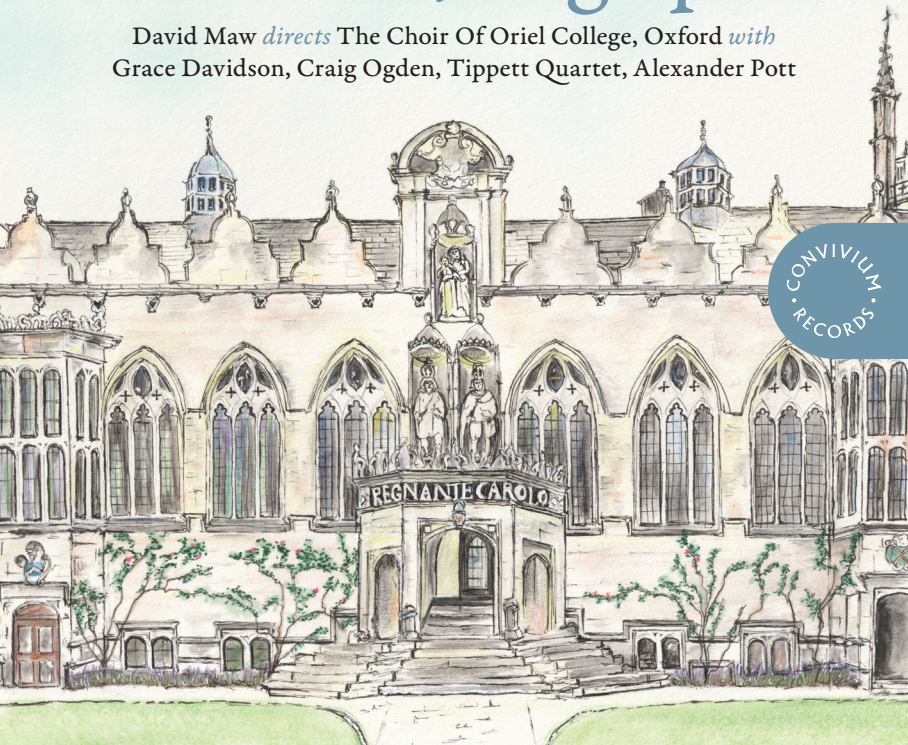


Oriel College 1326-2026

O Maria, virgo pia

David Maw *directs* The Choir Of Oriel College, Oxford *with*
Grace Davidson, Craig Ogden, Tippett Quartet, Alexander Pott



Tracklist

O Maria, virgo pia

1	O Maria, virgo pia <i>Anon (13th-c)</i>	2.21
2	Oriel Service, Magnificat <i>Judith Bingham</i>	5.03
3	Oriel Service, Nunc dimittis <i>Judith Bingham</i>	4.13
4	I sing of a maiden <i>David Maw</i>	3.11
5	Hail, gladdening light <i>David Briggs</i>	4.36
	Hymn of the Third Choir <i>Edmund Fellowes</i>	
6	i Praise to the holiest	3.29
7	ii The angels as beseeingly	3.26
8	iii But to the younger race	2.29
9	iv Praise to the holiest	3.25
10	Solitude <i>James Whitbourn</i>	6.13
11	Say not the struggle naught availeth <i>Mark R. Taylor</i>	3.55
12	Phos hilaron <i>John Caldwell</i>	2.35
13	Psalm 150 <i>Herbert Chappell</i>	1.52
14	The Glory of Zion <i>Phillip Cooke</i>	3.43
15	Verbum caro <i>Hugh Collins Rice</i>	5.50
16	Benedictus <i>Edmund Fellowes</i>	4.34
17	Magnificat <i>David Maw</i>	6.51
18	O Maria, virgo pia <i>Cheryl Frances-Hoad</i>	4.34
	Total running time	72.25

Programme Note

Oriel College's founding dedication as 'the House of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Oxford' bears witness to the importance that Mary had acquired in devotional life by the fourteenth century. The sequence *O Maria, virgo pia*, a song in paired strophes, is part of this tradition. Probably composed at some point during the thirteenth century, it could have been sung at Oriel during the college's early years or at least known by some of its first scholars. Judith Bingham alighted on it as a suitable starting point for her setting of Mary's song, the *Magnificat*, which was commissioned in 2015 to celebrate 30 years of the admission of female students to the college. In 2017, Provost Moira Wallace commissioned a *Nunc dimittis* to complete the Oriel Service, as a way of thanking the chapel choir for its singing during her Provostship. Cheryl Frances-Hoad returned to *O Maria*, now both its words and its music, as an inspiration for her anthem commissioned in 2025 to celebrate 40 years of female students.

No specific provision was made for music at the foundation of Oriel College in 1326. Yet its founder, King Edward II, was

keenly interested in the art. Had he been less politically embattled and had his reign continued longer, perhaps he would have had the opportunity to involve himself more in the college and to provide for its musical life. There is very little record of musical activities at the college for most of its existence. The college register indicates a payment of 10 shillings to William Cannyng for playing the organ ('ludenti ad organa') in 1507-8; but otherwise, there is nothing until renovation of the chapel in the nineteenth century made provision for the organ.

There is no reason to doubt that enthusiasm for music was part of college life, even if it was not provided for institutionally. John Henry Newman was passionate about music, having been given a violin by his father when he was ten. During his time as Chaplain and Fellow of Oriel (1822-30) he used to play Beethoven's string quartets with the Anglo-Hispanic poet-theologian, Joseph Blanco White (an active member of Oriel in the late 1820s). Newman wrote the poem *Solitude* whilst a student, in Michaelmas Term 1818. James Whitbourn's setting was composed for

Programme Note

the choir in 2019, during Craig Ogden's residency as the college's Distinguished Visiting Musician.

Oriel was the centre of the Oxford Movement, in which John Keble (fellow 1811-23), like Newman, played a key role. *Hail, gladdening light*, his translation of the ancient Greek hymn, *Phos hilaron*, has become well known and serves in Oriel chapel as an unofficial college anthem. Professor John Caldwell wrote a setting of it for the choir for Candlemas 2011; and the text was an obvious choice for the anthem commissioned in 2013 from David Briggs by a group of alumni to celebrate the contribution of retiring Provost Sir Derek Morris to Oriel's musical life.

The poet Arthur Hugh Clough was a fellow of Oriel from 1842 until his resignation in 1848 for doctrinal reasons. His famous poem, *Say not the struggle nought availeth* was drafted during the siege of Rome in 1849 and reflects his 'growing sense of discrepancy'. The poem's contrast between darkness and light attracted Mark R Taylor (Lecturer at Oriel 2009-10) as the basis of an anthem for the choir composed at Easter 2010.

Oriel's most eminent musical protégé was Edmund Fellowes (1870-1951), whose work on the editing and history of English vocal music of the Tudor and Stuart period remains important even today. He was a child prodigy on the violin, but his family directed him towards a conventional schooling culminating in a degree in Theology at Oriel. His time at the college was better for his hobbies than his studies. In 1892, he pursued ordination simultaneously with postgraduate study in music. In 1896, now a curate in Wandsworth, he supplicated for the Bachelor of Music degree, submitting a short cantata. Completed in the summer of 1895, the work was written for chorus, soprano, vocal quartet and strings and set words of the *Hymn of the Third Choir of Angelicals* from Newman's *The Dream of Gerontius*. The work is framed by choral movements to the famous words 'Praise to the holiest', the second of them a fugue, befitting the academic ambition; and in between are movements for soprano solo and a cappella chorus. The manuscript is held in the college archive.

The year after his BMus, Fellowes was

Programme Note

appointed precentor of Bristol Cathedral, a role he held for three years. During this time, he composed his service in D, comprising Te Deum and Benedictus for Matins and Magnificat and Nunc dimittis for evensong. His setting of the Benedictus is less ambitious technically than the earlier cantata but shares its gifts for melodic vitality and clearly defined mood.

In his autobiography, Fellowes noted that during his student days 'Oriel was in no sense a musical college.' This changed in the twentieth century. The organ scholarship was instituted in 1924, after a trial appointment in 1920. The college's first student to read for an honours degree in Music graduated in 1953. The second was Herbert Chappell, who graduated with a first in 1956. Whilst a postgraduate student, he composed his setting of Psalm 150 'for Julian Oxley and the Chapel Choir of Oriel College, Oxford' in January 1958.

Since then, the choir has attracted a number of unofficial commissions. In 2010, Organ scholar James Aiken asked Phillip Cooke and Mark R. Taylor to compose for it. Cooke's *The Glory of Zion* was written at the beginning of the year and shares

with Taylor's work a striking colouration contrasting darkness and light.

2017 was a similarly productive year. Hugh Collins Rice (current Lecturer in Music at Oriel) completed his setting of *Verbum caro* in January. Its starting point was the plainsong Respond at Matins on Christmas Day from the *Liber Usualis*, which provided the text as well as a formal plan and musical elements. My setting of the Magnificat was written in October for a choir concert in London; and my treatment of the fifteenth-century poem, *I sing of a maiden* was for the Carol Service at the end of November, with Bertie McIntosh as tenor soloist. It was dedicated to retiring Provost Moira Wallace in gratitude for her staunch supporter of the college's musical life.

However much music has been sung and played at Oriel through its history, there is no doubt that it has a more prominent place in the institution now than ever before. Music is an active and important part of life in the college at its 700th birthday. It is tempting to imagine that this would have pleased the founder.

David Maw

Text & Translations

1, 18 O Maria virgo pia

13th-c English anonymous

*O Maria virgo pia plena dei gratia,
Stella maris appellaris dans lucis solatia.*

*Caro Christi quam tulisti in
ventre veraciter,
Sic sacratur qua dampnatur
serpens efficaciter.*

*Hoc est corpus
O Maria natum de te virgine,
Quod portasti virgo pia divino spiramine.*

*Hec est caro clavis fixa crucis in putibolo,
Que surrexit crucifixa vitam reddit seculo.*

*Nunc Marie filium laudemus magnificum,
Regi regum omnium cantemus hoc
canticum.*

[cantemus deo gratias O Maria.]

O Mary, dutiful maiden full of God's
grace, You are called the star of the sea,
giving consolations of light.

By the flesh of Christ, which you
truly bore in the womb,
It is consecrated thus, by which the
serpent is effectually doomed.

This is the body,
O Mary, born of you, a virgin,
That you bore, O dutiful virgin, by divine
breath of life.

This is the flesh, fixed by nails to the
cross on a scaffold,
Which rose crucified and renders life for
all time.

Now let us praise the great son of Mary,
Let us sing this song to the king of all
kings.

[Let us sing: thanks be to God, O Mary!]

Text & Translations

2, 17 Magnificat

Luke 1.46-55

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my
spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his
hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth: all genera-
tions 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.

*Magnificat, anima mea, Dominum: et
exultavit spiritus meus in Deo,
salutari meo.*

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ:

*Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent
omnes generationes.*

*Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est: et
sanctum nomen eius.*

*Et misericordia eius a progenie in
progenies timentibus eum.*

*Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit
superbos mente cordis sui.*

*Deposuit potentes de sede: et exaltavit
humiles;*

*Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites
dimisit inanes.*

Texts & Translations

He remembering his mercy hath holpen
his servant Israel: as he promised to our
forefathers, Abraham and his seed,
for ever.

*Suscepit Israel puerum suum: recordatus
misericordiae suae. Sicut locutus est ad
patres nostros: Abraham et semini eius
in saecula.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

*Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

3 Nunc dimittis

Luke 2.29-32

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.

Texts & Translations

4 I sing of a maiden

15th-c English anonymous

I sing of a maiden
that is makeless,
king of al kings
to her sone she ches.

He came al so stille
where his moder was,
as dew in Aprille,
that falleth on the grass.

He came al so stille
To his mother's bower,
As dew in Aprille
That falleth on the flower.

He came al so stille
where his mother lay
as dew in Aprille,
that falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
was never non but she:
well may such a lady
Godes mother be.

5, 12 Hail, gladdening light

Phos hilaron, Greek hymn, trans John Keble (1834)

Hail, gladdening Light, of his pure glory poured
who is the immortal Father, heavenly, blest,
holiest of holies, Jesus our Lord.

Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,
the lights of evening round us shine,
we hymn the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit divine.

Worthiest art thou at all times to be sung with undefilèd tongue,
Son of our God, giver of life, alone:
therefore in all the world thy glories, Lord, they own. [Amen]

Texts & Translations

6-9 THIRD CHOIR OF ANGELICALS

St John Henry Newman (1865) - From The Dream of Gerontius

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

The Angels, as beseemingly
To spirit-kind was given,
At once were tried and perfected,
And took their seats in heaven.

For them no twilight or eclipse;
No growth and no decay:
'Twas hopeless, all-ingulfing night,
Or beatific day.

But to the younger race there rose
A hope upon its fall;
And slowly, surely, gracefully,
The morning dawned on all.

Texts & Translations

10 Solitude

St John Henry Newman (1818)

There is in stillness oft a magic power
To calm the breast, when struggling passions lower;
Touch'd by its influence, in the soul arise
Diviner feelings, kindred with the skies.
By this the Arab's kindling thoughts expand,
When circling skies inclose the desert sand;
For this the hermit seeks the thickest grove,
To catch th' inspiring glow of heavenly love.
It is not solely in the freedom given
To purify and fix the heart on heaven;
There is a Spirit singing aye in air,
That lifts us high above all mortal care.
No mortal measure swells that mystic sound,
No mortal minstrel breathes such tones around,—
The Angels' hymn,—the sovereign harmony
That guides the rolling orbs along the sky,—
And hence perchance the tales of saints who view'd
And heard Angelic choirs in solitude.
By most unheard,—because the earthly din
Of toil or mirth has charms their ears to win.
Alas for man! he knows not of the bliss,
The heaven that brightens such a life as this.



Texts & Translations

11 Say not the struggle nought availeth

Arthur Hugh Clough (1848)

Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

13 Psalm 150

O praise God in his holiness:
Praise ye the Lord. Praise him in the firmament of his power.
Praise him for his mighty acts. Praise him according to his excellent greatness.
Praise him to the sound of the trumpet. Praise him with the psaltery and harp.
Praise him in the timbrels and dance. Praise him with string'd instruments and organ.
Praise him upon the loud cymbals. Praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals.
Let everything that hath breath Praise the Lord.

Texts & Translations

14 The Glory of Zion

Isaiah 60.1-2

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Amen.

15 Verbum caro

Matins Respond for Christmas Day (Liber usualis) John 1.14 & 3

*Verbum caro factum est Et habitavit in
nobis et vidimus gloriam ejus gloriam
quasi unigenite a Patre plenum gratiae
et veritatis.*

The Word was made flesh, and lived
within us, and we saw his glory,
the glory as from the only begotten of the
Father, full of grace and truth.

*Omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso
factum est nihil.*

All things were made by him, and without
him was nothing made.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto

Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

Texts & Translations

16 Benedictus

Luke 1.68

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel : for he hath visited and redeemed his people;
And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us : in the house of his servant David;
As he spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets : which have been since the world began;
That we should be saved from our enemies : and from the hand of all that hate us.
To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers : and to remember his holy Covenant;
To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham : that he would give us;
That we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies : might serve him without fear;
In holiness and righteousness before him : all the days of our life.
And thou, Child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people : for the remission of their sins,
Through the tender mercy of our God : whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us;
To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death : and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
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.

Performers

Sopranos

Emma Arulantham
Amy Carson* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Grace Davidson*
(tracks 7, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18)
Laura Heit
Laura Knight
Margaret Lingas* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Daisy Middleton
Isabelle Miller
Emma Jayne Smith

Tenors

William Anderson* (tracks 4, 11, 14, 15, 16)
Edward Beswick* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Michael Gormley Jr
Adam Hufnagel
Richard Mifsud
Matthew Rengert
Marcus Williamson

Alto

Louise Ashdown* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Virginia Browne
Rebecca Dent-Young
Sorcha Ni Mheachair
Eve Pessagno
Charlotte Sleet* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Kirsten Spolar
Elena Stamp* (tracks 11, 15, 16)

Bass

Edward Bence
Nathaniel Best
Robin Bradfield
Francis Brown* (tracks 11, 15, 16)
Szymon Kwapiszewski
Leonard Shaw
Crawford Wiley* (tracks 11, 15, 16)

**Soloist on indicated tracks*

Instrumentalists

Craig Ogden (guitar) - track 10
The Tippet Quartet (John Mills, violin I; Jeremy Isaac, violin II;
Lydia Lowndes-Northcott, viola; Bozidar Vukotic, 'cello) - tracks 4, 6-9
Alexander Pott (organ) - tracks 2-4, 6-9, 13-17



Images from Oriel College Chapel and the recording at Keble College, Oxford.



Biographies

Oriel College Chapel Choir

Oriel College Chapel Choir is a group of mixed-voice singers drawn from the student body. Up to sixteen choral scholars lead the ensemble. Their vocal development is supervised by Kari Moffatt. The choir sings full choral services each week during term-time through the academic year. It draws widely on the historical repertory of sacred choral music and is committed

to the on-going development of that tradition through the commissioning of new works. Each year, the choir makes a tour of concerts and services, usually to a European destination – most recently Prague, Blois and Porto. The choir cultivates a warm, blended tone ideally suited to the intimate and focused acoustic of the college's seventeenth-century chapel.

www.oriel.ox.ac.uk



Biographies

David Maw

David Maw is Fellow and Director of Music at Oriel College and a Lecturer in Music at Christ Church, holding the title of Associate Professor in Music at the University of Oxford. He is active in musical scholarship, composition and performance and has won prizes in each of these domains. His scholarly publications have ranged widely across the history of music, with significant work on polyphonic composition and theory in the fourteenth century and on chamber music and improvisation in the twentieth century. He is currently engaged in the creation of an online edition of the musical works of Guillaume de Machaut. As a performer, he has directed choirs and vocal groups and worked as a keyboard player in solo and ensemble contexts, developing specialisation in various genres of improvisation. His output of compositions includes works for a variety of genres, solo and ensemble.



Biographies

Alexander Pott

Alexander Pott is an organist, conductor, and academic. From 2017 he spent eight years as Assistant Organist and Tutor to the Choristers at Magdalen College, Oxford, celebrating the new Eule organ by performing the complete organ works of J. S. Bach across two terms.

As an academic, his specialism is in the music of Frederick Delius, which is the subject of his PhD at the University of Cambridge. This specialism also feeds into his performance interests, notably through The Delius Singers, a choir he founded and directs in Oxford. He is in demand as a recitalist, conductor, and teacher, and is known particularly for his innovative programming of choral and organ music with education at its centre. His organ studies took place at Christ Church, Oxford and Westminster Cathedral, supplemented by support from the Musicians' Company and the Eric Thompson Trust, and his academic training has been supported by the Delius Trust.



www.alexanderpott.com

Biographies

Also featured

Further information on Grace Davidson, Craig Ogden, and Tippett Quartet can be found on their respective websites.



Image: Susan Porter Thomas

www.gracedavidsonsonoprano.com



Image: Cathy Pyle

www.tippettquartet.co.uk



Image: Evan Dawson

www.craigogden.com

Credits

O Maria, virgo pia

David Maw *directs* The Choir Of Oriel College, Oxford *with*
Grace Davidson, Craig Ogden, Tippett Quartet, Alexander Pott

Recorded

Keble College Chapel, Oxford, 17-18 March 2025

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Photography

Mike Cooter apart from where stated

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Engineer

Ada Khan

Producer

George Richford



Creative Director

Mike Cooter

Executive Producer

Adrian Green

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