

# Program

<i>Intrada*</i>	Grayston Ives
<i>Laudibus in sanctis</i>	William Byrd
<i>Hymne à la Vierge</i>	Pierre Villette
<i>I Beheld Her, Beautiful as a Dove</i>	Healy Willan
<i>Nuper rosarum flores</i>	Guillaume Dufay
<i>Corpus Christi Carol*</i>	Judith Bingham
<i>See, see, the Word is incarnate*</i>	Orlando Gibbons
<i>James Hevel, Katie Eakright, Jonathan Posthuma, Jim Bowen, Andrew Mogendorff, Paul Stever, Soloists</i>	

## Intermission

<i>Vallåtar från Gammelboning</i>	Rosenberg and Ahlbäck
<i>Sancta Anna, Mormor Christ</i>	Anonymous, 13 <sup>th</sup> Century
<i>I Seraillets Have</i>	Wilhelm Stenhammar
<i>Nimrod*</i>	Edward Elgar
<i>Ye Spotted Snakes</i>	Richard J. S. Stevens
<i>Owls (An Epitaph)</i>	Edward Elgar
<i>Resurrexi - Plainsong and Alleluia</i>	Gerald Near
<i>Ring Out! Sts. Luke and James Handbell Choir</i>	
<i>*Sharon Kleckner, Organist</i>	

# Texts and Translations

*Laudibus in sanctis* - William Byrd.

Latin Paraphrase, Psalm 150

*Laudibus in sanctis Dominum celebrate supremum:  
Firmamenta sonent inclita facta Dei.  
Inclita facta Dei cantate, sacraque potentis, voce potestatem saepe sonate manus.  
Magnificum Domini cantet tuba martia nomen: Pieria Domino concelebrate lira.  
Laude Dei resonent resonantia tympana summi,  
Alta sacri resonent organa laude Dei.  
Hunc arguta canant tenui psalteria corda,  
Hunc agili laudet laeta chorea pede.  
Concava divinas effundant cymbala laudes, Cymbala dulcisona laude repleta Dei.  
Omne quod aethereis in mundo vescitur auris. Halleluia canat tempus in omne Deo.*

Praise the Lord most high with praises in his sanctuary:  
Let the firmament resound the glorious works of God. Sing the celebrated works of God:  
And in a voice of holy might sound forth often the power of his hand.  
Let the martial trumpet sing the Lord's splendid name:  
Together praise the Lord with the Pierian lyre.  
Let resounding drums sound to the praise of God most high:  
Let lofty organs sound the praise of God most holy,  
To whom skillful psalteries sing with subtle string:  
To whom let joyful dance give praise with nimble foot.  
Hollow cymbals pour out divine praises:  
Sweet-sounding cymbals full of the praise of God.  
All on earth that is fed by the breath of heaven: Sing hallelujah in eternity to God.

*Hymne à la Vierge* - Pierre Villette.

Roland Bouhéret (1930 - 1995)

*Ô toute belle Vierge Marie,  
Votre âme trouve en Dieu le parfait amour,  
Il vous revêt du manteau de la Grâce  
Comme une fiancée parée de ses bijoux, Alléluia, alleluia.  
Je vais chanter ta louange, Seigneur,  
Car tu as pris soin de moi,  
Car tu m'as enveloppée du voile de l'innocence.  
Vous êtes née avant les collines. Ô sagesse de Dieu, porte du Salut.*

*Heureux celui qui marche dans vos traces  
Qui apprête son cœur à la voix de vos conseils. Alléluia, alleluia.  
Car tu m'as faite avant le jour,  
Car tu m'as fait précéder le jaillissement des sources.  
Avant les astres vous étiez présente,*

*Mère du Créateur au profond du ciel,  
Quand Dieu fixait les limites du monde.  
Vous partagez son cœur étant à l'œuvre avec lui. Alléluia.  
Ô toute belle Vierge Marie.*

O beautiful Virgin Mary,  
In God your soul discovers perfect love,  
It cloaks you with the mantle of Grace  
Like a betrothed adorned with her jewels.  
Alleluia, alleluia.  
I will sing your praise, Lord,  
For you have looked after me  
For you have covered me with the veil of innocence.  
You were born before the hills, O wisdom of God, the way to salvation.

Happy is he who walks in your footsteps,  
Who prepares his heart to listen to your advice.  
Alleluia, alleluia,  
For you have made me before the day,  
For you have made me go before the gushing of fountains.  
You were present before the stars,  
Mother of the Creator, in the very depths of heaven  
When God was creating the world.  
Working with Him, you shared His heart  
Alleluia. O beautiful Virgin Mary.

*I Beheld Her, Beautiful as a Dove - Healy Willan.*      **Responsory, Office of the Blessed  
Virgin Mary**

I beheld her, beautiful as a dove, rising above the water brooks,  
And her raiment was filled with perfume beyond all price.  
Even as the springtime was she girded with rosebuds and lilies of the valley.  
Who is this that cometh up from the desert  
like a wreath of sweet smoke arising from frankincense and myrrh?  
Even as the springtime was she girded with rosebuds and lilies of the valley.

*Nuper rosarum flores - Guillaume Dufay*

**Guillaume Dufay**

*Nuper rosarum flores ex dono Pontificis hieme licet horrida tibi, Virgo cœlica,  
Pie et sancte deditum grandis templum machinæ condecorarunt perpetim.  
Hodie vicarius Jesu Christi et Petri Successor Eugenius,  
Hoc idem amplissimum sacris templum manibus  
Sanctisque liquoribus consecrare dignatus est.  
Igitur, alma parens nati tui et filia, Virgo decus virginum  
Tuus te, Florentiæ devotus orat populus,  
Ut qui mente et corpore mundo quicquam exorarit,  
Oratione tua, Cruciatu et meritis tui secundum carnem  
Nati Domini sui grata beneficia veniamque reatum accipere mereatur. Amen.*

Recently roses came as a gift from the Pope, despite the cruel winter,  
to you, heavenly Virgin,  
to whom a temple of magnificent design is dedicated dutifully and through sacred rites.  
Together may they be perpetual ornaments.  
Today the Vicar of Jesus Christ and Peter's successor, Eugenius,  
has the honor to consecrate this same most spacious sacred temple  
with his hands and with holy water.

Therefore, gracious mother and daughter of your own Son, Virgin, ornament of virgins,  
the people of your city of Florence devoutly pray  
that whoever entertains you with a pure mind and body may,  
through your prayer, your anguish and merits,  
be found worthy to receive of the Lord. Amen,  
born of you as all flesh is, the benefits of grace and the remission of sins. Amen.  
(Cantus firmus: Awe-inspiring is this place.)

*Corpus Christi Carol* – Judith Bingham

Anonymous Medieval

Lulley, lulla, lulley, lulla, the faucon hath born my mak away.  
He bare hym up, he bare hym down, he bare hym into an orchard brown.  
In that orchard ther was an hall, that was hanged with purpill and pall.  
And in that hall ther was a bede, hit was hanged with gold so rede.  
And yn that bede ther lythe a knight, his wowndes bledyng day and nyght.  
By that bedes side there kneleth a may, and she wepeth both nyght and day.  
And by that bedes side ther stonidith a ston, "Corpus Christi" wretyn theron.  
Lulley, lulla, lulley, lulla.

*See, see, the Word is incarnate* – Orlando Gibbons

Godfrey Goodman (1583 – 1656)

See, see, the Word is incarnate; God is made man in the womb of a Virgin.  
Shepherds rejoice, wise men adore, and angels sing,  
"Glory be to God on high: peace on earth, good will towards men."  
The law is cancelled, Jews and Gentiles converted  
by the preaching of glad tidings of salvation.  
The blind have sight and cripples have their motion;  
diseases cured, the dead are raised, and miracles are wrought.  
Let us welcome such a guest with Hosanna.  
The Paschal Lamb is offered, Christ Jesus made a sacrifice for sin.  
The earth quakes, the sun is darkened, the powers of hell are shaken;  
and lo, he is risen up in victory. Sing Alleluia.

See, O see the fresh wounds, the gored blood, the prick of thorns, the print of nails.  
And in the sight of multitudes a glorious ascension.  
When now he sits on God's right hand where all the choir of heaven all jointly sing:  
Glory be to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne.  
Let us continue our wonted note with Hosanna:

Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord;  
with Alleluia, we triumph in victory,  
the serpent's head is bruised, Christ's kingdom exalted,  
and heaven laid open to sinners. Amen.

*Vallåtar från Gammelboning* - Rosenberg and Ahlbäck

Swedish Folk Song

*Mine getter går i skogen, gnager barken av trä. Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
*Våra pigor og våra drängar säta knä emot knä. Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
*Mine getter går i skogen, säta knä emot knä. Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
*Våra pigor og våra drängar gnager barken av trä. Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*

My goats walk in the forest, gnaw the bark off trees. *Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
Our maids and our servants sit knee to knee. *Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
My goats walk in the forest, sit knee to knee. *Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*  
Our maids and our servants gnaw the bark off trees. *Trididala, sudeludej, trididala, sudeludu!*

*Sancta Anna, Mormor Christ* - Anonymous

13<sup>th</sup> c. Swedish Prayer to St. Anne

*Sancta Anna, mormor Christ, bidjom vitill hen ne då hjälper hon oss vist,*  
*At hon nåde sig bedja för alt hjone lag att de gjöre Guds vila både natt och dag. Sancta Anna!*  
*Hone lag i paradis skickade själver Gud, han vare med brudgum och så hans unga brud.*  
*Han give dem år och hälsa, karlek därmed frid himmel rikets glädje den tidde torva vid. Kyrie eleis!*  
*Alle helga kvinnor med Sancta Annas bön förvära unga Brudnu himmelrikets lön,*  
*Gudalika kärleki deras hjone lag, himmelrikets glädje med Gud på dome dag. Sancta Anna!*  
*Glada, glada, glada, glada ärom vi, drickom, drickom vi glad mans minne*  
*Et os alla helgon signe, helgon signe, glada, glada, glada, glada ärom vi. Kyrie eleis!*

Holy Anne, grandmother of Christ, if we pray to her she will surely help us,  
She will gracefully pray for all marriages, so they do what pleases God both night and  
day.

Holy Anne!

Marriage in paradise was sent by God himself, pray he will show grace  
to both groom and bride.

Pray he will give them health, love and peace, heavenly joy during their lifetime.

*Kyrie eleison!*

All holy women, with Saint Anne's prayer let our young bride be given heaven's reward,  
Godly love in their marriage, until they meet God our Father on Domesday.

Holy Anne!

Let us all be happy and drink the happy man's toast, pray for all saints' blessings.

Let us all be happy. *Kyrie eleison!*

*I Seraillets Have* - Wilhelm Stenhammar

Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847-1885)

*Rosen sænker sit hoved, tungt af dug og duft,  
Og pinjerne svaje saa byst og mati lumre luft.  
Kilderne vælte det tunge sølv i døsigt ro,  
Minareterne pege mod himlen op i Tyrketro,  
Og halvmaanen driver saa jævnt afsted over det jævne blaa,  
Og den kysser rosers og liljers flok, alle de blomster smaa  
I seraillets have, i seraillets have.*

The rose sinks its head, heavy with dew and fragrance,  
And the pines are waving so silent and faint in the sultry air.  
The brooks turn their heavy silver in complete tranquility,  
Minarets point at Heaven in the Turkish faith,  
And the half-moon slowly drifts away over the evening-blue,  
And kisses the flocks of roses and lilies, all those little flowers  
In the seraglio's garden, in the seraglio's garden.

*Ye Spotted Snakes*, Richard John Samuel Stevens

William Shakespeare (1564 -1616)

Ye spotted snakes with double tongue,  
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;  
Newts and blindworms, do no wrong,  
Come not near our fairy Queen.

Philomele, with melody  
Sing in our sweet lullaby;  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:  
Never harm nor spell nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh;  
So, good night, with lullaby.

Weaving spiders, come not here;  
Hence, you long-legged spinners, hence!  
Beetles black, approach not near;  
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Philomele, with melody  
Sing in our sweet lullaby;  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby:  
Never harm nor spell nor charm,  
Come our lovely lady nigh;  
So, good night, with lullaby.

*Owls (An Epitaph)*, Edward Elgar

Edward Elgar

What is that? Nothing.  
The leaves must fall, and falling, rustle;  
That is all, they are dead as they fall,  
Dead at the foot of the tree.  
All that can be is said.  
What is that? Nothing.

A wild thing hurt but mourns in the night,  
And it cries in its dread, till it lies dead at the foot of the tree.  
All that can be is said.  
What is it? Nothing?  
What is that?  
A marching slow of unseen feet, that is all, but a bier, spread with a pall  
Is now at the foot of the tree.  
All that could be is said.  
Is it – What?  
Nothing.

*Resurrexi - Plainsong and Alleluia* - Gerald Near    Introit, *Resurrexi*, Graduale Triplex

*Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum, alleluia.*  
*Posuisti, super me, manum tuam, alleluia.*  
*Mirabilis facta est scientia tua, alleluia, alleluia.*  
*Domine probasti me, et cognovisti me:*  
*Tu cognovisti sessionem meam, et resurrectionem meam.*

I am risen, and I am always with thee.  
Thou hast placed thy hand upon me;  
Thy wisdom has been shown to be wonderful.  
Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.  
Thou hast known my resting and my rising up.



# About The Music

## *Intrada – Grayston Ives (1948 - )*

Grayston Ives is a British composer, singer and choral director. He studied composition with Richard Rodney Bennett, and later joined the King's Singers, with whom he recorded and performed worldwide. His organ piece *Intrada* was written for the Grand Procession at the 25th anniversary of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

## *Laudibus in Sanctis – William Byrd (1545-1623)*

We begin our 50th anniversary concert as we began our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert on February 9, 2013, with the festive *Laudibus in sanctis* by William Byrd. This setting of Psalm 150 appears in his *Canciones Sacrae*, published in 1589, as Part I of a double motet, and is one of only two of Byrd's settings of an entire psalm. This could be because Psalm 150 is the Bible's conclusion of a collection of five psalms of praise (146–150) in which everyone and everything is exhorted to praise God everywhere. The text of the psalm lists the various instruments by which God is praised, and Byrd's setting of the Latin paraphrase uses choral orchestration and imitations of the various instruments, leading to a grand finale where everything with breath praises the Lord. *Laudibus* is a joyful liturgical party piece, filled with syncopations, onomatopoeic wordplay and dance rhythms, that has more in common with the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Italian madrigal than with the typical English church motet of Byrd's time. It is splendidly lively, virtuosic and great fun to sing.



William Byrd lived in interesting times, living an equally matched life. He maintained connections at court, connections within the outlawed Catholic church, and connections with famous composers of the time. Some of these, including Alfonso Ferrabosco I and Thomas Tallis, influenced him, while others, including Thomas Tomkins, were Byrd's students. Although Tallis was Byrd's teacher, the two later became business partners, and in 1575 they received royal warrants for publishing music and music paper.

One of the most fascinating aspects of Byrd's life is the constant tension between his well-known allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church and his necessary obeisance to the newfangled Anglican Church. Both he and his wife were placed on lists of recusancy and were fined because of it yet were tolerated enough to avoid further punishment – probably because of Byrd's talent and popularity. While Byrd's sympathies were clearly with Catholicism, he managed to write enduring music for the Anglican Church as well. The body of his secular consort music is important also; his songs, consort pieces, and keyboard works are important enough to stand alongside his choral works, which at the end of his life numbered more than four hundred.



## *Hymne à la Vierge – Pierre Villette (1926-1998)*

Pierre Villette (1926-1998) was a contemporary of Pierre Boulez at the Conservatoire National Supérieure de Musique in Paris, where he studied with Maurice Duruflé. He followed a different path than Boulez, often basing his compositions on early music, including Gregorian chant, which he learned as a chorister at Rouen Cathedral. He was considerably influenced by the harmonies and styles of Messiaen, Poulenc and Stravinsky, as well as jazz. Most of his music was composed for the church and consists mainly of shorter motets, but he also wrote a larger *Messe en français*, premiered in 1981. The *Hymne à la Vierge*, a setting of a text by Roland Bouhéret (1930 - 1995), has been described as “melodious, homophonic and chromatic, with some delicious harmonies in the four-bar coda.”<sup>1</sup> It is Villette’s best-known work, having been performed often, including during the annual Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at King’s College, Cambridge.

## *I Beheld Her, Beautiful as a Dove – Healy Willan (1880-1968)*

Healy Willan was a Canadian organist and composer best known for his choral and organ works for the church. He was born in England in 1880, and worked there as a church musician until 1913, when he moved to Canada to take a position as organist and choirmaster at St. Paul’s Church in Toronto. In 1921 he took the same position at St. Mary Magdalene Church, where he worked for the rest of his life. In 1938 he also accepted a position as music professor at the University of



Toronto. Much of his church music was written for the choir of St. Mary Magdalene.

Willan was influenced during his early years in England by Wagner, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky, and especially the British composers Elgar, Parry and Stanford, and in writing for the church he often drew from Renaissance music and plainsong. He did not particularly like the music of the mid-twentieth century – “I hear only strange sounds which surprise and disturb me” – and throughout his life continued to rely on traditional styles, especially when writing for St. Mary Magdalene. He was a remarkably prolific composer; he wrote more than 800 works, including operas, chamber music, symphonies, and a variety of instrumental and vocal compositions.

*I Beheld Her, Beautiful as a Dove* (1928) is the second in a set of three liturgical motets. While Willan claimed to dislike “modern” music, he was unconstrained by such traditional conventions as the bar line. In *I Beheld Her*, we witness Willan’s “escape from the tyranny of the bar line, with gestures that alternate four, three, six, and five quarter notes per phrase. This example also demonstrates Willan’s signature modal cadences that resolve with an exquisite lack of musical tension.”<sup>2</sup> The text is taken from a responsory for an eighth-century Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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<sup>1</sup> Notes by Wadham Sutton © 1993

<sup>2</sup> Martin and Power, *Ancient Echoes: Stylistic Influences in Healy Willan’s Liturgical Music*, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Brock University, St. Catherine’s, Ontario, Canada

## *Nuper rosarum flores* – Guillaume Dufay (1397 – 1474)

Guillaume Dufay's motet *Nuper rosarum flores* (Recently Roses Blossomed) was written for the consecration of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence at its completion on the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25, 1436. The cathedral had been under construction since 1296, but the building remained unfinished until the architect Filippo Brunelleschi finally figured out how to construct the enormous dome. Brunelleschi's construction was the largest dome in the world until the late nineteenth century, and it remains the world's largest brick and mortar dome. Pope Eugenius IV, for whose coronation Dufay had previously written another motet, presided over the consecration. A list of the singers at the first performance of *Nuper rosarum* is known, and at the head of this list is Guillaume Dufay himself. Although this piece was composed for and performed in a cathedral in Italy, Dufay was French. He was the most famous of a group of composers working in what is now northern and eastern France, Belgium and the Netherlands, and often referred to as the Burgundian School because of the association of many of the composers with the Dukes of Burgundy. The burgeoning wealth of the Burgundian nobility resulted in the area becoming Europe's most influential cultural center, attracting artists like Jan Van Eyck as well as the best musicians.



The music of this period, the early Renaissance, may sound strange to the ear of the modern listener, as it maintained some of its medieval characteristics while gradually evolving into the polyphonic style of the later Renaissance and the music of Netherlands School composers such as Johannes Ockeghem and Josquin Des Prez. *Nuper rosarum* is one of the last of Dufay's thirteen so-called isorhythmic motets, but according to the editor of the score used in this performance, it is not, strictly speaking, an isorhythmic motet at all. This bit of music history trivia is actually important because it shows that Dufay was in the process of moving away from the old styles and adopting and inventing new ones.



During the previous century musicians had developed the isorhythmic method of composition, a very structured, complex style using a repeated rhythmic pattern (*talea*). The *talea* may appear in one or more voices and is usually independent of any melodic pattern (*color*), which may be of a much different length. At first only the tenor voice was isorhythmic, but during the early fifteenth century the technique became applied to all voices. Many of Dufay's motets were fully isorhythmic, but by the time he composed *Nuper rosarum* he had broken free of the strict isorhythmic style. The *talea* in the tenor line is sung with four different rhythmic durations, and the two upper voices are not isometric but are freely composed, although repeated melodic patterns appear in the four-voice sections. The overall impression of the motet is of a set of four increasingly complex and florid variations, each beginning with a duet for the upper voices that leads into a four-voice section with the lower voices carrying the cantus firmus, or chant melody. If you can't detect the actual isorhythmic pattern, you will definitely hear its effect as the piece gathers more momentum in each section.

The cantus firmus in the lower voices is *Terribilis est locus iste* ("Awe-inspiring is this place"), the antiphon for the consecration of a church, while the text assigned to the upper two voice parts is a Latin poem written by Dufay for the event. The Florentine diplomat and humanist scholar Giannozzo Manetti (1396–1459) was in attendance at the consecration, and described the music of the liturgy as follows:

*"Such harmonies exalted even to heaven, that truly it was to the listener like angelic and divine melodies; the voices filled the listeners' ears with such a wonderful sweetness that they seemed to become stupefied, almost as men were fabled to become upon hearing the singing of the sirens. I could believe without impiety that even in Heaven, yearly on this most solemn day that marks the beginning of human salvation, the angels sing thus.... I was so possessed by ecstasy that I seemed to enjoy the life of the Blessed here on earth."*

The Gregorian Singers performed *Nuper Rosarum* and other music of Burgundian School composers in two concerts on October 13 and 15, 2017, titled *A Taste of Burgundy: Franco-Flemish Music and Art of the Fifteenth Century*. The concerts featured a lecture and discussion of the visual art and artists of the period by Jim Robinson of the Art Academy in St. Paul, and were funded in part by a grant from the Minnesota Regional Arts Council.

### *Corpus Christi Carol* – Judith Bingham (1952 – )

Judith Bingham, who began her musical career as a professional singer, has become one of Britain's most acclaimed living composers. Her compositions have won British Composer Awards and have been premiered by major choral groups including the BBC Singers, the BBC Symphony Chorus, and the Choir of King's College, Cambridge. While she is known primarily as a composer of choral music, she has also written a substantial amount of organ music and other instrumental works. In 2020 she was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to music.

The history of this very weird and enigmatic poem is almost as mysterious as the text itself. It was first written down between 1504 and 1536 in the journal or "commonplace book" of a grocer named Richard Hill, but the poem is probably considerably older, and the original author is unknown. A few centuries later, in 1855, Hill's commonplace book was found behind a bookcase at Balliol College, Oxford, and ever since then scholars have tried to figure out what the poem means. One theory connects it with the legend of the Holy Grail, in which the knight who protects the Grail, the Fisher King, has "woundes bleeding day and night," and his kingdom is a wasteland, "an orchard brown." This could also be an allegory for the wounded Christ. The "orchard brown" could be the forest of wooden crosses on the hill of Golgotha. The weeping maid could be Mary, and the stone with "Corpus Christi written thereon" is probably the stone in front of Christ's tomb. The Irish historian Eamon Duffy theorizes that the poem's "strange cluster of images" are derived "directly from the cult of the Easter sepulchre, with its Crucifix, Host, and embroidered hangings, and the watchers kneeling around it day and night."<sup>3</sup> The well-known English Christmas carol *Down in Yon Forest*, which has been set to music by many composers including former Gregorian Singers member Larry Reynolds, uses a number of these same images, and was almost certainly derived from *the Corpus Christi Carol*.



<sup>3</sup> *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400-1580*, Eamon Duffy, Yale University Press (2005)

Judith Bingham is one of a number of composers who have set the Corpus Christi Carol to music, including Peter Warlock, Benjamin Britten, and the Norwegian composer Trond Kverno. Although no mention of the Nativity appears anywhere in the poem, and although the Feast of Corpus Christi, which celebrates the real presence of the body, blood and soul of Christ in the Eucharist and which occurs in May or June, the carol in its various musical settings is usually sung at Christmas. The Gregorian Singers have performed both the Bingham and the Kverno settings during Advent Processions.

Bingham's version, which was commissioned for the Queen's diamond jubilee in 2012, features an organ accompaniment that is initially marked "fresh and light," though from the outset it has a rather spooky vibe. Following the choir's words "bare him into an orchard brown," the accompaniment indicates "the light is starting to cloud over" prior to the entry into a hall "that was hanged with purple and pall." The choir sings contrapuntally that there is a bed "that was hanged with gold and red," and the organ part is marked "*mf* but magical and strange." It is "dark and heavy" as the choir sings the how the maid "weepeth both night and day," and reaches maximum darkness at the words, sung in dissonant chords: "By that bed there standeth a stone. *Corpus Christi* is written thereon." The choir sings the "Lully, lullay refrain," and the piece ends on a single sustained organ note.

### *See, see, the Word is incarnate – Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)*



Orlando Gibbons was the most celebrated English composer of his time. He is best known for his church music, but he also wrote many keyboard works, fantasias for viols, and a number madrigals, as well as his verse anthems for the church, all of which were set to English texts. His verse anthem *See, see, the Word is incarnate*, probably written around 1615, is one of the longest and most powerful of his compositions, narrates Christ's life through his birth, teachings, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension – rather like Handel's *Messiah* some 125 years later. Its prose text was written by Godfrey Goodman, chaplain to Queen Anne and later the Dean of Rochester. The piece does not fit into any specific Anglican liturgy, but like *Messiah*, it could be performed at almost any time during the church year, especially Christmas, Easter and Ascension; The Gregorian Singers have sung it several times as an Advent Procession anthem.

The verse anthem is a musical work for the church that is distinct from the motet written to be sung throughout by the full choir. In the verse anthem, usually accompanied by the organ (or by viols outside the church), the music alternates between ornamented solo sections and contrasting full choir sections. The form was specific to English choral music of the seventeenth century, having been developed for the use of the vernacular language as became necessary following the English Reformation. Other noted composers of verse anthems include William Byrd, Thomas Weeks, Thomas Tompkins, John Bull, Pelham Humfrey and Henry Purcell.

The pianist Glenn Gould named Gibbons his favorite composer and enthusiastically promoted his music, saying, "Ever since my teen-age years this music ... has moved me more deeply than any other sound experience I can think of." In one interview, Gould compared Gibbons to Beethoven and Webern:

... [O]ne is never quite able to counter the impression of music of supreme beauty that lacks its ideal means of reproduction. Like Beethoven in his last quartets, or Webern at almost any time, Gibbons is an artist of such intractable commitment that, in the keyboard field, at least, his works work better in one's memory, or on paper, than they ever can through the intercession of a sounding-board.<sup>4</sup>

Gibbon collapsed and died suddenly in 1625 at the age of 41 at Canterbury Cathedral, where he was supervising the music for a blessing of Charles I and his bride Henrietta Maria. As with other great composers who died young like Purcell and Mozart, we are left to wonder how the musical style of the time would have developed differently if he had lived. Even so, by teaching music to his son Christopher, who in turn taught John Blow and Henry Purcell, he must have had considerable influence on the development of the music of the English Baroque era.

### *Vallåtar från Gammelboning* – Rosenberg and Ahlbäck

*Kulning* is the old northern Swedish way of calling livestock, and of communication between young girl herders and between them and the home places down in the valley. This was also a way of calling for help, telling the family that an animal had gone missing, or crying for the herding women to come home. This is an arrangement of some of these calls by folksinger Susanne Rosenberg and fiddler Sven Ahlbäck. Along with the *kulning* calls, the arrangement includes a nonsensical folk song



about goats. We first presented *Vallåtar från Gammelboning* at a concert of Scandinavian music for the Leif Eriksson International Festival on October 16, 2022. According to Peggy Larson, the world music singer and ethnomusicologist who taught us the *kulning* and *kulokk* techniques, the Swedish *kulning* calls were sung in a way that resonated through forests where the goats were grazing, while the Norwegian version, called *kulokk*, was developed to call cattle over long distances – as far as six kilometers – across the mountains.

### *Sancta Anna, Mormor Christ* – Anonymous, 13<sup>th</sup> Century

This is a Swedish wedding song from approximately 1200. The text is a prayer to St. Anne and a celebration of happiness in marriage. St. Anne was the mother of Mary and the maternal grandmother of Jesus, and is the patroness of unmarried women, housewives, women in labor or who want to become pregnant, and grandmothers. The Gregorian Singers performed this piece during a concert of Scandinavian music, *The Vikings and Beyond*, on February 23, 2020, with the sponsorship of the Edvard Grieg Society of Minnesota and Norway House.

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<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey Payzant, *Glenn Gould: Music & Mind* (1986).



### *I Seraillets Have* – Wilhelm Stenhammar (1871 –1927)

Wilhelm Stenhammar was a Swedish composer, conductor and pianist. Although he traveled to Germany to study music performance, he was self-taught as a composer. He was particularly enthusiastic about the music of Wagner and Bruckner, but later, searching for a more “Nordic” style, he became interested in the works of Carl Nielsen and Jean Sibelius. His compositions included operas, solo songs and choral works as well as piano and orchestral music. *I Seraillets Have* (In the Seraglio’s Garden) is a poem in Danish by the Danish poet and novelist Jens Peter Jacobsen (1847-1885) and is one of three of Jacobsen’s poems Stenhammar set in his *Tre Körvisor* (1890). It seems to have been quite a popular poem, since it was also set to music by Frederick Delius, Carl Nielsen, and Christian Sinding.



Jacobsen’s poetry was influenced by late Romanticism; the exotic aspect of the seraglio garden was a popular theme during the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the poem and music are both examples of Moorish Revival, the then-fashionable rage for all things Persian. Harmonically, the piece is mostly diatonic, though the influence of composers like Bruckner seems to be reflected in the diminished seventh chords in its climax. This piece was also included in our 2020 concert, *The Vikings and Beyond*.

### *Nimrod* – Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934)

Edward Elgar was trained as a violinist and organist, and was self-taught as a composer. He became known as the composer of such iconically English works as *Pomp and Circumstance*. But as *Owls*, later in this program, suggests, Elgar was anything but the stereotypical British gentleman; he was curious and quirky, with a white rabbit as his alter ego and a hobby of making explosives in his basement. He was also one of the first major composers to embrace recorded music. *Nimrod* is the ninth and most famous of his *Enigma Variations*, written in 1898-99, a solemn piece often played at ceremonies and, in England, royal events. Elgar never told anyone what the enigma was.

### *Ye Spotted Snakes* – Richard John Samuel Stevens (1757 –1837)

Stevens was an English composer and organist who is best known as a composer of glees, which were a type of English part song composed mostly for men’s voices during eighteenth until the mid-nineteenth centuries. The perfectly chosen term “glee” comes from the Old English *glēo*, meaning “entertainment, music, fun.” Gentlemen’s singing clubs began to appear in London from around 1726 upon the establishment of the Academy of Vocal Music (renamed the Academy of Ancient Music in 1731 and revived in 1973, now as an internationally esteemed ensemble of period instruments). Eventually, due to their usual repertoire, these organizations became known as glee clubs. Glee clubs became popular in high schools and colleges in the United States beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The oldest of these, the Harvard Glee Club, was founded in 1858 and continues to perform.

Stevens was especially interested in Shakespeare's poetry, and composed fifteen Shakespearean glees, of which "Ye spotted snakes" (1782, rev. 1791) is one of the best-known. He was also a professional member of the Anacreontic Society, a popular gentleman's club for musicians. Stevens' journal records that one John Stafford Smith wrote their club song, "The Anacreontic Song," which, with different words, became "The Star-Spangled Banner."



The text is from Act 2, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which the fairies are singing a song to protect Queen Titania from the perils posed by spotted snakes, beetles, newts, blindworms, spiders and other unwelcome creatures because many of these animals were believed to be poisonous. The "spotted snake" might be the common adder, *Vipera berus*, which is widespread in Britain, and in fact is venomous. The blindworm and the newt are not, but evidently the fairies assumed they must have been.

### *Owls (An Epitaph)* - Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)

Certainly the strangest piece Elgar ever wrote, *Owls* is both disturbing and delightful. Elgar even wrote the text, and we suspect the composer had quite a lot of fun writing both words and music. He dedicated the piece to "my friend Pietro D'Alba," who, it turns out, is Peter, the Elgar family's pet rabbit. As Pietro D'Alba, Peter is credited as the author of the words for Elgar's songs *The Torch* and *The River*. Elgar's purpose and motivation in dedicating to a rabbit a song about a rabbit's predator is unknown, though perhaps slightly creepy.



Although owls are not actually mentioned in the text, the dread they inspire in their prey is vividly described; the paranoia provoked by these nocturnal predators hunting on silent wings is illustrated by the repeated words, "What is that?... Nothing..." That's the thing about owls; they fly silently so you can't hear them coming. Listen for the stylized calls of the unacknowledged owls and the funeral march, both of which lead to... Nothing. In an article in *The Guardian*, the piece was described as "fragmentary, halting, dissonant and weird. ... it's the strangest three minutes of Elgar I've ever heard. This miniature song is the most powerful corrective I know to the idea of Elgar as mustachioed imperialist ..." <sup>5</sup> We first performed *Owls* during our 2015 concert, *A Choral Aviary*:

<sup>5</sup> Tom Service, *The Guardian*, 10/15/2010.

*Music About Birds, Love, Irony and the Out-of-Doors*, and again during the Northern Voices Festival later that Spring.

### *Resurrexi - Plainsong and Alleluia* – Gerald Near (1941 - )

Gerald Near is a well-known American composer of choral and organ music. He first studied theory and composition at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago with Leo Sowerby and continued those studies with Leslie Bassett at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. While at the University of Michigan, he also studied organ with Robert Glasgow, and studied orchestral conducting under Gustav Meier, Dominick Argento and Thomas Lancaster at the University of Minnesota. In 1982 Near was one of the first recipients of a McKnight Foundation Fellowship. He was also the composer of the hymn *Lowry (Jesus Came Adored by Angels)*, with which The Gregorian Singers close the Advent Procession every year.

In 1989, *Gloria Dei Cantores* commissioned him to compose a work for the choir, *Resurrexi*, based on Gregorian chant motifs assigned to the events of the Resurrection. Unique in form, the work alternates chant with short motets. Following its first performance in 1991, *Resurrexi* came to the attention of The Gregorian Singers through the efforts of the composer, who had been the organist and choirmaster at Calvary Church in Rochester and still had a Minnesota connection; and The Gregorian Singers were privileged to present a full performance shortly thereafter. We performed sections of the work again in concert in 1997, and sometimes included the final section in the Great Paschal Vespers service.

In this performance the men sing the plainsong *Introit*, and the full choir and handbell accompaniment close with the *Alleluia*.

IV

**R**

E-SURRE-XI, \* et adhuc te-

cum sum, al- le- lú- ia :

po- su- í-sti su- per me ma- num tu- am, al- le-

lú- ia : mi-rá- bi-lis fa- cta est sci- én- ti- a

tu- a, alle- lú- ia, al- le- lú- ia. *Ps.* Dó-mi-ne

probásti me, et cognóvisti me : tu cognóvisti sessi-ó-nem

me- am, et re-surrecti- ó- nem me- am.



## Our Fiftieth Anniversary

Welcome to our celebration of the fiftieth anniversary season of The Gregorian Singers, one of the longest-lived vocal ensembles in the Twin Cities area. We are so pleased to be able to present this concert after three difficult years during which, like almost all other performing groups, we were set back by the COVID pandemic. We did manage to produce one performance in each of the three “plague” years of 2020, 2021 and 2022, and now that we can rehearse and perform more or less normally, we will continue to present the kinds of interesting and unusual old and new music that we have consistently offered throughout the fifty years of our existence so far.

The Gregorian Singers were founded in 1973, originally constituted as a men’s choir to sing the plainsong office of Compline at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Minneapolis, and to present the great music of the church within the context of its liturgies. Founder and Music Director Monte Mason explains the group’s origin:

*It all started because I was raised in a musical Methodist family, didn't know the first thing about chant, and really liked it but didn't know how to do it. And there was nobody around who could tell me how, so after meeting Peter Hallock and learning about his Compline choir at St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, I got a group of guys together and we started singing. At age 23, you really don't know what you're doing so it didn't seem all that much of a challenge. Fifty years later, it's still fun.*

So, from its start as a small men’s chant schola with a vocal range from low bass C to high treble C - just like Chanticleer but before it was invented – The Gregorian Singers became the second early music choral group in the Twin Cities area. The choir revived old liturgies such as the Sarum Rite, and adapted others for new purposes, including Great Paschal Vespers and our annual Advent Procession. While our liturgical music has been centered mainly on the Anglican tradition of the Episcopal Church, we have never been a “church choir” as such, and have often provided music for Lutheran, Catholic and other services. Over the years the choir has also changed its artistic course from time to time, including by adding treble voices and by focusing to a greater degree on concerts and secular music as the public interest in liturgies and church music in general has declined, although we still regularly perform the great music of the church outside liturgical settings.



We have always prided ourselves on presenting music that is not only excellent and inspiring but undeservedly overlooked, and sometimes strange. When the choir was founded, Gregorian chant was heard only in a few churches at their own services, and there were very few choral groups in the Twin Cities area that performed any sort of early music. As the public interest in early music increased, other groups arose, but not many took on the *very* old - Perotin, Machaut, and Dufay - as well as plainsong. We have never rejected newer music either; early in our existence, in 1976, we presented the first Minnesota performance of Maurice Duruflé’s *Missa cum Jubilo* during an Easter Vigil at St. Mark’s Cathedral – and we continue to offer new and unconventional music, as well as traditional works. We have also performed a number of compositions by Monte Mason,

some of which are included in the just-released recording *By a Wondrous Mystery*, available at this concert. About his compositions for The Gregorian Singers, he says:

*Somehow the Euterpian muse struck me unawares, and I started composing for the choirs I was directing. It just seemed part of the job, a package deal. In the case of The Gregorian Singers, this often meant getting excited about some of the more virtuosic elements of choral writing, and the sonorities a live acoustic could enhance. There was also the mystery of sound in a building's acoustic to play with. Miraculously, the choir was never in total rebellion over the tunes I'd pass their way, although we did wait for several years for a piece to be performed pending the evolution of certain vocal sections.*



In 2014, as we continued to expand our repertoire, we presented the first extant opera, *Rappresentazione di anima et di corpo* by Emilio de' Cavalieri, in collaboration with the St. Olaf College Early Music program, the University of Minnesota

opera department, the Twin Cities Lute Co-op and Maria Jette, all supported by a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. More recently we have explored old and new Scandinavian music in concerts sponsored by the Edvard Grieg Society and the Leif Eriksson International Festival.

Over the last fifty years we have amassed a music library of almost a thousand titles, and from that huge and still-growing collection, for this special concert we have – with much thought and some difficulty - selected pieces that represent the variety and excellence of our performance history.

Here are a few of the musical highlights of the last fifty years:

- 1973 First Compline services
- 1976 Compline service recording
- 1977 First Advent Procession, a continuing tradition
- 1979 Advent Procession broadcast on Minnesota Public Radio
- 1981 American Choral Directors Association Convention, New Orleans
- 1982 Thomas Tallis' *Lamentations of Jeremiah*
- 1985 Academy of St. Cecilia, a women's ensemble for mixed choir works with The Gregorian Singers
- 1987 First Great Paschal Vespers (arr. Larry Reynolds), observed every year until 2014
- 1990 Tenebrae service at Gethsemane Episcopal Church, Minneapolis
- 1990 Academy of St. Cecilia merged into The Gregorian Singers
- 1995 Claudio Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* with St. Mark's Cathedral Choir
- 1995 Release of *Music for Advent* CD
- 1995 Concert of Music of Purcell and Handel with Lyra Concert ensemble
- 1997 Gerald Near's *Resurrexi*
- 1997 Sarum Liturgy for Candlemas, St. Mark's Cathedral

- 1998 *Day of the Dead*, Music of the Mexican and Spanish Baroque
- 2000 Carissimi opratorios *Jonah* and *Jephthah*
- 2002 Concert Spirituel – Poulenc’s *Litanies à la Vierge Noire*
- 2002 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert - *Music from the English Courts of the Restoration*
- 2010 Concert Spirituel, music of Hildegard von Bingen
- 2011 Great Pascal Vespers, Fayrfax *Magnificat*
- 2011 Concert Spirituel, music of Ockeghem, Dufay and Schein
- 2012 Solemn Vespers, Sunday Lenten services, St. Paul Cathedral
- 2012 Great Paschal Vespers, John Tavener, *Magnificat*
- 2013 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert, Byrd’s *Laudibus in Sanctis* and Handel’s *Chandos Anthem X*
- 2013 Lenten Vespers, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- 2014 The first extant opera: *Rappresentatione di anima et di corpo* by Emilio de’ Cavalieri
- 2014 Final service, Great Paschal Vespers
- 2015 *A Choral Aviary: Music about Birds, Love, Irony and the Out-of-Doors*
- 2015 Northern Voices Festival
- 2016 *Scheiny Objects*, Music of the German Baroque
- 2017 *New Music for Voices*, 113 Composers Collective
- 2017 *A Taste of Burgundy, Franco-Flemish Music and Art of the Fifteenth Century*
- 2018 *A Door in Paradise*, choral compositions by Monte Mason
- 2018 Assumption Concert, Basilica of St. Mary, Minneapolis
- 2020 *The Vikings and Beyond*, 1,000 years of Scandinavian music, sponsored by the Edvard Grieg Society
- 2022 *Innendørs og Utendørs*, Scandinavian choral music, sponsored by the Leif Eriksson International Festival

This is not the end of the list, by any means. We have ambitious plans for presentations of old, new, and unusual music for many seasons to come, and we hope you will follow us as we add even more to our repertoire and offer our recorded work online. Please visit us on Facebook and at [www.thegregoriansingers.org](http://www.thegregoriansingers.org) for information about future performances.



*The Vikings and Beyond*, February 23, 2020

# Fifty Years of Change



The beginning – 1970s



Monte Mason, 1980



Rehearsal, St. Mark's Cathedral, ca. 1990



New treble voices, ca. 1986



Advent Procession, 2012



Northern Voices Festival, 2014



Polar Vortex Recording Session, unheated St. Paul's Church on the Hill, December 2013



Leif Eriksson International Festival, 2022

## Participating Musicians

### The Gregorian Singers

Jim Bowen, Dominic Bulger, Laura Clapp, Kathryn Eakright, James Hevel, Simon Hoehn,  
Mary Larew, Patrick Lopez deVictoria, Mary Mason, Jessica McKinnon,  
Andrew Mogendorff, Doug Muller, Jonathan Posthuma, Clara Elisabeth Sanders,  
Willow Skidmore, Matt Smith, Paul Stever

### Monte Mason, Founding Artistic Director

Founding Artistic Director Monte Mason received a bachelor's degree in piano performance at Macalester College in 1971. After additional musical studies at the University of Minnesota, he formed The Gregorian Singers in 1973. He has served as organist and choirmaster at several Twin Cities churches, most recently St. Martins by the Lake in Minnetonka.

In addition to The Gregorian Singers he directs the Eagan Women of Note, and he also teaches piano at St. Paul Conservatory of Music.

### Sharon Kleckner, Organist

Sharon Kleckner studied organ at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Syracuse University. Her career includes teaching at Keuka College and Gustavus Adolphus College, church music positions as organist-choirmaster in Ohio, New York and Minnesota, as well as concert work. She is a retired veterinarian and hospice nurse.

### *Ring Out! Sts. Luke and James Handbell Choir*

Larry Reynolds, Director

Libby Aurand, Diane Barnett, Cindy Boyle, Robin Fischer, Judy Galt, Anna Matthes,  
Dianne Pikula, Cliff Robinson, Kathy Robinson, Shannon Rolf, Tanya Thrasher, Heather Vick

The Gregorian Singers thank the following for their past and present assistance:

**Susan Barksdale** - Editing and production of Advent Procession booklets

**Gayle Gaskill** - Superb elocution and reading of lessons at Advent Processions

**Mary Mason** - Program notes and program production

**Larry Reynolds** - Direction of the Sts. Luke and James Handbell Choir

**Paul Rexford Thatcher**- Leadership and guidance as our first and long-time Board member

**Sts. Luke and James Episcopal Church** - For their gracious hospitality

**Tiffany and Walt Skidmore** – Concert and reception setup

**Kathryn and Blake Eakright** – Concert logistics

**Kathy Smith, Jenny Britton, John Hoehn, Sally Hoehn** - Ushers

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Tiffany Skidmore

The Gregorian Singers wish to thank these many former singers for their talent, time and effort over the years that have made our musical offerings possible.

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