# WIGMORE HALL

Friday 20 December 2024 7.30pm

#### Morning Star

The Gesualdo Six

Owain Park artistic director, bass Guy James countertenor

Alasdair Austin countertenor Joseph Wicks tenor

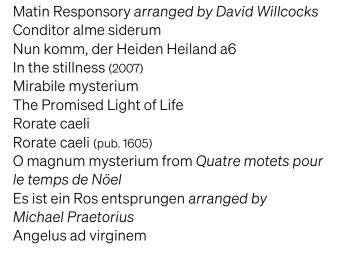
Josh Cooter tenor Michael Craddock baritone

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594) Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594) Michael Praetorius (c.1571-1621) Sally Beamish (b.1956) Jacobus Handl (1550-1591) Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b.1980) Plainchant William Byrd (c.1540-1623) Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Anon

Plainchant Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)

Joannes Eccard (1553-1611) Clemens non Papa (c.1510-1555) Arvo Pärt (b.1935) Judith Bingham (b.1952) Plainchant Orlande de Lassus **Owain Park** (b.1993) Bob Chilcott (b.1955)



#### Interval

Ecce advenit The Three Kings from Weihnachtslieder Op. 8 (1856 rev. 1859) Maria wallt zum Heiligtum Magi veniunt Morning Star In Mary's love Vidimus stellam **Tribus miraculis** O send out thy light The Shepherd's Carol



UNDER 35S Supported by the AKO Foundation Media partner Classic FM

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management. In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141. Wigmore Hall is equipped with a loop to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838 36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • Wigmore-hall.org.uk • John Gilhooly Director

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan









For centuries Christmas and the surrounding seasons have inspired composers to new heights of invention. In this programme, The Gesualdo Six weaves a tapestry of wellknown seasonal carols together with Renaissance gems and highlights from the 21st Century. Full of hope and joy, much of it alluding to the 'morning star', it offers a promise of renewal and rebirth.

This evening's programme opens with a trio of Renaissance works. The first, 'I Look From Afar'- also known as the Matin Responsory - originates in the music of Italian composer Palestrina, skilfully arranged by David Willcocks for the Choir of King's College, Cambridge. This is followed by 'Conditor Alme Siderum', one of the earliest known Christian hymns, dating back to the 7th Century. Its familiar melody, often sung to the English text 'Creator of the stars of night', is here brought to life by Orlande de Lassus, who beautifully captures the Advent season's themes of anticipation and reflection. Completing our opening triptych is 'Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland', a vibrant hymn adaptation by prolific 16th-Century German composer Michael Praetorius. Setting Martin Luther's text, Praetorius employs dramatic rhetoric, imitative textures, and striking gestures to celebrate the festive spirit.

We then start to weave new with old. The hushed rapture of a small parish church in a snowbound landscape is beautifully captured by **Sally Beamish** in her simple carol, 'In the stillness', which sets words by Katrina Shepherd.

Jacobus Handl was a prolific composer of the late Renaissance. The 'wondrous mystery' of the 'Mirabile mysterium' text—the mystical interaction between the human and the divine—is realised through wandering chromaticism which in combination with melodic imitation generates wild, often unlikely dissonances.

**Cheryl Frances-Hoad's** 'The promised light of life' sets a Latin text by St Bede, which is briefly conflated with a short phrase in English from the Revelation of St John the Divine: 'I am the bright and morning star.' The voices are gradually revealed through the building-up of chords, an effect repeated at the end of the piece. **William Byrd's** 'Rorate Caeli' serves as an introit for the votive Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary during Advent. The text, translated as 'Drop down, ye heavens, from above', is imbued with a sense of yearning and divine anticipation. Similarly steeped in reverence, **Francis Poulenc's** 'O magnum mysterium', composed in 1952 as part of his *Quatre Motets pour le temps de Noël*, explores the mystery of Christ's birth. Poulenc combines lyrical melodies with moments of striking dissonance that resolve into radiant beauty.

The German hymn 'Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen' first appeared in print in 1599 and became widely associated with a melody harmonised by Michael Praetorius a decade later. The hymn's opening verse evokes the image of a rose springing from the stem of the Tree of Jesse, a symbol rooted in medieval theology and frequently depicted in religious art of the period.

'Angelus ad virginem' is a beloved medieval carol that appears in at least six manuscripts dating from the late 13th to the mid-16th Century across Europe. The text exists in both Latin ('Angelus ad virginem') and Middle English ('Gabriel fram evene king'), with slight variations in melody between sources, reflecting its enduring popularity.

'The Three Kings' is the third song from *Weihnachtslieder*, Op. 8, by German composer **Peter Cornelius**. Following several revisions, Franz Liszt persuaded Cornelius to include the Lutheran chorale 'Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern' ('How brightly shines the Morning Star') in the accompanying voices.

Johannes Brahms held **Johannes Eccard** in high esteem, ranking him as one of the most significant Lutheran composers of the 16th Century. Eccard's 'Maria wallt zum Heiligtum' sets a text derived from a poem by Peter von Hagen, itself a paraphrase of the *Song of Simeon*. Depicting Christ's presentation at the temple (Candlemas), the piece exemplifies the 'chorale-motet' style, blending the clarity of a hymn tune with independent melodic and rhythmic lines.

**Clemens non Papa**'s extensive surviving output secures his place as one of the most prolific composers of his era. His motet 'Magi veniunt' is typically responsive to the moods and imagery of the text. Notably, Clemens uses rests to highlight key narrative moments, allowing a collective breath to emphasise significant phrases—such as at the close of the first section, 'et venimus' ('and we have come'), heightening its impact.

Arvo Pärt composed 'Morning Star' to celebrate the 175th birthday of Durham University in 2007, choosing to set a prayer inscribed above the tomb of St Bede in Durham Cathedral. The voices are treated almost orchestrally at first: we imagine flutes and oboes in the legato upper parts, with the middle parts imitating strings playing with separate bow strokes. When the basses arrive, it's a little like the gentle persuasion of timpani with soft bassoons. Judith Bingham's anthem 'In Mary's love' sets a poem by Ben Kaye whose text takes inspiration from a Marian homily given by the 12th-Century Cistercian Amadeus of Lausanne. The lovely series of parallel chords at 'Wondrous newborn life' and the tenderness of a faltering breath at 'unveiled the jewels of heaven' are examples of the piece's elegance and harmonic warmth.

Orlande de Lassus was born in Mons, in modern-day Belgium. His motet 'Tribus miraculis' is joyous. Driving scalic moments in the lower voices provide a bubbling energy for the upper voices, which frequently dance along towards the top of their range in celebration of the three manifestations of Jesus's divinity. 'O send out thy light' sets a verse from Psalm 42 (43) in which the protagonist asks for the divine light to guide them. I wrote this short introit for our Epiphany concert series in 2022 with the singers of the group in mind, splitting the forces in half to form a higher consort, which leads off, and a lower group which responds.

Our final work, **Bob Chilcott**'s 'The Shepherd's Carol' was composed for the famous Choir of King's College, Cambridge in 2000, and choirs have loved it ever since for its sense of calm and contentment. Chilcott sets a text by Clive Sansom, presenting the nativity through the eyes of the shepherds.

#### © Owain Park 2024

Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.

### Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

(c.1525-1594) Matin Responsory arranged by David Willcocks

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Go ye out to meet him and say: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

High and low, rich and poor, one with another. Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep. Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

#### Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594)

#### Conditor alme siderum

#### Creator of the stars of night

Conditor alme siderum, aeterna lux credentium, Christe, redemptor omnium exaudi preces supplicum.

Oui condolens interitu, mortis perire saeculum, salvasti mundum languidum, donans reis remedium.

Vergente mundi vespere, uti sponsus de thalamo egressus honestissima virginis matris clausula.

Cujus forti potentiae, genu curvantur omnia, coelestia terrestria nutu fatentur subdita.

Creator of the stars of night, Thy people's everlasting light, O Christ, Redeemer of all, hear Thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving that the ancient curse should doom to death a universe, hast found the medicine, full of grace, to save and heal a ruined race.

Thou camest, the Bridegroom of the bride. as drew the world to evening tide, proceeding from a virgin shrine, the spotless Victim all divine.

At whose dread Name, majestic now, all knees must bend, all hearts must bow; and things celestial Thee shall own, and things terrestrial Lord alone.

Te deprecamur agie, venture judex saeculi, conserva nos in tempore, hostis a telo perfidi.

Laus, honor, virtus. gloria Deo Patri et Filio. Sancto simul Paraclito, in saecolorum saecula. Amen.

O Thou whose coming is with dread, to judge and doom the quick and dead, preserve us, while we dwell below, from every insult of the foe.

To God the Father, God the Son. and God the Spirit, Three in One, laud, honour, might, and glory be from age to age eternally. Amen.

#### Michael Praetorius (c.1571-1621)

Nun komm, der Heiden Now come, Saviour Heiland a6

Nun komm der Heiden Heiland, der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt. daß sich wundert alle Welt, Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

## of the heathen

Now come, Saviour of the heathen,

recognised as the Virgin's Child.

so that the world marvels that God ordained such a birth for Him.

#### Sally Beamish (b.1956)

In the stillness (2007) Katrina Shepherd

In the stillness of a church Where candles glow...

Due to copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce the text of this piece

Please do not turn the page until the piece and its accompaniment have ended.

#### Jacobus Handl (1550-1591)

Mirabile mysterium Liturgical text

Mirabile mysterium declaratur hodie, Innovantur naturae: Deus homo factus est. Id quod fuit permansit, Et quod non erat assumpsit, Non commixionem passus neque divisionem.

#### A wonderful mystery

A wonderful mystery is revealed today, nature itself is transformed: God is made man. He remained what he was and became what he was not, suffering neither confusion nor division.

## Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b.1980)

#### The Promised Light of Life

Christus est stella matutina Qui nocte saeculi transacta Lucem vitae sanctis promittit Et pandit aeternam. Christ is the morning star who when the night of this world is past brings to his saints the promise of the light of life and opens everlasting day.

### Plainchant

Rorate caeli Liturgical text

Rorate caeli desuper, Et nubes pluant iustum.

Ne irascaris Domine, ne ultra memineris iniquitatis: ecce civitas Sancti facta est deserta: Sion deserta facta est: Jerusalem desolata est: domus sanctificationis tuae et gloriae tuae, ubi laudaverunt te patres nostri.

Rorate caeli desuper, Et nubes pluant iustum.

Peccavimus, et facti sumus tamquam immundus nos,

## Drop down the dew, ye heavens

Drop down the dew, ye heavens, from above and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Be not angry, O Lord, and remember no longer our iniquity: behold the city of thy sanctuary is become a desert, Sion is made a desert. Jerusalem is desolate, the house of our holiness and of thy glory, where our fathers praised thee.

Drop down the dew, ye heavens, from above and let the skies pour down righteousness.

We have sinned, and we are become as one

et cecidimus quasi folium universi: et iniquitates nostrae quasi ventus abstulerunt nos: abscondisti faciem tuam a nobis, et allisisti nos in manu iniquitatis nostrae.

Rorate caeli desuper, Et nubes pluant iustum.

Vide Domine afflictionem populi tui, et mitte quem missurus es: emitte Agnum dominatorem terrae, de petra deserti ad montem filiae Sion: ut auferat ipse iugum captivitatis nostrae.

Rorate caeli desuper, Et nubes pluant iustum.

Consolamini, consolamini, popule meus: cito veniet salus tua: quare maerore consumeris, quia innovavit te dolor? Salvabo te, noli timere, ego enim sum Dominus Deus tuus, Sanctus Israel, redemptor tuus.

Rorate caeli desuper, Et nubes pluant iustum.

#### William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Rorate caeli (pub. 1605) Liturgical text

Rorate caeli desuper, et nubes pluant iustum: Aperiatur terra, et germinet salvatorem. unclean, and we have all fallen as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast crushed us by the hand of our iniquity.

Drop down the dew, ye heavens, from above and let the skies pour down righteousness.

See, O Lord, the affliction of thy people, and send him whom thou hast promised to send. Send forth the Lamb, the ruler of the earth, from the rock of the desert to the mount of the daughter of Sion, that he himself may take off the yoke of our captivity.

Drop down the dew, ye heavens, from above and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Be comforted, be comforted, my people; thy salvation shall speedily come. Why wilt thou waste away in sadness? why hath sorrow seized thee? I will save thee; fear not: for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer.

Drop down the dew, ye heavens, from above and let the skies pour down righteousness.

#### Drop down ye heavens

Drop down ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open and bring forth a Saviour. Benedixisti, Domine, terram tuam: Avertisti captivitatem Jacob.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

O magnum mysterium from Quatre motets pour le temps de Nöel

O magnum mysterium, et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent Dominum natum, jacentem in praesepio. Beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Christum.

### Anon

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen arranged by Michael Praetorius

Anonymous

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen aus einer Wurzel zart, Wie uns die Alten sungen, von Jesse kam die Art Und hat ein Blümlein bracht Mitten im kalten Winter, wohl zu der halben Nacht. Lord, thou hast blessed thy land: thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.

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.

O great mystery

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the newborn Lord, lying in a manger. Blessed Virgin, whose womb was worthy to carry Christ the Lord.

## Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung. It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.

#### Angelus ad virginem Liturgical text

Angelus ad virginem, Subintrans in conclave, Virainis formidinem Demulcens, inquit 'Ave! Ave, regina virginum: Coeli terraeque dominum Concipies et paries intacta Salutem hominum; Tu porta coeli facta, Medela criminum.'

'Quomodo conciperem, Ouae virum non cognovi? Qualiter infringerem, Quae firma mente vovi?' 'Spiritus sancti gratia Perficiet haec omnia. Ne timeas, sed gaudeas Secura, quod castimonia Manebit in te pura Dei potentia.'

Ad haec, virgo nobilis Respondens inquit ei, 'Ancilla sum humilis Omnipotentis Dei. Tibi coelesti nuntio, Tanti secreti conscio, Consentiens et cupiens videre Factum quod audio, Parata sum parere Dei consilio.'

#### The angel to the Virgin

The angel came to the Virgin, entering secretly into her room; calming the Virgin's fear, he said, 'Hail! Hail, queen of virgins: you will conceive the Lord of heaven and earth and bear him, still a virgin, to be the salvation of mankind; you will be made the gate of heaven, the cure of sins.'

'How can I conceive, when I have never known a man? How can I transgress resolutions that I have vowed with a firm mind? 'The grace of the Holy Spirit shall do all this. Do not be afraid, but rejoice without a care, since your chastity will remain in you unspoilt through the power of God.'

To this, the noble Virgin, replying, said to him, 'I am the humble maidservant of almighty God. To you, heavenly messenger, and bearer of such a great secret, I give my consent, and wishing to see done what I hear, I am ready to obey the will of God.'

Piece continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.

Angelus disparuit Et statim puellaris Uterus intumuit Vi partus salutaris. Qui, circumdatus utero Novem mensium numero, Hinc exiit et iniit conflictum, Affigens humero Crucem, qua dedit ictum Hosti mortifero.

Eia Mater Domini, Quae pacem reddidisti Angelis et homini Cum Christum genuisti! Tuum exora filium Ut se nobis propitium Exhibeat, et deleat peccata, Praestans auxilium Vita frui beata Post hoc exsilium. The angel vanished, and at once the girl's womb swelled with the force of the pregnancy of salvation. He, protected by the womb for nine months in number, left it and began the struggle, fixing to his shoulder a cross, with which he dealt the blow to the deadly Enemy.

Hail, Mother of our Lord, who brought peace back to angels and men when you bore Christ! Pray your son that he may show favour to us and blot out our sins, giving us help to enjoy a blessed life after this exile.

#### Interval

#### Plainchant Ecce advenit

Ecce advenit dominator Domnius: et regnum in manu ejus, et potestas, et imperium. Deus, judicium tuum Regida: et justitiam tuam Filio Regis. Gloria Patri. Euouae.

#### Behold the Lord

Behold the Lord the Ruler is come: and the Kingdom is in His Hand, and power, and dominion. Give to the king Thy judgment, O God: and to the king's Son Thy justice.

#### Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)

#### The Three Kings from *Weihnachtslieder* Op. 8 (1856 rev. 1859)

(1856 rev. 1859) Peter Cornelius

Drei Kön'ge wandern aus Morgenland;
Ein Sternlein führt sie Zum Jordanstrand.
In Juda fragen und forschen die drei,
Wo der neugeborene König sei?
Sie wollen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und gold
Dem Kinde spenden zum Opfersold.

Und hell erglänzet des Sternes Schein: Zum Stalle gehen die Kön'ge

ein; Das Knäblein schaun sie wonniglich,

Anbetend neigen die Könige sich;

Sie bringen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold

Zum Opfer dar dem Knäblein hold.

O Menschenkind! halte treulich Schritt! Die Kön'ge wandern, o wandre mit! Der Stern der Liebe, der Gnade Stern Erhelle dein Ziel, so du suchst den Herrn, Und fehlen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold, Schenke dein Herz dem Knäblein hold!

#### Joannes Eccard (1553-1611)

Maria wallt zum Heiligtum

Maria wallt zum Heiligtum und bringt ihr Kindlein dar,

#### The Three Kings

Three kings journey from the East,

a little star leads them to Jordan's banks,

in Judaea the three of them seek and inquire where the new-born king

might be. They wish to make offerings to the child:

gold, frankincense and myrrh.

And brightly shines the light of the star.

The three kings enter the stable,

they gaze in rapture at the child, bowing low in adoration,

gold, frankincense and myrrh they bring to the child as offering.

O child of man! Follow them faithfully, the kings are journeying, O journey too! Let the star of love, the star of grace, light your way as you seek the Lord, and if you lack frankincense, myrrh and gold, give your heart to that sweet child!

Mary made a pilgrimage to the temple

Mary made a pilgrimage to the temple and brought her child there, Das schaut der greise Simeon, wie ihm verheissen war. Da nimmt er Jesum in den Arm und singt im Geiste froh:

Nun fahr' ich hin mit Freud, Dich, Heiland, sah ich heut, Du Trost von Israel, das Licht der Welt.

Hilf nun, du liebster Jesu Christ, dass wir zu jeder Frist An dir wie auch der Simeon all uns're Freude han Und kommt die Zeit, sanft schlafen ein und also singen froh:

Nun fahr' ich hin mit Freud, Dich, Heiland, sah ich heut, Du Trost von Israel, das Licht der Welt. who was seen by the aged Simeon, as the prophets had foretold. Simeon took Jesus in his arms, and joyfully sang:

Now I go forth with joy, for today I have seen You, Saviour, comfort of Israel, light of the World.

O dear Jesus, grant now that we at all times

find all our joy in Thee, just as Simeon did, and that, when the time comes, we pass away gently and thus sing gladly:

Now I go forth with joy, for today I have seen You, Saviour, comfort of Israel, light of the World.

## Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c.1510-1555)

Magi veniunt

Magnificat Antiphon at First Vespers on the Feast of the Epiphany

Magi veniunt ab oriente Jerosolimam quaerentes et dicentes: Ubi est qui natus est rex Judaeorum? Cuius stellam vidimus, et venimus cum muneribus adorare Dominum.

Magi videntes stellam, dixerunt ad invicem: Hoc signum magni regis es: eamus et inquiramus eum, et offeramus ei munera: aurum, thus et myrrham. Alleluia. The wise men came from the east to Jerusalem, searching and saying: Where is he that is born king of the Jews? His star we have seen and we have come with gifts to worship the Lord.

When the wise men saw the star, they said to one another: This is the sign of a great king:

let us go and seek him, and let us offer to him gifts:

gold, frankincense and myrrh. Alleluia.

### Arvo Pärt (b.1935)

Morning Star The Venerable Bede

Christ is the morning star, Who when the night of this world is past Brings to his saints the promise of the light of life And opens everlasting day.

## Judith Bingham (b.1952)

In Mary's love Ben Kaye

In Mary's love, you were the light, Earth and heaven with one voice ...

Due to copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce the text of this song

## Plainchant

#### Vidimus stellam

Vidimus stellam eius in oriente, et venimus cum muneribus adorare Dominum.

### Orlande de Lassus

**Tribus miraculis** Antiphon at Second Vespers on the Feast of the Epiphany

Tribus miraculis ornatum diem sanctum colimus: hodie stella magos duxit ad praesepium; hodie vinum ex aqua factum est ad nuptis; hodie a Johanne Christus baptizari voluit, ut salvaret nos. Alleluia. We have seen his star

We have seen his star in the east, and we have come with gifts to worship the Lord.

#### Three miracles

We observe this holy day, ornamented with three miracles: Today a star led the Magi to the manger;

Today wine was made from water at the wedding;

Today in the Jordan Christ desired to be baptised by John, so that He might save us, Alleluia.

#### Owain Park (b.1993)

#### O send out thy light

Psalm 42 (43): 3

O send out thy light and thy truth: that they may lead me and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.

### Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

## The Shepherd's Carol

Clive Sansom

We stood on the hills, Lady, Our day's work done ...

Due to copyright reasons, we are unable to reproduce the text of this piece

Translation by Richard Stokes of 'The Three Kings from Weihnachtslieder Op. 8' and 'Maria wallt zum Heiligtum' from The Book of Lieder published by Faber & Faber, with thanks to George Bird, coauthor of The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder, published by Victor Gollancz Ltd.