

Christmas Concert

Friday 13 December, 7.00pm
CATHEDRAL OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER

Sunday 15 December, 12.30pm
CHURCH OF HOLY CROSS

CATHEDRAL CHOIR , CHOIR OF THE HOLY CROSS
AND FLINDERS UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ENSEMBLE



CONCERTO GROSSO IN C MAJOR ('PASTORALE PER IL SANTISSIMO NATALE') OP 3 No 12 - *MANFREDINI*

SOLOISTS – VIOLINS: SHELLEY WALKER, EMILY McDONALD

I. LARGO – PASTORALE

II. LARGO

III. ALLEGRO

THE COMING OF THE LORD - *CHOPLIN*

This first piece combines a modern, prolific composer's music (Pepper Choplin) with the lyrics from an ancient 12th century hymn, 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel'. It points to Advent's joyful, anticipatory aspect in addition to its attitude of penitential preparation.

COME TO US, O CHRISTMAS STAR - *JOHNSON*

One of the perennial difficulties of performing Christmas pieces written above the equator is the fact that our Christmas Day falls just after the longest day of the year, rather than the 'darkest night' as mentioned in this piece. Here in the driest State in the driest Continent we can still relate to Christ as the 'eternal light' and our hearts can burn with the 'fire of joy' as referenced in this tune as we await Christ's birth.

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS - *FORREST*

The lyrics for this simple piece are by Howard Thurman, one of the originators of the Civil Rights movement in the United States and a co-founder of the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, an intentional, multi-racial congregation in California in the 1940's (way before it was fashionable!). Although a Protestant, he captures the essence of the Catholic teaching of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy that all Christians are called to directly by their Baptism – to shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, care for the sick, visit the prisoner and so forth.

GIFT OF WINTER - *LAWLOR*

Again, it is hard to capture the essence of the gift of winter in the midst of high summer, but the conductors felt that this stunning piece deserved to be proclaimed in all its beauty. There are rhythmic and harmonic profundities in this composition that would take too much time to describe but the musical depiction of falling snow is both delicate and transcendent in itself. May this piece 'strengthen us to wait... for that which is to come.'

ECCE NOVUM (based on Piae Cantiones 1582) - *GJIELLO*

The late medieval lyrics to this piece, set to music by Ola Gjelo in 2017, explain everything.

Behold, a new joy!
Behold, a new wonder!
A virgin, who knew not a man
Bears a son

As the pear tree bears the pear
The flourishing papyrus
Brings the lily from the soil
See how nature
Changes her laws
A pure virgin bears
The son of God
Amen

LONG AGO (IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER) - *NARVERUD*

This is a new arrangement by Jacob Narverud of a Gustav Holst tune, with lyrics by Christina Rossetti, a Victorian era poetess who died, ironically, four days after Christmas in 1894. Ironically again, she broke off her engagement to her fiancée after he became a Catholic, thinking his beliefs were incompatible with her staunch Anglicanism, and never married.

CONCERTO GROSSO IN G MAJOR, HWV 319 - *HANDEL*

SOLOISTS:

VIOLINS: ALEXANDER SIOW, JONATHAN SIOW; CELLO: JACQUELINE SIOW

I. A TEMPO GIUSTO

II. ALLEGRO

III. ADAGIO

IV. ALLEGRO



CONCERTO FOR STRINGS IN E MINOR RV 134 -

VIVALDI

I. ALLEGRO

II. ANDANTE E PIANO

III. ALLEGRO

CHRISTUS - *MENDELSSOHN*

Felix Mendelssohn is responsible for this little ditty which begins by referencing the story of the Magi from St Matthew's Gospel following the star to Bethlehem and then recalls the Old Testament prophecy of a 'star from Jacob' coming forth to judge the recalcitrant nations! Described as a 'frighteningly clever child prodigy, the young Felix excelled as a painter, poet, athlete, linguist and musician' speaking German, Italian, French, and English. He died exhausted and worn out at the age of 38 after a series of strokes.

SOLOISTS:

JACQUELINE SIOW

MARKY CANIOS, ALEXANDER SIOW, ASHAN WIMALASEKARA

LULLAY, MY LIKING - *OWENS*

This is a centuries old Christian carol set to a modern arrangement by Matthew Owens, Director of Music at Belfast Cathedral. This piece intersperses a choral refrain with beautiful solo verses and one punchy multi-voice verse – a kind of response to the previous verse which suggests that at Christ's birth 'they made mickle mirth' meaning there was much merriment and rejoicing by the angels as scripture also tells us, when they

spoke to the shepherds. To emphasise this the verse is sung in four voice unison rather than as a solo.

SOLOISTS:

1ST: RAEHEL BOS

2ND ASTRID SENGKEY

3RD JACQUELINE SIOW

4TH MARKY CANIOS, ANAND LOBO, EMMYLOU LIM, ASTRID SENGKEY

5TH EMMYLOU LIM

NORTHERN LIGHTS - GJEILO

Ola Gjeilo's haunting setting of the love refrain from the Old Testament's Song of Solomon, a divine allegory long regarded as representing the love between Christ and his church.

CRADLE HYMN - ARNESEN

In Christmas 2022 we featured a hymn by Kym Arnesen called Dormi Jesu. This year we have another of his compositions which sets the great Isaac Watts' (1674-1748) lyrics to a similar themed tune. Watts was a prolific composer, credited with over 700 hymns. (You might remember him next time you belt out 'Joy to the World'!)

LOVE'S PURE LIGHT - HAGENBERG

Elaine Hagenberg's arrangement and adaptation of the classic hymn 'Silent Night'.

GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN - *GIBBS*

Stacey Gibbs' playful re-working of the folk spiritual which first appeared in print in 1909. The stirring version by Peter, Paul and Mary, which is set in a Jewish Old Testament context ends the refrain with 'let my people go!' although the original was always a Christian anthem referring to the glory of the imminent birth of Christ at Christmas and so is a fitting finale to the Advent Concert.



SOPRANO

ANNE AGZARIAN, RAECHEL BOS, CRISTINA BUENVIAJE,
EMMYLOU LIM, ROSEMARIE MARTIN, GWEN MEADOWS,
ASTRID SENGKEY, JACQUELINE SIOW, CALISTER UMAH, ALEXA VITO

ALTO

ELAINE ALLISON, CHRIS EGAN, FAY HADDAD, JOHANNA KILMARTIN,
YSABELLA LIM, BARBARA MOYLE, WING NACUA, PAULINE OTIENO,
JACINTA ROONEY, DELWYN SCHINELLA, ASTRID SENGKEY, ARCHIE SIOW,
SAMANTHA SIOW

TENOR

ADRIAN ALLISON, MARKY CANIOS, TIMOTHY DAVEY, ANAND LOBO,
MICHAEL MADIGAN, SALITHRA PATHIRANA, JONATHAN SIOW

BASS

ALEXANDER SIOW, ARTHUR SIOW, ASHAN WIMALASEKARA

FLUTE

MEGAN ADRAIN

CLARINET

SOFIA JIMENEZ TRUJILLO

VIOLIN

EMILY McDONALD, SKYE NICHOLAS, JOYA RUGARI
ALEXANDER SIOW, JONATHAN SIOW, SHELLEY WALKER

VIOLA

STEWART WALKER

CELLO

HELEN CARTER, JACQUELINE SIOW

PIANO

TIMOTHY DAVEY, ARTHUR SIOW