



A CAPPELLA CHORAL WORKS



FINDING YOUR HOME

The Elgar Scholars

Directed by Jim Bate & Laura Bailie

Tracklist

1	Even Such Is Time <i>Bob Chilcott</i>	2.26
	<i>Soprano soloist Alice Martin</i>	
2	And I Will Betroth You <i>Michael Zev Gordon</i>	5.12
3	Lux Aeterna (Nimrod) <i>Edward Elgar, arr. John Cameron</i>	3.39
4	In Beauty May I Walk <i>Jonathan Dove</i>	4.51
5	Gratitude (Song Of Harvest) <i>Bob Chilcott</i>	2.44
6	Finding Your Home <i>Millicent B James</i>	4.28
7	Drop Down, Ye Heavens, From Above <i>Judith Weir</i>	1.54
8	Sing To The Moon <i>Steven James Brown & Laura Mvula, arr. Laura Mvula</i>	3.35
	<i>Soprano soloist Evelyn Byford</i>	
	Total Running Time	28.51

Tracks 1, 3, 7 & 8 conducted by **Laura Bailie** - **Tracks 2, 4, 5 & 6** by **Jim Bate**

Programme Note

FINDING YOUR HOME

Finding Your Home is a musical journey with belonging at its heart. Performed by The Elgar Scholars, Birmingham's newest pre-professional chamber choir, this debut album brings together works that explore the many meanings of "home". The programme spans multiple centuries and styles, blending timeless sacred repertoire with modern works that offer a reflective soundscape.

Highlights include music by Birmingham-based composers such as Laura Mvula and Millicent B James as well as pieces by living composers who hold strong connections to Birmingham's

vibrant musical culture including Jonathan Dove, Michael Zev Gordon, Bob Chilcott, Judith Weir, and Edward Elgar. The Elgar Scholars bring their trademark warmth and precision to each piece, inviting listeners on an emotive journey of unwavering sentimentality.

Birmingham's own rich cultural heritage as a city of diverse communities and evolving identities serves as a backdrop for this recording. The album resonates with both local and universal meaning, rendering *Finding Your Home* not just a listening experience, but a shared understanding of what it means to belong.

Biographies

The Elgar Scholars choir was founded in 2023 by co-musical directors Jim Bate and Laura Bailie, both of whom are graduates of the choral conducting master's programme at The University of Birmingham. The group's unique setup of two musical directors facilitates an active artistic ear at all times, both on and off the podium. The relationship that both conductors have created within the rehearsal room has enabled their singers to thrive and ultimately create a unified choral sound of the highest quality.

The singers comprise students and alumni from The University of Birmingham and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, alongside other academic and musical institutions from around the country. The choir is making its mark in the choral world by performing in unique venues, combining works by under-represented composers with popular classics, whilst supporting pre-professional singers who are bridging the gap in their careers.



Biographies

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Jim Bate Having learnt the piano and organ as a child from Birmingham, Jim later gained an organ scholarship and a place to read Music at Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford.

After graduating in 2021, Jim studied for a Master's degree in choral conducting at The University of Birmingham, studying with Simon Halsey CBE and Julian Wilkins. Jim is currently the Musical Director of the Royal Leamington Spa Bach Choir, Warwickshire Singers and PwC's workplace choir, In-Voice. Jim was also the conductor of the B:Music Workplace Voices, formerly the Birmingham City Council Choir which was set up by Gareth Malone.

Laura Baillie Originally from Northern Ireland, Laura completed her Master's in choral conducting under the tutelage of Simon Halsey CBE. Laura is the Musical Director for various choruses around England and is regularly invited to guest conduct choruses including The Rodolfus Choir and most notably, the UK premiere of Novello's edition of Ethyl Smyth's *Mass in D*.

Laura made her debut as a Chorus Master at Huddersfield Choral Society with HCS Voices in November 2023 for their performance of Monteverdi's Vespers. Laura was delighted to be Chorus Master for The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's performance of Verdi's *Requiem* in May 2024.



Performers

Sopranos

Lisa Bate
Evelyn Byford
Isabel Clarke
Becky Howitt
Alice Martin
Harriet Smith
Wizzie Yeats

Altos

Millie Frost
Eleanor Hudson
Hannah Komedera
Alexandra
Parker-Herrick
Emily Pinching
Jasmine Sandhar

Tenors

Matt Friend
Dominic
Spencer Jolly
Ned Tennet
Joe Yates

Basses

Issac Boothman
Freddie Ingles
Tom Hazell
Harry Hextall
Matthew McNamee

Acknowledgements

This album would not have been possible without the extraordinary generosity, encouragement, and belief of our friends, families, and supporters. Your donations and kind support have helped bring *Finding Your Home* to life, not just as a recording, but as a shared love and support of choral music within our wonderful city of Birmingham. Thank you for believing in us and our music making, and for helping us create something we hope will offer comfort and meaning to all who listen.

We would also like to thank Gavin Allsop and The University of Birmingham for their support in preparing and producing this album.

This album is dedicated to Brian Seagar who was a keen supporter of The Elgar Scholars and grandfather of singer, Millie Frost. We were delighted to welcome Brian to our concert in July 2024 and are so grateful for his wife Pat's generous donation on his behalf.

The Elgar Scholars

FINDING YOUR HOME

Conductors

Jim Bate & Laura Bailie

Recorded

13 April 2025

The Dome, The University of Birmingham

Cover Image

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Engineer

Adaq Khan

Producer

George Richford



Creative Designer

Mike Cooter

Executive Producer

Adrian Green

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