

The Cherwell Singers

present

Music for a Royal Consort

In memoriam:

HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (1921-2021)

Luke Bond

organ & piano

James Brown

conductor

Saturday, 24th July 2021

University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford

Programme

My Heart is Inditing, HWV 261

G. F. Handel

(Organ Solo)

The Prince of Denmark's March

Jeremiah Clarke

Out of the deep

Albert, Prince Consort

Daughter of Ancient Kings

Edward Elgar

The Queen

Edward Elgar

The Lord bless you and keep you

John Rutter

Interval

We wait for Thy loving kindness, O God

William McKie

Jubilate Deo in C

Benjamin Britten

They that go down to the sea in ships

Herbert Sumsion

Eternal Father, strong to save

J. B. Dykes, *arr.* James Vivian

(Organ Solo)

Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 546

J. S. Bach

Introduction by James Brown:

Medley of songs from *Oklahoma!*

Rodgers and Hammerstein

Luke Bond
James Brown

organ & piano
conductor

Music for a Royal Consort

To mark the centenary of the birth of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and to commemorate his long life and recent passing, the Cherwell Singers concert this term is titled “Music for a Royal Consort.”

Prince Philip was the most recent and longest serving royal consort, but in the first half of our programme we explore music written for, or associated with, previous royal consorts, including Queens Caroline, Alexandra, Mary, and Elizabeth, the recent Queen Mother. The most substantial work here is Handel’s Coronation anthem “My heart is inditing”, written for the moment during the service when the Queen Consort was crowned.

We also include an extremely rarely heard work by Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, - his setting of Psalm 130 “Out of the deep”.

In the second half of the concert we focus on music associated with Prince Philip himself, including works performed at his wedding and recent funeral.

Accompanying us on the organ will be Luke Bond, who in his position as Assistant Organist at St George’s Chapel, Windsor was organist for the Prince’s funeral in April. He will also be playing organ music he performed at this service.

We hope you will enjoy this very wide variety of choral works from the eighteenth century to the present day, and reflect and learn about the interesting Royal history behind these works.

James Brown

Notes and Words

The first part of this concert is made up of music associated with previous royal consorts rather than the late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

George Frederick Handel (1685-1759), although often considered an adopted English composer, was in fact a German who came to England shortly before his employer, the Elector of Hanover, succeeded to the throne of England as George I. Before George arrived, he wrote music for Queen Anne, and his relationship with the royal family made it natural for him to compose the music for the coronation of the next king, George II, and his Queen, Caroline, in 1727. The pieces he wrote are now known as the *Coronation Anthems*, and the first of them, *Zadok the Priest*, has been performed at every coronation since. *My Heart is Inditing* is the fourth, and was sung during the coronation of the Queen. The text was reduced from that previously set by Henry Purcell for the coronation of James II, and was modified by Handel to better suit a queen.

My heart is inditing of a good matter;
I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.

Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women.

Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in vesture of gold;
and the King shall have pleasure in thy beauty.

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers,
and queens thy nursing mothers.

Adapted from Psalm 45, vv 1, 10, 12 and Isaiah 49, v 23

The Prince of Denmark's March by **Jeremiah Clarke** (1669 or 1674-1707) was until the late twentieth century incorrectly known as the *Trumpet Voluntary* by Henry Purcell. Our knowledge of Clarke's life is rather confused; as well as the wide uncertainty of his date of birth, there are various stories about his death, which was probably suicide following disappointment in love. Although it is not stated in the published copies, contemporary sources indicate that the march was written in honour of Prince George of Denmark, husband of Queen Anne of Great Britain.

Albert, Prince Consort (1819-61) – formerly Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha - was Queen Victoria's cousin. After they married, he was very active in advising her, and she in turn came to rely on him to a considerable extent. Privately they were both accomplished musicians, and they came to have a close friendship with Felix Mendelssohn, who visited them at Buckingham Palace a number of times. After one of these visits, Mendelssohn wrote in a letter to his mother:

I begged the Prince to begin playing me something, so that I could boast of it in Germany. He played a chorale by heart, with the pedals – and so charmingly, precisely and accurately that it would have done credit to a professional... Meanwhile the Queen, who had finished what she was doing, came and joined him, listening with pleasure. Then it was my turn, and I began with the chorus from St. Paul, 'How lovely are the messengers.' Before I had come to the end of the first verse they both began singing the chorus, and Prince Albert managed the stops so cleverly for me... that I was quite enchanted.

So we have it on good authority that Albert was a decent musician, though we may judge that as a composer he falls short of any hint of greatness. One or two of his anthems are worth an occasional airing though, being somewhat reminiscent of Mendelssohn or S. S. Wesley. Perhaps the best of these is ***Out of the deep***, of which we give a very rare performance tonight, in a new edition from 2021 by Hugo Janacek. The writing is varied in texture, with solo, trio and choral sections.

Out of the deep have I called unto thee. O Lord, hear my voice.

O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.

If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss. O Lord, who may abide it?

For there is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared.

My soul fleeth unto the Lord, before the morning watch, I say, before the morning watch.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934) wrote his *Coronation Ode* for the coronation of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in 1902, at the request of Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the King's Music (a post which Elgar later held). He had completed it in draft when the librettist, A. C. Benson, realized there should be a movement for the Queen, and provided *Daughter of Ancient Kings* which Elgar reluctantly added (he felt it spoilt the relationship between the surrounding movements). The words were specifically composed to suit Alexandra, as she was the daughter of the King of Denmark, and she came from Denmark which is "over the Northern Sea". For the coronation of George V and Queen Mary in 1911, the movement was replaced by one with more generic words, entitled simply *The Queen*.

These days the *Coronation Ode* is less performed than Elgar's other major compositions. The style of the poetry now feels dated, and the sustained nationalistic bombast is less in favour than in the past.

Daughter of Ancient Kings,
Mother of Kings to be,
Gift that the bright wind bore on his sparkling wings,
Over the Northern Sea!

Nothing so sweet he brings,
Nothing so fair to see,
Purest, stateliest, daughter of Ancient Kings,
Mother of Kings to be!

A. C. Benson (1862-1925)

The Queen

True Queen of British homes and hearts
Of guileless faith and sterling worth,
We yield you ere today departs,
The proudest, purest crown on earth!

We love you well for England's sake,
True you shall prove, as you have proved;
The years that come shall only make
Your name more honoured, more beloved.

Oh kind and wise, the humblest heart
That beats in all your realms today
Knows well that it can claim its part
In all you hope, in all you pray.

A. C. Benson (1862-1925)

John Rutter (1945-) was educated at Highgate School, where he became an accomplished organist; as a student at Cambridge University, he became involved with music in the college chapels, and later was director of music at his old college, Clare. Since then he has made a remarkable contribution to the choral repertoire in particular.

The Lord bless you and keep you was originally written for the memorial service of his old music teacher at Highgate, and he has considered it his most representative composition. It was used in the celebration at St Paul's Cathedral of the 100th birthday of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 2000. When she died at the age of 101, the Queen Mother was the oldest ever royal consort.

The Lord bless you and keep you:
The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you,
The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Amen

Numbers 6, vv24

For the second part of this concert we turn to music which has a connection with the late royal consort, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Although not an active musician as his predecessor Albert had been, he did express interest in music both by commissioning compositions (such as the Britten below), and specifying some of the music for his own funeral.

William McKie (1901-84) was Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey on the occasion of the wedding in 1947 of Princess Elizabeth and Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten - who was created Duke of Edinburgh just before the wedding. *We wait for thy loving kindness, O God* is the anthem he provided for that service, and is his best-known work. The King had stipulated that the marriage ceremony was to be a simple service rather than a state occasion, and that the service itself should not last more than fifty-five minutes. McKie's response is to be heard in the simplicity of this anthem.

We wait for thy loving-kindness, O God : in the midst of thy temple.
Alleluia.

O God, according to thy Name, so is thy praise unto the world's end :
thy right hand is full of righteousness. Alleluia.

O Lord, send us now prosperity. Amen.

Words selected by Rev C. M. Armitage: Psalms 48:8, 9; 118:25

In 1972 the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh celebrated their Silver Wedding with a service at Westminster Abbey. This service included the *Jubilate Deo* in C by **Benjamin Britten** (1913-76), which had been written a decade earlier at the request of the Duke of Edinburgh for use at Mattins in St George's Chapel, Windsor (Mattins is still sung regularly in the chapel). The setting shows the simplicity that was one of Britten's hallmarks, the choral writing mainly being in just two parts, inexactly doubled in the high and low voices. This piece was also performed during Prince Philip's funeral at his prior request.

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands : serve the Lord with gladness, and
come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we
ourselves : we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with
praise : be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting : and his truth endureth
from generation to generation.

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.

Psalms 100

Prince Philip had a long association with the sea and the Royal Navy, having served with distinction during the Second World War, first in the Mediterranean and later in the far East. His active service ended in 1951, but in 1952 he was raised to the rank of Commander, and in 1953 he was promoted Honorary Admiral of the Fleet. He retained an interest in nautical matters; for instance, in 1970, he was involved with the founding of the Maritime Trust for restoring and preserving historic British ships. The Queen gave him the title of Lord High Admiral on his 90th birthday.

The next piece is included to celebrate the lifelong interest of Prince Philip in nautical and naval matters, though it is not specifically connected with any royal occasion.

Herbert Sumsion (1899-1995) was born in Gloucester, and sang in the choir of the cathedral there as a chorister. He was also organist of Gloucester Cathedral from 1928 to 1967. His anthem *They that go down to the sea in ships* was written for the choir of Repton Preparatory School. The piece unfolds with a remarkable economy of material: a rippling, listless organ part suggests the sea, and the rising and falling choral writing depicts the movement of the ship and the staggering of its sailors.

They that go down to the sea in ships : and occupy their business in great waters;

These men see the works of the Lord : and his wonders in the deep.

For at his word the stormy wind ariseth : which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They are carried up to the heav'n, and down again to the deep : their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man : and are at their wits' end.

So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble : he delivereth them out of their distress.

For he maketh the storm to cease : so that the waves thereof are still.

Then are they glad because they are at rest : and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

Psalm 107 vv23-30

Eternal Father, strong to save is often known as ‘The Mariner’s Hymn’ or ‘The Navy Hymn’. It is always sung to the tune provided for it by the prolific Victorian writer of hymn tunes, **J. B. Dykes** (1823-76). For the funeral of Prince Philip, it was sung by a choir of four voices in this arrangement by **James Vivian** (1974-), Director of Music at St George’s Chapel, who also conducted the music during the service.

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
Who bidd’st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
 O hear us when we cry to Thee
 For those in peril on the sea.

O Saviour, whose almighty word
The winds and waves submissive heard,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
And calm amid its rage didst sleep:
 O hear us when we cry to Thee
 For those in peril on the sea.

O sacred Spirit, who didst brood
Upon the chaos dark and rude,
Who bad’st its angry tumult cease,
And gavest light and life and peace;
 O hear us when we cry to Thee
 For those in peril on the sea!

O Trinity of love and power,
Our brethren shield in danger’s hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe’er they go;
 And ever let there rise to Thee
 Glad hymns of praise from land and sea.

William Whiting (1825-78), modified

Little need be said about **J. S. Bach** (1685-1750) who is universally regarded as one of the greatest composers, and especially pre-eminent when writing for the organ.

The ***Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 546*** is one of the very grandest of his compositions for organ. It made an impressive ending to Prince Philip's funeral, and is played for us tonight by the organist who played it on that occasion. The prelude in particular is clearly from Bach's mature years at Leipzig; the ritornello form and the richness of the triplet figuration are characteristic of that. The fugue may be an earlier work (it shows signs of revision), but there is no doubt that Bach himself put the movements together, and the ending of the fugue nicely matches that of the prelude.

In the program handed out at our concert, the last item was left unspecified, and was introduced by James Brown speaking to the audience (which also gave time for Luke Bond to descend from the organ loft to the piano). The following note has been added for the archival version of the program:

When the musical ***Oklahoma!*** by **Rodgers and Hammerstein** opened in London in April, 1947, the Royal Family attended on the opening night, and with them was a guest: Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten. In those more discreet days, the recently started relationship between Philip and Princess Elizabeth was being kept out of the news by the press. In the musical is a song for two lovers, *People will say we're in love*, which describes the restrictions which such discretion imposes, and the couple felt that the song could have been written for them! It became a great favourite of theirs, and they used to dance or sing together to it. It was last specified by them to be used at their birthday celebrations as recently as 2013.

Biographies

Luke Bond organ & piano

Luke Bond studied the organ with Andrew Nethsingha at Gloucester, and later graduated from Bristol University.

His early appointments were as organist at Clifton College, followed by the Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick, and then eight years as Assistant Director of Music at Truro Cathedral, where he made a number of well-regarded recordings, both accompanying the choir, and playing the organ solo.

In 2017 he became Organist and Assistant Director of Music at St George's Chapel, Windsor. He has played there for the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, for the wedding of Princess Eugenie, and most recently for the funeral of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

He has previously played for the Cherwell Singers in 2007 and 2008.

James Brown conductor

James Brown was organ scholar of Girton College, Cambridge before doing further study of organ with Lionel Rogg at the Geneva Conservatoire, Switzerland. After two years as Guest Artist in Residence at the First United Methodist Church, Lubbock, Texas, USA, he returned to England where he was Organist of Dean Close School.

In 2006 James moved to Oxford where he is Organist of the historic University Church, and teaches organ at Abingdon and New College Schools as well as pursuing freelance work as an organist and pianist. He is also a tenor lay clerk in the choir of New College.

James has given recitals in the UK, USA, Belgium and Switzerland, and appeared on both BBC radio and television. He also performs solo classical piano recitals for Cunard, P&O, and Fred Olsen cruise lines.

James has been conducting the Cherwell Singers since 2007.

The Cherwell Singers

Soprano

Stephanie Gilroy *
Janet Johnson
Sreya Rao
Elina Screen
Alice Stainer
Judith Ward
Eve-Marie Wenger

Tenor

Iain McLean
David Read
Samuel Teague *†

Alto

Jenny Ayres
Elizabeth Kreager
Wendy Morris
Anna Orłowska
Jo Poulton
Vanessa Sinclair

Bass

Toby Blundell
Benjamin Breyer
Paul Hodges
Simon Jones *
Simeon Mitchell

* Soloist in *Out of the Deep*.

† Soloist in *We wait for thy loving kindness, O God*

If you are interested in joining us, please contact James Brown at:
director@cherwellsingers.org

Next Concert

Angels and Archangels

A concert for Michaelmas to include
the **Archangel Suite** by Patrick Hawes.

Date and venue to be announced.

Please visit our web site to learn more about the choir, and listen to some of our recordings online. Use the web form to register yourself on our email list, to ensure you receive notification and full details of future concerts.

www.cherwellsingers.org