

A close-up photograph of two flowers. On the left is a vibrant purple flower, partially open. To its right is a larger, light pink flower with several petals, some showing a gradient from white to pink. The background is a plain, light color.

**signum**  
CLASSICS

Paul Mealor • Benjamin Britten

**...the flowers  
have their angels**

**The Rodolfus Choir  
Ralph Allwood**

# ... THE FLOWERS HAVE THEIR ANGELS

## PAUL MEALOR • BENJAMIN BRITTEN

	<b>Rejoice in the Lamb, Op.30</b>	Benjamin Britten	
1	Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues		[1.36]
2	Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter		[1.33]
3	Hallelujah		[1.07]
4	For I will consider my cat Jeffroy		[2.15]
	Soloist: Zoe Silkstone <i>treble</i>		
5	For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour		[0.59]
	Soloist: Lara Rebekah Harvey <i>alto</i>		
6	For the flowers are great blessings		[1.57]
	Soloist: Josh Baxter <i>tenor</i>		
7	For I am under the same accusation with my Saviour		[2.38]
8	For H is a spirit – For the instruments are by their rhimes		[4.10]
	Soloist: James Newby <i>bass</i>		
9	Hallelujah		[1.18]
	<b>Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal</b>	Paul Mealor	
	<b>Four Madrigals on Rose Texts</b>		
10	Now sleeps the crimson petal		[3.23]
11	Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting		[3.18]
12	Upon a bank with roses set about		[1.56]
13	A spotless rose		[4.40]
14	<b>A Hymn to the Virgin</b>	Benjamin Britten	[3.53]
	Soloists: Hannah Wight <i>soprano</i> , Katie Doig <i>alto</i> Toshi Ogita <i>tenor</i> , Gary Allen <i>bass</i>		

15	<b>Ecce sacerdos magnus</b>	Tomás Luis de Victoria	[1.40]
16	<b>Prelude and Fugue on a Theme of Vittoria</b>	Benjamin Britten	[5.04]
17	<b>Ecce sacerdos magnus</b>	Plainchant	[2.55]
	<b>Five Flower Songs, Op.57</b>	Benjamin Britten	
18	To Daffodils		[2.16]
19	The succession of the Four Sweet Months		[2.07]
20	Marsh Flowers		[2.29]
21	The Evening Primrose		[2.37]
22	The Ballad of Green Broom		[2.29]
	<b>Praise</b>	Paul Mealor	
	<b>Five Songs of Praise and Devotion</b>		
23	Praise, my soul		[1.57]
24	The world, the clustering spheres		[4.47]
	Soloist: Camilla Seale <i>soprano</i>		
25	Your gentleness, O God of grace		[4.20]
26	Glorious is the crown		[3.52]
	Soloist: Peter Davoren <i>tenor</i>		
27	Let all the world in every corner sing		[5.03]
	Soloist: Hannah Wight <i>soprano</i>		
	Total timings:		[76.19]

THE RODOLFUS CHOIR  
TOM WINPENNY ORGAN  
ROSS GUNNING PERCUSSION  
RALPH ALLWOOD

## Benjamin Britten

Although Britten's engagement with a huge variety of poetic and other texts was stimulated most profoundly by his friendship with WH Auden in his twenties, it is clear from diary entries and early musical essays that the composer was already hugely enthusiastic for the inspiration that words could bring to his music even from childhood. The finest early example is surely *A Hymn to the Virgin* written whilst the 16-year-old boy composer was in the school's sanatorium. The macaronic text alternates medieval English words sung by the full choir with Latin responses, taken by a quartet or semi-chorus. The melodic lines are elegant and the harmonic language has a diatonic simplicity that occasionally allows flickers of an earlier English choral language to appear: there are some cadences on bare chords without a mediant and a mixture of major and minor colours close together, redolent of much Tudor music. What must have impressed its first audience at a Lowestoft Musical Society concert in January 1931 was the directness of expression that this youthful piece articulated so convincingly and maturely. The strident Catholicity of the medieval text, anathema to that most

parochial of audiences, went without comment by its listeners then, as so often, today; the graceful and powerful music says it all.

The music that Britten wrote in the early 1940s, following his return to Great Britain from America – and whilst he was progressing on the composition of *Peter Grimes* – has a remarkable energy and vitality. Still today, 60 years or so after the first performance of *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Op.30, it is striking how vividly and brilliantly Britten responds to the witty, idiosyncratic words of poet Christopher Smart. The text is a celebration of the creator God found in all things. It begins with a hushed prayer that leads on to an invocation of a whole series of Old Testament characters sung to some thrilling, rhythmically taxing, music. Then follows a contemplation of the poet's cat Jeoffry and the animal's awareness of his maker; here a solo vocal part converses playfully with an *obbligato* organ line just as a cat might be teased with a ball of wool. Further meditations follow – on a mouse and on flowers, both also reflections of their creator's greatness – before the concluding sprint through an animated parade of musical instruments and a graceful Purcellian 'Hallelujah' that neatly brings the work to a close. It is perhaps typical of Britten

that he responded to Walter Hussey's invitation to compose a piece for an Anglican church service by writing something that was so far away from the manner of other contemporary church music. There is music here that has a deep poignancy in its most contemplative moments but it is delightfully boisterous and almost comical in the fast-moving sections.

In his published oeuvre Britten focused almost exclusively on writing for musicians to play together in ensembles. As a performer he devoted much time to his work with tenor Peter Pears, and the composer's Aldeburgh Festival appearances included duets with fellow-pianist Richter and accompanying cellist Rostropovich. *The Prelude and Fugue on a Theme of Vittoria* is one of Britten's rare forays into solo writing; it was the only organ solo by him published during his lifetime. Written in 1946, again at the behest of Walter Hussey, this work has none of the fun of *Rejoice in the Lamb*. The work's seriousness is rooted in the plainsong-like melody from the motet *Ecce sacerdos magnus*, which appears initially as a bold opening statement on the pedals and then in a more demure manner as the theme forms the brooding fugue. The work has had a mixed reception, but the accusation that the composer wrote it in bed one

morning before getting up for breakfast seems a little unkind and is certainly untrue. The piece really needs a rather large organ to capture the variety of colours and moods evoked by the composer.

If Britten abjured the manner of his immediate English predecessors and contemporaries in the sacred choral music of the forties, in the *Five Flower Songs* Op.47, first performed in the spring of 1950 he directly emulated it. Here are five charming pieces, written for botanical enthusiasts Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst of Dartington, that follow in the line of pastoral English part-songs, the staple diet of Edwardians Elgar, Parry and Stanford. The songs move from the delicate imitative music of the Herrick setting *To Daffodils* to a more wistful approach in *The succession of the Four Sweet Months* by the same poet. Then comes *Marsh Flowers* by George Crabbe; this poet wrote the original poem of Peter Grimes and Britten retained a fondness for him throughout his life. The melodic lines are more angular here and the harmonic language frequently pushes away from the more stable world of the first two songs as the composer describes a series of less immediately attractive plants such as the 'slimy root' of the strong mallow or 'dull

nightshade' with her 'deadly root'. John Clare's *The Evening Primrose* returns us to a more gentle and pensive world and this short cycle finishes with a boisterous rendition of *The Ballad of Green Broom*, as the singers tell the cheerful tale in music of increasing pace and virtuosity.

© Simon Whalley

## PAUL MEALOR

### *Now sleeps the Crimson Petal*

Paul Mealor's short choral cycle consists of four linked madrigals on texts referring to roses either directly or as a metaphor for love.

The eponymous first song sets a sensual poem by Tennyson in which the closing of flowers as night draws on suggests the union of two lovers. The setting is delicate and reflective but exploits the full range of the choir's vocal resources. *Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting* uses a typical English madrigal text, paraphrased from a 16th-century Italian original. The play of dual tonalities expresses the poet's flattering confusion: is he seeing his lady's red lips or the petals of a rose? *Upon a bank with roses set about* contrasts a

peaceful pastoral idyll with the sharp pain of a thwarted lover. Fast-moving and quiet, the music evokes a murmuring brook with micro-polyphony and rippling lines, interrupted when the voice of wounded Love is briefly heard.

The final poem, a setting of the Christmas text *A spotless rose*, is the emotional heart of the cycle, recalling the musical material of all the other three movements. An aural depiction of the petals of a rose unfurling culminates at the words 'fairest bud unfolds to light', and the cycle comes gently to rest on a rich B major chord.

© Mandy Macdonald

## Praise

*Five Songs of Praise and Devotion for Choir, Organ and Percussion.*

The five songs of praise to God take various texts by some of my favourite hymn writers and poets and mould them into one, continuous, devotional anthem. The structure of the cycle is arch-like in design with the two outer movements sharing similar musical material; movements two and four sharing similar material, and the third, central movement reflecting upon material used in all five movements. In fact, the third

movement is the emotional heart of the work setting Geoffrey Rowell's powerful Eucharistic hymn of Christ's love and sacrifice in a slow, meditative and all-encircling manner.

The compositional inspiration for the entire cycle is that of 'change ringing' or, more specifically, the art of ringing a set of tuned bells in a series of mathematical patterns, as we find in churches and cathedrals throughout the world. This musical motif, often a call to prayer in most Christian countries, is explored in many different ways throughout my cycle with the voices themselves becoming the change-ringing bells in the fourth movement and, the inner, most intimate sound of the bell explored through the use of the Tibetan singing bowl, in the second movement with the voices actually becoming the 'harmonics' of the bell.

The poetry of the 18th-century mystic, Christopher Smart has long been an inspiration for me and, rather unusually, I have chosen to set two extracts from his glorious poem, 'A Song to David' as 'meditations' upon spirituality as the two central movements here. Smart's poetry is cluttered with powerful and colourful images; though, in my selections, I have tried to focus on two recurring images – that of

God's beautiful creation, the earth and, his redeeming light given to us through the birth of Christ. For me, these images strike at the very heart of Smart's work and offer moments of reflection within my own choral cycle.

*Praise* is a celebration and was composed as a as a kind of companion piece to Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the lamb* and to celebrate Britten's centenary year of 2013.

*Praise* was commissioned and is dedicated to Dr Ralph Allwood MBE & The Rodolfus Choir and was premiered by them on their tour of Oxford and Douai Abbey between 28th December 2012 and 5th January 2013.

© Paul Mealor

## TEXTS

1 - 9 **Rejoice in the Lamb**

1 Rejoice in God, O ye Tongues;  
give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb.  
Nations, and languages, and every Creature,  
in which is the breath of Life.  
Let man and beast appear before him,  
and magnify his name together.

2 Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,  
bind a Leopard to the altar,  
and consecrate his spear to the Lord.  
Let Ishmael dedicate a Tyger,  
and give praise for the liberty in which  
the Lord has let him at large.  
Let Balaam appear with an Ass, and bless  
the Lord his people  
and his creatures for a reward eternal.  
Let Daniel come forth with a Lion,  
and praise God with all might  
through faith in Christ Jesus.  
Let Ithamar minister with a Chamois,  
and bless the name of Him,  
that cloatheth the naked.  
Let Jakim with the Satyr  
bless God in the dance.  
Let David bless with the Bear –  
the beginning of victory to the Lord –  
to the Lord the perfection of excellence

3 Hallelujah from the heart of God,  
and from the hand of the artist inimitable,  
and from the echo of the heavenly harp  
in sweetness magnifical and mighty.

4 For I will consider my Cat Jeffry.  
For he is the servant of the Living God,  
duly and daily serving him.  
For at the first glance of the glory of God  
in the East he worships in his way.  
For this is done by wreathing his body  
seven times round with elegant quickness.  
For he knows that God is his Saviour.  
For God has blessed him  
in the variety of his movements.  
For there is nothing sweeter  
than his peace when at rest.  
For I am possessed of a cat,  
surpassing in beauty,  
from whom I take occasion  
to bless Almighty God.

5 For the Mouse is a creature  
of great personal valour.  
For – this a true case –  
Cat takes female mouse –  
male mouse will not depart,  
but stands threat'ning and daring.  
If you will let her go, I will engage you,  
as prodigious a creature as you are.  
For the Mouse is a creature  
of great personal valour.  
For the Mouse is of  
an hospitable disposition.

6 For the flowers are great blessings.  
For the flowers have their angels  
even the words of God's Creation.  
For the flower glorifies God  
and the root parries the adversary.  
For there is a language of flowers.  
For flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ.

7 For I am under the same accusation  
with my Saviour –  
For they said, he is besides himself.  
For the officers of the peace  
are at variance with me,  
and the watchman smites me with his staff.  
For Silly fellow! Silly fellow! is against me  
and belongeth neither to me nor to my family.  
For I am in twelve hardships, but he that  
was born of a virgin shall deliver me out of all.

8 For H is a spirit and therefore he is God.  
For K is king and therefore he is God.  
For L is love and therefore he is God.  
For M is musick and therefore he is God.

For the instruments are by their rhimes.  
For the Shawm rhimes are lawn fawn  
moon boon and the like.  
For the harp rhimes are sing  
ring string and the like.

For the cymbal rhimes are bell well  
toll soul and the like.  
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth  
suit mute and the like.  
For the Bassoon rhimes are pass class  
and the like.  
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place  
beat heat and the like.  
For the Clarinet rhimes are clean seen  
and the like.  
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound  
soar more and the like.  
For the Trumpet of God is a blessed intelligence  
and so are the instruments in Heaven.  
For God the father Almighty plays upon the Harp  
of stupendous magnitude and melody.  
For at that time malignity ceases  
and the devils themselves are at peace.  
For this time is perceptible to man  
by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul.

9 Hallelujah from the heart of God,  
and from the hand of the artist inimitable,  
and from the echo of the heavenly harp  
in sweetness magnifical and mighty.

Text: Christopher Smart (1722-1771)

[10] - [13] **Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal**  
*Four Madridals on Rose Texts*

[10] **Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal**

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;  
The firefly wakens; waken thou with me.

Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake.  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

Text: Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

[11] **Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting**

Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting,  
Which clad in damask mantles deck the arbours,  
And then behold your lips where sweet  
love harbours,  
My eyes present me with a double doubting;

For, viewing both alike, hardly my mind supposes  
Whether the roses be your lips or your lips  
the roses.

Text: Anonymous, originally set by John Wilbye (1574-1638)

[12] **Upon a bank with roses set about**

Upon a bank with roses set about,  
Where pretty turtles, joining bill to bill,  
And gentle springs steal softly murmuring out,  
Washing the foot of pleasure's sacred hill;  
There little Love sore wounded lies,  
His bow and arrows broken,  
Bedewed with tears from Venus' eyes,  
O grievous to be spoken.

Text: Anonymous, originally set by John Ward (c.1589-1638)

[13] **A spotless rose**

A spotless Rose is blowing  
Sprung from a tender root,  
Of ancient seers' foreshowing,  
Of Jesse promised fruit;  
Its fairest bud unfolds to light  
Amid the cold, cold winter  
And the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,  
Whereof Isaiah said,  
Is from its sweet root springing  
In Mary, purest Maid;  
Through God's great love and might  
The blessed babe she bare us  
Amid the cold, cold winter  
And the dark midnight.

Text: Anonymous, *Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen* c.15th century,  
Translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

[14] **A Hymn to the Virgin**

Of one that is so fair and bright  
*Velut maris stella,*  
Brighter than the day is light,  
*Parens et puella:*  
I cry to thee, thou see to me,  
Lady, pray thy Son for me  
*Tam pia,*  
That I may come to thee, Maria!

All this world was forlorn  
*Eva peccatrice,*  
Till our Lord was yborn  
*De te genetrice.*  
With 'ave' it went away  
Darkest night, and comes the day

*Salutis;*  
The well springeth out of thee.  
*Virtutis.*

Lady, flow'r of ev'rything,  
*Rosa sine spina,*  
Thou bare Jesu, Heaven's King,  
*Gratia divina:*  
Of all thou bear'st the prize,  
Lady, queen of paradise  
*Electa:*  
Maid mild, mother es  
*Effecta.*

Text: Anonymous, c.14th century.

[15] & [17] **Ecce sacerdos magnus**

Ecce sacerdos magnus  
qui in diebus suis placuit Deo,  
et inventus est iustus.  
Ideo iureiurando fecit illum  
Dominus crescere in plebem suam.  
Benedictionem omnium gentium dedit illi,  
et testamentum suum  
confirmavit super caput eius.  
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto,  
sicut erat in principio  
et nunc et semper,  
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

*Behold the great priest  
who in his days pleased God,  
and was found to be just.  
Accordingly the Lord vowed  
to increase his people.  
He granted his blessing to all his peoples  
and confirmed his oath over his head.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning,  
is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.*

Text: Common of a Confessor Bishop

## **18 - 22 Five Flower songs**

### **18 To Daffodils**

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see  
You haste away so soon:  
As yet the early-rising sun  
Has not attained his noon.  
Stay, stay,  
Until the hasting day  
Has run  
But to evensong;  
And, having prayed together, we  
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,  
We have as short a Spring!  
As quick a growth to meet decay,  
As you, or any thing.  
We die  
As your hours do, and dry  
Away,  
Like to the Summer's rain;  
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,  
Ne'er to be found again.

Text: Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

### **19 The Succession of the Four Sweet Months**

First, April, she with mellow showers  
Opens the way for early flowers:  
Then after her comes smiling May,  
In a more rich and sweet array:  
Next enters June, and brings us more  
Gems than those two that went before:  
Then, lastly, July comes, and she  
More wealth brings in than all those three:  
April! May! June! July!

Text: Robert Herrick

### **20 Marsh Flowers**

Here the strong mallow strikes her slimy root,  
Here the dull nightshade hangs her deadly fruit;  
On hills of dust the henbane's faded green,  
And pencil'd flower of sickly scent is seen;  
Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,  
Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume.  
At the wall's base the fiery nettle springs,  
With fruit globose and fierce with poison'd stings;  
In ev'ry chink delights the fern to grow,  
With glossy leaf and tawny bloom below;  
The few dull flowers that o'er the place are spread  
Partake the nature of their fenny bed.  
These, with our seaweeds, rolling up and down,  
Form the contracted Flora of our town.

Text: George Crabbe (1754-1832)

### **21 The Evening Primrose**

When once the sun sinks in the west,  
And dewdrops pearl the evening's breast;  
Almost as pale as moonbeams are,  
Or its companionable star,  
The evening primrose opes anew  
Its delicate blossoms to the dew;  
And, hermit-like, shunning the light,  
Wastes its fair bloom upon the night;

Who, blindfold to its fond caresses,  
Knows not the beauty it possesses.  
Thus it blooms on while night is by;  
When day looks out with open eye,  
'Bashed at the gaze it cannot shun,  
It faints and withers and is gone.

Text: John Clare (1793-1864)

### **22 The Ballad of Green Broom**

There was an old man liv'd out in the wood,  
And his trade was a-cutting of broom,  
green broom,  
He had but one son without thought  
without good  
Who lay in his bed till 't was noon, bright noon.

The old man awoke one morning and spoke,  
He swore he would fire the room, that room,  
If his John would not rise and open his eyes,  
And away to the wood to cut broom,  
green broom.

So Johnny arose and slipp'd on his clothes  
And away to the wood to cut broom, green broom,  
He sharpened his knives, and for once he contrives  
To cut a great bundle of broom, green broom.

When Johnny pass'd under a Lady's fine house,  
Pass'd under a Lady's fine room, fine room,  
She call'd to her maid: "Go fetch me," she said,  
"Go fetch me the boy that sells broom,  
green broom!"

When Johnny came into the Lady's fine house,  
And stood in the Lady's fine room, fine room,  
"Young Johnny" she said,  
"Will you give up your trade  
And marry a lady in bloom, full bloom?"

Johnny gave his consent, and to church  
they both went,  
And he wedded the Lady in bloom, full bloom;  
At market and fair, all folks do declare,  
There's none like the Boy that sold broom,  
green broom.

Text: Anonymous

[23] - [27] **Praise**

### *Five Songs of Praise and Devotion*

[23] **Praise, my soul**

Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven;  
To His feet Thy tribute bring!  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,

Who like me His praise should sing?  
Praise Him! Praise Him!  
Praise the everlasting King!

Text: Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1874)

[24] **The world, the clustering spheres**

The world, the clustering spheres, He made;  
The glorious light, the soothing shade,  
Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;  
The multitudinous abyss,  
Where Secrecy remains in bliss,  
Where Wisdom hides her skill.

The pillars of the Lord are seven,  
Which stand from earth to topmost heaven;  
His Wisdom drew the plan;  
The glorious light, the glorious light.-

Text: Christopher Smart

[25] **Your gentleness, O God of grace**

Your gentleness, O God of grace,  
Has touched my wounded, fearful soul,  
Your hands engraved with nails of love  
Embrace my heart and make me whole.

The perfect love which casts out fear  
Is blazoned on your cross of life.  
There weakness shows the power of God,  
There glory flames midst pain and strife.

Your risen life, Ascended Lord,  
Dispels the darkness of death's night,  
Your spirit, poured into my heart,  
Irradiates my soul with light.

In broken bread and wine outpoured  
The meaning of my life is giv'n,  
The sacrifice of love for me,  
God's Living Bread comes down from heav'n.

All praise and thanks, my Lord and God  
Fore this, your greatest gift to me:  
Your very self to be my food,  
The love-feast of eternity.  
Amen.

Text: The Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell (b.1943)

[26] **Glorious is the crown**

Glorious the sun in mid career,  
Glorious the assembled fires appear,  
Glorious th' comet's train.

Glorious the northern lights astream;  
Glorious the song, when God's the theme;  
Glorious the thunder's roar.  
Glorious the martyr's gore.

Glorious—more glorious—is the crown  
Of Him that brought salvation down.  
Hosanna!

Text: Christopher Smart

[27] **Let all the world in every corner sing**

Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King!  
The heavens are not too high,  
his praise may thither fly,  
the earth is not too low,  
his praises there may grow.  
Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King!

O praise God in his holiness:  
praise him in the firmament of his power.  
Praise him in his noble acts:  
O praise his holy name

O praise God in his holiness  
Upon the lute and harp.

Praise him in the cymbals and dances  
O praise his holy name

Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King!  
The church with psalms must shout,  
no door can keep them out;  
but, above all, the heart must bear  
the longest part.  
Let all the world in every corner sing,  
my God and King!

Text: First and final verses, George Herbert (1593-1633)  
Central verses, Lowell Mason (1792-1872)



## THE RODOLFUS CHOIR



### SOPRANO

Rafaella Barratt  
Jillian Christie  
Martha Eddy  
Mary Fraser  
Sarah Godlee  
Emily Hall  
Livy Lewis  
Anna Lush  
Sarah Mansfield  
Rose Miller  
Helena Moore  
Miranda Ostler  
Camilla Seale  
Zoe Silkstone  
Juliet Webb  
Hannah Wight

### ALTO

Portia Cantwell  
Jess Clark Jones  
Jessy Croghan  
Katie Doig  
Corinne Hull  
Hamish McLaren  
Miranda Rainbow  
Lara Rebekah Harvey  
Angela Waters

### TENOR

Josh Baxter  
Nicholas Bromilow  
Peter Davoren  
Aidan Hampton  
Alexander Hume  
Sam Keeler  
Max Laverack  
Zakiy Manji  
George McCarthy  
Toshi Ogita  
Humphrey Thompson  
Peter Weatherley

### BASS

Gary Allen  
Greg Bannan  
Caspar Barrie  
James Day  
Will Ford  
Robert Holbrook  
Matt Innes  
Sam Keeler  
Greg Link  
Toby Matimong  
Fraser Moyle  
James Newby  
Oscar Osicki  
Rubin Patel  
Alex Pratley  
William Thomas

The Rodolfus Choir was founded in 1983 from the most accomplished singers from the summer choral courses, now known as the Eton Choral Courses. To date over 130 of these week-long courses have been held all over the country. The choir's first activity was a tour of Italy and Southern Germany, and since then they have toured regularly, including three visits to America. Their 16 recordings include two of the music of Francis Grier, one of large-scale arrangements of 19th-century orchestral works and songs by Clytus Gottwald, the Monteverdi *Vespers* and the Bach *B minor Mass*. The last six CDs have been brought out by Signum.

As well as regular broadcasts on BBC Radio, the Rodolfus Choir is developing a profile for work on film and television. Recent projects have included working with James Horner at Abbey Road Studios to record the soundtrack to the current *Romeo and Juliet* film. The choir returned here in July 2013 to record Elgar's *Sea Pictures* with the English Chamber Orchestra. 2013 marked the Anniversary of the Rodolfus Choir, celebrated with a performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the English Chamber Orchestra at Cadogan Hall and a Gala Concert at St John's Smith Square on New Year's Eve.

### *'Unspeakably beautiful'* The Gramophone

*The sound of the Rodolfus Choir is like that of no other UK chamber choir that I can think of. It's fresh, because all the members are under 25. It is wonderfully blended. It is fantastically in tune and very expressive, with a wide range of dynamics, sensitively employed. What does that leave out? Oh yes, balance – and that too is superb. And it has a quite extraordinary flexibility.*

**Clare Stevens, The Singer**

### TOM WINPENNY

Tom Winpenny is Assistant Master of the Music at St Albans Cathedral where his duties include accompanying the daily choral services and directing the acclaimed Abbey Girls Choir. Previously, he was Sub-Organist at St Paul's Cathedral, and during this time he performed with the Cathedral Choir at the American Guild of Organists National Convention, performed in Mahler's Symphony no.8 with Valery Gergiev and the LSO, and played for many great state occasions. He has also broadcast regularly on BBC Radio and been featured on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*.

He began organ lessons under John Scott Whiteley while a chorister at York Minster, and continued as a Music Scholar at Eton College under Alastair Sampson. After holding the post of Organ Scholar at Worcester Cathedral and then St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, he was for three years Organ Scholar at King's College, Cambridge, where he graduated with a degree in music. With the Choir of King's College, he gave concerts in the USA, Hong Kong and throughout Europe, in addition to appearing as their accompanist on CD releases on EMI Classics.

He has taken part in the first performance of works by Sir John Tavener, Judith Bingham, Jonathan Dove, Francis Grier and Francis Pott. He has studied with Thomas Trotter and Johannes Geffert, and won First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2008 Miami International Organ Competition.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include recitals in Leeds Town Hall, Westminster Cathedral, Stockholm Cathedral and in the USA in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Independence, Missouri. His solo organ recordings include a recital on the organ of St Albans Cathedral (JAV Recordings), organ works by Judith Bingham (Naxos) – including the first recording of the

concerto *Jacob's Ladder*, and music by Charles Villiers Stanford, played on the organ of Queens' College, Cambridge (Resonus Classics). He also directs St Albans Abbey Girls Choir in a recently-released recording of Mendelssohn Choral Works (Naxos).

### ROSS GUNNING

Ross Gunning was born in Glasgow and is passionate about classical music, and has always aspired to have a career as a musician. After leaving Williamwood High School Ross joined the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to study on the BMus degree course. He has been playing percussion for 9 years under the direction of Pamella Dow and attended the Junior Conservatoire of Scotland for 5 years. He has played with various orchestras including the West of Scotland Symphony Orchestra where he was the soloist in Ney Rosau's *Concerto for Vibraphone and Orchestra*. He has also played in the National Children's Orchestra of Scotland, National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, taking part in the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. He has had the great privilege of playing alongside the Royal Scottish National

Orchestra, Scottish Opera and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra where he appeared on TV as part of the *Music Nation* concert.

### RALPH ALLWOOD MBE

Ralph Allwood is well known as a choral director, but his expertise extends to composing, arranging, public speaking teaching, writing and adjudicating. He is a great authority on vocal and choral music for adults and young people.

In 1980 Ralph started the Eton choral course, which was a one-week summer school. There are now seven courses each year which, together with their flagship Rodolfus Choir, have brought choral singing to seven thousand 16 to 24 year-olds over the last 30 years. During this time he has conducted choirs in 40 live broadcasts for Radio Three.

He had the original idea for the celebrated Channel Four documentary *A Boy Called Alex* and has also appeared with Gareth Malone on his programmes. He has written choral music extensively for film and TV.



After 26 years as Director of Music at Eton College, he is now developing the same choral opportunities for state school children in London by founding Inner Voices and, for children aged 8 to 15, The Junior Choral Course. He is conductor of the National Youth Choir of Wales.

His skills as a workshop and 'Come and Sing' leader are in great popular demand, with choral workshops of some sort every Saturday. He judges many competitions, notably the Choir of the Year, the Llangollen Eisteddfod and the Cork International Choral Competition.

He is a Fellow Commoner of Queens' College, Cambridge, an Honorary Fellow of University College, Durham and a Choral Advisor to Trinity College, Oxford. He has been awarded a Doctorate of Music by Aberdeen University and created an MBE in the 2012 New Year's Honours list.

### PAUL MEALOR

Paul Mealor's music has rapidly entered the repertoire of choirs and singers around the world; his music has been described as having, 'serene beauty, fastidious craftsmanship and architectural assuredness ... Music of deep spiritual searching that always asks questions, offers answers and fills the listener with hope...'. Mealor was catapulted to international attention when 2.5 billion people heard his motet, *Ubi caritas*, performed at the Royal Wedding Ceremony of His Royal Highness Prince William and Catherine Middleton at Westminster Abbey, 29th April 2011.

Mealor studied composition privately from an early age with John Pickard, at the University of York with Nicola LeFanu (1994-2002) and in Copenhagen with Hans Abrahamsen (1998-99). Since 2003 he has taught at the University of Aberdeen, where he is currently Reader in Composition, and has held visiting professorships in composition at institutions in Scandinavia and the United States.



Recorded in Keble College Chapel, Oxford, 2-4 January and 1st April 2013.  
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# ... THE FLOWERS HAVE THEIR ANGELS

## PAUL MEALOR • BENJAMIN BRITTEN

1 - 9	<b>Rejoice in the Lamb, Op.30</b>	Benjamin Britten	[17.33]
10 - 13	<b>Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal <i>Four Madrigals on Rose Texts</i></b>	Paul Mealor	[13.17]
14	<b>A Hymn to the Virgin</b>	Benjamin Britten	[3.53]
15	<b>Ecce sacerdos magnus</b>	Tomás Luis de Victoria	[1.40]
16	<b>Prelude and Fugue on a Theme of Vittoria</b>	Benjamin Britten	[5.04]
17	<b>Ecce sacerdos magnus</b>	Plainchant	[2.55]
18 - 22	<b>Five Flower Songs, Op.57</b>	Benjamin Britten	[11.58]
23 - 27	<b>Praise <i>Five Songs of Praise and Devotion</i></b>	Paul Mealor	[19.59]

Total timings:

[76.19]

THE RODOLFUS CHOIR  
TOM WINPENNY ORGAN  
ROSS GUNNING PERCUSSION  
RALPH ALLWOOD

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