



Clive Dsgood

Christmas Collection

Polyphony & Britten Sinfonia
conducted by Stephen Layton

TRACKLIST

Clive Osgood

Christmas Collection

ORIGINAL CAROLS

1	Hodie Christus natus est	2.15
2	Coventry Carol	3.26
3	Adam lay ybounden	1.22
4	Sir Christēmas	1.31
5	In excelsis gloria	2.40

PIAE CANTIONES SETTINGS

6	Omnis mundus	1.52
7	Resonet in laudibus	1.58

SINFONIA CANTIONES

8	Puer nobis nascitur	3.21
9	Personent hodie	4.33
10	Up! Good Christen folk	2.08

Total Running Time 25.10

PROGRAMME NOTE

This collection of Christmas music consists of five of Clive Osgood's original carols for unaccompanied choir followed by his arrangements of carols taken from the sixteenth century collection *Piae Cantiones*.

ORIGINAL CAROLS

1 Hodie Christus natus est (2024)

This carol uses text taken from the liturgy of the Vespers service for Christmas Day. It is a paraphrase of Luke chapter 2 verses 11-14, announcing that 'Today, Christ is born'. It is written for eight-part choir and follows a ternary structure, with the opening music returning at the end. The music attempts to convey the excitement of the birth of Jesus using music in dance-like seven time. The quieter central section contrasts the lower voices singing 'Hodie in terra' (today on earth) with the sopranos and altos singing 'canunt Angeli' in imitation (the Angels sing). The music then builds from the lower voices before a return to the opening gesture and a section of reiterated alleluias. The carol

was awarded joint first prize by the Bach Choir in its 2024 'Sir David Willcocks Carol Competition'.

2 Coventry Carol (2019)

The *Coventry Carol* is a haunting 16th century carol taken from a medieval nativity drama, or 'mystery play, called the Shearmen and Tailors' pageant. It reflects upon the Massacre of the Innocents, where King Herod orders the killing of male infants to eliminate the baby Jesus. The lullaby is sung by the mothers mourning their lost children. This setting uses a gently lilting idea in the minor key with a chromatically descending bass line. A contrasting central section depicts the raging king while the last chorus adds a soprano descant.

PROGRAMME NOTE

3 Adam lay ybounden (2021)

Adam lay ybounden is a 15th century English text of unknown authorship recounting the Fall of Man from the third chapter of Genesis. Initially written as a song, no surviving musical settings from the time exist. This setting is in fast triple time with the inner parts providing frequent syncopations. The music builds to an eventual climax and a final resolution to a major chord.

4 Sir Christēmas (2017)

Sir Christēmas is a lively, late 15th century carol suggesting a ceremony that welcomes a personified 'Sir Christēmas' into the company. It is the first mention of a metaphorical character involved with the festivities, a potential forerunner of Father Christmas. This setting begins with the cry of Christmas joy, sung imitatively in all the parts then alternating with homophonic

passages. The carol builds to a final climax 'And sing with us now joyfully' and emphatic declamations of 'Nowell'.

5 In excelsis gloria (2014)

This mid 15th century carol takes its title from the refrain ('Glory in the highest'), sung at the end of each section. This refrain begins with a sense of excitement, to the words 'Christo Paremus Cantica' ('Let us raise unto Christ'), and is followed by a contrasting lyrical verse, sung in English first by the soprano and then the tenor soloists. A variety of choral textures are explored throughout the carol, with the two soloists set against the rest of the choral. The carol ends with repeated proclamation 'In excelsis gloria'.

PROGRAMME NOTE

PIAE CANTIONES SETTINGS

6 Omnis mundus

7 Resonet in laudibus

These short settings are arrangements of carols from the collection of late Medieval Latin songs called *Piae Cantiones*.

Published in 1582, this collection of sacred and secular songs contains several well-known carol melodies, later set to English words including 'Good King Wenceslas', and 'Of the father's love begotten'.

The first setting here, *Omnis mundus* ('All the world rejoices at the birth of the saviour') presents the original melody first in the soprano and then the tenor sections with subtle chromatic harmony and occasional countermelody.

In *Resonet in laudibus* ('Let it resound in praise with joyful applause'), the melody is given to the sopranos throughout with the lower parts accompanying.

SINFONIA CANTIONES

8 Puer nobis nascitur

9 Personent hodie

10 Up! Christen folk

Sinfonia Cantiones takes three carols from *Piae Cantiones*, arranged for choir and orchestra in the manner of a classical symphony, with three movements fast-slow-fast.

The work opens grandly with *Puer nobis nascitur* (Unto us is born a son), presented, like the middle movement, in its original Latin setting. This following movement, *Personent hodie* makes particular use of the lyricism of the cor anglais and the rest of the woodwind section with pizzicato strings.

The work then ends with a short and lively arrangement of 'O quam mundum' (Oh how beautiful) in its standard English translation *Up! Good Christen folk*.



Polyphony during recording at St Jude on the Hill, Hampstead



TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

ORIGINAL CAROLS

1 **Hodie Christus natus est**

*Hodie Christus natus est
Hodie Christus natus est
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli:
hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo, alleluja.*

Today is Christ born;
Today is Christ born;
today the Saviour has appeared;
today the Angels sing,
the Archangels rejoice;
today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia!

2 **Coventry Carol**

Lully, lulla, thou little tiny child,
by by, lully lullay.
O sisters too, how may we do
for to preserve this day
This poor youngling, for whom
we do sing. By by, lully lullay?

Herod the king, in his raging,
charged he hath this day
His men of might, in his own sight,
all young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor child for thee!
And ever morn and day,
For thy parting neither say nor sing.
By by, lully lullay!

3 **Adam lay ybounden**

Adam lay ybounden,
bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
thought he not too long.

All was for an apple, an apple that he took,
As clerkes finden written in their book.

Nay had the apple taken been,
the apple taken been,
Nay had never our lady
abeen heaven equeen.

Blessed be the time that apple taken was
Therefore we moun singen Deo gracias!

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

4 Sir Christēmas

Nowell nowell. Who is there that
singeth so: Nowell nowell?

I am here, Sir Christēmas.
Welcome, my Lord Sir Christēmas!
Welcome to all, both more and less!
Come near, nowell!

Dieu vous garde, beaux sieurs,
tidings I you bring:
A maid hath born a child full young,
which causeth you to sing: Nowell nowell.

Christ is now born of a pure maid,
in an ox-stall he is laid;
Wherefore sing we all at a brayde:
Nowell nowell.

Buvez bien par toute la compagnie.
Make good cheer and be right merry,
And sing with us now joyfully:
"Nowell nowell, nowell nowell!"

5 In excelsis gloria

Christo paremus cantica. In excelsis gloria.
*[Let us raise a song unto Christ,
all glory in the highest]*

When Christ was born of Mary free,
in Bethlem in that fair city,
Angels sung with mirth and glee,
In excelsis gloria.

The shepherds saw these angels bright,
to them appeared with great light,
And said 'God's son is born this night.'
In excelsis gloria.

This king is come to save his kind,
in the scripture as we all shall find.
Therefore this song have we in mind,
In excelsis gloria.

Then, Lord, for thy great grace,
grant us in bliss to see thy face,
Where we may sing to thy solace,
In excelsis gloria.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

PIAE CANTIONES SETTINGS

6 Omnis mundus

*Omnis mundus jocundetur
nato salvatore
Casta mater quae concepit
Gabrielis ore.
Sinceris vocibus
Sinceris mentibus,
Exsultemus et laetemur hodie.*

*Hodie, Hodie,
Christus natus ex Maria
Virgine, virgine,
Christus natus ex Maria.
Gaudete, gaudete,
Gaudeamus et laetemur itaque.
Itaque, Itaque,
Gaudeamus et laetemur itaque.*

Let the earth rejoice in chorus,
God's own Son receiving
Whom the Mother Maiden bore us,
Gabriel's word believing!
Clear let our voices rise,
Clear be our hearts like-wise,
Come, rejoice we and be glad this holy day;

Holy day, holy day,
Christ was born for us of Mary's purity;
Purity, purity,
Christ was born for us of Mary's purity;
Merrily, merrily,
Make we merry and be glad in charity.
Charity, charity,
Make we merry and be glad in charity.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

7 Resonet in laudibus

*Resonet in laudibus
cum iucundis plausibus
Sion cum fidelibus:
apparuit, quem genuit Maria.
Sunt impleta, quae praedixit Gabriel.
Eia, eia.*

*Virgo deum genuit
quem divina voluit clementia.
Hodie apparuit in Israel,
ex Maria virgine est natus rex.
Magnum nomen Domini Emmanuel,
quod annunciatum est per Gabriel.*

Let Zion resound in praise
with joyful applause
with the faithful:
He has appeared, whom Mary conceived.
What Gabriel foretold has been fulfilled.
Hail, hail.

The Virgin conceived God
whom divine clemency willed.
Today it has appeared in Israel,
from the Virgin Mary a king has been born.
Great is the name of the Lord Emmanuel,
which was announced by Gabriel.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

SINFONIA CANTIONES

8 Puer nobis nascitur

*Puer nobis nascitur
Rector angelorum;
In hoc mundo panditur
Dominus Dominorum.*

*In praesepe ponitur
Sub fœno asinorum.
Cognoverunt Dominum
Christum Regem cœlorum.*

*Hunc Herodes timuit –
Magno cum tremore,
In infantes irruit
Hos cœdens in furore.*

*Qui natus ex Maria –
Die hodierna
Duc nos tua gratia
Ad gaudia superna.*

*Te saluator a & ω
Cantemus in choro,
Cantemus in organo,
Benedicamus domino.*

Unto us is born a son,
King of choirs supernal:
See on earth his life begun,
Of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger;
Ox and ass their owner know
Now cradled in a manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
And did him bewilder,
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little childer.

Of his love and mercy mild
Hear the Christmas story:
O that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us up to glory!

O and A and A and O,
Cantemus in choro,
Voice and organ, sing we so,
Benedicamus Domino.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

9 Personent hodie

*Personent hodie
voces puerulae,
laudantes iucunde
qui nobis est natus,
summo Deo datus,
et de vir, vir, vir
et de virgineo ventre procreatus.*

*In mundo nascitur,
pannis involvitur
praesepe ponitur
stabulo brutorum,
rector supernorum.
Perdidit, dit, dit,
perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.*

*Magi tres venerunt,
munera offerunt,
parvulum inquirunt,
stellulam sequendo,
ipsum adorando,
aurum, thus, thus, thus,
aurum, thus, et myrrham ei offerendo.*

Let resound today
the voices of children,
joyfully praising
Him who is born to us,
given by most high God,
and conceived in a virginal womb.

He was born into the world,
wrapped in swaddling clothes,
and laid in a manger
in a stable for animals,
the master of the heavens.
The prince of Hell has lost his spoils.

Three Magi came,
they were bearing gifts,
and sought the little one,
following a star,
to worship him,
and offer him gold, frankincense,
and myrrh.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

*Omnes clericuli,
pariter pueri,
cantent ut angeli:
advenisti mundo,
laudes tibi fundo.
Ideo, o, o,
ideo gloria in excelsis Deo.*

10 Up! Good Christen folk

Up! Good Christen folk
Ding-dong, ding:
Ding-a-dong-a-ding:
Ding-dong, ding-dong:
Ding-a-dong-ding.
Up! good Christen folk, and listen
How the merry church bells ring,
And from steeple bid good people
Come adore the new-born King:

Let all the junior clerics
and also the boys
sing like angels:
"You have come to the world,
I pour out praises to you.
Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmastide,
Bringing gladness, Chasing sadness,
Show'ring blessings far and wide.

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
Ex Maria Virgine, In a stable
('Tis no fable), Christus natus hodie.



PERFORMERS

POLYPHONY

Soprano

Rachel Ambrose Evans
Ana Beard Fernández ‡
Lucy Cox ‡
Susie Hill *
Leah Jackson ‡
Victoria Meteyard ‡
Danni O'Neill
Laura Oldfield *
Daisy Walford *
Clover Willis *

Alto

Cathy Bell ‡
Luthien Brackett *
Nancy Cole *
Jessica Gillingwater ‡
Lucy Goddard
Ruth Kiang
Amy Lyddon *
Eleanor Minney ‡
Natalie Manning

* *January sessions only*

‡ *October sessions only*

Tenor

Michael Bell *
James Botcher ‡
Gareth Edmunds ‡
Jacob Ewens *
James Geer ‡
Jonathan Hanley *
Matthew Howard
Harry Jacques *
James Robinson ‡
Tom Robson *
Simon Wall ‡

Bass

Greg Bannan ‡
Michael Craddock *
Gavin Cranmer-Moralee
Eoghan Desmond *
Malachy Frame *
Jimmy Holliday ‡
Jack Lawrence-Jones ‡
Philip Tebb
Christopher Webb ‡
Laurence Williams *

PERFORMERS

BRITTEN SINFONIA

Double Bass

Markus Van Horn
Clare Larkman

Flute

Thomas Hancox
Sarah O'Flynn

Piccolo

Sarah O'Flynn

Oboe

Emma Feilding
Alison Alty

Cor Anglais

Emma Feilding

Clarinet

Joy Farrall
Oliver Pashley

Bassoon

Sarah Burnett
Simon Couzens

French Horn

Andrew Littlemore
Tom Rumsby
Phillippa Koushk-Jalali
Richard Stroud

Trumpet

Aaron Akugbo
Louis Barclay

Trombone

Byron Fulcher
Merin Rhyd

Bass Trombone

Daniel West

Tuba

Sasha Koushk-Jalali

Timpani

William Lockhart

January sessions only



BIOGRAPHIES

Clive Osgood studied Music at Bangor University before completing a Master's degree in Musicology at Cardiff University. After teacher training in London, he spent a year as an organ scholar at Salisbury Cathedral. More recently he completed a second Master's degree in Composition at the University of Surrey.

His written output includes a variety of music for choirs, orchestras and chamber groups. Choral music constitutes the largest part of his work and he has a particular interest in church music.

Clive's music is in the classical tradition – injected with elements of jazz harmony and the rhythmic vitality of Latin American music. He is currently Director of Music and Organist at the Parish Church of St Bartholomew's in Haslemere, Surrey and teaches 'A' Level Music at Reed's School, Cobham.

www.cliveosgood.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Stephen Layton

Awarded with an MBE for services to classical music in October 2020, Stephen Layton is one of the most sought-after conductors of his generation. Often described as the finest exponent of choral music in the world today, his ground-breaking approach has had a profound influence on choral music over the last 30 years. Having taken up the post of Principal Conductor of the Slovenian Philharmonic Choir from the start of the 2024/25 season, Layton is also Founder and Director of Polyphony, and Director of Holst Singers. Layton recently stepped down as Fellow and Director of Music at Trinity College Cambridge - a post he held for 17 years. His other former posts include Chief Conductor of Netherlands Chamber Choir, Chief Guest Conductor of Danish National Vocal Ensemble, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of City of London Sinfonia, and Director of Music at the Temple Church, London.

Layton is regularly invited to work with the world's leading choirs, orchestras and composers, and his recordings have won or been nominated for every major international recording award. With Britten Sinfonia, his eight highly acclaimed recordings include Handel's *Messiah* ("Best Messiah recording" – *BBC Music Magazine*); and with Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, whom he collaborates widely, he has recorded Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, *Mass in B Minor* and *St John Passion*.

Layton's interpretations of Bach and Handel have been heard across the globe with orchestras ranging from Academy of Ancient Music to the London Philharmonic and Philadelphia orchestras. Performances include *Messiah* in Sydney Opera House, the first staged *St John Passion* with English National Opera, and regular BBC broadcasts of his annual performances of *Messiah* and *St John Passion* with Polyphony at Smith Square Hall, London.



BIOGRAPHIES



Hailed as one of the world's leading choirs in a poll by Gramophone Magazine, Polyphony has become 'renowned for both their sound and versatility, whether in early music, or contemporary works such as those of Eric Whitacre, they embody the remarkable tradition of British choral excellence at its finest.' Polyphony has performed and broadcast regularly world-wide and has an extensive discography comprising numerous important recordings of works by Bach, Britten, Bruckner, Cornelius, Grainger, Grieg, Handel, Jackson, Jenkins, Lauridsen, Łukaszewski, MacMillan, Pärt, Poulenc, Rutter, Tavener, Walton, and Whitacre.

Recent highlights for the choir include appearances at the Oslo International Church Music Festival, at the Polish Sacred Music Festival in London 'Joy and Devotion', giving no less than seven

UK premieres; several appearances at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, as part of their ZaterdagMatinee series, including Fauré's *Requiem* with Britten Sinfonia; performances of Bach's *St John Passion*, with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris, and the Theater an der Wien, Vienna; and a performance of Mozart's *Requiem*, with the City of London Sinfonia, at the BBC Proms.

Other notable appearances have included the Belfast Festival as part of their 50 year celebrations; Snape Maltings, Aldeburgh, to mark the start of their Britten celebrations; and the Three Choirs Festival in Gloucester with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

www.polyphony.co.uk



BIOGRAPHIES



Britten Sinfonia

Britten Sinfonia is a different kind of orchestra. It is defined not by the traditional figurehead of a principal conductor, but by the dynamic and democratic meeting of its outstanding individual players and the broad range of their collaborators – from Steve Reich, Thomas Adès and Alison Balsom to Pagrav Dance Company, Chris Thile and Anoushka Shankar.

Rooted in the East of England, where it is the only professional orchestra working throughout the region, Britten Sinfonia also has a national and international reputation as one of today's finest ensembles. It is renowned for its adventurous

programming and stunningly high-quality performances, and equally for its record of commissioning new music, nurturing new composing talent, and inspiring school children, hospital patients and communities across the East of England.

Britten Sinfonia's main touring locations are in London, Saffron Walden, Cambridge and Norwich. The orchestra also performs regularly at London's Wigmore Hall and appears at UK festivals including Aldeburgh, Brighton, Norfolk & Norwich and the BBC Proms. Its prolific discography features many award-winning recordings.

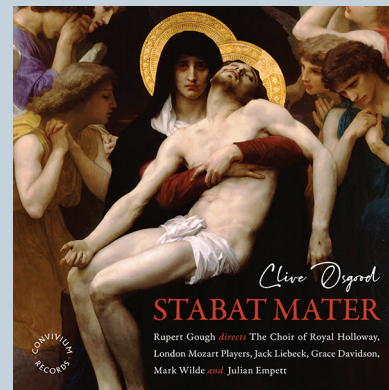
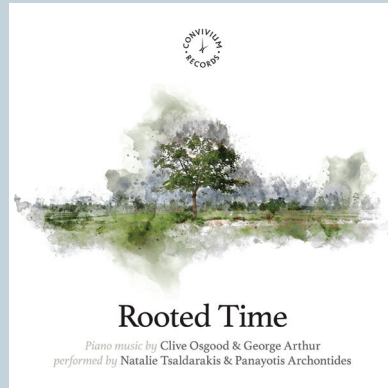
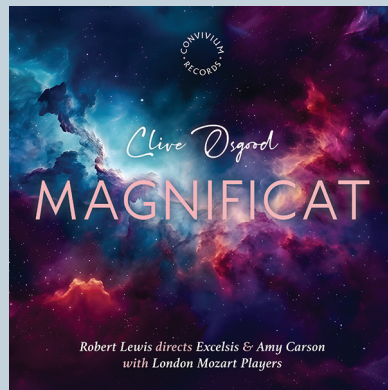
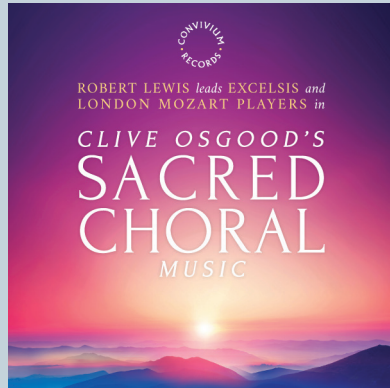
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CREDITS

Clive Osgood

Christmas Collection

Polyphony & Britten Sinfonia

conducted by **Stephen Layton**

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Producer & Editing

Adrian Peacock



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Mike Cooter

Executive Producer

Adrian Green

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St Jude on the Hill, Hampstead, UK. 19-20 January and 14-15 October 2024.

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