



The
Cecilia
Consort

the
LORD
is my
SHEPHERD

St John's Church
Newbury
Saturday 2nd March, 2024
7.30pm

Introduction

Welcome to our spring concert featuring three of the great choral masters. We mark the 100th anniversary of the death of Stanford by singing a selection of lesser known works to concert audiences. Then, after a cello solo from Charlotte and Steve, written by one of Stanford's pupils, we will perform the full set of Parry *Songs of Farewell*. You may have heard us cherry-pick a few in a previous concert, but to hear the full set is rare (probably because some of them are very difficult!)

After refreshments we will be performing John Rutter's beautifully atmospheric *Requiem*. Sit back and enjoy a feast of wonderful music in the beautiful setting of St John's.

Janet Coxwell

The
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Out now: our 30th Anniversary Album.

Featuring many of the choir's best-loved pieces. Available on the door to buy as a CD, or via our website: www.ceciliaconsort.org.uk

Janet Coxwell – Musical Director



Since graduating from London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Janet has worked professionally as a solo artist and consort singer. Whilst specialising in Early Music and performing with many of the UK's leading ensembles, her musical versatility boasts many other genres and musical styles and she has worked closely with Norfolk-based composer Patrick Hawes on many of his original works. Their first album *Blue in Blue* drew critical acclaim with Janet's voice being described as 'melting honey on freshly buttered toast' (BBC Radio 3). Her 'bell-like tones' (Financial Times) are often heard on TV, film and radio as well as on numerous classical and pop CDs. Janet enjoyed 23 wonderful years with the Tallis Scholars and performed in more than 900 concerts worldwide with this world-renowned ensemble. She continues to perform and record, but her love of teaching means she spends more time in the UK these days. Janet is Head of Choral Studies at Cheam School and enjoys working with her ever increasing 'family' of students and choristers.

Janet and David Woodcock (Head of Music at Harrow School) are Directors of the Early Music Academy, which had a hugely successful inaugural summer in 2015. After the inevitable interruptions of the pandemic, EMA resumed in 2022 and they are enjoying running courses again every July. See <https://www.earlymusicacademy.com> for more info. As well as a busy performing schedule, Janet enjoys adjudicating choral competitions, leading singing master classes and running choral workshops; she especially loves working with and training amateur singers. She lives in Highclere and has enjoyed a long and fruitful association with several Newbury-based choirs including Newbury Choral Society.

Steve Bowey B.Eng FRCO – Accompanist



Steve studied organ and piano from an early age, playing the organ regularly at St Francis and St Andrew's churches in Coulsdon. After gaining an engineering degree from Salford University he moved to Newbury to work for Vodafone. In 1991 Steve was appointed as accompanist of the Cromwell Singers and later became their Musical Director. From 1992, he was Director of Music at St Mary's Church, Shaw-cum-Donnington, and regularly worked with local choirs, including the Douai Choral Society, the Downland Chorale, the RSCM Southern Cathedral Singers, Berkshire Maestros youth choirs and Worcester College Oxford.

In 2006 Steve joined the Royal College of Organists and in July the following year took the examination for Associate (ARCO) in which he was awarded the Limpus prize for performance, as well as the Sowerbutts and Samuel Baker prizes. After further study, he was awarded the Fellowship Diploma (FRCO) in January 2011. His current musical commitments include teaching organ, piano, and music theory. He is Director of Music at St Mary's Shaw-cum-Donnington, organist at Cheam School, and regularly gives organ recitals. Steve is currently the accompanist to Newbury Choral Society and the Cecilia Consort, and enjoys working with the many choirs in Newbury and the surrounding area.

Charlotte Oates – Cello



Charlotte started playing the cello whilst at school, studying with Judith Barnby and Lorraine Deacon at Berkshire Maestros. She was a member of the youth orchestra for three years and continued her playing whilst at Durham University, where she was taught by Rosie Bliss.

Having worked in arts management for five years with the Young Concert Artists Trust (YCAT), Charlotte changed direction and is presently part of the finance team at Burford Garden Co., Burford. She still enjoys performing on her cello and is very pleased to be playing for the Cecilia Consort again.

Programme Notes

Marking the 100th anniversary since Charles Villiers Stanford's death, it is only appropriate to perform some of his wide body of choral work. Born to a well-off and highly musical family in Dublin, Stanford was educated at Cambridge before studying music in Leipzig and Berlin. While still an undergraduate, he was appointed organist at Trinity College, Cambridge and, from 1887, was also Professor of Music there. In 1882, aged 29, he was one of the founding professors of the Royal College of Music, where he taught composition for the rest of his life. Among his pupils were composers whose fame went on to surpass his own, such as Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. He composed a substantial number of concert works, including seven symphonies, but his best-remembered pieces are his choral works for church performance, chiefly composed in the Anglican tradition.

Te Deum laudamus

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

First performed in 1879, *Te Deum laudamus* (We praise thee oh Lord) was written for use in Trinity College Chapel, Cambridge where Stanford had been organist since 1873. He also produced an orchestrated version for the funeral of Edward VII in 1910. The hymn follows the outline of the Apostles' Creed, mixing a poetic vision of the heavenly liturgy with its declaration of faith. Calling on the name of God immediately, the hymn proceeds to name all those who praise and venerate God, from the hierarchy of heavenly creatures to those Christian faithful already in heaven, to the Church spread throughout the world. The hymn then returns to its credal formula, naming Christ and recalling his birth, suffering and death, his resurrection and glorification. At this point the hymn turns to the subjects declaiming the praise, both the universal Church and the singer in particular, asking for mercy for past sins, protection from future sin, and the hoped-for reunification with the elect.

Coelos ascendit hodie

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Coelos ascendit hodie (Today Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven) is one of three Latin motets published in 1905. The a cappella piece is in A major with two 4-part choirs singing an antiphonal setting. Choir II interrupts choir I by inserting 'Alleluja' calls into the first line, with switched positions for the second line. The piece, marked *allegro* has a strong rhythmic element, and closes with both choirs united on 'Amen'.

The Lord is my Shepherd

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

A setting of Psalm 23, *The Lord is my Shepherd* was described by Herbert Howells as "one of the supremely lovely anthems of all our history". Completed in May 1886, this is one of Stanford's finest examples of musical prose. His

technique of overlapping irregular phraseology, gleaned from Brahms, gives the overall musical fabric a seamless quality. This is impressively demonstrated in the pastoral sonata scheme of the first section and in the more contrapuntal finale ('But thy loving kindness'). Stanford's tonal thinking is equally imaginative. After firmly establishing F major in the much larger first part, the choral recitative provides both tonal and textural contrast with a shift to D minor ('Thou shalt prepare a table'). A continuation of this tonal idea, modally altered to D major, accompanies the beginning of the finale, but this is in fact only preparation for the return to F major ('And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever'). Stanford's coda, which elusively recalls the opening material is also deliciously romantic with its yearning appoggiaturas.

Prelude for Cello and Piano

Ernest Moeran (1894-1950)

Charlotte Oates, cello and Steve Bowey, piano

The son of a clergyman, Moeran studied at the Royal College of Music under Charles Villiers Stanford before service in the army during the First World War, in which he was wounded. After the war he was a pupil of John Ireland, and quickly established a reputation as a composer of promise with a number of well-received works, including this piece, composed in 1943 for his wife, the cellist (Kathleen) Peers Coetmore.

Songs of Farewell

Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry was an English composer, teacher and historian of music. Born in Richmond Hill in Bournemouth, Parry's first major works appeared in 1880. As a composer he is best known for the choral song *Jerusalem*, his 1902 setting for the coronation anthem *I was glad*. The six motets that make up his *Songs of Farewell* were written during the First World War when a number of Parry's pupils at the Royal College of Music were being killed in action. Parry's choice of texts is thought to reflect a yearning to escape the violence of a world at war, and to find peace in a heavenly realm. The Cecilia Consort has performed some of this gorgeous collection before, but this evening we will sing all six:

- **My soul, there is a country**
- **I know my soul hath power to know all things**
- **Never, weather-beaten sail**
- **There is an old belief**
- **At the round earth's imagined corners**
- **Lord, let me know mine end**

• Interval •

Please join us in the parish room for refreshments

Requiem

John Rutter (born 1945)

Charlotte Oates - cello, Janet Coxwell - soprano & Steve Bowey - piano

Rutter completed his Requiem in 1985. It bears the dedication "in memoriam L. F. R.", for John Rutter's father, who had died the previous year. He structured the work in seven movements, similar to the setting of Gabriel Fauré. Five of the seven movements are based on text from the Latin Requiem Mass, while the second movement is a setting of *Out of the deep* (Psalm 130) and the sixth movement is an anthem *The Lord is my Shepherd* (Psalm 23) which Rutter had written in 1976. The first movement combines the Introit and Kyrie, the third is *Pie Jesu*, with soprano solo. The central movement is a lively Sanctus, followed by *Agnus Dei* and finally *Lux aeterna*. In the *Agnus Dei* and *Lux aeterna*, Rutter combines the liturgical Latin text with English biblical verses.

Thank you for your support!

**Join us again at Douai Abbey, Upper
Woolhampton
for our next concert
on Saturday 16th November
at 7.30pm**

The Cecilia Consort is a member of
Making Music –
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The Cecilia Consort

The Cecilia Consort was formed by Janet Coxwell from the members of an ad hoc choir put together to sing Mozart's Requiem in the Newbury and District Arts Festival in 1989. Meeting for limited rehearsals before each of our two or three concerts each year we sing secular and sacred music from across a broad historical spectrum. As a chamber choir we perform not only chamber works – often a cappella or with organ accompaniment – but also larger works with orchestra, as at 2008's sell-out performance of Monteverdi's Vespers with Canzona at Douai Abbey.

We continually learn new works and almost every concert includes music that we have not performed before, be it a collection of anthems or an entire mass. For more information about the choir, or if you are interested in auditioning, please see our website: www.ceciliaconsort.org.uk. Or find us on Facebook: @TheCeciliaConsort

In the press:

Canticles of Creation – The Cecilia Consort at St John's Church

"...the choir was on terrific form with beautifully bright top voices and lush underpinning by the lower ones." Newbury Weekly News - March 2023

Howells & Muhly – The Cecilia Consort at St John's Church

"The programme opened with A Hymn to St. Cecilia... as the lush vocal sound washed over the choir's loyal audience. Well enunciated, fabulously rich textures and a soaring soprano counter-melody, this was a lovely opening to the evening." Newbury Weekly News – December 2017

Remembrance – The Cecilia Consort at Douai Abbey

"Another engaging evening from this fine local choir." Newbury Weekly News – November 2016

Eternal Light – The Cecilia Consort at Douai Abbey

"...special thanks and praise be to Janet Coxwell (who also gave us a couple of fine solos) and her wonderful singers for an evening of unalloyed pleasure and edification." – Newbury Weekly News – October 2014



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