



Celebrates Christmas

Christ Church Cathedral Darwin

26 November 2011

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John Rutter was born in London in 1945, studied music at Cambridge and, later, served as Musical Director of the choir of Clare College. He led that choir to international renown during the 1970s, directing them in a number of broadcasts and recordings.

In the '80s he founded the Cambridge Singers, now a recording-only choir, with which he has made many recordings of mainly sacred choral music, including his own works. His compositional career has embraced both large and small-scale choral works, orchestral pieces, a piano concerto, music for television, and specialist writing for specific groups, but like Benjamin Britten, Rutter has always



had a keen interest in composing for children and amateur performers. Another Britten connection involved Rutter singing as a member of the choir for the seminal recording of Britten's *War Requiem* in 1963, conducted by the composer.

Best-known for his own carols, as well as arrangements of many others in such collections as *Carols for choirs*, edited with David Wilcocks, Rutter becomes a household name at Christmas time, as choirs around the world prepare and perform his hummable, accessible songs. He is universally popular in the USA, whereas some members of the musical establishment in his native UK are not quite so enthusiastic. One English reviewer, however, said "For the infectiousness of his melodic invention and consummate craftsmanship, Rutter has few peers."



Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976) was the outstanding English composer of his generation. He was also a brilliant pianist and conductor, and his all-round gifts led to friendships and collaborations with many of the greatest names in music – the composer Shostakovich, cellist Rostropovich and singers Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Janet Baker and Peter Peers. The latter became his lifelong artistic and domestic partner – the inspiration for much of his vocal music. Britten delighted in composing for children and non-professional performers. *New Year Carol*, being performed tonight, is part of a set of songs for children called "Friday Afternoons", and *Ceremony of Carols* was originally written for children's voices.

His best-known compositions include the opera *Peter Grimes*, orchestral works *A Simple Symphony* and *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, and the major choral work *War Requiem*, music of enormous dramatic impact requiring large forces, combining the words of the Latin Mass with antiwar poetry of Wilfred Owen.

Britten received many prizes and honors, including a Companion of Honour in 1952, and an Order of Merit in 1965, his most cherished honor. In 1948 Britten had established the prestigious Aldeburgh Music Festival, where many of his works were premiered, including his opera *Death in Venice* in 1968. Just before his own death Britten was created a life peer as Lord Britten of Aldeburgh.

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Joy to the World **Brass Ensemble** L. Mason arr. M. Dudfield

I Saw Three Ships **Chorale** English trad. arr. J. Rutter

This is a traditional and popular Christmas carol from England. The reference to three ships is thought to originate in the three ships that bore the purported relics of the Biblical magi to Cologne Cathedral in the 12th century. The simplicity of the child-like melody has enabled Rutter to have some fun with this creative arrangement.

Angels' Carol **Chorale** J. Rutter

"Have you heard the sound of the angel voices ringing out so sweetly, ringing out so clear?..."

This carol epitomises the angelic sound we associate with Christmas – made more angelic by the use of an arpeggio accompaniment so idiomatic for the 'arpa'.

Il Est Né **Youth Choir** French trad. arr. N. Lewis

Il est né, le Divin enfant, jouez hautbois, résonnez musettes,
(He is born the Divine Child, play the oboe, sound the musettes)

Il est né, le Divin enfant, Chantons tous son avènement (He is born – let's all sing about his arrival.)

The tune for this carol can be found in R. Grosjean's *Airs des Noël Lorrain* (1862), where it is called 'Ancien air de chasse' – an old hunting song. The melodic shape of the opening few bars is indeed reminiscent of a hunting horn call.

An Australian Carol **Chorale and Youth Choir** R. Grainer arr. A. Meaghan

Like many other Australian carols, this one focuses initially on the different season and climate of the Antipodean Christmas, but then the essentiality of the message:

*No snow falls at Christmas on this sunburnt land – there's only the heat and the dust and the sand
But as in the land that our folks left behind, we'll celebrate Christ's birth – the hope of mankind.*

Star Carol **Chorale** J. Rutter

This is another Rutter favourite, announcing Christ's birth: *"See His star, shining bright..."*

The Holy Boy **Allegra Randazzo** J. Ireland

Set to a poem by Herbert Brown, this carol captures the mystery of Christ's birth with sombre and reflective chords, very characteristic of this early 20th century English composer. Ireland studied and taught at the Royal College of Music and counted Benjamin Britten amongst his pupils.

Ceremony Of Carols **Chorale and Youth Choir** B. Britten

Originally scored for three-part treble chorus, this Christmas cantata illustrated Britten's fondness of the pure timbre of the children's choirs and of the voices of boy trebles in particular. It was initially conceived as a series of unrelated songs, and unified into one piece with the framing processional and recessional in 1942 while Britten was travelling from the United States to England.

The text, (after the Latin processional) is from *The English Galaxy of Shorter Poems*, mostly in Middle English.

Separate movements include:

- a) *Processional (Hodie Chrsitus Natus Est)* b) *Wolcum (Welcome)* c) *There is No Rose*
- d) *That Yonge Child* – solo Fiona Wake e) *Balulalow (Lullaby)* Solo Siobhan Casey f) *As Dew In April*
- g) *This Little Babe* h) *Spring Carol* – Youth Choir i) *Deo Gratias* j) *Recessional*

INTERVAL

Jesus Child

..... Chorale

J. Rutter

Just as we asked "Have you heard about the Angels... " (in the Angels' Carol), this carol talks more about the Shepherds : "Have you heard the story of Jesus of Bethlehem: how he came from Heaven and was born in a manger bed...? Sing Alleluia!" The music of this pacey carol captures the breathless excitement of great news.

So My Sheep May Safely Graze Youth Choir

R. McKuen

Rod McKuen was born in California at the end of the great depression. At eleven, he left home to work as a cowhand, lumberjack and railroad worker. He served in Korea and returned as a folksinger, poet and best-selling author. The late W. H. Auden remarked "Rod McKuen's poems are love letters to the world"

*So my sheep may safely graze I climb the highest hill, and keep a watch out for the hawk & for the howling wolf.
I made a friend out of the wind and got to know the snow so even in the wintertime my sheep may safely graze.
Calling, 'Come sheep, come, I'll count you one by one, one for John and one for Jacob,
one for Job and one for the child who's born this morning in Bethlehem.'*

For the Beauty of the Earth Youth Choir

J. Rutter

Not really a Carol, this anthem nevertheless fits with choral pieces which give thanks for great blessings:

*For the beauty of the earth, For the beauty of the skies, For the love which from our birth over and around us lies...
For the beauty of the hour of the day and of the night, Hill and vale and tree and flower, Sun and moon and stars of light
For each perfect gift of thine To our race so freely given Graces human and divine
Flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n..... Lord of all to thee we raise This our joyful hymn of praise.*

New Year Carol

..... Chorale

B. Britten

One of Britten's earliest works for treble voices is the set of twelve songs for choir and piano grouped under the title *Friday Afternoons*, Op. 7 (1933-35), so entitled for the weekly slot once customarily given to class singing in English schools. The words are from a collection of traditional folk verses, and this one was from Wales. The text may relate to the custom of bringing fresh spring water with evergreen sprigs to neighbourhood houses early on New Year's Day. Young boys would sprinkle the hands and face of anyone they met for a penny, wishing them a Happy New Year. The exact meaning of the phrase, "levy dew" is unknown, although there have been attempts to trace it to *llef I Dduw* (Welsh for "cry of God"). It could also come from 'Levez Dieu', an elevation of the Host at the Eucharist. Benjamin Britten put this Carol to music in 1936.

Christmas Lullaby

..... Fiona Wake

J. R. Brown

Taken from 'Songs of the New World', this song is of a lonely young girl who decides to have a baby to improve how she feels about her place in the world. She considers herself 'in the eyes of heaven' and her faith is restored. She decides to make whatever sacrifices necessary to bring something beautiful into the world singing 'Gloria, Gloria I will sing the praise of the Lord'. Yes, it could be the Virgin Mary.

Three Kings

..... Chorale

P. Cornelius arr. I Atkins

This carol is a wondrous combination of two: the hymn *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* ("How lovely shines the morning star") by Philipp Nicolai written in 1597 and used by Bach in his church cantata of that name (BWV1), and a baritone solo line above it which tells the story of the journey of the Three Kings.

Gloria

..... Chorale

J. Rutter

Written as a concert work, the Gloria was commissioned by the Voices of Mel Olson, Omaha, Nebraska, and the composer directed the first performance on the occasion of his first visit to the United States in May 1974. The Latin text is drawn from the Ordinary of the Mass, and the work is divided into three movements similar to traditional symphonic structure ;

*Gloria in Excelsis Deo, Et in Terra pax hominibus bonae voluntate;
Domine Deus Rex Caelestis; and Quoniam Tu Solu Sanctus.*

The accompaniment for brass ensemble, timpani, percussion and organ provides quite a 'joyful noise' in the outer movements, but is used more softly and introspectively in the middle movement. Rutter describes the Gloria's musical challenge as exalted, devotional and jubilant by turns.

DARWIN CHORALE

Sopranos

Carole Baillargeon	Siobhan Casey	Appol Craufurd	Erin Dean
Marion Edens	Cherisse Gallagher	Jenny Scott	Pam Tibbits
Noelene Trinne	Benilde Tilman Costa	Fiona Wake	Ann Webb
Lyla Wills	Jenny Young		

Altos

Jenny Atkinson	Jenny Ashton	Francoise Barr	Sheila Delahay
Cassandra DeSilva	Mel Ehrlich	Annette Gore	Hilary Hannam
Pam Hibberd	Val Hristova	Nora Lewis	Louise Michie
Josie Roberts	Pam Smith	Janine Sutter	Didimaid Uibo

Tenors

Darryel Binns	Alistair Burns	David Hibbert	Norm McNair
Tony Mount	Lee Lovett-Olsen	Reg Prasad	Andrew Telfer

Basses

Mike Ashton	Richard Chapman	Mark de Souza	Echel Edens
Michael Foley	Philip Gerber	Martin Gore	Michael Loughlin

Soloists/Ensemble singers: Fiona Wake, Siobhan Casey, Annette Gore
Mark de Souza Michael Loughlin

HARP Vanessa Sundstrup

DARWIN YOUTH CHOIR

Rebekah Ainslie	Jessie-Clare Campbell	Sevasti Caravas	Breanna Dyer
Kimberly Harding	Emma Hodges	Katie Joyce	Mieke Liveris
Caitlin Macklon	Yuliana Pascoe	Allegra Randazzo	Jemma Stanley

BRASS ENSEMBLE

Trumpets: Bruce Cartwright Tom Cowie Peter Mathison Craig McGiffen

Euphonium: Carol Atkinson

Trombones: Graham Hen Matt Sutton Peter Wood

Tuba: Neil Williamson

Timpani: Malcolm Johnston-Leek

Percussion: Genevieve Meehan

ORGAN Digby Barrow

PIANO/REPETITEUR James Teh





Musical Director – Nora Lewis AM
Assistant Musical Director – Michael Loughlin
Rehearsal Repetiteur – James Teh
Conductor Emeritus – Dr. Dean Patterson

At the top end of song

Committee

Chairperson – Pamela Smith
Vice-Chairperson – Annette Gore
Secretary – Ann Lilley
Assistant secretary – Pam Hibberd
Treasurer – Paul Lassemillante
Assistant treasurer – Mallika Rajaratnam
Librarian – David Hibbert
Assistant Librarian – Tony Mount
Public Officer – Bev Turnbull
Registrar – Darryel Binns
Costume Manager – Jenny Atkinson

Life Members

Tine Adams
Kathy Banks
Elizabeth Davidson
Nan Giese
Annette Gore
Martin Gore
Bill Griffiths
Nora Lewis
Jenny Martin
Alison McCubbin
Ted Milliken
Pat Palmer
Reg Prasad
Jenny Scott
Noelene Trinne

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