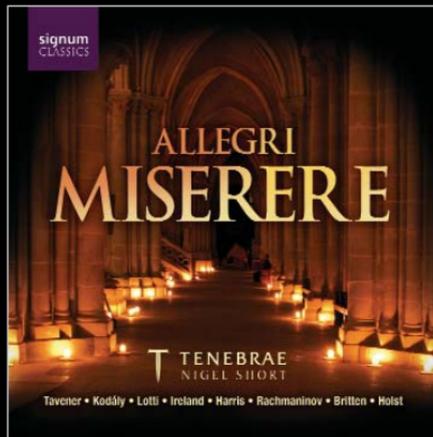
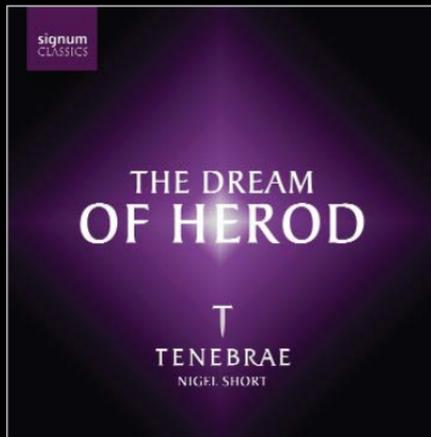


ALSO AVAILABLE ON SIGNUMCLASSICS



The Dream of Herod
Tenebrae

SIGCD046

The Dream of Herod features music for Advent, anthems for the Mother and Child, music for Christmas, and The Dream of Herod, a semi-dramatic contemporary work with a particular resonance at Christmas.

"...more polished choral singing would be hard to find anywhere."
BBC Music Magazine

"...exquisitely understated...singing of sincere simplicity..."
International Record Review

Allegri Miserere
Tenebrae

SIGCD085

Few can argue with Tenebrae's international stature as one of the most competent, versatile, exciting and passionate vocal ensembles in the world today.

Allegri's haunting Miserere is the central point in a journey through music of longing and entreaty, hope and faith. These works spanning the centuries are chosen from the heart of Tenebrae's concert repertoire, featuring works by Tavener, Holst, Rachmaninov, Lotti, Ireland, Harris, Britten and Kodály.

"I really think we're in a choral golden age at the moment ... It's beautifully sung, a wonderful disc" **BBC Music Magazine**

signum
CLASSICS

WHAT SWEETER MUSIC
SONGS AND CAROLS
FOR CHRISTMAS

T
TENEBRAE
NIGEL SHORT

Available through most record stores and at www.signumrecords.com For more information call +44 (0) 20 8997 4000

WHAT SWEETER MUSIC: SONGS AND CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS

1. Jingle Bells	Arr. Ben Parry	[2.35]
2. Silent Night	Franz Gruber, Arr. Jonathan Rathbone	[4.07]
3. What Sweeter Music?	John Rutter	[4.46]
4. A Spotless Rose	Herbert Howells	[3.41]
5. Quem Pastores?	Trad, Arr. Nigel Short	[1.43]
6. Veni, veni	Adrian Peacock	[2.38]
7. There is a Flower	John Rutter	[4.03]
8. Alleluia	Peter Wishart	[1.53]
9. The Lamb	John Tavener	[3.53]
10. I Wonder as I Wander	Arr. Andrew Carter	[3.23]
11. Quelle est cette odeur agreable?	French Trad, Arr. David Willcocks	[4.35]
12. We Wish You a Merry Christmas	Arr. Nigel Short	[2.05]
13. The Oxen	Jonathan Rathbone	[2.55]
14. Gaudete	Arr. Karl Jenkins	[1.48]
15. Away in a Manger	Trad, Arr. Nigel Short	[4.09]
16. Tomorrow Shall be my Dancing Day	Trad, Arr. David Willcocks	[1.57]
17. Nativity Carol	John Rutter	[4.40]
18. The Twelve Days of Christmas	Arr. Andrew Carter	[3.36]

Total Timings [58.30]

TENEBRAE
NIGEL SHORT DIRECTOR • JAMES SHERLOCK ORGAN

www.signumrecords.com

AN INTERVIEW WITH NIGEL SHORT

Christmas and choirs have always gone together. Whether it be the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College, Cambridge, or an annual visit to midnight mass, our memories of Christmas are almost always accompanied by a soundtrack of carols and choirs.

But what makes a good Christmas recording? What elements need to be there to bring something new to the market? How do you go about doing something different with the repertoire? These are some of the questions I put to Nigel Short, the musical director of Tenebrae.

So Nigel, why did you feel the need to record another Christmas CD?

Well, from the very beginning Christmas and Tenebrae go together. It was where the choir began back in the Summer of 2001 recording **The Dream of Herod**, a disc of Christmas music, which was followed by a Christmas tour to Switzerland. It was a voyage of discovery for everyone involved, especially me, and it gave us all a chance to focus on our ensemble skills and building a choir sound.

What happened on that first tour took us all by surprise; the opportunity to socialise and make music together really gave momentum to the group. And to this day it has been almost a group philosophy; work hard, play hard.

How did you go about choosing the pieces from the repertoire?

Well, in my mind a Christmas CD needs to appeal to as many people as possible, so a wider range of pieces gives that opportunity. The repertoire for this CD falls into three categories; traditional carol arrangements, original pieces composed for Christmas and then some lighter close-harmony arrangements of Christmas favourites - a throw back if you like to my days as a member of The King's Singers who did lots of this kind of repertoire and which I always found to be great fun.

In the traditional section we have **I Wonder as I Wander**, a beautiful Appalachian folk tune arranged by Andrew Carter, **Gaudete** by Karl Jenkins, **Quelle est cette odeur agreable** and **Tomorrow Shall be my Dancing Day**, both arranged by Sir David Willcocks, **Silent Night** arranged by Jonathan Rathbone and **Quem Pastores laudavere** and **Away in a Manger** in new arrangements by myself.

Then we move on to the original compositions with John Tavener's **The Lamb, Alleluia** by Peter Wishart, a trio of beautiful pieces by John Rutter (**What Sweeter Music, There is a Flower** and the **Nativity Carol**), a gem from the English composer Herbert Howells with **A Spotless Rose**, an exciting new piece by the record's producer Adrian Peacock (**Veni, veni**) and a ravishing setting of the Thomas Hardy poem **The Oxen** by Jonathan Rathbone.

The lighter repertoire, and fun, starts with a wonderfully energetic and tricky arrangement of **Jingle Bells** by Ben Parry followed by my own arrangement of **We Wish You a Merry Christmas**. Ben told me a little behind the circumstances of writing his piece:

"The arrangement of Jingle Bells with the odd 7/8 bar thrown in was written to put audiences in America and Japan off clapping through it. But it didn't seem to deter them - they invariably persevered, and ended up either clapping on or off the beat depending on where the singers were in the bar. It was, of course, originally written for 8 solo voices, but sounds much more exciting with a larger group".

It was great fun to do, and look out for the farmyard in Andrew Carter's witty arrangement of **The Twelve Days of Christmas!**

So I see there are quite a few arrangements by yourself, did you write especially for the disc?

No, I was actually contacted a few years ago by Boosey and Hawkes to compile a collection of new arrangements of Christmas tunes that were specifically light and jazzy, hence the title of the collection "Christmas in Blue". It was great to have an opportunity to put them onto disc.

Was there a different approach to the Close Harmony style of piece?

We always bring the same principles to bear in terms of quality of work and accuracy of course, but really it was about having fun singing together; some of the pieces on the disc are technically challenging but you have to get over that hurdle and ensure the music has a "smile on its face" that hopefully the listener will hear and respond to.

The sessions for this recording followed directly on from four days of very intense work recording a disc of Poulenc's *Mass* and the stunning *Figure*

Humaine (to be released on Signum in 2010), but it shows the flexibility of the singers involved with Tenebrae that they can go from one extreme to the other in the blink of an eye; able to work on some of the most challenging choral music one day and imitating geese and cows the next!

How did you go about creating a sound for this disc? Was it different to say, the Poulenc?

After discussion with the producer and engineer we decided to go for a light, warmer sound; bringing the microphones in closer, which of course created its own problems in terms of putting the singers under a microscope. When it's like this they can get away with very little.

And why did you choose St Bartholomew The Great as a venue?

I think St Bartholomew's is one of the most stunning churches in England, let alone London. It was where Tenebrae recorded **The Dream of Herod** back in the 2001, and it was also the place where we performed a very emotional world premiere of Joby Talbot's **The Path of Miracles**. Originally the premiere was to take place on 7 July 2005, the day of the London bombings, and so had to be postponed. When we did eventually perform the

piece it was dedicated to the victims and was a very emotionally charged occasion. It is also a happy coincidence that I was recently appointed director of music here, so as a building it seems as close to our home as anywhere.

What is next for Tenebrae?

Well, we will tour to the USA performing the Poulenc works and Talbot's *Path of Miracles* and then we take another Christmas Swiss tour, which we are all looking forward to. Let's just hope the Swiss like our animal impressions!

Interviewed by Mark Chambers, September 2009.

BIOGRAPHIES

TENEBRAE

Tenebrae is a professional chamber choir, founded and directed by Nigel Short in 2001. Often performing by candlelight, the choir creates an atmosphere of spiritual and musical reflection, where medieval chant and renaissance works are interspersed with contemporary compositions. The carefully selected team of singers use the acoustic and atmosphere of the building to enable the audience to experience the power and intimacy of the human voice.

Singers are drawn from outstanding musical backgrounds - King's College, Cambridge, Westminster Abbey and Cathedral, St Paul's Cathedral, The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and English National Opera - to create a unique vocal mix with an extraordinary range of vocal power and color.

Tenebrae has an exceptionally wide repertoire, from early, through renaissance, baroque and classical music, to romantic and twentieth century works, plus a range of specially commissioned

pieces, the most recent of which is Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*. Tenebrae's unique virtuosity and style are exemplified on CD recordings, including Mozart's *Requiem* with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Sir John Tavener's *Mother and Child*, *Gaudete*, a Christmas disc in association with Karl Jenkins and Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles*.

Recording work is complemented by a schedule of regular performances for festivals and venues throughout the UK, Europe and the world. December 2006 saw the commencement of Tenebrae's artistic association with the London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Colin Davies and LSO Live with a series of critically and publicly acclaimed performances and recordings at the Barbican, London.

Tenebrae was nominated for a Royal Philharmonic Society Award in 2007.



NIGEL SHORT

Nigel began his musical life as a chorister at Solihull Parish Church going on to study singing and piano at the Royal College of Music in London. He began his career as a soloist in opera and oratorio and as a member of specialist vocal ensembles such as The Tallis Scholars whilst maintaining a regular involvement in church music, firstly as a member of Westminster Abbey Choir then Westminster Cathedral. He joined The King's Singers when he was 27 and stayed with them for seven years.

After a short break of about one ski season in the Swiss Alps he set about founding his own group, Tenebrae, aiming to bring together what he loved best as a singer - namely the more passionate sounds of large Cathedral choirs and the precision of ensembles like The King's Singers - to create a new kind of choral group. Whilst embracing an eclectic repertoire, he wanted to have some 'signature' works that would make Tenebrae different, adding a theatrical element that would involve singers moving around as if on stage. To that end he wrote *The Dream of Herod*, with a central role for baritone Colin Campbell, and commissioned Joby Talbot to write *Path of Miracles*, premiered in July 2005.

Since its debut performance in 2001 Tenebrae has given concerts all over the world, including Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland, UK, USA and Bermuda.

Nigel and the group have performed and recorded live with The Chamber Orchestra of Europe for Warner Classics and have given several performances with The English Concert. They record regularly with Signum Classics.

In December 2006, Sir Colin Davis and the LSO chose Tenebrae to perform Handel's *Messiah* and Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ* to a sold-out audience at the Barbican. Additional performances with Sir Colin Davis are planned.

Nigel divides his time between directing Tenebrae and giving an ever-increasing number of masterclasses and workshops for both professional and amateur vocal groups and choirs throughout Europe.

Nigel has recently been named Director of Music at St Bartholomew The Great, London.





Photo by Eric Richmond

Recorded at St Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield, London on 22 - 26 June 2009.

Producer - Adrian Peacock
Engineered and Edited - Andrew Mellor
Assistant - Alex Foster

Tracks 4, 8 and 15 - Recorded at the Church of St Bartholomew the Great, 27 - 28 August 2001

Producer - Adrian Peacock
Engineer - Limo Hearn
Editor - Ken Blair

Tracks 9 and 14 - Recorded at St Michael's Church, Highgate, 12-13 May 2004

Producers - Adrian Peacock and Gabriel Crouch (Gaudete)
Engineers - Limo Hearn and Mike Hatch
Editor - David Hinit

Mixed and Mastered by Andrew Mellor

Cover Image, Design and Artwork - Woven Design
www.wovendesign.co.uk

© 2009 The copyright in this recording is owned by Signum Records Ltd.

© 2009 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd.

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by law. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK
+44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com

www.signumrecords.com