

# Ralph Vaughan Williams A Choral Celebration



## Joyful Company of Singers

Peter Broadbent and Olivia Tait - conductors  
Jeremiah Stephenson - organist



**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7pm**  
**St Martin's Church, Dorking**



## **JOYFUL COMPANY OF SINGERS**

### **President**

Brian Kay

### **Vice Presidents**

Lord Berkeley of Knighton

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Stephen Connock MBE

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### **The Friends of JCS**

The coronavirus pandemic has affected everyone and hit amateur singing particularly. We send a huge 'thank you' to all our Friends who have continued to support the choir through this very difficult period.

Friends support us both with donations and as audience members. Friends also support our Youth Fund which provides a bursary for a young conductor to work with us and be coached by our founder-director, Peter Broadbent, one of Britain's leading choral conductors. Our latest Junior Conducting Fellow, Olivia Tait, will conduct some of tonight's programme.

We warmly invite new Friends to enjoy the Scheme's improved benefits for all who donate regularly a minimum £5 monthly/£60 annually – larger amounts are most welcome, of course!!

Friends' benefits include:

- 10% discount on unlimited tickets to JCS own-promotion events
- Pre-concert 'Meet the Musicians' talks and complimentary Friends' receptions at all JCS own-promotion concerts
- Participation in JCS 'Come and Sing' days at discounted rates
- A password-protected Friends page on the JCS website offering choir news and free downloads of JCS copyright audio recordings.
- A free copy of our 'Sing Joyfully' CD
- Discounts on new JCS recordings and archive CDs from our stocks

To join the Friends, please use the contact form on [www.jcos.co.uk](http://www.jcos.co.uk) or send an email to [friends@jcos.co.uk](mailto:friends@jcos.co.uk).

#### **Our current Friends:**

Amanda Abbitt, Kevin Bailey, Hannah Bale, Jenny Ball,  
Celia Bangham, Carrie Beaumont, Anne Broadbent,  
Christine Broadbent, Francesca Caine, Philip Caine, Cathryn Caunt,  
Carolynne Cox, Peter da Costa, Andrew Davison, Philippa Gardner,  
Elaine Gould, Neville Hargreaves, Dawn Herbert, Debbie Johnstone,  
Mark Johnstone, Rachael Jones, Jonathan Lane, Alexandra Loewe,  
Andy Mackinder, Yvette Miller, Helen Morton, Peter Murphy,  
Isabel Nisbet, Bruce O'Brien, Nigel Richards, Louisa Roberts,  
Howard Simmons, Janet Stephen, Joanna Thompson,  
Christopher Williams, Sally Zimmermann  
and others who prefer to remain anonymous

The JCS also thanks The Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust  
for its generous support for this performance.



## Programme

- O taste and see* Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) (comp. 1952)  
Jenny Ball (Soprano)
- Bushes and Briars* Trad. arr. RVW (1903)
- I love my love*  
*The Song of the Blacksmith* Trad. arr. Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
- The dark eyed sailor*  
*The Springtime of the Year* Trad. arr. RVW (1913)
- Rest* - Christina Rossetti RVW (1902)
- Earth Grown Old* - Christina Rossetti Zoe Dixon  
Conducted by Olivia Tait
- A vision of Aeroplanes* RVW (1956)
- INTERVAL**
- God is gone up* Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)  
Conducted by Olivia Tait
- Three Shakespeare Songs RVW (1951)  
*Full fathom five - The cloud-capp'd towers - Over hill over dale*
- Silence and music* - Ursula Vaughan Williams RVW (1953)
- O Western Wind...An Anniversary* - Ursula Vaughan Williams Sarah Cattley
- Three Shakespeare Songs Havergal Brian (1876-1972)  
*Shall I compare thee? - Fear no more the heat o' the sun - Blow, blow, thou winter wind*
- I praise the tender flower*  
*Nightingales* - Robert Bridges Gerald Finzi
- Lord, Thou hast been our refuge* RVW (1921)  
Catherine Caunt {Soprano} Debbie Johnson {Alto}  
Richard Milnes (Tenor) Andy Mackinder (Baritone)

## Programme Notes

This celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the birth of one of England's greatest composers also pays respect to Queen Elizabeth's extraordinary 70 years on the throne by opening with a piece RVW wrote for the Coronation in 1953, as well as his contribution to the *Gala for the Queen: Silence and Music*, with words by Ursula Vaughan Williams. This is linked with a new piece by Sarah Cattley, which is an imaginative setting of Ursula's poem *O Western Wind*, interspersed by phrases from the ancient song. Another poetic link is with RVW's *Rest*, a setting of a Christina Rossetti poem, which is paired with a setting of her poem *Earth grown old* by our newly appointed Composer in Association, Zoe Dixon.

The rarest item in the programme is from the final part of his life. Written in 1956 *A vision of Aeroplanes* is a setting of a passage from the Book of Ezekiel, and in many ways recalls the late symphonies, although it has echoes of *Sancta Civitas* as well. The organ part is very demanding, as are the vocal parts. It is certainly not pastoral.

The Folk song collecting and arranging that was so much part of his life was shared by his great friend Holst, and they shared and criticised each other's works until Holst's untimely death in 1934. The first folksong setting in tonight's programme is a setting of the first genuine folksong he heard sung in Ingrave, Essex in 1903, and this is the first of many arrangements he made of this lovely melody.

A young composer who wrote to RVW for advice in the 1920s was Gerald Finzi, and he became a close friend, in some ways replacing Holst. Finzi's anthem *God is gone up* and two of his part songs are included in the programme.

Vaughan Williams' *Three Shakespeare Songs*, written in 1951 for a Choir Festival organised by the National Federation of Music Societies, are echoed by three songs by Havergal Brian, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of whose death is in November this year - JCS and others are currently in the process

of recording all of Brian's choral songs. The two composers knew each other and corresponded – RVW thanked him for his help with *Sancta Civitas*, for which Brian prepared the vocal score. The Shakespeare settings we have chosen were written respectively in 1903, 1919 and 1925, but make a very satisfactory group.

The final work is *Lord thou hast been or refuge* and combines a setting of the text of Psalm 90 with Isaac Watts' metrical version of the words, *O God our help in ages past* and the tune to which it is normally sung – "St Anne". This is a skilfully wrought piece by a composer just beginning to achieve the recognition he deserved.

### **Text - A vision of aeroplanes**

Ezekiel 1:4-6, 9, 12-19, 21, 24-26, 28

4 And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

5 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.

6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

9 Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.

13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

14 And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

15 Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.

16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

17 When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went.

18 As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round about them four. 19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

21 When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

25 And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.

26 And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

## Performers



**Peter Broadbent**, the founder conductor of the Joyful Company of Singers, is one of Britain's leading choral conductors. He has conducted the London Mozart Players, Divertimenti Chamber Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Southern Sinfonia, the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, Apollo Voices and the BBC Singers, broadcasting frequently on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM.

Guest engagements outside the UK include concerts with the Debrecen Philharmonic Orchestra and Kodály Chorus in Debrecen (Hungary), a broadcast concert with the National Chamber Choir in Dublin and a European tour with the World Youth Choir.

Peter Broadbent gives workshops and master classes throughout Europe and was the first Director of Training for the Association of British Choral Directors. In 2007 he was presented with the Pro Cultura Hungarica Award by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture for his services to Anglo-Hungarian musical relations, and in 2017 was presented with the Knight's Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit. He was awarded an MBE in the 2022 New Year's Honours for his service to music.

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**Olivia Tait** is a London based conductor, recently having graduated with a distinction in her MA Choral Conducting from the Royal Academy of Music, where she held an entrance scholarship and studied under Patrick Russell.



As well as her Junior Fellowship with the Joyful Company of Singers, Olivia is also the St Martin-in-the-Fields Conducting Fellow, where she works with the St Martin's Choral Scholars and Chamber Choir in conducting weekly services. She is also the Genesis Sixteen Conducting Scholar 2020/21 where she receives tutoring from Harry Christophers and Eamonn Dougan in conducting the Genesis Sixteen Choir. Olivia recently received a place on the Jette Parker Women Conductors Course, where she conducted scenes from Verdi's La Traviata with the City of London Sinfonia at the Royal Opera House under the tuition of Sian Edwards, Alice Farnham and Jessica Cottis and went on to deputise as chorus master for Opera Holland Park's production of Janacek's The Cunning Little Vixen.



She also participated in the DIMA International Choral Conducting Competition where she was a finalist and received the Gheorge Dima Special Prize.

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**Jeremiah Stephenson** first started learning the organ as a chorister at Sheffield Cathedral. Currently Associate Director of Music at All Saints Margaret Street in London, Jeremiah combines his Sunday duties with a busy career as a freelance recitalist and accompanist; he is also one of the Royal College of Organists Accredited Teachers.

Jeremiah has performed solo recitals across the UK, Europe and America. His work has been broadcast on television and radio in the

UK, France and the Czech Republic, appearing alongside the BBC singers on Radio 3 and playing a televised recital as part of the Janáček May International Music Festival. This year's projects include recitals in venues such as St Paul's Cathedral in London and Uppsala Cathedral, as well as participation in the Toulouse les Orgues and Rocamadour Musique Sacrée festivals.

A prize-winning graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music, Jeremiah completed his formal studies with Michel Bouvard and Willen Jansen at Toulouse Conservatoire supported by the Nicholas Danby Trust. He won first prize in the Eben International Organ Competition held in the Czech Republic, and second prize in the 'Prix de J L Florentz' organised by L'Académie des Beaux-Arts in Angers, France. Jeremiah continues his study of interpretation with Dame Gillian Weir.

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One of Europe's prominent chamber choirs, the **Joyful Company of Singers** is known for its virtuosity and intensity of spirit, as well as for an



astoundingly wide repertoire, ranging from the 16th Century to the present day, including many first performances. Formed in 1988 by conductor Peter Broadbent, the choir first came to prominence when it won the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition in 1990. Since then, it has

maintained its profile in the music world, winning an impressive list of national and international competitions leading to many invitations to perform. Concert appearances include most of the leading UK festivals and regular concert tours in Europe, broadcasting in many countries as well as on BBC and Classic FM. A discography of over 25 CDs includes Rachmaninov's *All-night Vigil* on Nimbus: '*beautifully characterized and shaped by Peter Broadbent*' (International Record Review).

The JCS has also instituted a Youth Fund to encourage the development of young choral conductors, singers and composers. The first composition competition was won by young Australian composer Chris Williams and in 2016 the JCS co-commissioned the major work *Dancing Star* from Toby Young. In addition, we now welcome Olivia Tait as our fifth funded Junior Conducting Fellow to work with the choir.

### **Tonight's Singers:**

#### SOPRANOS

Amanda Abbitt, Jenny Ball, Felicitas Biskup, Cathryn Caunt, Olivia Tait, Clare Vincent-Silk, Carrie Beaumont, Margaret Green, Alexandra Loewe, Jane Metcalfe, Louisa Roberts, Nicy Roberts, Rebecca Trumper.

#### ALTOS

Francesca Caine, Philippa Gardner, Elaine Gould, Debbie Johnstone, Denise Fabb, Lorna Perry, Pamela Poust, Joanna Thompson.

#### TENORS

Richard Milnes, Nick King, Mark Johnstone, Peter Murphy.

#### BASSES

Kevin Bailey, Andy Mackinder, Peter da Costa, Jonathan Lane, David Lowe, Christopher Williams.

## Our next performances:

**Thursday 21st July 2022 at 7.30pm**

**St. Marylebone Parish Church, London, NW1 5LT**

A unique collaboration with *The English Folk Dance and Song Society*, the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, and Marylebone Festival Director Gavin Roberts (piano and organ).

Tickets £15 and £12 (Students, Senior Citizens) from:  
[www.stmarylebonefestival.com](http://www.stmarylebonefestival.com)

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**Sunday 16th October 2022 at 6.30pm**

**Cadogan Hall, Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ**

Gala Concert celebrating Peter Broadbent's 75th Birthday

**Martin** Messe pour double chœur

**Poulenc** Movements from Figure Humaine

**Tippett** Dance, Clarion Air, **Paul Reade** On Some Island

**Jaakko Mäntyjärvi** Canticum Calamitatis, **György Orbán** Cor Mundum

**Toby Young** Still I Rise, **Bryan Kelly** Fruit Machine

Tickets £25-£40 from <https://cadoganhall.com>



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