

WIGMORE HALL 125

Thursday 2 October 2025
1.00pm

Radiant Dawn

The Gesualdo Six

Owain Park director, bass

Guy James countertenor

Alasdair Austin countertenor

Joseph Wicks tenor

Josh Cooter tenor

Simon Grant baritone

Matilda Lloyd trumpet

Alec Roth (b.1948)

Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

Deborah Pritchard (b.1977)

James MacMillan (b.1959)

Thomas Tallis

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

Judith Bingham (b.1952)

Owain Park (b.1993)

Joseph Rheinberger (1839-1901)

Richard Barnard (b.1977)

Roxanna Panufnik (b.1968)

Geoffrey Burgon (1941-2010)

Night Prayer (2017)

O nata lux de lumine (pub. 1575)

The Light Thereof (2020)

O Radiant Dawn from *The Strathclyde Motets* (2005)

Dum transisset Sabbatum (1575)

O gloriosissimi (c.1163-1175)

Enter Ghost (2002)

Sommernacht (2022)

Abendlied from *3 Geistliche Gesänge* Op. 69 (pub.1873)

Aura (2020)

O Hearken (2015)

Nunc dimittis (1979)



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Radiant Dawn

Alec Roth's *Night Prayer* reflects on the Compline hymn *Te lucis ante terminum*, a favourite with composers for its contemplative, scalar lines. Each verse presents the Latin text as a two-part canon, which weaves in and out of the English translation. The Latin and English chants unfold at different speeds, creating an interplay that blurs the vocal lines, ethereal as lingering incense.

The intimate and prayerful text of *O nata lux* originates from the 10th Century and is traditionally associated with the Feast of the Transfiguration, which commemorates the moment in the Gospels when the disciples witness Jesus radiant with divine light, clothed in angelic splendour. A hallmark of **Tallis's** style, the use of false relations – bristling clashes between chromatically opposing notes – adds a disorienting feeling as the harmonic ground momentarily shifts.

Deborah Pritchard's setting of words from the *Book of Revelation* explores searching for light, with the music gradually building in expressive intensity. Trumpet and voices begin *The Light Thereof* in an elegiac dialogue, gradually unify, then finally conclude in a quiet, meditative texture where the use of muted trumpet evokes delicate light. Commissioned by the artists in 2020, this work received its première at the Dunkers Kulturhus in Helsingborg, Sweden.

The text for 'O Radiant Dawn' is traditionally sung during Advent as one of the 'Great O' antiphons used in the seven days leading up to Christmas. In his setting from the second set of *Strathclyde Motets*, **James MacMillan** draws harmonic inspiration from Thomas Tallis's *O nata lux*, blending it with insistent, ascending repetitions which depict the people's desperate cries for Christ's presence.

In *Dum transisset Sabbatum*, **Thomas Tallis** perfectly paints the image of a bright Easter Morning, as the gloom of Lent is finally replaced by the new season's joy. The melismatic setting of the chant in the top voice lends itself to instrumental performance, with serene, unbroken melodic lines, rather than the text, at the forefront for the listener. Meanwhile, the lower voices dance beneath, cultivating scalar lines which are punctuated by yearning leaps – listen for the moment Tallis chooses to highlight 'emerunt aromata' ('bought aromatic oils') with a series of fragrant triadic gestures that ripple through the voices.

12th-century polymath and religious icon Saint **Hildegard of Bingen** was a prolific composer of devotional pieces. The hallmarks of her enduring compositional style permeate *O gloriosissimi*. Each phrase begins with a wandering series of notes, as if posing a question. The compass is continually developing, evoking a searching light which gradually consumes the shadows. Hildegard creates a sense of inevitability by repeatedly descending just below the expected final pitch of each phrase, before resolving upwards to a satisfactory conclusion.

Judith Bingham's 2002 interpretation of a passage from Hamlet, *Enter Ghost*, blends music and spoken word into a mesmerising exploration of Shakespeare's timeless tale.

We hear fragments of Act 1 Scenes 4 and 5: the appearance of the ghost of King Hamlet, and the revelation of his murder at the hands of his brother Claudius. Bingham skilfully captures the play's dramatic storytelling through dance-like, motoric rhythms using the extremes of the trumpet's range.

My piece *Sommernacht* was commissioned by the StimmGold Vokalensemble as a response to a song by Max Reger. Gertrud Triepel's evocative poem delicately captures a summer evening, comparing the tugging of a breeze to the pull of homesick heartstrings. I aimed to channel the languid nature of Reger's original in a re-imagined choral work, mimicking hazy piano writing with voices fading in and out of focus. Guided by the original harmonic patterns, chromatic twists and turns re-shape the chords, transfiguring them between vocal lines.

The first version of 'Abendlied' was composed in 1855 when **Josef Rheinberger** was just 15 years old. It is perhaps his most famous choral work, paying homage to the great sacred music of the Renaissance with short moments of imitative writing blended with glorious homophony. The text is set primarily in a syllabic style, providing poetic clarity. As evening approaches – 'und der Tag hat sich geneiget' ('and the day has concluded') – the text flows downwards from the highest voice, conjuring an image of the sun dropping lower and lower in the sky before disappearing below the horizon.

Richard Barnard's *Aura* sets the poem of the same name by Emily Berry from her 2017 poetry collection *Stranger, Baby*, which poignantly explores the loss of the poet's mother. The poem's striking layout – unpunctuated phrases split between two columns – mirrors the emotional fragmentation at the heart of the work. As the text progresses, the gap between the columns – the fading boundary between 'the living & the dead' – dissolves. The trumpet acts as a bridge between two groups of singers, eventually merging with the voices to create a shimmering aura that envelops the entire ensemble.

Roxanna Panufnik's *O Harken* started life as a raffle ticket prize at Westminster Abbey Choir School's 2015 Summer Fête. Initially promised as a fanfare, the raffle winner, Pamela Carrington, encouraged the composer to write a new composition for the Westminster Abbey Choir. The resulting introit was crafted to be celebratory and concise, with a dreamy middle section surrounded by bright, punchy harmonies. The central passage evokes the lingering scent of recently burned incense, rising and mingling in the church rafters as the light gradually fades.

British composer **Geoffrey Burgon** conceived his *Nunc dimittis* for the BBC's acclaimed dramatisation of John le Carré's novel *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. The accompanying voices slowly oscillate between tonal centres, as a solo voice interacts with the trumpet. The magic of this setting is its inherent positivity – each line ends with a short series of ascending notes, as if Simeon is lifting his hands into the air in praise of the new-born Christ.

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Alec Roth (b.1948)

Night Prayer (2017)

Liturgical text, trans. John Mason Neale

Te lucis ante terminum, Rerum creator poscimus, Ut solita clementia, Sis praesul ad custodiam. Amen.	To thee before the end of day, Creator of the world we pray, That with thy wanted favour, thou Wouldst be our guard and keeper now. Amen.
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Procul recedant somnia, Et noctium fantasmata; Hostemque nostrum comprime, Ne polluantur corpora. Amen.	From all ill dreams defend our sight From fears and terrors of the night; Withhold from us our ghotsly foe That spot of sin we may not know. Amen.
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Praesta, Pater omnipotens, Per Jesum Christum Dominum, Qui tecum in perpetuum Regnat cum Sancto Spiritu. Amen.	O Father, that we ask be done, Through Jesus Christ thine only Son, Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee, Doth live and reign eternally. Amen.
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Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

O nata lux de lumine
(pub. 1575)
Anonymous

O nata lux de lumine
Jesu redemptor saeculi,
Dignare clemens supplicum
Laudes precesque
sumere.

Qui carne quondam
contegi
Dignatus es pro perditis,
Nos membra confer
effici
Tui beati corporis.

O light born of light

O light born of light,
Jesus, redeemer of the age,
deign mercifully to hear
suppliants' praises and
prayers.

You who once deigned to
take on flesh
on behalf of the damned,
grant that we be made
limbs
of your blessed body.

Deborah Pritchard (b.1977)

The Light Thereof (2020)

Biblical text

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon,
to shine on it:
For the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the
light thereof. Amen.

James MacMillan (b.1959)

O Radiant Dawn from *The Strathclyde Motets*
(2005)

Liturgical text

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal Light, Sun of Justice.
Come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death. Isaiah had prophesied, 'The people
who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon
those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.'
Amen.

Thomas Tallis

Dum transisset
Sabbatum (1575)

Biblical text

Dum transisset Sabbatum,
Maria Magdalene
Et (Maria/Maria Jacobi) et
Salome
Emerunt aromata ut
venientes ungerent
Jesum.
Alleluia.

Et valde mane una
sabbatorum

Veniunt ad monumentum
orto iam sole.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui
Sancto.

And when the
sabbath was past

And when the sabbath was
past, Mary Magdalene,
and (Mary/Mary the mother
of James) and Salome,
had bought sweet spices,
that they might come
and anoint him.
Alleluia.

And very early in the
morning the first day of
the week,
they came unto the
sepulchre at the rising
of the sun.

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to
the Holy Ghost.

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

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179)

O gloriosissimi

(c.1163-1175)

*Hildegard of Bingen,
transcribed by Beverly R
Lomer*

O living light

O gloriosissimi lux vivens
angeli,
Qui infra divinitatem
Divinos oculos

Cum mistica obscuritate
Omnis creature aspicitis
In ardentibus desideriiis,
Unde numquam
Potestis satiari.

O living light, O angels
glorious!
Below divinity,
upon the eyes divine you
gaze
within the mystic darkness
of all creation—
in yearnings set alight
where you can ne'er
be satiated.

Judith Bingham (b.1952)

Enter Ghost (2002)

William Shakespeare

The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
The King doth wake tonight, and takes his rouse ...
The swaggering upspring reels.
Look, my Lord, it comes!
It beckons you to go away with it.
The ghost speaks.
The ghost vanishes.
Hamlet rails against fate.
O cursèd spite,
That ever was born to set it right!

Owain Park (b.1993)

Sommernacht (2022)

Gertrud Triefel

Im Garten rauscht die
Sommernacht,
Durchs Fenster drängt es
schwer,
Mit weiten Augen lausch' ich
still,
Und alles schweigt
umher.

Und alles schläft, ein Sehnen
nur
Weht heimlich ein und aus,
Da fängt mein Herz zu
weinen an
Und wollt es wär zu Haus.

Summer's night

In the garden rustles the
summer's night,
through the window it
enters strong,
with wide eyes I
eavesdrop silent,
and everything is hushed
around.

And everything sleeps, a
lone desire
drifts discreetly in and out,
then trips my heart to
weeping
and wishes it were at home.

Joseph Rheinberger (1839-1901)

No. 3 Abendlied from

Evening song

3 Geistliche Gesänge

Op. 69 (pub.1873)

Bleib bei uns,
Denn es will Abend
werden,
Und der Tag hat sich
geneiget.

Bide with us,
for evening shadows
darken,
And the day will soon be
over.

Richard Barnard (b.1977)

Aura (2020)

Emily Berry

Listen to me
I called you up
little water
believing something...

*Due to copyright reasons, we are unable to print the full
text of this song.*

Roxanna Panufnik (b.1968)

O Hearken (2015)

Biblical text

O hearken thou unto the voice of my calling, my King, and
my God: for unto thee will I make my prayer.

Geoffrey Burgon (1941-2010)

Nunc dimittis (1979)

Biblical text

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in piece:
according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of
thy people Israel.

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.