



## Songs of Angels

Music by Magdalen Composers

### Choir of Magdalen College

directed by Bill Ives

Read what reviewers said about Magdalen's previous performances:

"We were spellbound by the charm of these pure voices..."  
- Concert review, Rouen, 8 July 1992

"Hallelujah for Magdalen Choir"  
- Trinidad Gazette, September 2001

"PERFECTION. What more can one say, or write, of the Magdalen College Choir?"  
Trinidad Newsday, 7 September 2001

"...a thrilling, perfectly timed performance"  
- Oxford Times, 26 May 2000

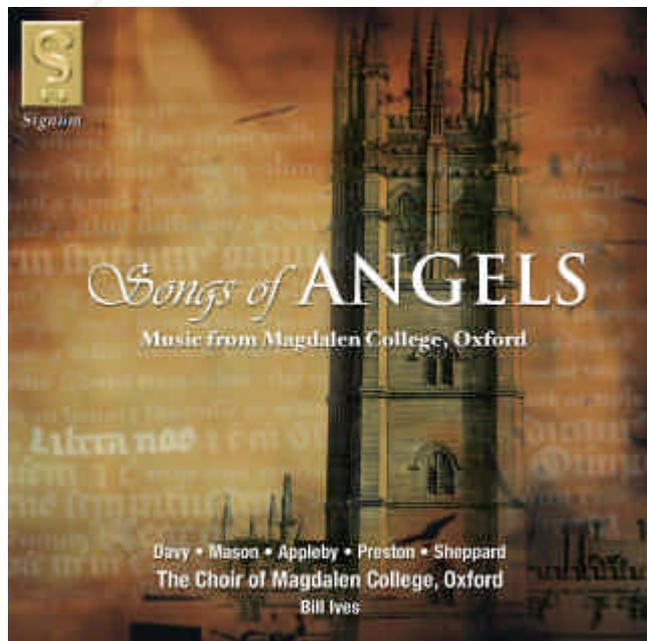
Signum Records is delighted to present Magdalen College Choir's first recording for the label. "Songs of Angels" is an inspired collection of music that was either sung at Magdalen or written by Magdalen composers between 1480 and 1560.

The Choir at Magdalen seems to have held a unique position in sixteenth-century Oxford. Whilst other college choirs suffered during the Reformation, Magdalen, for some reason, flourished. From the earliest days in Magdalen's musical history, the post of *Informator Choristarum* (Instructor of the Choristers) attracted some of the most eminent composers of the day - despite the rather paltry stipend of 40 shillings a year! Renowned *Informatores* at the time included Richard Davy, John Mason and Thomas Appleby, all of whom have works represented here.

Magdalen's most famous sixteenth-century composer is John Sheppard. Three of Sheppard's works are included on this recording, including the Lord's Prayer and the magnificent seven-part setting of *Libera Nos*, one of his finest achievements. The music represented here justifies his place as one of the masters of Early English Music.

"Songs of Angels" is a project of former King's Singer Bill Ives, Magdalen's current *Informator Choristarum*, and the noted academic Dr. David Skinner. The choir performs regularly in the UK and abroad. In 1999, they made their debut in the Royal Albert Hall at the BBC Proms and in October 2001 appeared at the Royal Festival Hall. Their film and television work includes music for Richard Attenborough's acclaimed movie, *Shadowlands* and Channel Four's millennium production, *Longitude*.

The choir's association with composer George Fenton resulted in music for the remarkable BBC TV natural history series, *The Blue Planet*. In November 2001, they presented the first public performance of *Ecce Cor Meum*, a new choral work written especially for them by Sir Paul McCartney.



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|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | Vespers Hymn <i>Collaudemus Magdalene lachrymas</i> - Saraum plainchant  | [3.45]  |
| 2.  | <i>Stabat mater</i> - Richard Davy (d. 1538)   | [15.10] |
| 3.  | <i>Quales sumus</i> - John Mason (fl.1500-30)  | [11.34] |
| 4.  | <i>Aspice Domine</i><br>- Jacquet of Mantua (1483-1559)  | [5.56]  |
| 5.  | <i>Resurrexi</i> (III) - Thomas Preston (fl. 1540s)  | [3.01]  |
| 6.  | Antiphon <i>Inclita sancte Marie Magdalene</i><br>- Sarum plainchant<br><i>Magnificat</i> - Thomas Appleby (d. after 1563) | [14.49] |
| 7.  | Offertory, <i>confessio et pulchritudo</i> - Preston   | [4.11]  |
| 8.  | <i>Dum transisset sabbatum</i><br>- John Sheppard (d. 1558)  | [7.22]  |
| 9.  | The Lord's Prayer - Sheppard   | [4.11]  |
| 10. | <i>Libera nos</i> - Sheppard   | [3.02]  |
|     | Total  | [63:01] |

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