



CONVIVIVUM
RECORDS

SANSARA

CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

THE
AWARD-WINNING
CHAMBER CHOIR

SANSARA

CLOTHS OF HEAVEN



SANSARA

DESCRIBED AS 'ONE OF THE MOST DYNAMIC NEW CHORAL GROUPS IN THE UK' (*CHOIR AND ORGAN, 2016*), SANSARA IS A PASSIONATE AND INNOVATIVE CHAMBER CHOIR UNITING MANY OF THE UK'S FINEST YOUNG PROFESSIONAL SINGERS. FOUNDED IN 2013, THE CHOIR HAS RAPIDLY GAINED A REPUTATION FOR CAPTIVATING PERFORMANCES OF A BROAD RANGE OF REPERTOIRE, JUXTAPOSING CHORAL MUSIC OLD AND NEW IN AMBITIOUS AND IMAGINATIVE NARRATIVE PROGRAMMES. IN SEPTEMBER 2015, SANSARA WON FIRST PRIZE AND AUDIENCE PRIZE IN THE LONDON INTERNATIONAL A CAPPELLA CHOIR COMPETITION, HOSTED BY ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE TALLIS SCHOLARS.

SANSARA IS UNIQUE IN THAT IT HAS NO SINGLE CONDUCTOR. INSTEAD, SEVERAL CONDUCTORS—WHO ALSO SING IN THE GROUP—DIRECT THE CHOIR ACCORDING TO THEIR PARTICULAR MUSICAL SPECIALISMS. THIS MAKES THE CHOIR HIGHLY VERSATILE AND PROVIDES AN INCREASED SENSE OF COLLABORATION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHOIR, OUR UPCOMING CONCERTS AND PROJECTS, VISIT US AT WWW.SANSARACHOIR.COM

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CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

ON THIS DISC

	1	9	
INTROITUS MANUEL CARDOSO	7'51	3'26	NUNC DIMITTIS GUSTAV HOLST
EMENDEMUS IN MELIUS WILLIAM BYRD	3'35	2'40	O COME, LET US SING UNTO THE LORD CHERYL FRANCES-HOAD
LUGEBAT DAVID ABSALON NICOLAS GOMBERT	8'40	7'05	OUR FLAGS ARE WAFING IN HOPE AND GRIEF GABRIEL JACKSON
MEMENTO HOMO WILLIAM BYRD	2'24	3'34	TANTUM ERGO MARCO GALVANI
WIE SICH EIN VAT'R ERBARMET (FROM BWV 17) JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH	2'58	2'55	CLOTHS OF HEAVEN MALCOLM ARCHER
WIE LIEGT DIE STADT SO WÜST RUDOLF MAUERSBERGER	7'04	5'01	A PRAYER OF ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER OLIVER TARNEY
ABENDLIED JOSEF RHEINBERGER	3'18	3'47	LUX AETERNA JAMES MACMILLAN
LEIT UNS MIT DEINER RECHTEN HAND (FROM BWV 90) JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH	1'04		
	8	15	

CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

ARTISTS' NOTES

Since its foundation in 2013, Sansara has adopted a unique and innovative approach to programming. Rather than focusing on single composers or music from a particular era, our programmes explore thematic and textual links between pieces from the early Renaissance through to the present day, drawing on the often evocative associations they inspire.

Through the juxtaposition of a broad range of musical styles and compositional practices, our programmes offer an eclectic presentation of choral music and its vividly human aesthetics.

The aim of this disc is to capture our approach to programming and live performance, with fifteen pieces ranging from the sixteenth century through to the present day.

Cloths of Heaven is a programme of multiple and intertwined narratives that moves from darkness to light, towards optimism and hope for the future. In one sense, it is a Requiem that begins with Manuel Cardoso's *Introitus*, from his own six-part Requiem Mass, and concludes with the radiant light of James MacMillan's *Lux aeterna*, one of his Strathclyde Motets.

The intervening music spans over four hundred years, beginning with two masters of the Renaissance. Nicolas Gombert's poignant *Lugebat David Absalon* is framed by two contrasting works by William Byrd, *Emendemus in melius* and *Memento homo*, both from the *Cantiones sacrae* of 1575. This first group establishes the relationship between grief and hope that continues to weave its way through the programme.

Rudolf Mauersberger's *Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst* is a harrowingly beautiful piece, composed in 1945 in the wake of the Allied bombing

of Dresden, where the composer lived and worked. The text, taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, could as easily be applied to cities caught in today's wars, and this piece speaks as strongly to today's conflicts as it does to those of the past. The tranquil beauty of Josef Rheinberger's *Abendlied* reintroduces hope into a darkened place, 'as evening shadows gather'.

These two pieces are framed by a pair of chorale settings by J. S. Bach, *Wie sich ein Vat'r erbamet* (from BWV 17) and *Leit uns mit deiner rechten Hand* (from BWV 90). Concluding the first half of the disc, Gustav Holst's impassioned *Nunc Dimittis* draws together the threads of the preceding pieces whilst looking forward towards the light of the second half.

Works by living composers are always integral to our concert programmes and we are delighted to include six pieces by contemporary composers, five of which are recorded here for the first time.

Cheryl Frances-Hoad's *O come, let us sing unto the Lord* shares its core sentiment of vocal celebration with Gabriel Jackson's *Our flags are wafting in hope and grief*, which sets poetry by Doris Kareva written in response to the Latvian Singing Revolution of the 1980s and '90s.

This 'voicing of freedom' is followed by Marco Galvani's effervescent setting of the medieval hymn, *Tantum ergo*, based on the original chant melody.

Written specially for this recording, Malcolm Archer's *Cloths of Heaven* sets

W. B. Yeats' beautiful text with characteristic sensitivity and warmth. These stable harmonies are followed by the glistering dissonances of Oliver Tanney's *A Prayer of St Richard of Chichester*, also written for the choir. The album concludes with another Requiem text, the *Lux aeterna*. James MacMillan's setting presents the original plainchant melody in the altos, grounding the piece firmly in the European choral tradition.

Just as the *Lux aeterna* chant weaves its way through this final piece, so have the threads of narrative woven through the whole disc, their distinct musical voices coming together in a programme which explores the darker sides of human experience, but that is ultimately optimistic for the future.

Tom Herring

CO-FOUNDER & CONDUCTOR

Tom Herring (b. 1994) is a bass-baritone and conductor based in London. He is a graduate and former Choral Scholar of Merton College, Oxford, where he attained a First in Music. A frequent soloist in large-scale choral works and oratorios, Tom is the bass soloist on the 2015 recording of Oliver Tarney's *Magnificat* (Convivium Records) and performed at the London première at Cadogan Hall.

Tom is a former chairman of Schola Cantorum of Oxford, the university's leading chamber choir, during which time he was responsible for the day-to-day administration of the choir.

Tom studies singing with Alex Ashworth at the Royal Academy of Music and has participated in masterclasses with Ian Partridge, Ann Murray, and Jane Glover among others.



TOM HERRING

JACK BUTTERWORTH



Jack Butterworth

CO-FOUNDER & CONDUCTOR

Jack Butterworth (b. 1993) is a singer, conductor and organist based in Cambridge. An alumnus of Cambridge's Trinity College (from where he graduated with a Double First in Music), he was for three years a member of the college's choir under the directorship of Stephen Layton.

While at Cambridge, he combined his academic studies with the Presidency

of Trinity College's Music Society, where he had organisational and artistic responsibility for a programme of around 50 concerts per year.

A bass-baritone, he currently studies with Ann de Renais. Jack also worked for a year as a music teacher in Bogotá, Colombia—where, on a long bus journey with Tom, the idea for Sansara was first conceived.

S A N S A R A

Benjamin Cunningham

CONDUCTOR

Benjamin Cunningham (b. 1994) is currently the Organ Scholar of Westminster Abbey, where duties include sharing in the playing for the Choir, and conducting Lay Vicars in services as required. Prior to this he held organ scholarships at Chichester Cathedral and Worcester College, Oxford where he studied for a degree in Music, in which he attained

a First. He is also an active recitalist and has given a number of concerts across the country, including at Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, Chichester and Bristol Cathedrals, Reading Town Hall, and at Merton, Keble, Exeter and The Queen's College, Oxford. A prize-winning Associate of the Royal College of Organists, Benjamin currently studies with William Whitehead.

C L O T H S O F H E A V E N



BENJAMIN CUNNINGHAM

MEGHAN QUINLAN



Meghan Quinlan

ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR

Meghan Quinlan (b. 1988) grew up singing in the internationally acclaimed Hamilton Children's Choir (Canada), conducted by Zimfira Poloz of Kazakhstan, and later became the conductor of the choir's youth ensemble. She has appeared as a conductor on Canadian national television and led choral workshops in Estonia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, and Poland. With the support of a Grant for Professional Musicians from the Canada

Council for the Arts, she studied conducting in Oslo, Norway, and later returned to Oslo to work as the artistic director of the chamber choir Canticum. Since moving to Oxford, she has been writing a doctoral dissertation on medieval song, an extension of her interests in literature, medieval studies, and song traditions. She is a former conducting scholar of Schola Cantorum of Oxford and conducts the Choir of Wolfson College, Oxford.

C L O T H S O F H E A V E N

INCLUDING

ASSOCIATE COMPOSERS

Marco Galvani

Marco Galvani (b. 1994) is a composer based in London, studying with David Sawer. Marco's works have been performed throughout the UK, Europe, and America. Marco's choral piece *Tantum Ergo* was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 from the Edington Festival, and has been subsequently published by Edition Peters.

Marco received the Schellhorn Prize in 2015, and his *Et Vidi Angelum* has been recorded and performed by The Queen's College Choir, Oxford. Marco's first chamber opera, *Rothschild's Violin*, led David Threasher from Gramophone to describe Marco as having 'a compositional voice of genuine promise.'



MARCO GALVANI

OLIVER TARNEY



Oliver Tarney

Oliver Tarney (b.1984) was introduced to choral singing at a young age, and has been inspired by it ever since. Following a music degree at Manchester University and a Master's degree in composition, he is currently Head of Composition and Singing at Winchester College, Hampshire.

Oliver has written a variety of choral works, including his recent acclaimed *Magnificat*, (also Convivium Records) and several works now published by Oxford University Press. Future commissions include: pieces for Suzi Digby's Ora Singers, Winchester Cathedral, and a St Mark Passion for the St Endellion Easter Festival 2019.

THE CHOIR

SANSARA

DIRECTED BY

Tom Herring
Jack Butterworth

Benjamin Cunningham
Meghan Quinlan

SOPRANO

Caroline Halls
Alice Harberd
Bethany
Horak-Hallet
Elspeth Piggott
Meghan Quinlan
Helena Thomson
Clover Willis

ALTO

Alex Chance
Lila Chrisp
Katherine
Jeffries-Harris
James Orrell

BASS

Jack Butterworth
Christopher Breeze
Benjamin Cunningham
Tom Herring
Michael Hickman
Daniel Tate
Humphrey Thompson

TENOR

William Anderson
Marco Galvani
Joseph Mason
Matthew Thomson



1 INTROITUS

Introit from the Requiem Mass. Directed by Tom Herring.

CARDOSO (1566–1650)

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Te decet hymnus, Deus, in Sion,
et tibi reddetur votum in Jerusalem.

Exaudi orationem meam,
ad te omnis caro veniet.

Grant them eternal rest, Lord,
and let perpetual light shine on them
You are praised, God, in Zion,
and homage will be paid to You in Jerusalem.
Hear my prayer,
to You all flesh will come.

2 EMENDEMUS IN MELIUS

Matins Responsory for Lent I & Distribution of Ashes on Ash Wednesday.

Directed by Benjamin Cunningham.

BYRD (c. 1543–1623)

Emendemus in melius quae ignoranter
peccavimus;

ne subito praeoccupati die mortis,
quaeramus spatium poenitentiae, et
invenire non possumus.

Attende, Domine, et miserere; quia
peccavimus tibi.

Adjuva nos, Deus salutaris noster, et
propter honorem nominis tui libera nos.

Let us amend for the better in those things
in which we have sinned through ignorance;
lest suddenly overtaken by the day of death,
we seek space for repentance, and be not
able to find it.
Hearken, O Lord, and have mercy: for we
have sinned against thee.

Help us, O God of our salvation, and for
the honour of thy name deliver us.

3 LUGEBAT DAVID ABSALON

Anonymous, after Samuel II. Directed by Benjamin Cunningham.

COMBERT (c. 1495–c. 1560)

Lugebat David Absalon, pius pater filium,
tristis senex puerum:
Heu me, fili mi Absalon, quis mihi det ut moriar,
ut ego pro te moriar, O fili mi Absalon!
Rex autem David filium, cooperto flebat capite:
Quis mihi det ut moriar, O fili mi, O fili mi!

Porro rex operuit caput suum,
et clamabat voce magna:
Fili mi Absalon, O fili mi.

David mourned for Absalom, a pious father
for his son, a grieving old man for his boy:
Ah me! my son Absalom, would God I had
died for you, O my son Absalom!
Kind David wept for his son with covered
head: Would God I had died for you, O my son!

Then the King covered his head
and cried with a great voice:
my son Absalom, O my son!

4 MEMENTO HOMO

Text for Imposition of Ashes, Ash Wednesday. Directed by Benjamin Cunningham.

BYRD

Memento homo, quod cinis es, et in
cinerem reverteris.

Remember, O Man, that thou art dust, and
to dust shalt return.

5 WIE SICH EIN VAT'R ERBARMET (FROM BWV 17)

Johann Gramman (1487–1541) (v.3 of Nun lob, mein' Seel'). Directed by Tom Herring.

JS BACH (1685–1750)

Wie sich ein Vat'r erbarmet
Üb'r seine junge Kindlein klein:
So tut der Herr uns Armen,
so wir ihn kindlich fürchten rein.
Er kennt das arme Gemächte,
er weiß, wir sind nur Staub.
Gleichwie das Gras vom Rechen,
ein Blum und fallendes Laub,
der Wind nur drüber wehet,
so ist es nimmer da:
Also der Mensch vergehet,
sein End, das ist ihm nah.

As a father has mercy
For all his children, young and small,
The Lord forgives us also,
When we as children fear him pure.
He knows that we are poor creatures,
He knows we are but dust.
Like as the grass in mowing,
A flower and falling leaves,
The wind need merely blow it,
And it's no longer there:
So man too is passing,
His end is always near.

7 ABENDLIED

From Luke 24 v. 29. Directed by Meghan Quinlan.

RHEINBERGER (1839–1901)

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.

S A N S A R A

6 WIE LIEGT DIE STADT SO WÜST

Lamentations of Jeremiah 1:1,4,9,13; 2:15; 5:17, 20-21. Directed by Tom Herring.

MAUERSBERGER (1903–1982)

Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst,
die voll Volks war.
Alle ihre Tore stehen öde.
Wie liegen die Steine des Heiligtums vorn
auf allen Gassen zerstreut.
Er hat ein Feuer aus der Höhe
in meine Gebeine gesandt
und es lassen walten.

Ist das die Stadt, von der man sagt,
sie sei die allerschönste,
der sich das ganze Land freuet.
Sie hätte nicht gedacht, dass es ihr zuletzt so
gehen würde;
sie ist ja zu gräulich heruntergestoßen
und hat dazu niemand, der sie tröstet.
Darum ist unser Herz betrübt
und unsre Augen sind finster geworden.

Warum willst du unser so gar vergessen
und uns lebenslang so gar verlassen!
Bringe uns, Herr, wieder zu dir,
dass wir wieder heim kommen!
Erneue unsere Tage wie vor alters.

Herr, siehe an mein Elend,
ach Herr, siehe an mein Elend!
Siehe an mein Elend!

How lonely sits the city
that was full of people!
All her gateways are desolate
The holy stones lie scattered
at the head of every street.
From on high he sent fire,
into my bones
he made it descend.

Is this the city that was called
the perfection of beauty,
the joy of all the earth?
She took no thought of her future;
therefore her fall is terrible;
she has no comforter.
For this our heart has become sick,
for these things our
eyes have grown dim.

Why do you forget us forever,
why do you forsake us for so many days?
Restore us to yourself, O Lord, that we may
be restored! Renew our days as of old.
Lord, behold my affliction,

O Lord, behold my affliction,
behold my affliction.
behold my affliction.

8 LEIT UNS MIT DEINER RECHTEN HAND (FROM BWV 17)

Martin Moller (1547–1606). Directed by Meghan Quinlan.

JS BACH

Leit uns mit deiner rechten Hand
Und segne unser Stadt und Land;
Gib uns allzeit dein heiliges Wort,
Behüt für's Teufels List und Mord;
Verleih ein selges Stündelein,
Auf daß wir ewig bei dir sein.

Lead us with Your right hand
and bless our city and land;
give us Your holy word always,
guard against the devil's deceit and harm;
grant a blessed little hour to us,
in which we shall be eternally with You!

9 NUNC DIMITTIS

Luke 2 v.29–32. Directed by Jack Butterworth.

HOLST (1874–1934)

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,
secundum verbum tuum in pace:
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum
Quod parasti ante faciem
omnium populorum:
Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam
plebis tuae Israel.
Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto,
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in
peace 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 Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

S A N S A R A

10 O COME, LET US SING UNTO THE LORD

Psalm 95 vv.1a, 2b. Directed by Meghan Quinlan.

FRANCES-HOAD (b. 1980)

O come, let us sing unto the Lord, and make
a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

11 OUR FLAGS ARE WAFTING IN HOPE AND GRIEF

Doris Kareva (b. 1958). Directed by Jack Butterworth.

JACKSON (b. 1962)

Our flags are wafting in hope and grief,
Through turmoil we are silent and stern.
A moment has come, a moment so brief
Perhaps a point of no return.
We live with regret, we live with doubt,
our roots are tangled and ancient

The timidest heart that never spoke out
Now breaks into song, impatient.
Whatever we had, whatever we lost
Whether valued or taken for granted
A voicing of freedom at whatever cost
Cannot now be recanted.

C L O T H S O F H E A V E N

12

TANTUM ERGO

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–1274) (from the *Pange Lingua*). Directed by Benjamin Cunningham.
GALVANI (b. 1994)

Tantum ergo sacramentum
veneremur cernui,
et antiquum documentum
novo cedat ritui;
praestet fides supplementum
sensuum defectui.

Genitori Genitoque
laus et iubilatio,
salus, honor, virtus quoque
sit et benedictio;
procedenti ab utroque
compar sit laudatio. Amen.

Therefore so great a Sacrament
Let us fall down and worship,
And let the old law
Give way to a new rite,
And let faith stand forward
To make good the defects of sense.

To the Father and the Son
Be praise and joy,
Health, honour and virtue
And blessing,
And to him proceeding from both
Be equal praise. Amen.

13

CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

W. B. Yeats (1865–1939). Directed by Jack Butterworth.
ARCHER (b. 1952)

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,

I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

S A N S A R A

14

A PRAYER OF ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER

St Richard of Chichester (c. 1197–1253). Directed by Benjamin Cunningham.
TARNEY (b. 1984)

Thanks be to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ
For all the benefits Thou hast given me,
For all the pains and insults
Thou hast borne for me.

O most merciful Redeemer,
friend and brother,
May I know Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly,
Follow Thee more nearly.

15

LUX AETERNA

Communion (from the *Requiem Mass*). Directed by Tom Herring.
MACMILLAN (b. 1959)

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine,
cum sanctis tuis in aeternum,
quia pius es.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine;
et lux perpetua luceat eis;
cum Sanctis tuis in aeternum, quia pius es.

Amen.

May everlasting light shine upon them, O Lord,
with your saints forever,
for you are kind.

Grant them eternal rest, O Lord,
and may everlasting light shine upon them.
with your saints forever, for you are merciful.

Amen.

C L O T H S O F H E A V E N



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We would like to recognise:

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SOPRANO

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Helena Thomson
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Michael Hickman
Daniel Tate
Humphrey Thompson

ASSOC. COMPOSERS

Marco Galvani
Oliver Tarney



ENGINEERING
& MASTERING

Adaq Khan

ARTIST PHOTO

Theo Williams

SESSION PHOTO

Theo Williams, Tom Herring

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POST PRODUCTION

John Bevan

PRODUCER

Andrew King

CREATIVE
DIRECTOR

John Bevan

EXECUTIVE
PRODUCER

Adrian Green



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