

In the stillness

Christmas Reflections

Jervaulx Singers
Charlie Gower-Smith

Tracklist

In the stillness

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16	Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maisons <i>Claude Debussy</i>	2.42
17	There's a song in the air <i>John Hearne</i>	2.35
18	Cantique de Noël <i>Adolphe Adam, arr. Laurence Williams</i>	5.51
	Total running time	61.30

When Jenny and I started the Jervaulx Singers in 2021, our first concert was an evening of carols at the beautiful 13th-century St Andrew's Church in Aldborough, near Boroughbridge, home of the thriving Northern Aldborough Festival. The church was full of excited audience members, all keen to see what we had to offer. We sang a selection of contemporary carols and well-known favourites, some of which appear on this disc. It finished with Peter Warlock's version of *Bethlehem Down* for solo voice with an incredibly rich piano accompaniment, that we split between the upper and lower voices, as an early iteration of solo songs appearing within our concerts.

The collection of Christmas music presented here is a selection of carols that we have loved sharing with our audiences, with the inclusion of repertoire from opera and art song to reflect our approach to concert programming. In the opening scene of Barber's opera *Vanessa*, her niece Erika sings a reflective aria that explores feelings of anticipation and isolation, with the music capturing the sense of the impending winter. A sense of expectancy, along with images of stillness

in nature, are recurrent in depictions of the story of Christmas. Clive Sansom's poetry in *The Shepherd's Carol* describes the calmness of the evening when the three kings saw the star that took them to Bethlehem, with Bob Chilcott's music evocatively building to a climax as 'a voice from the sky' tells them of the impending birth. Katrina Shepherd's poem *In the stillness* gives eight images to build the sense of eagerness felt in the 'patience as we wait for a new morn'. These texts all describe the most remarkable story, with the composers capturing the sense of hope and excitement for the arrival of the Christ Child. This album builds to a new arrangement of *O Holy Night* by Laurence Williams, who also sings second bass on the disc. He writes: "Influences of both Mendelssohn and Rachmaninov pervade the accompaniment, whilst the choir writing is based on the double choir textures developed by Gabrieli and Schütz. The final cadence returns us to the stillness of Christmas".

Charlie Gower-Smith

Charlie Gower-Smith

Texts & Translations

1 The Shepherd's Carol

Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

Text: Clive Sansom (1910-1981)

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2 Puer nobis

Music: Richard Rodney Bennett (1936-2012)

Text: Alice Meynell (1847-1922)

Given, not lent,
And not withdrawn – once sent,
This infant of mankind, this One
Is still the little welcome Son.

New every year,
New born and newly dear,
He comes with tidings and a song,
The ages long, the ages long.

Even as the cold
Keen winter grows not old,
As childhood is so fresh, foreseen,
And spring in the familiar green.

Sudden as sweet
Come the expected feet.
All joy is young, and new all art,
And He too, Whom we have by heart.

Texts & Translations

3 Die Könige

From: Weihnachtslieder, op. 8

Music and text: Peter Cornelius (1824-1874)

Arranged: Clytus Gottwald (1925-2023)

Translation: Martin Pickard

Drei Könige wandern aus Morgenland;
Ein Sternlein führt sie zum Jordanstrand.
In Juda fragen und forschen die Drei,
Wo der neugeborene König sei?
Sie wollen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold
Dem Kinde spenden zum Opfersold.
*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern
Voll Gnad und Wahrheit von dem Herrn,
die süße Wurzel Jesse.*

Und hell erglänzet des Sternes Schein:
Zum Stalle gehen die Kön'ge ein;
Das Knäblein schau'n sie wonniglich,
Anbetend neigen die Könige sich;
Sie bringen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold
Zum Opfer dar dem Knäblein hold.
*Du Sohn Davids aus Jakobs Stamm,
Mein König und mein Bräutigam,
hast mir mein Herz besessen.*

Three kings travel from the Orient.
A star leads them to the bank of the Jordan.
In Judah they search and ask:
where is the newborn king?
They wish to give incense, myrrh and gold
to the child as their tribute.
*How beautifully the morning star shines,
Full of grace and truth from the Lord,
The sweet root of Jesse.*

The star's light shines brightly;
the kings enter the stable.
Delighted, they gaze at the boy,
bowing before him in worship.
They present incense, myrrh and gold
as offerings to the beautiful boy.
*Thou son of David from the stem of Jacob,
My King and my bridegroom,
Thou hast won my heart.*

Texts & Translations

O Menschenkind!
halte treulich Schritt!
Die Kön'ge wandern, o wandre mit!
Der Stern der Liebe, der Gnade Stern
Erhelle dein Ziel, so du suchst den Herrn,
Und fehlen Weihrauch, Myrrhen und Gold,
Schenke dein Herz dem Knäblein hold!
*Lieulich, freundlich, schön und herrlich,
Groß und ehrlich, reich an Gaben,
Hoch und sehr prächtig erhaben.*

Oh human child,
match your step faithfully to theirs!
The Kings are travelling, travel with them!
Let the star of love, the star of grace
light your goal as you seek the Lord.
And if you have neither incense, myrrh nor gold,
then give your heart to the beautiful boy.
*Loving, friendly, fair and glorious,
Great and virtuous, rich in gifts,
Exalted, magnificent, sublime.*

4 Lullay, my liking

Music: Thomas Hewitt Jones (b. 1984)

Text: 15th Century English

*Lullay, my liking,
my dear son my sweeting;
Lullay, my dear heart,
mine own dear darling!*

I saw a fair maiden sitten and sing:
She lulled a little child, a sweete lording.

That eternal Lord is he that made alle thing:
Of alle lords He is Lord, of alle kings King.

There was mickle melody
at that Childes birth:
Although they were in heaven's bliss
they made mickle mirth.

Angels bright they sang that night,
and said to that Child
"Blessed be Thou, and so be she
that is so meek and mild."

Pray we now to that Child,
and to his mother dear;
God grant them all his blessing
that no maken cheer!

Texts & Translations

5 In the stillness

Music: Sally Beamish (b. 1956)

Text: © Katrina Shepherd

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In the stillness of a church
where candles glow,
In the softness of a
fall of fresh white snow,
In the brightness of the stars
that shine this night,
In the calmness of a
pool of healing light.

In the clearness of
a choir that softly sings,

In the oneness of
a hush of angels' wings,
In the mildness of a night
by stable bare,
In the quietness of
a lull near cradle fair.

There's a patience as
we wait for a new morn,
And the presence of a child
soon to be born.

6 Jesus Christ the apple tree

Music: Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987) **Text:** Words from *Divine Hymns or Spiritual Songs*, compiled by Joshua Smith (New Hampshire, 1784)

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green;

The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.



Texts & Translations

His beauty doth all things excel,
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought;
I missed of all but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile;
Under the shadow I will be
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

7 Must The Winter Come So Soon

From: Vanessa

Music: Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Text: Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)

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Must the winter come so soon?
Night after night I hear the hungry deer
Wander weeping in the woods,
And from his house of brittle bark
Hoots the frozen owl.

Must the winter come so soon?
Here in this forest neither dawn nor sunset
Marks the passing of the days.
It is a long winter here.

Must the winter come so soon?

Texts & Translations

8 In dulci jubilo

Music: Verse 1 Michael Praetorius (1571-1621) / Verse 2 arr. J.S. Bach (1685-1750) /
Verses 3&4 Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856)

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In dulci jubilo,
Nun singet und seid froh!
Unsers Herzens Wonne
Leit in praesepio;
Und leuchtet wie die Sonne
Martris in gremio.
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule,
Nach dir ist mir so weh!
Tröst mir mein Gemüte
O puer optime
Durch alle deine Güte
O princeps gloriae
Trahe me post te!

In sweet joy,
Now sing and be glad!
Our heart's delight lies
In the crib
And shines like the sun
In the mother's lap.
Thou art Alpha and Omega!

O little Jesus,
I yearn for you!
Comfort my soul
O best of boys
Through all your goodness
Prince of Glory,
Draw me unto thee!

Texts & Translations

O Patris caritas,
O Nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained
Per nostra crimina
But thou hast for us gained
Coelorum gaudia
O that we were there.

Ubi sunt gaudia?
If that they be not there
There are angels singing
Nova cantica
There the bells are ringing
In regis curia;
O that we were there.

O Father's love,
O newborn's gentleness!
Deeply were we stained
By our sins
But thou hast for us gained
The joys of heaven
O that we were there.

Where are the joys?
If that they be not there,
There are angels singing
New songs
There the bells are ringing
In the king's court;
O that we were there.

Texts & Translations

9 The Infant King

Music: Basque Noël, arranged by David Willcocks (1919-2015)

Text: Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now reclining,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Angels are watching,
Stars are shining
Over the place where he is lying:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now asleeping,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon will come sorrow
With the morning,
Soon will come bitter grief and weeping:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now adozing,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon comes the cross,
The nails, the piercing,
Then in the grave at last reposing:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby! is the babe awaking?
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not stir the Infant King.
Dreaming of Easter,
gladsome morning,
Conquering Death, its bondage breaking:
Sing lullaby!

Texts & Translations

10 Noël (Op. 43, No. 1) *Music:* Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

Text: Victor Wilder (1835-1892) *Translation* © Richard Stokes. Reproduced by permission.

La nuit descend du haut des cieux,
Le givre au toit suspend ses franges,
Et, dans les airs, le vol des anges
Éveille un bruit mystérieux.

Night falls from the sky,
Frost hangs its fringes along the roofs.
And the flight of angels in the sky
Creates a mysterious sound.

L'étoile qui guidait les mages,
S'arrête enfin dans les nuages,
Et fait briller un nimbe d'or
Sur la chaumière où Jésus dort.

The star that led the Magi
Stops at last in the clouds,
And casts a golden halo
Above the cottage where Jesus sleeps.

Alors, ouvrant ses yeux divins,
L'enfant couché dans l'humble crèche,
De son berceau de paille fraîche,
Sourit aux nobles pèlerins.

Then, opening His divine eyes,
From His crib of fresh hay
The Child, lying in the humble manger,
Smiles at the noble pilgrims.

Eux, s'inclinant, lui disent: Sire,
Reçois l'encens, l'or et la myrrhe,
Et laisse-nous, ô doux Jésus,
Baiser le bout de tes pieds nus.

They, bowing down, address Him: Sire,
Receive the incense, gold and myrrh,
And allow us, gentle Jesus,
To kiss the tips of your naked feet.

Comme eux, ô peuple, incline-toi,
Imite leur pieux exemple,
Car cette étable, c'est un temple,
Et cet enfant sera ton roi!

Bow down like them, O people,
Follow their devout example,
For this stable is a temple,
And this Child shall be your king.

Texts & Translations

11 Silent Night

Music: Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

Arranged: Darius Battiwalla (b. 1966)

Text: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia:
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.

12 In The Bleak Midwinter

Music: Becky McGlade (b. 1974)

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man,
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him:
give my heart.

JERVAULX SINGERS

DIRECTOR CHARLIE GOWER-SMITH



Texts & Translations

13 Nativity Carol

Music and text: John Rutter (b. 1945)

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Born in a stable so bare,
Born so long ago;
Born 'neath light of star
He who loved us so.

Wise men from distant far lands.
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare,
Hearts with his warmth he fills.

Far away, silent he lay,
Born today, your homage pay;
Christ is born for aye,
Born on Christmas Day.

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow;
Innocent dreaming babe,
Make me thy love to know.

Cradled by mother so fair,
Tender her lullaby;
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky.

Texts & Translations

14 Aday Lay Ybounden

Music: Matthew Coleridge (b. 1980)

Text: Anon, 15th Century

Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond:
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkès finden
Written in their book.

Nè had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our lady
Abeen heavenè queen.

Blessèd be the time
That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen,
Deo gracias!

15 Away in a manger

Music: Traditional Normandy tune,

Arranged: Reginald Jacques (1894-1969)

Text: Anon.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus
laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky
looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus,
no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus!
look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever,
and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children
in thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with thee there.

Texts & Translations

16 Noël des enfants qui n'ont plus de maison

Music and text: Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Translation © Richard Stokes, author of A French Song Companion (Oxford, 2000).

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Nous n'avons plus de maisons!
Les ennemis ont tout pris,
Tout pris, tout pris,
Jusqu'à notre petit lit!
Ils ont brûlé l'école et notre maître aussi.
Ils ont brûlé l'église
et monsieur Jésus-Christ
Et le vieux pauvre
qui n'a pas pu s'en aller!

Nous n'avons plus de maisons!
Les ennemis ont tout pris,
Tout pris, tout pris,
Jusqu'à notre petit lit!
Bien sûr! papa est à la guerre,
Pauvre maman est morte!

Avant d'avoir vu tout ça.
Qu'est-ce que l'on va faire?
Noël! petit Noël! n'allez pas chez eux,
N'allez plus jamais chez eux,
Punissez-les!

We've no houses any more!
The enemy have taken everything,
everything, everything,
even our little beds!
They've burned the school and our
teacher too.
They've burned the church
and Mister Jesus
and the poor old man who couldn't escape!

We've no houses any more!
The enemy have taken everything,
everything, everything,
even our little beds!
Of course! Daddy's at the war,
poor mother died!

Before seeing all this.
What are we to do?
Noël, little Noël, don't visit them,
don't visit them ever again,
punish them!

Texts & Translations

Vengez les enfants de France!
Les petits Belges, les petits Serbes,
Et les petits Polonais aussi!
Si nous en oublions, pardonnez-nous.
Noël! Noël! surtout, pas de joujoux,
Tâchez de nous redonner le pain quotidien.

Nous n'avons plus de maisons!
Les ennemis ont tout pris,
Tout pris, tout pris,
Jusqu'à notre petit lit!
Ils ont brûlé l'école et notre maître aussi.
Ils ont brûlé l'église et monsieur
Jésus-Christ
Et le vieux pauvre qui
n'a pas pu s'en aller!

Noël! écoutez-nous,
nous n'avons plus de petits sabots:
Mais donnez la victoire
aux enfants de France!

Avenge the children of France!
The little Belgians, the little Serbs,
and also the little Poles!
If we've forgotten any, forgive us.
Noël! Noël! And above all, no toys,
try to give us back our daily bread.

We've no houses any more!
The enemy have taken everything,
everything, everything,
even our little beds!
They've burned the school and our
teacher too.
They've burned the church and Mister Jesus
and the poor old man
who couldn't escape!

Noël! Hear us,
we no longer have our little clogs:
but give victory
to the children of France!

Texts & Translations

17 There's a song in the air

Music: John Hearne (b. 1937)

Text: Josiah G. Holland (1819-1881)

There's a song in the air!
There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer
and a baby's low cry!
And the star rains its fire
while the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem
cradles a King!

There's a tumult of joy
o'er the wonderful birth,
For the virgin's sweet boy
is the Lord of the earth.
Ay! the star rains its fire
while the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem
cradles a King!

In the light of that star
lie the ages impearled;
And that song from afar
has swept over the world.
Ev'ry hearth is aflame,
and the beautiful sing
In the homes of the nations
that Jesus is King!

We rejoice in the light,
and we echo the song
That comes down through the night
from the heavenly throng.
Ay! we shout to the lovely
evangel they bring,
And we greet in His cradle
our Saviour and King!

Texts & Translations

18 Cantique de Noël

Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-1856) *Arranged:* Laurence Williams (b. 1989)

Text: Placide Cappeau (1808-1877)

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Minuit, chrétiens, c'est l'heure solennelle,
Où l'homme Dieu descendit jusqu'à nous,
Pour effacer la tache originelle
Et de son père arrêter le courroux:
Le monde entier tressaille d'espérance
A cette nuit qui lui donne un sauveur.
Peuple à genoux,
attends ta délivrance,

Noël! Noël! Voici le Rédempteur!
Noël! Noël! Voici le Rédempteur!

De notre foi que la lumière ardente
Nous guide tous au berceau de l'enfant
Comme autrefois, une étoile brillante
Y conduisit les chefs de l'Orient.
Le Roi des Rois
naît dans une humble crèche,

Midnight, Christians, it is the solemn hour,
when God as man came down among us,
to erase the original stain
and to quell the wrath of his father:
The whole world trembles with hope
on this night which gifts us the saviour.
Kneel down,
people, await your deliverance,

Noël! Noël! The Redeemer is here!
Noël! Noël! The Redeemer is here!

The blinding light of our faith
guides us to the infant's cradle
as in times past, a shining star
led there the Eastern kings.
The King of Kings
born in a humble crib.

Texts & Translations

Puissants du jour fiers
de votre grandeur.
A votre orgueil c'est de là qu'un Dieu prêche,
Courbez vos fronts
devant le Rédempteur!
Courbez vos fronts
devant le Rédempteur!

You powerful rulers of the day,
so proud of your greatness,
It's to your pride that God preaches,
Bow your heads
before the Redeemer!
Bow your heads
before the Redeemer!

Le Rédempteur a brisé toute entrave,
La terre est libre et le ciel est ouvert;
Il voit un frère
où n'était qu'un esclave
L'amour unit ceux
qu'enchaînait le fer.
Qui lui dira notre reconnaissance?
C'est pour nous tous qu'il naît,
qu'il souffre et meurt.
Peuple, debout!
Chante ta délivrance,

The Redeemer has broken every shackle,
the world is free and the sky is open;
he sees a brother
where there was just a slave
love brings together
those who were chained in irons.
Who will tell him of our gratitude?
It's for us all that he is born,
that he suffers and dies.
People, stand up!
Sing of your deliverance,

Noël! Noël! Chantons le Rédempteur!
Noël! Noël! Chantons le Rédempteur!

Noël! Noël! Let's sing of the Redeemer!
Noël! Noël! Let's sing of the Redeemer!

Biographies

Jervaulx Singers

Jervaulx Singers is a leading soloists choir, combining choral music with song and opera to create exciting and diverse programmes that thrill and delight audiences. Founded by Charlie Gower-Smith and Jenny Bianco, we are passionate about giving expressive, memorable performances through creative and varied programming, combining choral music with opera and song.

Recent performances include 'The Dream' at St James' Piccadilly, London, and for a return to the Swaledale Festival. 2025-6 highlights include performances for York Concerts and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Passionate about inspiring the next generation of singers, we will also be launching a new education partnership with Repton School.

www.jervaulxsingers.com

Performers

Sopranos

Rachel Allen
Jenny Bianco

Mezzo Sopranos

Sarah Anne Champion
Beth Moxon †

Director

Charlie Gower-Smith

Tenors

Gareth Meirion Edmunds ‡
Edmund Hastings

Basses

Edmund Danon §
Laurence Williams

Pianist

Alison Frances Gill

Soloists † track 7, ‡ track 10, § track 18



Biographies

Charlie Gower-Smith

Charlie Gower-Smith is a conductor of choirs and orchestras, in demand for working at all levels with warmth and fun whilst demanding precision and excellence.

He is Musical Director of Jervaulx Singers and the Chapter House Youth Choir. He has prepared choirs for performances at the BBC Proms and for live radio broadcasts.

Charlie is a board member of Made with Music, a not-for-profit organisation delivering early years, primary school and family music in and around Leeds. When not making music, Charlie can be found cooking with his daughters or avidly cleaning his car.

www.charliegowersmith.com



Biographies

Alison Frances Gill

Alison is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, specialising as an accompanist and répétiteur. Now based in North Yorkshire, Alison is highly sought after as an accompanist across the region, collaborating regularly with the Chorus of the Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Jervaulx Singers and as an accompanist in residence for Leeds Conservatoire, Durham University, Samling, Berkshire Choral International and for the BBC Proms, held at the Glasshouse International Centre for Music.

As a soloist and accompanist Alison has performed at venues from the Wigmore Hall to the Palau de La Musica in Barcelona, the Teatro Verdi in Florence and Vienna's Musikverein.



Credits

In the stillness

Jervaulx Singers

Piano Alison Frances Gill

Director Charlie Gower-Smith

Recorded at The National Centre for Early Music,
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