

St Matthew's Choir is very grateful for the following help and assistance:

Publicity: Karen and David Benny
Tickets: Dagmar Gauweiler
Front of House:
Vision Director: Clive Cooke
Vision Control and Animations: Bernd Gauweiler
Cameras: Tim Allan, Ayman Farahat
Aemelia Henderson-Roe
Sound: Xavier Walker, Ian Davis
Programme: Dinah Walker
Special thanks: Sam Thomas of Studio Hire

The Choir, as ever, are very grateful to the Rev. Peter Watkins and the Congregation of St Matthew's Church for all their support.

What's next for St Matthew's Choir?

<p>Advent Service Bach <i>Magnificat in D</i> Retiring collection Sunday November 28th 7.00pm</p>	<p>Christmas Show Sunday December 19th 7.00pm All tickets £5</p>
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St Matthew's Choir performs classical, sacred and secular concerts throughout the year. We are a friendly, fully committed choir and welcome singers of all abilities. We welcome new members in all voice parts. We rehearse at St Matthew's Church (North Common Rd, W5) every Thursday from 7.30 to 9.30pm. There is no audition and there is no membership fee.

Contact: The Choir Manager 020 8998 2879
www.smce.org.uk

St Matthew's Choir

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Baritone: **Andrew Ashwin**

Conductor: **Phiroz Dalal**

Organist: **Chris Richardson**

Piano: **Ken Williams**

Percussion: **Richard Thomas**

Henry Purcell

I was Glad

Hubert Parry

Blest Pair of Sirens

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Five Mystical Songs



Michael Tippett

Five Spirituals

from *A Child of our Time*



Karl Jenkins

Charge

Better is Peace

St Matthew's Church, North Common Rd, Ealing W5

Sunday July 11th 7.00pm



Is there any questioning the diversity of style, the volume of output, and the beauty of British choral music? Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons and Purcell, all of whom were organists at the Chapel Royal, produced music that has not only influenced British music, but their styles and influence can be found throughout the music of Western Europe. They all contributed so much to both the sacred and secular repertoire that it is difficult to say what they are remembered for in particular.

Whilst many of the 17th and 18th century composers were associated with either Westminster or the Chapel Royal, (or in many cases, both) the Royal College of Music produced many fine composers of the late 19th and 20th centuries. Founded in 1882 by George Grove, the college appointed Parry in 1894 and Stanford as director and professor of music respectively. Some of Stanford's and Parry's pupils look like a roll call of some of the greatest 20th century British composers – Bliss, Bridge, Howells, Holst, Ireland, Goossens and Vaughan Williams. Vaughan Williams returned to the RCM in 1921 as Professor of Composition – two Years later Tippett joined as a student.



JENKINS (b. 1944)

Charge

Piano: **Ken Williams**

Organ: **Chris Richardson**

Percussion: **Richard Thomas**

Better is Peace

Charge and ***Better is Peace*** are taken from Jenkins' popular mass, *The Armed Man, A Mass for Peace*. Jenkins wrote the mass whilst the tragedies of Kosovo were unfolding and it was released on 10th September 2001.

The mass draws on a variety of literary and musical sources. *Charge* used the third verse of Dryden's 1687 *Song for St Cecilia's Day*, as well as a reference to Wilfred Owen's *Dolce et Decorum est* when he asks the question 'How blest is he for his country dies?'. The opening of *Better is Peace* is taken from the French *L'Homme Arme* masses, which date from the 1450s, the second half is taken from Tennyson's *Ring out the old, Ring in the new*'. The mass closes with the final section of *Better is Peace*, which is a modern day song of hope, a song of spirit – *God shall wipe away all fears*.

We will be performing the full version of the mass on 25th April 2005



Andrew Ashwin

Baritone

Andrew grew up in the north-east of England, and began his musical life as a pianist and trombonist. He took up singing aged 17, and continued at the University of Birmingham, where he studied with Andrea Calladine. He currently receives singing lessons in London with Gilles Denizot and Russell Smythe, and he studies at the Royal College of Music at post-graduate level.

On stage Andrew has played both Figaro and Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Papageno in *The Magic Flute*, Marcello in *La Bohème*, Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Mr Trulove in *The Rake's Progress* and Micha in *The Bartered Bride*. On Thursday he sang solos in the chapel of Windsor Castle, in the presence of the Earl and Countess of Wessex. The work was Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, and the group performing was the London Mozart Players, conducted by Andrew Parrott. More details of his work may be found at www.andrewashwin.com.

TIPPETT (1905-1998)
5 Spirituals

Soprano: **Fiona Ellen Thomas**
Alto: **Jananne Rahman**
Tenor: **David Benny**
Bass: **Andrew Ashwin**

- 1. Steal Away**
- 2. Nobody Knows**
- 3. Go Down, Moses**
- 4. By and By**
- 5. Deep River**

The oratorio *A Child of our time* is a harrowing tale of man's inhumanity. It was composed between 1939 and 1941, during the first 2 years of the second world war. The spirituals all have their roots in the slavery of the south eastern states of America. They were songs of hope, of escape, songs of spirit. Many slaves in towns and in plantations tried to run to a "free country", that they called "my home" or "Sweet Canaan, the Promised Land". This country was on the Northern side of Ohio River, that they called "Jordan". Some Negro spirituals refer to the Underground Railroad, an organization for helping slaves to run away. The 5 spirituals that Tippett chose to illustrate, or punctuate, his oratorio have their roots in the Bible, and his mixing these texts with the secular surroundings of the oratorio make them all the more poignant.



PURCELL (1659-1695)
I Was Glad

1685 turned out to be quite an eventful year. Bach, Handel and Domenico Scarlatti were born, Charles II died, and his younger brother became James II of England and James VII of Scotland. It was for this coronation that Purcell set the words of Psalm 122 to music. The choir was in procession during its first performance, remaining ahead of the King and Queen as they entered Westminster Abbey. To make sure that the anthem didn't fall apart, the first sections are written in fairly simple block rhythms. Once the choir reached their stalls and could see the conductor, the 26 year old composer steadily increases the rhythmic complexity. The Gloria starts off simply enough, but this simplicity rapidly evolves into fugue, canon and counterpoint.



Psalm 122, vv. 1, 4-7

I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the house of the Lord, for thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, to testify unto Israel and to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord. For there is the seat of judgement, even the seat of the house of David.

Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls and plenteousness within thy palaces.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

PARRY (1848 – 1918)

Blest Pair of Sirens

Milton squeezed into the 28 lines of this ode a number of ideas. The first of 3 sections deals with the idea that the singing of the heavenly host is audible on earth. In the second section Milton takes us to the sapphire-coloured throne, where the cherubic host touch their immortal harps of golden wires. It is not until the third section that the idea of the fall of Adam and Eve is introduced. Milton wants earth to return to paradise, to a time that we could answer Him, as we once we did before disproportioned sin broke the fair music that all creatures made to their great Lord.

Educated at Eton and Exeter College, Oxford, Parry was probably no stranger to the classics. He took Milton's ode, and gave it the full works – double woodwind, an 11-piece brass section, strings, organ and timpani.

Blest Pair of Sirens

John Milton (1608-1674)

Blest pair of sirens, pledges of Heav'ns joy,
Sphere-born harmonious Sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce,
And to our high-rai's'd phantasie present,
That undisturbed Song of pure concent,
Ay sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To him that sits theron
With Sainly shout, and solemn Jubilee,
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow,
And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal Harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious Palms,
Hymns devout and holy Psalms
Singing everlastingly;
That we on Earth with undiscording voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against natures chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect Diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O may we soon again renew that Song,
And keep in tune with Heav'n, till God ere long
To his celestial consort us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light.

STANFORD (1852-1924)

The Blue Bird

Stanford was born in Dublin, and spent most of his life composing and teaching in England. From the 1880s, when he joined Parry at the Royal College of Music, he became one of the major influences of the English musical life. Most of what we hear by Stanford are his sacred compositions – his latin motets, the Gloria which was used at the last coronation, and a collection of Mags and Nuncs. The Blue Bird contrasts his sacred writing by being very much freer in style, using his music and the words of Mary E. Coleridge to paint a picture of a bluebird, perhaps represented by the sopranos, soaring, then catching its reflection in the stillness of the lake.



VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS (1872–1958)

5 Mystical Songs

Baritone: **Andrew Ashwin**

1. *Easter*
2. *I got me flowers*
3. *Love Bade Me Welcome*
4. *The Call*
5. *Antiphon*

The 5 mystical songs were written in 1911. The congregation of St Matthews Church is probably familiar with the fifth song in the cycle, *Antiphon* that rings out with the words *Let all the world in every corner sing*. The other four might be less familiar, but no less remarkable. *Easter* establishes the nature of the whole cycle. The second song, *I got me flowers*, is a fine example of Vaughan Williams's ability to express emotion with the simplest arrangement of notes, whilst the third, *Love bade me welcome*, is arranged so that the muted strings can be heard despite being performed on a piano tonight. The use of the chant, *O sacrum convivium* as a wordless chorus set against the baritone soloist's words *You must sit down ...* is simply masterful. *The Call*, the fourth song in the set, uses a tune that might have come from the distant past but was in fact a typical invention of Vaughan Williams. We are grateful to Andrew Ashwin for working with us on this set.