



Choir of New College Oxford

CONCERT of CHORAL MUSIC

St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta

(by kind permission of the St John's Co-Cathedral Foundation)

Monday 10 July at 7.00pm

PROGRAMME

William Byrd (1535-1623), *Sing joyfully*
Byrd, *Civitas sancti tui*

ORGAN

William Byrd, *Fantasia [A]*

plainchant, *Urbs Hierusalem beata*
Bairstow, *Blessèd City, heavenly Salem*
Harris, *Faire is the heaven*
Pritchard, *Magnificat (New College Service)*

ORGAN

Mendelssohn, *Organ Sonata No 3 in A major*
con moto maestoso

MacMillan, *When one man dies*
Marsh, *O ignis Spiritus*
Young, *O God, make the door of this house*

CHOIR OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD

Trebles

James Arnold
 Jack Baker Ellis
 Andrés Bobe Carvalho
 Alexander Compton-Burnett
 Toby Conway
 Yoav Gal
 Thomas Howarth
 Peter Kendall
 Finn Lawrence
 Monty Lawrence
 Arran Lusty
 Alexander Remoundos
 Didrik Tarras-Wahlberg
 George Walker
 Jacob Whyte
 Ethan Zhang

Altos

Jay Chitnavis
 Emily Fraser
 Karol Jozwik
 Elena Stamp
 Stephen Taylor

Tenors

Andrew Bennett
 Edward Beswick
 Jonathan Venn
 Theo Peters

Basses

John Furse
 Daniel Gilchrist
 Dominic Grimshaw
 John Johnston
 Raphaël Maurin
 Anton May
 Daniel Tate

Organ scholars

James Andrews
 Hamish Fraser

Assistant Organist

Dónal McCann

Director

Robert Quinney

THE CHOIR of NEW COLLEGE OXFORD is firmly established as one of the most acclaimed British choral ensembles. When William of Wykeham founded his 'New' College in 1379, a choral foundation was at its heart, and daily chapel services have been a central part of college life ever since. The choir comprises sixteen boy choristers and fourteen adult clerks; the latter a mixture of professional singers and undergraduate members of the college.

The choir has performed with many of the UK's finest ensembles, including the Academy of Ancient Music, The Orchestra of the Enlightenment, The English Concert, and more recently in performances of Bach and Handel with Instruments of Time & Truth. Bach is fundamental to the choir's year, with a regular cantata programme and an annual performance of the St John Passion. Touring is an important part of the choir's profile: this spring the choir gave acclaimed concerts in Houston, Dallas, Charlotte and New York. The choir has an impressive discography of over 100 recordings, reflecting the diversity of its repertoire and different performance styles. In 2020 the choir made its debut recording on the renowned Linn label with *John Sheppard: Media vita: 'A consistently radiant sound with strong, purposeful phrasing...[it is] thrilling to hear such young voices do justice to one of Sheppard's finest works'* (Gramophone, December 2020).

In June 2023 the choir premiered a new commission from Sir James Macmillan, the UK's most distinguished composer, and released its second disc with Linn Records, *New College: Commissions & Premieres*, which celebrates a century of new works for the choir. Composers include William Harris, Caitlin Harrison, Herbert Howells, Kenneth Leighton & Deborah Pritchard.

ROBERT QUINNEY is Organist of New College, Oxford, where he is also associate professor in the Faculty of Music. He also maintains a parallel career as a solo organist, and is a prolific recording artist: his discs of organ music by J. S. Bach, Elgar, Dupré, Wagner and Brahms have been widely acclaimed. In March 2023 he gave an acclaimed concert of J. S. Bach on the organ of the Royal Festival Hall, London.

He read music at King's College, Cambridge, where he was organ scholar. After four years as assistant master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, he became sub-organist of Westminster Abbey in 2004. While at the Abbey he performed at several televised services, including the Marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. From 2013 he was director of music at Peterborough Cathedral, before moving to New College in September 2014. His role in Oxford enables a unique synergy between the latest scholarship and the academic traditions of the

university; performance and research illuminate each other in the work of New College Choir. His particular research interests have borne fruit in regular performances of J. S. Bach's church music in the context of reconstructed liturgies; and he is committed to refreshing the choral repertory by commissioning new works.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

William Byrd (c.1535-1623) - *Sing joyfully*

Sing joyfully unto God our strength. Sing loud unto the God of Jacob.
Take the song and bring forth the timbrel, the pleasant harp and the viol.
Blow the trumpet in the new moon, even in the time appointed and at our feast day.
For this is a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

Psalm 81: 1-4

William Byrd (c.1535-1623) – *Civitas sancti tui*

Civitas sancti tui facta est deserta. Sion deserta facta est, Jerusalem desolata est.
The holy cities are a wilderness. Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

Isaiah 64: 9-10

Plainchant, Urbs Jerusalem beata

Urbs Jerusalem beata,
dicta pacis visio,
quae construitur in caelis
vivis ex lapidibus
angelisque coronata
sicut sponsa comite.

Portae nitent margaritis
adytis patentibus,
et virtute meritorum
illuc introducitur
omnis qui ob Christi nomen
hic in mundo premitur.

Gloria et honor Deo
usquequaque altissimo,
una Patri Filioque
inlyto Paraclito,
quibus laudes et potestas
per aeterna saecula.
Amen.

Nova veniens e coelo
nuptiali thalamo
praeparata, ut intacta
copuletur Domino.
Plateae et muri ejus
ex auro purissimo.

Tusionibus, pressuris
expoliti lapides
suis coaptantur locis
per manum artificis;
disponuntur permansuri
sacris aedificiis.

Source & translation as for Bairstow, Blessèd city

Edward Bairstow (1874-1946) - *Blessèd city, heavenly Salem*

Blessèd city, heavenly Salem,
Vision dear of peace and love,
Who of living stones art builded
In the height of heaven above,
And by angel hands apparell'd,
As a bride doth earthward move.

Out of heaven from God descending,
New and ready to be wed
To thy Lord, whose love espoused thee,
Fair adorned shalt thou be led;
All thy gates and all thy bulwarks
Of pure gold are fashioned.

Bright thy gates of pearl are shining,
They are open evermore;
And, their well-earned rest attaining
Thither faithful souls do soar,
Who for Christ's dear name in this world
Pain and tribulation bore.

Many a blow and biting sculpture
Polished well those stones elect,
In their places now compacted
By the heavenly Architect.
Nevermore to leave the temple,
Which with them the Lord hath decked.

To this Temple, where we call thee,
Come, O Lord of Hosts, today;

With thy wonted loving kindness,
Hear thy servants as they pray;
And thy fullest benediction
Shed within its walls always. Amen.

Urbs beata Ierusalem, 7th or 8th century hymn,
transl. J. M. Neale (1818-1866)

William Harris (1883-1973), Organist of New College, 1919-29 - *Faire is the heaven*

Faire is the heaven, where happy soules have place
In full enjoyment of felicitie,
Whence they doe still behold the glorious face
Of the Divine Eternall Majestie;
Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins,
Which all with golden wings are overdight,
And those eternall burning Seraphins,
Which from their faces dart out fiery light;
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
Be th'Angels and Archangels, which attend
On God's owne Person, without rest or end.
These then in faire each other farre excelling,
As to the Highest they approach more neare,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling,
Fairer than all the rest which there appear,
Though all their beauties joynd together were;
How then can mortall tongue hope to expresse
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?

*Edmund Spenser (1552-1599),
from An Hymn of Heavenly Beauty, 1596*

Deborah Pritchard (b. 1977) - *New College Service (2019; rev. 2022)*

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.
Glory be to 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.

Luke 1. 46-55

James MacMillan (b. 1959) - *When One Man Dies*

Commissioned by the Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford. First performed on 24 June 2023 by New College Choir, directed by Robert Quinney, with Dónal McCann, organ.

When one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated... some pieces are translated by Age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; But God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again, for that Library where every book shall lie open to another... The Bell doth toll for him, that thinks it doth; and though it intermit again, yet from that minute, that that occasion wrought upon him, he is united to God. ... Who bends not his ear to any bell, which upon any occasion rings? No man is an island, entire of itself... any man's death

diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

*Selected by the composer from John Donne (1572-1631),
Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (1624)*

Joanna Marsh (b. 1970) - O ignis spiritus

Commissioned in 2019 by New College, Oxford, to mark 40 years of women being admitted to the college.

O ignis Spiritus paracliti,
vita vite omnis creature,
sanctus es vivificando formas.

*O Holy Spirit of Fire,
life in the life of all life,
holy are you, enlivening all things.*

Sanctus es unguendo
Periculose fractos,
sanctus es tergendendo
fetida vulnera.

*Holy are you,
a healing balm to the broken.
Holy are you,
washing blistered wounds.*

O spiraculum sanctitatis,
o ignis caritatis,
o dulcis gustus in pectoribus
et infusio cordium in bono odore virtutum.

*O holy breath,
O fire of life,
O sweetness in my breast
infusing my heart with the fine scent of truth.*

O fons purissime,
in quo consideratur
quod Deus alienos
colligit et perditos requirit.

*O pure fountain
through which we know
God unites strangers
and gathers the lost.*

Tu etiam semper educis doctos
per inspirationem sapientie letificatos.

*And eternally do you bring forth knowledge
by the breath of wisdom.*

Unde laus tibi sit,
qui es sonus laudis
et gaudium vite,
spes et honor fortissimus,
dans premia lucis.

*All praise to you,
you who are the song of praise
and the joy of life,
you who are hope and the greatest treasure,
bestowing the gift of Light.*

*Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179),
Sequence for the Holy spirit; translation by Ivan Granger*

Toby Young (b. 1990) - O God, make the door of this house

Commissioned for the installation of Miles Young as Warden of New College, 2016

O God, make the door of this house wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship; narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling-block to children, nor to straying feet, but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. God make the door of this house the gateway to thine eternal kingdom. Amen.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711); Fellow of New College, 1657–62