

A BAROQUE CHRISTMAS

Australian Chamber Choir

Directed by Douglas Lawrence OAM

Elizabeth Anderson — organ

St Mary's Cathedral Crypt	Sydney	Sat 24 November	2:30pm
Church of the Resurrection	Macedon	Sat 1 December	3:00pm
St Mary of the Angels	Geelong	Sun 2 December	3:00pm
St Andrew's	Brighton	Sun 8 December	3:00pm
Our Lady of Mount Carmel	Middle Park	Sun 9 December	3:00pm

PROGRAM NOTES

HALLELUJA, FREUET EUCH IHR CHRISTEN ALLE

ALLELUIA, REJOICE YOU CHRISTIANS ALL — Andreas Hammerschmidt

Born in Brück, Germany (now Most, Czech Republic), December 1611; died in Zittau, Germany, 29 October 1675.

German-American musicologist Manfred Bukofzer (*Music in the Baroque Era*, 1947) accused Hammerschmidt of having 'watered down the achievements of Schütz for the multitude.' Yet this composer gained much more respect in his own time – including from Schütz himself, who wrote an enthusiastic preface to one of Hammerschmidt's half-dozen sacred music publications – than Bukofzer's rather haughty verdict on him would lead one to suppose. Hammerschmidt served as organist in the main Lutheran church of Zittau, near the Polish border, from 1639 until 1671, when his health broke down. (His tombstone calls him 'the Orpheus of Zittau.') Despite his organ-playing role, he left no original pieces for his instrument, preferring to concentrate on choral repertoire. The lively, succinct motet in today's concert, dating from 1646, sets a text by 17th century German poet, Christian Kiemann. With verses sung by a trio of men's voices and an SATB reprise, in recent years this has become easily his most popular composition.

Halleluja!
Freuet euch, ihr Christen alle,
Freue sich, wer immer kann;
Gott hat viel an uns getan.
Freuet euch mit grossen Schalle,
Das er uns so hoch eracht,
Sich mit uns befreundt gemacht.

*Freude, Freude über Freude:
Christus wehret allem Leide;
Wonne, Wonne über Wonne:
Christus ist die Gnadensonne.*

Siehe, siehe, meine Seele,
wie dein Heiland kommt zu dir,
brennt in Liebe für und für,
dass er in der
Krippe Höhle
harte lieget dir zugut,
dich zu lösen durch sein Blut.

Freude, Freude ...

Jesu, wie soll ich dir danken?
Ich bekenne, dass von dir
meine Seligkeit herrühr.
O lass mich von dir
nicht wanken,
nimm mich dir zu eigen hin,
so empfindet Herz und Sinn

Freude, Freude ...

Jesu, nimm dich deiner Glieder
Ferner in Genaden an!
Schenke, was man bitten kann,
Zu erquicken deine Brüder;
Gib der ganzen Christenschar
Frieden und ein sel'ges Jahr.

Freude, Freude ...

Alleluia!
Rejoice, all you Christians,
rejoice, whoever can,
God has done so much for us,
rejoice most loudly,
that He has valued us so highly,
that He has become our friend.

*Joy, joy upon joy!
Christ protects from all suffering.
Delight, delight upon delight!
He is the Son of mercy.*

See, see, my soul,
how your Saviour comes to you,
burns in everlasting love,
so that in the
darkness of the manger
He has a hard bed for your benefit,
to redeem you through His blood.

Joy, joy ...

Jesus, how shall I thank You?
I know well that from You
my happiness is derived.
In my devotion to You may I
never falter,
take me for Your own,
and my heart and mind will feel

Joy, joy ...

Jesus, take care of Your flock
for the future in Your mercy;
Grant what can be asked for
to give life to Your brothers :
give to the Christian flock
peace and a blessed year!

Joy, joy ...

O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

O GREAT MYSTERY — GIOVANNI GABRIELI

Born in Venice, circa 1555; died in Venice, 12 August 1612.

Several Giovanni Gabrieli motets make regular appearances in concerts and on recordings. *O magnum mysterium* is not among them. It remains substantially less celebrated than, for example, Tomás Luis de Victoria's 1572 setting of the same words. But already in this early work – 1587, published alongside compositions by the recently deceased Andrea Gabrieli, Giovanni's uncle – we can appreciate that confident handling of large choral forces which would become so conspicuous a feature of Giovanni's subsequent style. Two choirs, one SATB and the other TTTB, are needed here (Victoria contented himself with a single SATB choir). The music switches into a joyful triple-time for the Alleluia passage, as it does for the corresponding part of Victoria's motet. Since Victoria's music – thanks largely to his long stay in Rome – had an Italian following, it is just possible that this particular motet had come to Gabrieli's attention.

O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio.
O beata Virgo,
cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Christum.
Alleluia!

O great mystery
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals see the new-born Lord
lying in a manger!
O blessed is the Virgin,
whose womb
was worthy to bear Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!

SINGT UND KLINGT

SING AND RING – Michael Praetorius

Born in Creuzburg, Germany, 1571;

died in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 15 February 1621.

Praetorius is a Latinisation of an unglamorous Teutonic surname, in this case Schultz. Several huge collections of music came from Praetorius's active pen: *Musae Sioniae*, nine volumes of sacred compositions (around 1,200 in all) which appeared between 1605 and 1610; *Terpsichore* (1612), the source for more than 300 dance tunes; and the splendidly titled *Polyhymnia Caduceatrix et Panegyrica* (1619). A fourth important publication by Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* (three volumes, 1614–20),

is more theoretical in nature and contains numerous valuable engravings of instruments now seldom used but very popular in his day. From the 1609 volume of *Musae Sioniae* comes this carol, with its macaronic — that is, multi-lingual — text. The repeated upward and downward leaps of a fourth remind us of the bell-ringing mentioned in the first line.

Singt und klingt,
Jesu, Gottes Kind,
und Marien Söhnelein,
Unsern lieben Jesulein,
Krippenlein beim Öchslein
und beim Eselein.

Sing and ring,
Jesus, Son of God,
and little Son of Mary,
Our beloved little Jesus,
In the manger, by the ox
and by the ass.

*Psallite, unigenito Christo
Dei Filio,
Redemptori Domino, puerulo,
iacenti in praesepio.*

*Sing your psalms to Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
God's redeemer, little Child,
Lying in the manger.*

Ein kleines Kindelein liegt
in dem Krippelein;
Alle liebe Engelein
dienen dem Kindelein,
und singen ihm fein.

A small Child lies
in the manger;
All the blessed angels
serve the little Child
and sing to Him keenly.

Psallite, unigenito Christo...

Sing your psalms to Christ...

O JESULEIN SÜSS (BWV 493)

O SWEET LITTLE JESUS – Johann Sebastian Bach

Born in Eisenach, Germany, 31 March 1685;

died in Leipzig, 28 July 1750.

Soprano soloist — Elspeth Bawden

First and last a practical musician, Bach showed himself willing enough to let other composers share the limelight with him, even if they altogether lacked his genius. Especially significant in this regard is the material – at least three and possibly four contributions – that Bach provided for the *Musicalisches Gesang-Buch*, a vast (954 items) anthology from 1736, assembled from heterogeneous sources by one Georg Schemelli (1677? –1762). The compiler's son, Christian Friedrich Schemelli, was a student

at St Thomas's, Leipzig, during Bach's tenure there. That is almost certainly how Schemelli senior and Bach came to collaborate, though since Schemelli senior worked in Zeitz, where Anna Magdalena Bach was born, the two men possibly knew of each other beforehand. Whatever the truth on this point, the text of *O Jesulein süß* had incontestably been in wide circulation well before 1736. Valentin Thilo, a professor of rhetoric at the University of Königsberg (renamed Kaliningrad by its Russian occupiers in 1946), wrote the poem in 1650.

O Jesulein süß!
O Jesulein mild!
des Vaters Will'n hast du erfüllt;
bist kommen aus
dem Himmelreich,
uns armen Menschen worden gleich,
O Jesulein süß!
O Jesulein mild!

O little one sweet,
O little one mild,
Thy Father's will Thou hast fulfilled;
Thou camest
from heaven to mortal ken
to be with us poor men equal,
O little one sweet,
O little one mild.

O Jesulein süß!
O Jesulein mild!
Du bist der Lieb
ein Ebenbild:
zünd an in uns der Liebe
Flamm,
dass wir dich lieben allzusamm,
O Jesulein süß!
O Jesulein mild!

O little one sweet,
O little one mild,
with joy Thou hast
the whole world filled;
Thou camest here from heaven's
domain
to bring men comfort in their pain,
O little one sweet!
O little one mild!

EIN KIND GEBORN ZU BETHLEHEM

A CHILD BORN IN BETHLEHEM)

Verses 1, 3, 5 and 7 – **Bartholomäus Gesius**

Born in Müncheberg, Germany, 1562;

died in Frankfurt an der Oder, Germany, 1613.

Verses 2, 4 and 6 – **Michael Praetorius**

Born in Creuzburg, Germany, 1571;

died in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, 15 February 1621.

Gesius – the Latin form of a surname originally Gese or, in some sources, Göss – was among the first musicians from German-speaking territories or anywhere else to compose a Passion setting. He owes most of what

fame he currently has to his Easter hymn *Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn*. This forms the basis for one of the most dramatic, inspiring chorale preludes in *Bach's Orgelbüchlein*; and it continues to adorn Lutheran hymn-books. Both *Heut triumphieret* and the work in today's concert appeared in Gesius's 1601 collection *Geistliche deutsche Lieder*. *Ein Kind geboren* has a melody of 15th century origin, one which initially was associated with Latin words beginning *Puer natus in Bethlehem*. Thoughtfully, and to increase the market for his work, Gesius supplied the Latin as well as the German text. His harmonisation of *Ein Kind geboren* – from the 1619 anthology – places the original tune in the second-lowest part.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem,
des freuet sich Jerusalem.
Alleluia! | A child is born at Bethlehem,
For whom Jerusalem rejoices.
Hallelujah! |
| 2. Hier liegt es in dem Krippelein,
ohn' Ende ist die Herrschaft sein.
Alleluia! | He lies here in the little crib,
He who reigns without end.
Hallelujah! |
| 3. Das Öchslein und das Eselein
erkannten Gott, den Herren sein.
Alleluia! | The little ox and the little ass
know that He is the Lord God.
Hallelujah! |
| 4. Die König' aus Saba kamen dar,
Gold, Weihrauch,
Myrrhen brachten sie dar
Alleluia! | The kings come from Sheba,
They bring gold, incense,
and myrrh.
Hallelujah! |
| 5. Sie gingen in das Haus hinein,
Und grüssen ihren Herren fein.
Alleluia! | They go into the house
And greet the Child and His mother.
Hallelujah! |
| 6. Sie flehen nieder auf die Knie, Sie
sprachen: Gott und Mensch ist hie.
Alleluia! | They fall down on their knees,
And say: 'God and Man is here.'
Hallelujah! |
| 7. Für solche gnadenreiche Zeit
sei Gott gelobt in Ewigkeit.
Alleluia! | For such a gracious time,
let God be praised for ever.
Hallelujah! |

DAS WORT WARD FLEISCH (SWV 385)

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH – Heinrich Schütz

Born in Köstritz, Germany, 18 January 1585;

died in Dresden, 6 November 1672.

Though Schütz had studied in Venice with Giovanni Gabrieli during his youth, and had exhibited Gabrieli's influence in his often spectacular polychoral *Psalms of David* (1619), the motet *Das Wort ward Fleisch* – to words from St John's Gospel in the Lutheran Bible translation – comes from much later. It forms part of Schütz's 1648 collection (29 pieces) *Geistliche Chor-Musik*: the product of an older and more austere composer, forced back upon stylistic essentials by the privations imposed by the Thirty Years' War, and by the wider sense of cultural despair which the war guaranteed. Accordingly, instrumental participation in this music is much more limited than in the opulent days of 1619 (*Basso continuo ad libitum* is Schütz's direction for performing the present motet). At the same time, Schütz rarely if ever lost that dramatic sense which had been so apparent in his early output, and which can be discerned here in the very first bars' majestic homophony.

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Das Wort ward Fleisch
und wohnt unter uns,
und wir sahen seine Herrlichkeit,
eine Herrlichkeit als des
eingebornen
Sohns vom Vater,
voller Gnade und Wahrheit.

The Word was made flesh
and dwelt among us,
and we beheld His glory,
a glory like that of the
only begotten
Son of the Father,
full of grace and truth.

PASTORALE FOR ORGAN IN F MAJOR (BWV 590)

First Movement — Johann Sebastian Bach

The *Pastorale*, written after 1720 (no more definite date than that can be attributed to it), is an oddity among Bach's organ works in that it displays more Italian influence than is his wont (though one must remember that Bach thought highly enough of at least three Italians –

Vivaldi, Albinoni, and Giovanni Legrenzi – to transcribe their output). There are four movements in this *Pastorale*, of which the first alone resembles the pieces in a Christmastide, drone-dominated idiom which had already been employed by Frescobaldi, Corelli and others. Scholars are mostly agreed that Bach composed the movements over a period of years and did not originally envisage them as making up a set. British critic Stephen Westrop observed that ‘The melody of the third movement is one of those long-breathed tunes reminiscent of the instrumental obbligato from a cantata aria.’

MOTET: LOBET DEN HERREN (BWV 230)
PRAISE THE LORD - Johann Sebastian Bach

Bach wrote at least six motets – the authenticity of a seventh is disputed – between 1723 and 1727. All were intended for the Thomaskirche (St Thomas’s Church), Leipzig, where he had been Cantor since 1723. The present motet differs from its companions in that it contains a separate part for continuo instruments, a part that does not simply duplicate what the singers are doing. Some critics – conscious of this singularity – reckon that it dates from well before the other five. A few have questioned whether Bach even wrote it. Sir John Eliot Gardiner pooh-poohs such notions: ‘Most of these doubts,’ he writes, ‘may be dismissed.’ Even by Bachian criteria the counterpoint is elaborate, double-fugue writing being almost commonplace.

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden,
und preiset ihn, alle Völker!
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit
waltet über uns in Ewigkeit.
Alleluia!

Praise the Lord, all nations,
And praise Him, all peoples!
For His grace and truth
Rule over us for eternity.
Halleluja!

VOM HIMMEL HOCH
FROM HEAVEN HIGH – Johannes Eccard

Born in Mühlhausen, Germany, 1553; died in Berlin, 1611.

Eccard was among the earliest Lutheran composers too young to have known Luther himself. Moreover, the early 1570s found Eccard at the Catholic court of Munich, where the great Lassus taught him. Later in the

decade, Eccard directed in Augsburg another Catholic establishment: the private orchestra of the awesomely rich Fugger family, bankers to monarchs and nobles alike. The clan had obtained its original fortune by dominating Europe's textile business. When Emperor Charles V visited Paris's royal treasury – so the anecdote goes – he found it disappointing after Fugger wealth, and commented: 'There is a linen-weaver in Augsburg who could pay all that from his own purse.' Later still, Eccard worked as court musician to (the Lutheran) Duke Albrecht Friedrich of Prussia, first at Königsberg and then at Berlin. The 1539 *Vom Himmel hoch* melody, which Eccard harmonised for SSATB ensemble, acquires in his version numerous passing notes in the lower voices.

The most frequent English version of the verses is a 19th century translation by Catherine Winkworth, supplied here.

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm
ich her.
Ich bring' euch gute
neue Mär,
Der guten Mär bring ich so viel,
Davon ich sing'n und sagen will.

From heaven high to earth
I come
To bear good
news to every home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring
Whereof I now will say and sing:

Euch ist ein Kindlein heut' geborn
Von einer Jungfrau auserkorn,
Ein Kindelein, so zart und fein,
Das soll eu'r Freud und Wonne sein.

To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen mother mild;
This little Child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

Es ist der Herr Christ, unser Gott,
Der will euch führn aus aller Not,
Er will eu'r Heiland selber sein,
Von allen Sünden machen rein.

'Tis Christ our God Who, far on high
Hath heard your sad and bitter cry;
Himself will your Salvation be,
Himself from sin will make you free.

Er bringt euch alle Seligkeit,
Die Gott der Vater hat bereit,
Daß ihr mit uns im Himmelreich
Sollt leben nun und ewiglich.

He brings those blessings, long ago
Prepared by God for all below;
Henceforth His kingdom open stands
To you, as to the angel bands.

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RESONET IN LAUDIBUS

LET THE VOICE OF PRAISE RESOUND – Johannes Eccard

Resonet in laudibus (SATTB) has the same lilting, dance-like, triple-time melody which is known in German as *Joseph, lieber Joseph mein*, and which can often be identified in sacred works of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Lassus himself had treated it. Eccard's arrangement of it (like his arrangement of *Vom Himmel hoch*, also included in today's concert) first appeared in 1597, as part of his collection *Geistliche Lieder*.

Resonet in laudibus,
Cum iucundis plausibus,
Sion cum fidelibus,
Apparuit, quem genuit Maria.

Let praises resound,
With joyous acclaim,
Sion and their faithful.
He appeared, who was born of Mary.

Pueri concinite,
Nato Regi psallite,
Voce pia dicite:
Apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Sing together to the Child,
The new-born King let us praise,
With pious voices, say:
He appeared, who was born of Mary.

Sion lauda Dominum,
Saluatorem hominu,
Purgatorem criminu.
Apparuit quem genuit Maria.

Sion praise the Lord,
The Saviour of mankind,
He who purges us of sin:
He appeared, who was born of Mary.

HODIE – Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

*Born in Deventer, The Netherlands, 1562;
died in Amsterdam, 16 October 1621.*

Best-known of all Dutch composers (indeed the sole Dutch composer ever to have left a major impact outside his homeland), Sweelinck lived mostly in Amsterdam and acquired a fine reputation across Europe as organist and teacher. Though the Calvinist authorities at the city's Oude Kerk – 'Old Church' – forbade instrumental music during their services, they welcomed the chance to have such music from the organist before and after such services. There, Sweelinck's virtuoso playing came into its own. If Sweelinck himself had a private religious allegiance other than Calvinism, he kept quiet about it; the theory that he remained a secret Catholic (as Byrd, in England, did) is unproven but cannot be altogether

discounted. Certainly this Latin-language motet for Christmastide — using lines from Luke 2:11—14 and Psalm 33:1 — appeared in a 1619 collection which Sweelinck titled *Cantiones Sacrae*, and which bespeaks the exuberant influence of Venetian musicians like the Gabriellis. To quote a vivid description by conductor Ryan Turner: ‘The text is punctuated by exuberant cries of *alleluia* that burst musically through the texture, culminating in a skilful jumble of overlapping calls of *Noë* (*Noël*).’

Hodie Christus natus est:
Hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli
Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born:
Today the Saviour appears:
Today the angels sing on earth,
and the Archangels rejoice.
Today the just exult, saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Alleluia.

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INTERVAL

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VOM HIMMEL HOCH

FROM HEAVEN HIGH – melody attributed to Martin Luther

Born in Eisleben, Germany, 10 November 1483;

died in Eisleben, 17 February 1546.

Harmonisation by Adam Gumpelzhaimer

Born in Trostberg, Germany, 1559;

Died in Augsburg, 3 November 1625.

Commentators in the 19th century tended to credit Luther with the music, as well as with the text, of almost every world-famous Lutheran hymn. This assumption has long been discredited; but there remain grounds – albeit not conclusive – for assuming that the distinctive, mainly scalic melody of *Vom Himmel Hoch* is Luther's own creation. He undoubtedly was responsible for the words, which allude to Luke 2:8–18 and which bear the date 1534. The tune's earliest appearance occurred in 1539; Luther originally thought of his words in connection with a very different melody, one which has dropped out of use. A brief list of composers who have used the 1539 theme must include Michael Praetorius, Hans Leo Hassler, Samuel Scheidt, and Georg Böhm, not to mention JS Bach (several times), Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Mendelssohn and Reger.

Adam Gumpelzhaimer, responsible for the harmonisation of this melody was cantor of Augsburg Cathedral from 1581 until his death in 1625.

For the text and translation, see page 9.

IN DULCI JUBILO – Samuel Scheidt

Baptised in Halle, Germany, 3 November 1587;

died in Halle, 24 March 1654.

It is the habit of historians to call Scheidt one of German baroque music's 'three Ss', the other two being Heinrich Schütz and Johann Hermann Schein. All three composers were born in the 1580s; all three adhered to Lutheranism; all three excelled in both Latin-language and German-language sacred works, though Scheidt also had a separate reputation on the strength of his vast keyboard music collection *Tabulatura Nova* (1624). From four years earlier than *Tabulatura Nova* comes *In dulci*

jubilo, heard more often nowadays than anything else that Scheidt wrote. Scored lavishly for two choirs (one SSAT, the other ATBB), it quotes from the start the original carol melody and uses the original part-German, part-Latin words.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. In dulci jubilo
Nun singet und seid froh!
Unsers Herzens Wonne,
Leit in praeseptio.
Und leuchtet als die Sonne
Matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O. | In sweet rejoicing
Now sing and be glad!
Our hearts' joy
Lies in the manger.
And He shines like the son
In His mother's lap.
He is Alpha and Omega. |
| 2. O Jesu parvule
Nach dir ist mir so weh!
Tröst mir mein Gemüte
O puer optime
Durch alle deine Güte
O princeps gloriae.
Trahe me post te! | O little Jesus,
I have longed so much for Thee!
But now my mind is comforted,
O best of Children,
Through all Thy goodness,
O Prince of glory,
Draw me after Thee. |
| 3. O Patris caritas!
O Nati lenitas!
Wir wären all verloren
Per nostra crimina
So hat er uns erworben
Coelorum gaudia | O love of the Father!
O lenity of the Son!
We were all lost
Through our sins,
But Thou hast gained for us
The joys of heaven. |
| 4. Eia, wären wir da!
Ubi sunt gaudia
Nirgend mehr denn da?
Da die Engel singen
Nova cantica,
Und die Schellen klingen
In regis curia.
Eia, wären wir da! | O, that we were there!
Where are joys
In any place but there?
The angels sing
New songs,
And the bells ring
In the King's court.
O, that we were there! |

IN DULCI JUBILO

Verses 1 and 4 – Johann Sebastian Bach

Verses 2 and 3 – Johann Walter

Born in Kahla, Germany, 1496;

died in Torgau, Germany, 25 March 1570.

The anonymous melody for this carol comes down to us via an early 15th century manuscript. It must have possessed an unusual charm for Bach, because he based at least two organ works on it (a third, listed in the standard catalogue as BWV 751, might or might not be by him) as well as furnishing the SATB choral harmonisation given in today's program for Verses 1 and 4. Verses 2 and 3, on the other hand, are here sung in a much earlier harmonisation composed by Luther's friend Johann Walter, responsible for several of Lutheranism's greatest hymns, including *Ein feste Burg* and *Wir glauben all an einer Gott*. Authorship of *In dulci jubilo's* macaronic text is traditionally ascribed to German Dominican mystic Heinrich Suso (1295?—1366). But Suso denied actually having conceived it. Rather, he maintained that angels had dictated it to him, and that during their visitation they also persuaded him to join them 'in a dance of worship.'

As you do.

For the text and translation, see page 14.

THE ANGEL GABRIEL FROM HEAVEN CAME

– Traditional Basque, arranged David Willcocks

Name three Basque musical compositions. The short answer is that almost no non-Basque reader could do anything of the sort. In fact the only such piece to have attained the slightest celebrity outside Basque territories is this carol, which was introduced to the rest of the world by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834—1924), an Anglican clergyman and remarkably prolific author whose several dozen books, both fiction and non-fiction, include an 1865 treatise – you never know when this might come in handy – on the habits of werewolves. Wishing to save time that would otherwise be wasted by sitting down, Baring-Gould usually wrote

while standing up. Of his enormous output, precious little is now remembered except his words to Sir Arthur Sullivan's immortal hymn *Onward, Christian Soldiers*, and his translation of the present carol. The identity of the tune's composer has not been recorded: a pity, since the tune's irregular phrasing makes it permanently distinctive.

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!
'For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;
Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!
Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name':
Most highly favoured lady. Gloria!
Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

ES IST EIN ROS' ENTSPRUNGEN

A ROSE HAS SPRUNG UP – Traditional

Nobody knows who originally wrote the German words of this carol, associated with Advent at least as much as with Christmas. Some of them date from the 15th century, but none of them achieved wider fame (and nor did the likewise anonymous tune) 'til the late 16th century: specifically, via a 1599 hymnal that both Catholics and Lutherans took up. The harmonisation best known now is the one that Michael Praetorius issued in 1609; later composers attracted by the theme have included Brahms (one of his *Eleven Chorale Preludes for organ* is a free-wheeling fantasy upon it) and Schoenberg, then a practising Christian, who in 1921 used the melody as a basis for a Yuletide chamber work.

Some idea of the carol's ineradicable Teutonic popularity can be gleaned from the fact that the Nazis – unable to stomach the text's allusion to

the Old Testament, and specifically to Isaiah 11:1 – felt compelled to rewrite it as a pantheistic tribute to the *Reich*. The English version given below is a literal translation; other English versions which, unlike this one, fit the original metre were supplied in the 19th century by Theodore Baker (*Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming*, more popular in the USA) and Catherine Winkworth (*A Spotless Rose*, more popular in Britain).

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,
aus einer Wurzel zart,
wie uns die Alten sungen,
von Jesse kam die Art
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
mitten im kalten Winter,
wohl zu der halben Nacht.

A rose has sprung up,
from a tender root,
As the old ones sang to us,
Its strain came from Jesse
And it has brought forth a floweret
In the middle of the cold winter
Well at half the night.

Das Röslein, das ich meine,
davon Isaias sagt,
ist Maria die reine
die uns das Blümlein bracht.
Aus Gottes ew'gem Rat
hat sie ein Kind geboren
und blieb doch reine Magd.

The little rose that I mean,
Of which Isaiah told,
Is Mary, the pure,
Who brought us the floweret.
At God's eternal counsel
She has borne a child
And remained a pure maid.

Das Blümelein, so kleine,
das duftet uns so süß,
mit seinem hellen Scheine
vertreibt's die Finsternis.
Wahr Mensch und wahrer Gott,
hilft uns aus allem Leide,
rettet von Sünd und Tod.

The floweret, so small
That smells so sweet to us
With its bright gleam
It dispels the darkness.
True man and true God,
It helps us from all trouble,
Saves us from sin and death.

PASTORALE FOR ORGAN IN F MAJOR, Third Movement
MOTET: SINGET DEM HERREN EIN NEUES LIED
SING UNTO THE LORD A NEW SONG (BWV 225)
– Johann Sebastian Bach

This motet derives its words partly from Psalms 149 and 150 in the Lutheran Bible, and partly from a hymn by the 16th-century Protestant

writer Johannes Poliander (alias Johann Graumann). While we do not know the precise occasion for which Bach envisaged the piece, it has been conjectured that he meant it – notwithstanding its joyous sound, most obvious in the exuberant setting of words like ‘*Reigen* [dances]’ – for, of all things, a royal funeral. Christiane, Queen of Poland, died (at Pretzsch, Saxony) in 1727, having refused to renounce her original Lutheranism even when her husband, King Augustus II, cynically sought to appease the Poles by ostentatiously proclaiming himself to be a Catholic.

As elsewhere in his canonical motets, so here, Bach allowed for (but did not insist on) instrumental accompaniment. The work became a special favourite of Mozart, who might well have had its counterpoint in mind when he wrote the *Jupiter Symphony*. Note the curious – and much discussed, although accidental – resemblance between the melody which Bach employs for the words ‘*Wie sich ein Vater erbarmet,*’ and the melody which English-speaking churchgoers will recognise as *The Old Hundredth*.

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied,
Die Gemeine der Heiligen
sollen ihn loben.
Israel freue sich des, der ihn
gemacht hat.

Sing ye the Lord a new song;
the assembly of saints
should be telling His praises.
Israel, be joyful in Him
Who hath made thee.

Die Kinder Zion sei'n fröhlich
über ihrem Könige,
Sie sollen loben
seinen Namen
im Reigen; mit Pauken
und mit Harfen
sollen sie ihm spielen.

Let Zion's children rejoice
in Him who is their mighty king;
let them be praising
His name's honour
in dances; with timbrels
and with psalteries
unto Him be playing

Wie sich ein Vater erbarmet
Gott, nimm dich ferner unser an,
Über seine junge Kinderlein,
So tut der Herr uns allen,
So wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.

As does a father mercy show
So doth the Lord to all of us,
To his own little children dear,
If as pure children
we Him fear.

Er kennt das arm Gemächte,
Gott weiss, wir sind nur Staub,
Denn ohne dich
ist nichts getan
Mit allen unsern Sachen.
Gleichwie das Gras vom Rechen,
Ein Blum und fallend Laub.
Der Wind nur drüber wehet,
So ist es nicht mehr da,
Drum sei du unser Schirm und Licht,
Und trägt uns unsre Hoffnung nicht,
So wirst du's ferner machen.
Also der Mensch vergehet,
Sein End, das ist ihm nah.
Wohl dem, der sich
nur steif und fest
Auf dich und deine Huld verlässt.

Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten,
Lobet ihn
in seiner grossen
Herrlichkeit!
Alles, was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn
Halleluja.

He sees our feeble powers,
God knows we are but dust;
For, lacking Thee,
nought shall we gain
From all of our endeavours.
Just as the grass in mowing,
Or bud and falling leaf,
If wind but o'er it bloweth,
It is no longer there,
So be Thou our true shield and light,
And if our hope betray us not,
Thou wilt thus henceforth help us.
Even so is man's life passing,
His end to him is near.
Blest he whose hope,
both strong and firm,
On Thee and on Thy grace can rest.

Praise ye the Lord
in all His doings, praise ye Him in all
His might and majesty!
All things which have breath, praise
ye the Lord,
Hallelujah.

Program notes ©R.J. Stove, 2016-2018

The **AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER CHOIR** was established by Douglas Lawrence in 2007. In its first ten years, the choir has undertaken six concert tours of Europe, recorded five CDs and given over 200 concert performances, many of which were recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM or 3MBS FM.

In 2015, returning by invitation to Denmark's oldest classical music festival, the *Sorø International*, the ACC was made an Honorary Life Member and took its place alongside such luminaries as Wilhelm Kempff, Anton Heiller, Gaston Litaize and Julian Bream. On this tour and on the subsequent one in 2017, the choir was accompanied by a group of *Friends*.

You are invited to join Douglas Lawrence and the singers of the ACC on their 2019 tour (see the cover of this program for more details).

In Australia, the ACC has supplemented regular performances in key Victorian centres with interstate visits, performing in Canberra, Sydney, Albury, Bowral and Wagga Wagga.

In 2016, the choir expanded its regular commitments by undertaking to present all its *a cappella* programs in Sydney, increasing the cultural traffic travelling in the Melbourne to Sydney direction.

Wherever they perform, the Australian Chamber Choir is met with resounding accolades from audiences and critics alike:

“one of the finest concerts in Sydney this year...The Australian Chamber Choir sings complex music fearlessly and it thrills” (True Romantics)

ClassikON

25 September 2018

“The ACC, with its mastery of numerous styles and languages...combined with exemplary vocal technique and ensemble skills, creates a glorious sound” (True Romantics)

SoundsLike Sydney, 18 September 2018

“The impact is magical and leaves a lasting impression” (Mozart Requiem)

Melbourne Observer, 2 May 2018

“the many listeners were totally captivated by the marvellous sound conjured by the Australian Chamber Choir ... At the end ... several minutes of standing ovation ...”

Schwäbische Zeitung, Ravensburg

17 July 2017

“This extraordinary concert was breathtakingly moving...There were tears” (True Romantics)

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“Impeccable pitch and articulation of the text are a feature of the ACC’s performances, and throughout (Palestrina’s Stabat Mater) the tempered contrasts of dynamics in response to the text was scholarly and splendid”

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“This is a choir that Australia can be proud of”

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“a creative force that transcends faith and soars...with a devotion and assurance that is inspirational and affirming” (Bach Magnificat)

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“world class” (By the Waters of Babylon)

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“a dramatic concert which was both tremendously well-conceived and received” (By the Waters of Babylon)

Australian Arts Review

“the choir’s performance is magical, confident, dancing as one entity” (By the Waters of Babylon)

Weekend Notes, 29 August 2017

“A lightning-crisp intonation rings through a naturally blended sound...as the choir wends its way with the greatest security through music of many periods and styles”

Echo Darmstadt, Germany, 20 July 2017

“they created a sound that was as pure as crystal, beautifully blended, clearly articulated and unanimous in execution of phrasing and dynamics”

SoundsLike Sydney, 23 August 2016

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