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CLASSICS

# Only a Singing Bird

## NYCoS National Girls Choir

Karen Cargill *mezzo soprano*

Philip Moore *piano*

Christopher Bell *conductor*



Includes *The Ships of Arcady* and *The Little Road to Bethlehem* by Michael Head

# ONLY A SINGING BIRD

<b>Snowbirds</b>		Michael Head	
[1]	The Bird of Morn		[2.29]
[2]	Under the Bower of Night		[2.48]
[3]	Little Foo		[4.40]
[4]	Love Offerings		[1.41]
[5]	Only a Singing Bird		[2.38]
[6]	Spring Grass		[2.58]
[7]	King Ra		[5.11]
<b>The Food of Love – Book 2</b>		Gary Carpenter	
[8]	Spring		[2.30]
[9]	Under the Greenwood Tree		[3.01]
[10]	Winter		[2.24]
[11]	<b>A Funny Fellow</b>	Michael Head	[1.38]
[12]	<b>The Ships of Arcady</b>	Michael Head	[3.15]
[13]	<b>The Little Road to Bethlehem</b>	Michael Head	[2.35]
[14]	<b>The Robin's Carol</b>	Michael Head	[2.53]
[15]	<b>Star Candles</b>	Michael Head	[2.23]
[16]	<b>Ave Maria</b>	Michael Head	[3.03]
[17]	<b>Bonie Wee Thing</b>	Ken Johnston	[3.31]
[18]	<b>The Wind that Shakes the Barley</b>	Ken Johnston	[2.48]
[19]	<b>The Circus</b>	Stephen Deazley	[2.50]
Total timings:			[55.20]

NYCoS NATIONAL GIRLS CHOIR  
KAREN CARGILL MEZZO-SOPRANO  
PHILIP MOORE PIANO  
CHRISTOPHER BELL CONDUCTOR

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## The NYCoS National Girls Choir sings Michael Head and other composers

It is only just over a century ago that young amateur choirs began to gain a repertoire that might be performed without embarrassment. Gustav Holst, who was not only composer of *The Planets* but also a major pioneer of school music, once wrote in despair to a friend: "I find the question of getting music for girls' schools perfectly hopeless. I get reams of twaddle sent me periodically, and that is all the publishers seem to think is suitable for girls."

Such was the situation he faced in the decade or so before the outbreak of World War I. To an extent, Holst's former teacher Charles Villiers Stanford was attempting to improve the standard of school music through the publication in 1906 of a *New National Song Book* a volume which was successful enough to go through several editions even through World War II and the 1950s. This contained, apart from an assortment of rounds and "folk songs" (in fact much divorced from the authentic folk song tradition then being discovered by Cecil Sharp), many songs of the sea, a reflection of Britain's much celebrated naval reputation. It's not so surprising, then,

that on this album the earliest song in terms of composition is "**The Ships of Arcady**", originally composed during World War I by Michael Head (1900-76).

As a teenager Head had been rejected for military service, and so had started working in a munitions factory. It was during that time that he composed his first collection of solo songs, *Over the Rim of the Moon* settings of poems by the Irishman Francis Ledwidge (himself killed at Ypres in 1917) including 'The Ships of Arcady'. This collection became Head's first published work (by Boosey & Hawkes) in 1919. That year he began composition studies with John Ireland and in September 1919 joined the Royal Academy of Music as the Sir Michael Costa Scholar for composition.

Other songs followed, including the collection *Songs of Fantasy* published in 1920, from which "**A Funny Fellow**" is taken. Head himself gained some fame as a singer, giving his first public recital at the Wigmore Hall in 1929, singing while accompanying himself at the piano! In all he composed around 124 songs, several of which gained even greater currency when arranged for choir, including "The Ships of Arcady". By far the most often performed

and recorded of Head's works by choirs is "**The Little Road to Bethlehem**" (published in 1946, then subsequently in 1954 in the arrangement for chorus, as sung here). Other Christmas songs include "**Star Candles**" (published 1942) and "*The Robin's Carol*" (published 1950). Head also wrote several other religious works, including a set of *Three Sacred Songs*, published in 1954, from which the **Ave Maria** on this album is taken.

It was for The Ladybrook Ladies Choir, conducted by their founder Elsie Harrop, that Michael Head composed "Under the Bower of Night" and "I am only a Singing Bird", setting texts by the Brahmin poet Sri Ananda Acharya (1881-1945), for SSA voices and piano: these were performed by the choir to mark its silver jubilee in 1953. The following year Head added a further five settings of Acharya's poetry to create a choral cantata, **Snowbirds**, named after the 1919 publication from which Head had selected his texts. To the women's voices Head originally added a baritone soloist, though the score published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1956 suggests that part could be sung by a mezzo-soprano (as it is on this recording).

Several of the songs are about or allude to birds, and Head often reinforces the avian theme either through his musical setting or by changing an individual poem's title. Yet one should not be misled by the cantata's overall title. Rather, the common theme is the appearance of birds or other natural phenomena as symbols for often quite powerful emotional states. The first song, setting a poem originally titled "New Life" but retitled by Head "The Bird of Morn", concerns the poet's rejection of the lugubrious world of night in preference for dawn and its promised comforts. In "Under the Bower of Night", by contrast, the poet embraces the piping song (identified by Head's piano accompaniment as a bird's song) heard at dusk. "Little Foo" is a parable about a motherless boy who is comforted by a cliff's echo, believing it to be his mother's voice "from her high dwelling on the shadowy-ledge above the eagle's nest"; tragedy follows when he is removed by a well-meaning relative from that echo. "Love Offerings" is a short anecdote of an encounter with a woman bearing a basket of fruit; initially sung by the soloist alone, Head intensifies the sense of revelation created by the woman's answer with an unexpected key-change, reinforced by humming chorus. "Only a Bird" – retitled by

Head "Only a Singing Bird" – is a simple yet charming setting utterly appropriate to its subject. "Spring Grass" is another symbolic song, a love duet between the sun and the spring grass, Head here recalling Vaughan Williams's "Love Bade Me Welcome" from *Five Mystical Songs*. Vaughan Williams's influence can be also heard in the last and longest setting, "King Ra", telling of the monarch and his kingdom.

Gary Carpenter (born 1951), though a friend of such leading British composers as Oliver Knussen and Simon Bainbridge, was until recently one of the least recognised of British composers of his generation. Yet more people have seen him perform or heard his music than any of his peers could dream of. Carpenter's first job after graduating from London's Royal College of Music was as associate musical director of the 1973 cult film *The Wicker Man* – he appears on-screen plucking a Nordic lyre while Britt Ekland and Ingrid Pitt prepare Edward Woodward for his fiery demise. Much more recently, his colourful orchestral piece *Dadaville* was commissioned by the BBC for the opening night of the 2015 Proms in the Royal Albert Hall.

Carpenter's *The Food of Love* a projected series of four books of choral settings of Shakespeare, was commissioned by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust for a two year project, celebrating the 450th anniversary of the playwright's birth (2014), and the 400th anniversary of his death (2016). Two of Carpenter's books will be for full choir, another for high voices and piano, and one for male voices and piano. Book 2 recorded here consists of three settings, each for two soprano parts and an alto part with piano accompaniment. The first and last settings are complementary – "Spring" (set to an uneven yet lilting metre of five) and "Winter" (its potentially "square 4/4 metre offset by the piano's edgy tango-like rhythms), both taken from *Love's Labours Lost* – framing a text taken from *As You Like It* which, as Carpenter explains, "references both hot and cold weather and so sits neatly between the other two songs".

Born in Glasgow and brought up in Aberdeen, Ken Johnston now lives and works in East Lothian. He has a long association with the National Youth Choir of Scotland, having been encouraged early in his career to write choral music by the choir's founder and artistic director Christopher Bell; Johnston became one of ten

composers based in Scotland commissioned by the choir in 2006, as part of its tenth anniversary celebrations, to each write three songs: one to use the pentatonic scale; one that was diatonic without any accidentals; and one diatonic with accidentals. Published accordingly by NYCoS in three separate collections, the project was so successful that a second collection was commissioned using the same criteria. Ken Johnston was commissioned on both occasions, and on this recording the choir sings the pentatonic songs he wrote for each edition: “**Bonnie Wee Thing**” from Songbooks 1, and “**The Wind that Shakes the Barley**” from Songbooks 2. Both songs demonstrate considerable ingenuity in concealing the pentatonic basis of the choir’s music with piano accompaniments that modulate, so implying several key changes without disrupting the choir’s scale.

Another composer commissioned by NYCoS for the second edition of this project was Belfast-born Stephen Deazley, who qualified for inclusion as he now lives in Scotland. His contributions included *The Circus*, a lively fulfillment of the project’s non-chromatic diatonic category. Deazley has described working with children as having the greatest

impact on his composing career: “They are the best audience and inspiring to watch when they perform. Where music is concerned they have no pretensions whatsoever – they don’t call it ART – but you know when they like it. Equally you know when they don’t!”

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## TEXTS

### Snowbirds

Michael Head (1900–1976)

Words by Sri Ananda Acharya (1881–1945)

#### 1 The Bird of Morn

I will not listen to thy chant,  
O Singer of the Night!  
I will not come to the river,  
O Thirster after Night!  
I will not wander among graves,  
O Traveller in the Night!  
I have built my home on the strand  
In the sound of the song of the Ocean.  
I have seen the sun rise  
Upon the Last Night’s passing,  
And I will hasten home and welcome  
At my window the Bird of Morn.

#### 2 Under the Bower of Night

I heard Him playing on His flute  
And the stars sat listening in the sky.  
The notes came pouring down the hills  
And mingled with the murmur of streams.  
I stood beneath the bower of night  
And fixed my ears in the sky,  
And gave my heart and my mind

To hear the song of His piping.  
The winds lay asleep on the bosom  
Of the drowsy sea,  
I saw the Queen of Dreams standing  
On tip-toe at the heavens’ edge.  
The stars closed their eyes and died  
In the joy of His song,  
And I know not myself since His melody  
Entered my soul.

#### 3 Little Foo

On the sky-hid uplands of Kansu,  
Where the Sampo winds  
Among pale purple asters, lit-blood poppies,  
And rosy twinkling primulas,  
There lived a little boy named Foo,  
Motherless and unfriended.  
One evening as the sun went down he stood  
Before the gaunt, bare cliff, Jing Ko,  
And called aloud and said:  
“Mother, where art thou?”  
And out of the dusky shadows  
Came a threefold echo,  
Wave upon wave, ringing  
With tender throbs of memory,  
And Foo believed it was his mother’s voice,  
Answering his call from her high dwelling  
On the shadowy ledge above the eagle’s nest.

And when the evening cow-bells tinkled  
 In the valley and the tired day-god went to rest,  
 Foo would stand before Jing Ko and call aloud  
 And listen to his mother's answer:  
 "Thou... thou... thou."  
 One day came Hilpi, the sister of his mother,  
 And kissed him and took him to her home,  
 Down in the smoke-roofed village of Lil-Cho.  
 And Foo ran out at evening to the village green  
 And called aloud as was his wont:  
 "Mother, where art thou?"  
 No answer came, and little Foo shouted again  
 And yet again,  
 And still he called, until the chamber  
 Of his speech was shattered – and he died.  
 Even today the pilgrim lays a tear –  
 Offering on the mute grave of little Foo,  
 Nestled among pale purple asters,  
 Lit-blood poppies, and rosy twinkling primulas,  
 On the sky-hid uplands of Kansu.

#### **4 Love Offerings**

I saw her in the morning climbing the steeps  
 With a basket of fruits in her hand;  
 She smiled as she climbed, high and high,  
 Up to the peak where the moon was sinking  
 At day-dawn.  
 "Whither goest thou? And to whom art thou

Bearing these fruits, little mother?" I asked.  
 And smiling she answered,  
 "I carry the love-offerings of the living  
 To their beloved who dwell in the moon."  
 And I saw her enter the moon like a star  
 Smiling itself away into the glory  
 Of the morning sun.

#### **5 Only a Singing Bird**

I am not God nor His messenger,  
 I am only a singing bird.  
 I am not Poet nor his Muse,  
 I am only a singing bird.  
 I am not Prophet, I am not sage.  
 I am only a singing bird.  
 I fly in the heav'ns across the seas,  
 And come to sing at thy door,  
 Each dawn when the morning god  
 Smiles on the ocean.  
 Each eve when the twilight god  
 Sings at earth's ends.  
 Each night when the god of thy heart  
 Sits in silence, alone with the god of my heart.  
 I am only a singing bird.

#### **6 Spring Grass**

"Dost thou not love me?"  
 Said the spring grass to the smiling sun,  
 "Under the snow I sat, waiting for thee,  
 While storms were raging in the misty skies.  
 Did I see thee come in the wintry night  
 Or hear the beetle chirr?"  
 "I came and I came again  
 And peeped at thee through the snow,  
 I danced on the yellow moss each morn  
 Outside thy door,  
 And under thine ice-latticed window each eve  
 I sang thee a new serenade" said the sun.  
 "I lay asleep in my lightless home and in dreams  
 I heard thy song,  
 And I knew that thy heart was true and again  
 I should see thee in Spring."  
 So spake the fair spring grass  
 And trembled in the breeze,  
 And the gentle sun touched her brow  
 With his ruby lips of rays.

#### **7 King Ra**

There was once a great King Ra,  
 Who ruled the land of Va wisely and well.  
 His subjects were true and noble  
 And lived in the love of God.  
 They knew not poverty, disease or war,

And no man left this life,  
 Until the blossoms of a hundred summers  
 Had smiled before his eyes.  
 Their gardens were full of fruit,  
 Their fields were full of corn,  
 And full of honey were their hives.  
 Thus, in the happy land of Va,  
 King Ra ruled righteously for eighty summers.  
 And there came an angel from God's heaven  
 And said,  
 "Hail, King! God is merciful, and by His grace,  
 Even with this thy body of clay,  
 Shall thou ascend to Heav'n."  
 And the King spoke and said:  
 "Glory to God in the Height,  
 for He hath shown mercy unto His servant Ra.  
 But shall I be happy in Heaven,  
 O kindly messenger,  
 Without my minister Hu  
 And all my good people of Va?"  
 And the angel said:  
 "By the mercy of God Thou, and thy servant Hu  
 And all the good people of Va,  
 Shall ascend to Heav'n and live for ever."  
 So did it come to pass,  
 And men of faithful heart even in these our days.  
 See in the firmament,  
 The heavenly city of the virtuous Ra.  
 The great king of the ancient land, the land of Va.

## The Food of Love – Book 2

Gary Carpenter (b.1951)

Words by William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

### 8 Spring

When daisies pied and violets blue  
And lady-smocks all silver-white,  
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,  
Do paint the meadows with delight,  
The cuckoo then, on ev'ry tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,  
“Cuckoo;  
Cuckoo, cuckoo”: o word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear.

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,  
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,  
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,  
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,  
The cuckoo then, on ev'ry tree,  
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,  
“Cuckoo;  
Cuckoo, cuckoo”: o word of fear,  
Unpleasing to a married ear.

### 9 Under the Greenwood Tree

Under the greenwood tree,  
Who loves to lie with me,  
And turn his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see no enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Seeking the food he eats,  
And pleased with what he gets,  
Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see no enemy  
But winter and rough weather.

### 10 Winter

When icicles hang by the wall  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
And milk comes frozen home in pail;  
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
“Tu-who!  
Tu-whit! Tu-who!”: A merry note!  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,  
And birds sit brooding in the snow,  
And Marian's nose looks red and raw;  
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl  
Then nightly sings the staring owl:  
“Tu-who!  
Tu-whit! Tu-who!”: A merry note!  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

### 11 A Funny Fellow

Michael Head (1900-1976)

Words by Frank Dempster Sherman (1860-1916)

There is a funny fellow  
Who goes by every day:  
When sad, his voice is mellow,  
But shrill when he is gay.

I know he pulls the thistles  
That grow along the lane,  
And pricks himself, and whistles  
To drive away the pain.

And when the snow is falling  
So fast I may not see,  
I often hear him calling  
Across the fields to me.

He sings to me, and makes me  
A sleepy child at night;  
He sings again, and wakes me,  
At early morning bright.

### 12 The Ships of Arcady

Michael Head

Words by Francis Edward Ledwidge (1887-1917)

Thro' the faintest filigree,  
Over the dim waters go,  
Little ships of Arcady,  
When the morning moon is low.

I can hear the sailors' song  
From the blue edge of the sea,  
Passing like the lights along  
Thro' the dusky filigree.

Then where moon and waters meet  
Sail by sail they pass away,  
With little friendly winds replete  
Blowing from the breaking day.

And when the little ships have flown,  
Dreaming still of Arcady  
I look across the waves, alone  
In the misty filigree.

**13 The Little Road to Bethlehem**

Michael Head

Words by Margaret Rose (d.1958)

As I walked down the road at set of sun,  
The lambs were coming homeward one by one.  
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them,  
Along the little road to Bethlehem

Beside an open door as I drew nigh,  
I heard sweet Mary sing a lullaby.  
She sang about the lambs at close of day,  
And rocked her tiny King among the hay.

Across the air the silver sheepbells rang.  
“The lambs are coming home,” sweet Mary sang.  
“Your star of gold, your star of gold is shining in  
the sky.  
So sleep, my little King, go lullaby.”

**14 The Robin's Carol**

Michael Head

Words by Patience Strong (1907-1990)

The Robin on the frosted twig  
Pours forth a song of praise,  
Just as if he knew that these  
Were high and holy days.  
Trills of music ripple from

That tiny crimson throat.  
Never did I hear him give  
So clear and glad a note.

Sing on, little chorister,  
Upon this happy morn,  
Tell your silent brothers that  
The Prince of Peace is born.  
Bid the blackbirds and the thrushes  
Make sweet melody,  
For it is the season of  
The Lord's Nativity,  
Alleluia.

**15 Star Candles**

Michael Head

Words by Margaret Rose (d.1958)

The sun's in his cradle,  
The bird's in her nest,  
The Shepherds are calling  
The lambs home to rest.  
Go, sleep little Jesus!  
The wind's riding by  
To set all the candles  
Alight in the sky.

A candle for Kingship,  
Sweet laughter it brings

And mirth's golden music,  
The riches of Kings.  
Go, sleep little Jesus!  
The wind's riding by  
To set all the candles  
Alight in the sky

But oh! in the skytop  
Up there I can see  
A cross, it is shining,  
It's shining on thee,  
Go, sleep little Jesus!  
The wind's riding by  
To set all the candles  
Alight in the sky.

**16 Ave Maria**

Michael Head

Traditional prayer

Ave Maria gratia plena  
Dominus tecum:  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus  
Et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesu.

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 amongst women  
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*Holy Mary, Mother of God  
Pray for us sinners  
Now and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.)*

**17 Bonie Wee Thing**

Ken Johnston (b.1962)

Words by Robert Burns (1759-1796)

Bonie wee thing, cannie wee thing,  
Lovely wee thing, wert thou mine,  
I wad wear thee in my bosom,  
Lest my jewel it should tine.

Wishfully I look and languish  
In that bonie face o' thine,  
And my heart it stounds wi' anguish,  
Lest my wee thing be na mine.

Wit, and Grace, and Love, and Beauty,  
In ae constellation shine;  
To adore thee is my duty,  
Goddess o' this soul o' mine!

**18 The Wind that Shakes the Barley**

Ken Johnston

Words by Katharine Tynan (1861-1931)

There's music in my heart all day,  
I hear it late and early,  
It comes from fields are far away,  
The wind that shakes the barley.

Above the uplands drenched with dew  
The sky hangs soft and pearly,  
An emerald world is listening to  
The wind that shakes the barley.

Above the bluest mountain crest  
The lark is singing rarely,  
It rocks the singer into rest,  
The wind that shakes the barley.

Oh, still through summers and through springs  
It calls me late and early.  
Come home, come home, come home, it sings,  
The wind that shakes the barley.

**19 The Circus**

Stephen Deazley (b.1969)

Words by C J Dennis (1876-1938)

Hey, there! Hoop-la!  
Have you seen the dappled horse  
Gallop round the ring?  
Have you seen the acrobats on the dizzy swing?  
Have you seen the elephant?  
Have you seen the clown?  
Hey, there! Hoop-la! The circus is in town!

Have you seen the tumbling men  
Tumble up and down?  
Hoop-la! Hoop-la! The circus is in town!  
Here's the educated dog  
Jumping through the hoop!  
Hoop-la! Hoop-la! Here's the circus troupe!

See the lady Blondin with the parasol and fan,  
The lad upon the ladder  
And the India rubber man.  
See the joyful juggler  
And the boy who loops the loop!  
Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! The circus is in town!



## NYCOS NATIONAL GIRLS CHOIR

### Soprano 1

Juliet Barclay  
Rebecca Black  
Lucy Blair  
Christina Callion  
Emilia Darwent  
Becky Deveney  
Georgia Dunn  
Claire Gilchrist  
Amy-Felicity Horsey  
Charlotte Jennings  
Lauren MacDonald  
Caitlin MacKenzie  
Elizabeth Macnair  
Kathryn McLaren  
Rachel McLean  
Laura Murphy  
Suzanne Poole  
Bella Robb  
Rebecca Robertson  
Mhairi Sharkey  
Kirsty Stirling  
Anna Swan  
Jana Tobin  
Erin Wallace  
Kirstie Wilson

### Soprano 2

Áine Beattie  
Jenna Boyd  
Iona Bremner  
Emily Capell  
Cecilia Carlsson  
Madeleine Faughey  
Leonie Findlay  
Lorna Fraser  
Catriona Glen  
Phoebe Hayman  
Emily Henderson  
Holly Jarvis  
Natalie Klaes  
Eilidh Lawrie  
Ailsa Macdonald  
Isla MacKenzie  
Rowan MacKillop  
Gabrielle McCann  
Abby McKinlay  
Eleanor McMahon  
Sarah Mulholland  
Bronwyn Stevens  
Rebecca Tait  
Beth Taylor  
Eleanor Wilson

### Alto

Lara Anderson  
Maggie Ashmole  
Tabitha Benton-Evans  
Rachel Bolton  
Eleanor Brownlie  
Laura Conneely  
Sophie Craig  
Kim Erskine  
Tabitha Gibb  
Kirsty Glen  
Tinglan Liu  
Anna Mackenzie  
Kirsty Mackenzie  
Megan McCormick  
Clare McKain  
Eli McKeown  
Ailsa Millar  
Catriona Murphy  
Alice Murray  
Leonie Page  
Rebecca Pennykid  
Grace Sutherland  
Kirsty Waters

NYCoS National Girls Choir, chosen from Scotland's best young female singing talent, demonstrates a freshness of voice and unrivalled diction that receives consistent praise. Performing regularly throughout Scotland, the Girls Choir is invited to sing at world-class music festivals and events including BBC Proms in the Park, Edinburgh International Festival, Aberdeen International Youth Festival and Lammermuir Festival. The Choir has also made several TV and radio appearances, including BBC One Scotland's Christmas Celebration watchnight service in 2014.

The Choir released two commercial CDs, prior to *Only a Singing Bird*, both of which were critically acclaimed. The first is a recording of two complementary works; Britten *A Ceremony of Carols* and the rarely-performed Poston *An English Day-Book* (2010). The second, also on the Signum label, is Bennett *Letters to Lindbergh* (2012).

Membership of NYCoS National Girls Choir is granted by audition on a yearly basis and is open to girls who are born, resident or studying in Scotland. The Choir has two sections,



suitable for all ages and stages: National Girls Choir (NGC) is for experienced singers who can cope with the advanced musical and vocal demands of a national choir; National Girls Training Choir is for girls who audition successfully but whose voices are not quite ready for NGC, or who need a bit more choral experience.

The girls, aged 12–16, travel from all over Scotland to take part in an intensive six-day residential course at Loretto School in Musselburgh, East Lothian, where time is split between high-quality vocal coaching, musicianship training and full choir rehearsals with highly-qualified staff who are experts in their fields.

“This youth choir is so on it - the vitality, the diction, everything that you want from a young choir is there. It's beautiful; it's very grown up but youthful too.” - Jeremy Summery on BBC Radio 3.

## KAREN CARGILL

Scottish mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill was the winner of the 2002 Kathleen Ferrier Award. Past and future highlights with her regular recital

partner Simon Lepper include appearances at Wigmore Hall London, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Kennedy Centre Washington and in 2015, her New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall, as well as regular recitals for BBC Radio 3. With Simon, she recently recorded a critically acclaimed recital of lieder by Alma and Gustav Mahler for Linn Records.

Engagements in the 2015/16 season and beyond include Waltraute *Götterdämmerung* in her debut with the Canadian Opera Company, Brangäne *Tristan and Isolde* for English National Opera as well as her debut for Glyndebourne Festival Opera and return invitations to both the Royal Opera, Covent Garden and the Metropolitan Opera, New York. Future concert highlights include her debuts at the Salzburg Festival singing Bruckner *Mass No 3* with Yannick Nézet-Séquin and with the Royal Concertgebouw and Chicago Symphony Orchestras (both with Mahler *Symphony No 2*); Bruckner *Te Deum* with Bernard Haitink and the Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic; a first visit to the Dresden Staatskapelle with Elgar *Sea Pictures*; Mahler *Symphony No 3* with Sakai Oramo and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and a return invitation to the LSO to sing Berlioz *La Damnation de Faust* with Sir Simon Rattle.



Karen regularly sings with the Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Rotterdam, Seoul and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, London Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestras working with conductors including James Levine, Donald

Runnicles, Valery Gergiev, Nézet-Séquin, Myung Whun Chung, Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle and Robin Ticciati. Opera highlights have included roles with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera, New York and Deutsche Opera, Berlin.

In 2013, Karen was appointed Associate Artist of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Performances together have included Berlioz *La mort de Cléopâtre*, *L'enfance du Christ* and *Les nuits d'été*, Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde*, *Symphony No 4* and *Kindertotenlieder*, Wagner *Wesendonck Lieder* and *Béatrice* in Berlioz *Béatrice et Bénédict*. Their recent Linn Records recording of Berlioz *Les nuits d'été* and *La mort de Cléopâtre* with Robin Ticciati was chosen as Gramophone magazine recording of the month in June 2013.

An early highlight was singing Mendelssohn *Elijah* with Kurt Masur and the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the BBC Proms, and since then, her regular relationships with the BBC Symphony and Scottish Symphony Orchestras have taken her back to the Proms to sing Mahler *Symphony No 3* and *Das Lied von der Erde* and Waltraute as well as Constant Lambert *The Rio Grande* at a 'Last Night' and most recently Verdi *Requiem*.

## PHILIP MOORE

Philip Moore was born in 1976 and is originally from the Vale of Evesham. He studied at London's Royal Academy of Music with Hamish Milne, during which time he won many prizes. Upon leaving, he was awarded the Meaker Fellowship, and was appointed an Associate of the RAM in 2003. In 2004, he became a Steinway Artist.

He has performed in the United States, Canada, Korea, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Tunisia, and at all of the major UK venues. He has recorded for radio and television throughout Europe and appeared as a concerto artist with, among others, the Hallé, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Philharmonia Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He is the pianist of the Hebrides Ensemble, a member of the Colin Currie Group and the Olivier Ensemble, and has worked with many international artists, giving duo and chamber music performances and broadcasts with ECO Ensemble, Conchord and Britten Sinfonia. In 2006, he and

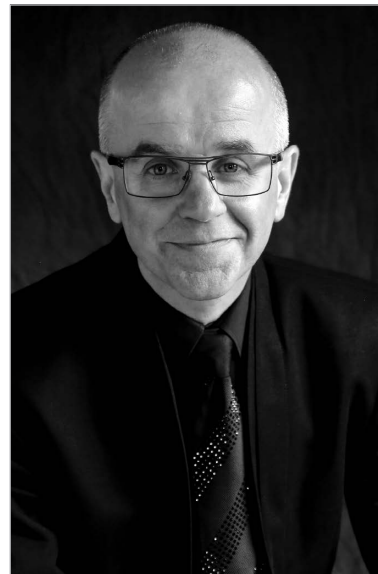


fellow-pianist Andrew West began a two-year collaboration with Michael Clark Dance Company, playing Stravinsky's two-piano version of *Rite of Spring* at the Barbican Theatre and worldwide on tour. He has recorded for Linn, Naxos, Signum and Deux-Elles.

Philip's piano duo with Simon Crawford-Phillips has won international prizes and awards, including a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship in 2004. The Duo has performed and broadcast internationally, and made frequent appearances as concerto artists and recitalists at the Southbank and Wigmore Hall. They have given world premieres of Detlev Glanert's *Two Piano Concerto*; Anna Meredith's *Two Piano Concerto* (at the 2009 BBC Proms); and, more recently, Steve Reich's Quartet for two pianos and two vibraphones, with Colin Currie and Sam Walton, at the Southbank, Carnegie Hall NY (listed as one of 'The Ten Best Classical Performances of 2014' by New York Magazine), Kölner Philharmonie and Cité de la musique Paris.

## CHRISTOPHER BELL

Belfast born Christopher Bell is the Artistic Director of NYCOS. Alongside that he currently holds posts as Chorus Director of the Grant Park Chorus, Chicago, Chorusmaster of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Junior Chorus and the Edinburgh Festival Chorus. In 2009 he became Associate Conductor of Ulster Orchestra.



Christopher was educated at Edinburgh University and held his first post as Associate Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra between 1989 and 1991. Since then he has worked with many of the major orchestras in the UK and Ireland, including the Royal Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National,

BBC Scottish Symphony, Ulster, Scottish Chamber, City of London Sinfonia, London Concert, RTE National Symphony, RTE Concert and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestras.

Christopher Bell enjoys working with young people. Before his current posts with the RSNO and NYCoS, for six years he directed the TOTAL Aberdeen Youth Choir, undertaking touring and recordings with it as well as many concerts in the North East of Scotland. He was the first Artistic Director of the Ulster Youth Choir between 1999 and 2004, a group which he developed and moulded into a critically acclaimed ensemble. Between 2001 and 2008 he was Artistic Director of the highly successful Children's Classic Concerts series.

It was his work as Chorusmaster of the RSNO Chorus between 1989 and 2001 alongside the time with the Aberdeen Youth Choir, which led Christopher to form the National Youth Choir of Scotland in 1996 to encourage young singers to develop their skills. Since then the organisation has grown, not only as a choral group with four national choirs and area choirs across Scotland, but as a provider of educational training and resources for teachers and choir directors.

For his work with singers, and particularly his encouragement of young singers in Scotland, Christopher Bell was awarded a Scotsman of the Year 2001 award for Creative Talent. In 2003, he was awarded the Charles Groves Prize for his contribution to cultural life in Scotland and the rest of the UK. In 2009 he was awarded an Honorary Masters Degree from the Open University for Services to the Arts. In 2012 he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in recognition for his contribution to the performing arts in Scotland. In 2013, Chorus America awarded Christopher the Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral Art.

#### **Additional Soloists**

Christina Callion, *Little Foo*  
Rebecca Pennykid, *Little Foo*  
Catriona Hewitson, *King Ra*  
Alan Rowland, *King Ra*  
Alice Yeoman, *Ave Maria*

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