

CONVIVIUM  
RECORDS

THE  
TUDOR  
CHOIR  
BOOK  
VOLUME II

GEORGE RICHFORD  
ROMSEY ABBEY CHOIR



## Introduction

This recording represents a culmination of 12 months intensive work and study for the boy choristers of Romsey Abbey. In May 2016, seven existing choristers were swamped by an influx of 18 new boys and so began the meticulous process of retraining the top line from scratch.

It has been my long-held belief that 21st century boys can love and be engaged with renaissance literature (it doesn't have to be all Howells and Rutter). The verse-anthem genre immediately presented a suitable departure point as they are differentiated in a way that can engage older and newer boys alike. The prospect of having the St Teilo Tudor Organ in residence (thanks to Professor John Harper and Dominic Gwynn) gave us an opportunity to enthuse the boys further by performing music liturgically and in context with this remarkable instrument. This CD is not just an eclectic array of music from Tudor-era composers; it is a record of the first year of chorister training and a scheme of work that has almost exclusively concentrated on English Tudor music. And it has a wider significance too.

Choristers in today's churches and

cathedrals are expected to be 'generalists' and able to lead and deliver music from early chant to modern-day masterpieces; majestic Victoriana, rumbustious descants, and hearty hymnody - all alike. The demands and stresses of this repertoire on the developing voice and the 'choral sound' are significant. If one can imagine Byrd's Lincoln choristers, the diet was much more slight: Byrd, Tallis, perhaps Taverner and plenty of chant would have formed the daily menu, but that was in no way comparable to the expectations of today's choristers. Examination of Byrd's own music, written whilst at Lincoln Cathedral, reveals that it is most likely Byrd's choristers were lower Means and not high Trebles as we think of choristers today. For the first time, Byrd's well-known Second Evening Service has been recorded in a reconstructed version by Andrew Johnstone at the original pitch with Means on the top line. This reveals a very different way of singing and a rather richer and more wholesome sound.

In essence then, the Romsey Choristers on this disc are Means and not Trebles (the highest note sung on this disk is an F). Although the boys are regularly warmed

up to a high C, for the past 12 months their average operating tessitura has been on average a 3rd lower than a more typical, generalist repertoire of Victoriana and 20th Century fare. Perhaps this is a futile attempt to capture something lost or an indulgence of curiosity — but at very least it has demonstrated the effectiveness of training and inspiring a top line of 21st century boys, twice a week for 12 months on a diet of English music from the 'Golden Age'. The next steps for these boys is to develop their repertoire further to encompass more music from the 19th and 20th centuries whilst maintaining a sense of specialism and focus.

I extend my thanks to Canon Tim Sledge and the Church Wardens of Romsey Abbey, The White Horse Hotel, Romsey, Chris Pritchard, FoRAM, Archie Jesty, Andrew Johstone, Professor Martin Ashley, Edward Tambling, Dominic Gwynn, Peter Wilton and Professor John Harper as well as the numerous supporters of this project through Crowd Funding.

## George Richford

Director of Music, Romsey Abbey



## Tracklist

- I **Almighty God, who by  
the leading of a star**  
*John Bull*  
**07.01**
- II **Out of the Deep**  
*Thomas Morley*  
**05.20**
- III **The first song  
of Moses**  
*Orlando Gibbons*  
**01.13**
- IV **Second Evening  
Service, Magnificat**  
*William Byrd*  
**04.42**
- V **The secret sins**  
*William Mundy*  
**05.12**
- VI **Teach me thy way**  
*William Fox*  
**02.04**

## Programme note

Throughout the history of the revival of Renaissance music there has always been a considerable amount of debate concerning the pitch of the music in question as it is presented in the source in question. Do the notes on the page bear any resemblance to what we might hear today? Was there anything like the universal pitch standard that we employ today? What effect did pitch have on vocal scoring and what sort of singers would have sung this music? Such questions are very difficult to answer, and although many manuscripts of musical works have been handed down through the ages, very little in the way of the detail concerning musical instruments is available to us today.

As far as continental polyphony is concerned, a simple clef system for unaccompanied vocal music is employed, and the combination of various voice types gives a clear indication of the intended pitch of the music. Notational concerns dictate whether a piece should be notated at a higher pitch than it should be performed, but the notated pitch only acts as a guideline in this regard and should not

be taken literally. However, English music of the same period is not so straightforward! Since the organ was a key element of church music before and after the Reformation, its bearing on vocal pitch needs to be taken into account.

In pre-Reformation times, the organ was used not in accompaniment but in alternation with a choir singing plainsong, and a large number of keyboard works in this format have survived: usually a series of short verses designed to complement the singing of plainsong. Indeed, in smaller religious establishments, the organ was used in place of a polyphonic choir, although larger abbeys and priories would no doubt employ both. The Reformation marked the occasion of the removal of many church organs, so it would seem that the type of instrument used during this early period was lost to history. However, as explained by Andrew Johnstone in his article 'As It Was in the Beginning': Organ and Choir Pitch in Early Anglican Church Music (Early Music, Vol. 31, No. 4, Nov., 2003) the early style of organ was retained for reasons of economy and convenience. Only after a second wave of organ removal in the time of the Civil War the following (*continued...*)

- VII **When Israel came  
out of Egypt**  
*Michael East*  
**06.52**
- VIII **Second Evening  
Service, Nunc dimittis**  
*William Byrd*  
**02.35**
- IX **Out of the Deep**  
*Adrian Batten*  
**04.57**
- X **Above the stars,  
my saviour dwells**  
*Thomas Tomkins*  
**04.46**
- XI **Salvator mundi (i)**  
*Thomas Tallis*  
**03.11**
- XII **A fancy for a  
double orgaine**  
*Orlando Gibbons*  
**06.36**

century was this type of organ swept away entirely, and a new pitch standard approaching modern standards embarked upon.

To summarise, the small Tudor organ heard on this recording sits at approximately a semitone and a third of a semitone sharp of modern concert pitch. The instrument itself ('The St Teilo organ') is a reconstruction based on the scant evidence afforded by a barn door from Suffolk: a chance examination of this extraordinary piece of agricultural furniture showed that it had a number of holes in it which corresponded to the pipes that sit on an organ soundboard. Its measurements were taken and the organ reconstructed anew.

In the early twentieth century, when much English church music was being rediscovered (or otherwise re-evaluated), the written pitch was thought to be too low for modern voices and was arbitrarily transposed up a tone or minor third to suit the necessary forces. Some took this application rather too literally and imposed it upon Latin polyphony of the previous era, distorting the music into a stratospheric tessitura. Thankfully, and with this new

organ evidence to hand, such experiments can be discounted as careless vandalism.

This recording is remarkable for its use of an organ that seeks faithfully to reproduce the colour, sound and pitch of an English organ from the Renaissance era.

### **Edward Tambling**

Early Music Editor



**St Teilo Tudor Organ**

Image courtesy of CPD Film



## THE MUSIC

### **Almighty God, who by the leading of a star**

JOHN BULL

Known as 'The Star Anthem', John Bull's *Almighty God, who by the leading of a star* has been an enduringly popular anthem for Epiphany ever since its inception. The large number of sources that transmit the work do so under a number of titles (including a Latin one in a source otherwise without text underlay) which attest to its popularity. Moreover, the piece is notable for its wholesale modulation from the minor to the major mode, a fact that highlights a new conception of key rather than mode that was taking place near the end of this era. Furthermore, and as Andrew Johnstone amply demonstrates,

this piece appears in an organ book copied by Adrian Batten, notated not at the regular pitch but a fifth higher than the voice parts, for convenience of notation on the regular six-line keyboard staff. It was also not uncommon for two pitches to be notated on the same staff, with a double set of clefs and key signatures, as can be seen elsewhere in Batten's book. Bull's anthem is one of many that is transmitted also in vocal parts, namely with the accompaniment written in single parts on the otherwise silent staves of the other voices during verse passages. This points to a possible performance with viol accompaniment, since many of these pieces had their beginning not in ecclesiastical environs but in private domestic settings.



### **Out of the Deep**

THOMAS MORLEY

Morley's setting of the same text follows many of the same conventions, particularly with its expansive Amen, albeit with some chromatic coloration in the chorus sections. The organ can be heard most distinctly in these verse anthems, and has a clear and cutting tone. The temptation on modern organs is to accompany this repertoire on softer flute stops, but there is no such option on the Tudor organ. The sound, and that of the choir as a result, is much more full-bodied.



### **The first song of Moses**

JOHN BULL

Gibbons contributed a number of what might today be considered 'hymn tunes' to a 1623 collection by George Wither entitled 'The Hymnes and Songs of the Church'. It is no surprise that the majority of these tunes have been retained in modern hymnals, in one form or another. The first tune ('Song 1') lives on most famously as 'O Thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray', but the original words comprise a metrical paraphrase of Exodus 15:1. The original format of these

hymns was simply a treble and bass line, but the inner parts can be added without recourse to excessive invention - here a solo voice sings the upper part to the accompaniment of the organ, a format common in domestic circles for which this publication was no doubt intended. The contents of many similar collections of psalms and hymns from the same time have disappeared from private and public repertoires, but it is a testament to Gibbons' popularity that his work in this genre lives on to this day.



### **Second Evening Service, Magnificat**

WILLIAM BYRD



### **Second Evening Service, Nunc dimittis**

WILLIAM BYRD

This recording of Byrd's Second Evening Service is particularly remarkable for its presentation of a new edition by Andrew Johnstone which seeks to challenge those previously in use for this ever-popular setting. Often performed at the very high pitch of a major third higher (ed. Fellowes), this edition not only restores the original

pitch of the music (with the sharper adjustment made by the organ) but some of the musical material too. The contrapuntal introduction of the Magnificat, duplicated at the opening of the Nunc dimittis, can be shown to be something of a cut-and-paste device common in the work of Byrd and other composers, and is probably the work of the scribe of one of the organ books, and not the composer himself. Johnstone seeks to recapture the simplicity of the supposed original by including a simpler introduction for each canticle. The use of the larger, lower-sounding pipes can be heard on this piece in particular, typically only in support of the chorus and giving some depth to the passages that require it.

It is hoped that a re-examination such as this of the early Anglican repertoire will foster new interest concerning its accompaniment on authentic organs, and not performed at unsuitable and unfortunate pitch systems suggested merely by the arbitrary whim of the editor. As can amply be heard on this recording, the use of the organ in accompaniment to the voices gives a much purer vocal quality, aided by the sensitivity of the given pitch, far from the usual strain resulting from

higher transpositions that have regrettably become mainstream.

## V **The secret sins** WILLIAM MUNDY

Once attributed to Gibbons, Mundy's *The secret sins* is one of only two verse anthems by the composer, both of a penitential nature. This anthem sets a metrical text of unknown origin, but which is likely to be a gloss on a psalm or otherwise a paraphrase of another sacred text. The divided alto part in the chorus is typical of works of this period and indicative of the church choir of the time. John Barnard in publishing his First Book of Selected Church Music in 1641 highlighted these parts by exchanging them across the sides: thus Decani Contratenor I was equivalent to Cantoris Contratenor II etc., making necessary the need to divide the parts e.g. in antiphonal sections in canticles.

## VI **Teach me thy way** WILLIAM FOX

William Fox's biographical details are scant, and little can be established about him other than his death date of 1579. Moreover, his sole surviving work consists of a single

anthem *Teach me thy way, O Lord*, a portion of Psalm 119. Apart from a mid-seventeenth century organ book from Ely Cathedral, no voice parts have survived from the same period. However, it is thanks to the authority of the Tudway Manuscripts, a set of full scores from the eighteenth century, that this piece can be restored. Set in a simple, declamatory style, this anthem presents the text in an ABB form typical of settings from this period, and which has its roots in Latin polyphony of the previous age.

## VII **When Israel came out of Egypt** MICHAEL EAST

Michael East published several sets of printed music designed for multi-purpose use. The source for *When Israel came out of Egypt* is *The Third Set of Bookes: wherein are Pastorals, Anthemes, Neopolitanes, Fancies, and Madrigales, to 5. and 6. parts: Apt both for Viols and Voyces (1610)*. The range of genres on offer is pleasing, but also their disposition, able to be sung or played on viols, a sure way of cornering the publishing market for domestic music. This anthem is a setting of Psalm 114, set in two sections, and printed in the standard form,

not with an organ part but with the parts for the accompaniment given within the vocal parts for each voice. East achieves remarkable contrast during what is a rather long text by varying the solo textures with different vocal distributions, and other devices, e.g. the striking triple-time word painting at 'the mountains skipped like rams'. The boundary between sacred and secular forms is blurred not only within the contents of these publications but within the pieces themselves.

## VIII **Out of the Deep** ADRIAN BATTEN

Settings from the Psalms were popular throughout this period of English history, starting with the lengthy, elaborate psalm motets by Robert White, William Mundy and Robert Parsons. At a time when religious upheaval was a concern for much of the country, the comforting words of Scripture acted as a unifying aid in times of grave uncertainty. Moreover, the number of settings of Psalm 15 (Domine quis habitabit/Lord, who shall dwell) from this period is extraordinarily high, White setting the text three times in Latin and a further once in English. Penitential psalms such as Out of

the deep were no less common, and indicative of the all-too-common supplicant's plea in the face of adversity. Batten, along with Tomkins, is a later composer of this period, but who maintains a conservative bent in pieces of this style.

## X **Above the stars my saviour dwells**

THOMAS TOMKINS

Tomkins, despite passing away in 1656 well after the Civil War, has often been termed 'the last Elizabethan', an epithet which betrays his deep conservatism and his links to an earlier generation. He was taught by William Byrd, and homage to the great composer can be found in many of Tomkins' works, most notably his *Fourth Evening Service* which quotes melodies from Byrd's *Second Evening Service*. We are very fortunate that the vast majority of Tomkins' church music has been handed down to us through the weighty posthumous publication by his son Nathaniel in 1668 of *Musica Deo sacra*. *Above the stars my saviour dwells* is taken from this collection, the first in England to have its own printed organ book in addition to the vocal parts. The style is typical of the

English verse anthem, with short vocal phrases underpinned by the accompaniment and reaffirmed at important cadences by the the chorus. The piece ends with an impassioned plea: 'come, Lord Jesu, come away' with urgent, scampering rhythms across the full vocal range, in stark contrast with the rather more sedate opening.

## XI **Salvator mundi (i)**

THOMAS TALLIS

Thomas Tallis' *Salvator mundi* might seem out of place in this collection of vernacular service music, were it not for the fact that it was transmitted in an English version 'With all our hearts' in seventeenth-century sources. This treatment was not uncommon for popular Latin items of the repertoire in order to justify their retention in vernacular liturgies, a practice which continued well into the twentieth century. While the new English texts were often unrelated, the music was nonetheless retained with minor alterations: the false relation in the bass part at the final cadence is the work of a later copyist, and is not found in Tallis' original! The Latin text is one of two settings by Tallis, the first of which is heard here. The piece opens the 1575 joint publication

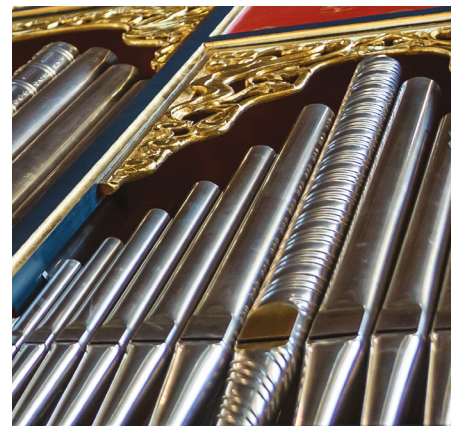
by Tallis and Byrd of a collection of motets dedicated to Elizabeth I and with the hope of distributing it across the continent. The work was, nevertheless, a financial failure and sold very few copies, but the contents include many of the most enduring works by the two composer, the young William Byrd flexing his muscles in a series of extraordinary contrapuntal feats, combined with Tallis' more restrained output from the final decade of his life.

## XII **A fancy for a double orgaine**

ORLANDO GIBBONS

Although it is perfectly possible to play this piece on a single keyboard, Gibbons' *A fancy for a double orgaine* was, as its title suggests, designed to be played on two keyboards, as the organ was considered not to be a single instrument but a small collection of divisions. Frequent references in inventories to 'a pair of organs' show that two separate divisions of the same instrument were intended, and not two discrete organs. Gibbons' piece is typical of the style of organ music of this period in its continuous, unfurling counterpoint, and recorded afresh on this 'new' Tudor

organ, something of the voice of a time past can be heard once more. Moreover, this solo outing shows very clearly not only the high pitch of the organ but its tuning system. Modern tuning is based around 'equal temperament' in which intervals are tuned to a fixed standard and most of the keys sound quite similar. However, a temperament from 1511 is in use here, and is a modified form of 'mean tone' tuning, where the intervals are maintained to a very different standard, and wherein the use of some keys is aurally impossible!





## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

### **Almighty God, who by the leading of a star**

TEXT *Collect for Epiphany*  
 MUSIC *John Bull (1562 — 1628)*  
 EDITED *Lionel Pike*  
 ORGANIST *Jon Pilgrim*  
 SOLOISTS *Henry Roberts,  
 Joshua Thompson,  
 Rosie Whittock,  
 Andrew Wainwright,  
 Nigel Wissett-Wamer,  
 Jon Sketchley*

O God, who by the leading of a star  
 didst manifest thy only-begotten  
 Son to the Gentiles,  
 mercifully grant that we who

know thee now by faith,  
 may after this life have the  
 fruition of thy glorious Godhead,  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **II & IX Out of the Deep**

TEXT *Psalm 130*  
 MUSIC *Thomas Morley  
 (1557 — 1602)*  
 EDITED *Lionel Pike*  
 SOLOIST *Patrick Bolton*  
 MUSIC *Adrian Batten (1591 — 1637)*  
 EDITED *Maurice Bevan*  
 SOLOIST *Henry Roberts*

Out of the deep have I called unto thee,  
 O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.  
 O let thine ears consider well:  
 the voice of my complaint.  
 If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme  
 to mark what is done amiss:

O Lord, who may abide it?  
 For there is mercy with thee:  
 therefore shalt thou be feared.  
 I look for the Lord;  
 my soul doth wait for him:  
 in his word is my trust.

My soul fleeth unto the Lord:  
 before the morning watch, I say,  
 before the morning watch.  
 O Israel, trust in the Lord,  
 for with the Lord there is mercy:  
 and with him is plenteous redemption.  
 And he shall redeem Israel  
 from all his sins.



### **The First Song of Moses**

TEXT *George Wither (1623)*  
 MUSIC *Orlando Gibbons  
 (1583 — 1625)*  
 SOLOIST *Jack West*

Now shall the praises of the Lord be sung:  
 For he a most renowned Triumph won:  
 Both horse and men into the sea he flung.  
 And them together there hath overthrown.  
 The Lord is he whose strength  
 doth make me strong  
 And he is my salvation and my song:  
 My God, for whom I will a house prepare  
 My father's God whose praise I will declare.



### **Magnificat (2nd Evening Service)**

TEXT *Luke 1: 46 — 55*  
 MUSIC *William Byrd (c1543 — 1623)*  
 EDITED *Andrew Johnstone*  
 ORGANIST *Jon Pilgrim*  
 SOLOISTS *Adrian Green, William  
 Swinnerton, Joshua Thompson,  
 Henry Roberts, Billy Boulton,  
 Ben Walpole*

My soul doth magnify the Lord:  
 and my spirit hath rejoiced  
 in God my Saviour.  
 For he hath regarded:  
 the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
 For behold, from henceforth:  
 all generations shall call me blessed.  
 For he that is mighty hath magnified me:



and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him:  
throughout all generations.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm:  
he hath scattered the proud  
in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty  
from their seat:  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things :  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy  
hath holpen his servant Israel:  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed for ever.

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.

## V **The secret sins**

TEXT *Anon. *Attrib. Mundy**  
MUSIC *William Mundy*  
*(1529 — 1591)*  
SOLOIST *Patrick Bolton*

The secret sins that hidden lye  
within my pensive heart.  
Procures great heaps of bitter thoughts  
and fills my soul with smart;  
And yet the more my soul doth seek  
some sweet relief to find,  
the more doth sin, with vain delights,  
Alas, still keep me blind.

Thou see'st, O God, the strifes there are  
between my soul and sin:  
Thy grace doth work, but sin prevails  
and blinds my soul therein.  
Wherefore, sweet Christ, thy grace increase,  
my faith augment withal,  
And for Thy tender mercy's sake,  
Lord, hear me when I call. Amen.

## VI **Teach me thy ways**

TEXT *Psalm 86; vv 11 & 12*  
MUSIC *William Fox (d. 1579)*  
EDITED *George Richford*

Teach me thy way, O Lord,  
and I will walk in thy truth;  
O knit my heart unto thee  
that I may fear thy name.  
I will thank thee O Lord my God

with all my heart  
and will praise thy name  
for evermore.

## VII **When Israel came out of Egypt**

TEXT *Psalm 114*  
MUSIC *Michael East (c.1580 — 1648)*  
EDITION *George Richford, after  
Lionel Pike*  
ORGANIST *Jon Pilgrim*  
SOLOISTS *Simon Lillystone,  
Rosie Whittock, Jack West,  
Elliot Beverton, Billy Boulton,  
Matthew Adams-King,  
Nigel Wissett-Wamer,  
Henry Roberts,  
Joshua Thomposon*

When Israel came out of Egypt:  
and the house of Jacob from among the  
strange people,  
Judah was his sanctuary:  
and Israel his dominion.  
The sea saw that, and fled:  
Jordan was driven back.

The mountains skipped like rams:  
and the little hills like young sheep.

What aileth thee, O thou sea,  
that thou fleddest:  
and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?  
Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams:  
and ye little hills, like young sheep?  
Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord:  
at the presence of the God of Jacob. Amen.

## VIII **Nunc Dimittis (2nd Evening Service)**

TEXT *Luke 2: 29 · 32*  
MUSIC *William Byrd (c1543— 1623)*  
EDITED *Andrew Johnstone*

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 Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever  
shall be, world without end.  
Amen.

# X

## Above the stars, my saviour dwells

TEXT *Joseph Hall Bishop of Norwich  
(1574 · 1656)*  
 MUSIC *Thomas Tomkins  
(1572 — 1656)*  
 EDITED *Edward Tambling*  
 SOLOISTS *Patrick Bolton, Matthew Jones,  
Alex Hegedus-Adkin,  
Rosie Whittock,  
Andrew Wainwright,  
Peter Wilton, Toby Armstrong*

Above the stars my Saviour dwells;  
I love, I care for nothing else.

There, there he sits and fits a place  
for the glorious heirs of grace.

Dear Saviour, raise my duller eyne;  
let me but see thy beams divine.

Ravish my soul with wonder and desire;  
ere I enjoy, let me thy joys admire.

And wond'ring let me say,  
come, Lord Jesu, come away.

# XI

## Salvator mundi (i)

TEXT *Antiphon at Holy Unction &  
Exaltation of the Holy Cross.*  
 MUSIC *Thomas Tallis  
(c.1505 — 1585)*  
 EDITED *Edward Tambling*

Salvator mundi, salva nos,  
qui per crucem et sanguinem redemisti nos.

O Saviour of the world, save us,  
who by thy cross and blood hast redeemed us,  
help us, we pray thee, O Lord our God.

# XII

## A fancy for a double orgaine

ORGANIST *Adrian Taylor*

*Recorded in St Nicholas Chapel, Romsey  
Abbey, June 12, 13 & 14, 2017.  
With thanks to the Vicar and  
Churchwardens of Romsey Abbey.*

*With thanks to The White  
Horse Hotel & Brasserie  
for their sponsorship  
of this recording*



BIOGRAPHIES

## George Richford

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

George Richford is a multi award-winning composer and conductor, living and working in Hampshire. He has been Director of Music at Romsey Abbey since September 2015. George was born and raised in South London and studied at Durham University and Christchurch Canterbury and has held MD posts at Newcastle Cathedral, St John's College, Durham, St Mary Magdalene Church, Newark and Dartford Parish Church. He has directed choirs to wide critical acclaim and has recorded and broadcast widely earning a reputation for reinvigorating and





transforming choirs and for his success recruiting boys and girls. He is also the Director of Southampton University Chamber Choir.

His compositions have been performed and broadcast around the world, and have received premières on television and radio, at the 300th Anniversary of the Three Choirs' Festival and for the Commonwealth Service of Remembrance for WW1 from Glasgow Cathedral. His music is published by Universal Editions, Music Sales Novello and Shorter House, London.

### **Romsey Abbey Choir**

BOY CHORISTERS & ATB

Romsey Abbey can trace its first choir back only as far as 1869 when, responding to the Tractarian fashions of the time, a robed choir of men and boys was introduced. A healthy choir, rooted in the Anglican Tradition continued throughout much of the 20th century. In 1997 a top line of Girl Choristers was incorporated into the choirs at the Abbey, and they now sing with the altos (male and female), tenors and basses on alternate weeks. In 2016 the boys' line enjoyed something of a renaissance, with

24 choristers filling the choir stalls and a separate training choir established to cope with the demand. There are over 120 singers engaged on a weekly basis at Romsey Abbey, including the Boy Choristers, Senior and Junior girl Choristers, choir adults, the Quavers training choir and the Abbey Consort.

The choir has broadcast on BBC Songs of Praise and has toured widely. The 2016 CD release of Adoration, celebrating 20 years of the girl choristers at Romsey Abbey, won widespread critical acclaim.

The choristers of the choir are drawn from schools in the local area and are generously supported by the PCC of Romsey Abbey and the Friends of Romsey Abbey Music.

### **Adrian Taylor**

ORGANIST

Adrian Taylor was appointed Assistant Organist of Romsey Abbey in 2011, under Robert Fielding. As well playing for the weekly round of services at the Abbey, Adrian has accompanied the choirs on tour to Wells, Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester Cathedrals, played for BBC Songs of Praise



and in the presence of HRH the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. He has held several previous positions in the Hampshire area and holds the Archbishop's Award in Church Music. He works full-time in the commercial finance sector.

### Jon Pilgrim

MICHAEL JAMES ORGAN SCHOLAR

Jon began his experience of sacred music as a chorister at St Leonard's Church, Hythe, Kent, where he later became organ scholar. He read music at the University of Southampton, and during his degree was

appointed as the university organ scholar; and Senior Organ Scholar at Romsey Abbey.

Before leaving for university, he achieved an Associate of Trinity College, London recital diploma with distinction, on the piano. He is currently working towards Associateship of the Royal College of Organists.

### St Teilo Tudor Organ

GOETZE & GWYNN

This organ was made for the project directed by Professor John Harper from Bangor University researching "The experience of worship in late medieval cathedral and parish church", at the great medieval cathedral church at Salisbury, and the reconstructed parish church of St Teilo's in the grounds of the Welsh National Museum at St Fagans near Cardiff.

The new organ is based on the Wetheringsett organ made for the Early English Organ Project in 2001, which was based on the soundboard found in 1977 at Wetheringsett in Suffolk. Its characteristics suggest that this organ was made by an English builder, probably local. They include a long, fully chromatic key compass, choruses of

wooden or metal pipes of the same scale and style, each with its own slider, and a voicing style familiar from 17th century English organs, but also Italian and Spanish organs. The organ for St Teilo is physically smaller. Its pipes are based on the only pipes surviving from the mediaeval West Country tradition, from John Loosemore's 1665 organ for Nettlecombe Court. They are very narrow-scaled and without nicking, so the speech is sibilant and the tone, rich.

The case is a much-reduced version of the case at Old Radnor, copying the carvings (see box below).

The key compass is C to a<sup>2</sup>, 46 notes, which is the number of grooves in the Wetheringsett soundboard and the compass specified in the contract for Holy Trinity Coventry (1526). It matches the

ranges needed for the surviving repertory. This key compass allows for transposition by the player, extended by the sub-octave Diapason for choral and vocal accompaniment in the early 17th century verse style.

The nominal pitch is 5ft, i.e. a plainsong pitch a fourth above singing pitch, the basis for all the Tudor organs we know about. The actual pitch is a semitone above A440 at singing pitch. The tuning system was recommended by Arnolt Schlick in his *Spiegel der Orgelmacher* published in Heidelberg in 1511, and intended as a guide for good practice throughout the Holy Roman Empire. It is a modified form of mean tone tuning, with good (not pure) major thirds and the wolf spread to some extent over neighbouring fifths to allow some modulation.

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### Organ specification

I.	open metal	principal	5ft (C – g#_ in front)
II.	open metal	principal	5ft (C – g#_ in front)
III.	open metal	octave	
IV.	open metal	octave	
V.	open metal	fifteenth	
VI.	stopped wood	diapason	10ft (full compass)



# THE TUDOR CHOIR BOOK II

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Harry Hegedus-Adkin,  
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Christopher Jamolin,  
Henry Roberts (Head Chorister),  
Oliver Swinnerton,  
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