



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER CHOIR

with Melina van Leeuwen – harp
directed by Douglas Lawrence AM



C E R E M O N Y O F C A R O L S

Saturday 26 November at 3PM

Thomson Memorial Presbyterian Church TERANG

Sunday 27 November at 3PM

Christ Church CASTLEMAINE

Saturday 3 December at 3PM

Church of the Resurrection MACEDON

Sunday 4 December at 5PM

Basilica of St Mary of the Angels GEELONG

Sunday 11 December at 3PM

Our Lady of Mount Carmel MIDDLE PARK

A note about the program

Douglas Lawrence (the ACC's Artistic Director) and I have always loved Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, but until now have not programmed it for the ACC. When I asked Douglas what he would like to program alongside Britten's 1942 cycle, he immediately nominated Britten's *Hymn to the Virgin* and Villette's 1954 setting of a similar text in French. For the second half of the program, I used as a starting point the texts of Britten's cycle, sourcing settings of some of the same texts by Renaissance composers. The result is a kind of infinity mirror that casts new light on the texts and the music.

The mirror image in the second half begins and ends with the Latin texts, *Deo Gratias* and *Hodie Christus natus est*, this time set by Ockeghem and Sweelinck. The mirror structure is completed by the earliest-known setting of the Middle English poem *There is no rose*, from a 15th century manuscript, along with a central harp interlude.

– Elizabeth Anderson, Manager

PROGRAM

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS (Not available on demand after 11 December 2022)

Benjamin Britten (1913–76)

TWO HYMNS TO THE VIRGIN (Not available on demand after 11 December 2022)

Pierre Villette (1926–98); Benjamin Britten

INTERVAL

DEO GRATIAS 36-voice fugue

Johannes Ockeghem (c.1410–97) arranged E Anderson

TWO OLD ENGLISH CAROLS

William Ballet (c.1600) harmonised by Charles Wood

Sweet was the song the Virgin sung

Anon, Trinity Carol Roll (c.1420) *There is no rose*

INTERLUDE FOR SOLO HARP

FANTASIA NO.10

Alonso Mudarra (c.1510–c.1580)

THREE GERMAN SETTINGS OF IN DULCI JUBILO

Verses 1 and 4 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Verses 2 and 3 Johann Walter (1496–1570)

Samuel Scheidt (1587–1654)

AUSTRALIAN AND UKRAINIAN CAROLS OF BIRDS

Alan Holley (born 1954) Text: Mark Tredinnick

Carol of the Two Crows first performance

Mykola Leontovych (1877–1921) *Shchedryk* (Ukrainian Bell Carol)

TWO FRENCH NOËLS arranged E Anderson

Louis Claude Daquin (1694–1772) *Noël No.X for organ*

Traditional Angels we have heard on high (Les anges dans nos compagnes)

HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

PROGRAM NOTES

A CEREMONY OF CAROLS Benjamin Britten

Born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, 22 November 1913;

died in Aldeburgh, Suffolk, 4 December 1976.

Among the most often performed of Britten's pieces, *A Ceremony of Carols* originated in the enforced leisure of the composer's five-week 1942 voyage from the USA to his native England. En route, the ship docked at the Nova Scotia city of Halifax, where Britten found in a local bookshop *The English Galaxy*, a volume of poems (several of them actually, despite the volume's title, Scottish rather than English) from the Middle Ages. These poems triggered musical ideas in him, and by the time he arrived home he had finished the whole work. Curiously, he at first countenanced performances for SATB choir. Only with a subsequent revision did he turn it into the cycle for treble choir and harp which we know today. Though never a Catholic, he repeatedly found that Gregorian chant haunted his artistic imagination, and he included quotes from such chant here. Most of the verses which he used – several of them macaronic, that is, in more than one language – are of unknown authorship. But the seventh and ninth movements, employing vocabulary closer to modern English than the rest, set stanzas written by Saint Robert Southwell, one of the Elizabethan epoch's Jesuit martyrs. (While it is not clear whether Southwell and Shakespeare ever met, both men employed the term 'silly' in its original meaning:

BRITTEN Ceremony of Carols See 2023 concerts

'innocent,' without the slightest connotations of foolishness.)

1. Processional

**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.

Hallelujah. (English translation ©
Hyperion Records, UK)

2. Wolcum Yole! (Anon. 14th Century)

Wolcum, Wolcum,

Wolcum be thou hevenè king,

Wolcum Yole!

Wolcum, born in one morning,

Wolcum for whom we sall sing!

Wolcum be ye, Stevene and John,

Wolcum, Innocentes every one,

Wolcum, Thomas marter one,

Wolcum be ye, good Newe Yere,

Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both in fere,

Wolcum, seintes lefe and dare,

Wolcum Yole, Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!

BRITTEN Ceremony of Carols See 2023 concerts

Candelmesse, Quene of Bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be ye that are here,
Wolcum Yole,
Wolcum alle and make good cheer.
Wolcum alle another yere,
Wolcum Yole.

3. There is no Rose (Anon. 14th Century)

There is no rose of such vertu
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in little space,
Res miranda [A thing of wonder].

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma [In the image of the father].

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo! [Glory to God in the highest]
Gaudeamus [Let us rejoice].

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
and follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus [Let us cross over].

Alleluia, Res miranda, Pares forma,
Gaudeamus, Transeamus.

4. That Yongë Child (Anon. 14th Century)

That yongë child when it gan weep

With song she lullèd him asleep:

That was so sweet a melody

It passèd alle minstrelsy.

The nightingale sang also:

Her song is hoarse and nought thereto:

Whoso attendeth to her song

And leaveth the first, then doth he wrong.

5. Balulalow (Anon. 14th Century)

O my deare hert, young Jesu sweit,

Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,

And I sall rock thee to my hert,

And never mair from thee depart.

But I sall praise thee evermoir

With sanges sweit unto thy gloir;

The knees of my hert sall I bow,

And sing that richt Balulalow.

6. As Dew in Aprille (Anon. c.1400)

I sing of a maiden that is makèles:

King of all kings to her son she ches.

He came also stille there his moder was

As dew in Aprille that falleth on the grass.

He came also stille to his moder's bour

As dew in Aprille that falleth on the flour.

He came also stille there his moder lay

As dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray.

BRITTEN Ceremony of Carols See 2023 concerts

Moder and maiden was never none but she:
Well may such a lady Goddes moder be.

7. This Little Babe (Robert Southwell, d. 1595)

This little Babe so few days old,
is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake,
though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmed wise
the gates of hell he will surprise.

With tears he fights and wins the field,
His naked breast stands for a shield;
His battering shot are babish cries,
His arrows looks of weeping eyes,
His martial ensigns Cold and Need,
and feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.

His camp is pitched in a stall,
His bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes;
of shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound,
the angels' trumps alarum sound.

My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
stick to the tents that he hath pight.
Within his crib is surest ward;
this little Babe will be thy guard.
If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy,
then flit not from this heavenly Boy.

8. Interlude (Solo harp)

9. In Freezing Winter Night (Robert Southwell)

Behold, a silly tender babe,
in freezing winter night,
In homely manger trembling lies.
Alas, a piteous sight!

The inns are full;
no man will yield this little pilgrim bed.
But forced he is with silly beasts
in crib to shroud his head.

This stable is a Prince's court,
this crib his chair of State;
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,
the wooden dish his plate.

The persons in that poor attire
his royal liveries wear;
The Prince himself is come from heaven;
this pomp is prizèd there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight,
do homage to thy King,
And highly praise his humble pomp,
wich he from Heaven doth bring.

10. Spring Carol (William Cornish, d. 1523)

Pleasure it is to hear iwis,
the Birdes sing,
The deer in the dale, the sheep in the vale,
the corn springing.

God's purveyance for sustenance,
It is for man, it is for man.
Then we always to give him praise,
And thank him than.

11. Deo Gracias (Anon. 15th Century)

Deo gracias! Deo gracias! [Thanks be to God!]
Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not to long.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias! [Thanks be to God!]
And all was for an appil, an appil that he tok,
As clerkes finden written in their book.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias! [Thanks be to God!]
Ne had the appil take ben, the appil take ben,
Ne hadde never our lady a ben hevene quene.
Blessed be the time that appil take was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias! [Thanks be to God!]

TWO HYMNS TO THE VIRGIN

HYMNE À LA VIERGE Pierre Villette

Born in Duclair, France, 7 February 1926; died in Aix-en-Provence, 6 March 1998

If there exists a Gallic counterpart to John Rutter in Britain, this counterpart is surely the former Rouen Cathedral chorister Pierre Villette. One would never guess from the style of his *Hymne à la Vierge* (1967), far and away his most famous composition, that he had been a fellow Paris Conservatoire student of the rebarbative Marxist-modernist Pierre Boulez. Villette's own idiom comes much closer to plainchant, to the refined fragrance of Fauré, and (reflecting French musical culture of Villette's childhood) to Gershwin's harmonic manoeuvres, these last being a particularly clear influence on the *Hymne à la Vierge*'s concluding four bars. The words – they include a refrain put into the mouth of the Virgin Mary herself – are by one Roland Bouhéret. Probably such words could have been written by no-one else on the planet except a Frenchman. (France is, after all, the land where a nineteenth-century archbishop of Paris was assassinated by a lunatic priest who accused His Grace's Marian devotions of fostering goddess-worship ...) Readers happening upon Bouhéret's poem after perusing the standard Magnificat text will quickly appreciate that, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, they are not in Kansas anymore.

HYMNS TO THE VIRGIN

See 2023 concerts

O toute belle Vierge Marie,
Votre âme trouve en Dieu
le parfait amour

Il vous revêt du manteau
de la Grace

Comme une fiancée parée
de ses bijoux.

Alléluia, 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,

O sagesse de Dieu, porte
du Salut,

heureux celui qui marche
dans vos traces

Qui apprête son cœur à la
voix de vos conseils.

Alléluia, je vais chanter ta
louange, Seigneur,

Car tu m'as faite
avant le jour,

Car tu m'as fait précéder
le jaillissement des

O beautiful Virgin Mary,
In God your soul discovers
perfect love.

It cloaks you with the
mantle of Grace

Like a betrothed woman
adorned with her jewels.

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, I will sing Your
praise, Lord,

For You have made me
before the day,

For You have made me go
before the gushing of

HYMNS TO THE VIRGIN

See 2023 concerts

sources.

fountains.

Avant les astres vous étiez
présente

You were present before
the stars,

Mère du Créateur au
profonde du ciel.

Mother of the Creator, in
the very depths of heaven.

Quand Dieu fixait les
limites du monde,

When God was creating the
world,

Vous partagiez son cœur
étant à l'œuvre avec lui.

Working with Him, you
shared His heart.

O toute belle Vierge Marie

O beautiful Virgin Mary

English translation © Hyperion Records, UK

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN Benjamin Britten

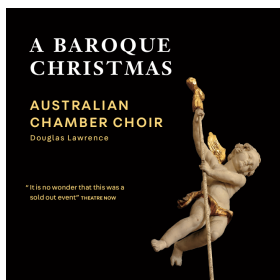
Whilst Britten produced a vast amount of juvenilia (by his seventeenth birthday he had already reached a scarcely credible Op. 534), he suppressed most of it. Among the few early pieces which he allowed out of his room was the present concert's anthem, an eight-voice setting of an anonymous macaronic poem from the Middle Ages. Appropriately enough, Britten endowed the music with an old-world ambience while avoiding any hints of explicit archaism. He composed the entire thing on 9 July 1930, when a mere sixteen years old (and during the enforced leisure of a sojourn in his high school's sick-bay). It quickly achieved considerable fame among choirs, especially after Britten transposed it down a tone to make it more readily singable.

Of one that is so fair and bright
Velut maris stella [Like a star of the sea],
Brighter than the day is light,
Parens et puella [Mother and maiden]:
I cry to thee, thou see to me,
Lady, pray thy Son for me,
Tam pia [Oh virtuous one],
That I may come to thee,
Maria!

All this world was forlorn
Eva peccatrice [Through Eve the sinner],
Till our Lord was y-born
De te genetrix [Of thee the mother].
With Ave it went away
Darkest night, and comes the day
Salutis [Of salvation];
The well springeth out of thee.
Virtutis [Of virtue].

Lady, flower of everything,
Rosa sine spina [Rose without thorn],
Thou bare Jesu, Heaven's King,
Gratia divina [By divine grace]:
Of all thou bearest the prize,
Lady queen of paradise
Electa [Chosen one]:
Maid mild, mother
Es effecta [You are made].

INTERVAL 10 minutes



This CD was produced during the lockdown of 2020. "One of Australia's many choral treasures – finely honed by artistic director Douglas Lawrence into a single pulse of unity and beauty"

Sydney Morning Herald

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DEO GRATIAS 36 voice fugue – Johannes

Ockeghem arranged by Elizabeth Anderson

*Born probably in Saint-Ghislain [present-day Belgium],
circa 1410; died in Tours, France, 6 February 1497*

Most subtle and rigorous of his epoch's composers, Johannes Ockeghem – whose name is also rendered in contemporary documents as 'Ogkegum,' 'Ockegham,' 'Okchem,' and even 'Hocquegam' – has become almost a by-word for his polyphonic invention, in which he often seems to derive an obdurate pleasure from piling up complexity on complexity. For example, he based his *Missa Prolationum* on mensuration canons (canons, dreadfully hard to write with any effectiveness, where the same theme appears in all parts at different speeds). As if this achievement were not enough, he also taught Josquin Desprez; produced the earliest surviving non-chant setting of the Requiem; and wore spectacles. Of his *Deo gratias*, the piece's arranger Elizabeth Anderson writes as follows:

'How can a thirty-six-voice fugue be sung by eighteen people?' I hear you ask. The piece consists of four fugal subjects, or melodies, each of which is sung by nine voices. Each voice begins its subject one bar after the previous voice. When each voice has completed its subject, it holds a sustained note. By removing the duplicated pitches in the sustained notes, I was able to

assign some voices two or three of the subjects, making up the full thirty-six fugal entries.

Deo gratias!

Thanks be to God!

TWO OLD ENGLISH CAROLS

SWEET WAS THE SONG THE VIRGIN SUNG

William Ballet (c.1600) harmonised by Charles Wood
Born in Armagh [present-day Northern Ireland], 22 June 1866; died in Cambridge, 12 July 1926.

THERE IS NO ROSE OF SUCH VERTUE

Anonymous, from the Trinity Carol Roll (c.1420)

Our paltry stock of data concerning William Ballet, the source for *Sweet was the song*, takes but a few lines to exhaust. We know neither the year of Ballet's birth nor

the year of his death. In fact, we would be totally clueless about him, were it not for two manuscript collections of lute music which bear his name. Though both collections found their way to Trinity College in Dublin during the eighteenth century, the earlier of them is thought to have been compiled in England late in Elizabeth I's reign (1590 has been conjectured) and the second early in James I's reign, which would put it at 1610 or thereabouts. All the pieces in the collections had been circulating for

decades, at least, before Ballet assembled them; some are known from as far back as the 1400s. Those who profited from studying Ballet's anthologies included Charles Wood, who succeeded Sir Charles Villiers Stanford in the composition professorship at London's Royal College of Music; his most distinguished students included Herbert Howells (who rated Wood's didactic ability above even Stanford's) and Vaughan Williams. In 1901 Wood, having found in the Trinity College library Ballet's version of the tune for *Sweet was the song*, released his own harmonisation of this carol for choir. Somewhat better known is Wood's later (1924) and wholly original treatment of *There is no rose*, which has become a staple of British carol services. The version of *There is no rose* sung today is not Wood's harmonisation, but the original version from the Trinity Carol Roll, which is held at Trinity College Cambridge.

Sweet was the song the Virgin sung,
When she to Bethlehem Juda came,
And was delivered of a Son,
That blessed Jesus hath to name.
Lullaby, lullaby, sweet Babe, sung she,
My Son, and eke [also] a Saviour born,
Who hast vouchsafed from on high
To visit us that were forlorn;
Lullaby, lullaby, sweet Babe, sung she,
And rocked Him sweetly on her knee.

There is no rose

Text as for Movement 3 of Britten's Ceremony of Carols (page 6).

INTERLUDE FOR SOLO HARP

FANTASIA WHICH IMITATES THE HARP IN THE MANNER OF LUDOVICO Alonso Mudarra

Born around 1510; died in Seville, 1 April 1580.

Priest as well as composer, Mudarra specialised in songs and instrumental music, the latter including this program's harmonically daring Tenth Fantasia. The piece has been recorded on the guitar by (among many others) such internationally celebrated virtuosi as Julian Bream, Narciso Yepes, and Christopher Parkening. Here it is heard on the harp. Emeritus Professor and long-standing Australian Chamber Choir patron John Griffiths wrote the Mudarra entry in the New Grove, from which entry the following remarks come:

It is likely that Mudarra travelled ... in the entourage that accompanied Charles V to Italy in 1529. He subsequently entered the priesthood, probably in Palencia, becoming a canon at Seville Cathedral on 18 October 1546, less than two months before the publication of his vihuela book. During the following thirty-four years he played an important role in cathedral affairs: arranging the annual Corpus Christi celebrations, hiring wind players,

negotiating the purchase and installation of a new organ, and consulting in 1572 with Francisco Guerrero at the request of the chapter concerning the music commissioned from Guerrero for the coming Christmas season. ... The ingenious *Fantasia que contrahaze la harpa en la manera de Ludovico* is a disguised set of folia variations that use cross-rhythms and bold chromaticism to imitate the legendary harpist of Ferdinand III of Aragon.

THREE GERMAN SETTINGS OF IN DULCI JUBILO

Johann Sebastian Bach (Verses 1 and 4)

Born in Eisenach, 31 March 1685;

died in Leipzig, 28 July, 1750.

Johann Walter (Verses 2 and 3)

Born in Kahla, Germany, 1496;

died in Torgau, Germany, 25 March, 1570.

Samuel Scheidt

Born in Halle, Germany. Baptised, 3 November 1587; died in Halle, 24 March 1654.

The anonymous melody for this carol comes down to us via an early-fifteenth-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 concert for Verses one and four. Verses

two and three, on the other hand, are here sung in a much earlier harmonisation by Luther's friend Johann Walter, responsible for composing several of Lutheranism's most beloved hymn-tunes, including *Ein feste Burg* and *Wir glauben all an einer Gott*. Authorship of *In dulci jubilo*'s bilingual 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.

Historians are apt to call Samuel Scheidt one of German baroque music's 'three S's', 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 *Tablatura Nova* (1624). From four years earlier than *Tablatura 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) and for two trumpets which take all opportunities for breaking out into fanfare-style figuration, it quotes from the start the original carol melody and uses the original part-German, part-Latin words, though only the first verse thereof.

IN DULCI JUBILO

See 2023 concerts

In dulci jubilo

Nun singet und seid froh!

Unsers Herzens Wonne

Leit in praesepio.

Und leuchtet als die Sonne

Matris in gremio.

Alpha es et O.

In sweet rejoicing

Let us our homage show!

Our hearts' joy

Reclineth in the manger.

And like a bright star shineth

In His mother's lap.

He is Alpha and Omega.

O Jesu parvule [O little Jesus],

I long for Thee alway!

Hear me I beseech thee,

O puer optime [O best of Children],

My prayer let it reach thee,

O princeps gloriae [O Prince of glory]

Trahe me post te [Draw me after Thee]!

O Patris caritas [O love of the Father]!

O Nati lenitas [O lenity of the Son]!

Deeply were we stained

Per nostra crimina [Through our sins],

But Thou for us hast gained

Coelorum gaudia [The joys of heaven].

O, that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia [Where are joys]

In any place but there? There are angels singing

Nova cantica [New songs],

And there the bells are ringing

In regis curia [In the King's court].

O, that we were there.



This CD (which includes the settings of *In dulci jubilo* and Sweelinck's *Hodie*, heard today) was produced during the lockdown of 2020. "One of Australia's many choral treasures – finely honed by artistic director Douglas Lawrence

into a single pulse of unity and beauty" *Sydney Morning Herald*

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AUSTRALIAN AND UKRAINIAN CAROLS OF BIRDS
CAROL OF THE TWO CROWS text by Mark
Tredinnick, music by **Alan Holley** first performance
Born in Sydney, 1 October 1954.

SHCHEDRYK Mykola Leontovych

*Born in Podolia (now in Ukraine), 1 December 1877;
died in Tulchyn, Ukraine, 22 January 1921.*

During recent decades, Alan Holley's works have been heard at numerous music festivals (sometimes in concerts wholly devoted to these works) in Croatia, Serbia, and Albania, as well as Australia. Among Holley's most ambitious pieces is a trumpet concerto called *Doppler's Web*, which the Sydney Symphony Orchestra commissioned in 2005 for performance by the orchestra's principal trumpeter, Paul Goodchild. Holley's output is published by Kookaburra Music and available on disc via the Hammerings Records label. The present program's carols employs a text by Holley's fellow

Sydneysider Mark Tredinnick and was produced specifically for the Australian Chamber Choir (as was an earlier composition, *Time Passages* of 2019). As regards the carol's origin, Holley has supplied this commentary:

For more than forty years I have been notating the songs of a small number of birds who live near my house on the northern beaches of Sydney. The tawny frogmouth has been prominent, but foremost has been the grey butcherbird, with its near clarinet-toned purity of song. I write down the melodies as if I am composing diary entries, and I can see small variations over the years and, indeed, decades. When I include these calls in my compositions, it's not to create some sort of ornithological songfest – although that has happened a few times; I write the phrases of the birds into my music because these small musical components have become the folksongs of my life, here and at this time.

Although most people may not initially think that the Australian raven has a beautiful call, it is one I find totally intriguing, and when there is a congregation of crows all screaming at full volume there are so many dissonances created and great rhythmic complexity. In the *Carol of the Two Crows*, I hint at some crow-like song without resorting to an exact call.

Mark Tredinnick's poem is made of nine lines, each line of nine syllables. The rhythm of these lines, in tension with

the rhythm of the syntax that runs through the lines, led me to create moments of alternating time signatures. These help me bounce the musical and lexical ideas off each other – the way the music and the sense dance in Mark's lines. I wanted to treat the text the way I know that Mark composed it, as folksongs for these times – given to us by birds.

Mark Tredinnick, for his part, writes as follows:

I can't think why it took me so long to work out how to write contemporary carols – carols that nod toward the ideas in the Bible stories of the Nativity (rebirth, hope against hope, joy in the despair, and the triumph of life) without being narrowly Christian; carols that are spiritual but not pious, reverent without slipping into dogma or the sentiment of Yuletide. Birds carolled long before humans did; the verb was theirs long before it was ours, and long before it was overwhelmed by Christmas. Some people claim it was the birds who taught us to talk and at length to sing. So, when Alan asked me for some carols to set for this great choir, at length I landed on the birds.

This is one of nine carols I've composed, the nine comprising a poem of a type known inelegantly only as a '9 x 9 x 9.' And I've drawn, in the writing, on a life of listening to the birds, witnessing them as well as I could, wherever I have travelled. My observation of the birds is an amateur's. Whatever love is, poetry does that, I once

wrote. I think love's what the birds sing, and most of what they teach.

Carol of the Two Crows

When I walked out, knee-deep in Advent,
To check who kept rolling what down my
Tin roof, they stopped it, but I knew: two
Crows stood side by side on the ridge cap,
Mischievous aforethought bright in their eyes.
And when I walked in, it started straight
Up: a bone they'd burgled from the dogs
Came clattering down again. So, play
Your days; give praise for the wit of birds.

SHCHEDRYK Mykola Leontovych

*Born in Podolia (now in Ukraine), 1 December 1877;
died in Tulchyn, Ukraine, 22 January 1921.*

Confronted as we are by almost daily televised horrors from the Russian invasion that seems as if it will never end, there is a certain appropriateness in having included for today's concert a Christmas carol by a Ukrainian composer: one who, furthermore, paid the supreme price for his religious faith and patriotic convictions. Leontovych, trained in youth for the Orthodox priesthood, later abandoned all thoughts of the clerical

state and worked as a lay teacher of music in various schools, his duties including choral and orchestral conductorships. The years of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian Civil War found him at first in Kyiv, from which he fled to his parents' hometown of Tulchyn, hoping to escape Soviet threats. Alas, shortly after the Orthodox feast of Christmas (which fell in January 1921, not in December 1920), Leontovych was fatally shot by an innocent-seeming houseguest in the pay of Lenin's secret police, the Cheka. At least he managed to leave for posterity's benefit more than 150 unaccompanied choral compositions, many being sacred, others being arrangements of folk-tunes. Among his pieces, much the most famous – indeed, the only one which any non-Ukrainians are likely to have encountered – is the present Christmas carol. In a 1936 version (Carol of the Bells) to an English-language text, it has been heard on the soundtrack of the popular American movie, *Home Alone*, in a gaudily swashbuckling arrangement by John Williams. Today's performance cleaves to the music's original a cappella form.

Shchedryk, shchedryk,
shchedrivochka,
pryletila lastivochka,
stala sobi shchebetaty,
hospodaria
vyklykaty:
"Vyidy, vyidy, hospodariu,

Bountiful evening,
a New Year's carol;
A little swallow flew
into the house and
started to twitter,
to summon the master:
"Come out, O master,

CAROLS OF BIRDS

See 2023 concerts

podyvysia na kosharu,
tam ovechky pokotylys,
a yahnychky narodyls.
V tebe tovar ves khoroshyi,
budesh maty mirku
hroshei,
Khoch ne hroshti, to
polova.
V tebe zhinka
chornobrova."
Shchedryk shchedryk,
shchedrivochka,
pryletila lastivochka.

look at the sheep pen;
the ewes have given birth
and the lambkins are born.
You have a fine herd,
That will bring you
wealth,
If not wealth, then the
harvest.
You have a dark-eyed
beautiful wife."
Bountiful evening,
a New Year's carol,
A little swallow flew.

TWO FRENCH NOËLS arranged by E Anderson

NOËL NO X FOR ORGAN Louis Claude Daquin

Born in Paris, 4 July 1694; died in Paris, 15 June 1772.

Outstanding musicians often launch their careers at ages when most children are still grappling with the multiplication tables. Jascha Heifetz made his debut as a professional violinist when a mere seven years old (Harpo Marx responded to this news by telling Heifetz 'I suppose before that you were just a bum') and Louis-Claude Daquin achieved something similar: he had the honour of playing the organ in Louis XIV's presence when still aged only six. A full-time organist before his

thirteenth birthday, Daquin eventually obtained posts at nearly all the leading Parisian churches. At the auditions for one such post, Saint-Paul in 1727, the applicants who lost out to Daquin included no less a figure than Jean-Philippe Rameau. Chief court organist from 1739, Daquin also served for the second half of his life at Notre-Dame, where so many crowded to hear his playing that on occasion the police needed to be summoned to restore order. His organ Noëls – all incorporating extant Yuletide folk-tunes, predominantly though not always French – are a godsend to many players today, for four reasons. First, they exude an unmistakable aroma of the festive season. Second, they are consistently fresh and inventive. Third, they never require too many reserves of technique or great quantities of practice time. Fourth, their sheer bounciness makes them appeal even to audiences otherwise misguided enough to find organ music boring. Here Elizabeth Anderson has arranged Daquin's tenth Noël for unaccompanied choir.

**Quand Dieu naquit à
Noël,**

Dedans la Judée,

On vit ce jour solennel

La joie inondée.

Il n'étoit ni petit,

ni grand,

Qui n'apportât son

présent,

When God was born at
Christmas,

There in Judea,

On that solemn day

Joy poured down.

There was no one small
or big,

Who would not bring a
present,

FRENCH NOËLS

See 2023 concerts

Et n'o, n'o, n'o, n'o,
Et n'offrit, ffrit,
ffrit,
Et n'o, n'o,
Et n'offrit
sans cesse,
Toute sa richesse.

And no, no, no, no,
And nobody who did not
offer,
And no, no,
And nobody who did not
offer unceasingly,
All his riches.

L'un apportoit un agneau
Avec un grand zèle,
L'autre un peu de
lait nouveau
Dedans une écuelle;
Tel, sous ses pauvres
habits,
Cachoit un peu de
pain bis,

One brought a lamb,
With great zeal;
Another brought a little
fresh milk
In a pail;
Yet another, under his
ragged cloak,
Carried a crust of
brown bread,

Pour la, la, la, la,
Pour la sain, sain, sain,
Pour la, la, la, la,
Pour la Sainte Vierge,
Et Joseph Concierge.

For the, the, the, the,
For the Holy, Holy, Holy
For the, the, the, the,
For the Holy Virgin And for
Joseph, the doorkeeper.

Ce bon père putatif
De Jesus mon ître,
Que le Pasteur
plus chétif

This good foster-father
To Jesus, my refuge,
Whom the very small
Shepherd

FRENCH NOËLS

See 2023 concerts

Désiroit [faire] connoître;
D'un air obligeant
et doux,
Recevoit les dons
de tous,

Desired to made known:
In an obliging and sweet
manner,
He received everyone's
gifts,

Sans cé, cé, cé, cé,
Sans céré, ré, ré,
Sans cé, cé,
Sans cérémonie,
Pour le Fruit de vie.

Without ce, ce, ce, ce,
Without cere, re, re,
Without ce, ce,
Without ceremony:
Gifts for the Fruit of life.

Il ne fut pas jusqu'aux Rois
Du rivage Maure,
Qui, joints au nombre de
Trois,
Ne vinssent encore;
Ces bons Princes d'Orient,
Offrurent
en Le priant,

There were even Kings
From the Moorish shores,
Who, in the number of
three,
Came to visit Him;
These good Princes of the
East, Offered, as they
worshipped Him,

L'en, l'en, l'en, l'en, l'en,
Cens, cens, cens,
L'en, l'en, l'en,
L'encens et la myrrhe,
Et l'or qu'on
admire.

In, in, in, in, in,
Cense, cense, cense,
In, in, in,
Incense and myrrh,
And gold, which is greatly
prized.

Quoiqu'il n'en eût pas
 besoin,
 Jesus notre Maître,
 Il en prit avec
 soin
 Pour faire connoître,
 Qu'il avoit les qualités
 Par ces dons représentés,

Although He had no
 need of them,
 Jesus Our Lord,
 Took hold of the gifts with
 care
 To make it known
 That He had the qualities
 Symbolised by these gifts,

D'un vrai, vrai, vrai, vrai,
 D'un Roi, Roi, Roi, Roi,
 D'un vrai, vrai,
 D'un vrai Roi de Gloire,
 En qui l'on doit croire.

Of a true, true, true, true
 Of a King, King, King, King,
 Of a true, true,
 Of a true King of Glory,
 In Whom we must believe.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH Traditional

arranged Elizabeth Anderson and François-Auguste
 Gevaert. *Born in Huysse, Belgium, 31 July 1828;
 died in Brussels, 24 December 1908*

The present tune, of French origin (though usually
 associated with words from 1862 by an Englishman,
 James Chadwick), is a familiar one to most people in the
 English-speaking world who know any Christmas carols at
 all. But the arrangement in today's concert has not been
 widely heard. Elizabeth Anderson describes the result
 thus:

This is one of those strophic songs that I had always found a bit too repetitive. One of the problems for me was the lack of momentum caused by the cadence and long held chord at the end of each of the choruses – too much stopping and starting. I really liked the arrangement by Belgian composer, F.A. Gevaert, but this had never been set to English words. I liked the way Gevaert introduced the bass voice in the second line of each text with an off-beat accent and continued the momentum between each verse and the following chorus by introducing passing notes. Among other things, in my arrangement, I removed the cadence from the end of all but the final chorus and introduced similar passing note figures to continue the momentum through to the following verse.

François-Auguste Gevaert deserves more general recognition than the musical public has ever accorded him outside his native land. He came from humble social origins; an early-twentieth-century American magazine rather sniffily asserted that ‘his father was a baker, and he was intended for the same profession, but better counsels prevailed.’ In youth, Gevaert composed no fewer than seven operas, which failed to win more than fleeting success. He achieved his greatest significance as administrator and pedagogue. From 1871 until his death, he served as the Brussels Conservatoire’s much-esteemed director. In this role, he raised his country’s

overall standards of musical teaching; wrote a treatise on orchestration, one which in 2022 retains its usefulness for students of that daunting art; and gave active, unselfish encouragement to his better-known compatriot César Franck.

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be?
Which inspire your heavenly songs?
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

HODIE CHRISTUS NATUS EST

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

Born in Deventer, 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 international reputation as organist and teacher. Though the Calvinist authorities at the city's Oude Kerk – 'Old Church' – forbade instrumental music during their actual services, they welcomed the chance to have such music from the organist before and after such services. At these points, Sweelinck's virtuoso playing came into its own. If Sweelinck himself had a private religious allegiance other than Calvinism, he kept quiet about it. But 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 Gabrielis. Conductor Ryan Turner has supplied the following vivid description: '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").'

For text and translation, see page five (Movement One of Ceremony of Carols)

The Australian Chamber Choir, founded by Douglas Lawrence and Elizabeth Anderson in 2007, has won critical acclaim in six countries:

“This excellent concert ended with a standing ovation”

– General Anzeiger Bonn, Germany

“Australian Choir in Super League” – Dagbladet, Ringsted, Denmark

“The audience was overcome with admiration for the angel voices of the ACC”

– Zielona Gora University News, Poland

Every singer on today’s program is a soloist, given that the Ockeghem *Deo Gratias* is performed with one singer per voice part. The asterisks below denote singers who are featured soloists or duettists for an entire movement or verse

Soprano

Alex Hedt*

Kristina Lang*

Elizabeth Lieschke*

Katherine Lieschke*

Kate McBride*

Jennifer Wilson-Richter*

Tenor

Matthew Bennett*

Will Carr*

Charles Hannah*

Samuel Rowe*

Alto

Elizabeth Anderson

Neda Bizzarri*

Melissa Lee*

Isobel Todd*

Bass

Thomas Drent (not Middle Park)

Kieran Macfarlane

Tom Reid

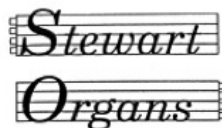
Duncan Robertson (Geelong,
Middle Park only)

Alasdair Stretch (not Geelong)

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Henk Nieuwenhuizen
Paul and Sue Nisselle
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Stephen Shanasy
David and Lorelle Skewes
Sandra Speirs
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