



# *Glimpses of Heaven*

*Souvenir Programme*

*Holy Trinity Church, Coventry  
19th November 2005*

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WELCOME to Holy Trinity, and to this concert.

On Saturday 11th September 2004 one of the most eagerly awaited unveilings of recent years was finally made at Holy Trinity church. Dated to the 1430's, this "Last Judgement" type of painting was white-washed over a century later during the reformation of King Henry VIII's time. More liberated times were to come and in 1831, artist David Gee restored the painting and gave it a varnish coating to "preserve" it! The bitumen contained in the varnish soon caused it to darken, and half a century later the painting had once again virtually disappeared from sight.

In 1995, discussions were held to find the best way to reveal and preserve the ancient painting. In 2002, work was underway and two years later the public can enjoy the work originally done by Coventry's medieval artists 50 years before Leonardo da Vinci painted the *Last Supper*.

The 'Doom Painting' above the nave arch would have told its story to Holy Trinity's 15thC worshippers in the only way most of them knew - not through the written word, but through images.

We are using those images and that story as the guide to our musical journey tonight.



## Part One "Sin & Repentance"

PLAINSONG: from Basilica di San Marco, Milan

The concert opens by candlelight with this plainsong in latin - just as the monks of St Mary's Priory (to the north of Holy Trinity) would have done when entering through Holy Trinity's north porch. The north porch still stands today, and is the oldest part of the church, dating from c.1260. The text *Veni Redemptor Gentium* (Come thou redeemer of the earth) is a setting for Advent and includes the text which sums up tonight's theme: "His course he runs to death and hell , returning on God's throne to dwell"

Giovanni da Palestrina 1523-1594: Kyrie from Missa Papae Marcelli

The Kyrie is one of the first parts of the Christian service of Eucharist, and pleads "Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us" as part of a process of asking for forgiveness of sins before the worshipper can be absolved. Imagine the scene in St Peter's Rome, as the memorial service in 1556 for the papacy of Pope Marcellus commenced with this music.

Antonio Lotti c1667-1740: *Crucifixus a 8*

This is Lotti's best-known work. *"For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried"* forms part of the Nicene Creed, a product of Emperor Constantine's Council of Nicea in AD325. It professes the Christian belief that Christ died to redeem the sins of the world. Lotti sang alto in St Mark's Venice from 1687 and became organist in 1704. Take a moment to imagine Lotti conducting his singers during a Mass in St Marks over 300 years ago.



John of Portugal 1603- 1656 – *Crux Fidelis*

John IV of Portugal was King and musician. He knew, and was influenced by, Manuel Cardoso, one of the great composers of the time, and he built up a library of manuscripts that rivalled that of the Vatican. The translation of the latin words of this piece - often sung on Good Friday - match the beauty of the music; *"Faithful cross above all other. One and only noble tree. None in foliage, none in blossom, None in fruit thy peer may be. Sweetest wood and sweetest iron, Sweetest weight is hung on thee. Amen"*.

Henry Purcell 1659-1695 – *Man that is born of a woman*

This piece, by one of England's greatest ever composers, was composed the music for the funeral of Queen Mary in 1695. Intended to be sung at the graveside, it was sung eight months later at his own burial service, having died aged 36.

*Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts*

This is the third of a set in the Funeral Sentences, of which "Man that is born" is the first. It reflects on an element of the marriage service when, in death "the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed", in preparation for eternal salvation.

Johann Kuhnau 1660-1722: *Tristis est anima mea*

This comes from a Responsory for Thursday of Holy Week, prior to the meditations of Good Friday. "*My soul is heavy within me - stay here and watch*" paints the picture of Christ in Gethsemane, praying in the garden on the day before his death. Kuhnau was Organist at St Thomas, Leipzig, in 1684 - the year before JS Bach was born.

Sergey Rachmaninov 1873-1943: *When Thou O Lord hadst arisen*

From his tremendous "All-night Vigil" this section celebrates Christ rising from the tomb and bursting "*the bonds of hell*" giving a glimpse of hope after his death. Rachmaninov wrote this in 1916, two years before the Revolution, when religion was suppressed. It's survival through those years, and it's lofty position in today's choral repertoire somehow reflects the theme of this particular movement.

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*Interval of 15 minutes*

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## Part Two

### “Redemption & Salvation”

Rachmaninov: *To Thee O Lord I lift up my soul*

This is an offering of the Christian soul in hope of redemption from past sins, words taken from the opening of Psalm 25.



Sir William Harris 1883-1973: *Holy is the True Light*

Harris was Organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor from 1933 to 1961. During this time he took part in the burial service of King George V. This work points towards the light of salvation through Christ. A 'Glimpse of Heaven' is seen in the phrase "*from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour wherein they rejoice for evermore*"

Morten Lauridsen b1943: *O Magnum Mysterium*

"*O Great Mystery*" recounts the birth of Christ as the 'Light of the World'. Lauridsen, born in Washington USA, composed this piece in 1994, creates a mystical atmosphere which purveys the mystery of the Virgin birth and the first glimpse of hope.

Sir William Harris: *Bring us O Lord*

In one of Harris' finest works, we are placed "*at our last awakening*" through the words of John Donne (1572-1631), one of the greatest of the metaphysical poets. The serenity of the music treads a course through John Donne's heaven "*...to dwell in that house where there shall be no noise nor silence, but one equal music.....no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession.....no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity*"

## Charles Wood: 1866-1926: *Hail Gladdening*

### Light

John Keble's words conclude our concert in a work which brings us finally to "the sun's hour of rest" where "the lights of evening round us shine". Charles Wood, Irish by birth, counted Vaughan Williams amongst his pupils. Many of his choral works remain cornerstones of the church choral repertoire.



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## THE PERFORMERS

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**Nigel Short**

**Director**

Nigel started singing at the age of 7 in the choir of St Alphege, Solihull, and studied at the Royal College of Music. He has sung in many of the country's foremost choirs, including Westminster Cathedral and The Tallis Scholars and as a soloist with the English National Opera. After seven years as a member of the world's most celebrated vocal ensemble - the King's Singers - Nigel left to follow his dream of conducting and composing for his own chamber choir, Tenebrae. The group has been taken under the wing of Formula One racing champion Jacques Villeneuve, who together with Lady Valerie Solti and James Bowman form the group's Patrons.

**Jeremy Filsell**

**Alto/Organ**

Jeremy preceded his brother Simon as Head Chorister at Holy Trinity. Since leaving Coventry for studies at Oxford University and then the Royal College of Music, he has established an international concert career as one of only a few virtuoso performers as both Pianist and Organist - one reflected in numerous recordings made on both instruments for a variety of European companies. He has performed as a soloist in Russia, the USA and throughout Europe, recording for BBC Radio 3, German and Finland Rundfunk and USA networks in solo and concerto roles. Currently, he is Visiting Tutor in Organ Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, a Lecturer in Academic Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, a piano tutor at Eton College and a Lay Clerk in the choir of St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. His PhD thesis is an analytical and contextual study of the music of Marcel Dupré and Gramophone magazine noted that his recordings of the Dupré Intégrale on 12 CDs were, "truly distinguished, compelling and unquestionably authoritative performances; Filsell's astonishing interpretative and technical skills make for compulsive listening .....this series sets the standard for Dupré interpreters of the future and is a landmark in the history of organ recordings"

**Jenny Hasnip**

**Soprano**

Jenny's musical career developed in the choir of St Luke's, Chelsea - the 'home' of the famous English composer, John Ireland. She now sings with the award-winning Vasari Singers in London and has performed on several recordings on the EMI and Virgin labels, as well as concerts in all the major London venues.



**Karen Filsell** **Soprano**

Karen has sung for the Joyful Company of Singers and Vox Musica, and has performed in concerts and recordings the world over, plus appearances on BBC1, Radio 3 and Classic *fm*. She has appeared locally as a guest singer with Coventry Cathedral Chapter House choir, and other local groups. She also performed as a soloist in a concert of Mozart in Hampton Lucy.

**Patricia Bentley** **Soprano**

Patricia read music at Royal Holloway College, University of London and was awarded a Choral Scholarship while continuing to study the piano at the Royal Academy of Music. Her musical career has been mainly as a choral singer, firstly with the London Oriana Choir and then with the Joyful Company of Singers with whom she made her (brief) conducting debut at the BBC Proms. Patricia currently performs with Vox Musica, a chamber choir specialising in early music, and is musical director of her local choral society, the Langcliffe Singers.

**Katherine Verney** **Soprano**

The daughter of former Coventry Cathedral Canon, The Right Reverend Stephen Verney, Katherine sang and studied piano at London University and the Royal College of Music. She works for the Southbank Sinfonia orchestra as Player Development Manager. The Sinfonia has worked with schools in Coventry and performed in concerts in the Cathedral with Paul Ledington-Wright, including a children's concert of Carnival of the Animals for local schools.

**Kathryn Cook** **Alto**

Kathryn lives just over the border into Leicestershire, and has performed as far afield as North and South America, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Spain and France. In this country she has given concerts in such venues as Huddersfield Town Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Barbican. As a choral singer she has performed extensively with the Gabrieli Consort, and the Joyful Company of Singers. She was a member of the Daily Service Singers on BBC Radio 4, and has recently completed a CD of the music of the late Malcolm Williamson, a past Master of the Queen's Music, appearing as soloist.

**Anastasia Micklethwaite** **Alto**

After attending Chetham's School of Music, Anastasia won a choral scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge where she read music. As a Flautist, she was a principal with the National Youth Orchestra and also sang with the National Youth Choir. In London, she sang with numerous choirs, including The Joyful Company of Singers, and spent 8 years as a choral singer and vocal coach in New York. She has made many commercial recordings and appearances on TV and radio. In her capacity as Director of Furness Music Centre in Cumbria, Anastasia enjoys conducting, teaching and performing, and is a flute tutor with the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain.

**Denise Fabb** **Alto**

tbc

**Simon Colston** **Tenor**

Simon's father was a member of Holy Trinity Choir in the 1940's, later moving to Welford-on-Avon nr. Stratford. Simon went on to be educated at King's School, Worcester and sang in Worcester Cathedral where he eventually became head chorister. After a short spell in the Midlands Chorale, he furthered his musical education at Trinity College of Music, London. Whilst in London he sang with Pro Musica of London, BBC Symphony Chorus, the National Youth Choir, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Chorus, Holst Singers, Corydon Singers and latterly the Joyful Company of Singers. He has made recordings with the Martin Best Medieval Ensemble, Paco Pena, the Michael Brewer Singers and, more recently, several highly acclaimed recordings with The Joyful Company of Singers amongst others. He now concentrates on singing as a layclerk at St. Albans Cathedral and semi-professional groups such as Vox Musica.

**Ben Trenchard** **Tenor**

Ben was the Head Chorister of Peterborough Cathedral Cathedral Choir in the mid-80's before studying at

Bristol University. He returned as a Tenor Layclerk at Peterborough Cathedral, and has been a soloist in various concerts throughout the midlands, as well as on CDs of music by Purcell, Bax and Whitlock.

**Richard West** Tenor

**Grayson Jones** Tenor

A former Head Chorister at Holy Trinity Church choir and pupil at Blue Coat C.E. School, Coventry, Grayson graduated from the University of Birmingham with a BMus(hons) in 1994. He completed his PGCE at Cambridge, where he sang with the University Chamber Choir and was invited to join Clare College Choir. Grayson was appointed to St Albans School in 2001 as Choral Director and sings in a number of semi-professional choirs in and around London.

**Simon Filsell** Bass

During Simon's time as Head Chorister at Holy Trinity, he was one of only two midlands finalists in the first ever Choirboy of the Year competition. After a time as a bass in Coventry Cathedral Choir, he became a Layclerk in St Albans Cathedral Choir. He was a soloist on television for a special service when some of the bones of St Alban were returned to his shrine. He now sings with several semi-professional choirs, including the Joyful Company of Singers and has been a soloist on several of their recordings, as well as concerts in Russia, France, Germany and the USA. He has been a soloist in Monteverdi's Vespers for City Chamber Choir as well as at the BBC Proms, Radio 3 and at the Snape Maltings for James Macmillan.

**David Rees-Jones** Bass

David's extensive musical career has taken in the London Bach Society, with whom he performed most of Bach's Church Cantatas, the Joyful Company of Singers, appearing as choir member and soloist in many concerts and recordings, New Company and the renowned Monteverdi Choir with which he has performed in various European venues including the Salzburg Festival. He was a member of the professional choir of St Mary's Church, Bourne Street, London for eight years, and remains a member of Vox Musica, for whom he has sung in Paris, London and Tuscany.

**Roderick McPhee** Bass

Roderick has been singing and conducting since his days as a student at Durham University where he sang in the University Chamber Choir and directed the University College Madrigal Choir. After studying singing at the Guildhall School of Music he performed with several of London's leading choirs, including the Holst Singers, New London Chamber Choir, and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. As a singer Roderick has performed oratorio solos in much of the UK as well as New York, Holland, Belgium, France, and Germany. He has been a lay clerk at St Albans Cathedral and now deputises regularly at St George's Chapel, Windsor. Roderick was formerly General Manager of the Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, the three ensembles founded and directed by Sir John Eliot Gardiner. He was responsible for the organisation and execution of Gardiner's epic Bach Cantata Pilgrimage. He spent several years living in Leamington Spa, and regularly featured as a soloist locally.

**Mark Fenton** Bass

During his studies at Cambridge University, Mark sang in the choir of St Catherine's College under Peter le Huray, taking part in several overseas tours and recordings. He also performed in King's College Chapel under the direction of Stephen Cleobury. On graduating with first class honours, he became a lay clerk at Chelmsford Cathedral, a position he held for seven years. He has also sung in the choirs of Rochester and Worcester Cathedrals. He is a member of the Joyful Company of Singers in London and has taken part in numerous concerts and recordings. He is also the director of the Ramsey Singers, with whom he has recorded works by Purcell, Humfrey, Bax and Whitlock and has conducted all over the UK and in Europe.

## The Organ Fund

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