

# Sing to the Lord

The Choirs of Portsmouth Cathedral

CONVIVIUM  
RECORDS

# MUSIC

The pieces on this disc reflect a journey through the Christian year. Advent is a time of expectancy and of penitence, waiting to welcome God's incarnate love. The Kyrie Eleison is an ancient Greek text sung at the opening of every celebration of the eucharist. The setting here is taken from Vaughan Williams' Mass of 1922, drawing upon the modal harmonies of English polyphony. It is written for a quartet of solo voices and double choir. 'Hodie Christus Natus Est' is the antiphon for the first mass of Christmas Day: it will perhaps be familiar as the processional from Benjamin Britten's 'Ceremony of Carols'. At Christmas it is a tradition at Portsmouth, for obvious reasons, to begin the Christmas Morning eucharist with the joyful unaccompanied carol 'I Saw Three Ships'. The Gloria announces the song of the angels at the birth of the Messiah. This example, drawn from the late mediaeval plainsong Mass VIII, sometimes known as the 'Missa de Angelis', would originally have been sung by a cantor and choir of monks. Whilst 'The Call', 'Creator of the Stars of Night' and 'Faithful Magi' all are appropriate to the season of the Epiphany, the Coventry Carol for three voices reflects in its spare mediaeval harmonies Herod's massacre of the Holy Innocents. The 'Carol for Emmaus' takes us through Epiphany to the Nunc Dimittis and Candlemas, when the aged Simeon, realising that he has at last seen the Redeemer whom he has awaited so long, can now at last depart in peace. This setting by Herbert Howells was commissioned in the 1940s by King's College, Cambridge. Nicholas Farrant has left us few extant compositions but 'Call to Remembrance' is a penitential piece, suitable for the season of Lent, and asks the Christian conscience to examine itself for the test of Holy Week and Easter to come. 'If Ye Love Me' and 'Ubi Caritas' are sung at the eucharist of Maundy Thursday, recalling Christ's injunction to the disciples to adhere to God's teachings of universal peace and charity to all. The centrality of the eucharist is commemorated in Byrd's miniature masterpiece 'Ave Verum Corpus' which reflects the sacrifice of Christ in the shedding of his blood. Victoria's 'O Vos Omnes' and 'Consider All Ye' by Amner both capture the desolation on Good Friday of the deserted and crucified Jesus before Vaughan Williams' 'Easter' shatters the darkness with its triumphant choruses declaiming George Herbert's poem of faith in the Resurrection. This mood of joy continues in the Great Choir's rendition of one of the most famous of all hymn tunes, 'All People That On Earth Do Dwell', preceding the final responses by Naylor, which are customarily sung at the end of each service of evening prayer at Portsmouth, giving God thanks for bringing His people safely through each day and each season of the year.

Martin Cawte, June 2009

# PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL CHOIR

**PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL CHOIR** is made up of twenty-four boy choristers and fourteen gentlemen (made up of seven lay-clerks and up to seven choral scholars) who contribute to the pattern of daily cathedral worship singing for at least five services every week. The Choir also sings at various special services and events both locally, in the Cathedral and the Diocese of Portsmouth and on tour to Belgium, Holland, Sweden, France and, more recently, Estonia, Denmark and The French Alps.

The Choir was involved in the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of DDay commemorations during 2004. This trip saw two BBC Radio broadcasts, a concert in Caen with the London Mozart Players and the International Service of Remembrance at Bayeux in the presence of HM The Queen, President Chirac and the Rt Hon Tony Blair. In 2005, as part of Trafalgar 200 they performed at the International Drumhead Ceremony in June, and at events aboard HMS Victory during Trafalgar Week (three BBC radio and TV broadcasts). Our 'Nelson year' concluded with a live broadcast of Choral Evensong on BBC Radio 3 on the day 200 years ago that Nelson's body sailed from Portsmouth to London for his State Funeral. The Choir has also made a number of recordings, including a reconstruction of music from Admiral Lord Nelson's Funeral year and 'I look from afar' – a recording of Advent and Christmas carols closely followed by 'Portsmouth Remembers'. In 2008 we recorded Harvey Brough's DDay 60 cantata 'Valet in Pace' with The Britten Sinfonia, Clare College Choir, Cambridge, Mark le Brocq and Andrew Parrott.

**DAVID PRICE** was appointed Organist and Master of the Choristers at Portsmouth Cathedral in 1996 – becoming the youngest cathedral organist in the country at that time. In his time at Portsmouth David has overseen the building of the nave organ, the establishment of a joint scheme between diocese and cathedral to support parish music-making, and a Gap Year project for Choral Scholars in partnership with Portsmouth Grammar School and Portsmouth Music Service.

David is a regular broadcaster on television and radio. He has recently appeared on BBC Radio Three's 'In Tune' and 'Choral Evensong' as well as on BBC Radio 4 and BBCtv Songs of Praise. His John Amner recording for Hyperion was Editor's Choice in 'Gramophone'. He has played recitals at Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral, Trinity Church Copenhagen and Chabery Cathedral. He is an Honorary Fellow of The Academy of St Cecilia and holds an Honorary Doctorate of Music from Portsmouth University.

## PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL CHOIR

**Director:** David Price **Organist:** Marcus Wibberley

**Treble:** Harry Boorman, Oliver Chubb, Charlie Cresswell-Hogg, Henry Cresswell-Hogg, Thomas Cleary, Adam Dixon, Louie Duncan, Henry Elphick-Smith, William Forrest, Rory Greenwood, Samuel Gibb, Elias Lederer, Charlie Haestier, Theo Hornsey, Ben Ireland, Aadam Mactoom, Finley McBride, Jack O'Leary, Guy Snowball, Hugh Summers, Gulliver Trim, Robert Weekes, James Willcocks

**Countertenor:** George Barrett, John Bretherton, Oli Carpenter, Nick Pepin

**Tenor:** Martin Cawte, Adrian Green, Bryn Hughes, John Austin

**Bass:** John Holland-Avery, Harry Bennett, David Price, Richard Walshe

## ST THOMAS PARISH CHOIR

**Director:** Marcus Wibberley **Organist:** David Price

**Soprano:** Fiona Alsop, Julia Alsop, Jenny Barrett, Rachel Barrett, Gabrielle Biles, Cathryn Moul, Catherine O'Leary, Alexandra Packer, Emma Ralph, Harriet Summers

**Alto:** Douglas Barrett, Angela Carpenter, Janet Dover, Kitty Price, Catherine Smith

**Tenor:** Adrian Green, Robert Lacey

**Bass:** John Bradford, Peter Care, John Holland-Avery, Tim Stone, David Whitmarsh

## CANTATE

**Director:** Andrew Cleary **Organist:** David Price

**Soprano:** Julia Alsop, Lydia Brown, Lucy Cole, Josceline Dunne, Christina Etherington, Rosie Hammans, Pamela Kamel, Aphra Luchesa Smith, Issy Mackay, Alice O'Leary, Emma O'Leary, Issy Printer, Emma Ralph, Charlotte Rowden, Claire Rowden (*Deputy Head Chorister*), Liz Sayer (*GAP student*), Celia Stoddart, Charlotte Stoddart (*Head Chorister*), Lydia Stoddart, Harriet Summers, Alice Tilbury, Gabrielle Walton Green, Sophie Whitehead

**Alto / Countertenor:** John Bretherton, Douglas Barrett, Rachel Barrett

**Tenor:** Adrian Green, Bryn Hughes, Sam Moffitt

**Bass:** John Holland-Avery, Harry Bennett, David Price (Jnr.), Richard Walshe

**Production / Booklet Design:** Adrian Green

**Sound Capture / Mastering:** Kevin Hodgson

**Sound Capture / Editing:** Adaq Khan



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