



Kantorei of Kansas City
Chris Munce

To Bethlehem

Carols and Motets for Christmas

To Bethlehem

Carols and Motets for Christmas

Kantorei of Kansas City
Chris Munce *conductor*

About Kantorei:

'[...] if you want to hear some gorgeous singing and inspiring words, Kantorei's new CD is right up your alley'

The Kansas City Star

'Kantorei is one of the most focused groups in town with clear direction, clear programming, and pristine singing. Kantorei should be on your must-hear list!'

KCMetropolis

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|---------|
| David Basden (b. 1957) | | Matthew Culloton | |
| 1. Alleluia! O virga mediatrix | [2:19] | 13. Still, still, still | [3:42] |
| Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980) | | Blasius Ammon | |
| 2. O come, O come Emmanuel | [5:02] | 14. Grates nunc omnes | [2:49] |
| Melchior Vulpus (c. 1570-1615) | | R. Douglas Helvering | |
| 3. Ascendit Joseph a Galilaea | [5:15] | 15. All my heart again rejoices | [4:57] |
| Claudio Merulo (1533-1604) | | Franz Gruber (1787-1863) | |
| 4. Spiritus Sanctus in te | [3:06] | arr. Ivo Antognini | |
| R. Douglas Helvering (b. 1977) | | 16. Silent night | [3:55] |
| 5. Ave Maria | [4:11] | Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980) | |
| Jakob Reiner (c. 1555-1606) | | 17. Dormi Jesu | [5:42] |
| 6. Hodie Christus natus est | [2:41] | Total playing time | [61:29] |
| Matthew Culloton (b. 1976) | | | |
| 7. Angels we have heard on high | [3:00] | | |
| 8. In dulci jubilo | [3:21] | | |
| Giovanni Bassano (c. 1558-1617) | | | |
| 9. Angelus ad pastores ait | [2:57] | | |
| Blasius Ammon (c. 1558-1590) | | | |
| 10. Parvulus filius | [2:41] | | |
| 11. Magi videntes stellam | [3:05] | | |
| Ivo Antognini (b. 1963) | | | |
| 12. O magnum mysterium | [2:38] | | |



To Bethlehem: Carols and Motets for Christmas

Over many centuries the story of Christmas and the journey of Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and the Wise Men to Bethlehem has been told through words and music, lending some of the most enduring and recognisable music to the choral repertoire. And while the Christmas story is one of great celebration, it's also a tale of wonderment and awe at the magnitude of the unfolding events.

Kantorei has compiled a set of songs that covers the spectrum of obscurity to familiarity. With motets by Blasius Ammon (c. 1558-1590) and Melchior Vulpius (c. 1570-1615) and others that are rarely performed, juxtaposed with fresh new arrangements of some of the world's most cherished Christmas Carols. The programme is assembled, not with chronology of the music's creation, but with the chapters of the Christmas story. The story follows the Prophecy and Annunciation, the journey to Bethlehem, the birth of the Christ Child and the visit of the Wise Men until, finally, the new born baby is sung to sleep.

This journey in music begins with a bold prophecy by the Australian composer David Basden (b. 1957), **Alleluia! O virga**

mediatrix. With a text by the twelfth-century German abbess Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179), Basden takes a simpler approach to his earlier counterpart in this alleluia-antiphon, the assured and poised 'alleluia' juxtaposed with the prayerful text on Mary as mediator between Earth and Heaven.

The expectation continues with one of the most familiar of Advent hymns, **O come, O come, Emmanuel**, in this new arrangement by North Dakota native Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980). The fragmented and often opaque qualities of this arrangement lead up to the united pinnacle of expectation at 'O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind.'

The first of the programme's selection of rarely-heard Renaissance motets follow with Melchior Vulpius's **Ascendit Joseph a Galilaea**, a setting of verses from Luke's gospel (2:4-14), and Claudio Merulo's (1533-1604) setting of the Latin antiphon for the first Sunday of Advent, **Spiritus Sanctus in te**. Continuing the theme of prophecy, *Spiritus Sanctus in te*, speaks of Mary's immaculate conception in bearing the Son of God, while the more intricate *Ascendit Joseph a Galilaea* narrates the listener through the journey to Bethlehem and the call to the shepherds to visit the new-born baby boy.

A reverent Roman Catholic prayer to the Virgin Mary follows, with R. Douglas Helvering's (b. 1977) rich double choir setting of **Ave Maria**, the hushed opening gradually leading up to the climactic 'Sancta Maria, mater Dei' (Holy Mary, mother of God) and an extended and impassioned 'Amen'. **Hodie Christus natus est** by Jakob Reiner (c. 1555-1606) is a setting of the Magnificat antiphon for Vespers on Christmas Day and speaks of the birth of Christ and the rejoicing of the angels, archangels and all the righteous.

Based on two traditional carols, the next two steps on the journey, **Angels we have heard on high** and **In dulci jubilo**, are compelling arrangements by the Minneapolis-based composer Matthew Culloton (b. 1976). The first of these is an arrangement of a French carol characterised by the recurring rhythms and gentle syncopation. Towards the close of *Angels we have heard on high* we hear a quotation in the tenor part from the ensuing carol, a setting of the traditional German carol *In dulci jubilo*, which continues the exultation of the birth of the world's saviour in this famous macaronic text.

Also employing verses from the second chapter of Luke's gospel, Italian composer

Giovanni Bassano's (c. 1558-1617) **Angelus ad pastores ait** tells of the angels' annunciation to the shepherds. Two motets by the Austrian Franciscan friar Blasius Ammon follow – **Parvulus filius** and **Magi videntes stellam**. *Parvulus filius*, is a Latin antiphon of celebration for Christmas Day, while **Magi videntes stellam**, which introduces the Wise Men to the story, with their own journey to Bethlehem to bring gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the child.

The final section of this programme focuses on the 'holy night' and the moments of peace after Jesus's birth. The first of two works in this programme by Swiss composer Ivo Antognini (b. 1963) **O magnum mysterium** speaks of the awe and wonderment at the coming of Christ – 'the great mystery'. The final contribution to the journey from Matthew Culloton follows with an arrangement of a traditional Austrian carol, **Still, still, still**. The gentle lullaby of *Still, still, still* gives way to a thankful motet for use at midnight mass on Christmas Eve, **Grates nunc omnes** (Now let us give thanks) the last of Ammon's works featured here.

Composed for and dedicated to Kantorei of Kansas City, **All my heart again rejoices** by R. Douglas Helvering provides a modern recapitulation of *Grates nunc omnes* with typical luxuriant textures before a fresh and

unique take by Ivo Antognini on Franz Gruber's (1787-1863) infamous carol **Silent night**.

Closing this programme is a final tender lullaby to the new baby, **Dormi, Jesu** by the Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980). With the journey complete, a final moment of reflection on the greatest story ever told.

Kantorei of Kansas City are extremely grateful to the following who generously supported this recording:

Chris Munce
Brad Pearson
David Basden
Kimberly Sheek
Steve Brown
Sarah Dwyer
Maria Brobst
Gary and Laura Wesche
Jamie Munce
Jessica Munce
Mary Goforth
Kelli Hemstock
Tommy and Rita Duncan
Lisa Greenwald
Robert Bode
Andrew Brewer
Orren and Carole Lee
Dave & Susie Gale



Texts & translations

David Basden (b. 1957)

1. Alleluia! O Virga mediatrix

Alleluia! O virga mediatrix,
sancta viscera tua mortem superaverunt
et venter tuus omnes creaturas illuminavit
in pulchro flore de suavissima integritate
clausi pudoris tui orto. Alleluia!

*O branch and intercessor,
your sacred flesh has conquered death,
your womb all creatures illumined
in beauty's bloom from that exquisite purity
of your enclosed modesty
sprung forth.*

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)

Jocelyn Hagen (b. 1980)

2. O come, O come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer,
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! ...

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orders all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! ...

O come, Desire of nations,
Bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! ...

John Mason Neale (1818-1866) & Henry Sloane Coffin

Melchior Vulpius (c. 1570-1615)

3. Ascendit Joseph a Galilaea

Ascendit Joseph a Galilaea de civitate
Nazareth in Judaeam,
in civitatem David, quae vocatur Bethlehem:
ut profiteretur cum Maria desponsata sibi uxore,
quae erat praegnans.
Accidit autem, cum essent ibi, completi sunt
dies ut pariendi.
Et peperit filium suum primogenitum,
et pannis eum involvit,
et reclinavit eum in praesepio:
quia non erat eis locus in diversorio.
Et pastores erant in regione eadem vigilantes,
et custodientes vigilias noctis super gregem suum.
Et ecce angelus Domini astitit illis,
et claritas Domini circumfulsit illos,
et timuerunt timore magno.

Et dixit illis angelus: Ne timeatis:
ecce enim annuncio vobis gaudium magnum,
quod futurum est toti populo: quia natus est
vobis hodie Salvator, qui est Christus Dominus,
in civitate David.
Et hoc vobis signum: invenietis puerum fasciis
involutum, et positum in praesepe. Et subito
facta est cum angelo multitudo militiae
coelestis laudantium Deum, et dicentium:
Gloria in altissimis Deo, et in terra pax
hominibus bona voluntas.
Alleluja.

To And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.' Alleluia.

Luke 2:4-14

Claudio Merulo (1533-1604)

4. Spiritus Sanctus in te

Spiritus Sanctus in te descendet, Maria, ne timeas, habebis in utero filium Dei. Alleluia.

The Holy Ghost will descend upon you, Mary, Do not be afraid, for you will bear in your womb the son of God. Alleluia.

Antiphon for the First Sunday of Advent

R. Douglas Helvering (b. 1977)

5. Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus [Christus]. Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus [Christ]. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Roman Catholic prayer

Jakob Reiner (c. 1555-1606)

6. Hodie Christus natus est

Hodie Christus natus est, Hodie Salvator apparuit, Hodie in terra canunt Angeli, laetantur Archangeli, Hodie exultant iusti, dicentes, Gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia.

Today, Christ is born, Today, the Saviour appears, Today, on earth the angels sing, Archangels rejoice, Today the righteous rejoice, saying: 'Glory to God in the highest.' Alleluia.

Antiphon for Christmas Day

Matthew Culloton (b. 1976)

7. Angels we have heard on high

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains. Gloria!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria.

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ, whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria.

Traditional French

Matthew Culloton
8. **In dulci jubilo**
In dulci jubilo,
Let our homage show,
Our heart's joy reclineth
In praesepio,
And like a bright star shineth
Matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O.

O Jesu parvule!
I yearn for thee alway!
Hear me, I beseech thee,
O Puer optime!
My prayer let it reach thee,
O Princeps gloriae,
Trahe me post te.

O Patris caritas!
O Nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained,
Per nostra crimina;
But thou hast gained
Coelorum gaudia!
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia,
Where, if they be not there?
There are angels singing
Nova cantica!
And there the bells do ring
In Regis curia.
O that we were there!

*In sweet joy
Let our homage show,
Our heart's joy reclineth
In a manger
And like a bright star shineth
In the mother's lap
You are the Beginning and Ending.*

O infant Jesus
I yearn for thee alway!
Hear me, I beseech thee,
O best of boys
My prayer let it reach thee,
O Prince of Glory,
Draw me after you

O love of the Father
O gentleness of the Son
Deeply were we stained,
Through our sins
But thou hast gained
The joys of heaven
O that we were there!

Where are the joys
Where, if they be not there?
There are angels singing
new songs
And there the bells do ring
in the King's courts
O that we were there!
In sweet joy.

Traditional German

Giovanni Bassano (c. 1558-1617)

9. Angelus ad pastores ait

Angelus ad pastores ait:

annuntio vobis gaudium magnum,

quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator mundi.

Alleluia.

Parvulus filius hodie natus est nobis,

et vocabitur Deus fortis.

Alleluia.

The angel said to the shepherds,

'I announce to you tidings of great joy,

For unto you is born this day the Saviour of the world.'

Alleluia.

A tiny son is born to us today,

and he shall be called Mighty God.

Alleluia.

Luke 2:10-11

Blasius Ammon (c. 1558-1590)

10. Parvulus filius

Parvulus filius hodie natus est nobis,

et vocabitur Deus fortis.

Alleluia.

Today a tiny son is born to us,

and he will be called, Mighty God.

Alleluia.

Antiphon for Christmas Day

Blasius Ammon

11. Magi videntes stellam

Magi videntes stellam

dixerunt ad invicem,

hoc signum magni regis est.

Eamus inquiramus,

et offeramus ei munera,

aurum thus et myrrham.

Alleluia.

The magi, seeing the star,

said to each other,

'This is the sign of a great king!

Let us go see him

and offer him gifts,

gold, frankincense, and myrrh.'

Alleluia

Antiphon for Epiphany.

Ivo Antognini (b. 1963)

12. O magnum mysterium

O magnum mysterium

et admirabile sacramentum,

ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,

jacentem in praesepio!

Beata Virgo, cujus viscera

meruerunt portare

Dominum Christum. Alleluia.

O great mystery,

and wonderful sacrament,

that animals should see the new-born Lord,

lying in a manger!

Blessed is the Virgin whose womb

was worthy to bear

Christ the Lord. Alleluia!

Responsory for Matins on Christmas Day

Matthew Culloton

13. Still, still, still

Still, still, still

One can hear the falling snow.

For all is hushed,

The world is sleeping,

Holy Star its vigil keeping.

Still, still, still,

One can hear the falling snow.

Sleep, sleep, sleep,

'Tis the eve of our Saviour's birth.

The night is peaceful all around you,

Close your eyes,

Let sleep surround you.

Sleep, sleep, sleep

'Tis the eve of our Saviour's birth.

Dream, dream, dream,

Of the joyous day to come.

While guardian angels without number

Watch you as you sweetly slumber.

Dream, dream, dream,

Of the joyous day to come.

Traditional Austrian

Blasius Ammon

14. Grates nunc omnes

Grates nunc omnes reddamus Domino Deo

qui sua nativitate liberavit nos de diabolica potestate.

Huic oportet ut canamus cum angelis semper

gloria in excelsis.

Now let us all respond with thanks to the Lord God,

Who, from his birth, delivered us from the power of the devil.

We ought to sing with the angels forever,

'Glory in the highest.'

Antiphon for Midnight Mass

R. Douglas Helvering

15. All my heart again rejoices

All my heart again rejoices

As I hear

Far and near

Sweetest angel voices.

'Christ is born!' their choirs are singing

Till the air

Ev'rywhere

Now with joy is ringing.

Alleluia!

P. Gerhardt (1607-1676), tr. C. Winkworth (1827-1878)

Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

arr. Ivo Antognini

16. Silent night

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 quake at 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.

Radiant beams from Thy holy face

With dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980)

17. Dormi Jesu

Dormi, Jesu! Mater ridet

Quae tam dulcem somnum videt,

Dormi, Jesu, blandule, Jesu!

Si non dormis, Mater plorat,

Inter fila cantans orat,

Blande, veni, somnule.

Sleep, Jesus! Mother smiles

Who sees such sweet sleep,

Sleep, Jesus, adorable!

If you sleep not, Mother weeps,

While she spins thread, she prays in song,

Come, adorable little sleep.

Anonymous Latin



Photography: Russell Walker

Kantorei of Kansas City

Kantorei KC aims to educate audiences, enrich lives, build community, and bring vitality to past and present through music of the highest professional quality.

Kantorei KC is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to educating audiences by performing music selected from the Medieval period through the twenty-first century. Kantorei first established a reputation with their adult professional ensemble through its recordings, concerts and convention performances. Now it has expanded our mission to include music education through the Kantorei Summer Choral Institute. Kantorei has performed on various concert series and convention stages around the mid-west US in addition to an ever expanding local concert season.

The choir is committed to innovative programming of exceptional music, and extraordinary choral sound. Kantorei features many of the Metro's finest professional singers as well as some wonderful young talent, who bring a stunning palette of vocal colours, impeccable control, and sensitive musical expression. Kantorei specialises in concerts that explore the historical links between music of all eras and art, politics,

literature and culture, and most importantly, all with an attention to detail and performance practice. Concerts feature a wide variety of excellent music ranging from Schutz to La Bamba, from medieval chant to sophisticated arrangements of traditional folk music. Kantorei combines these in ways that serve the ensemble's broader artistic vision.

www.kantoreikc.org



Chris Munce (artistic director)

Chris Munce is an accomplished choral performer, conductor, educator, clinician and arts administrator. As a performer, he is a member of Kantorei of Kansas City, as well as its Founder and Artistic Director. He has also performed with the Simon Carrington Chamber Singers, and the Grammy Winning Kansas City Chorale. Chris was fortunate to be a part of the Chorale's Grammy Nominated album, *Rheinberger: Sacred Choral Works*, as well as Simon Carrington's *Juxtapositions*. With Kantorei, Chris has lead the group in making three complete album recordings. *Sweet Was the Song* was self produced and released in 2011. Kantorei completed its second album *Music and Sweet Poetry* which was released in 2014 can be found on the Resonus Classics Label.

Chris received a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting from the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance. His graduate research focus was the performance practice of early Baroque choral singing in the French and Italian styles. Chris has studied with Eph Eely, Charles Robinson, Ryan Board, Richard Sparks, William Dehning, Peter Bagley and Jerry McCoy. He also served as adjunct

faculty at the Conservatory teaching choral arranging, and at Blue River Community College as a professor of voice. Chris recently served as the President of Conservatory's Alumni Board of Directors.

Chris is now teaching at Lee's Summit High School as the Director of Choral Studies, where his premier ensemble 'Sounds of Summit' has recently performed at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC and on a Masterclass with the multiple Grammy Award winning vocal group Chanticleer. Munce is also Director of Music at Central United Methodist Church in Kansas City. He has been an active private voice instructor since 1999.

Kantorei of Kansas City

Soprano

Suzanne Hatcher *
Amy Krinke
Laura Lowry
Beth Munce *

Alto

Elise Hepworth
Chris Munce
Alexis Rolls
Courtney Williams

Artistic Director: Chris Munce
Assistant Director: Christopher Smith
Production Manager: Paul Davidson
Recording Engineer: Josh Williams

Soloists:

* O come, O come Emmanuel (track 2)
† Still, still, still (track 13)

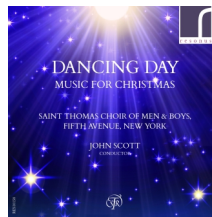
Tenor

Brad Light
Alan Murray
Jake Thede
Vince Woods *

Bass

Paul Davidson †
Jon Duncan
Jacob Lowry *
Christopher Smith
Thou Yang

More titles from Resonus Classics



Dancing Day: Music for Christmas
Saint Thomas Choir of Men & Boys,
Fifth Avenue, New York
John Scott (conductor)
RES10158

'The abiding impression is one of intimacy, innocence and wonder [...] This is a moving, memorable recital'
BBC Music Magazine (Christmas Choice 2015)



Music & Sweet Poetry: Choral Music by Matthew Harris
Kantorei of Kansas City
Chris Munce (artistic director)
RES10125

'I enjoyed hearing this album; the quality of the performances, booklet notes and recording all contributed to that enjoyment.'
MusicWeb International

© 2016 Resonus Limited

© 2016 Resonus Limited

Recorded in St Peter's Catholic Church, Brookside, Kansas City, Missouri on 10-12 June 2016

Producer & Editor: Adam Binks

Engineer: Josh Williams

Session photography © Resonus Limited

Recorded at 24-bit/96kHz resolution (DDD)

RESONUS LIMITED – UK

info@resonusclassics.com
www.resonusclassics.com

