

A Winter's Light

1	Bob Chilcott (b. 1955): This is the truth (2010)*†	3:24
2	Traditional, arr. Jonathan Rathbone (b. 1957):	
	Gabriel's Message (1991)	1:45
	Jan Sweelinck (1562-1621): Hodie Christus natus est (1619)	3:46
4	Michael Praetorius (c.1571-1621), arr. Jan Sandström (b. 1954): Es ist ein Ros entsprungen (1609/1990)	4:03
5	Herbert Howells (1892-1983): Sing Lullaby (1920)	3:31
6	Pierre Villette (1926-98): Hymne à la Vierge (1954)	3:58
7	Bob Chilcott: Sweet was the song (2010)*†	4:15
8	Plainchant: <i>Divinum mysterium</i> from <i>Piae Cantiones</i> , arr. David Willcocks (b. 1919): Of the Father's heart begotten	
	(1582/1963)†	3:03
	Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1555-1612): Hodie Christus natus est (1597)	4:17
10	Bob Chilcott: Rejoice and be merry (2010)*†	1:50
11	Walford Davies (1869-1941): O little town of Bethlehem (1920)†	5:30
12	C. Armstrong Gibbs (1889-1960): The Stable Door (1933)	2:29
13	Adolphe Adam (1803-56), arr. John E. West (1863-1929): O Holy Night (1847/1910) [†]	5:40
14	Harold Darke (1888-1976): In the bleak mid-winter (1909)†	4:43
15	Gabriel Jackson (b. 1962): The Christ-child (2009)	5:02
16	John Rutter (b. 1945): Nativity Carol (1971)†	4:26
17	James Lord Pierpont (1822-93), arr. Ben Parry (b. 1965):	
	Jingle Bells (1859/1992)	2:45
18	Bob Chilcott: Christmas-tide (1997)	3:08
19	Greg Lake (b. 1947), arr. Jonathan Rathbone:	
	I believe in Father Christmas (1974/?)	3:17
20	Jonathan Rathbone: Carol Medley (1993)†	3:14

† Martin Ford, Organ

Susan Waton, Soprano ਜ਼ · Alysha Paterson, Soprano ਜ਼ ਜ਼ · Paul Robertson, Tenor ਜ਼ Fiona McWilliams, Soprano 20 · Alex Brougham, Alto 20 Daniel Burges, Tenor 20 • Matthew Wood, Bass 20

A Winter's Light

A Christmas Collection

Over the years Vasari Singers, in its many annual carol concert celebrations, has always strived to imbue its programmes with a warming blend of the traditionally familiar and the readily accessible, less well-known, from all periods and styles of music; so one would quite usually and happily find a piece of sixteenth-century polyphony a mist of vocalising voices creating a magically peaceful sitting alongside the most contemporary of material, or a close-harmony, scat number juxtaposed with something stylistically far removed. As with our concert programmes, so with this latest Christmas disc which includes a selection from amongst the many carols that have become firm Vasari favourites over the years.

The journey begins with Bob Chilcott and the first of three extracts from his On Christmas Night, written in 2010 for the University Christian Church, Austin, Texas, who also commissioned it and gave the first performance, conducted by the composer, on 12th December of that year. In the three movements included on this disc Chilcott magically combines his own simple yet exquisitely crafted material with traditional carols; in the first, the start of the Christmas story, This is the truth 1 is incorporated with another traditional opening carol (not wanting to give the game away too much!). Later a similar approach is adopted in Sweet was the song 7 where a beautiful Chilcott tune is first given its own life, and then later superimposed on a traditional carol, with entrancing effect. The third extract, Rejoice and be merry 10, later still on the recording, once again uses the same technique, but here in an exuberant and upbeat form. One final carol from the hand of one of Britain's finest choral composers of our time is *Christmas-tide* 18: another simple but deeply poignant setting of words by the American poet and novelist Janet Lewis (1899-1998), written in 1997.

Two hymns dressed up in modern (but very different) guise are, first, David Willcocks's majestic setting of Of the Father's heart begotten 8: a tune that dates back to as early as the tenth century, but more recognisably from and which is set to fourth-century words (in translation) by

Prudentius. Secondly, the sixteenth-century German anonymous hymn Es ist ein Ros entsprungen 4. set to the familiar 1599 tune first printed in Cologne in the Speyer Hymnal. In this arrangement by Jan Sandström, the traditional harmonisation of the tune is surrounded in

From the latter part of the sixteenth century we include two contrasting settings of the Hodie Christus natus est: one from Jan Sweelinck 3, who spent almost his entire life living and working in Amsterdam, and whose setting combines joyous and masterful homophonic and polyphonic writing; the other from Giovanni Gabrieli 9, born and raised in Venice and whose music is sharply influenced by his workplace, the magnificent St Mark's Basilica. He uses the spaces there to create a motet that relies on dramatically contrasting antiphonal effects. One can imagine the glorious sound reverberating around that building as the two choirs come together in a stirring

Unashamedly Victorian in sentiment and an oftrequested favourite is Cantique de Noël, better known to us in its English guise. O Holy Night 13. written by German composer Adolphe Adam in 1847, using an English translation by John Sullivan Dwight of Placide Cappeau's Minuit, chrétiens. This remains as popular today as it always has been: Vasari Singers' recording adds to a long list of famous interpretations, including those of Enrico Caruso (1916), Luciano Pavarotti (platinum disc in 1984), Michael Crawford (1993), Mariah Carey (1994), Josh Groban (2002), Whitney Houston (2003), Celine Dion (2004) and Andrea Bocelli (double platinum disc in 2009), to name but a few. Also, to add to this fame, this carol became, on 24th December 1906, the second piece of music ever to be broadcast on radio.

Henry Walford Davies, in his delightful setting of O little town of Bethlehem 11, sets just verses 1, 3 and 5 of the 1582 Piae Cantiones of Theoderici Petri Nylandensis the original poem by the Philadelphian priest, Phillips Brooks (inspired by a visit to the eponymous city in 1865)

^{*} from the Carol Cycle On Christmas Night

and as an adjunct sets, as a recitative, two verses from Chapter 2 of St Luke's Gospel. Similar in mood and spirit is Harold Darke's beautiful setting of Christina Rossetti's In the bleak mid-winter [iii], which retains its place as one of the most-loved carols of all time and can take pride of place in any Christmas collection. Cecil Armstrong Gibbs was born a year later than Harold Darke and is less well known than his contemporary, but we include The Stable Door [iii] for its simplicity and gentle beauty. It was written in 1933, setting words by Lilian Cox, and is dedicated 'To the Rev. R.E. Fanshawe', my maternal grandfather and close friend of the composer.

Herbert Howells was born just four years later than Harold Darke and three years after Armstrong Gibbs, yet belongs to a different generation of composers. *Sing Lullaby* [5] is the third in the set of *Three Carol-Anthems* (the others being *Here is the little door* and *A spotless Rose*) written between the years 1918 and 1920. Howells wrote briefly about this carol-anthem: "Here too a poet found the verses for me. F.W. Harvey, the Gloucestershire poet, friend of lvor Gurney, had written and published the poem only a short time before this setting was made".

Pierre Villette studied with Maurice Duruflé, then at the Paris Conservatoire where he was a fellow student of Pierre Boulez; he went on to spend his life as a teacher and composer, living and working first in Besançon and later in Aix-en-Provence. His music is informed by Duruflé, Debussy and Messiaen. Despite its strongly French flavour, it is not widely performed in France; in the United Kingdom it was initially championed by Donald Hunt at Worcester Cathedral before being taken up by choirs throughout the country. Hymne à la Vierge (a) is perhaps his most popular choral work, but O sacrum convivium, O magnum mysterium and Attende, Domine for example, are also superbly crafted.

Christmas would not be Christmas without a visit to the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, for the Christmas Eve Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. Of most particular interest and most eagerly awaited is the première of the new commissions that are first performed in these services. One such is Gabriel Jackson's *The Christ-child* [15], written for that service in 2009, a gentle, lilting and powerful carol that sets words by G.K. Chesterton.

And no Christmas would be complete without the appearance of a carol from the pen of John Rutter who has single-handedly done more for redefining and reinventing the Christmas carol than any living composer. Any choral director's happy headache is which of the many gems to include; here we go with perhaps his best known, the exquisite Nativity Carol 19.

Finally, no Vasari Christmas could pass without a smattering of close harmony, Swingle arrangements with which to wind up proceedings. Here, from the hand of ex-Swingles Ben Parry and Jonathan Rathbone, we offer familiar tunes in cool new guises with funky rhythms (don't try tapping your foot to Jingle Bells! \$\overline{T}\$), outrageous keyshifts (count the modulations as well as the carols in the Carol Medley \$\overline{D}\$), unfettered exuberance (Gabriel's Message \$\overline{D}\$) and just a touch of bitter-sweet in Greg Lake's I believe in Father Christmas \$\overline{B}\$.

Whatever your taste in festive music, we hope that you will find something here to enjoy, to delight, to uplift, to move, to wonder at, to smile at, to be entertained by ... and perhaps by which to peel the sprouts and stuff the turkey.

Jeremy Backhouse

Martin Ford



Martin Ford is the Assistant Organist of Westminster Abbey. After a year as Organ Scholar at Southwark Cathedral, combined with study at the Royal Academy of Music, he took up the Organ Scholarship at Magdalen College, Oxford in 2005. Working under the direction of Bill Ives, he accompanied the choir in their daily services, BBC Radio 3 broadcasts, and CD recordings, including a release on the Harmonia Mundi label of the music of Maurice Duruflé. After graduating, he continued his studies at the Royal College of Music. Martin was appointed Assistant Organist at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square in 2009, where he accompanied the choir for numerous BBC Radio broadcasts and a tour to the USA. His previous teachers have included David Sanger, Susan Landale, David Graham and David Titterington, and he is currently taught by Sophie-Véronique Cauchefer-Choplin.

Vasari Singers



Founded over 30 years ago, Vasari Singers is among the leading chamber choirs in Britain. performing music ranging from Renaissance to contemporary under Jeremy Backhouse. The choir performs regularly in London as well as visiting many of England's cathedrals to sing services, with recent trips to Canterbury, Salisbury, Bath and Ripon. The choir has commissioned over 20 works since 2000, including the oratorio The Cloud of Unknowing by Francis Pott and a Requiem by Gabriel Jackson, Vasari's extensive discography reflects the choir's versatility and quality and showcases its unique choral sound, whether singing a cappella or accompanied. Two CDs of works by Marcel Dupré received Gramophone's 'Editor's Choice' award. The Howells Requiem and

Frank Martin Mass CD was Gramophone Award-nominated, and the 2007 disc Noel Nouvelet was MusicWeb International's Recording of the Month. 2012 saw Vasari Singers open the London A Cappella Festival at King's Place, performing alongside members of the Swingle Singers.

Soprano
Harriet Gritton
Elizabeth Limb
Fiona McWilliams
Rosalind Newis
Julia Smith
Nicola Balzan
Alysha Paterson
Katie Fry
Lizzie Isherwood
Jess Stansfield
Susan Waton

Alto Elizabeth Atkinson Julia Field Sarah Mistry Alison Benton Julia Ridout Alex Brougham Stephanie May

Tenor Daniel Burges Simon Burges Paul Robertson Julian Washington Roger Carpenter David Jackson Chris Paterson Chris Riley

Bass Matthew Bernstein John Hunt Paul Newis Matt Wood Malcolm Field Andrew Key Keith Long Nick Wakelin

Jeremy Backhouse



Jeremy Backhouse is one of Britain's leading conductors of amateur choirs. He began his musical career in Canterbury Cathedral where he was Senior Chorister. He has been the sole conductor of the Vasari Singers since its inception in 1980. Since winning the prestigious Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition in 1988, the Vasari Singers have performed regularly in cathedrals and concert halls throughout Britain and abroad, and have a substantial discography. In 1995 Backhouse became Music Director of the Vivace Chorus and in May 2011, conducted a performance of Mahler's Symphony of a Thousand in the Royal Albert Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2009 he was appointed Music Director of the Salisbury Community Choir, a 180-strong non-auditioned choir. He has also guest conducted the BBC Singers, the Brighton Festival Chorus, the Philharmonia Chorus, the London Chorus and many other leading British adult and youth choirs.

This is the truth Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955) Words: Traditional English and Cecil Frances Alexander (1823-95)

This is the truth sent from above, The truth of God, the God of love; Therefore don't turn me from the door, But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will relate, That God at first did man create; The next thing which to you I tell, Woman was made with him to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes Till God the Lord did interpose; And so a promise soon did run: That he'd redeem us by his Son.

Once in Royal David's City stood a lowly cattle shed Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for a bed Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

3 Hodie Christus natus est Music: Jan Sweelinck (1562-1621) Words: Magnificat antiphon for Christmas Day

Hodie Christus natus est, Noe! Hodie Salvator apparuit, Alleluia! Hodie in terra canunt angeli, Laetentur Archangeli, Noe! Hodie exultant justi dicentes: Gloria in excelsis Deo, Alleluia!

Noe!

② Gabriel's Message (The Angel Gabriel) Music: Traditional, arr. Jonathan Rathbone (b. 1957) Words: Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Gloria

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."

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."

Today Christ is born, Noel!

Today the Saviour hath appeared, Alleluia!

Today, angels sing on earth, and Archangels rejoice,

Noel!

Gloria

Today the just exult, saying: Glory to God in the highest,

Alleluia! Noel! 4 Es ist ein Ros entsprungen Music: Michael Praetorius (c. 1571-1621), arr. Jan Sandström (b. 1954) Words: Anonymous

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen Aus einer Wurzel zart, Als uns die Alten sungen: Von Jesse kam die Art Und hat ein Blümlein bracht Mitten im kalten Winter Wohl zu der halben Nacht.

5 Sing Lullaby Music: Herbert Howells (1892-1983) Words: F.W. Harvey (1888-1957)

Sing lullaby, sing lullaby, While snow doth gently fall. Sing lullaby to Jesus. Born in an oxen-stall, Sing lullaby to Jesus. Born now in Bethlehem, The naked blackthorn's growing To weave his diadem.

Sing lullaby, While thickly snow doth fall, Sing lullaby to Jesus, The Saviour of us all.

Sing lullaby.

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A rose has sprung up from a tender root, As the elders sang to us: It came from Jesse's lineage And it has brought forth a bud Amid the cold winter In the middle of the night.

6 Hymne à la Vierge Music: Pierre Villette (1926-98) Words: Roland Bouheret (1930-95)

O toute belle, Vierge Marie, Votre âme trouve en Dieu

Le parfait amour.

Il vous revêt du manteau de la Grâce

Comme une fiancée Parée de ses iovaux. Alléluia, Alléluia,

Je vais chanter ta louange, Seigneur,

Car tu as pris soin de moi,

Car tu m'as envelopée du voile de l'innocence.

Vous êtes née avant les collines,

O sagesse de Dieu Porte du Salut.

Hereux ce lui qui marche dans vos traces,

Qui apprête son coeur A la voix de vos conseils.

Alléluia, Alléluia, Je vais chanter ta louange, Seigneur,

Car tu m'as faite, avant le jour,

Car tu m'as fait précéder le jaillissement des sources.

Avant les astres Vous étiez présente Mère du Créateur Au profound du ciel

Quand Dieu fixait les limites du monde

Vous partagiez con coeur Etant à l'oeuvre avec lui. O toute belle Vierge Marie.

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Oh Virgin Mary most fair Your soul in God finds

Perfect love.

He clothes you in the mantle of Grace

As a bride

Arrayed in her iewels. Alleluia, Alleluia,

I will sing your praise, Lord,

For you have taken care of me,

For you have wrapped me in the veil of innocence.

You were born before the hills,

Oh wisdom of God, Gate of Salvation.

Happy is he who follows in your footsteps,

Who opens his heart

To the voice of your counsel.

Alleluia, Alleluia, I will sing your praise, Lord

For you made me, before time began,

For you made me, before the bubbling of the springs.

Before the stars You were there Mother of the Creator In the highest firmament

When God decreed the limits of the world

You shared his heart

And were with him in his labours.

Oh Virgin Mary most fair.

Translation © Penny Langton 2012

Sweet was the song
 Music: Bob Chilcott
 Words from William Ballet's Lute Book (16th century)
 and Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang, When she to Bethlem Judah came And was delivered of a Son That blessed Jesus hath to name. Lulla, Iulla, Iulla, Iullaby, Lulla, Iulla, Iullaby,

'Sweet babe, sweet babe', sang she 'My son, and eke a Saviour born, Who has vouchsafed from on high To visit us that were forlorn.' Lalulla, lalulla, lalullaby, Lulla, lalulla, lalullaby.

'Sweet babe', sang she, sang she, And rocked him sweetly on her knee.

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright; Round yon Virgin Mother and Child, Holy Infant so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace. B Of the Father's heart begotten Melody from Piae Cantiones, Theodorici Petri Nylandensis, 1582, arr. David Willcocks (b. 1919) Words: Prudentius (b. 348), trans. R.F. Davis (d. 1937)

Of the Father's heart begotten, Ere the world from chaos rose, He is Alpha: from the Fountain All that is and hath been flows; He is Omega, of all things Yet come the mystic Close, Evermore and evermore.

By his word was all created; He commanded and 'twas done; Earth and sky and boundless ocean, Universe of three in one, All that sees the moon's soft radiance, All that breathes beneath the sun, Evermore and evermore.

He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
Evermore and evermore.

Sing, ye heights of heav'n, his praises; Angels and Archangels, sing! Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful, Let your joyous anthems ring, Ev'ry tongue his name confessing, Countless voices answering, Evermore and evermore. Hodie Christus natus est
 Music: Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1555-1612)

Words: Magnificat antiphon for Christmas Day

Alleluia.
Hodie Salvator apparuit,
Alleluia.
Hodie in terra canunt angeli,
Laetantur Archangeli,
Alleluia.
Hodie exultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Et in terra pax hominibus
Bonae voluntatis,
Alleluia.

Hodie Christus natus est,

Music: Bob Chilcott
Words: Traditional English

Rejoice, Rejoice!
Rejoice and be merry in songs and in mirth!
O praise our Redeemer, all mortals on earth!
For this is the birthday of Jesus our King,
Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing!

A heavenly vision appeared in the sky; Vast numbers of angels the shepherds did spy, Proclaiming the birthday of Jesus our King, Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing!

Likewise a bright star in the sky did appear, Which led the wise men from the east to draw near; They found the Messiah, sweet Jesus our King, Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing! Today Christ is born,
Alleluia.
Today the Saviour hath appeared,
Alleluia.
Today, angels sing on earth,
and Archangels rejoice,
Alleluia.
Today the just exult, saying:
Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace
good will towards men,
Alleluia.

And when they were come, they their treasures unfold And unto him offered myrrh, incense and gold So blessed for ever be Jesus our King Who brought us salvation, his praises we'll sing, Rejoice!

On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring news of great joy News of great mirth News of our merciful King's birth. Rejoice! O little town of Bethlehem
 Music: Walford Davies (1869-1941)
 Words from St Luke 2, vv. 11, 12,
 and Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Unto you is born this day in the city of David A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you; Ye shall find the Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, And lying in a manger.

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light; The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him,
still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, Descend to us we pray; Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell: O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel. 12 The Stable Door Music: C. Armstrong Gibbs (1889-1960) Words: Lilian Cox (b. ca. 1878)

A soft light from a stable door Lies on the midnight lands; The Wise Man's star burns evermore Over all desert sands.

Unto all peoples of the earth A little child brought light; And never in the darkest place Can it be utter night.

No flick'ring torch, no wav'ring fire, But life, the Light of men; Whatever clouds may veil the sky Never is night again.

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O Holy NightMusic: Adolphe Adam (1803-56),arr. John E. West (1863-1929)Words: J.S. Dwight (1813-93)

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth Long lay the world, in sin and error pining, Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices. For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices! O night, divine! O night when Christ was born O night divine, O night divine, O night divine.

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand
So, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the wise men from the Orient land
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials, born to be our friend;
He knows our need, he guardeth us from danger;
Behold your King, before the Lowly bend!
Behold your King, before the Lowly bend!

M In the bleak mid-winter Music: Harold Darke (1888-1976) Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak mid-winter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign. In the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim worship night and day. A breast full of milk and a manger full of hay. Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before, the ox and ass and camel, which adore.

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart. 15 The Christ-child Music: Gabriel Jackson (b. 1962) Words: G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap His hair was like a light (O weary, weary were the world But here is all a-right.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast His hair was like a star. (O stern and cunning are the kings, But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart His hair was like a fire (O weary, weary is the world But here the heart's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee, His hair was like a crown, And all the flowers looked up at Him, And all the stars looked down.

Mords and music: John Rutter (b. 1945)

Born in a stable so bare Born so long ago Born 'neath light of star He who loved us so.

Far away Silent lay Born today Your homage pay For Christ is born for aye Born on Christmas Day. Cradled by mother so fair, Tender her lullaby Over her son so dear Angel hosts fill the sky. Far away...

Wise men from distant far land, Shepherds from starry hills Worship this babe so rare Hearts with his warmth he fills. Far away...

Love in that stable was born Into our hearts to flow; Innocent dreaming babe, Make me thy love to know. Far away...

'Nativity Carol' words and music by John Rutter © Oxford University Press 1967. Words reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

☑ Jingle Bells Words and music: James Lord Pierpont (1822-93), arr. Ben Parry (b. 1965)

Jingle bells, jingle bells Jingle all the way, Oh what fun it is to ride In a one-horse open sleigh, hey!

Dashing through the snow In a one-horse open sleigh Over fields we go, laughing all the way Bells on bobtail ring, making spirits bright What fun it is to ride and sing this sleighing song tonight. Christmas-tide
 Music: Bob Chilcott
 Words: Janet Lewis (1899-1998)

.... (....

Lullee, lullay
I could not love thee more
if thou wast Christ the King.
Now tell me, how did Mary know
that in her womb should sleep and grow
The Lord of everything?

Lullee, lullay
An angel stood with her,
who said 'That which doth stir
Like summer in thy side
shall save the world from sin.
Then stable, hall and inn
shall cherish Christmas-tide.'

Lullee, Iullay
And so it was that Day.
And did she love him more
because an angel came
to prophesy his name?
Ah no, not so,
she could not love Him more,
But loved Him just the same.

Lullee, lullee, lullee, lullay,

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I believe in Father Christmas
 Music: Greg Lake (b. 1947), arr. Jonathan Rathbone
 Words: Peter Sinfield (b. 1943)

They said there'll be snow at Christmas,
They said there'll be peace on earth.
But instead it just kept on raining,
A veil of tears for the Virgin birth.
I remember one Christmas morning
A winter's light and a distant choir
And the peal of a bell and that Christmas-tree smell
And their eyes full of tinsel and fire.

They sold me a dream of Christmas,
They sold me a silent night.
And they told me a fairy story
Till I believed in the Israelite
And I believed in Father Christmas
And I looked to the skies with excited eyes
Till I woke with a yawn in the first light of dawn
And I saw him and through his disguise.

We wish you a hopeful Christmas, We wish you a brave new year. All anguish pain and sorrow, Leave your heart and let your road be clear. They said there'll be snow at Christmas, They said there'll be peace on earth. Hallelujah, Noël, be it Heaven or Hell, The Christmas we get, we deserve.

I Believe In Father Christmas
Words & Music by Greg Lake & Peter Sinfield
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20 Carol Medley Music: Jonathan Rathbone

Deck the hall with boughs of holly, Fala lalala, lala lala, 'Tis the season to be jolly, Fala lalala, lala lala.

I saw three ships come sailing in, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day, I saw three ships come sailing in, On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three?

(On Christmas Day etc.)

Our saviour Christ and his Lady, (On Christmas day etc.)

Deck the hall with boughs of holly, Fala lalala, lala lala.

We wish you a merry Christmas And a happy New Year. Good tidings we bring To you and your kin. We wish you a merry Christmas And a happy New Year.

Now bring us some figgy pudding And bring some out here.

(Good tidings etc.)

For we all like figgy pudding So bring some out here.

The holly and the ivy, When they are both full grown, Of all the trees that are in the wood The holly bears the crown. Nowell. Nowell.

We wish you a merry Christmas And a happy New Year.

And we won't go until we've got some So bring some out here. (Good tidings etc.)

Past three o'clock
And a cold frosty morning

Born is the King of Israel.

The rising of the sun, And the running of the deer, The playing of the merry organ, Sweet singing in the choir.

Good tidings we bring To you and your kin. We wish you a merry Christmas And a happy New Year.

Deck the halls with boughs of holly, Fala lalala, lala lala.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Publishers

Oxford University Press (tracks 1, 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18); Kikapust Music (tracks 2, 17, 20); Chester Music (track 3); Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers, Ltd. (tracks 4, 12); Stainer and Bell (tracks 5, 14); Durand SA (track 6); Choral Public Domain Library (track 9); Novello Publishing Ltd. (track 13); Lead Choice Ltd. (track 19)

The Vasari Singers' annual carol concerts always provide a warming blend of traditional favourites and less well-known music from all periods and styles. Here, joyous and masterful 16th-century polyphony sits alongside eternally popular Victorian carols, and exquisitely crafted settings by Howells and Walford Davies join works as recent as Gabriel Jackson's *The Christ-child*. Bob Chilcott magically superimposes traditional carols with entrancing new material, and no Vasari Christmas would be complete without some close harmony Swingle singing. The Vasari Singers have also recorded Gabriel Jackson's *Requiem* (8.573049).

A WINTER'S LIGHT

A Christmas Collection

1 Chilcott: This is the truth*	3:24	11 Walford Davies: O little town	
2 Rathbone: Gabriel's Message	1:45	of Bethlehem*	5:30
3 Sweelinck: Hodie Christus		12 Armstrong Gibbs:	
natus est	3:46	The Stable Door	2:29
4 Praetorius, arr. Sandström:		13 Adam, arr. J.E. West:	= 40
Es ist ein Ros entsprungen	4:03	O Holy Night*	5:40
	3:31	14 Darke: In the bleak mid-winter*	4:43
5 Howells: Sing Lullaby		15 Jackson: The Christ-child	5:02
6 Villette: Hymne à la Vierge	3:58	16 Rutter: Nativity Carol*	4:26
Chilcott: Sweet was the song*	4:15	77 Pierpoint, arr. B. Parry:	
8 Willcocks: Of the Father's		Jingle Bells	2:45
heart begotten*	3:03	18 Chilcott: Christmas-tide	3:08
Gabrieli: Hodie Christus		19 Lake, arr. Rathbone:	
natus est	4:17	I believe in Father Christmas	3:17
10 Chilcott: Rejoice and be merry*	1:50	20 Rathbone: Carol Medley*	3:14

Martin Ford, Organ*

Vasari Singers • Jeremy Backhouse

A detailed track list and artists' and publishers' details can be found inside the booklet.

Recorded at Tonbridge School Chapel, Tonbridge, Kent, UK, from 10th to 12th February, 2012

Producer: Adrian Peacock • Engineer and editor: Will Brown

The sung texts can be found inside the booklet and may also be accessed at

www.naxos.com/libretti/573030.htm

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