

An English choral landscape

Whitehall Choir : Paul Spicer

Organ : Ian Tindale

**Thursday 21 April 2016, 7:30pm
Holy Trinity, Sloane Square,
London SW1X 9BZ**

**Music by Purcell, Parry,
Howells, Bainton and Spicer**

Sir (Charles) Hubert (Hastings) Parry (1848 - 1918)

I was glad when they said unto me

I was glad was written by Hubert Parry for the coronation of King Edward VII. It is a setting of verses from Psalm 122 and has been sung at all subsequent coronations and on many other national occasions. The work contains alterations made before its re-use at the Coronation of King George V in 1911, which included the provision of a new, more elaborate, introduction.

source: Royal College of Music Library

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.
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, vv. 1-3, 6, 7 (Book of Common Prayer)

Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695)

Lord, how long wilt Thou be angry

This anthem dates from around 1680. It looks back to the unaccompanied imitative style of the Elizabethan composers, and uses rich, chromatic harmony. The final chorus is contrastingly optimistic. The words are taken from Psalm 79.

source: Scottish Chamber Choir

Lord, how long wilt Thou be angry? Shall Thy jealousy burn like fire for ever?
O remember not our old sins, but have mercy upon us,
and that soon: for we are come to great misery.
Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy Name:
O deliver us, and be merciful unto our sins, for Thy Name's sake.
So we that are Thy people, and the sheep of Thy pasture,
shall give Thee thanks for ever:
and will always be shewing forth Thy praise, from one generation to another.

Psalm 79, vv. 5, 8, 9, and 14 (Book of Common Prayer)

Remember not, Lord, our offences

This five-part anthem dates from 1679-81 and sets lines from the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. It starts in plangent homophonic style. Thereafter an increasingly penitential tone is signalled by a rising use of counterpoint. The work's central climax, an intense chromatic passage on the words 'spare us, good Lord', is balanced by a prayerful coda on the same words with a change from A minor to A major.

source: CD programme notes ('Bright Orb of Harmony'; *The Sixteen Edition*; CORolive)

Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor th' offences of our forefathers,
Neither take thou vengeance of our sins but spare us, good Lord.
Spare thy people, whom thou has redeem'd with thy most precious blood,
And be not angry with us for ever. Spare us, good Lord.

Thomas Cranmer, from 'Exhortation and Litany' (1544)

I was glad when they said unto me

This anthem, which chooses in part different verses of Psalm 122 from those set by Parry, was written by the 26-year-old Henry Purcell for the coronation of James II in 1685. For much of its length the piece is bold and direct in its setting, moving in block chords, but interest is sustained by key changes and harmonic surprises, for instance at the words “O Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” and again at “Peace be within thy walls”. Just before the end Purcell launches into a Gloria full of dazzling contrapuntal ingenuity.

source: The Cherwell Singers

I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord.
For thither the tribes go up, e'en the tribes of the Lord: to testify unto Israel,
and to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.
For there is the seat of judgement: e'en the seat of the house of David.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls: and plenteousness within thy palaces.
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

Psalm 122, vv. 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 (Book of Common Prayer)

Henry Purcell

Voluntary in G;
Double Organ Voluntary
Ian Tindale organ

Purcell's compositions for the organ explored the new possibilities of instruments and styles heavily influenced by performers, composers and instrument builders from the Continent. The word 'voluntary' became common in this period to denote any bipartite composition consisting of a slow section followed by a faster fugue. 'Voluntary in G' is a perfect example of this, with a beautiful ornamented opening followed by a gently imitative fugue. The 'Voluntary in D Minor for Double Organ' was written for an instrument with more than one keyboard (one soft and one loud), and these two voices are heard throughout in dialogue, with even greater degrees of ornamentation and expression.

Ian Tindale

Paul Spicer (born 1952)

Glory be to God for dappled things

Paul Spicer writes: This is a setting of Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem "Pied Beauty". It was commissioned by the Reverend Jim Bates, Vicar of Kingston, for the service in Kingston Parish Church celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. The first performance was given by the combined choirs of Kingston Parish Church and Twickenham Choral Society on 2nd June 2002.

The Vicar particularly requested the use of Hopkins's famous poem which celebrates all manner of 'dappled things'. It is a difficult poem for the composer (as are many of Hopkins's poems) and a good proportion of the text is reflective or descriptive. The poem winds through a number of examples of dappled things: 'skies of couple-colour', 'rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim', 'fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls' and so on, winding down to a centrally peaceful section in which Hopkins writes of 'all things counter, original, spare, strange'. However, in the context of a celebratory service I wanted to bring out as much of that element within the poem as possible and so repeated the first three lines of the poem at the end as a lively dance, finishing with many injunctions to 'praise him'.

Glory be to God for dappled things –
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout
that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow,
and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows
how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle,
dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past
change:
Praise him.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Pied Beauty"

I N T E R V A L

Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

Te Deum ("Collegium Regale" setting)

Much of Howells' music was inspired by certain occasions, people, and in the case of some of the service music, buildings. His distinguished settings for Anglican liturgical services are dedicated to and influenced by the acoustic and special choral traditions of various churches. Tonight's "Te Deum" is taken from the service *Collegium Regale* of 1944, which was composed for the choir of King's College, Cambridge. The long unison modal-feeling melodies, contrasted with lush harmonic passages and the strong, independent organ part, evoke the aura of that venerable chapel and capitalize on its distinguished tradition of representing the finest in Anglican church music.

source: Linda Mack, Andrews University, Michigan, USA

We praise thee, O God: we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee: the Father everlasting. To thee all angels cry aloud: the Heavens, and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubin and Seraphin continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of thy glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee. The noble army of Martyrs praise thee. The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee; The Father of an infinite Majesty; Thine honourable, true, and only Son; Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter. Thou art the King of Glory: O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When thou took'st upon thee to deliver man: thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death: thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. Thou sittest at the right hand of God: in the Glory of the Father. We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore pray thee, help thy servants: whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy Saints: in glory everlasting. O Lord, save thy people: and bless thine heritage. Govern them: and lift them up for ever. Day by day we magnify thee; And we worship thy Name ever world without end. Vouchsafe, O Lord: to keep us this day without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us: have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us: as our trust is in thee. O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

Book of Common Prayer

Sir Hubert Parry

Songs of Farewell, nos 1-4

The *Songs of Farewell* were composed during the First World War, when Parry already knew that he did not have long to live. Common to all the texts are the contrasting themes of the transitory nature of life and the redeeming power of faith.

The six individual motets, of which we are performing the first four tonight, are arranged in a carefully organized scheme of developing length and complexity. The first two, for four vocal parts, are quite short and rhythmically and harmonically relatively straightforward. Here and elsewhere Parry's liberal use of rests to punctuate phrases and emphasize aspects of the text is both effective and original. The second pair, "Never weather-beaten sail" and "There is an old belief", are in five and six parts respectively, and introduce a degree of counterpoint into the texture. Parry's *Songs of Farewell* are widely acknowledged as masterpieces of unaccompanied choral writing.

source: John Bawden

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:

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

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

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

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.

Sir John Davies

3. "Never weather-beaten sail"

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore.	Ever blooming are the joys of Heaven's high Paradise.
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more.	Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:	Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the blessed only see:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest.	O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to Thee!

Thomas Campion

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.
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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

Sir Hubert Parry

Two Chorale Preludes
Rockingham;
St Ann
Ian Tindale organ

The two chorale preludes by Parry are from his first collection composed in 1911 and published in 1912. Parry learnt the organ as a boy, and throughout his career was inspired by the instrument and by his organist colleagues at Oxford and the Royal College of Music. The influence of Bach is noticeable in both these pieces: "Rockingham" ("When I survey the wondrous cross") shares the same key and texture (with the hymn melody in the tenor part) as Bach's famous 'Wachet auf' setting. "St Ann" ('O God, our help in ages past') is a jubilant toccata with the fragmented melody appearing in the right hand, surrounded by imitative continuous quavers.

Ian Tindale

Edgar Bainton (1880–1956)

And I Saw A New Heaven

The anthem *And I Saw a New Heaven* was completed in June 1928, and is a favourite with generations of singers. It succeeds partly because of the drama of its word-setting (take, for example, the rising phrase given to the basses on "and I heard a great voice out of heaven", followed by the brass-like choral chords for "behold, the tabernacle of God is with men"), but equally because of the lyrical quality of its melodies, especially the unforgettable tenor phrase towards the end, at "God shall wipe away all tears", where the melody, at first setting the text syllable by syllable, returns twice to its initial pitch before finally breaking off heavenwards with a melisma on "away".

source: Durham Cathedral Choir Association

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away"

Revelation 21, vv. 1–4

Sir Hubert Parry

Blest Pair of Sirens

This work was composed for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. John Milton's ode "At a Solemn Music" combines the classical Greek idea of a lost Golden Age with the Christian doctrine of the Fall. In the first part the poet also recalls the Christian tradition of a jubilee, as both a celebration and a time of forgiveness and renewal and of rededication and reaffirmation of faith. The ode takes the form of a single extended sentence before the final prayer of the last four lines, and Parry's music manages perfectly to embrace the drawn-out phraseology and the changes of tone as the lines develop. *Blest Pair of Sirens* effectively established Parry as the leading English choral composer of his day, and is still frequently used at royal events.

source: Cambridge Philharmonic Society

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'n's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed pow'r employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured 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 disproportioned sin
Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
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 Heav'n, till God ere long
To His celestial concert us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

John Milton 'At a solemn music'

Paul Spicer



Paul Spicer (b.1952) is one of the UK's most widely respected choral conductors. He teaches at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he also conducts the Chamber Choir, and at Oxford and Durham Universities. His biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, was published in August 1998 and has been reprinted three times. His major biography of Sir George Dyson was published in May 2014 by Boydell & Brewer. He has recently been commissioned to write a biography of Sir Arthur Bliss. Following the ongoing success of his guide to James MacMillan's choral music he was commissioned by the Britten-Pears Foundation and Boosey & Hawkes to write the first practical guide to all Benjamin Britten's choral music for the Britten centenary this year. As a composer his *Easter Oratorio* was hailed as 'the best of its kind to have appeared ... since Howells's *Hymnus Paradisi*.' His choral symphony, *Unfinished Remembering*, commemorating the centenary of the First World War, was premiered to considerable acclaim in Symphony Hall, Birmingham, in September 2014.

Paul is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Research Fellow of Birmingham University, an Honorary Fellow of University College, Durham, Honorary Fellow of the Birmingham Conservatoire, Trustee of the Finzi Trust, Chairman of the Sir George Dyson Trust and lay member of the Chapter of Lichfield Cathedral.

Ian Tindale



Ian Tindale, a graduate of Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music, joined the Whitehall Choir as its accompanist in January 2013. Ian is an organist, harpsichordist and répétiteur, but he primarily works in the UK and abroad as a song accompanist. He has won Accompanist's Prizes in the Kathleen Ferrier Awards, the Royal Overseas League Competition and the Maggie Teyte Competition, and he is a Samling Artist and a Britten Pears Young Artist. He also frequently performs with the London Philharmonic, Philharmonia and BBC Symphony Orchestras. Future engagements include song recitals in Oxford, Bath and Edinburgh, and Ian will be Music Director of Handel's *Alcina* at the Ryedale Festival this summer. For more information please see www.iantindale.com.

WHITEHALL CHOIR – FORTHCOMING EVENTS IN 2016

(For further details, and information on later fixtures, visit
www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.)

Thursday 28 April - Monday 2 May
Vienna tour

Thursday 14 July
A programme of French music for Bastille Day,
including works by Saint-Saëns, Debussy and Massenet
St James's, Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

Saturday 8 October
Come and Sing: an open choral workshop
on Dvořák's Stabat Mater
Church of the Holy Spirit, Clapham, London SW4 9LQ

Tuesday 22 November
Mozart Coronation Mass in C K317
Mozart Divertimento in F K138
Richard Blackford Mirror of Perfection
St John's Smith Square, London SW1P 3HA

Tuesday 13 December
Christmas Music and Readings
St Peter's, Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AL

You may also be interested in this forthcoming concert:

St Johns Smith Square
Saturday 9 July 2016 at 7.30pm

Elgar Dream of Gerontius

Miranda Westcott - mezzo-soprano
Peter Auty - tenor
David Soar - bass

Brandenburg Sinfonia
Twickenham Choral Society
Conducted by Christopher Herrick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*We are grateful to Hertfordshire Libraries' Performing Arts service
for the supply of hire music used in this concert.*

Jonathan Williams kindly supplied the photograph featured on the front page of the programme.

THE WHITEHALL CHOIR

PRESIDENT: Martin Donnelly CMG

Conductor Paul Spicer

Accompanist Ian Tindale

The Whitehall Choir achieves singing of a high quality in a wide range of repertoire, and we are looking to recruit in all voices. 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 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 settings across London. Our concert locations in recent years have included St Margaret’s Westminster Abbey; St John’s Smith Square; the Banqueting House in Whitehall; St Alban’s Church, Holborn; St Peter’s, Eaton Square; and tonight’s venue, Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square. Our programmes cater for a broad spectrum of musical tastes, and we feel privileged to be able to give concerts in such great venues. Members’ commitment to music-making is such that the weekly rehearsals go well with the busy day-jobs that many of us have, and provide 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. Some details of forthcoming events can be found in this programme. For more information, please visit the Choir’s website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk (Charity no. 280478).

Sopranos

Hilary Davies
Imogen Davies
Deb Dowdall
Ruth Eastman
Jacky Erwteman
Kate Goulden
Kate Hand
Claire Johnston
Lesley Kirby
Beth Organ
Margaret Perkins
Lucilla Poston
Lesley Raymond
Janet Simpson
Janet Winstanley

Altos

Helen Audaer
Gesa Brinkmann
Rose Chandler
Monica Darnbrough
Miranda Douce
Julie Dyg
Sam Foley
Katherine Howes
Jane Mackay
Paula Nobes
Jean Orr
Penny Prior
Jean Robinson
Liz Walton
Helen Ward

Tenors

Patrick Haighton
Graham Hand
Ken Holmes
Philip Pratley
Barry Sterndale-Bennett
Alastair Tolley
Jonathan Williams
Philip Worley

Basses

James Gourlay
Laurence Grace
Richard Grafen
Mark Graver
Martin Humphreys
Jack Joseph
Daniel Lambauer
Simon Lawson
William Longland
Brendan O’Keeffe
Malcolm Todd
Ian Williamson

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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 an up-front payment at the start of the season, Friends receive one top-price ticket for all Whitehall-Choir-promoted 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.

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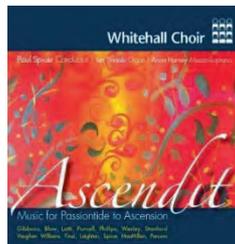
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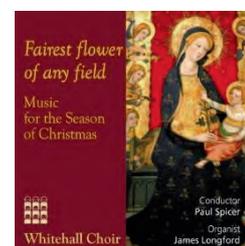
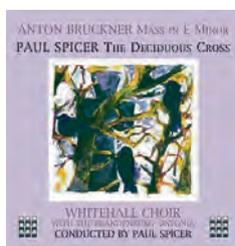
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Ascendit – Music for Passiontide to Ascension

The pieces for Whitehall Choir's most recent CD, *Ascendit*, its third, recorded in 2014, were chosen to trace the period of the church's year between Passiontide and Ascension. In selecting them, we wanted to present a wide variety of styles and periods, including a substantial amount of recent music. A key element was the winning entry of Whitehall Choir's 70th anniversary Young Composer Competition, which stipulated that the piece had to set words which related to the programme. Samuel Parsons' work movingly sets the words from the Latin *Stabat Mater* alongside those of Elizabeth Jennings. We also sing pieces by James MacMillan, one of the greatest choral composers of the present day, and his teacher Kenneth Leighton. Balancing all this modern music are classics from earlier periods including Purcell's near-perfect *Remember not, Lord, our offences*, Lotti's extraordinary *Crucifixus* and Gibbons's precocious doctoral exercise for Oxford University, *O Clap your Hands*, one of the truly virtuoso compositions of the Tudor period. There really should be something for everyone on this CD.



In 2007 the Whitehall Choir's first CD featured the first recorded performance of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross*, together with Bruckner's Mass in E minor. The second CD, recorded in 2009 at St Alban's Church, Holborn, is a selection of music for the Christmas season.



All our CDs are on sale at this evening's concert, or they may be purchased via the Choir's website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.