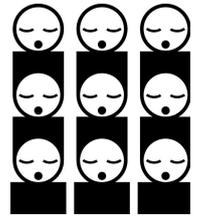


# WHITEHALL CHOIR



Conductor **PAUL SPICER**  
Organ **JAMES LONGFORD**

**PARRY** I was glad,  
Songs of Farewell, Blest Pair of Sirens  
**FINZI** Lo, the full, final Sacrifice  
**BRITTEN** Rejoice in the Lamb



*View from Exmoor Window by Anthony Krikhaar*

*Programme £2*

Friday 15 April 2011 at 7.30pm

Holy Trinity Sloane Square  
Sloane Street, London SW1X 9BZ



## PROGRAMME

Hubert Parry *I was glad*

Gerald Finzi *Lo, the full, final Sacrifice*

Benjamin Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb*

## *I N T E R V A L*

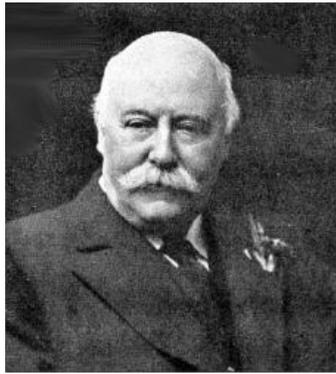
Hubert Parry *Songs of Farewell*

*Blest Pair of Sirens*

The concert is expected to end at approximately 9 pm.



## Hubert Parry (1848-1918)



Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, 1st Baronet, was born in Bournemouth, the youngest of six children of Thomas Gambier Parry (1816-1888) of Highnam Court, Gloucestershire, and his first wife, Isabella *née* Clinton (1816-1848). Three of their children died in infancy, and Isabella Parry died twelve days after the birth of her sixth child. Parry grew up at Highnam Court with his surviving siblings, (Charles) Clinton and Lucy. Thomas Parry remarried in 1851, and had a further six children.

After Twyford Preparatory School in Hampshire Parry went on to Eton, where his interest in music was encouraged and developed. While there he distinguished himself at sports as well as music, despite early signs of the heart trouble that was to dog him for the rest of his life. He took music lessons with Sir George Job Elvey, the organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor, and composed many prentice works.

While still at Eton Parry successfully sat the Oxford Bachelor of Music examination, the youngest person who had ever done so. His examination exercise, a cantata, *O Lord, Thou hast cast us out*, "astonished" the Oxford Professor of Music, Sir Frederick Ouseley, and was triumphantly performed and published in 1867. However, on going up to Oxford, Parry did not study music, and instead read law and modern history. From 1870 to 1877 he was an underwriter at Lloyd's of London and in 1872 he married Lady Elizabeth Maude Herbert (1851-1933). However, Parry proved as unsuccessful in insurance as he was successful in music. Parry and his wife had two daughters.

Parry continued his musical studies alongside his work in insurance. He had already studied in Stuttgart with the English-born composer Henry Hugh Pearson (better known in Germany as Heinrich Hugo Pierson), and afterwards took lessons from William Sterndale Bennett, and later the pianist Edward Dannreuther, "wisest and most sympathetic of teachers". Dannreuther started by giving Parry piano lessons, but soon extended their studies to analysis and composition, and it was Dannreuther who introduced him to the music of Wagner.

Parry's first major works appeared in 1880: a piano concerto, which Dannreuther premiered, and a choral setting of scenes from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. The first performance of the latter has often been held to mark the start of a 'renaissance' in English classical music, but was regarded by many critics as too avant-garde. Parry scored a greater contemporary success with the ode *Blest Pair of Sirens* (1887), commissioned by and dedicated to Charles Villiers Stanford, who was to describe Parry as the greatest English composer since Purcell. The success of *Blest Pair of Sirens* had the drawback of bringing him a series of commissions for conventional oratorios, a genre with which he was not in sympathy.

At the same time as his compositions were coming to public notice, Parry was taken up as a musical scholar by George Grove, first as his assistant editor for his new *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, to which post Parry was appointed in 1875 and contributed 123 articles. He wrote prolifically on music throughout his adult life. In 1883, Grove, as the first Director of the new Royal College of Music, appointed him as the College's professor of composition and musical history.

Parry's subsequent commissions included the *Ode on Saint Cecilia's Day* (1889), the oratorios *Judith* (1888) and *Job* (1892), the psalm-setting *De Profundis* (1891) and a lighter work, *The Pied Piper of*

*Hamelin* (1905), described later as “a bubbling well of humour”. The biblical oratorios were well received by the public, but George Bernard Shaw denounced *Job* as “the most utter failure ever achieved by a thoroughly respectable musician. There is not one bar in it that comes within fifty thousand miles of the tamest line in the poem.”

Parry's orchestral music includes five symphonies, a set of Symphonic Variations in E minor, the *Overture to an Unwritten Tragedy* (1893) and the *Elegy for Brahms* (1897). Over the years he wrote music to accompany productions of plays by Aristophanes at Oxford and Cambridge. He also provided incidental music for a West End production by Beerbohm Tree, *Hypatia* (1893). However, his only attempt at opera, *Guenever*, was turned down by the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

Parry succeeded George Grove as director of the Royal College of Music in January 1895, and held the post until his death. In 1900 he succeeded John Stainer as professor of music at Oxford. An obituarist in 1918 lamented these calls on Parry's time: “A composer who counts is rare enough anywhere, any time. ... A great blow was delivered against English music when Parry was appointed to succeed Sir George Grove as director of the RCM.” However, despite the demands of these posts his personal beliefs, which were Darwinian and humanist, led him to compose a series of ‘ethical cantatas’, with which he hoped to supersede the traditional oratorio and cantata forms. They were generally unsuccessful with the public, though Edward Elgar admired *The Vision of Life* (1907), and *The Soul's Ransom* (1906) has had several modern performances.

Parry evolved a powerful diatonic style which itself greatly influenced younger contemporaries such as Elgar and Vaughan Williams. His own full development as a composer was almost certainly hampered by the immense amount of work he took on; but his energy and charisma, not to mention his abilities as a teacher and administrator, helped establish art music at the centre of English cultural life. As head of the Royal College of Music, he numbered among his leading pupils not just Ralph Vaughan Williams, but also Gustav Holst, Frank Bridge and John Ireland.

Parry was created a Knight Bachelor in 1898. He was made a baronet in King Edward VII's Coronation Honours List of June 1902.

In 1908 Parry resigned his Oxford appointment and in the last decade of his life produced some of his best-known works, including the *Symphonic Fantasia '1912'* (also called ‘Symphony No. 5’), the *Ode on the Nativity* (1912), *Jerusalem* (1916) and the *Songs of Farewell* (1916-1918). The setting of William Blake's poem ‘Jerusalem’ was immediately taken up by the suffragette movement, with which both Parry and his wife were strongly in sympathy.

Parry, as a friend of German music and culture in general, was in despair when the First World War broke out. In the words of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: “During the war he watched a life's work of progress and education being wiped away as the male population – particularly the new fertile generation of composing talent – of the Royal College dwindled.”

In the autumn of 1918 Parry contracted Spanish flu during the global pandemic and died. At the suggestion of Stanford he was buried in St Paul's Cathedral. The site of his birthplace in Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, next door to The Square, is marked with a blue plaque, and there is a memorial tablet with an inscription by Bridges in Gloucester Cathedral, which was unveiled during the Three Choirs Festival of 1922.

## I was glad

*I was glad* (Latin incipit, *Lætatus sum*) is an introit commonly used in the Anglican church, and also used as an anthem traditionally sung at the coronation of British monarchs.

The text of the anthem consists of verses from Psalm 122, from the psalter found in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. Most of the content of the psalm is a prayer for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem, and its use in the coronation service clearly draws a parallel between Jerusalem and the United Kingdom, as William Blake had in his poem *Jerusalem* (which Parry set to music later, in

1916). Its most famous setting, the one written in 1902 by Sir Hubert Parry, which is being performed tonight, includes only verses 1-3, 6, and 7.

Settings for earlier coronations were composed by Henry Purcell and William Boyce, among others. Parry's version was written for the coronation of King Edward VII and revised in 1911 for that of King George V, when the familiar introduction was added. This setting employs antiphonal choir effects and brass fanfares. Apart from the imperial splendour of the music, the chief innovation is the incorporation in the central section of the acclamations "Vivat Rex ..." or "Vivat Regina ..." ("Long live King/Queen ...") with which the Queen's Scholars of Westminster School traditionally greet the entrance of the monarch. However, as will be the case this evening, this section, which has to be slightly rewritten every time a new monarch is crowned, is more usually omitted when the anthem is performed on non-royal occasions.

I was glad when they said unto me,  
We will go into the house of the Lord.  
Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.  
Jerusalem is builded as a city that is at unity in itself.

*Semi-chorus*

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces.

*Psalm 122: 1-3, 6, 7*

## Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)



Gerald Raphael Finzi was born in London of Jewish descent, the son of John Abraham (Jack) Finzi and Eliza Emma (Lizzie) Levenson. Finzi became one of the most characteristically 'English' composers of his generation. Despite being an agnostic, he wrote inspired and imposing Christian choral music.

Finzi was just seven when his father died. He was educated privately, and during World War I the family settled in Harrogate, where he began to study music under Ernest Farrar, whose death at the Western Front affected him deeply. He also suffered the loss of three of his brothers. These adversities contributed to a bleak outlook on life, but Finzi found solace in the poetry of Thomas Traherne and his favourite, Thomas Hardy, whose poems, as well as those by Christina Rossetti, he began to set to music. From the very beginning, most of his music was elegiac in tone.

After Farrar's death, Finzi studied at York Minster with the organist and choirmaster Edward Bairstow. In 1922, following five years of study with Bairstow, he moved to Painswick in Gloucestershire, where he began composing in earnest. His first Hardy settings and the orchestral piece *A Severn Rhapsody* were soon performed in London to favourable reviews. In 1925, he took a course in counterpoint with R O Morris and then moved to London, where he became friendly with Howard Ferguson and Edmund Rubbra. He was also introduced to Gustav Holst, Arthur Bliss and Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Vaughan Williams obtained for him a teaching post at the Royal Academy of Music.

Finzi never felt at home in the city, however, and, having married the artist Joyce Black, settled with her in Aldbourne, Wiltshire, where he devoted himself to composing and apple-growing. He also amassed a library of some 3000 volumes of English poetry, philosophy and literature, now in the library of the University of Reading, and a fine collection (some 700 volumes including books, manuscripts and printed scores) of 18th-century English music, now at the University of St Andrews.

During the 1930s, Finzi composed few works, but it was in these, notably the cantata *Dies natalis* (1939) to texts by Traherne, that his fully mature style developed. At this time Finzi and his wife catalogued and edited Ivor Gurney's works for publication, and they also studied and published English folk music and music by older English composers.

In 1939 the Finzis moved to Ashmansworth, near Newbury, where he founded the Newbury String Players, an amateur chamber orchestra which he conducted until his death, reviving eighteenth century string music as well as giving premières of works by his contemporaries, and offering chances of performance for talented young musicians such as Julian Bream and Kenneth Leighton.

During the Second World War Finzi worked for the Ministry of War Transport and lodged German and Czech refugees in his home. After the war, he became somewhat more productive than before, writing several choral works, as well as the Clarinet Concerto (1949), perhaps his most popular work.

By now, Finzi's works were being performed frequently at the Three Choirs Festival and elsewhere. But this happiness was not to last. In 1951, Finzi learned that he was suffering from the then incurable

Hodgkin's disease and had at most ten years to live. Something of his feelings after this revelation is probably reflected in the agonized first movement of the deeply moving Cello Concerto (1955), his last major work, although its second movement, originally intended as a musical portrait of his wife, is of great serenity.

In 1956, Finzi developed shingles, later possibly disseminated shingles, which resembled chickenpox, and was complicated by encephalitis. He died in an Oxford nursing home, the day after the first radio performance of his Cello Concerto.

Finzi is perhaps best known for his vocal music, though he wrote some purely instrumental music too. His output includes nine song cycles, six of them on the poems of Thomas Hardy. The first of these, *By Footpath and Stile* (1922), is for voice and string quartet, the others, including *A Young Man's Exhortation* and *Earth and Air and Rain*, for voice and piano. Among his other songs, the Shakespeare settings in the cycle *Let Us Garlands Bring* (1942) are the best known. He also wrote incidental music to Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (1946). For voice and orchestra he composed the above-mentioned *Dies natalis*, and the pacifist *Farewell to Arms* (1944). Finzi's choral music includes the popular anthems *Lo, the full, final Sacrifice* and *God is gone up* as well as unaccompanied partsongs, and choral works such as *For St. Cecilia* (text by Edmund Blunden), *Intimations of Immortality* (William Wordsworth) and the Christmas scene *In terra pax* (Robert Bridges and the Gospel of Luke), all from the last ten years of his life.

Finzi belongs firmly to the tradition of Elgar, Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford, which made his music seem unfashionable in his lifetime. While no experimentalist or modernist, Finzi in some of his lesser-known works completely contradicted his popular image of a lyrical pastoralist. He had a distinctive voice of his own, most evident in the songs and choral works, which show an unfailing response to and unity with each poet's words. In this respect, he resembles Gurney, Roger Quilter and other English song composers of the early twentieth century, though works such as the Cello Concerto and *Intimations of Immortality* show him as more than a miniaturist.

Thanks to Finzi's son Christopher and other enthusiasts, as well as the work of the Finzi Trust and the Finzi Friends, Finzi's music has enjoyed a great resurgence from the late twentieth century onwards.

### **Lo, the full, final Sacrifice**

This is one of a distinguished series of choral works commissioned by the Reverend Walter Hussey for performance by the choir of St Matthew's Church, Northampton (others include Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*; Hussey also commissioned Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* when his career took him to Chichester Cathedral). In terms of Finzi's output, this was the longest single span of music he had yet written, and is available in versions with full orchestra or organ. Stephen Banfield in his book on the composer thinks it contains some of Finzi's finest music, portraying the liturgical drama of the Eucharist in a series of characterful sections commencing with a solemn, almost improvisatory, introduction. Although the work is suitable for both small and large choirs, the voice-parts themselves (all of which divide) need to be well balanced: each is cast into the limelight at some point during the piece (some lines are optionally cast for solo voices), and there are a few passages of unaccompanied writing, most notably the first, very magical chorus entry. The expressive lines, colourful accompaniment and dramatic choral writing make this a great favourite with choirs. The closing eight-part Amen is one of the most remarkable and poignant pieces of choral writing of its period.

*Photograph of Gerald Finzi and note on Lo, the full, final Sacrifice  
reproduced by kind permission of Josephine Finzi and the website [www.geraldfinzi.com](http://www.geraldfinzi.com).*

Lo, the full, final, Sacrifice  
On which all figures fix'd their eyes.  
The ransom'd Isaac, and his ram;  
The Manna, and the Paschal Lamb.  
Jesu Master, just and true!  
Our Food, and faithful Shepherd too!  
O let that love which thus makes thee  
Mix with our low Mortality,

Lift our lean Souls, and set us up  
Convictors of thine own full cup,  
Coheirs of Saints. That so all may  
Drink the same wine; and the same Way.  
Nor change the Pasture, but the Place  
To feed of Thee in thine own Face.

O dear Memorial of that Death  
Which lives still, and allows us breath!  
Rich, Royal food! Bountiful Bread!  
Whose use denies us to the dead!

*Soprano solo*

Live ever Bread of loves, and be  
My life, my soul, my surer self to me.

*(Chorus)*

Help Lord, my Faith, my Hope increase;  
And fill my portion in thy peace.  
Give love for life; nor let my days  
Grow, but in new powers to thy name and praise.

Rise, Royal Sion! rise and sing  
Thy soul's kind shepherd, thy heart's King.  
Stretch all thy powers; call if you can  
Harps of heaven to hands of man.  
This sovereign subject sits above  
The best ambition of thy love.

Lo the Bread of Life, this day's  
Triumphant Text provokes thy praise.  
The living and life-giving bread,  
To the great twelve distributed  
When Life, himself, at point to die  
Of love, was his own Legacy.

*Tenor and bass solos; chorus sopranos and altos*

O soft self-wounding Pelican!  
Whose breast weeps Balm for wounded man.  
All this way bend thy benign flood  
To a bleeding Heart that gasps for blood.  
That blood, whose least drops sovereign be  
To wash my worlds of sins from me.

*(Chorus)*

Come love! Come Lord! and that long day  
For which I languish, come away.  
When this dry soul those eyes shall see,  
And drink the unseal'd source of thee.  
When Glory's sun faith's shades shall chase,  
And for thy veil give me thy Face.  
Amen.

*From versions of the Hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas, Adoro Te  
and Lauda Sion Salvatore, made by Richard Crashaw  
(1613-1649)*

## Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)



Edward Benjamin Britten, Baron Britten of Aldeburgh, OM, CH, was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, the son of a dentist and a talented amateur musician. He showed musical gifts very early in life, and began composing prolifically as a child. He was educated at Old Buckenham Hall School, near Ipswich in Suffolk, and Gresham's, Holt, Norfolk. In 1927, he began private lessons with Frank Bridge; by the following year he had composed *Quatre Chansons françaises* for soprano and orchestra. He was also a student at the Royal College of Music under John Ireland, with some input from Ralph Vaughan Williams. He studied both the piano and the viola; the piano was his only instrument as an adult, but the viola would play a significant role in many of his adult works.

Britten was a prolific juvenile composer: some 800 works and fragments precede his early published works. His first compositions to attract wide attention were the *Sinfonietta* Op. 1, *A Hymn to the Virgin* (1930) and a set of choral variations, *A Boy was Born*, written in 1934 for the BBC Singers.

In April 1935, he was approached by the film director Alberto Cavalcanti to write the film score for the documentary *The King's Stamp*, produced by the GPO Film Unit. He subsequently met W H Auden, who was also associated with the GPO Film Unit; together they worked on the films *Coal Face* and *Night Mail*. They also collaborated on the song cycle *Our Hunting Fathers* Op. 8, and other pieces.

Of more lasting importance to Britten was his meeting in 1937 with the tenor Peter Pears, who was to become his musical collaborator and inspiration as well as his life partner. One of Britten's most noteworthy works from the 1930s was *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* for string orchestra, Op. 10, written in 1937.

In early 1939, Britten and Pears followed Auden to America. There, in 1940, Britten composed *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, the first of many song cycles for Pears, and he encountered Aaron Copland's latest works, *Billy the Kid* and *An Outdoor Overture*, both of which influenced his own music. While in America Britten also wrote the operetta *Paul Bunyan* to a libretto by Auden. The period in America was also remarkable for a number of orchestral works, including the Violin Concerto Op. 15, and *Sinfonia da Requiem* Op. 20 (for full orchestra).

Britten and Pears returned to England in 1942. During the long sea voyage Britten completed the choral works *Hymn to St. Cecilia* (his last large-scale collaboration with Auden) and *A Ceremony of Carols*. The première of his opera *Peter Grimes*, based on the writings of George Crabbe, at Sadler's Wells in 1945 was his greatest success thus far. However, Britten gradually withdrew from the London scene, founding the English Opera Group in 1947 and the Aldeburgh Festival the following year.

*Peter Grimes* was the first in a series of English operas, of which *Billy Budd* (1951) and *The Turn of the Screw* (1954) were particularly admired. His Shakespeare opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, followed in 1960. Britten's operas share common themes. For instance, most of them, even his comic opera *Albert Herring* of 1947, feature an 'outsider' character excluded or misunderstood by society. Often this is the eponymous protagonist, as in *Peter Grimes* and *Owen Wingrave*.

Britten's church music is also considerable: in addition to tonight's 'classic', *Rejoice in the Lamb*, it includes *A Hymn to the Virgin*, and a *Missa Brevis* for boys' voices and organ.

An increasingly important influence on Britten was the music of the East, an interest fostered by a tour with Pears in 1957, during which he experienced the Balinese gamelan and Japanese Noh plays. The fruits of this tour include the ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas* (1957) and the series of semi-operatic 'Parables for Church Performance', *Curlew River* (1964), *The Burning Fiery Furnace* (1966) and *The Prodigal Son* (1968). A greater success at this time, however, was the *War Requiem*, written for the 1962 consecration of the newly reconstructed Coventry Cathedral.

In his last decade, Britten's health deteriorated. His later works include the operas *Owen Wingrave* (1970) and *Death in Venice* (1971–1973); the *Suite on English Folk Tunes "A Time There Was"* (1974); the *Third String Quartet* (1975), which drew on material from *Death in Venice*; and the dramatic cantata *Phaedra* (1975), written for Janet Baker.

Britten became a Companion of Honour in 1953, and in 1965 he was appointed to the Order of Merit. On 2 July 1976 he accepted a life peerage as Baron Britten, of Aldeburgh in the County of Suffolk, only a few months before he died of heart failure at his home in Aldeburgh. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church there, with a gravestone carved by Reynolds Stone. The grave of his partner, Sir Peter Pears, lies next to his. A memorial stone to Britten was unveiled in 1978 in the north choir aisle of Westminster Abbey (the 'Musicians' Aisle').

Britten's status as one of the greatest composers of the 20th century is now secure among professional critics. However, criticism of his music is apt to become entangled with consideration of his personality, his politics (especially his pacifism in the Second World War) and his sexuality. Humphrey Carpenter's 1992 biography further described Britten's often fraught social, professional and sexual relationships, as did Alan Bennett's 2009 play *The Habit of Art*, set while Britten is composing the opera *Death in Venice* and centred on a fictional meeting between Britten and W H Auden.

In 2003, a selection of Britten's writings, edited by Paul Kildea, revealed other ways in which he addressed such issues as his pacifism. A further study along the lines begun by Carpenter is John Bridcut's *Britten's Children*, 2006, which describes Britten's infatuation with a series of pre-adolescent and adolescent boys throughout his life, most notably David Hemmings.

For many musicians, however, Britten's technique, broad musical and human sympathies and his ability to treat the most traditional of musical forms with freshness and originality place him at the head of composers of his generation. A notable tribute to him is *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*, an orchestral piece written in 1977 by the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt.

### **Rejoice in the Lamb, Op. 30**

Britten composed the festival cantata *Rejoice in the Lamb* for four soloists, choir and organ, in 1943. It was commissioned by the Reverend Walter Hussey to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the consecration of St Matthew's Church, Northampton. For the text of this delightful and sometimes moving piece, Britten selected passages from *Jubilate Agno*, a long, rambling poem written by the 18th-century poet Christopher Smart while he was in a lunatic asylum. The poem has been aptly described as a kind of 'Benedicite', full of naive joy and innocence, to which Britten's response is inspired. The cantata falls into several sections, detailing how animals praise their creator by just being what they are, the blessings of flowers, Smart's personal tribulations, and the mystical nature of four letters of the alphabet. The cantata starts with a ritualistic injunction to rejoice in God and His son Jesus, "the Lamb", and a summoning of beasts and men to do homage. It closes with a lively chorus dwelling on the association between the sounds of instruments and of words, at the end of which comes a passage of calm and tranquillity, in which Smart's tortured mind finds repose. The repeat of a soft but ecstatic Hallelujah heard earlier in the work forms a gentle, unifying coda.

*Note reproduced by kind permission of the Woking Choral Society; author William Gould*

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.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter,  
Bind a Leopard to the altar  
And consecrate his spear to the Lord.

Let Ishmail 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 his 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,  
Dance, dance, dance.

Let David bless with the Bear  
The beginning of victory to the Lord,  
To the Lord the perfection of excellence.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
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.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

*Soprano solo*

For I will consider my cat Jeoffry.  
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 bless'd 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.

*Alto solo*

For the Mouse is a creature  
Of great personal valour.  
For this is 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.

*Tenor solo*

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 the flowers are peculiarly  
The poetry of Christ.

*(Chorus)*

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.

*Bass solo*

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.

*(Chorus)*

And therefore he is God.  
For the instruments are by their rhimes,  
For the Shawm rhimes are lawn fawn and the like.  
For the Shawm rhimes are moon boon and the like.

For the harp rhimes are sing ring and the like.  
For the harp rhimes are ring string and the like.  
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well and the like.  
For the cymbal rhimes are toll soul and the like.  
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth and the like.  
For the flute rhimes are suit mute and the like.  
For the Bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.  
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place 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 all the instruments in Heav'n.  
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.

Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
Hallelujah from the heart of God,  
And from the hand of the artist inimitable,  
And from the echo of the heavenly harp  
In sweetness magnificent and mighty.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

*From Jubilate Agno by Christopher Smart (1722-1771)*

I N T E R V A L

# Hubert Parry

## Songs of Farewell

In the last three years of his very active life Parry wrote six unaccompanied motets, which were collected together under the title *Songs of Farewell*. These pieces are all of a deeply philosophical nature, dwelling on the transitory nature of human existence and the hope of a continuing life in another world. The first four were completed in 1916, the fifth a year later, and the last in 1918.

'My soul, there is a country', the first of the six motets, is the most well-known, often sung by cathedral and large parish church choirs. It is set to a text by Henry Vaughan that paints a picture of the blissful and tranquil world to come. This and the next, 'I know my soul hath power to know all things' (a text by Sir John Davies) are for four-part choir; the third, Campion's 'Never weather-beaten sail', is set for five-part choir; the fourth, Lockhart's 'There is an old belief', for six parts; the fifth, John Donne's 'At the round earth's imagined corners', for seven parts; and the last, set to the biblical text 'Lord, let me know mine end', is for eight parts. This final motet, which is by far the most elaborate of the set, was completed just three months before Parry's death: it ranks as one of his greatest achievements and one of the greatest works of its kind in British music.

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### 1. *My soul, there is a country*

My soul, there is a country  
Far beyond the stars,  
Where stands a wingèd sentry  
All skilful in the wars:

There, above noise and danger  
Sweet Peace sits crown'd with smiles  
And One, born in a manger,  
Commands the beauteous files.

He is thy gracious friend  
And, O my soul, awake!  
Did in pure love descend  
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,  
There grows the flow'r of Peace,  
The Rose that cannot wither,  
Thy fortress and thy ease.

Leave then thy foolish ranges,  
For none can thee secure  
But One who never changes,  
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

*Henry Vaughan (1622-1695)*

### 2. *I know my soul hath power to know all things*

I know my soul hath power to know all things,  
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:  
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,  
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall  
I know my life's a pain and but a span;

I know my sense is mock'd in ev'rything;  
And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,  
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

*John Davies (1569-1626)*

3. *Never weather-beaten sail*

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore.  
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,  
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:  
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest.

Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven's high Paradise.  
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:  
Glory there the sun outshines whose beams the blessed only see:  
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to thee!

*Thomas Campion (1567-1620)*

4. *There is an old belief*

There is an old belief,  
That on some solemn shore,  
Beyond the sphere of grief  
Dear friends shall meet once more.  
Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin  
And Fate's control,  
Serene in changeless prime  
Of body and of soul.  
That creed I fain would keep  
That hope I'll ne'er forgo,  
Eternal be the sleep,  
If not to waken so.

*John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854)*

5. *At the round earth's imagin'd corners*

At the round earth's imagin'd corners  
Blow your trumpets, angels, and arise,  
Arise from death, you numberless infinities  
Of souls and to your scatter'd bodies go!  
All whom the flood did, and fire shall overthrow,  
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,  
Despair, law, chance, hath slain, and you whose eyes  
Shall behold God and never taste death's woe;  
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space,  
For, if above all these my sins abound,  
'Tis late to ask abundance of Thy grace  
When we are there.  
Here on this lowly ground,  
Teach me how to repent; for that's as good  
As if Thou'dst seal'd my pardon with Thy blood.

*John Donne (1572-1631)*

6. *Lord, let me know mine end*

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days,  
That I may be certified how long I have to live.  
Thou hast made my days as it were a span long;  
And mine age is as nothing in respect of Thee,  
And verily, ev'ry man living is altogether vanity,  
For man walketh in a vain shadow  
And disquieteth himself in vain.  
He heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them.  
And now, Lord, what is my hope?  
Truly my hope is even in Thee.  
Deliver me from all mine offences  
And make me not a rebuke to the foolish.  
I became dumb and opened not my mouth  
For it was Thy doing.  
Take Thy plague away from me,  
I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand.  
When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin  
Thou makest his beauty to consume away  
Like as it were a moth fretting a garment;  
Ev'ry man therefore is but vanity.  
Hear my pray'r, O Lord  
And with Thy ears consider my calling,  
Hold not Thy peace at my tears!  
For I am a stranger with Thee and a sojourner  
As all my fathers were.  
O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength  
Before I go hence  
And be no more seen.

*Psalm 39: 5-15*

### **Blest Pair of Sirens**

Parry dedicated this work to C V Stanford and the members of the Bach Choir, who gave its first performance in 1887. Its success established Parry as the leading English choral composer of his day.

The text is Milton's poem 'At a Solemn Music'. Milton, as it happens, was himself the son of a composer, and he presumably had plenty of musical experience. To match the words, the music is written in a suitably grand style, mostly in eight parts for the choir. However, "That we on earth" can manage only four parts, and "disproportion'd sin" jars the music temporarily into 3/4 time. But at the prospect of being reunited to "His celestial concert" the texture blossoms again into eight parts and the work builds to a radiant climax.

*Note reproduced by kind permission of the Watford Philharmonic Society*

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,  
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,  
Wed your divine sounds, and mixt power employ,  
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;  
And to our high-rai'd phantasy present  
That undisturb'd song of pure consent,  
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne  
To him that sits thereon,  
With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;  
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,  
Their loud, uplifted angel-trumpets blow,  
And the Cherubic host in thousand quires

Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,  
With those just spirits, that wear victorious palms,  
Hymns devout and holy psalms  
Singing everlastingly.  
That we on Earth with undiscording voice,  
May rightly answer that melodious noise;  
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin  
Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din  
Broke the fair music that all creatures made  
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd  
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood  
In first obedience, and their state of good.  
O may we soon again renew that song  
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long  
To his celestial concert us unite,  
To live with him and sing in endless morn of light.

*John Milton (1608-1674): At a Solemn Musicke*

#### NEXT CONCERTS

**Monday 11 July 2011**

**Dyson *The Blacksmiths***  
**Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms***  
Banqueting House, Whitehall,  
London SW1 2ER

**Thursday 24 November 2011**

**Give Thanks: Renaissance and Modern Choral Music from Tallis to Whitacre**  
Church of St Alban the Martyr, Holborn,  
London EC1N 7RD

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The painting reproduced on the title page of this programme is by Anthony Krikhaar, who was born in the Netherlands, but has been resident and working in London since the 1960s. His work is in public and private collections throughout the world. Visit [www.krikhaar.co.uk](http://www.krikhaar.co.uk) for more details.*

*The Choir is very grateful for the support that it continues to receive from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).*

*The Choir would like to thank Philip Pratley, the Concert Manager, and all tonight's volunteer helpers.*

# *Paul Spicer*



Paul Spicer, musical director of the Whitehall Choir, began his musical training as a chorister at New College, Oxford. He studied with Herbert Howells and Richard Popplewell (organ) at the Royal College of Music in London, winning the top organ award (the Walford Davies Prize) in his final year. Paul is best known as a choral conductor, partly through the many CDs he made with the Finzi Singers for Chandos Records. He conducted Bach Choirs in Chester and Leicester before moving to conduct the Bach Choir in Birmingham in 1992. He taught at the Royal College of Music between 1995 and 2008, and now teaches choral conducting at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he also directs both chamber choirs, and at Oxford University. Until July 2001 Paul Spicer was Artistic Director of the Lichfield International Arts Festival and the Abbotsholme Arts Society. He was Senior Producer for BBC Radio 3 in the Midlands until 1990, and today is in considerable demand as a composer and as a recording producer.

The first complete recording of Paul Spicer's large-scale *Easter Oratorio* was released in 2005 to critical acclaim, the work being recognised by *Gramophone* magazine as "the best of its kind to have appeared ... since Howells's *Hymnus Paradisi*". *The Deciduous Cross*, for choir and winds, based on poems by R S Thomas and premiered in 2003, was commissioned for Paul's tenth anniversary as conductor of the Birmingham Bach Choir, and was recorded by the Whitehall Choir. Robert Sharpe, when Director of Music at Truro Cathedral, recorded his complete works for organ. A recording of his shorter choral works was made by the choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge, in 2008.

Paul Spicer's biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, was published in August 1998 and has been reprinted twice. He has recently completed a full-scale biography and study of works of the composer Sir George Dyson. He has written articles for many periodicals and is a contributor to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Paul has recently completed a large-scale choral and orchestral work, an *Advent Oratorio*, to another libretto by the New Testament scholar Dr. Tom Wright, formerly Bishop of Durham, who had written the text for the *Easter Oratorio*. The first performance of the *Advent Oratorio* was in Lichfield Cathedral on 5 December 2009.

Paul Spicer is in great demand for his choral workshops, which take him all over the world. He runs an annual choral course/arts festival called the English Choral Experience at Abbey Dore, in Herefordshire, each July ([www.englishchoralexperience.co.uk](http://www.englishchoralexperience.co.uk)). He is a broadcaster, lecturer and popular speaker. Paul Spicer is a member of the Council of Lichfield Cathedral, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Research Fellow of Birmingham University, an Honorary Fellow of Birmingham Conservatoire, a Trustee of the Finzi Trust, Chairman of the Finzi Friends, Vice-President of the Herbert Howells Society, and Advisor to the Sir George Dyson Trust.

# *James Longford*



James Longford studied organ and piano with Nicholas Danby, Margaret Phillips and John Blakely at the Royal College of Music, and with Paul Stubbings as Organ Scholar of St Martin-in-the-Fields. During his studies he was awarded the Tagore Gold Medal, the Walford Davies Prize, all the piano accompaniment prizes, Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists and an RCM Junior Fellowship. He is now enjoying a career as a freelance pianist, repetiteur and continuo player, and recently was on the music staff for English National Opera's acclaimed production of Handel's *Radamisto*.

James is one half of the longfordbrown piano duo, with Lindy Tennent-Brown. They were placed among the top nine piano duos in the world at the Murray Dranoff International Two Piano Competition in Miami in 2008.

Visit [jameslongford.com](http://jameslongford.com) and [longfordbrown.com](http://longfordbrown.com) for more information.

## **COME AND SING HAYDN WITH US**

Join us in an enjoyable and rewarding day of music-making on Saturday, October 8, 2011, at Holy Spirit Church, Narbonne Avenue, Clapham, London SW4, near Abbeville Road and Clapham Common. Our conductor Paul Spicer, with piano accompaniment by James Longford, will lead singers from the Whitehall Choir and other singers in the London area who would like to come along, to rehearse and then perform choruses from *The Creation* by Haydn. You don't need to be a regular singer to take part – so come and have a go. We would love to see you. Or just come for the concert. The day starts at around 10.30am with an early-evening concert at around 5pm. Watch our website for further details including soloists.



**THE WHITEHALL CHOIR**  
**PRESIDENT:** Martin Donnelly CMG

**Conductor:** Paul Spicer

**Accompanist:** James Longford

The Whitehall Choir combines great repertoire, high-quality singing and terrific fun.

We are looking to recruit in all voices, but especially tenors and basses, to our ranks. Amongst our current members we count civil servants, lawyers, teachers, consultants, engineers and many others, with an age range of fifty years between youngest and oldest members. The choir meets every Tuesday evening near St James's Park tube station for a two-and-a-half hour rehearsal. We are conducted by Paul Spicer – a conductor, composer and academic of international repute – and perform four concerts a year in a range of venues across London. Besides tonight's magnificent setting, Holy Trinity Sloane Square, our regular concert locations include Whitehall's stunning Banqueting House, St John's, Smith Square, and St Alban's Holborn, and our programmes, which are rich and varied, cater for all musical tastes. Some details of forthcoming outings can be found on the next page of this programme.

We are proud to deliver high-quality concerts in such great venues, and the commitment is such that the choir sits well with the busy day-jobs that many of our members have, and provides a clear and friendly space in the middle of the week. We would love to hear from any singers who are interested in joining us. Short, informal auditions take place after a few weeks of singing with us on a trial basis.

For more information, please contact the Choir's Secretary, Ben Nicholls, at [nichollsb@parliament.uk](mailto:nichollsb@parliament.uk), or visit the Choir's website [www.whitehallchoir.org.uk](http://www.whitehallchoir.org.uk). (Charity no. 280478.)

*Sopranos*

Rebecca Almond  
Joanna Bradley  
Hilary Davies  
Imogen Davies  
Anne Delauzun  
Ruth Eastman  
Jacky Erwtaman  
Eleanor Gill  
Kate Goulden<sup>1\*</sup>  
Kate Hand  
Alice Hill<sup>2\*</sup>  
Kate Johnston  
Rachel Nixon  
Jean Quinn  
Lesley Raymond  
Louisa Stanway<sup>\*</sup>  
Janet Winstanley

*Altos*

Helen Audaer<sup>\*</sup>  
Rose Chandler  
Tamsin Cousins<sup>3\*</sup>  
Miranda Douce  
Ann Marie Earwaker  
Sam Foley<sup>\*</sup>  
Polly Fortune  
Katherine Howes  
Kate Mole  
Paula Nobes  
Jean Orr  
Penny Prior  
Moirra Roach  
Jean Robinson  
Liz Walton  
Alison Williams

*Tenors*

Patrick Haighton<sup>\*</sup>  
Graham Hand<sup>\*</sup>  
Ken Holmes  
Kevin McManus<sup>4</sup>  
Philip Pratley  
David Rawlins  
Alastair Tolley<sup>5</sup>  
Danny Tompkins<sup>\*</sup>  
Jonathan Williams

*Basses*

Laurence Grace<sup>\*</sup>  
Richard Grafen  
Mark Graver  
Martin Humphreys  
Simon Lawson  
William Longland  
Brendan O'Keeffe<sup>7\*</sup>  
Tony Piper<sup>6\*</sup>  
Mark Simmonds  
Malcolm Todd<sup>\*</sup>  
Daniel Walton  
Ian Williamson

\*Semi-chorus in Parry *I was glad*

<sup>1</sup>Soprano solo in Finzi <sup>2</sup>Soprano solo in Britten <sup>3</sup>Alto solo in Britten <sup>4</sup>Tenor solo in Finzi  
<sup>5</sup>Tenor solo in Britten <sup>6</sup>Bass solo in Finzi <sup>7</sup>Bass solo in Britten

## WHITEHALL CHOIR COMMITTEE 2010-11

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Friends and Patrons of the Choir are a vital part of our future. They help fund not only our regular concerts but also additional activities such as workshops, sing-through days, and tours. For a single payment at the start of the season, Friends receive one top-price ticket for each of the three main concerts, plus 10% discount on any further tickets they require. Also included is advance notification of all concerts/events and a free programme – perfect for regular concert attenders, who will save overall on the whole season. For further details about how to become a Patron or Friend, please see the ‘Support Us’ page of the website [www.whitehallchoir.org.uk](http://www.whitehallchoir.org.uk).

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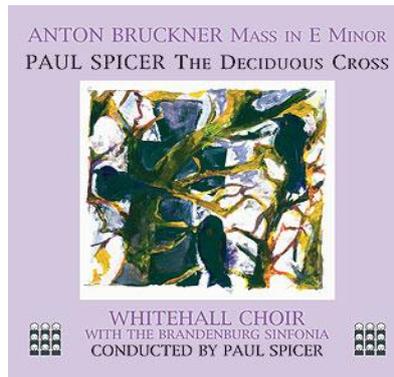
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**Please fill in the sheet left on your seat if you want to be kept informed of Whitehall Choir performances and initiatives by e-mail. You can also sign up for e-alerts via our website, [www.whitehallchoir.org.uk](http://www.whitehallchoir.org.uk)**

**During 2007 the Whitehall Choir produced a CD featuring the first recorded performance of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross*. On it the Choir also recorded Bruckner's Mass in E minor.**



*"...instrumental writing which is assured, inventive and colourful...a performance which is committed and compelling..."* Organists' Review, October 2007

*"...Definitely recommended!"* Bruckner Journal, November 2007

**In 2009 the Choir recorded its second CD, a selection of music for the season of Christmas. The CD, 'Fairest flower of any field', is recommended as a best buy in *Gramophone's* 2009 Christmas edition, while the December 2009 edition of *Classical Music* magazine highlights "...[the Choir's] fine balance and floating lines ensuring this is a satisfying selection".**



**Both of these CDs may be purchased on eBay, or via the Choir's website:**  
[www.whitehallchoir.org.uk](http://www.whitehallchoir.org.uk)