



Festival Singers of Wellington

A French Christmas in Aotearoa

Director: Ingrid Schoenfeld

Accompanist: Jonathan Berkahn

St John's Anglican Church, Johnsonville

7:30pm 9 December 2023

Programme

John Gardner (1917-2011)

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Oratorio de Noël (Op. 12)

Interval

Jonathan Berkahn (b. 1971)

Gloria

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Cantique de Jean Racine, Op. 11

Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704)

from

Messe de Minuit pour Noël Night

Kyrie

Gloria

Agnus Dei

Philip Stopford (b. 1977)

Lully, Lulla, Lullay

Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

Cantique de Noël

About the Concert

“Tomorrow shall be my dancing day” is a modern re-setting of the text of a traditional English carol. With its complicatedly exuberant rhythms, it is probably John Gardner’s best-known piece.

Camille Saint-Saëns wrote tonight’s **Oratorio de Noël** at the age of 23, near the start of his exceptionally long career. He wrote it for the church La Madeleine (where he was organist) in less than two weeks, finishing it ten days before the first performance. It is a colourful and variegated work, containing no less than 11 different movements in its 35-minute length. The text is in Latin, from the Vulgate translation of the Bible; the musical style covers the distance between Baroque oratorio and the latest (1858), most mellifluous operatic melody.

Jonathan Berkahn wrote the first part of his **Gloria** (down to “glorificamus te”) for a Festival Singers Christmas concert back in 2014. Unlike Saint-Saëns, he finished the rest of it a whole thirteen days before the concert. Its rhythms look complicated on the page, but are derived from the accentuation of the Latin text. Although stylistically very different, it was inspired by Renaissance polyphony’s ability to retain its textural integrity without accompaniment. It can be performed that way, but it’s also fun to do it with accompaniment; and that’s what we are doing tonight.

Fauré’s **Cantique de Jean Racine** is not specifically a “Christmas” piece, but it is French, and the text has enough of an Advent flavour to bring it into the picture.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s **Messe de minuit pour Noël** (“Midnight Mass for Christmas”) is a Baroque gem that transports listeners to the candlelit splendour of a seventeenth-century French Christmas Eve. Composed around 1690, Charpentier’s masterpiece brilliantly captures the festive spirit and religious reverence of the holiday season, incorporating traditional French carols into the texture.

Philip Stopford’s piece, like John Gardner’s, is a modern interpretation of an old text. In this case it is the lament of the grieving mothers of Bethlehem at Herod’s decree, from the sixteenth-century Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors in Coventry.

We finish with Adolph Adam’s best-known tune. As “O holy night” it achieved great popularity in the United States, lines such as “Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, and in his name all oppression shall cease” having particular resonance for the anti-slavery movement. We will be singing it in the original French.

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day;
I would my true love did so chance
To see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure,
Of her I took fleshly substance,
Thus was I knit to man's nature,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

In a manger laid, and wrapped I was
So very poor, this was my chance,
Between an ox and a silly poor ass,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then afterwards baptized I was;
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,
My Father's voice heard from above,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Oratorio de Noël (Op. 12)

1. Prelude [Instrumental]

2. Recit. and Chorus (Luke 2:8-14)

Et pastores erant in regione eadem vigilantes,
Et custodientes vigilias noctis
super gregem suum.
Et ecce angelus Domini stetit juxta illos,
et claritas Dei circumfulsit illos,
et timuerunt timore magno
Et dixit illis angelus:
Nolite timere:
ecce enim evangelizo
vobis gaudium magnum,
quod erit omni populo:
quia natus est vobis hodie
Christus Dominus, in civitate David.
Et hoc vobis signum:
invenietis infantem pannis involutum,
et positum in praesepio.
Et subito facta est cum angelo multitudo
militiae caelestis laudantium Deum,
et dicentium:

Chorus:

Gloria in altissimis Deo,
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

3 Air (Psalm 39:2)

Exspectans expectavi Dominum,
et intendit mihi.

1. Prelude [Instrumental]

2. Recit. and Chorus (Luke 2:8-14)

And there were in the same country shepherds
watching, and keeping the night watches
over their flock.
And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them,
and the brightness of God shone round about
them; and they feared with a great fear.
And the angel said to them:
Fear not; for, behold,
I bring you good tidings
of great joy,
that shall be to all the people:
For, this day, is born to you...
Christ the Lord, in the city of David.
And this shall be a sign unto you.
You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling
clothes, and laid in a manger.
And suddenly there was with the angel a
multitude of the heavenly army, praising God,
and saying:

Chorus:

Glory to God in the highest;
and on earth peace to all people of good will.

3 Air (Psalm 39:2)

With expectation I have waited for the Lord,
and he was attentive to me.

4 Air and Chorus (John 11 :27)

Domine, ego credidi
quia tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi,
qui in hunc mundum venisti.

5 Benedictus (Psalm 117: 27-28)

Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini.
Deus Dominus, et illuxit nobis.
Deus meus es tu, et confitebor tibi;
Deus meus es tu, et exaltabo te.

6 Chorus (Psalm 2:1)

Quare fremuerunt gentes,
et populi meditati sunt inania?
Gloria Patri, gloria Filio, Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

7 Trio (Psalm 109:3)

Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae
in splendoribus sanctorum

8 Quartet (Isaiah 49:13)

Alleluia.
Laudate, caeli, et exulta, terra;
quia consolatus est Dominus populum suum,
et pauperum suorum miserebitur.

9 Quintet and Chorus

(Lamentations 2:19, Isaiah 62:1)

Consurge, filia Sion.
Alleluia.
Lauda in nocte, in principio vigiliarum.
Egrediatur ut splendor justus Sion,
et salvator ejus ut lampas accendatur.

Chorus (Psalm 95:8, 11, 13)

Tollite hostias, et adorate
Dominum in atrio sancto ejus.
Laetentur caeli,
et exultet terra, a facie Domini,
quoniam venit.
Alleluia.

4 Air and Chorus (John 11 :27)

Lord, I have believed|
that thou art Christ the Son of the living God,
who art come into this world.

5 Benedictus (Psalm 117: 27-28)

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the
Lord. The Lord is God, and he hath shone upon
us. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou
art my God, and I will exalt thee.

6 Chorus (Psalm 2:1)

Why have the Gentiles raged,
and the people devised vain things?
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end. Amen.

7 Trio (Psalm 109:3)

With thee is the principality in the day of thy
strength: in the brightness of the saints.

8 Quartet (Isaiah 49:13)

Give praise,
O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth:
because the Lord hath comforted his people, and
will have mercy on his poor ones.

9 Quintet and Chorus

(Lamentations 2:19, Isaiah 62:1)

Arise, daughter of Sion,
give praise in the night,
in the beginning of the watches.
May her just one come forth as brightness,
and her Saviour be lighted as a lamp.

Chorus (Psalm 95:8, 11, 13)

Bring up sacrifices,
and adore ye the Lord in his holy court.
Let the heavens rejoice,
and let the earth be glad before
the face of the Lord, because he comes.
Alleluia.

Gloria

For the text of the Berkahn *Gloria*, see the Gloria section of *Messe de Minuit pour Noël* below.

Cantique de Jean Racine

Verbe, égal au Très-Haut, notre unique espérance,
Jour éternel de la terre et des cieux;
De la paisible nuit nous rompons le silence:
Divin Sauveur, jette sur nous les yeux!
Répands sur nous le feu de ta grâce puissante;
Que tout l'enfer fuie au son de ta voix;
Dissipe le sommeil d'une âme languissante,
Qui la conduit à l'oubli de tes lois!
O Christ! sois favorable à ce peuple fidèle
Pour te bénir maintenant assemblé;
Reçois les chants qu'il offre à ta gloire immortelle
Et de tes dons qu'il retourne comblé

Word equal to God, the Almighty, our only hope,
Eternal day of the earth and heavens;
We break the silence of the peaceful night,
Divine Saviour, look upon us!
Fan the fire of your powerful grace upon us,
So that all Hell may flee at the sound of your voice;
Shake off the sleep of a languishing soul,
Who has forgotten your laws!
O Christ, be kind to these faithful people
Who have now gathered in thanks.
Listen to the chants they offer to your immortal glory,
And may they come away fulfilled with your gifts!

Messe de Minuit pour Noël

Kyrie Eleison
Christe Eleison
Kyrie Eleison

Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy

Gloria in Excelsis Deo
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis
Laudamus te
Benedicimus te
Adoramus te
Gratias agimus tibi
Propter magnam gloriam tuam
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis
Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe
Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.

Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace to people of good will
We praise You
We bless You
We adore You
We give thanks to You
For Your great glory
Lord God, heavenly King
Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father
You who take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us
You who take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer
You who sit at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us
For You alone are holy,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ
With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the
world, have mercy on us.

Lully, Lulla, Lullay

Lully, lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.
Lullay, thou little tiny Child,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do sing
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.

Herod, the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his owne sight,
All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor Child for Thee!
And ever mourn and sigh,
For thy parting neither say nor sing,
Bye, bye, lully, lullay.

Cantique de Noël / O Holy Night

Minuit, chrétiens, c'est l'heure solennelle,
Où l'Homme-Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous
Pour effacer la tache originelle,
Et de Son Père arrêter le courroux.
Le monde entier tressaille d'espérance
À cette nuit qui lui donne un Sauveur.
Peuple à genoux, attends ta délivrance.
Noël, Noël, voici le Rédempteur,
Noël, Noël, voici le Rédempteur!

Le Rédempteur a brisé toute entrave,
La terre est libre et le ciel est ouvert.
Il voit un frère où n'était qu'un esclave,

L'amour unit ceux qu'enchaînait le fer.
Qui lui dira notre reconnaissance,
C'est pour nous tous qu'il naît,
qu'il souffre et meurt.
Peuple, debout! Chante ta délivrance,
Noël, Noël,
chantons le Rédempteur!
Noël, Noël,
chantons le Rédempteur!

Midnight, Christians, it is the solemn hour,
When God as man descended unto us
To erase the stain of original sin
And to put an end to the wrath of His Father.
The entire world thrills with hope
On this night that gives it a Saviour.
People, kneel down, await your deliverance.
Christmas, Christmas, here is the Redeemer,
Christmas, Christmas, here is the Redeemer!

The Redeemer has broken every bond:
The Earth is free, and Heaven is open.
He sees a brother where there was once
only a slave,
Love unites those that iron had chained.
Who will tell Him of our gratitude?
It is for us all that He is born,
that He suffers, and that He dies.
People, stand up! Sing of your deliverance,
Christmas, Christmas,
let us sing of the Redeemer,
Christmas, Christmas,
let us sing of the Redeemer!

Festival Singers

Musical Director: Ingrid Schoenfeld

Accompanist: Jonathan Berkahn

Sopranos:

Robyn Bridge,

Heather Garside, Jan Hamill, Anne Neal,

Jo Rothbaum,* Zoe Rothbaum,*

Helen Sharpe, Helen Willberg

Altos:

Anne Carnus, Heather Easting,*

Cathy Edge, Karen Espersen,*

Helen Jackman, Wendy Nelson,

Margaret Seconi, Helen Tripp, Rita Urry

Tenors:

Joe Fecteau,* Martin Haua,* Paul Kilford*

Basses:

Jean-Michel Carnus, Robert Easting,

Philip Garside, Alex Jeune,

* *Soloists*

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Festival Singers' Plans for the remainder of 2023

Seatoun Community Carols

at St Christopher's, Ventnor Street, that
fundraises for the Wellington City Mission.

Early evening Friday 15 December 2023

Sing with Festival Singers in 2024

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from February to early December

at Newlands Christian Assembly,

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in our supportive greater Wellington
community choir.

For more details contact:

Ingrid Schoenfeld (Musical Director)

ingrid.s@outlook.co.nz, 027 240 6669

or

Philip Garside (Secretary)

books@pgpl.co.nz, home 475 8855

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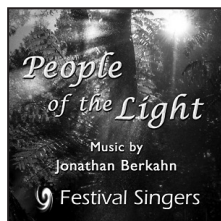
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