

THE CHOIR OF



ST JOHN'S  
CAMBRIDGE

DEO | HARVEY  
NETHSINGHA



# DEO

JONATHAN HARVEY (1939-2012)

1	<b>I Love the Lord</b>	[6.02]
2	<b>Magnificat</b>	[7.51]
3	<b>Nunc Dimittis</b>	[5.12]
4	<b>Toccatà for Organ and Tape</b>	[5.27]
5	<b>Come, Holy Ghost</b>	[7.27]
6	<b>Praise ye the Lord</b>	[4.08]
	<b>Missa Brevis</b>	
7	Kyrie	[2.48]
8	Gloria	[3.08]
9	Sanctus & Benedictus	[2.57]
10	Agnus Dei	[2.58]
11	<b>The Royal Banners Forward Go</b>	[3.49]
12	<b>Laus Deo</b>	[4.07]
13	<b>The Annunciation</b>	[4.28]

Total timings: [60.24]

THE CHOIR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE  
EDWARD PICTON-TURBERVILL ORGAN  
ANDREW NETHSINGHA DIRECTOR

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## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE MUSIC OF JONATHAN HARVEY

**Andrew Nethsingha**

Jonathan Harvey's experience of church music began as a chorister at St Michael's College, Tenbury, where he sang 13 services each week. He recalled one particular loud chord in a post-service organ improvisation as being a moment of great epiphany in which he knew he would be a composer. I myself was also brought up in the idyllic surroundings of St Michael's, where my father was Organist in the 1960s.

Harvey was later an undergraduate here at St John's. Though he found Cambridge composition teaching at the time to be unduly conservative, he retained a great affection for the College itself throughout his life and was an Honorary Fellow here.

Harvey spoke of how liberating he found writing for a Cathedral-type choir, not to have to take a bow, simply to contribute to the worship which, in turn, helped him to forget about personal ambition. He also enjoyed writing for a Cathedral acoustic in which

chords blurred into one another, and where he *sometimes felt that the Cathedral itself were singing.*

Of the chapel at Tenbury where he was a chorister, Harvey wrote: *The silence of the building was haunting...Music came out of it, dissolved back into it.* This is a fitting backdrop to the first work on the recording, ***I love the Lord*** (1977) takes a simple G major triad as its starting point, just as the *String Quartet no. 1* (also 1977) is based on the single note D.

With this anthem, written for Winchester Cathedral when his son was a chorister there, a new sound-world was opened up in liturgical music. The steadfastness and purity of the psalmist's faith in God is challenged by so many tribulations; the constancy of the G major triad is stretched almost to breaking point by the rest of the choir as its harmony goes in and out of focus with the triad. The resulting bitonality and the psalmist's words both express one of the most fundamental of all questions: if God exists, why does he allow all this suffering?

In performing this anthem I have chosen to place the group singing the triad at a

considerable distance from the rest of the choir. In services and concerts we have found it effective to have this solo trio out of sight. A further semi-chorus group is employed in the middle of the work, close to the main choir.

The anthem was written in memory of the composer's mother; the psalm was a text she often asked her son to read to her towards the end of her life. The composition may have played a part in the healing process after bereavement. In his book, *Music and Inspiration*, Harvey writes: *Suffering encountered in art or ritual is healing. If we give ourselves to the experience of art, fully and fearlessly, we are journeying inward to our truth, from where we will find our new world.* He later said that the theme of suffering and healing was his most common source of musical inspiration.

Settings of the Evening Canticles are central to the Anglican choral tradition. I regard Harvey's kaleidoscopic *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* (1978) as one of the two most significant contributions to this genre in the past 50 years – a set of canticles for the age of space travel! This is one of five works on the disc all written for Martin Neary and his choirs. When Harvey came to hear us sing

the work at St John's he asked for a note to be changed to enable the use of our organ's *Trompeta Real*.

The composer described the music to me in the following way:

*Magnificat* paints Mary as a cosmic Mary, as a metaphysical Mary. *Nunc Dimittis*, by contrast, is an extremely human image of an old man nearing death; the 'ts are expressive of brilliance and light. *Magnificat* is based on a cantus firmus, always the same series of notes, going round and round like a wheel. The wheel throws off sparks as it turns. It is like a nebula, a luminous or dark patch in the sky made by distant star-clusters, gas or dust. There is a rolling sense of the same idea moving on and on. The section *He remembering his mercy* has a sense of innocence, of childhood and of something timeless; the glissandi from speech to sung pitches are transitions between dreaming and wakefulness. The end of the Gloria, *As it was in the beginning*, has an urgency, a pleading quality regarding the future, a strong impulse to transform the cosmos.

Although the vocal techniques are less complex than those employed in some of his

secular compositions, the work nevertheless requires much that is not used in mainstream Anglican composition – whispering, glissandi, aleatoric writing, shouting, pitched speech, percussive effects using repeated consonants. We Anglican musicians tend to be conservative in our use of choir and instruments. Most repertoire is for choir *a capella* or with organ. Yet the psalmist urges us to make use of the lute and harp, of the trumpet and the clashing of cymbals: *Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.* I feel sure that includes the techniques used here! Some contemporary music experts have considered Harvey's church music to be of lesser importance than his instrumental works. I want to stress how imaginative, innovative and courageous Harvey was in pushing the boundaries of church music, without ever losing the intensity of spirituality which underpins all the great religious music from plainchant to Beethoven, from Byrd to Messiaen.

I choose to perform the *Nunc Dimittis* in a rather theatrical, ritualistic way, of which the composer approved. I would never want any element of a service to seem like a concert, but I believe that use of space and movement can heighten a congregation's sense of involvement.

My interpretation is for Harvey's *Nunc Dimittis* to be a liturgical drama in which one starts with a darkened church and then gradually candles are lit for all members of the congregation – *a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel.* When the trebles, altos and tenors initiate dramatic crescendos on the word *light*, they walk out of the choir stalls and spread out around the chapel; I hope you can hear this effect captured in the recording. The bass soloist is joined by four other basses in unison, standing centrally in an imposing row as the music builds to the blinding vision of the organ entering at full volume on all twelve pitch classes: the old man, Simeon, comes face to face with the Messiah in this supreme moment of revelation, before the organ chord begins to dissolve and Simeon's soul gradually leaves his body as he departs in peace.

Harvey was amongst the composers who led the way in the field of electro-acoustic music. In *Toccata* (1980) for organ and pre-recorded tape, written in the same year as *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco*, the composer asked for the sound source to be placed very close to the organ pipes. It is an exciting piece to hear live, as the organist interacts with the

pre-recorded sounds. *Toccata* was often played around the world by John Scott, the illustrious former St John's organ student, and indeed it featured in the last recital he gave here in the college. Scott's untimely death occurred three weeks after the present CD was recorded.

***Come, Holy Ghost*** (1984) is a work in five main sections, essentially a theme with variations. The text is associated with the Feast of Pentecost. The scene is described in *Acts of the Apostles*:

*And suddenly there came from the sky  
a noise like a strong driving wind,  
and it filled the entire house in which they were.  
Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,  
which parted and came to rest on each one of them.  
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit  
and began to speak in different tongues,  
as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.*

Harvey depicts this event in an extraordinarily vivid way. First the ancient plainsong theme, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, is heard sung by a soloist with other singers acting like a piano's sustaining pedal. In variation 1 canonic writing appears against a chordal backdrop with fragments of treble melody floating

weightlessly. In variation 2 the tenor soloist sings a version of the melody which becomes increasingly distorted; like Jesus's disciples he begins in a language one understands but gradually mutates into another tongue. Below all this the second basses are given the first 2 ½ phrases of the true theme *ppp*. In variation 3 there are more slow moving chords for the lower voices, while the boys start to sing melodic fragments in free time. If you listen incredibly carefully you might be able to hear the final 1 ½ phrases of the theme in the second tenor part, but they are not marked to be sung any louder than anything else. When the disciples were speaking in so many different languages simultaneously it must have been hard to pick out any individual one clearly. During this section I asked the trebles to spread out into different parts of the Chapel, like the Holy Spirit filling the entire house.

Mystical glissandi lead us into variation 4. Now the lower voices have aleatoric writing, with segments of melody to be sung in free time and in an order of the singer's own choosing. This is a perfect musical representation of Glossolalia. It reminds me of the magical way in which Salman Rushdie conjures up the

sense of varied wafting aromas in the opening section of *Midnight's Children*. Harvey seems to fill the building with incense, a traditional means of symbolizing the ascent of prayers to the Almighty. The rushing wind emerges in the distance, overwhelms us, and then dissipates before the humble, prayerful doxology. The whole choir ends softly in unison, emphasizing the unity of the three persons of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The simplicity and purity of the beginning and end of the work, contrasting with much complexity, are hallmarks of Harvey's liturgical music.

Although Harvey questioned Christianity and had a period of atheism in his teens, *the potential for mystical experience never left... Evelyn Underhill's book Mysticism changed my life*. He bought this as a student. In the late 1970s Harvey started practising Vedic meditation twice daily; he never lapsed for more than a day or two. The deeper state of consciousness thus attained seems to permeate his music. From then on he became more and more interested in Buddhism, Hinduism and other eastern religions. It was not a case of choosing one religion or another: *There is no question of eliminating earlier spiritual selves, only of incorporating them. In From*

*Silence* (1988) Harvey combined Benedictine texts with other texts of his own with Buddhist undertones; this met with a strongly positive response from the audience. *Since then I have always believed in the underlying sense of the sacred present in all human beings.*

***Praise ye the Lord*** (1990) sets Psalm 148, one of the most pictorial sections of the Psalter. Harvey had used the same text in *Lauds* (for two choirs and cello) just three years earlier. The colouristic organ writing shows the influence of Messiaen. The anthem is an exuberant paean of joy, painted in the brightest colours, though even here the composer falls to his knees at the end, in awe at the wonder of Creation.

***Missa Brevis*** (1995) was composed for the Choir of Westminster Abbey in the tercentenary year of the Abbey's former Organist, Henry Purcell. In his modern idiom Harvey takes up the mantle of Purcell's often tortured chromaticism. *Kyrie* is densely chromatic music with a very clear tonal centre. As in *Agnus Dei*, there are two trios - of upper and lower voices; one group sings quasi-canonically while the other group sighs pitifully in glissandi. The pleading for mercy becomes more urgent

and intense until an angel descends in the form of a solo treble to grant absolution and reconciliation, another example of healing in Harvey's music.

*Gloria* opens with a declamatory pentatonic chord. This is later rearranged into piles of fourths or fifths and eventually melts into the final chord of *Agnus Dei*. At *Gratias agimus* speech again joins the palette of vocal colours – the two halves of the choir jostle with one another as they compete to give thanks to God. The penitential central section of *Gloria* shares material with the two outer movements of the Mass.

In *Sanctus* the extremes of heaven and earth are represented by the tritone between A major and E flat major – the most distant possible keys. In the awesome opening three words we hear the great space between heaven and earth open up. The lower triad pulls away towards E flat from the upper triad of A major; three against three; *Holy, Holy, Holy*. Numerology is important in the *Sanctus*; think of Bach's three trumpets and three oboes plus six part choir at that point in the *Mass in B minor*. The prophet Isaiah depicts the throne of God surrounded by six-winged

attendant Seraphim. Harvey starts with a six part chord and eventually Heaven and Earth are full of God's glory, represented here by all 12 available pitch classes.

The music suggests that here on earth the tonal centre is A (as in *Kyrie*), and in heaven the tonal centre is E flat; so *Benedictus* moves from E flat to A major, as Christ enters Jerusalem having come from heaven in the name of the Lord. The two settings of *Osanna* are mirror images as heaven and earth reach towards one another. In the same passage from which the words of *Sanctus* are drawn, Isaiah describes the Seraphim calling ceaselessly to one another; Harvey paints this image at *Dominus Deus Sabaoth*. The prophet goes on: *And, as each one called, the threshold shook to its foundations, while the house was filled with smoke*. The apocalyptic setting of *Osanna* portrays this. In the context of a Solemn mass, the awestruck silences are indeed filled with smoke, both literally and metaphorically. Isaiah writes *I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the skirt of his robe filled the temple*. Harvey's vision of the Lord on his throne is no Handelian trumpets and drums affair, but rather he seems to share the approach of his

fellow Worcestershire composer, Elgar. Harvey had been 'fanatical' about *The Dream of Gerontius* when he was a chorister. At the moment when the soul sees God, Elgar asks that each instrument exert its fullest force for one moment only. Not many composers dare to challenge worshippers in this way, but religion should not all be easy and comfortable.

*Agnus Dei* reuses material from *Kyrie* when pleading for mercy, and reinforces the previous tonal centre of A. Harvey reminds us that the Lamb of God is also the only-begotten Son of God, by reutilising exactly the same chord from *Gloria* (at *Domine fili unigenite*.) Suddenly the intensity builds at the third appearance of the opening words, as a menacing E flat enters the hitherto untroubled waters of a white-note chord. This in turn sets up a reprise of the struggle between A major and E flat major, as we on earth plead with the Lamb of God in heaven to grant us peace.

*The Royal Banners forward go* (2004) was written for St John's College Choir under David Hill's direction. Harvey had set the same text 24 years earlier as part of his Church Opera, *Passion and Resurrection*. Fortunatus's Latin hymn *Vexilla Regis* was first sung in the 6th

century when a relic of the True Cross was carried in procession from Tours to Poitiers. One hears in the first three stanzas the sense of a slow, solemn procession with heads bowed low. *O Tree of glory* is the only stanza in the second person and we vividly glimpse the bright glory of the Cross. In the final stanza, as we gaze up at the crucified Christ, a treble soloist hangs timelessly above us.

The works on this recording are arranged in order of composition, with the exception of the solo organ work, *Laus Deo* (1969), which is in fact the earliest work on the disc. It dates from the same year as *Ludus Amoris*, written for Christopher Robinson, who had been a chorister with Harvey in Tenbury, a work described by one critic as the most striking premiere at the Three Choirs Festival for nearly 50 years. Harvey gave the following description of the extraordinary creation of *Laus Deo*: *Having given up all hope of finding time to fulfil a commission from Simon Preston before the deadline, I had one night a vivid dream in which a shimmering 'cinquecento' angel played an organ. What he played formed the main substance of Laus Deo, and within twelve hours of waking the piece was finished*. In describing a similar experience

Gustav Mahler had whilst composing his Seventh Symphony, Harvey wrote: *The way in which the principal material emerged and the speed with which it was eventually completed suggest that it was in some sense already fully formed in the unconscious: the epiphanaic moment was one of revelation rather than invention.*

In terms of those who influenced him and those he most admired, Harvey was as much a European composer as a purely British one.

His major work exploring world religions, *Weltethos*, was premiered by the Berliner Philharmoniker in the Philharmonie in 2011. One of the innovative features of that great concert hall is the way it places the musicians at the centre of the listeners, and breaks down the impersonal nature of 'them and us' in a traditional concert hall. I have tried to engender something of that sense of personal connection to the performers in the movement of singers during the music on this recording. The shape of our Chapel is conducive to this. In *Music and Inspiration*, Harvey quoted his contemporary, Iannis Xenakis: *Music can surround us in the same way as the sounds of nature surround us in the forest or at sea. The practice generally observed at concerts,*

*of music coming from one source, is merely one possibility of many.* In transferring this idea to a religious context, one might add that God is all around us.

Harvey's numinous work, *The Annunciation* (2011), was written as part of the Quincentenary celebrations of St John's College. Each day we rehearsed *The Annunciation* and I e-mailed a sound recording to the composer and then we spoke on the phone. It was an intensely moving dialogue. Harvey explained how he could no longer hold a pencil or play the piano and that he thought these notes would be the last he would ever compose. Mercifully a little more music followed. I later read the following words of the composer: *Pain and suffering experienced in life increase the artist's determination to create an ideal world through his music.* A year further on *The Annunciation*, which seems to inhabit an ideal world, was nominated for a British Composer Award. The day after the awards ceremony the composer passed away after his long experience of Motor Neurone Disease. We sang this work at his memorial service.

Harvey once quoted Debussy's explanation of how he had written *La Mer* when away from



*The Annunciation* by Domenico Veneziano

the sea: *But I have an endless store of memories; to my mind, this is worth more than reality.* At the end of his life Harvey continued to turn back to previous sources of inspiration. He had set Edwin Muir's poem, *The Annunciation*, quite differently over 40 years earlier. The passage *that it makes each feather tremble on his wings* makes musical reference to Harvey's *Messages*, an ecstatic work which sets only angel names in their nine hierarchies. *The Annunciation* takes Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* as its starting point, Harvey having previously

elaborated the same work in music for choir and live electronics in 2004.

The composer described an aspect of his student days thus: *every evening I would spend maybe an hour in the darkened Catholic church in Cambridge gazing at the sanctuary light, quite still. It was the church Rosa and I were married in.* I am deeply moved that the final stanza of what he believed would be his last work should set the following words:

*But through the endless afternoon  
These neither speak nor movement make,  
But stare into their deepening trance  
As if their gaze would never break.*

Harvey cited Domenico Veneziano's *The Annunciation*, in Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum, as a model for the work. As far as I know this fact is not written down anywhere; perhaps no one would know if he had not told me. This is the hidden inspiration for the work. Harvey wrote: *Inspiration is the hidden cause: it may be almost impossible for the listener to pinpoint its presence in the finished work, yet without it the work would not have the individuality for which, presumably, we admire it.*

I take it that the composer had got to know this painting during his student days. A composer looks back at the end of his life; the young Mary, just before the start of Jesus's earthly life, has premonitions of her later sorrow at the foot of the Cross – *a strange, sad memory of the Stabat Mater* as the composer put it to me. Time moves forwards and backwards in a profound depiction of eternity. This mirror effect can be heard in the music just as it can be seen in Veneziano's

painting. The interplay between angel and virgin is captured in the music to exquisite effect, as solo voices pass the melody between them against a background halo of humming. The composer spoke of *a meeting of the supernatural and natural worlds; the work begins with very soft sounds as though hearing voices from outside the building. The poem is about the timeless – a poised rapturous state. Within that are of course emotions, but the spell must not be completely broken.* I think of *The Annunciation* as representing a distillation of the composer's musical essence – it has a purity and simplicity of means whilst still seeming new.

Edwin Muir writes: *Earth was the only meeting place.* One thinks of various meeting places in Harvey's works: between old and new; between live performers and electronics; between different groups of voices; between faith and doubt in *I love the Lord*; between different faiths; between the sound of the musicians and the sound of the building. It is hard to hear where one begins and another ends.

Harvey wrote: *Much of the fascination of the composer lies in the way inspiration is produced from the encounter between the*

*artist and the world.* One can never know for sure how composers' music will be regarded in later centuries, but it is my firm belief that the deepening trance of Jonathan Harvey's music will never break. Our journey of exploration of this music has been the most important and satisfying part of my musical career to date. We humbly dedicate this recording to Jonathan's memory and also to his wife Rosa and their children Anna and Dominic. I end with the composer's own words:

*I have the feeling there's some new type of music hovering on the horizon, which I can glimpse very fleetingly now and then, and which does seem like a change of consciousness.*



## TEXTS

### 1 I Love the Lord

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice  
and my supplications.

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me,  
therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.  
The sorrows of death compassed me,  
and the pains of hell gat hold upon me:  
I found trouble and sorrow.

Then called I upon the name of the Lord;  
O Lord I beseech thee, deliver my soul.  
Return unto thy rest, O my soul;  
the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.  
For thou hast delivered my soul from death,  
mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.  
I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living.  
I love the Lord.

Words: Psalm 116 vv. 1–4, 7–9

### Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

#### 2 Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord:  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded:  
the lowliness of his hand-maiden.

For behold, from henceforth:  
all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me:  
and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him:  
throughout all generations.

He hath shewed strength with his arm:  
he hath scattered the proud in the  
imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat:  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things:  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his  
servant Israel:  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now,  
and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.

Words: Luke 1 vv. 46–55

#### 3 Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace  
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation;  
Which thou hast prepared before  
the face of all people;  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be  
the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son  
and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now,  
And ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Words: Luke 2 vv. 29–32

#### 5 Come, Holy Ghost

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire  
And lighten with celestial fire;  
Thou the anointing Spirit art,  
Who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Thy blessed unction from above  
Is comfort, life, and fire of love;  
Enable with perpetual light  
The dullness of our blinded sight.

Anoint and cheer our soiled face  
With the abundance of thy grace;  
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;  
Where thou art guide no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
And thee of Both to be but One  
That through the ages all along  
This may be our endless song,

Praise to thy eternal merit,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Words: Bishop John Cosin (1594–1692)  
based on the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*

#### 6 Praise ye the Lord

Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord of heavens:  
praise him in the heights.  
Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him,  
all his hosts.  
Praise ye him, sun and moon:  
praise him, praise him, all ye stars of lights.  
Praise him, ye heavens of heavens,  
and ye waters that be above the heavens.  
Let them praise the name of the Lord:  
for he commanded, and they were created.

He hath also stablished them for ever and ever:  
he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

Praise the Lord from the earth,  
ye dragons, and all deeps:  
Fire, and hail, snow, and vapours;  
stormy wind fulfilling his word:  
Mountains, and all hills;  
fruitful trees, and all cedars:  
Beasts, and all cattle;  
creeping things, and flying fowl:

Kings of the earth, and all people;  
princes, and all judges of the earth:  
Both young men, and maidens;  
old men, and children:  
Let them praise the name of the Lord:  
for his name alone is excellent;  
his glory is above the heavens.  
Praise ye the Lord.

Words: Psalm 148

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## MISSA BREVIS

### 7 Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

*Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.*

### 8 Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
et in terra pax  
hominibus bonae voluntatis.

*Glory be to God on high,  
and in earth peace,  
good will towards men.*

Laudamus te, benedicimus te,  
adoramus te, glorificamus te.  
Gratias agimus tibi  
propter magnam gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe,  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis;  
qui tollis peccata mundi,

suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe,  
cum Sancto Spiritu  
in gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.

*We praise thee, we bless thee,  
we worship thee, we glorify thee,  
we give thanks  
to thee for thy great glory,  
O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father Almighty.*

*O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father, that takest away the sins  
of the world, have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right hand of  
God the Father, have mercy upon us.*

*For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
with the Holy Ghost,  
art most high in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.*

**9 Sanctus & Benedictus**

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt coeli  
et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

**10 Agnus Dei**

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem.

*Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of hosts,  
heaven and earth  
are full of thy glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who cometh  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

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

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

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

**11 The Royal Banners Forward go**

The royal banners forward go,  
The cross shines forth in mystic glow;  
Where he in flesh, our flesh who made,  
Our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

There whilst he hung, his sacred side  
By soldier's spear was opened wide,  
To cleanse us in the precious flood  
Of water mingled with his blood.

Fulfilled is now what David told  
In true prophetic song of old,  
How God the heathen's king should be;  
For God is reigning from the tree.

O tree of glory, tree most fair,  
Ordained those holy limbs to bear,  
How bright in purple robe it stood,  
The purple of a Saviour's blood.

Upon its arms, like balance true,  
He weighed the price for sinners due,  
The price which none but he could pay,  
And spoiled the spoiler of his prey.

Words: Venantius Fortunatus (530–609)  
Tr. John Mason Neale (1818–1866)

**13 The Annunciation**

The angel and the girl are met,  
Earth was the only meeting place.  
For the embodied never yet  
Travelled beyond the shore of space.  
The eternal spirits in freedom go.

See, they have come together, see,  
While the destroying minutes flow,  
Each reflects the other's face  
Till heaven in hers and earth in his  
Shine steady there. He's come to her  
From far beyond the farthest star,  
Feathered through time. Immediacy  
Of strangest strangeness is the bliss  
That from their limbs all movement takes.  
Yet the increasing rapture brings  
So great a wonder that it makes  
Each feather tremble on his wings.

Outside the window footsteps fall  
Into the ordinary day  
And with the sun along the wall  
Pursue their unreturning way  
Sound's perpetual roundabout  
Rolls its numbered octaves out  
And hoarsely grinds its battered tune.

But through the endless afternoon  
These neither speak nor movement make,  
But stare into their deepening trance  
As if their gaze would never break.

Words: Edwin Muir (1887–1959)

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## THE CHOIR OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

### Trebles

George Balfour <sup>1, 2, 5</sup>  
Maximilian Boorman  
Joel Branston <sup>2, 5, 7</sup>  
Matthew Brown  
Oliver Brown <sup>1, 2, 11, 13</sup>  
David Bryson  
James Buttery  
Blake Chen  
Jaylen Cheng  
Adam Chillingworth  
Charles Cobb  
Alfred Harrison  
Peter Nethsingha  
Alexander Tomkinson  
Sebastian Wade  
Samuel Williams

### Counter Tenors

Jack Hawkins <sup>1</sup>  
Thomas Lilburn <sup>2</sup>  
Hamish McLaren <sup>7</sup>  
Alexander Simpson <sup>1, 2, 13</sup>

### Tenors

William Ashford <sup>1</sup>  
Michael Bell <sup>2</sup>  
John Clapham <sup>2, 13</sup>  
Benedict Flinn <sup>1</sup>  
Xavier Hetherington <sup>1, 5</sup>

*Numbers indicate soloist credits  
for each CD track.*

### Basses

James Adams  
Quintin Beer <sup>2</sup>  
Stephen Matthews <sup>2, 7</sup>  
Oliver Morris <sup>1, 2, 7</sup>  
Augustus Perkins Ray <sup>2, 5</sup>  
Theodore Platt <sup>3, 9, 13</sup>

### Herbert Howells Organ Scholar

Edward Picton-Turbervill

### Junior Organ Scholar

Joseph Wicks

### Director of Music

Andrew Nethsingha

**The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge** is one of the finest men and boys choirs in the world, known and loved by millions from its recordings, broadcasts and concert tours. A cornerstone of the great English choral tradition since the 1670s, the Choir is recognised for its distinctive, rich and expressive sound and is today directed by Andrew Nethsingha.

The Choir is made up of 20 Choristers and Probationers who are educated at St John's College School. The alto, tenor and bass parts are usually taken by 15 Choral Scholars who are students in the University, with two Organ Scholars assisting in the daily running of the Choir. Services in the College Chapel follow the Cathedral tradition of the Church of England, with Evensong six days a week during term and Sung Eucharist on Sunday mornings. The Choir's services are frequently broadcast on BBC Radio 3. On the concert platform, the Choir regularly performs in high-profile venues around the UK, with orchestras and ensembles including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra. Its busy international touring schedule includes the

USA, Canada, Brazil, South Africa, Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Europe.

Under Nethsingha's direction, the singers receive a unique musical education in an extremely varied breadth of repertoire, from Renaissance polyphony and Haydn masses to 20th century and specially commissioned contemporary music. Committed to engaging with a wide audience through digital innovations, St John's was the first British choir to broadcast its services live in weekly webcasts, and in 2011 it launched SJC Live, a unique online archive for music lovers and choirmasters.

A key innovation of Nethsingha's is the establishment of St John's Sinfonia, a professional period ensemble formed with Margaret Faultless in 2011, with which the Choir gives termly liturgical performances of Bach cantatas.

Under Nethsingha and former directors of music George Guest, Christopher Robinson and David Hill, the Choir has produced an extraordinary and extensive discography on Decca, EMI, Naxos, Hyperion and other labels. In 2009 the Choir signed to Chandos Records and its recent eleven CDs on the label – which span music from across 500 years – have garnered

international critical acclaim. Releases have included discs of music by Mozart, Purcell, Sheppard, Tomkins and S S Wesley, and a CD of Lassus including many previously unrecorded motets. This new disc marks the first release on the new St John's College imprint with Signum Records; future plans include recordings by world-class musicians from the College and alumni community, as well as music from the Choir.

Renowned for championing contemporary music, the Choir regularly commissions new work. Since 2014 the Choir has performed world premieres of works by Nico Muhly, John McCabe, Michael Finnissy, Tim Watts, James Burton, Philip Moore, Alex Woolf and James Welland.

[www.sjcchoir.co.uk](http://www.sjcchoir.co.uk)



## ANDREW NETHSINGHA DIRECTOR OF MUSIC ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Performing as a conductor and organist in North America, South Africa, the Far East, and throughout Europe, ANDREW NETHSINGHA has been Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge since 2007. His innovations at St John's have included weekly webcasts and a termly Bach cantata series. His recordings for Chandos have been enthusiastically reviewed. His latest St John's CD to be released, "The Call", was Editor's Choice in the Gramophone Magazine.

Andrew Nethsingha received his early musical training as a chorister at Exeter Cathedral, where his father was organist for over a quarter of a century. He later studied at the Royal College of Music, where he won seven prizes, and at St John's College, Cambridge. He held Organ Scholarships under Christopher Robinson, at St George's Windsor, and George Guest, at St John's, before becoming Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral. He was subsequently Director of Music at Truro and Gloucester Cathedrals. Other recent positions have included Artistic



Director of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival and Musical Director of the Gloucester Choral Society.

He has served as President of the Cathedral Organists' Association. He has worked with some of the UK's leading orchestras. Andrew's concerts with the Philharmonia Orchestra have included many of the major choral works: Mahler's *8th Symphony*, Beethoven's *9th Symphony*, Britten *War Requiem*, Brahms *Requiem*, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom*, Walton *Belshazzar's Feast*, Poulenc *Gloria* and Duruflé *Requiem*. He has also worked with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, English

Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St Luke's, Britten Sinfonia, Aarhus Symfoniorkester and the BBC Concert Orchestra. Recent conducting engagements have included the BBC Proms, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Tokyo Suntory Hall. He regularly runs choral courses in various countries.

His concerts during 2014 and 2015 included Verbier Festival Switzerland, Hong Kong City Hall, Mexico City, St Blasien Germany, Royal Festival Hall London, University of Velacruz, Grand Rapids Choir of Men and Boys USA, Symphony Hall Birmingham, The Esplanade Singapore, Liesse Boys Choir France, Royal Albert Hall London, St Thomas Church New York City.



## EDWARD PICTON-TURBERVILL HERBERT HOWELLS ORGAN SCHOLAR

Edward was a Chorister at Winchester Cathedral, and took up the organ there with Sarah Baldock. He then gained a music scholarship to Eton, where he began to learn with David Goode. In his final year, he was awarded an Organ Scholarship at St John's College, and the Associateship of the Royal College of Organists.

Following the earthquake in Christchurch, he divided his gap year in New Zealand between Auckland Cathedral and Christchurch Cathedral, spending six months in each.

During his time at St John's, he gave recitals in King's College, Cambridge and St Paul's Cathedral, premiered works by Nico Muhly and Francis Pott, and played for numerous live broadcasts both in the UK and abroad. He loves the outdoors and is a committed environmentalist.





The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge

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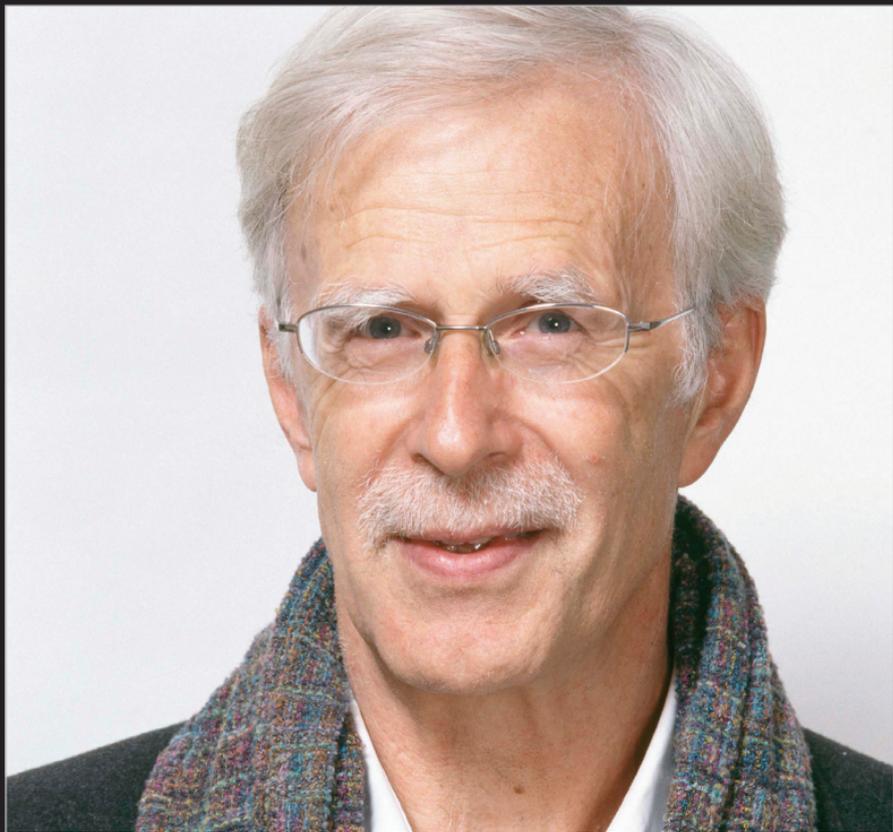
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Jonathan Harvey (1939-2012)