

INVITATIONE presents

Music for Advent and Christmas

Saturday 2nd December 2017, 7.30

in the Parish Church of All Saints, Great Driffield

Musical Director: Rachel Mathieson

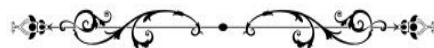


Programme

Byrd Hodie Christus natus est
 O magnum mysterium
 Puer natus est nobis

Charpentier Messe de Minuit, H.9

Interval of 20 minutes
Refreshments will be served



Victoria O magnum mysterium

Poulenc O magnum mysterium

Lauridsen O magnum mysterium

Bach Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
 BWV 140 (mvts. I & VII)

Warlock Bethlehem Down
 Benedicamus Domino

Berlioz The Shepherds' Farewell

O magnum mysterium

*O magnum mysterium, et admirabile
sacramentum, ut animalia viderent
Dominum natum, jacentem in praesepe!
Beata Virgo, cuius viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Christum.
Alleluia.*

O great mystery, and wondrous sacrament,
that animals should see the new-born Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was
worthy of bearing Christ the Lord.
Alleluia.

This text is taken from the responsories for Christmas Day, and has been set to music many, many times over the centuries. The emphasis is on seeing - on witnessing - the miracle. The music of each composer is an attempt to convey the wonder and awe felt by the shepherds as they worship the newborn Christ-child.

Today we sing some of our favourite settings: by Tomas Luis de Victoria (1549–1611), composed in 1572; by Francis Poulenc (1899–1963), from his *Quatre motets pour le temps de Noël* 1952; by Morten J. Lauridsen (born 1943), composed in 1994; and by William Byrd (c.1540-1623), from his second volume of *Gradualia*, published in 1607.

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Hodie Christus est; O magnum mysterium; Puer natus est nobis

Little is known of Byrd's early life, other than that in 1563 he was made Master of Choristers at Lincoln Cathedral. Byrd's appointment to the Chapel Royal in 1572 led to greater opportunities for him, both as a composer, and also for making contacts at Court. Elizabeth I was a moderate Protestant, who retained a fondness for elaborate ritual, besides being a music lover and keyboard player herself. Byrd's output of Anglican church music is small, but tends to stretch the limits of what was considered acceptable by many reforming Protestants at that time, who regarded highly wrought music as a distraction from the word of God.

From the early 1570s, Byrd became increasingly involved with Catholicism, which became a major factor in his personal and creative life. It is probable that Byrd's parental family were Protestants and it seems he may have held Protestant beliefs in his youth (a fragment of a setting of an English translation of Martin Luther's hymn "Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort", bears an attribution to "Birde" which includes the line "From Turk and Pope defend us Lord").

Byrd appeared in the recusancy lists from 1584, and, because of his associations with Catholic plotters, had restrictions placed on his movements and his property searched. It is a mark of the high esteem in which he was held that, in spite of his known Catholic sympathies, he was allowed to continue his work. Along with Thomas Tallis, Byrd ranks as the greatest English composer of the period.

Although Byrd composed many keyboard pieces and secular vocal music, he is best known for his sacred choral music. He composed many of the finest motets written in the late Renaissance. The motets sung this evening are all from his second volume of *Gradualia*, published in 1607: the setting of *O magnum mysterium*; together with *Hodie Christus natus est* and *Puer natus est nobis*, both of which were written to be sung on Christmas Day.

By the time Byrd died, the English musical landscape was undergoing profound changes. The native tradition of Latin music, which Byrd had done so much to keep alive, was

disappearing. The Civil War, and the change of taste brought about by the Restoration, created a cultural hiatus which adversely affected the cultivation of Byrd's music, together with that of Tudor composers in general. In a small way, it was his Anglican church music which came closest to establishing a continuous tradition, at least in the sense that some of it continued to be performed after the Restoration and into the eighteenth century.

Hodie Christus natus est

*Hodie Christus natus est:
Hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli
Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia.*

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

Puer natus est nobis

*Puer natus est nobis
Et filius datus est nobis
Cuius imperium super humerum eius
Et vocabitur nomen eius
Magni consilii Angelus*

A boy is born to us,
And a son is given to us,
upon whose shoulders authority rests,
and His name will be called
The Angel of Great Counsel.

*Cantate Domino canticum novum
Quia mirabilia fecit*

Sing to the Lord a new song,
because he has done marvellous things.

*Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
in secula seculorum. Amen.*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to
the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, and is now, and
always will be, for ever and ever. Amen.

M.-A. Charpentier (1643 – 1704)

Messe de Minuit, H.9

Marc-Antoine Charpentier was born in Paris, educated by the Jesuits, and destined for the law. In 1667, he went to Rome to study composition with Giacomo Carissimi, where he developed a taste for the drama of opera and oratorio. He was keen to utilise his new skills on his return to Paris. Whilst sacred music was flourishing in Italy, strict Catholic guidelines in France focused on the liturgy. The Italian style, which was becoming increasingly popular in secular French composition, was frowned upon in a sacred context, and this, combined with Louis XIV's total disinterest in masses set to music, meant that court composers largely stopped composing them. Charpentier's regret in not attaining a royal position was somewhat counterbalanced by being able to indulge his dramatic instincts in his church compositions, and he remains the outstanding composer of stylish and forward-looking French church music in an otherwise austere period for that genre. His prodigious amount of sacred music includes eleven masses for choir and orchestra, of which the *Messe de Minuit* is the most popular. It was probably written around 1690 for the Jesuit church of Saint-Louis in Paris, where Charpentier was *Maître de Musique*.

The *Messe de Minuit* is an excellent example of a parody mass, in which already existing musical material is overtly reused and incorporated into a new work. It combines art music and Italianate contrapuntal techniques with simple homophonic settings of French tunes of profane origin, using, as it does, Christmas folk melodies dating back to the Middle Ages (the relevant titles are included in the overview of the mass given above.) According to custom, Christmas folk songs or carols, known as *Noëls*, were sung in France at Midnight Mass. *Noëls* became popular in the 16th century, partly due to their extreme simplicity, dance-like nature and bucolic texts. In France it was more usual to play, rather than sing, these melodies, and organ versions and even complex instrumental arrangements were commonplace. Charpentier himself made some lovely arrangements (H.531 and H.534), which indeed we in *Invitatione* have performed in previous Christmas concerts. In today's performance we include his arrangement of *Or nous dites Marie* following the sung *Christe*.

Charpentier weaves together the quite different idioms of the secular folk melodies and his newly composed sections, such as the "Et in terra pax" and "Et incarnates est", successfully preventing the potential showiness of the Italian style from compromising the immediacy and charm of the simple folk tunes. The result is an attractive, accessible and uplifting work, full of variety, which is provided by the alternation between smaller and larger vocal and instrumental groups. There is a particularly significant alternation between voices and instruments in the Kyrie, which calls, for example, for groups of three renditions of each of the three acclamations of Kyrie, Christe and Kyrie eleison, in line with the three-part form which characterises much early music intended for the praise of God. The Agnus Dei similarly presents a vocal rendition nestling between two instrumental sections. It is interesting that some of the organ interludes are directed by manuscript instructions but not written out. Perhaps the *Noëls* were so well known that any organist would be able to supply them.

Along with other French contemporaries, Charpentier lived in the shadow of Jean-Baptiste Lully, who virtually controlled music in Paris, and little of Charpentier's output was published in his lifetime. However, his ability to combine successfully the Italian and French styles, and to mesh the secular with the liturgical, mean that his legacy has lasted, and influenced subsequent composers, including Couperin.

I KYRIE

Kyrie eleison: *Joseph est bien marié*

Christe eleison: *Or, nous dites Marie*

Kyrie eleison: *Une jeune pucelle*

II GLORIA

Et in terra pax hominibus

Laudamus te: *Tous les bourgeois de Châtre*

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus: *Ou s'en vont ces
gais bergers*

III CREDO

Patrem omnipotentem

Deum de Deo: *Vous qui désirez sans fin*

Crucifixus: *Voici le jour solennel, de Noël*

Et in Spiritum sanctum: *A la venue de Noël*

IV SANCTUS: O Dieu, que n'étais-je en vie

V AGNUS DEI: A minuit fut fait un réveil



J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Cantata, BWV 140 (movements I and VII)

Chorus: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*

Chorale: *Gloria sie dir gesungen*

The Lutheran tradition of music is widely thought to have peaked in J. S. Bach, a composer who, like his most distinguished predecessors, capitalised on all the musical styles available to him, whether from Protestant or Catholic traditions. Within the Lutheran liturgy, certain readings from the Bible were prescribed for every event during the church year, and the cantatas reflected these readings. After Bach's death, his cantatas fell into obscurity and were little known until the Bach-Gesellschaft began to publish his complete works in 1851.

The cantata *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* was written for performance on the 27th Sunday after Trinity, the last Sunday in the church year. This particular feast, however, is a rare occurrence, only happening when Easter has been early. While Bach was at Leipzig, the 27th Sunday after Trinity only occurred twice, in 1731 and again in 1742. (This year, 2017, there have been 24 Sundays after Trinity and before Advent Sunday, so the 27th misses out on an appearance by a few weeks.) In fact, evidence suggests that Bach wrote the cantata in 1731. The famous chorale 'Wachet auf' was written, as were so many, by the pastor Philipp Nicolai, on his recovery from an outbreak of plague which he had believed would kill him.

Today we are performing the first and last movements of the cantata, which set the texts of the first and third verses of the original chorale. The first movement is a chorale fantasia, an extended chorus which uses the original chorale melody as a cantus firmus in the sopranos, the other parts weaving intricate counterpoint under and around it in the traditional German style. In the instrumental introduction, the strings and woodwind play antiphonally. The original instrumentation includes a *taille*, or tenor oboe; today this part is being played on a clarinet, with no apology – Bach himself, ever the practical musician, often made use of whatever instruments he had to hand.

The last movement of the cantata is homophonic, promoting a unity of choir, clergy and congregation in their shared belief in the glory of God.

P. Warlock (1894 – 1930)

Bethlehem Down; Benedicamus Domino

Philip Heseltine published his musical works under the name of Peter Warlock. He is best known for his delightful solo songs and choral works, though in his lifetime he enjoyed a certain notoriety for his rather unconventional and often scandalous lifestyle. Despite having little formal musical training, he devoted his life to editing, music journalism, and transcribing and writing music. His contribution to early music scholarship is significant, and he produced a biography of Frederick Delius, with whom he was close friends. His early death due to coal gas poisoning was most likely to have been suicide, and reflects his state of mind, which was often plagued by insecurity and uncertainty of purpose.

Warlock's songs are rich in colour, chiefly because of the prolific use of chromaticism. 'Bethlehem Down' is a beautiful and tender carol, setting words by Bruce Blunt; the pair wrote it in 1927 to earn beer money for Christmas. *Benedicamus Domino* belongs to a clutch of songs, composed over a period of a fortnight in 1918, which first revealed Warlock's true

compositional prowess. It is a joyous setting of an anonymous Latin text about the immortal Christ made man, introducing each of four verses with a fanfare-like figure.

H. Berlioz (1803 – 1869)

***L'adieu des bergers* ('The Shepherds' Farewell')**

'The Shepherds' Farewell' is a creation of beauty, serenity and touching simplicity. It is the best-known section of the oratorio *L'Enfance du Christ*, dating from 1854. It originated as an organ piece Berlioz composed for his friend, Joseph-Louis Duc, in 1850; the composer then developed it into a choral work depicting the shepherds' farewell to the baby Jesus. The oratorio took four years to compose, and covers, as well as the childhood of Christ, Herod's mass murder of infants in Judea which led to the fleeing of Mary, Joseph and Jesus.



The Chamber Orchestra of *INVITATIONE*

Violins	Alan Deighton	Fiona Steele	Andrew Ward-Campbell
Violas	Penny Cook	Amy Parkin	
Cellos	Alan Edgar	Trish Ringrose	Sue Sidwell
Oboes	Julia Thompson	Martin Lutley	'Taille' (clarinet) Ian Franklin
Flutes	Kate Lutley	Margaret Pearson	

The Chamber Choir of *INVITATIONE*

Tony Ashbridge	Sarah Bartlett	Emma Dawber	Stacey Fergusson
Melanie Flick	Diana Halsey	John Hammond	Joseph Mathieson
Lily Mathieson	Rachel Mathieson	Mary Mead	George Myers
Luca Myers	Kathleen Nield	Patrick Plunkett	Ian Reid
Janice Summers			

Musical Director: Rachel Mathieson

Rachel graduated with a first class BMus in 2007 and a PhD in Music in 2016 from the University of Hull. She also has a BA in Modern Languages and a DPhil in Education from the University of Oxford. Over the last decade, she has taught music privately and in schools in the local area. She particularly enjoys music performance coaching, with individuals and groups. Since March 2017, she has worked in the School of Education at the University of Leeds, as a qualitative researcher on a post-16 maths education project funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

A pianist, singer and conductor, Rachel has performed with many local groups and societies. She has been piano soloist in Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue' and the Schumann Piano Concerto with the Hessle Sinfonia, and has been a guest conductor of a number of choirs and orchestras. She has recently returned to the Hull Choral Union as Deputy Music Director and Accompanist. When time permits, Rachel also enjoys playing the cello with the Hessle Sinfonia.

Rachel can be contacted at md@invitatione.org or via Facebook.

Invitatione was established in 2011 by a group of local musicians and music teachers. We aim to provide high quality live music in local venues, seeking avenues for creative ways of presenting classical music to a wider audience; to create enjoyable and varied performing experiences for our players and singers; and to promote a life-long love of music and music making, and an appreciation of the emotional and social benefits which this can provide. Our members have ranged from those as young as 11 to those in their retirement. This mix of ages and range of experience amongst members enables the youngest and the least experienced of our group to enjoy the support of others and to tackle challenging repertoire with confidence. Working and developing alongside one another, the experience for all of us is one of exploration and discovery.

We have performed large and small scale concerts in churches in Hull and across the East Riding, raising money for charities, churches and good causes. Highlights include a concert for Amnesty International which raised over £2,000 (January 2012); the semi-staged *Messiah* performed in Holy Trinity Church, Hull (Easter 2012); a collaboration with East Riding Theatre using the words of, and music inspired by, Shakespeare (June 2013); and thrilling performances in Beverley Minster of: Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony (2013) and his Tenth Symphony (2015): Strauss's *Four Last Songs* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* (2014); the Requiems of Brahms, Duruflé and Mozart; Kurt Weill's Little Threepenny Music; and Dvorak's Seventh and Eighth Symphonies (2016).

If you are interested in singing or playing in the ensembles of *Invitatione*, or booking us for an event, please email info@invitatione.org.

Acknowledgements

We are very grateful to the Catholic Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Hessle, and to Beverley Minster, for allowing us the free use of their premises for some of our rehearsals; to Mervyn King for designing our posters; and to all the supporters who assist with tickets, programmes, stewarding and refreshments for our events.

Thank you to the many singers and players who give their time to support the organising and managing of our projects, and to the clergy and staff at the church of All Saints, Great Driffield, for hosting this event.

Forthcoming *Invitatione* events

Sunday 10th December, 7.30, Beverley Minster: Music for Advent and Christmas (part of the Christmas Tree Festival)

Saturday 14th April 2018, 7.00: Handel's Messiah, All Saints, Great Driffield

To join our mailing list in order to receive information about events, please email info@invitatione.org, or visit www.invitatione.org or our Facebook page for further details.