



NAXOS



A CHRISTMAS CHORAL SPECTACULAR

BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA
PETER BREINER

A Christmas Choral Spectacular

(arrangements by Peter Breiner)

A staple of the Christian choral tradition, the carol is most accurately defined as a religious seasonal song, of joyful character, in the vernacular and sung by the common people, and indeed the time-hallowed annual Christmas ritual of carolling, always close to the hearts of ordinary people, is essentially of peasant rather than aristocratic origin. Several of the most enduring carol-tunes date from the Middle Ages or even earlier, having first been either sacred or secular, particularly pastoral melodies, frequently of French or German origin. The latter group often have lilting rhythms, betraying their former links with courtly dancing, not infrequently out of doors, and some of these are as pagan in origin as our Christmas holly or the candles on our cake. Others may relate more specifically to, or have been at least in part inspired by the crib that from the time of St Francis of Assisi in the thirteenth century has traditionally been installed in churches at Christmastide.

The medieval carol, which as often dealt with earthly topics as with the Nativity, the Blessed Virgin or St Nicolas, usually favoured a Latin or vernacular text arranged in simple, easily memorised stanzas with repeatable refrains, or 'burdens'. While many ancient carol-tunes are extant in manuscript, the earliest printed carols, in the collection of Caxton's pupil Wynkyn de Worde, first appeared in England in 1521. After the Reformation carols inclined in their message and mood of Christmas toward a more modern idiom. In 1833 William Sandys' seminal *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* appeared and the Victorian era saw the publication of other influential collections, including Bramley and Stainer's *Christmas Carols New and Old* and by the late nineteenth-century revival movements, analogous to those relating to folk-song and dance, were active in preserving ancient oral carol traditions from extinction. The trend continued into the twentieth century through various choral anthologies.

Another, sadly now all but faded strand in the fabric of choral Christmas, is the nostalgic English custom of open-air carol-singing, performed by 'waits'. This, as Percy Scholes reminds us, 'had long become a matter of door-to-door visitation, often of a very picturesque nature [which] tended to be degraded into a petty beggary: in every district

little children paraded from door-step to door-step, from the end of November onwards, building up a Christmas fund by the extortion of what may very fairly be called "hush money".'

The distinctive lilt of *Ding dong! Merrily on high*, with its now familiar English text by G.R. Woodward (1848-1934), betrays its history, for it was originally not a carol at all but a courtly dance-rhythm. Attributed to the pseudonymous Thoinot Arbeau (1520-1595) it was gleaned from the *Orchésographie* of 1589, a manual of music and choreography by the French ecclesiastic Jehan Tabourot.

The *Coventry Carol*, *Lully, lulla, thow little tyné child*, deals with the slaughter of the Holy Innocents by Herod and is drawn from the Pageant of the Shearman and Taylors, one of the cycle of medieval mystery plays performed annually around the streets of Coventry on Corpus Christi, included in the edition by Robert Croo (1534). The song, one of only two surviving vernacular songs from English mystery plays, was added to Croo's manuscript by Thomas Mawdycke in 1591 and it is this tune which has come down to us, by way of a bowdlerised version preserved in Thomas Sharp's 1825 *Dissertations* on the Coventry pageants.

A rhythmic tune in the Welsh tradition of penillion, in which singers improvise on a melody from the harpist, *Deck the hall* was originally a carol for dancing rather than a Festive one. As *Nos Galan* (New Year's Eve) it appeared in *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (1784), by the Merionethshire-born harpist and folk-song collector Edward Jones (1752-1824). Its original Welsh verses were subsequently translated as *Soon the hoar old year will leave us*, while the now familiar *Deck the hall* version apparently originated in J.P. McCaskey's *Franklin Square Song Collection* of 1881.

In mid-European and Teutonic pagan traditions the fir-tree was a token of the life-force surviving winter's frost long before it symbolized renewal at the birth of Christ, and the Christmas-tree later became synonymous with Martin Luther who, many Germans formerly believed, was the first to use it in the context of the Nativity. In the 1820s, by which time Christmas-trees had assumed a domestic connotation in Germany, it acquired words drawn from a

sixteenth-century song, now with a popular tune known, at least, by 1799, with the words *Es lebe hoch*, the carpenter's song. The student song beginning *Lauriger Horatius quam dixisti verum* used the same melody. The result was the well-known *O Christmas Tree* (O Tannenbaum).

Variouly rendered in its original as *Oi Belêem!* and *Oh, mi Belén*, the traditional Basque *The Infant King* was first transcribed by Bordes in 1895. Its English words were added soon afterwards by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), the noted folk-song collector, editor and hymnodist, who was also sometime squire and rector of the Devonshire parish of Lewtrenchard. It has undergone various subsequent arrangements.

The origins of *O come, all ye faithful*, the most famous of all Christmas carols, are obscure, but both the Latin text *Adeste, fidele* and the tune, which most probably date from the eighteenth century, exist in a manuscript of circa 1740 by the English Catholic teacher and music scribe John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786), of the English College at Douai. In 1910 it was suggested that the first part of the melody was an adaptation of an operatic aria by Handel, but more recent scholarship has attributed it to Wade's friend Thomas Arne (1710-1778). Whereas the carol was popular in its Latin original in the United States from about 1795, the now widely known English version was the work of the mid-Victorian hymnodists F. Oakeley, F.H. Murray and W.T. Brooke.

The words of *O little town of Bethlehem*, an American carol, by Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) of Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, were reputedly inspired by his trip to Jerusalem in 1865. It was first set to music by his organist, Lewis Redner, in 1868 and since then it has occupied a special niche in the carol repertory. It has retained its popularity in various arrangements. The text was also famously set by Ralph Vaughan Williams and subtitled *Forest Green*, based on the old English tune *The Ploughboy's Dream*.

The text of *Puer nobis nascitur, rector angelorum* (Unto us is born a son, the ruler of angels) is that of a fifteenth-century German carol, an offertory of thanks to God. One of the finest of medieval *cantiones* (songs) the tune was also heard in France, in the form of a Latin *noël*, from the sixteenth century onwards.

With original music, in the folk-song mode, by the

Austrian Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863) and words by Josef Mohr (1792-1848), *Silent Night, Holy Night* (Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht), one of the best loved of carols, is now known in English-speaking countries in a translation dating from the 1870s by John F. Young (1820-1885). Supposedly written at short notice for a midnight Mass at Oberndorf parish church on Christmas Eve, 1818, it was later popularised in Germany by Tyrolean singers and by the 1840s several variants of the original had found their way into print. The carol's earliest printed English version, *Holy Night! Peaceful Night!*, by Jane Montgomery Campbell (London, 1863) was introduced to the United States in the early 1870s by the Episcopalian hymnodist Charles Lewis Hutchins.

Probably the best known of traditional Czech carols, *Hajej, nynej, Ježíšku* (Little Jesus, sweetly sleep) first gained currency in the English-speaking world through *The Oxford Book of Carols*. A lullaby with which all Czechs are familiar, its undulating rhythm harks back to the medieval German custom of cradle rocking.

Gloucester Wassail (Wassail, all over the town!) is a carol with traditional English text and melody, based on an eighteenth-century Gloucestershire wassailing song. This found new currency in Victorian times in Husk's *Songs of the Nativity* (1864) and in an arrangement by Sir John Stainer (1840-1901).

Quem pastores laudavere (Him whom the shepherds praised) is a paean of praise to the Infant Christ the King. This fourteenth-century German carol was later included in both Catholic and Lutheran usage. Adapted by the Thuringian hymnodist and editor Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), it first appeared in print in his *Musae Sioniae* of 1607.

Although it has become a firm world favourite among Christmas songs, the calypso-style adaptation of a traditional Trinidadian carol, *The Virgin Mary had a baby boy*, is a comparative newcomer to the English repertoire. Included by the West Indian baritone and collector Edric Connor in his 1945 *Collection of West Indian Spirituals and Folk Tunes*, it was, he claimed, handed down to him by a 94-year-old plantation worker, in Trinidad in 1943.

Peter Dempsey

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus

Director: Greg Beardsell

The Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, founded in 1911 by Sir Dan Godfrey, has become established as one of the country's leading large vocal ensembles. It gives regular concerts with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Bournemouth, Poole, London and throughout Southern England, records extensively, and has appeared at the Proms and many other Festivals. It tours abroad regularly, with recent visits to America, Italy, Israel and Paris. It won a Grammy Award in America for its recording of *Belshazzar's Feast*. For its ninetieth birthday in 2001, it commissioned a major new cantata, *Voices of Exile*, from the composer Richard Blackford, with new poems by Tony Harrison, with first performances in Poole and at the Royal Festival Hall.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1893 by Sir Dan Godfrey, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra has had among its Principal Conductors some of the finest musicians in the world, including Rudolf Schwarz, Constantin Silvestri, Sir Charles Groves and Paavo Berglund. More recently Andrew Litton raised the orchestra's standards to new levels, crowning its centenary season with a triumphant début tour of the United States in April 1994, followed by Yakov Kreizberg and débuts at the Musikverein, Vienna, the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and Carnegie Hall, New York. In October 2002, Marin Alsop became Principal Conductor, the first woman to hold this title for any British symphony orchestra. The name of the orchestra is internationally known through over three hundred recordings, including the award-winning release of Anthony Payne's sketches for Elgar's *Symphony No. 3* (8.554719) with Paul Daniel, and the symphonies of Vaughan Williams with the former Chief Guest Conductor Kees Bakels and Paul Daniel for Naxos, and through overseas tours. In addition to its recording and international touring commitments, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to providing orchestral music across the South and West of Britain, with a varied programme of educational and outreach commitments, and makes regular appearances in major festivals and concert-halls throughout the country.

Peter Breiner

Peter Breiner is a Canadian-Slovak composer, conductor, pianist and arranger. He is known internationally for a multiplicity of recordings, broadcasts, telecasts and concert appearances. He began to play the piano at the age of four. When he was nine he started his formal training at the Košice Conservatory, where he studied piano, percussion, composition and conducting. He received traditional European musical training and studied composition at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava (former Czechoslovakia) with Alexander Moyzes, one of the most significant figures in modern Slovak music. Peter Breiner has recently conducted the world première of his own oratorio composition *The Story* (based on the Biblical texts) for solo singers, two choirs and a large orchestra. Other compositions include two symphonies, orchestral, chamber and choral music. His complete works for piano trio were released on his profile CD in summer 2004. He is perhaps best known, however, for his clever arrangements, including award-winning Baroque versions of the Beatles and a similar adaptation of Elvis Presley and of popular Christmas music. Breiner's distinctive arrangements of all national anthems were used during the Olympic Games in Athens 2004. In addition to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Peter Breiner has conducted, often doubling as a pianist, the Vienna Mozart Orchestra, the Hungarian State Radio Orchestra, the Nicolaus Esterházy Orchestra Budapest, the Polish Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, the Ukrainian State Symphony Orchestra, the Moscow Symphony Orchestra, the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra, the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, Capella Istropolitana, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre National de Lille, France, and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, among many others.

Weltberühmte Weihnachtslieder für Chor (gesetzt von Peter Breiner)

Bei dem *Carol* handelt es sich um eines der wichtigsten Elemente der christlichen Chortradition. Es lässt sich als ein fröhliches, auf die Jahreszeit bezogenes Lied religiösen Inhalts definieren und wird von ganz normalen Menschen in ihrer jeweiligen Muttersprache gesungen. Gerade das altbewährte, alle Jahre wiederholte Ritual des Weihnachtssingens ist dem Herzen der einfachen Leute besonders nahe, denn es wurzelt eher in ländlich-bäuerlichem denn in aristokratischem Boden. Einige der unvergänglichsten *Carol*-Melodien entstanden im Mittelalter oder sogar früher. Diese Weisen waren entweder geistlichen weltlichen, vor allem ländlichen Ursprungs, wobei letztere häufig aus Frankreich oder Deutschland stammten und in ihrer oft wiegenden Rhythmik alte Beziehungen zu nicht selten im Freien aufgeführten Tänzen verraten. Einige der Stücke gehen ebenso auf heidnische Bräuche zurück wie die in verschiedenen Ländern übliche weihnachtliche Stechpalme oder die Kerzen, mit denen man Weihnachtskuchen dekoriert. Dann wieder gibt es Weisen, die von der Krippe handeln, die man seit dem 13. Jahrhundert, der Zeit des heiligen Franz von Assisi, zu Weihnachten in den Kirchen aufstellt.

Das mittelalterliche *Carol*, das ebenso oft von irdischen Gegenständen handelt wie vom Christfest, von der Gesegneten Jungfrau oder vom Heiligen Nikolaus – diese Liedform gab üblicherweise lateinischen oder landessprachlichen Texten den Vorzug, die in leicht einprägsamen Strophen und Refrains (engl. = *burdens*) geformt waren. Viele dieser alten *Carols* sind handschriftlich überliefert. 1521 erschien dann die erste englische Druckausgabe in einer Sammlung des aus Frankreich stammenden Wynkyn de Worde, der in England von etwa 1480 bis 1535 nachgewiesen ist und Mitarbeiter des „englischen Gutenberg“ William Caxton (ca. 1422–1491) war. Nach der englischen Reformation wurde die Weihnachtsbotschaft und -stimmung der *Carols* moderner. 1833 erschien die wirkungsvolle Publikation *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* (Alte und neue

Weihnachtslieder) von William Sandys, und in der viktorianischen Ära kamen weitere einflussreiche Sammlungen hinzu – darunter die *Christmas Carols New and Old* von Henry Ramsden Bramley (1833–1917) und Sir John Stainer (1840–1901) sowie Veröffentlichungen, die Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts im Zuge der Erneuerungsbewegungen erschienen und ebenso wie die entsprechenden Unternehmungen auf den Gebieten des Volkslieds und des Volkstanzes für die Bewahrung mündlicher Traditionen sorgten. Dieser Trend setzte sich durch die verschiedenen Anthologien, die die Oxford University Press seit 1928 veröffentlichte, bis ins 20. Jahrhundert fort. Zu den jüngeren Sammlungen gehören unter anderem das *The Penguin Book of Christmas Carols* (1965) sowie verschiedene Oxford-Editionen, die David Willcocks, John Rutter und andere herausbrachten.

Ein weiterer, heute in England fast völlig vergessener Weihnachtsbrauch ist die Freiluft-Aufführung von *Christmas Carols* durch sogenannte *waits* (Straßenmusikanten). Das waren, wie der Musikschriftsteller Percy A. Scholes (1877–1958) bemerkte, „seit langem schon Hausbesuche von oft sehr pittoresker Art, die allmählich zu einer verächtlichen Bettelei verkommen: In jedem Bezirk zogen ab Ende November kleine Kinder von Tür zu Tür, um sich vor Weihnachten ein regelrechtes ‘Schweigegehd’ zu erpressen.“

Der charakteristisch wiegende Rhythmus des *Ding dong! Merrily on high*, den man heute mit den Worten des Engländers George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848–1934) kennt, offenbart die Geschichte des Liedes, das ursprünglich auf einem höfischen Tanzrhythmus basiert. Übernommen wurde das Thema aus der 1589 erschienenen *Orchésographie*, einem Lehrbuch über Musik und Choreographie, das der französische Kleriker Jehan Tabourot unter dem anagrammatischen Namen Thoinot Arbeau (1520–1595) veröffentlichte. Bekannt ist das Stück bislang vor allem in zwei Fassungen – in der Harmonisierung von Charles Wood (1866–1926), die erstmals in W. L. Reeds *Treasury of Christmas Music*

(Hausschatz weihnachtlicher Musik) erschien, und in der jüngeren Einrichtung von David Willcocks.

Das *Coventry Carol* (Lully, lulla, thow little tyné child = Schläfe, schlafe, du kleines, winziges Kind) handelt von der Ermordung der Neugeborenen, die Herodes angeordnet hatte. Es entstammt einem Schauspiel der Scherer und Schneider und gehört somit in einen Zyklus mittelalterlicher Mysterienspiele, die alljährlich zur Zeit des Festes *Corpus Christi* in den Straßen von Coventry aufgeführt wurden. Der Text findet sich in dem Manuskript von Robert Croo (1534); die Melodie wurde der Handschrift 1591 von Thomas Mawdycke hinzugefügt. Es ist als eins von nur zwei muttersprachlichen Liedern englischer Mysterienspiele erhalten und wurde in einer korrumptierten Fassung von Thomas Sharp in den *Dissertations* über die Schauspiele von Coventry (1825) überliefert. Neuerdings wird das Lied gern in den Arrangements von Martin Shaw (1875–1958) und David Willcocks aufgeführt.

Deck the hall ist eine rhythmische Melodie aus der walisischen Tradition des *pennill* oder *penillion* – ein harfenbegleiteter Gesang, wie er bei einem *eisteddfodd*, einem walisischen Sängerwettkampf, aufgeführt wurde – und damit ursprünglich kein festliches, sondern tänzerisches Stück. Wie *Nos Galan* (Silvesterabend) erschien es in den *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (1784) des aus Merionethshire stammenden Harfenisten und Volksliedsammlers Edward Jones (1752–1824). Die walisischen Worte wurden später als *Soon the hoar old year will leave us* (Schon bald will uns das eisig-alte Jahr verlassen) übersetzt; die heute bekannte Fassung (*Deck the Hall* = Schmückt den Saal) geht wohl auf J. P. McCaskeys *Franklin Square Song Collection* von 1881 zurück. Das inzwischen populäre Arrangement von David Willcocks aus dem Jahre 1975 wurde 1978 von der Oxford University Press veröffentlicht.

In den heidnischen, namentlich den germanischen Traditionen Mitteleuropas war der Tannenbaum ein Symbol dafür, dass die Kraft des Lebens den langen kalten Winter übersteht. Erst viel später wurde daraus ein Sinnbild für die Geburt Christi. Schließlich wurde der Weihnachtsbaum in einem Atemzug mit dem Reformator

Martin Luther genannt, da viele Deutsche früher glaubten, er sei es gewesen, der ihn im Zusammenhang mit dem Christfest verwendet habe. So entstand beispielsweise das Lied *O Tannenbaum*, das zum Teil auf ein (schlesisches?) Volkslied des 16. Jahrhunderts zurückgeht, das aber nichts mit dem christlichen Weihnachtsfest zu tun hat: 1820 schrieb August Zarnack dazu die berühmte erste Strophe, bevor vier Jahre später der Leipziger Lehrer Ernst Anschütz die nachfolgenden Verse reimte. Schon Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts sang man auf dieselbe Weise das alles andere als weihnachtliche Lied *Lauriger Horatius, quam dixisti verum* (Horazius im Lorbeerkranz, wie wahr sind deine Worte) sowie das festliche *Es lebe hoch der Zimmermannsgeselle*.

Das baskische Lied vom königlichen Kind (*The Infant King*) wird verschiedentlich unter den Originaltiteln *Oi Betléem!* und *Oh, mi Belén* aufgeführt. Es wurde erstmals im Jahre 1895 von dem Musikgelehrten und Komponisten Charles Bordes (1863–1909) transkribiert. Den englischen Text schrieb wenig später der bekannte englische Kleriker, Volksliedsammler und Schriftsteller Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924), der zeitweilig auch *squire* und Pfarrer von Lew-Trenchard in Devon war. Das Lied wurde später von Edgar Pettman (1865–1943) und dann noch einmal von David Willcocks (1970) arrangiert.

Die Ursprünge des *O come, all ye faithful*, eines der berühmtesten Weihnachtslieder, liegen im Dunkeln, doch sowohl der lateinische Text *Adeste, fideles* (Herbei, o ihr Gläubigen) als auch die wahrscheinlich im frühen 18. Jahrhundert entstandene Melodie finden sich in einem Manuskript, das der katholische Lehrer und Musikschriftsteller John Francis Wade (um 1711–1786) im englischen Kollegium des französischen Douay herstellte. 1910 hieß es, der erste Teil der Melodie sei die Adaption einer Operarie von Händel; die jüngere Forschung hat die Weise allerdings Wades Freund Thomas Arne (1710–1778) zugeschrieben. Während man das lateinische Original dieses *Carols* in den USA seit etwa 1795 kannte, ist die heute geläufige englische Fassung eine Arbeit der Hymenschreiber Frederick Oakeley, F. H. Murray und W.T. Brooke, die sich in der Mitte der viktorianischen Epoche damit befassten.

Die Worte des amerikanischen Liedes *O little town of Bethlehem* soll Bischof Phillips Brooks (1835–1893) nach der Heiligen Dreifaltigkeitskirche in Philadelphia nach einer Reise geschrieben haben, die ihn 1865 nach Jerusalem führte. Sein Organist Lewis Redner verfasste dazu 1868 die erste Melodie, und seither nimmt das Stück eine besondere Stellung im Repertoire der *Carols* ein. Es hat seine Beliebtheit behalten – auch in den schönen Vertonungen des englischen Organisten, Chorleiters und Musikerziehers Sir Thomas Armstrong (1898–1994) und einer unbegleiteten Fassung durch H. Walford Davies (1869–1941), der zeitweilig als Organist an der Londoner Temple Church tätig war und zu den Pionieren des britischen Rundfunks gehörte. Eine weitere berühmte Fassung hinterließ Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) unter dem Titel *Forest Green* (Waldesgrün). Diese Vertonung basiert auf der altenglischen Weise *The Ploughboy's Dream* (Der Traum des Ackerknechts) und ist in den Kreisen englischer Chöre die beliebteste Fassung überhaupt.

Der Text des *Puer nobis nascitur, rector angelorum* (Uns ist ein Sohn geboren, der Beherrscher der Engel) entstammt einem alten deutschen Weihnachtslied. Dieses musikalische Dankopfer existiert in zwei Versionen, die das heute in der Münchner Universitätsbibliothek aufbewahrte Graduale von Moosburg (1355–1360) überliefert. Es ist einer der schönsten mittelalterlichen *cantiones* (Gesänge), und wurde seit dem 16. Jahrhundert auch in Frankreich als lateinisches *cantique de Noël* (= Weihnachtslied) gesungen.

Der Österreicher Franz Xaver Gruber (1787–1863) schrieb die Melodie von *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* auf einen Text seines Landsmannes Joseph Mohr (1792–1848) im Stile eines schlichten Volksliedes. Seit den 1870er Jahren dieses Weihnachtslied dank einer Übersetzung von John F. Young (1820–1885) auch im englischsprachigen Raum bekannt. Angeblich sollen die beiden Autoren das Stück binnen kürzester Frist für die nächtliche Christmesse des Jahres 1818 in Oberndorf geschrieben haben; es wurde später durch Tiroler Sänger(innen) weit verbreitet und lag schon 1840 in verschiedenen Druckvarianten vor. Die älteste englische Publikation als *Holy Night! Peaceful*

Night! von Jane Montgomery Campbell (London 1863) wurde Anfang der 1870er Jahre von dem Hymnen-schreiber Lewis Hutchins in die USA gebracht.

Das wohl bekannteste tschechische „Weihnachts-Traditional“ *„Hájej, nynej, Ježíšku“* (Kleiner Jesus, schlafe süß) lernte die englischsprachige Welt zunächst durch das *Oxford Book of Carols* aus dem Jahre 1928 kennen. Dieses Schlaflied kennt jeder Tscheche. Sein wogender Rhythmus geht auf die alte deutsche Gepflogenheit zurück, Kleinkinder in den Schlaf zu wiegen.

Die traditionelle Weise und der Text des *Gloucester Wassail* (*Wassail, wassail, all over the town!*) basieren auf einem Trinklied aus dem Gloucestershire des 18. Jahrhunderts, das in viktorianischer Zeit durch William Henry Husks *Songs of the Nativity* (1864) und ein Arrangement des bereits erwähnten Sir John Stainer neue Verbreitung fand. Eine Variante erschien in dem *Oxford Book of Carols* von 1928 – und zwar in einer Einrichtung, die hauptsächlich auf Vaughan Williams' Gloucestershire-Antologie beruht.

Quem pastores laudavere (Ihn, den die Hirten priesen) ist ein Lobgesang auf das „Christuskind, den König“, der auf Verse aus der Offenbarung zurückgeht. Dieses Weihnachtslied aus dem 15. Jahrhundert – man erinnert sich vielleicht des *Quempas*-Singers – wurde im Laufe der Zeit sowohl in die katholische als auch in die protestantische Liturgie übernommen. Der thüringische Komponist und Verleger Michael Praetorius (1571–1621) übernahm es 1607 in seine Publikation *Musae Sioniae*.

Zwar ist die kalypsoartige Adaption des traditionellen Weihnachtsliedes *The Virgin Mary had a baby boy* ein Hit unter den internationalen *Carols*, doch im englischen Repertoire gehört es zu den recht neuen Repertoirestücken. Es ist in der *Collection of West Indian Spirituals and Folk Tunes* erhalten, die der westindische Bariton und Sammler Edric Connor 1945 herausbrachte. Er will den Titel zwei Jahre zuvor in Trinidad von einem 94-jährigen Plantagenarbeiter erhalten haben.

Peter Dempsey

Deutsche Fassung: Cris Possalc

1 Ding Dong! Merrily on high
(16th century French)

Ding Dong! Merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing
Ding, dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with angel singing
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

E'en so here below, below
Let steeple bells be swungen
And i-o, i-o, i-o
By priest and people sungen
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

Ding Dong! Merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing
Ding, dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with angel singing
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.

2 Coventry Carol
(Tune of 1591)

Lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
By, by, lully, lullay.
Lullay, Thou little tiny Child.
By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters, too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day;
This poor youngling for whom we do sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.

Herod the King, in his raging,
Charged 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 say;
For Thy parting, neither say nor sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.

3 Deck the hall
(Traditional Welsh)

Deck the hall with boughs of holly
Fa la la la la la la la la
'Tis the season to be jolly
Fa la la la la la la la la
Fill the mead cup, drain the barrel
Fa la la la la la la la la
Troll the ancient Christmas carol
Fa la la la la la la la la.

See the flowing bowl before us
Fa la la la la la la la la
Strike the harp and join the chorus
Fa la la la la la la la la
Follow me in merry measure
Fa la la la la la la la la
While I sing of beauty's treasure
Fa la la la la la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes
Fa la la la la la la la la
Hail the new ye lads and lasses
Fa la la la la la la la la
Laughing, quaffing, all altogether
Fa la la la la la la la la
Heedless of the wind and weather
Fa la la la la la la la la.

Deck the hall with boughs of holly
Fa la la la la la la la la
'Tis the season to be jolly
Fa la la la la la la la la
Fill the mead cup, drain the barrel
Fa la la la la la la la la
Troll the ancient Christmas carol
Fa la la la la la la la la.

[4] O Christmas Tree (O Tannenbaum)

(Traditional German)

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How lovely are your branches
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How lovely are your branches
In beauty green they always grow
through summer sun and winter snow
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
How lovely are your branches.

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Christmas Tree!

[5] The Infant King (Oh, mi belén)

(Basque carol; English words: S. Baring-Gould)

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now reclining,
sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the infant King,
Angels are watching, stars are shining
over the place where He is lying:
sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-sleeping,
sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the infant King.
Soon will come sorrow with the morning,
soon will come bitter grief and weeping:
sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-doing,
sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the infant King.
Soon comes the cross, the nails, the piercing,
then in the grave at last reposing;
sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby! is the babe awaking?
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not stir the infant King.
Dreaming of Easter, gladsome morning,
conquering death, its bondage breaking:
sing lullaby!

[6] O Come, all ye faithful (Adeste, fideles)

(Attr. J.F. Wade; Words: F. Oakeley and others)

O Come, all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O, Christ the Lord.

Adeste, fideles
Laeti triumphantes
venite, venite in Bethlehem
Natum videte
regem angelorum
venite adoremus
venite adoremus
venite adoremus Dominum

Natum videte
regem angelorum
venite adoremus
venite adoremus
venite adoremus Dominum

Ergo qui natus
die hodierna
Iesu tibi sit gloria
Patris aeterni
verbum caro factum

venite adoremus
venite adoremus
venite adoremus Dominum

Patris aeterni
verbum caro factum
venite adoremus
venite adoremus
venite adoremus Dominum

7 O little town of Bethlehem

(Traditional English; Words: Bishop Phillips Brooks)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

O morning stars together
proclaim the holy birth
and praises sing to God the King
And peace to men on Earth
For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

Where children pure and happy
pray to the blessed child
where misery cries out
to thee son of the mother's child
where charity stands watching
and faith holds wide the door
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks
and Christmas comes once more.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in:
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

8 Puer nobis nascitur

(Music: Peter Breiner

Words: Traditional 16th century Latin)

Puer nobis nascitur
rector angelorum;
in hoc mundo pascitur
Dominus dominorum.

In presepe positum
sub foeno asinorum.
cogoverunt Dominum
Christum regem coelorum.

Hunc Herodes timuit
Magno cum tremore
in infantes irruit
hos cedens in furore.

Qui natus ex Maria
die hodierna:
Duc nos tua gratia
Ad gaudia superna.

Te Salvator A et O
cantemus in choro
cantemus in organo
benedicamus Domino.

9) Silent Night (Stille Nacht)
(Music: Franz Gruber)

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds first saw the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar.
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Saviour is born,
Christ, the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiance beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

10) Little Jesus, sweetly sleep
(Traditional Czech)

Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir,
We will lend a coat of fur.

We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,

See the fur to keep you warm,
Snugly round your tiny form.

Mary's little baby, sleep, sweetly sleep,
Sleep in comfort, slumber deep.

We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,

We will serve you all we can,
Darling, darling little man.

Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir,
We will lend a coat of fur.

We will rock you, rock you, rock you,
We will rock you, rock you, rock you,

See the fur to keep you warm,
Snugly round your tiny form.

11) Gloucester Wassail
(Traditional English)

Wassail, wassail all over the town!
Our bread it is white and our ale it is brown,
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;
In the wassail bowl, we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right eye,
Pray God send our master a good Christmas pie,
A good Christmas pie as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl, we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his right horn,
Pray God send our master a good crop of corn,
a good crop of corn as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl, we'll drink unto thee.

Here's a health to the ox and to his long tail,
Pray God send our master a good cask of ale,
a good cask of ale as e'er I did see,
In the wassail bowl, we'll drink unto thee.

Come butler, come fill us a bowl of the best,
Then I pray that your soul in heaven may rest;
But if you do draw us a bowl of the small,
May the devil take butler, bowl and all.

Then here's to the maid in the lily white smock,
Who tripped to the door and slipped back the lock!
Who tripped to the door and pulled back the pin,
For to let these jolly wassailers walk in.

¶12 Quem pastores laudavere

(Music: Peter Breiner

Words: Traditional 14th century Latin)

Quem pastores laudavere,
quibus angeli dixere,
absit vobis iam timere,
natus est rex gloriae.

Ad quem magi ambulabant,
aurum, thus, myrrham portabant,
immolabant haec sincere
nato regi gloriae.

Exultemus cum Maria
In coelesti hierarchia
Natum promat voce pia
Laus honor et gloria.

Christo regi, Deo nato,
per Mariam nobis dato,
merito resonet vere
laus, honor et gloria.

¶13 The Virgin Mary had a baby boy

(Traditional West Indian)

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy,
And they say that His name is Jesus.
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
Oh yes, believer!
Oh yes, believer!
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.

The angels sang when the baby born,
The angels sang when the baby born,
The angels sang when the baby born,
And proclaimed Him the Savior, Jesus.

He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
Oh yes, believer!
Oh yes, believer!
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.

The wise men saw where the baby born,
The wise men saw where the baby born,
The wise men saw where the baby born,
And they said that His name was Jesus.

He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.
Oh yes, believer!
Oh yes, believer!
He came from the glory,
He came from the glorious kingdom.

This glorious collection of carols old and new brings a touch of glamour to the holiday season, with Peter Breiner's lavish arrangements for choir and orchestra adding a fresh twist to familiar festive melodies. Breiner's own Christmas carols complete the celebration.

A CHRISTMAS CHORAL SPECTACULAR

(arranged by Peter Breiner)

Playing Time
64:28

- | | | | |
|--|------|---|------|
| 1 Anon: Ding dong! Merrily on high | 2:46 | 7 Trad: O little town of Bethlehem | 5:52 |
| 2 Anon: Coventry Carol | 4:50 | 8 Breiner: Puer nobis nascitur | 7:26 |
| 3 Trad: Deck the hall | 3:17 | 9 Gruber: Silent Night (Stille Nacht) | 6:44 |
| 4 Trad: O Christmas Tree
(O Tannenbaum) | 5:07 | 10 Trad: Little Jesus, sweetly sleep | 4:19 |
| 5 Anon: The Infant King
(Oh, mi Belén) | 4:26 | 11 Trad: Gloucester Wassail | 4:40 |
| 6 Attrib. J.F. Wade: O come, all ye
faithful (Adeste, fideles) | 5:47 | 12 Breiner: Quem pastores
laudavere | 5:30 |
| | | 13 Trad: The Virgin Mary had a
baby boy | 3:43 |

All arrangements by Peter Breiner

Margaret Burdett, Soprano • Cecily Atkinson, Alto
Lynton Atkinson, Tenor • Jonathan Prentice, Bass
Bournemouth Symphony Chorus (Nigel Perrin, Chorus Master)
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra • Peter Breiner

Recorded at The Concert Hall, Lighthouse, Poole, on 26th and 27th June 2004
Producer: Andrew Walton (K&A Productions Ltd.) • Engineer: Mike Clements
Assistant engineer: Toby Walton
Post-Production: Eleanor Thomason and Andrew Walton
Booklet notes: Peter Dempsey
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