

St. Cecilia's Concert 2020

Saturday 21 November

Our annual St. Cecilia's Concert is a musical highlight of our year. We're determined that this year will be no different, and so we will be presenting a performance of music in honour of the patron saint of music. It will also be a chance to catch up with what the choir has been getting up to over the last three months.

The Choir of Royal Holloway

Rupert Gough • Director

George Nicholls • Organ



**ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY**
OF LONDON

A Hymn for St Cecilia

Herbert Howells
(1892-1983)

Sing for the morning's joy, Cecilia, sing,
in words of youth and praises of the Spring,
walk the bright colonnades by fountains' spray,
and sing as sunlight fills the waking day;
till angels, voyaging in upper air,
pause on a wing and gather the clear sound
into celestial joy, wound and unwound,
a silver chain, or golden as your hair.

Sing for your loves of heaven and of earth,
in words of music, and each word a truth;
marriage of heart and longings that aspire,
a bond of roses, and a ring of fire.
Your summertime grows short and fades away,
terror must gather to a martyr's death;
but never tremble, the last indrawn breath
remembers music as an echo may.

Through the cold aftermath of centuries,
Cecilia's music dances in the skies;
lend us a fragment of the immortal air,
that with your choiring angels we may share,
a word to light us thro' time-fettered night,
water of life, or rose of paradise,
so from the earth another song shall rise
to meet your own in heaven's long delight.

Ursula Vaughan Williams (1911-2007)

Feast Song for St. Cecilia

Bernard Rose
(1916-1996)

When the sun
with great flashes
of grandeur
breaks over the edge
of the earth,
Cecilia
nine trumpets blazing
at her side
glides over the sea and land
rousing great organs
and voices
to join in song.

*Sing
precious music
sing to the Creator
as this great Saint
sang in her heart.*

When midday heat
beats on working heads,
Cecilia
with strings and horns
stirs the will in man
and urges him
to do great things.

*Sing
precious music
sing to the Creator
as this great Saint
sang in her heart.*

When cool evening breezes
calm weary folk
inviting them to rest,
Cecilia
plucking heart strings
entreats flutes to play
lulling her people to calm rest.

*Sing
precious music
sing to the Creator
as this great Saint
sang in her heart.*

Gregory Rose (1948-)

Can you hear me?

Though you're so far
So far away
I will hold you
One day.

Can you hear me?
(I can hear you)
Though we're apart
I'm still near you

Thomas Hewitt Jones
(1984-)

We are only
Only human.
Our hearts reach out,
Reach out in pain.

Pass by, pass by
Pass by, pass by
Keep your distance.
This too will pass.

One day we will
Be together
Though you're so far away.
I am near you.

Matt Harvey (1978-)

Steal away

Arr. Richard Allain
(1965-)

Steal away, steal away,
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord, He calls me,
He calls me by the thunder;
The trumpet sounds within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away,
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Green trees are bending,
Poor sinners stand a-trembling;
The trumpet sounds within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away,
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord, He calls me,
He calls me by the lightning;
The trumpet sounds within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Attr. Wallace Willis (c.1820-1880)

It don't mean a thing

It don't mean a thing, if it ain't got that swing!
It don't mean a thing all you got to do is sing.
It makes no difference
If it's sweet or hot.
Just give that rhythm
Everything you've got.

Irving Mills (1894-1985)

Issy Pott, soprano

Ellie Ajao, alto

James Edgeler, tenor

Alfie Evans-Hutchinson, baritone

Ben Richards, bass

Lux arumque

Lux,
Calida gravisque pura velut aurum
Et canunt angeli molliter
modo natum.

*Light,
warm and heavy as pure gold
and angels sing softly
to the new-born babe.*

Edward Esch, trans. Silvestri (1970-)

**Duke Ellington, arr. Edenroth
(1899-1974)**

**Eric Whitacre
(1970)**



Faire is the heaven

William Harris
(1883-1973)

Faire is the heaven where happy soules have place
In full enjoyment of felicitie;
Whence they do still behold the glorious face
Of the Divine, Eternall Majestie;

Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins
Which all with golden wings are overdight.
And those eternall burning Seraphins
Which from their faces dart out fiery light;

Yet fairer than they both and much more bright
Be the Angels and Archangels
Which attend on God's owne person without rest or end.
These then in faire each other farre excelling
As to the Highest they approach more neare,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling

Fairer than all the rest which there appeare
Though all their beauties joynd together were;
How then can mortal tongue hope to expresse
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?

Edmund Spenser (1553-1599)

Hymn to St. Cecilia

Benjamin Britten
(1913-1976)

I. In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.
Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

II. I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.
I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.
I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.
All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

III. O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.
O dear white children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.
O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of our intellectual will.
That what has been may never be again.
O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.
O bless the freedom that you never chose.
O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.
O wear your tribulation like a rose.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973)

Rupert Gough

Rupert Gough has been Director of Choral Music and Organist at Royal Holloway, University of London since 2005. He is also Organist and Director of Music at London's oldest surviving church, Saint Bartholomew the Great, which maintains a professional choir. At Royal Holloway Rupert has developed the choral programme to include weekly choral recitals, choral conducting courses for undergraduates, frequent new choral commissions and transformed the Chapel Choir into an elite group of 24 choral scholars. The choir has particularly come to prominence through their series of recordings for Hyperion Records. Their recent recording of the music of Ola Gjeilo for Decca Classics was top of the US and UK classical charts. The choir is now in demand for recording work from a variety of record labels, composers and orchestras and travels widely for concert performances.

Rupert was a chorister at the Chapels Royal, St. James's Palace, and won a scholarship to the Purcell School. He received (with distinction) a Masters degree in English Church Music from the University of East Anglia whilst Organ Scholar at Norwich Cathedral. For 11 years he was Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral during which time he made around 30 CD recordings as accompanist and director. Rupert has worked with a variety of professional ensembles including the BBC Singers, King's Singers, Britten Sinfonia, London Mozart Players and Tallinn Chamber Orchestra. He regularly conducts and commissions new music for concerts and recordings. This year he is recording the choral music of George Arthur and a new Oratorio by Carson Cooman with the London Mozart Players.

The Choir of Royal Holloway

The Choir of Royal Holloway is considered to be one of the finest university choirs in Britain. The choir was created at the time of the foundation of Royal Holloway College in 1886, and was originally only for women's voices. The group, comprised of 24 choral scholars and 2 organ scholars, is directed by Rupert Gough and undertakes a busy schedule of weekly services and concerts, international tours, recordings and live broadcasts. Royal Holloway is the only university that maintains a tradition of singing daily morning services, and is home to the only choir in the country performing weekly live streamed concerts.

As part of the choir's 50+ concerts a year, they regularly collaborate with and perform alongside many famous ensembles. These have included the King's Singers, the BBC Singers, Britten Sinfonia, London Mozart Players, Onyx Brass, Fretwork and the jazz-trio Acoustic Triangle, with whom they broadcast live on BBC radio. The group also celebrates the work of living composers, and have commissioned works from Sir James MacMillan, Gabriel Jackson, Richard Rodney Bennett, Cecilia McDowall and Paul Mealor. The choir's diverse repertoire also includes larger-scale works including Vespers by Monteverdi, Rachmaninov and Rautavaara, Requiems by Mozart and Howells, and Gabriel Jackson's *Ave regina coelorum* for choir and electric guitar which they also broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.

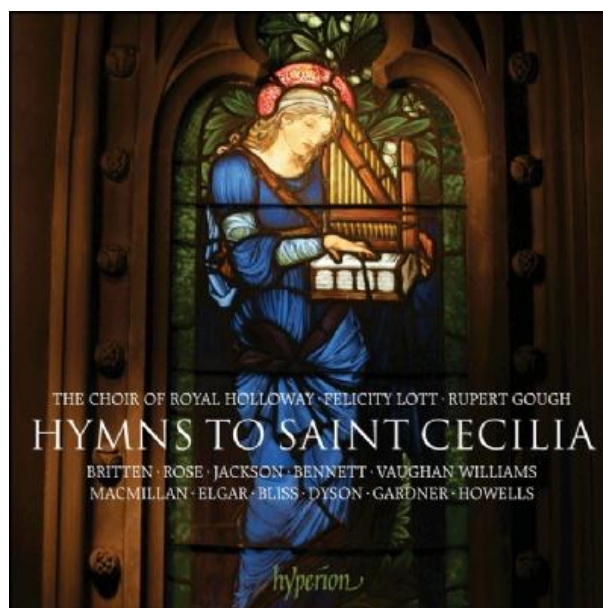
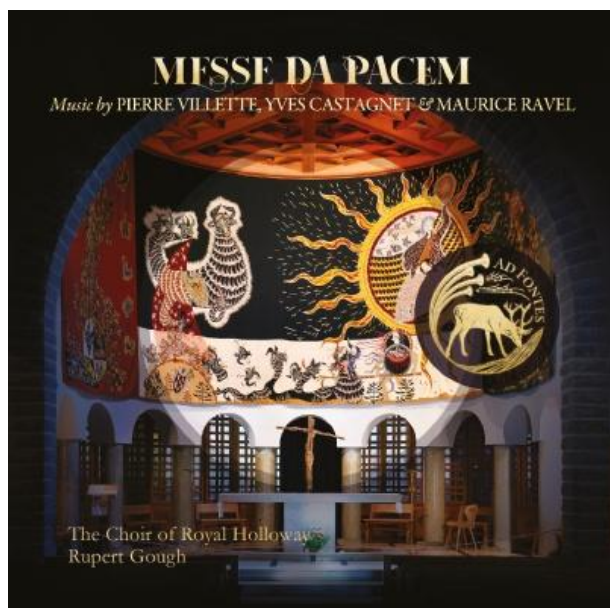
International performances are also an integral part of the choir's work. They have toured most European countries, visited Beijing, and have had a number of successful tours to North America, as well as having been broadcast on national television and radio all over the world. The choir regularly sing at high-profile events which have included the Annual Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall (live on BBC television), and for an awards ceremony at Buckingham Palace.

The choir has an extensive and highly acclaimed discography with Hyperion, Decca, Signum and Naxos amongst others. Many of these feature works by northern European composers, Vytautas Miškinis, Rihards Dubra, Bo Hansson, Tõnu Kõrvits (with the Britten Sinfonia) and Ola Gjeilo (which was No. 1 in the UK and US classical charts). Upcoming releases feature the music of Ben Parry and Joanna Marsh, a live-concert recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Thomas Adès and the Britten Sinfonia, and a recently rediscovered work by Pierre Villette with alumna Sarah Fox. Future projects include works by George Arthur and Dan Locklair.



Support the choir

Many of the works you have heard tonight are available to purchase. The choir has a large and diverse discography. Check it out on our new website: chapelchoir.co.uk



Hear the choir

The choir is continuing to stream concerts every Wednesday during term-time, as part of their Midweek Music series. They are all available to catch up afterwards, and can be viewed on our [concert catch-up](#) page.

You can also hear the choir through their live streamed services of Choral Evensong, every Thursday at 18:15.

Upcoming performances

- Wednesday 25 November: **Midweek Music: A year with J S Bach**
Organ preludes played on a Baroque organ and chorales by the choir which take us from Advent to Pentecost.
- Thursday 26 November: **Choral Evensong**
New music by George Arthur and Dan Locklair.
- Wednesday 2 December: **Midweek Music: With one voice**
Smaller ensembles of Choral Scholars perform chamber choral music.
- Thursday 3 December: **Choral Evensong**
Evensong for Advent, with Dyson's Service in F, and a carol by George Arthur.
- Thursday 3 December: **A Choral Christmas**
The Chapel Choir, Founder's Choir and Chorus team up for a festive programme which includes Vaughan Williams' rousing Fantasia on Christmas Carols.
- Sunday 6 December: **Festival of Lessons and Carols**
Tune in for our ever-popular carol service, full of festive favourites as well as choral gems, interpolated with readings for the season.

For live streams, further information, and to purchase recordings:
chapelchoir.co.uk