere nobis.*

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ:
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world, have
mercy upon us.

*Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem
nostram.*

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.

*Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu
solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum sancto Spiritu,
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord,
thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art the
Most High, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus
Sabaoth. Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.*

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of
the Lord.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere
nobis.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the
world, have mercy on us.

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis
pacem.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the
world, grant us peace.

MAURICE DURUFLÉ: QUATRE MOTETS SUR DES THÈMES GRÉGORIENS

Ubi caritas

*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.*

Where charity and love are, there is God.
The love of Christ has brought us together into
one flock.

*Exultemus et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus at amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero. Amen.*

Let us rejoice and be glad in that love itself.
Let us fear and love the living God.
And let us love from a pure heart. Amen.

Tota pulchra es

*Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non
est in te.
Vestimentum tuum candidum quasi nix,
et facies tua sicut sol.
Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu laetitia Israel,
tu honorificantia populi nostri.*

You are wholly beautiful, Mary, and there is no
blemish of original sin in you.
Your garments are as white as snow, and your
face is as the sun.
You are the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel,
the source of honour to our people.

Tu es Petrus

*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo
Ecclesiam meam.*

You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my
church.

Tantum ergo

*Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui;
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui:
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.
Genitori, Genitoque,
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio;
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.*

So great a sacrament therefore
Let us worship with bowed heads;
And let the ancient example
Give way to a new rite;
Let faith make good
The insufficiency of our senses.
To the Begetter and the Begotten
Praise and rejoicing,
Safety, honour and virtue
Let there be, and also blessing;
To him who comes from either
Let there be equal praise. Amen.

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER!

*Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder
La gracieuse bonne et belle;
Pour les grans biens que sont en elle,
Chascun est prest de la louer.
Qui se pourroit d'elle lasser?
Tousjours sa beauté renouvelle.*

Lord, you made her lovely to look at,
So gracious, good, and beautiful;
For her many virtues
All are ready to praise her.
Who could bring himself to tire of her?
Her beauty is ever fresh.

*Dieu, qu'il la fait bon regarder,
La gracieuse bonne et belle!
Par de ça, ne de là, la mer
Ne scay dame ne damoiselle
Qui soit en tous bien parfaits telle.
C'est ung songe que d'i penser:*

Lord, you made her lovely to look at,
So gracious, good, and beautiful!
Whether near or far over the sea,
There is neither wife nor maiden
Who is so perfect in every respect,
It is a dream even to think of it.

Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder!

Lord, you made her lovely to look at!

QUANT J'AI OUY LE TABOURIN

*Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin
Sonner pour s'en aller au may,
En mon lit n'en ay fait affray
Ne levé mon chief du coisin;
En disant: il est trop matin
Ung peu je me rendormiray.*

When I hear the little drum
Sounding to call us to maying,
I do not stir myself in my bed
Nor lift my head from the pillow;
Saying: it is too early,
And I let myself sleep a little longer.

*Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin
Sonner pour s'en aller au may,
Jeunes gens partent leur butin;
De non chaloir m'acointeray
A lui je m'abutineray
Trouvé l'ay plus prouchain voisin.*

When I hear the little drum
Sounding to call us to maying,
Young folk distribute their favours;
With nonchalance I listen
To them as I lie there;
I find him a closer neighbour.

Quant j'ai ouy le tabourin . . .

When I hear the little drum . . .

YVER, VOUS N'ESTES QU'UN VILLAIN

*Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain;
Esté est plaisant et gentil
En témoin de may et d'avril
Qui l'accompaignent soir et main.*

Winter, you are a scoundrel;
Summer is pleasing and gentle,
As witness May and April
Who always accompany her.

*Esté revet champs, bois et fleurs
De sa livrée de verdure
Et de maintes autres couleurs
Par l'ordonnance de nature.*

Summer clothes field, forest and flowers
In their garb of green
And many other colours,
As ordained by nature.

*Mais vous, Yver, trop estes plein
De nège, vent, pluye et grézil.
On vous deust banir en exil.*

But you, Winter, are too full
Of snow, wind, rain and hail.
I'd like to banish you into exile.

*Sans point flater je parler plein:
Yver, vous n'estes qu'un villain.*

I say plainly, without any attempt to flatter:
Winter, you are a scoundrel.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN *CHORAL DANCES FROM GLORIANA*

1 TIME

Yes he is Time,
Lusty and blithe,
Time is at his apogee!
Although you thought to see
A bearded ancient with a scythe.
No reaper he
That cries "Take heed!"
Time is at his apogee!
Young and strong in his prime!
Behold the sower of the seed!

2 CONCORD

Concord is here
Our days to bless
And this our land to endure
With plenty, peace and happiness.
Concord and Time,
Each needeth each:
The ripest fruit hangs where
Not one, but only two can reach.

3 TIME AND CONCORD

From springs of bounty,
Through this county,
Streams abundant,
Of thanks shall flow.
Where life was scanty,
Fruits of plenty,
Swell resplendent
From earth below!
No Greek nor Roman
Queenly woman
Knew such favour
From Heav'n above . . .
As she whose presence
Is our pleasance,
Gloriana, Gloriana
Hath all our love.

4 COUNTRY GIRLS

Sweet flag and cuckoo flower,
Cowslip and columbine
Kingcups and sops-in-wine
Flower deluce and calaminth,
Harebell and hyacinth,
Myrtle and bay,
With rosemary between,
Norfolk's own garlands for her Queen.

5 RUSTICS AND FISHERMEN

From fen and meadow
In rushy baskets
They bring ensamples of all they grow.
In earthen dishes
Their deep-sea fishes;
Yearly fleeces,
Woven blankets;
New cream and junkets,
And rustic trinkets
On wicker flaskets,
Their country largess,
The best they know.

6 FINAL DANCE OF HOMAGE

These tokens of our love receiving,
O take them, Princess great and dear,
From Norwich city you are leaving,
That you a-far may feel us near.

William Plomer (1903–1973)

ERIC WHITACRE *SLEEP*

The evening hangs beneath the moon,
A silver thread on darkened dune.
With closing eyes and resting head
I know that sleep is coming soon.
Upon my pillow, safe in bed,
A thousand pictures fill my head,
I cannot sleep, my mind's a-flight;
And yet my limbs seem made of lead.
If there are noises in the night,
A frightening shadow, flickering light;
Then I surrender unto sleep,
Where clouds of dreams give second sight.
What dreams may come, both dark and deep,
Of flying wings and soaring leap,
As I surrender unto sleep,
As I surrender unto sleep.

Charles Anthony Silvestri (b.1966)

FRANK BRIDGE *FOUR PART-SONGS*

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.
Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)

HILLI-HO! HILLI-HO!

Wind thy horn, my hunter boy,
And leave thy lute's inglorious sighs;
Hunting is the hero's joy,
Till war his nobler game supplies.
Hark! the hound-bells ringing sweet,
While hunters shout and the woods repeat,
Hilli-ho! Hilli-ho!
Wind again thy cheerful horn,
Till echo, faint with answering, dies:
Burn, bright torches, burn till morn,
And lead us where the wild boar lies.
Hark! the cry, "He's found, he's found."
While hill and valley our shouts resound,
Hilli-ho! Hilli-ho!

Thomas Moore (1779–1852)

The Scottish Chamber Choir

O WEARY HEARTS

O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes!
O drooping souls whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!
No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.
Responds, as if with unseen wings,
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
Where hast thou stayed so long?
O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes! . . .

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)

THE BEE

The bee buzzed up in the heat,
"I am faint for your honey, my sweet."
The flower said, "Take it, my dear,
For now 'tis the spring of the year;
So come, come!"
"Hum!"
And the bee buzzed down from the heat.
And the bee buzzed up in the cold
When the flower was withered and old.
"Have you still any honey, my dear?"
She said: "It's the fall of the year,
But come, come!"
"Hum!"
And the bee buzzed off in the cold.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)

Awards for All – Lottery grant

The Scottish Chamber Choir has been successful in being awarded a Lottery grant of £5,000 from the Scottish Arts Council via Awards for All to support the commission of a new work to celebrate our 40th anniversary during the 2008–2009 season.

The new work is being composed by Kenneth Dempster, a Scottish composer who, in addition to being Composer in Residence at Napier University, has also recently composed works for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Edinburgh Quartet, Mr McFall's Chamber and the St Magnus Festival. The piece, for choir and organ, entitled *Father and son* and a setting of Dylan Thomas's *Do not go gentle into that good night*, will be premiered in our concert on 22nd November 2008 at St Giles' Cathedral.

In addition to the premiere of the work, the choir will also be involved in two workshops with primary schools in Linlithgow and Peebles, led by Kenneth Dempster. This will involve the children creating music around the new work, and then participating in a short performance alongside the Scottish Chamber Choir for the rest of the school.

We are delighted to be given this opportunity to create new music and look forward to our rehearsals, the schools' workshops and the premiere of the work in November.

The Scottish Chamber Choir is registered with OSCR,
the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator,
as Scottish Charity No. SC013058
(details at <http://www.oscr.org.uk/>)

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, by phone on 0131 339 7663 or by email at info@scottishchamberchoir.org.uk. 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.

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 in 1992) and his work has involved him in numerous recordings and broadcasts, both for Television and Radio. Under his direction the Cathedral Choir has visited the USA and Greece, and most recently, in October 2006, they undertook a short tour of southern France.

His solo recordings include *The Organ at St Giles'*, and he has directed the Cathedral Choir in a number of CD recordings, including *An Edinburgh Celebration* to mark their first tour of the USA in Autumn 2004. A recording for the Priory label, of a 1724 organ in Thüringen by Johann Schröter, is due for release in Summer 2008.

Elsewhere Michael has given recitals at many venues in Germany, Belgium, Italy and the USA, as well as in the UK, where he has played in many of the major venues. In August and September 2008 he will be giving concerts in Australia and New Zealand. Since 1998 he has been Musical Director of the Scottish Chamber Choir.

He is also much involved in organ and choral education. He has led a number of study tours to Germany, with a special interest in the organs of Thüringen and Saxony, and is Director of the Edinburgh Organ Academy, an international annual Spring-time organ course founded in 1998. His Napier University duties include supervision of final year performance students, and directing the University Chamber Choir.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Sopranos	Harriet Atkinson	Julie Morrice
	Rachel Bucknall	Kate Rigg
	Adrienne Burgess	Sasha Salinasova
	Lorraine Fraser	Sue Shoosmith
	Jenny Mackenzie	Adriana Skaraas
	Pauline McClellan	Milda Zinkus
Contraltos	Anne Barker	Guen Innes
	Bridget Beagan	Marjory Lobban
	Jean Brodie	Alison McCleery
	Myra Brown	Susan White
Tenors	George McNeil	James Verge
	Stuart Mitchell	Bill Wood
Basses	Mike Arthur	Wilf Krause
	George Burgess	James Mcdonald
	Peter Innes	Martin Tarr

Keep in touch with the Scottish Chamber Choir – visit our web site at:

www.scottishchamberchoir.org.uk

You will find there our plans for the season, details of forthcoming concerts and useful links, plus an archive of our programmes back to 1993.