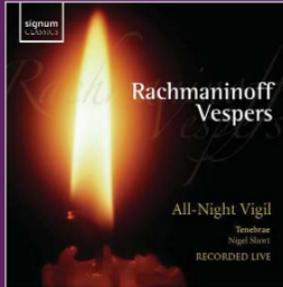


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Mother and Child SIGCD501

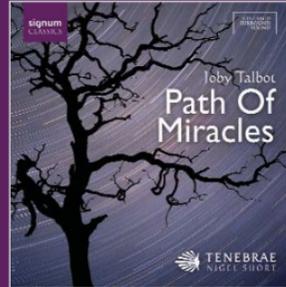
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CLASSICS

ALLEGRI MISERERE

T TENEBRAE
NIGEL SHORT

Tavener • Kodály • Lotti • Ireland • Harris • Rachmaninov • Britten • Holst

ALLEGRI MISERERE

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1. | John Tavener (b. 1944)
Song for Athene | [6.11] |
| 2. | John Ireland (1879-1962)
Ex ore innocentium | [4.05] |
| 3. | John Tavener
The Lamb | [3.51] |
| 4. | Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)
Hymn to the Cherubim | [4.39] |
| 5. | Count Alexander Sheremetiev (1859-1931)
Now ye heavenly powers | [3.42] |
| 6. | Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
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| 7. | Pawel Lukaszewski (b. 1968)
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| 8. | Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)
8-part Crucifixus | [3.39] |
| 9. | Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652)
Miserere | [11.59] |
| 10. | Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967)
Esti Dal | [3.08] |
| 11. | Trad. arr. Nigel Short
The Dying Soldier | [4.34] |
| 12. | Gustav Holst (1874-1934)
Psalm 148, Lord who has made us for Thine own | [4.53] |
| 13. | William Henry Harris (1883-1973)
Faire is the Heaven | [5.23] |
| | Total time | [71.03] |

TENEBRAE
DIRECTED BY NIGEL SHORT

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TENEBRAE: ALLEGRI MISERERE

The fusion of a line from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with Eastern Orthodox chant in the opening moments of John Tavener's *Song for Athene* sets the tone for a divergent and diverting aggregate of creeds, songs, and prayers performed by Tenebrae under the direction of Nigel Short. Songs of innocence and experience, war, remembrance and hope mingle with Orthodox hymns, Roman Catholic motets and Anglican anthems. From the secretive Vatican of the Seventeenth Century to present-day Poland, by way of the American Civil War, there are plenty of crosscurrents, concurrences and reflections with which to conjure in this programme.

1. John Tavener (born 1944) composed **Song for Athene** in 1993 to commemorate the tragic death of actress Athene Hariades. The opening 'Alleluia' reflects Tavener's devotion to the Eastern Orthodox faith and his fascination with its musical traditions while the quotation from the final scene of *Hamlet*, 'flights of angels sing thee to thy rest', brings Hariades' profession to the foreground. The combined effect is of extreme simplicity and emotional purity. The work now serves as a duplex memorial having been performed as the recessional Hymn at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997.

Alleluia.

May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Alleluia.

Remember me, O Lord, when you come into your kingdom.

Alleluia.

Give rest, O Lord, to your handmaid who has fallen asleep.

Alleluia.

The Choir of Saints have found the well-spring of life and door of paradise.

Alleluia.

Life: a shadow and a dream.

Alleluia.

Weeping at the grave creates the song:

Alleluia.

Alleluia.

Come, enjoy rewards and crowns
I have prepared for you.

Baritone solo: Andrew Rupp

2. From untimely death to young life and the distinctly English strains of John Ireland's **Ex ore innocentium** - 'from the mouths of the innocent'. Despite sympathies for pagan mysticism, socialism and humanism, Ireland (1879-1962)

never flinched from his devotion to English church music. The text of this little Passiontide motet (by Bishop W.W. How) reflects on Christ's suffering through the eyes of a single innocent - how Jesus Christ chose a 'poor and humble lot' and died 'to save a child like me'. The pathos of the music is heightened at the child's imagining of the crucifixion, the simple song breaking into two emotionally heightened streams before re-grouping for a reposeful close.

It is a thing most wonderful,
Almost too wonderful to be,
That God's own Son should come from heaven,
And die to save a child like me.
And yet I know that it is true:
He chose a poor and humble lot,
And wept, and toiled and mourned and died,
For love of those who loved him not.
I sometimes think about the Cross,
And shut my eyes,
And try to see the cruel nails and crown of thorns,
And Jesus crucified for me.
But even could I see him die,
I should but see a little part
Of that great love, which, like a fire,
Is always burning in his heart.
And yet I want to love thee, Lord;
O light the flame within my heart,

And I will love thee more and more,
Until I see thee as thou art.

Poem by Bishop W.W. How

3. Tavener's carol, **The Lamb** was written for the composer's young nephew in 1982. The poem, by William Blake, begins by asking questions of the lamb ('Little lamb, who made thee?') before answering them in the second stanza. Blake entwines the gentleness of creation with the idea of God coming into the world as both innocent child and meek, sacrificial lamb. These complex and competing images are softened by Tavener's treatment of the text - by turns haunting, enchanting and mesmerising.

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee.
He is called by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb.
He is meek, and He is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by His name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Poem by William Blake

4. Rachmaninov's setting of the *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* remains, for many, the most musically satisfying setting of this particular Russian Orthodox service. Although Rachmaninov (1873-1943) never stipulated whether it was intended for performance in church or concert hall, it works well in both contexts due to its formal clarity and the spiritual splendour of the choral writing. The **Hymn to the Cherubim** calls for us to lay aside the cares of this life and receive the 'King of All'. The sublime, undulating opening soon gives way to hushed tones before building into a grand climax, glorifying the Holy Trinity. The hymn ends gently, like Tavener's *Hymn to Athene*, with long-spun Alleluias.

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Ever blessed Lord God Almighty:
Holy, Holy, Holy,
God in three persons, blessed, blessed Trinity
Saints and Martyrs bless and praise Thee,
Hearts and voices swell one hymn
Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord, Heaven and earth are full of Thy great glory,
Holy blessed Trinity
Amen
Glory be to Thee, Glory to Thee in the highest,
Hosannah, Hosannah, Hosannah
In the highest to Father and Son and Holy Spirit
Glory to Thee in the highest, in the highest,
Cherubim and Seraphim
Angels and Archangels praise and worship
Thee singing
Alleluia.

5. Count Alexander Sheremetiev (1859-1931) was a Russian nobleman and philanthropist who, following the lead of his father, founded his own orchestra and choir in order to further the cause of music in Russia. His vast inherited wealth gave him access to the finest musicians around and enabled him to mount concerts at prices low enough for the general public to afford. His few surviving compositions include a setting of **Now ye heavenly powers** from the Liturgy of the

Pre-sanctified Gifts. Calling the Orthodox faithful to communion, this quietly powerful piece bids them to partake in everlasting life.

Now ye Powers of Heaven do serve invisibly with us;
Lo, the King of Glory enters.
Lo, the mystical sacrifice is upborne, fulfilled.
Let us draw near in faith and love
And become communicants of life eternal.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Arranged and edited by Vladimir Morosan

6. In complete contrast to the lush, low, close harmonies of the Orthodox tradition, Benjamin Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia* is full of light, space and grace - fitting qualities to celebrate the patron saint of music on whose feast day the composer was born. Completed on his voyage home from the United States in 1942, the hymn was his final collaboration with poet W. H. Auden. The piece consists of three poems, dedicated to Britten and follows the English tradition of celebratory odes by invoking the muse, in this case to 'appear in visions / To all musicians', and by describing instruments with vocal soloists in the final section.

I
In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.
Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.
*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

II
I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.
I cannot err;
There is no creature

Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.
I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.
All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.
I shall never be
Different. Love me.
*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

III
O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.
O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,

So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.
O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing so small, so gay.
O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of our intellectual will.
That what has been may never be again.
O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.
O bless the freedom that you never chose.
O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.
O wear your tribulation like a rose.
*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

Soprano 1 - Grace Davidson
Soprano 2 - Natalie Clifton-Griffith
Alto - Anna Stephany

Tenor - Chris Watson
Bass - Simon Grant

Words by W. H. Auden

7. In the Western Christian tradition there is no shortage of settings of the Angelic Salutation or **Ave Maria**, with the versions by Bach-Gounod and Schubert leading the field in terms of popularity. Undaunted, one of Poland's younger generation of composers, Pawel Lukaszewski (born 1968) has produced an affecting and genuinely devotional setting of the Marian prayer. Like his older compatriot, Penderecki, Lukaszewski composes in a largely tonal style shot through with unexpected but appropriate effects. His style marks him out as both a thoroughly modern composer of sacred music and a worthy inheritor of an ancient tradition.

Ave Maria
Amen.

8. One of Lukaszewski's many distinguished forebears in the Roman Catholic tradition, Antonio Lotti (1667-1740) was a Venetian composer much celebrated in his day. He attracted the finest singers to participate in his operatic ventures, was able to command huge salaries for his

services and even found the time to teach many of the next generation's most talented Italian composers. As the senior choirmaster at the prestigious Basilica of St Mark in Venice, he produced a great deal of high-quality sacred music. His 8-part **Crucifixus** is a wonder of polyphonic writing, depicting the pain of the crucifixion through striking harmonies, with one part after another piercing the dense texture, rising to the foreground and falling back again, as if in pain and exhaustion.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est.
He was crucified also for us
Under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.

Published by Dr J.A. Bank
© Anne Bank

9. Even earlier within the same tradition, Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652) is famed for a single piece of church music, the **Miserere** - a setting of Psalm 51, composed for the Papal Choir and traditionally performed exclusively at the Vatican during Holy Week. Legends abound surrounding the secrecy enveloping the choir's repertoire, its skill in improvising ornamentation and how death

might ensue if certain works were removed or copied by choir members or visitors. Death was an unlikely vengeance from the Vatican, but even the threat of excommunication didn't deter the 14 year-old Mozart, who copied the *Miserere* after a single hearing in 1770. At its heart, the piece is a relatively straightforward treatment of the plainchant, but the music is transformed by a second, ornamented choir part, which rises, thrillingly, to a top C, an uncommon feature for this period.

1. Choir I: Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.
Have mercy on me, God: according to your great mercy.
2. Cantor: Et secundum multitudinem miserationem tuarum: dele iniquitatem meam.
And according to the multitude of your tender mercies blot out my iniquity.
3. Choir II: Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.
Wash me from my iniquity: and cleanse me of my sin.
4. Cantor: Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

For I acknowledge my iniquity: and my sin is always before me.

5. Choir I: Tibi soli peccavi et malum coram te feci: ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum iudicaris.
Against you only have I sinned and done evil in your sight: that you may be justified in your sentence, and fair in your judgement.
6. Cantor: Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.
For behold, I was conceived in sin: and in sin my mother conceived me.
7. Choir II: Ecce enim veritatem in corde dilexisti: incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.
For behold, you have loved truth: and you have shown me your hidden wisdom.
8. Cantor: Asperges me hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.
You shall sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: you will wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
9. Choir I: Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exsultabant ossa humiliata.

- You will make me hear of joy and gladness: and the bones you have crushed shall rejoice.*
10. Cantor: Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele.
Turn away your face from my sins: and blot out all my iniquities.
11. Choir II: Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.
Create in me a clean heart, God: and renew a right spirit within me.
12. Cantor: Ne proicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.
Cast me not from your presence: and take not your holy spirit from me.
13. Choir I: Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu principali confirma me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation: and strengthen me with your spirit.
14. Cantor: Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur.
I will teach the unjust your ways: and the wicked shall be converted to you.
15. Choir II: Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae: et exultabit lingua mea iustitiam tuam.
Deliver me from blood guilt, God, the God of my salvation: and my tongue shall extol your justice.
16. Cantor: Domine, labia mea aperies: et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.
You will open my lips, Lord: and my mouth shall declare your praise.
17. Choir I: Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem utique: holocaustis non delectaberis.
For you do not desire sacrifice, else I would give it to you: you delight not in burnt offerings.
18. Cantor: Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus: cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicies.
The sacrifice of God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, you will not despise.
19. Choir II: Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion: ut aedificentur muri Ierusalem.
Deal favorably, Lord, in your good will with Zion: that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up.
20. Choir I: Tunc acceptabis sacrificium iustitiae, oblationes, et holocausta: tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.
Then you will accept the sacrifice of justice, oblations and burnt offerings: then shall they lay calves upon your altars.
- Quartet:
Soprano 1 (top) - Grace Davidson
Soprano 2 - Julia Doyle
Alto - Ben Turner
Bass - Matthew Brook
- Edited by George Guest
10. Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) set a good few religious texts in his time, but his prime concerns were Hungarian music, ethnomusicology and education. He was an indefatigable collector of folksong, the melodies, rhythms and harmonies of his country's musical inheritance informing all of his compositions. His arrangement of the Northern Hungarian song, **Esti Dal**, has achieved extraordinary popularity through translation into a multitude of languages. This is hardly a surprise given the universal theme; a soldier prays for divine protection to see him through another night in a foreign land. The fervent, but necessarily whispered, longing for home, security and rest is reflected in the music with extraordinary sensitivity.
- Erdo mellett estvéledtem,
Subám fejem alá tettem,
Őszszetettem két kezemet,
Ugy kértem jó Istenemet:
En Istenem, adjál szállást,
Már meguntam a járkálást,
A járkálást, a bujdosást,
Az idegen földön lakást.
Adjon Isten jó ejszakát,
Küld je hozzám szent angyalát,
Bátorítsa szívünk álmát,
Adjon Isten jó ejszakát.
- Evening darkness overtook me near the woods;
I have put my coat under my head,
I have put my hands together
To pray to the Lord, like this:
Oh, my Lord, give me a place to sleep,
I am weary with wandering,
With walking around and hiding,
With living on foreign land.
May Lord give me a good night,
May he send me a holy angel,
May he encourage our hearts' dreams,
May he give us a good night.
- Soprano solo: Julia Doyle

11. **The Dying Soldier** (also known as *Brother Green*) is the lament of a less fortunate fighting man, shot and expiring during the American Civil War. Lying on the cold ground, he asks his friend to stay by his side and relay his final thoughts to his wife and children, secure in the knowledge that he will, in time, be reunited with them in heaven. The tune, arranged by Nigel Short, is a version of another famous song of death - the old Scots ballad, *Barbara Allen*.

O Brother Green O come to me,
For I am shot and bleeding.
Now I must die no more to see
My wife and my dear children.
The fighting foe has laid me low
On this cold ground to suffer,
Stay brother stay and lay me away
And write my wife a letter.
O brother I am dying now,
O I do die so easy.
Surely death has lost its sting
Because I love my Jesus.
Go tell my wife she must not grieve,
Go kiss my little children
For they will cam for me in vain
When I am gone in to Heaven.

Baritone solo: Matthew Brook
American Folksong
Arranged by Wilberg / Short

12. Like John Ireland, Gustav Holst (1874-1934) was not conventionally religious and tended towards a fusion of socialist thought and mystical beliefs. He was much taken by Indian spirituality and became proficient enough in Sanskrit to translate hymns from ancient Hindu texts whilst retaining a strong interest in early English music and folksong. His setting of Psalm 148, **Lord who has made us for Thine own**, is a fine example of his unconventional, fresh approach to an ancient art - combining the directness of plainchant and folk music with surprising interjections, complex rhythms and joyfully clamorous harmonisations.

Lord, Who hast made us for thine own, Hear as
we sing before Thy throne.

Alleluia.

Accept Thy children's rev'rent praise For all
Thy wondrous works and ways.

Alleuia.

Waves rolling in on ev'ry shore, Pause at His
foot-fall and adore.

Alleluia.

Ye torrents rushing from the hills, Bless Him
Whose hand your fountains fills.

Alleluia.

Earth, ever through the power divine,
Seedtime and harvest shall be thine.

Alleluia.

Sweet flowers that perfume all the air, Thank
Him that He hath made you fair.

Alleluia.

Burn, lamps of night, with constant flame,
Shine to the honour of His name.
Thou sun, whom all the lands obey, Renew His
praise from day to day.

Alleluia.

13. A thoroughbred of the Anglican tradition, William Henry Harris (1883-1973) held numerous prestigious positions as organist and educator, including appointments at New College, Oxford and St George's Chapel, Windsor, where he meticulously organised numerous grand ceremonial services. Steeped in the Church of England's music and worship, his anthem for double choir, **Faire is the Heaven**, is unerring in its utterance, pacing and beauty. Although a perennial favourite, it requires a confident pair of choirmaster's hands and singers of consummate ability to release its many glories.

Faire is the heav'n 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 eachother 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?

Words by Edmund Spenser

BIOGRAPHIES

TENEBRAE

Tenebrae is a professional vocal ensemble, founded and directed by former King's Singer Nigel Short. Passion and Precision is Tenebrae's motto and its members are drawn from musical backgrounds reflecting these qualities, such as the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Cathedral, King's College Cambridge and from Britain's two major opera houses, Covent Garden and English National Opera. This combination offers an impressive scope of choral experience and interpretative and dramatic skills giving the choir its exceptional range of vocal power and colour.

Tenebrae has built an impressive reputation for innovative and memorable performances at festivals and venues throughout the UK and Europe. Its ever-expanding performing schedule includes many return visits to venues, and also sees it making its Spanish debut in 2006 touring Joby Talbot's *Path of Miracles* to the great churches of the Camino route, and the start of an association with the LSO. Recordings on Signum Classics to date cover a wide range of repertoire from the 16th to 21st century. Tenebrae will also appear on the LSO Live label.



Photos by Oliver Haubensak



Photo courtesy of Canterbury Festival

NIGEL SHORT

Nigel Short began his musical life as a chorister at Solihull Parish Church going on to study singing and piano at the Royal College of Music. 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



Photo by Eric Richmond

in 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.

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.



TENEBRAE



Photo by Eric Richmond

SOPRANO: Grace Davidson, Julia Doyle, Joanna Forbes, Juliet Fraser, Amy Haworth, Laura Holmes, Amy Moore

ALTO: David Allsopp, Mark Chambers, Ruth Massey, Anna Stephany, Ben Turner

TENOR: Paul Badley, Andrew Busher, Jeremy Budd, Andrew Tortise, Christopher Watson

BASS: Matthew Brook, Gabriel Crouch, Joseph Cullen, William Gaunt, Simon Grant, Daniel Jordan, Adrian Peacock, David Porter-Thomas, Andrew Rupp

ORGAN: Jeremy Filsell

Tracks 3 & 6:

Recorded at St Michael's, Highgate, London, UK, 17 May 2004
Producer - Adrian Peacock / Engineer - Mike Hatch

Track 10:

Recorded at All Hallows, Gospel Oak, London, UK, 8 July 2005
Producer - Adrian Peacock / Engineer - Limo Hearn

All remaining tracks:

Recorded at St Jude's on the Hill, Hampstead, London, UK, 5 & 7 January 2006
Producer - Adrian Peacock / Engineer - Limo Hearn
Booklet notes - M. Ross
All tracks edited by David Hinnitt
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