

# Christmas from Cambridge

Carols and Christmas music from Queens' College, Cambridge

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This recording brings together some fine music from over one thousand years of Christmas celebrations. Familiar ancient carols such as 'The holly and the ivy' mix with medieval music and more recent choral pieces from the twentieth century, in a programme sung by one of Cambridge's finest choirs.

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| 1. A solis ortus cardine                    | 13 All this time William Walton                |
| 2 Verbum patris umanatur                    | 14 The holly and the ivy                       |
| 3 Nowell: Dieu s wous garde                 | 15 What cheer? William Walton                  |
| 4 Estampie – Robertsbridge Codex            | 16 Toccata on 'Veni Emmanuel'<br>Andrew Carter |
| 5 Ther is no rose of swych vertu            | 17 Ave regina coelorum Michael Finnissy        |
| 6 Lullay, lullow: I saw a swete semly syght | 18 The fader of heven Peter Maxwell Davies     |
| 7 Swete was the song the Virgine soong      | 19 Verbum supernum                             |
| 8 Lullaby, my sweet little baby             |  |
| 9 A fancy William Byrd                      | The Choir of Queens' College, Cambridge        |
| 10 Bethlehem Down Peter Warlock             | Directed by James Weeks                        |
| 11 Silent Night Alan Ridout                 | Matthew Steynor, organ                         |
| 12 Long, long ago Herbert Howells           |  |

The *Gift*  
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CCL CDG1023

Cover image: Tim Rawle

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**CAROLS AND CHRISTMAS MUSIC  
FROM QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**

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This recording brings together some fine choral music from over one thousand years of Christmas celebrations. Familiar ancient carols such as ‘The holly and the ivy’ mix with medieval music and more recent choral pieces from the twentieth century in a programme sung by one of Cambridge’s finest choirs.

Plainsong is one of the greatest musical resources. Its purity and apparent simplicity have inspired composers over the centuries. In the old English hymn ‘A solis ortus cardine’ (track 1) the choir sings of the birth of Jesus and of the angels and shepherds of the Christmas story from Bethlehem. The scene is thus set for the rest of the programme. This leads us through a series of medieval and renaissance carols (many transcribed from manuscripts in Cambridge libraries) to recently composed music, including a beautiful piece by Michael Finnissy, ‘Ave regina’ (track 17) which is based on the words and music of another plainsong hymn.

The Choir of Queens’ College, Cambridge has established a reputation for innovative and exciting performances and recordings. It is run by two undergraduate organ scholars, each holding the post for three years, who are at liberty to stamp their own individuality on the choir, ensuring a malleable and Protean ensemble which adopts constantly to changes of approach and repertory. The choir’s busy term-time schedule includes a twice-weekly choral evensong, cathedral evensongs marking college events throughout the year. The repertory covered by such diverse projects is correspondingly large. Queens’ has been a keen promoter of contemporary

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music since CV Stanford (himself a college organ scholar in 1870) dedicated a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis to the choir in 1874. A CD, *Evening Watch*, released in January 1999, attracted favourable critical attention, and a tour to Germany featured an invitation by the city of Munich to participate in their prestigious International Choral Series, later broadcast on South German radio.

### **Soprano**

Joanna Willmott, Rachel Flecker, Natalie Malikova, Caroline Gill, Jo Kilpatrick, Naomi Lovett, Mai King

### **Alto**

Christi Burt, Beth Guiton, Helen McKenna, Amy Clemitchaw, Frances Gibson

### **Tenor**

John Paul Hoskins, Richard Tiley, Paul Naish, Daniel Oi

### **Bass**

Matthew Wilkinson, Jonathan Paxman, Bob Yuncken, Jonathan Dawes, Daniel Clarke

### **Organ**

Matthew Steynor, James Weeks