

The Cherwell Singers

present

The Carolean Era

*Music from the reigns of
Charles I, II, and III*

Dónal McCann

organ

James Brown

conductor

Sunday, 25th June 2023

Chapel of Keble College, Oxford

Programme

Factum est silentium Richard Dering

I heard a voice from heaven Thomas Tomkins

Duo Seraphin Richard Dering

O sing unto the Lord a new song Thomas Tomkins

(Organ Solo:)

Cornet voluntary John Blow

O God, wherefore art thou absent from us so long William Child

O Lord, increase our faith Henry Loosemore

Interval

Zadok the Priest Henry Lawes

Behold, O God our defender Henry Cooke

(Organ Solo:)

Voices of the World Iain Farrington

Coronation Sanctus Roxanna Panufnik

Coronation Agnus Dei Tarik O'Regan

Make a Joyful Noise Andrew Lloyd Webber

Dónal McCann organ
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The Carolean Era

Music from the reigns of Charles I, II, and III

Twelve months ago the Cherwell Singers presented a concert in the chapel of Keble College to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. We have returned to the same venue this June to perform music from our new and previous Carolean ages.

The reigns of Charles I and II in the seventeenth century saw periods of disruption and renewal in government and society, as well as in music for the church, and our programme explores these and other developments with works by Tomkins, Dering, Child, and Cooke.

Coming right up to date, the final part of the concert includes brand new commissions from the recent coronation of Charles III, including the organ work *Voices of the World* by Iain Farrington played by Dónal McCann, as well as works by Panufnik, O'Regan, and Lloyd Webber.

Please enjoy the majestic setting of the chapel of Keble College as we link pieces old and new from the reigns of these three Kings.

James Brown

Notes & Words

We are marking the start of a new Carolean era by performing music from the earlier era of Charles I (r.1625-1649) and Charles II (r.1660-1685), leading up to music from the coronation of Charles III in 2023.

The mid-17th century was musically a transition between the end of the Renaissance period of composers like Tallis, Byrd, and Gibbons and the start of the Baroque period of Purcell and Handel, reaching a low point with the Commonwealth of 1649 to 1660 during which music in churches was suppressed and organs destroyed. Of course, the composers of the time survived, and took up their pens again after the restoration of the monarchy.

The coronation of Charles I was in some respects a curious affair. It was only the second coronation to use the vernacular instead of being entirely in Latin. Charles refused to wear regal purple, preferring to dress in white to symbolise his deep faith and spirituality; and also his Queen, Henrietta Maria, was not crowned alongside him, because she was Roman Catholic. These two decisions seem to presage the religious and political problems which would come during his reign and lead to his beheading. One of Charles I's enduring legacies is the post of the Master of the King's Music, which was first awarded in 1626 to Nicholas Lanier (1588-1666).

Richard Dering (c.1580-1630) - whose name had many forms: Deering, Dearing, Deringo, Diringus, *etc.* - was a late English Renaissance composer. He is noted for his pioneering use of techniques which anticipated the advent of Baroque music in England. Despite being English and probably brought up Protestant, he converted to Catholicism in his 20s during or after a visit to Italy, at which point the style of his music changed markedly, and he started using Latin texts such as we hear this evening. Following his conversion he lived and worked for much of his life in the Spanish-dominated South Netherlands, along with several other English Catholic composers. But in 1625 England had gained a Catholic Queen, Henrietta Maria, and Dering returned to England that year to serve as organist to the Queen at her private chapel and as Musician for the Lutes and Voices to King Charles I.

Factum est silentium depicts the war between Michael (for Heaven) and the Dragon (for the Devil), and is often performed around Michaelmas.

Factum est silentium in cœlo,
Dum committeret bellum draco cum Michaelē Archangelo.
Audita est vox millia millium dicentium:
Salus, honor et virtus omnipotenti Deo.
Alleluia.

*There was silence in heaven
When the dragon fought with the Archangel Michael.
The voice of thousands of thousands was heard saying:
Salvation, honour and power be to almighty God.
Alleluia.*

(First Respond at Matins for Michaelmas)

Initially Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) had been put in charge of preparing the music for Charles I's coronation in 1626, but on his sudden death at the early age of 42 he was replaced by **Thomas Tomkins** (1572-1656). Tomkins was born in Wales, and for most of his life was Master of the Choir at Worcester Cathedral. He studied under Byrd, and was also for a time a Gentleman and Organist of the Chapel Royal. Tomkins was a prolific writer of choral music, both anthems and madrigals, and himself contributed several anthems for the coronation service (not all of which have survived), including settings of *I was Glad* and *Zadok the Priest*; but the anthems we are singing tonight are not from that occasion.

The anthem ***I heard a voice from heaven*** is a straightforward late renaissance setting, with many characteristic false relations.

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me,
Write: From henceforth, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord:
Even so, saith the Spirit: for they rest from their labours.

(Revelation 14:13)

Dering's anthem ***Duo seraphin*** is an example of his most forward-looking style, a result of his working in The Netherlands, and strongly foreshadows Purcell's *Evening Hymn*.

Duo seraphin clamabant alter ad alterum:
Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Plena est omnis terra gloria ejus.

*Two seraphim cried to one another:
Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.
The whole earth is full of his glory.*

(Isaiah 6:3)

Like the previous anthem by Tomkins, *O sing unto the Lord a new song* is generally backward-looking in its style. But Tomkins uses his forces with considerable variety, contrasting polyphonic sections with homophonic interludes and varying the thickness of the texture.

O sing unto the Lord a new song:
let the congregation of saints sing praise unto him.
Let Israel rejoice in him that made him:
and let the children of Sion for ever sing Alleluia.

(Psalm 149:1-2)

John Blow (1649-1708) brings us to the period of Charles II. As a boy he was a chorister of the Chapel Royal under Henry Cooke. He was appointed as organist of Westminster Abbey at the age of 19, still during the reign of Charles II, and subsequently he taught many of the major English Baroque composers, such as William Croft, Jeremiah Clarke, and most notably Henry Purcell. In 1699 he was appointed to the newly created post of Composer to the Chapel Royal.

The *Cornet Voluntary* was a characteristic feature of early English Baroque organ music, consisting typically of a short slow introduction followed by a lively solo using the “Cornet” stop, which uses a group of flute pipes at different pitches to generate a somewhat reedy sound.

Given the short interval between the reigns of Charles I and Charles II, it is not surprising that the other composers from that period we are representing tonight served under both kings.

William Child (1606-1697) was born in Bristol, and was a chorister in the cathedral there. In 1630 he began his lifetime association with St. George’s Chapel, Windsor Castle, becoming first a lay-clerk, and from 1632 Master of the Choristers, until the dissolution of the chapel in 1643. After the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, Child was re-appointed to St. George’s Chapel, and became Master of the King’s Wind Music and a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal.

O God, wherefore art thou absent from us so long, although fairly simple in its form, is quite advanced in its use of harmony, colouring the more agonised parts of the words (possibly a response to the poor conditions for musicians during the Commonwealth) with suitably wrenching harmonies.

O God, wherefore art thou absent from us so long:
why is thy wrath so hot against the sheep of thy pasture?
O think upon thy congregation:
whom thou hast purchased and redeemed of old.

(Psalm 74:1-2)

Henry Loosemore (c.1607-1670) is the only composer in this concert with no particular royal connection, spending his life from 1627 till his death as organist of King's College, Cambridge – apart from the period of the Commonwealth during which he was employed privately by a local Lord. He was born in Devon, son of an organ builder, Samuel Loosemore. His brothers included George, a fellow organist, and John, also an organ builder, who built the organ in Exeter Cathedral in 1662-3, replacing the one vandalized during the Commonwealth – his fine casework survives.

Until the mid-20th century, ***O Lord increase our faith*** was believed to have been by Gibbons. However, the discovery of a book of anthems in the handwriting of Loosemore, including this one with his name attached, made it clear that the attribution was wrong. But the former acceptance of the mistake underlines the quality of the piece, straightforward though it is.

O Lord, increase our faith, strengthen us and confirm us in thy true faith;
endue us with wisdom, charity, chastity and patience.
In all our adversities., sweet Jesu, say Amen.

(unknown)

In the second part of our concert, all the music we are performing was used as part of a coronation ceremony.

Henry Lawes (1596-1662) was sworn 'epistoler' of the Chapel Royal in January 1626 and Gentleman in November following. On 6 January 1631 he was cited in the Lord Chamberlain's accounts as being appointed 'for the lutes and voice' as one of Charles I's musicians. At the Restoration, Lawes was reinstated in both of his old positions in the King's Musick and the Chapel Royal. However, he died shortly after, in 1662, and was buried in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.

In 1661 Lawes's quite simple setting of ***Zadok the Priest*** was sung at the coronation of Charles II. It was not usual at that time to reuse music from a previous ceremony, so the setting by Tomkins would have been ignored.

Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon King;
and joyfully approaching they cried:
“God save the King! For ever and ever, God save the King!”
“Hallelujah”

(1 Kings 1:38-39)

Henry Cooke (c.1616-1672), commonly known as Captain Cooke, was an English composer, choirmaster and singer. He was a boy chorister in the Chapel Royal and by the outbreak of the English Civil War had become a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. He joined the Royalist cause, in the service of which he rose to the rank of Captain. With the Restoration of Charles II he returned to the Chapel Royal as Master of the Children, and was responsible for the rebuilding of the chapel and the introduction of instrumental music into the services. The choristers in his charge included his successor and eventual son-in-law Pelham Humfrey, as well as Henry Purcell, John Blow, and several other notable composers; but in the first years after the restoration, because there were no trained choristers in place, it was necessary to use cornets and falsetto men's voices to supplement them. By 1663 things had improved; as Pepys wrote: “They say there are four or five of them that can do so much”. Cooke was also one of the five English composers who created music for Sir William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656), which was arguably the first English opera.

Cooke was naturally given the task of supplying the music for Charles II's coronation – though one wonders how well that went, given the parlous state of the choirs so soon after the restoration! He wrote ***Behold, O God our defender*** for the occasion; it is a characteristic, if somewhat four-square, example of the verse anthem, alternating semichorus and chorus with instrumental interludes, which was becoming a common English form.

Behold, O God our defender, and look upon the face of thine anointed.
For one day in thy courts is better than a thousand.*
O how amiable are thy tabernacles, thou Lord of hosts!
Alleluia.

* meaning: “is better than a thousand elsewhere”.
(Psalm 84:9-10,1)

Now we come to music from the recent coronation of Charles III. The King has a personal interest in music, and took an active part in choosing and commissioning the music and ensuring diversity in its styles and origins.

Iain Farrington (1977-) is a pianist, organist, composer and arranger. He gave a solo performance on the Albert Hall organ in the BBC Proms in 2007, and played the piano at the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics. He arranged several of the orchestral pieces played for the coronation of Charles III for the specially configured Coronation Orchestra, and also was commissioned to compose a new organ piece for the Coronation.

Voices of the World is that piece, and includes traditional song melodies from various Commonwealth countries, mixed together in a joyful, jazzy and dance-like character.

Roxanna Panufnik (1968-) is a British composer of Polish descent. She studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music. Her *Four World Seasons* for the violinist Tasmin Little was presented as part of BBC Radio 3's "Music Nation", celebrating the 2012 Olympics. She is especially interested in building musical bridges between faiths through music; the BBC's Last Night of the Proms in 2018 included her *Songs of Darkness, Dreams of Light* which brought together Jewish text, modes, Maronite Syriac chant, and Sufi rhythm and structure.

The *Coronation Sanctus* is notable for the variety of its rhythms, which combine to make a suitably rich single texture.

Sanctus.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

(from the liturgy of the Eucharist)

Tarik O'Regan (1978-) is a British and American composer. His parents were English (of Irish descent) and Algerian, and he spent some of his childhood in Algeria and Morocco. He studied music as an undergraduate in Oxford, and continued with post-graduate studies in Cambridge. He writes in a wide range of genres – instrumental, vocal, chamber, orchestral, and for the stage (both opera and ballet). O'Regan's music is mostly written in tonal, extended-tonal and modal languages (or a combination of all three), often with complicated rhythmic effects and dense textural variation. He lists as his influences: Renaissance vocal writing, music of North Africa, British rock bands of the 1960s and 1970s, Jazz, and Minimalist music.

In his *Coronation Agnus Dei*, O'Regan combines similar but slightly varied and offset lines in a way which was often used by Benjamin Britten.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

(from the liturgy of the Eucharist)

Andrew Lloyd Webber (1948-), is an English composer and impresario of musical theatre. Several of his musicals have run for more than a decade both in the West End and on Broadway. He is one of only 18 people to have won an Oscar, an Emmy, a Grammy, and a Tony, and he has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He is involved in a number of charitable activities supporting arts education around the world. His music ranges over a considerable variety of styles to suit the varying subjects of his musicals.

King Charles asked Lloyd Webber for a piece which listeners could go away humming; ***Make a joyful noise*** is certainly simple enough for this to be possible, but how long it will be remembered is not so clear.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, for He hath done marvellous things:
and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel:
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God

O, make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth:

Make a loud noise, rejoice, and sing his praise.

Let the sea roar, the world, and they that dwell therein:

Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth:

Make a joyful noise, rejoice, and sing his praise.

For he cometh to judge the earth:

And with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

O, make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth:

Sing unto the Lord with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

With trumpets and sound of cornets:

Make a joyful noise before the Lord the King

(based on Psalm 98)

Biographies

Dónal McCann organ

Originally from Belfast, Dónal read music at King's College, Cambridge, where he was an academic and organ scholar, and accompanied the choir in daily chapel services, as well as in recordings, broadcasts and extensive tours, including to America and Australia. Prior to this, Dónal was the Andrew Lloyd Webber Scholar at Eton College, where he gained the FRCO with the Limpus Prize, subsequently being nominated for the Silver Medal of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. The following year he won the inaugural Dame Gillian Weir Medal at the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition.

Dónal studied piano at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin, and organ with Professor Gerard Gillen at St Mary's Pro Cathedral. He has performed as a soloist with the Ulster Orchestra and the Academy of Ancient Music, and has given many recitals in the UK and abroad.

He is currently Assistant Organist at New College, Oxford.

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, and is appearing as the solo classical artist on the Cunard flagship Queen Mary 2 twice in 2023.

James has been conducting the Cherwell Singers since 2007.

The Cherwell Singers

Soprano

Christy Callaway-Gale
Sian Cattell
Hester Crombie
Stephanie Gilroy *
Clare Scott-Dempster
Elina Screen

Alto

Virginia Allport
Elizabeth Kreager
Ann Leggett
Rhiannon Lovell *
Wendy Morris
Anna Orłowska

Tenor

Joshua Crolla
Jack Lovell
Maks Tobiasiewicz *
Simon Murray
David Read

Bass

David Gillespie
Paul Hodges
Simon Jones *
Simeon Mitchell

** Semichorus in the Cooke verse anthem.*

If you are interested in joining us, please contact James Brown at:

director@cherwellsingers.org

Next Concert:

A Spanish Christmas **Seasonal Music from Spain**

Date and venue to be advised.

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