

FEMININE VOICES AT CHRISTMAS

ENSEMBLE ALTERA
CHRISTOPHER LOWREY

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TRADITIONAL, arranged by **JOHN RUTTER**
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CHRISTOPHER LOWREY

**HANNAH ELY, RACHEL GARREPY, REBECCA MYERS,
SARAH VITALE** SOPRANO 1

**CLAIRE BRUSSEL, ELEONORE COCKERHAM, KATELYN
GRACE JACKSON, ELIJAH MCCORMACK** SOPRANO 2

**KRISTEN DUBENION-SMITH, OLIVIA KLEYLA, KIMBERLY LEEDS,
CHRISTOPHER LOWREY, JENNA HERNANDEZ-MCLEAN** ALTO

LISHAN TAN HARP

JAMES KENNERLEY ORGAN

FEMININE VOICES

BY CHRISTOPHER LOWREY

'Feminine Voices' have long possessed the power to enchant, seduce, ennoble, and overpower. From the Sirens to Scheherezade to Salome, witches to Wollstonecraft, the feminine voice, spoken, sung, or written, has, for millennia, been coded both as subordinate to the masculine, but also as threatening to male power. In a captivating song, an entrancing poem, a compelling story, or, most dangerously of all, in sustained rhetorical argument, long thought to be the exclusive province of educated men, women could wrest back their agency, at first haltingly and temporarily, and in recent years with sustained and surprising force. And, yet, relics of this ancient and defining dialectic remain with us, passed down from the Medievals through the Moderns. Nowhere can this heritage be observed as vividly as in classical music, where the feminine voice has been both enduringly disempowered – see the astonishing lack, until recently, of female conductors, composers, and stage directors – and inversely, continually fetishized. It's no coincidence that the 'divo' has never stirred our cultural imagination quite like the diva, or that the unbroken voices of boys and *castrati* (as well as their spiritual heirs, countertenors) activate and excite some ancient recesses of our collective unconscious. The theme for our program coalesces around this pockmarked, though perfectable, inheritance, tracing a map of historical exceptions that prove the rule, and exploring the terrain of emerging feminine voices of today. I have interspersed works by no fewer than eight women with music – such as *Ceremony of Carols* – perhaps better known to us, entirely for treble choir, but initially conceived for women's choir, with the hope of embracing the many enthralling possibilities of the feminine voice.

When we think of exceptional feminine voices in the history of music, no composer cuts a greater figure than Saint Hildegard of Bingen (c.1098-1179). A German Benedictine abbess who became Mother Superior of her order, Hildegard was so ahead of her time she ought to be considered the forerunner of the archetypal Renaissance man: the medieval woman. A writer, philosopher, dramatist, mystic, visionary, medical theorist and practitioner during the High Middle Ages, she was also a prolific composer of sacred plainchant, and uniquely wrote both the melodies of these chants as well as their texts. More of her music survives than of any other composer from the Middle Ages, and she is the most-recorded known composer of the entire medieval period. Hildegard's seventy-odd musical compositions, published as the 'Symphony of the Harmony of Celestial

Revelations', are all monophonic sacred vocal works, but they are chants with a twist. Brimming with brilliant poetic images, they feature wide-ranging and ornamented melodies with surprising intervals, conjuring a mood referred to by scholars as the 'ecstatic'. *O viridissima, Virga* is a salutation to the Virgin Mary and is one of the few surviving chants by Hildegard in the mixolydian mode. Its alluring poetry paints the Virgin Mother in familiar tropes of natural viridity: the fresh green branch, from which the Christ Child blossoms, lavished by windy gusts (*ventoso flabro*) and sunlight's warmth (*calor solis*).

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) is perhaps regarded as the most important British composer of the 20th century, but less appreciated is his reputation as a mentor to younger musicians and composers. One such fascinating partnership emerged between Britten and Gustav Holst's daughter, Imogen Holst (1907-1984). The pair had the good fortune to meet at Dartington Hall in Devonshire, England, where Holst served as Director of Music during Britten's and his partner Peter Pear's many trips to give recitals there. Their collaboration yielded several commissions from Holst for Britten's own Aldeburgh Festival, including, in 1951, *Welcome Joy & Welcome Sorrow*, a setting of six poems by John Keats, self-consciously modeled on Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*; and, a year later, an invitation to orchestrate Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*. The cycle evokes the rhythms and renewal of the natural world; and the first and last movements mark the turning of the calendar so intimately associated with this season.

Joanna Marsh (b. 1970), who divides her time between England and Dubai, was among the first of the University of Cambridge's female, organ scholars (at Sidney Sussex College). It was during her time in post that she cultivated an enduring fascination with the music of Elizabethan composers such as Weelkes and Byrd. The canticles of the *St Paul's Service*, premiered in 2007 by Nova Aurora under countertenor Patrick Craig, are peppered with the idioms of Church and Court music of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, recalling the keyboard figurations, dance rhythms, and gestures of the viol consort, all prominent hallmarks of the Tudor musical lexicon. The *Magnificat*, traditionally the first of the two canticles sung in the Anglican service of Evensong, the Vespers service in Catholic and Lutheran practice, and Matins in the Eastern Orthodox Church ('Ode of the Theotokos'), is known colloquially as the "Song of Mary". The text is derived from a scene in the Gospel of Luke, during the visitation of Mary to her pregnant cousin, Elizabeth (the child who will become John the Baptist). Upon hearing Mary's greeting, the child stirs in her womb, to which Elizabeth responds with much

of what will form the second half of the *Ave Maria*. Mary responds in kind with the text of what develops into what we recognize as the *Magnificat*.

Treble-rich settings of the *Ave Maria* itself abound (along with other Marian texts such as *Ave Regina Caelorum*, *Ave Maris Stella*, *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, *Salve Regina* and *Tota Pulchra es Maria*), with hundreds of examples from the late Middle Ages through to today. One 21st-century example is the plaintive upper-voices setting by Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951). Vocal writing has occupied a central position in McDowall's compositional catalog, music that has been described as constantly tweaking the ear with a "range of spicy rhythms and colours" (*Gramophone Magazine*). Her setting of the *Ave Maria*, a haunting and humble supplication to the Virgin, harkens back to Renaissance exemplars with its embellished chant-like lines, chains of unfurling suspensions, and modal harmonies, with a spiky, modernist twist.

The *Trinity Carol Roll* is a parchment scroll dating from early fifteenth-century East Anglia, England, which, when unfurled, measures as tall as a human. It is the earliest-known collection of English polyphonic carols; and contains thirteen carols in Middle English and Latin, set to texts such as the well-known *There is no rose*. Our world-premiere setting is by Adrian Peacock (b. 1962), one of the world's most sought-after recording producers of choral music today – who, incidentally, produced the world-premiere recording of this piece for treble voices with Ensemble Altera, for many years was a low bass in illustrious choirs including at Westminster Cathedral in London. His harmonic language recalls the late medieval period through the use of *fauxbourdon*. The word, from the French for 'false drone', is a technique of musical harmonization used in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. With each verse, the texture thickens, until the climactic, clarion fanfare at "the angels sungen".

The influence of the aforementioned *Ceremony of Carols* cannot be overstated. It is a work so cherished and revered, it single-handedly sprouted a cottage industry of music for treble choir and harp, a practice that echoes down to our time. Another such example in this lineage is *I Sing of a Maiden* by Ian Shaw (b. 1960), which sets the same text as the fifth movement of *Ceremony*, and serves as a kind of loving commentary on or extension of Britten's own musical ideas. Unlike Britten's setting, the choral scoring is reduced to a single soprano line; but that melody is spun out in fascinating directions, full of whimsical intervallic leaps and cheeky harmonic kinks.

The reputation enjoyed by Barbara Strozzi (1619-1677) in dramatic music (secular cantatas, madrigals, etc.) is well-established, but her credentials as a composer of sacred music were long-neglected. It was only with the relatively recent rediscovery of a single volume of her sacred music, *Sacri Musicali Affetti*, that her bona fides in this terrain have latterly been burnished. Without the essential patronage of the Church, Strozzi was forced to scrape together her own means to publish eight volumes – rumors persist that her gainful employment took the form of the oldest profession – and, from under the weight of these prejudices, it has taken centuries for her reputation to be justly restored. *O Maria quam pulchra es* is baroque prosody and vocalism at its transcendent apogee. Strozzi paints the textual references by turns with billowing rapture and rollicking piety.

Kerensa Briggs is an award-winning composer specializing in choral music. Her writing has been described in the *New York Times* as “poignant, ambivalent, quietly devastating music.” Her love of choral music emanates from her choral background, having sung in the Gloucester Cathedral Youth Choir and the Choir of King’s College London, where she held a choral scholarship and undertook a Master’s in Composition. In her enchanting setting written for Ensemble Altera of the sixteenth-century *Coventry Carol* – a lullaby depicting the story of the Massacre of the Innocents, in which Herod ordered all male infants under the age of two in Bethlehem to be killed – Briggs more closely evokes the atmosphere of a lullaby than the traditional melody; and by beginning the text at the second verse, emphasizes the sisterhood of mothers who mourn their slain sons. The effect is all the more devastating in its quiet, effortless beauty.

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree is the best known of a relatively short list of compositions by Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987). It started life in her *Children’s Song Book*, and burst off the page to prominence at the 1967 *Carols for Kings* service (the annual truncated television version of the *Nine Lessons & Carols* service broadcast on radio around the world). Inspired by the words of a New England poem that she happened upon while traveling there, she set the text to an arresting melody in what could be described as a spare and sincere style inflected by American folk tradition, notably shape-note singing. Of the composition she wrote “the Spirit bloweth where it listeth. I wrote it down immediately and inevitably, almost without thinking, on the nearest scrap to hand at the time, which happened to be a garage bill.” Our upper-voices version condenses the affecting harmonies into the treble octave; and makes use of her suggested, but seldom performed, canon in its concluding verse.

Germaine Tailleferre was a French composer and the only female member of the celebrated group of composers known as Les Six, though during her own lifetime she was perhaps more celebrated as a friend of these composers than one of them in her own right. Much of her music, tragically, was burned by the Nazis to heat her house, which was commandeered during the occupation of World War II; and of the remainder, only some was published during her lifetime. Her music was neglected, not only because of her gender, but also perhaps because it was largely light and joyful. In her own words, “I have had a very difficult life, you know. Only I do not like to talk about it, because I write happy music as a release.” The *Lento* movement of her *Sonate Pour Harpe* initially seems to share a kinship with the introverted, undulating harmonies of another French composer, Erik Satie; but it soon asserts a more joyful expressionism.

Despite his palpable fondness for the timbre of the boy soprano, the *Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was initially conceived, in his own words, as “7 Christmas Carols for women’s voices and Harp! Very sweet and chockfull of charm!” Few might know that the original core of the work was premiered by the women of the Choir of Fleet Street, at Norwich Castle in East Anglia; and it featured the soprano, Margaret Ritchie, and harpist, Gwendolen Mason. The genesis and evolution of *Ceremony* was a winding one. While touring the United States with his partner, Peter Pears, Britten was marooned there as Great Britain entered the War in September, 1939. Despite his ardent pacifism and conscientious objection to Britain’s war footing, he nevertheless remained homesick throughout his American stay until he was finally able to make the return journey by boat to Europe in March, 1942. Having had many of his manuscripts confiscated by customs officials prior to the crossing, he furiously sketched out from memory several half-completed and finished works including the famous *Hymn to St. Cecilia* (patron saint of music, with whom Britten shared a birthday); his *Clarinet Concerto* for Benny Goodman (eventually lost!); and a setting of several medieval and Renaissance texts from an anthology of poems he had acquired in Halifax, Nova Scotia (clearly a theme for traveling composers) for treble voices and harp, the first draft of what would become *Ceremony of Carols*. Following the premiere of the initial seven movements, Britten framed the piece by a processional and recessional, with optional harp accompaniment, of the Vespers antiphon for Christmas Day, *Hodie Christus natus est* (“Today Christ is born”) to which he affixed a stylistically convincing *Alleluia*. A year after the premiere, the haunting mezzo solo *That yongē child* was appended along with the *Interlude* for the harp, which quotes and develops on the antiphon. By this stage, several performances of *Ceremony* had been given by boy choirs and it is evident in Britten’s

letters – and the fact that the Welsh boys of Morryston School were chosen to record the work on Decca – that it might have become his preferred sound: “I think the little boys were enchanting – the occasional roughness was easily outweighed by their freshness and naivety – something very special.” Whether *Ceremony of Carols* is performed by women, boys, or even mixed choir, as in Julius Harrison’s celebrated SATB arrangement, it continues to delight, enchant, lull, awaken, and transport the listener. From the youthful exuberance of *Welcome yole* to the soporific delicateness of the *Balulalow*; from the martial muscularity of *This little babe* to the hypnotic reverie of *In Freezing Winter Night*; from the effervescent dance of the *Spring Carol* to the machined angularity of *Adam lay i-bounden*; the cycle is a kaleidoscope of hues, textures, rhythms, language, and harmonic and melodic invention. Above all, it is the rare piece of music overflowing with evergreen exuberance, appealing equally to performer and audience alike. Now, as then, a “pleasure it is to hear, i-wis” [surely].

Dancing Day, from which we’ve drawn the *Prelude* and the eponymous carol, is a suite for trebles and harp containing a selection of beloved carols such as *Angelus ad virginem*, *A virgin most pure*, *Personent hodie*, and, his own settings of *There is no rose* and the *Coventry Carol*, by the king of Yule himself, John Rutter (b. 1945). If there is a composer, living or dead, who has written and arranged more Christmas music for choirs, from original compositions like *What Sweeter Music* and *There is a Flower* to tasteful arrangements of classics like *O Holy Night*, *I Wonder as I Wander*, and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, they are unknown to me. *Tomorrow shall be my dancing day* likely has its origins in the late Middle Ages, as it references the mystery, miracle, and morality plays that occupied such a central part in medieval community life. First published in William B. Sandys’s *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* in 1833, the carol tells the life story of Jesus in his own voice. The “true love” with whom Jesus dances is usually understood to be the Church, often depicted as his bride. In this device, known as *vox christi*, Christ declares all that he has done for the church and the faithful.

ENSEMBLE ALTERA

Ensemble Altera has been described as “something extraordinary” (BBC Record Review) and “a leading ensemble on the American choral scene” (*Scherzo Magazine*). Led by internationally celebrated countertenor Christopher Lowrey, the group has quickly become known for thoughtful programming, passionate performances, and tireless advocacy for the importance of ensemble singing in the broader music culture. BBC Music Magazine called Ensemble Altera’s debut album, *The Lamb’s Journey*, “clean as a whistle and confident”. Europadisc proclaimed the performances “wonderfully refined and expertly blended, with that combination of radiance, power and transparency that comes with the best chamber choirs”. In the words of the Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik [German Record Critics’ Award], which awarded the disc its coveted prize, “no recent recording debut in this field has been as spectacular.”

Recent programs include *A New Song: Psalms for the Soul*, an exploration of the Biblical Psalm texts in all their dizzying variety, and *A Christmas Present*, a sumptuous collection of seasonal music written in the new millennium. Ensemble Altera is now beginning to undertake tours throughout the USA, including repeat visits to Carnegie Hall, and expands this work over the coming season. Upcoming projects include *The Four Elements*, a celebration of the awesome beauty and terrifying power of the sky, earth, fire, and water.

Additionally, Altera teams up with celebrated conductor Raphaël Pichon, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, in a program entitled *Mein Traum*, starring soprano Ying Fang and baritone Christian Gerhaher. Later in 2025, the group offers new performances of its acclaimed chamber version of Handel’s *Messiah* in its native home of Rhode Island.

Deeply committed to championing new works and lifting up new voices from around the globe, over the past few seasons, Altera has premiered works by Ian Gabriel Corpuz, Motshwane Pege, Toby Young, Joanna Marsh, Daniel Gledhill, Zuzanna Koziej, and Michael Garrepy.

Additionally, Altera has a profound faith in the healing power of music, both in and out of the concert hall, and is proud to offer its complete recorded music library free of charge in collaboration with select partners in music therapy.

CHRISTOPHER LOWREY

Director Christopher Lowrey was born and raised in Johnston, RI, and trained at Brown University, the University of Cambridge, where he sang under Stephen Layton with Trinity College Choir, and the Royal College of Music. In addition to conducting, he enjoys a dynamic international solo career as a countertenor, working at some of the world's leading opera houses and concert platforms, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera House, the Philharmonie de Paris, as well as with many of the world's leading baroque orchestras. This season he makes his debut at Opéra de Lausanne, Royal Danish Opéra, and Bachfest Leipzig, and sings Ottone in Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* on a North American tour with Cappella Mediterranea. More info at christopherlowrey.com.

HILDEGARD VON BINGEN
(c. 1098-1179)

1 O VIRIDISSIMA, VIRGA

O viridissima virga, ave, que in ventoso
flabro sciscitationis sanctorum prodisti.
Cum venit tempus quod tu floruisti in
ramis tuis, ave, ave fuit tibi, quia calor
solis in te sudavit sicut odor balsami.
Nam in te floruit pulcher flos qui odorem
dedit omnibus aromatibus que arida erant.
Et illa apparuerunt omnia in viriditate
plena.

IMOGEN HOLST (1907-1984)
WELCOME JOY AND
WELCOME SORROW

2 I. Welcome joy and welcome sorrow

Weldom joy, and welcome sorrow,
Lethe's weed and Hermes' feather; come
to-day, and come to morrow, I do love you
both together!
Nightshade with the woodbine kissing;
serpents in red roses hissing; Cleopatra
regal-dress'd with the aspic at her
breast; dancing music, music sad, both
together, sane and mad; muses bright
and muses pale; sombre Saturn, Momus
hale; laugh and sigh, and laugh again.

3 IV. Shed no tear

Shed no tear! oh, shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more! oh, weep no more!
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
Dry your eyes! oh, dry your eyes!
For I was taught in Paradise to ease my
breast of melodies, – shed no tear.

GUSTAV HOLST (1874-1934)

4 'HYMN TO THE DAWN'

from *Choral Hymns from the*
Rig Veda, 3rd Group

Hear our hymn, O Goddess, rich in wealth
and wisdom, ever young yet ancient, true
to law eternal.

Wak'ner of the songbirds, ensign of the
eternal, draw thou near, o fair one in thy
radiant chariot. Bring to her your off'ring;
humbly bow before her: raise your songs
of welcome as she comes in splendour.

JOANNA MARSH (* 1970)

5 MAGNIFICAT from *St. Paul's Service*

My soul doth magnify the Lord; and my
spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, For
he hath regarded: the lowliness of his
handmaiden.
For behold from henceforth: all

generations shall call me blessed. For
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 scatter'd 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.

He rememb'ring his mercy hath helped
his servant Israel: As he promised to
our forefathers, Abraham and his seed
forever.

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.

CECILIA MCDOWALL (* 1951)

6 'AVE MARIA' from *Three Latin*
Motets

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum
Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et
benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis
peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis
nostrae.
Amen.

ADRIAN PEACOCK (* 1962)

7 THERE IS NO ROSE

There is no rose of such virtue as is the
rose that bare Jesu.

Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was Heaven
and earth in little space, res miranda;
Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see there be
one God in persons three, Pares forma.
The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo: Gaudeamus.
Now leave we all this worldly mirth, and
follow we this joyful birth; Transeamus.

IAN SHAW (* 1960)

8 I SING OF A MAIDEN

I sing of a maiden that is makeless; King
of all kings to her son she ches.
He came all so still where his mother was,
As dew in April that falleth on the grass.
He came all so still to his mother's bower,
As dew in April that falleth on the flower.

He came all so still where his mother lay,
As dew in April that falleth on the spray.
Mother and maiden was never none
but she;
Well may such a lady Godës mother be.

**BARBARA STROZZI
(1619-1677)**

**9 'O MARIA QUAM
PULCHRA ES'**

from *Sacri Musicali Affetti*

O Maria, quam pulchra es, quam suavis,
quam decora.

Tegit terram sicut nebula, lumen ortum
indeficiens, flamma ignis,
Arca federis, inter spinas ortum lilium,
tronum Siion in Altissimis in columna
nubis positum.
O Maria.

KERENSA BRIGGS (* 1990)

10 COVENTRY CAROL

O sisters too, how may we do for to
preserve this day.
This poor youngling for whom we sing,
'Bye bye, lully, lullay'?
O sisters too, how may we do for to
preserve this day.
This poor youngling for whom we sing,

«Bye bye, lully, lullay»?
Herod the king, in his raging, chargèd he
hath this day.
His men of might in his own sight all
young children to slay.
That woe is me, poor child, for thee, and
ever mourn and may.
For thy parting neither say nor sing, «Bye
bye, lully, lullay.»

**ELIZABETH POSTON
(1905-1987)**

**11 JESUS CHRIST THE APPLE
TREE**

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden
with fruit and always green;
The trees of nature fruitless be,
Compared with Christ the apple tree.
His beauty doth all things excel,
By faith I know but ne'er can tell the
glory which I now can see,
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought, and
pleasure dearly I have bought;
I missed of all but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.
I'm weary with my former toil – here I will
sit and rest awhile,
Under the shadow I will be,

Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be with
Jesus Christ the apple tree.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913-1976)

12 A NEW YEAR CAROL

Here we bring new water from the well
so clear
For to worship God with, this happy
New Year

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water
and the wine;
The seven bright gold wires and the
bugles that do shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon
her toe,
Open you the West Door, and turn the
Old Year go.
Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, etc.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon
her chin,
Open you the East Door, and let the New
Year in.
Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, etc.

CEREMONY OF CAROLS

14 I. Procession

Hodie Christus natus est, hodie Salvator
apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli: hodie exsultant
justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia!

15 II. Wolcum Yole!

Wolcum, Wolcum, Wolcum be thou
hevenè king,
Wolcum Yole! Wolcum, born in one
morning,
Wolcum for whom we sall sing! Wolcum
be ye,
Stevene and Jon, Wolcum, Innocentes
every one,
Wolcum, Thomas marter one, Wolcum
be ye, good
Newe Yere, Wolcum, Twelfthe Day both
in fere,
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dare, Wolcum
Yole,
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum! Candelmesse,
Quene of Bliss,
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.
Wolcum, Wolcum,
Wolcum be ye that are here, Wolcum

Yole, Wolcum
alle and make good cheer. Wolcum alle
another yere,
Wolcum Yole. Wolcum!

16 III. There is no Rose

There is no rose of such vertu as is the
rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia, Alleluia, for in this rose
containèd was Heaven and earth in litel
space, res miranda, res miranda.
By that rose we may well see there be
one God in persons three, pares forma,
pares forma.
The aungels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gaudeamus, gaudeamus.
Leave we all this worldly mirth, and
follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus, transeamus, transeamus.
Alleluia, res miranda, pares forma,
gaudeamus, transeamus.

17 IVa. That Yongë Child

That yongë child when it gan weep with
song she lulled him asleep:
That was so sweet a melody it passèd
alle minstrelsy.
The nightingalë sang also:
Her song is hoarse and nought thereto:

Whoso attendeth to her song and
leaveth the first then doth he wrong.

18 IVb. Balulalow

O my deare hert, young Jesu sweat,
prepare thy creddil in my spreit, and I
sall rock thee to my hert, and never mair
from thee depart.
But I sall praise thee evermoir with
sangës sweat unto thy gloir;
The knees of my hert sall I bow, And sing
that richt Balulalow!

19 V. As Dew in Aprille

I sing of a maiden that is makeless;
King of all kings to her son she ches.
He came all so still where his mother
was,
As dew in April that falleth on the grass.
He came all so still to his mother's
bower,
As dew in April that falleth on the
flower.
He came all so still where his mother lay,
As dew in April that falleth on the spray.
Mother and maiden was never none
but she;
Well may such a lady Godës mother be.

20 VI. This Little Babe

This little Babe so few days old, is come
to rifle Satan's fold; all hell doth at his
presence quake, though he himself for
cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmèd wise the
gates of hell he will surprise.
With tears he fights and wins the field,
his naked breast stands for a shield;
his battering shot are babish cries,
his arrows looks of weeping eyes, his
martial ensigns Cold and Need, and
feeble Flesh his warrior's steed.
His camp is pitchèd in a stall, his
bulwark but a broken wall; the crib
his trench, haystalks his stakes; of
shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound, the
angels' trumps alarum sound.
My soul, with Christ join thou in fight;
stick to the tents that he hath pight
within his crib is surest ward; this little
Babe will be thy guard. If thou wilt foil
thy foes with joy; then flit not from this
heavenly Boy!

21 VIII. In Freezing Winter Night

Behold, a silly tender babe, in freezing
winter night, in homely manger
trembling lies.

Alas, a piteous sight! The inns are full;
no man will yield this little pilgrim bed.
But forced he is with silly beasts in crib
to shroud his head.

This stable is a Prince's court, this crib
his chair of State; the beasts are parcel
of his pomp, the wooden dish his plate.
The persons in that poor attire his royal
liveries wear; the Prince himself is
come from heav'n; this pomp is prizèd
there.

With joy approach, O Christian wight, do
homage to thy King, and highly praise
his humble pomp, wich he from Heav'n
doth bring.

23 IX. Spring Carol

Pleasure it is to hear iwis the Birdës
sing, the deer in the dale, the sheep in
the vale, the corn springing.
God's purvayance For sustenance.
It is for man.

Then we always to him give praise, and
thank him than.

24 X. Adam lay i-bounden

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Adam lay i-bounden, bounden in a bond;
four thousand winter thought he not
too long.

Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
And all was for an appil, an appil that
he tok, As clerkès finden written in
their book.
Deo gracias! Deo gracias!
Ne had the appil takè ben, the appil
takè ben Ne haddè never our lady a ben
hevenè quene.
Blessèd be the time that appil takè was.
Therefore we moun singen.
Deo gracias!

25 XI. Recession

Hodie Christus natus est, hodie Salvator
apparuit: hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli: hodie exsultant
justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia!

27 **NO.8 'TOMORROW SHALL BE MY DANCING DAY**

Trad., arr. by John Rutter

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day; I
would my true love did so chance to see
the legend of my play, to call my true
love to my dance;

Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love,
my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure, of her I
took fleshly substance.
Thus was I knit to man's nature to call
my true love to my dance.

In a manger laid, and wrapped I was, so
very poor, this was my chance betwixt
an ox and a silly poor ass to call my true
love to my dance.

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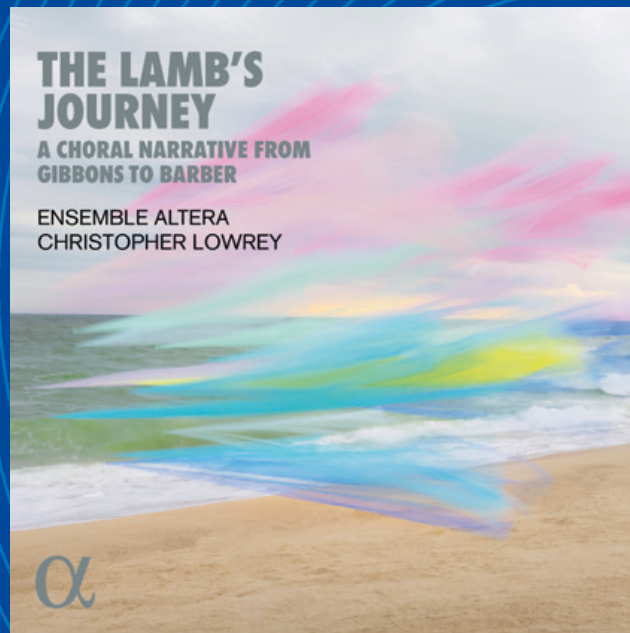
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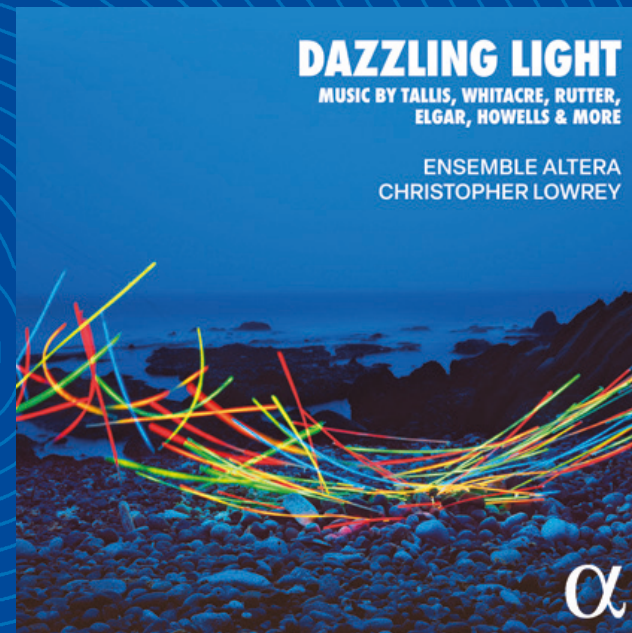
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