

# CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees *director*

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## WELCOME LORD, SYRE CRISTESMASSE

CHRISTMAS MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE

Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge

Sunday 7th December, 8.15pm

## PROGRAMME

Veni, veni Emanuel

Gloria in excelsis Deo

O sapientia (chant)

Videte miraculum

O Oriens (chant)

Swete was the song the Virgine soong

O Emmanuel (chant)

Nowell: Dieus wous garde, byewsser

Jesu mercy, how may this be?

Gloria, from Missa Puer natus est nobis

Thomas Weelkes (c. 1576–1623)

Thomas Tallis (c. 1500–1585)

anon.

Richard Smert (*fl.* 1428–1477)

(John?) Browne

Thomas Tallis

## INTERVAL

Joseph lieber

Puer natus est nobis (chant)

Gaudete

Quæramus cum pastoribus

Angelus ad pastores ait

Niño Dios

Pastores dicite quidnam vidistis

O magnum mysterium

Das Wort ward Fleisch

Hieronymus Praetorius (1560–1629)

anon. (*Piæ Cantiones*, 1582)

Jean Mouton (1459–1522)

Hans Leo Hassler (1562–1612)

Francisco Guerrero (1528–1599)

Cristóbal de Morales (c. 1500–1553)

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672)

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We are most grateful to the Master, Dean of Chapel, and Fellows of Jesus College, for their kind permission to perform in the chapel.

An extraordinary variety of music was associated with the seasons of Advent and Christmas in the Renaissance and the Baroque. This concert gives some idea of that variety, from plainchant to carols and Latin motets, including works from England, Spain, and the German lands.

We begin with a two-part setting—probably dating from the thirteenth century—of the famous Advent text ‘Veni, veni Emanuel’, after which the first half of the concert presents music from England. In Thomas Weelkes’s six-voice Christmas anthem *Gloria in excelsis Deo* the words of the angels are heard as a frame to a middle section with English text. Thomas Tallis’s *Videte miraculum*—likewise for six voices—is a highly expressive setting of a responsory for Vespers on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which reaches its climax at the acclamations of Mary’s name. The four-voice setting of *Swete was the song the Virgine soong* is an arrangement by the seventeenth-century musical amateur Thomas Hamond of an earlier consort-song version of the piece. It sets with beautiful simplicity a text describing the lullaby sung by Mary to her child. The earliest substantial repertory of English polyphonic carols—dating from the fifteenth century—is represented here by *Nowell: Dieu vous garde*. The text is a dialogue between ‘Syre Cristesmasse’ and the welcoming company, and the piece may have been intended for a banquet or other celebration (as is suggested by the final verse: ‘Beuvex bien par toute la company’); Frank Harrison suggested that a suitable occasion would have been the celebration of Christmas held by the singing-men of cathedrals in their common hall. Either the text or the music of this carol—or possibly both—are the work of Richard Smert, who was rector at Plymtree in Devon and a singer at Exeter Cathedral. Between the pieces just described we sing three of the seven ‘O Antiphons’ (or ‘Great Antiphons’) for the Advent season. The text of *Jesu mercy, how may this be* is a dialogue between humankind and Christ, and focuses on the Passion in a graphic way, powerfully reflected in Browne’s music. The piece has a number of verses each of which ends with a partial repeat of the opening refrain. It has been suggested that Tallis’s seven-voice Mass *Pure natus est nobis* might have been composed for performance at Christmas 1554, when Philip of Spain, together with his chapel establishment, was in London following his marriage to Queen Mary. We know that on the first Sunday in Advent both Mary’s and Philip’s chapel singers sang at Mass in St Paul’s, as did the cathedral choir itself, and it is possible that they collaborated again at Mass on Christmas Day, a service for which Tallis’s setting would have been perfectly suited, incorporating as it does the Introit chant for this Mass as a tenor cantus firmus.

The second half of the concert turns to Continental music, beginning and ending in the German lands. The setting of *Joseph lieber* by the Hamburg organist Hieronymus Praetorius is based on the well-known tune, embedded in an eight-voice texture divided into two choirs of high and low voices. A group of pieces concerns the shepherds: the texts of those by Morales (a Spaniard who spent part of his career in Rome) and Hassler (born in Nuremberg, trained partly in Venice, and active in Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Dresden) are concerned with the joyful message of Christmas, while the famous motet *Quæramus cum pastoribus* by the French composer Mouton is a dialogue with the Christ-child. The extraordinary stillness of the opening of Victoria’s *O magnum mysterium* evokes the mystery of the Incarnation, while the piece ends with joyful ‘Alleluias’. Part of St John’s account of the Incarnation forms the text of Schütz’s *Das Wort ward Fleisch*, which ends the concert.

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### The Cambridge Taverner Choir

director Owen Rees

<i>sopranos</i>	<i>altos</i>	<i>tenors</i>	<i>basses</i>
Diana Baumann	Toby Gee	Paul Baumann	James Durran
Josie Dixon	Simon Godsill	Peter Leech	Frank Salmon
Helen Garrison	Rupert Preston Bell	Philip Mills	Gary Snapper
Rachel Godsill		Mark Wilderspin	Paul Watson
Bryony Lang			
Margaret Simper			
Sally Terris			

The Cambridge Taverner Choir, founded in 1986, belongs to a new generation of exciting young early music chamber choirs which, like The Tallis Scholars and The Sixteen, have emerged from the Oxford and Cambridge choral tradition. As well as regular concert series and festival appearances in Cambridge, the choir has performed in many parts of the U.K., and undertaken highly successful tours of Portugal in 1991 and Switzerland and Italy in 1996; it has also broadcast on Radio 3, and has been featured on Radio 4. The choir has

released three recordings; all have been acclaimed by the critics, and *Music from Renaissance Portugal* was shortlisted for the *Gramophone* Early Music Award in 1994.

The choir specialises in the performance of sacred polyphony in illuminating thematic, liturgical and physical contexts, aiming to recreate the grandeur and excitement of the European Renaissance, and especially the Tudor age in England and the Iberian 'Golden Age'. The choir also performs baroque and contemporary works. The 1995/6 season celebrated the music of John Taverner on the 450th anniversary of his death, and included a prestigious commission from the contemporary composer, John Tavener, while last year's concerts explored the music of five great European cities at the turn of the seventeenth century.

### NEXT CONCERT

Sunday 22 February, Jesus College Chapel

### *A Portuguese Requiem*

## CAMBRIDGE

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Edited by Stanley Sadie  
and Alison Latham

*The Cambridge Music Guide* is for all those who love music and wish to know more about its colourful history, development and theory. Superbly illustrated, the *Guide* is a comprehensive tour of every aspect of the new musical world, expertly edited by Stanley Sadie, editor of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*.

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£45.00 HB 0 521 40265 4 498 pp.



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**Veni, veni, Emanuel;**  
Captivum solve Israel.  
Qui gemit in exilio,  
Privatus Dei Filio.  
(Gaude, gaude; Emmanuel  
Nascetur pro te, Israel.)

Veni, veni, o Oriens  
Solare nos adveniens;  
Noctis depelle nebulas  
Dirasque noctis tenebras

Veni, veni, Adonai,  
Qui populo in Sinai  
Legem dedisti vertice  
In maiestate gloriae.

*O come, o come, Emmanuel!*  
*Redeem thy captive Israel,*  
*That into exile drear has gone*  
*Far from the face of God's dear Son.*  
*(Rejoice! rejoice! Emmanuel*  
*Shall come to thee, O Israel)*

*O come, o come, thou Dayspring bright!*  
*Pour on our souls thy healing light:*  
*Dispel the long night's lingering gloom,*  
*And pierce the shadows of the tomb*

*O come, o come, Adonai!*  
*Who in thy glorious majesty*  
*From that high mountain, clothed in awe,*  
*Gavest thy folk the elder Law.*

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**Gloria in excelsis Deo**

Sing my soul to God the Lord,  
All in glory's highest key.  
Lay the angels' choir abroad  
In their highest holy day;  
Crave thy God to tune thy heart  
Unto praise's highest part.

**Videte miraculum** matris Domini: concepit virgo virilis ignara consortii, stans onerata nobili onere Maria; et matrem se laetam cognoscit, quae se nescit uxorem. Haec speciosam forma prae filiis hominum castis concepit visceribus, et benedicta in aeternum Deum nobis protulit et hominem. (Stans onerata...) Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. (Et matrem...)

*Behold the miracle of the mother of our Lord: the virgin has conceived though she knew not a man, Mary, standing laden with her noble burden; and she is glad, knowing that she is a mother, and knowing that she is not a wife. She has conceived in her chaste womb one who is more beautiful than the sons of men, and - blessed for ever - she has brought forth God and man for us. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.*

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**Swete was the song the Virgine soong**

When she to Bethlem Juda came  
And was deliver'd of hir Sonne  
Who blessed Jesus hath to name.  
La lulla, lulla, lullaby,  
Lullaby swete Babe, soong she;  
My Sonne and eke my Saviour borne,  
Which hath vouchsafed from an high  
To visit us that ware forlorne.  
La lulla, lulla, lullaby,  
Lullaby swete Babe, soong she,  
And rockt him fetly on hir knee.

**Nowell Dieu wous garde, byewsser:** 'Who ys there that syngith so Nowell?' 'I am here, Syre Cristesmasse.' 'Wellcome, my Lord Ser Cristemasse, Wellcome to us all, bothe more and lasse, Com nere, nowell.' 'Dieus wous garde, byewsser,\* tydynges Y yow bryng: A mayde hathe borne a chylde full yong, the weche causeth yew for to syng: nowell. Christe is now born of a pure mayde; in an oxe stalle he ys layde; wherefor syng we all atte abrayde: nowell. Beuvex bien par tutte la company,\* make gode chere and be ryght mery, and syng with us now joyfully: nowell.'

*\*God keep you, fine sir*  
*\*a health to everyone*

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**Jesu mercy, how may this be,**  
That God himself for sole mankind  
Would take on Him humanity?  
My wit nor reason may it well find:  
*Jesu mercy, how may this be?*

With weeping, wailing, yea sowning for woe.  
*Jesu mercy, how may this be?*

Christ that was of infinite might,  
Egall to the Father in deity,  
Immortal, impassible, the worldes light,  
And would so take mortality.  
*Jesu mercy, how may this be?*

Ah Jesu!  
Why suffered thou such entreating,  
As beating, bobbing, yea spitting on thy face?  
Drawn like a thief, and for pain sweating  
Both water and blood, crucified, an heavy case.  
*Jesu mercy, how may this be?*

He that wrought this world of nought,  
That made both paines and joy also,  
And suffer would pain as sorrowful thought

Lo, man for thee, that were unkind,  
Gladly suffered I all this.  
And why, good Lord? Express thy mind.  
Thee to purchase both joy and bliss.  
*Jesu mercy, how may this be?*

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**Gloria of the Mass:** Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe; Domine Deus, agnus Dei, Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

**Joseph lieber, Joseph mein,**  
Hilf mir wiegen das Kindelein,  
Gott der wird dein Lohner sein  
Im Himmelreich der Jungfrau Kind Maria. Eya.  
Virgo Deum genuit quem divina voluit clementia.  
Omnes nunc concinite, Nato regis psallite,  
Voce pia dicite: Sit gloria Christo nato infantulo.  
Hodie apparuit in Israel, quem praedixit Gabriel, est natus rex.

*Dear Joseph, my Joseph, help me rock my darling child,  
God will reward thee in Heaven, child of the Virgin Mary.  
The Virgin gave birth to God as ordained by Heaven's mercy.  
All now sing together and play to the new-born King:  
With holy voice say: Glory be to the new-born Christ child.  
Today, he appears in Israel, he, whom Gabriel foretold, is  
born King*

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**Gaudete, gaudete!** Christus est natus ex Maria virgine, gaudete!  
*Rejoice, rejoice, Christ is born of the Virgin Mary, rejoice!*

Tempus adest gratiae      *The time has come of the grace*  
Hoc quod optabamus,      *for which we have prayed; let us*  
Carmina laetitiae      *devoutly sing songs of joy.*  
Devote reddamus

Deus homo factus est,      *God is made man, while nature*  
Natura mirante,      *wonders; the world is renewed*  
Mundus renovatus est      *by Christ the King.*  
A Christo regnante.

Ergo nostra cantio      *Therefore let our assembly sing*  
Psallat iam in lustris      *praises now at this time of*  
Benedicat Domino,      *purification: let it bless the Lord,*  
Salus Regi nostro.      *with greetings to our KING*

**Quaeramus cum pastoribus** Verbum incarnatum;  
cantemus cum hominibus regem saeculorum. Noe, Noe,  
Noe. Quod tu vides in stabulo? Jesum natum de Virgine.  
Quid audis in praeseptio? Angelos cum carmine et  
pastores dicentes: Noe, Noe, Noe. Ubi pascas, ubi cubes,  
dic, si ploras, aut si rides: Te rogamus, Rex Christe. Noe,  
Noe, Noe. Cibus et lac virgineum, lectus durum  
praeseptium, carmina sunt lacrimae. Noe, Noe, Noe.

*Let us seek with the shepherds the Word incarnate; let us  
sing with men the king of the ages. Noe. 'What do you  
see in the stable?' 'Jesus, born of the Virgin'. 'What do  
you hear in the stable?' 'Angels with a song, and  
shepherds saying: Noe.' 'Where will you sleep? Where  
will you eat? Tell us whether you are weeping or  
laughing. We ask you, Christ the King. Noe'. 'The food  
and milk of the Virgin, my bed a hard stable, my songs  
are tears. Noe'.*

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**Nino Dios** d'amor herido tan presto os enamorais, que apenas aveis  
nascido, quando d'amores llorais. En esa mortal divisa, nos modtrais bien  
el amar, pues, siendo hijo de risa, lo trocais por el llorar. La risa nos a  
cabido, el llorar nos lo aceptais y apenas aveis nascido quando d'amores  
llorais.

**Pastore, dicite, quidnam vidistis?** Et  
annuntiate Christi nativitatem. Noe, Noe, Noe.  
Infantem vidimus, pannis involutum, et choros  
Angelorum laudabant Salvatorem, Noe, Noe,  
Noe.

*Shepherds, tell us, pray, what have you seen?  
And announce to us the birth of Christ. Noel.  
We have seen the child wrapped in swaddling  
clothes, and choirs of Angels were praising the  
Saviour. Noel.*

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**Angelus ad pastores ait:** Annuntio vobis  
gaudium magnum quia natus est vobis hodie  
Salvator mundi, Alleluia..

*The angel spoke thus to the shepherds: I bring  
you tidings of great joy, for unto you this day  
is born the Saviour of the world, Alleluia.*

**O magnum mysterium,** et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent  
Dominum natum iacentem in praeseptio. O beata Virgo, cuius viscera  
meruerunt portare Dominum Iesum Christum. Alleluia.

*O great mystery and wonderful sacrament that the animals should see the  
new-born Lord lying in a manger. O blessed Virgin, whose womb was  
worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia.*

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Das Wort ward Fleisch und wohnt unter uns, und wir sahen seine Herrlichkeit, eine Herrlichkeit als des eingebornen Sohns von  
Vater voller Gnade und Wahrheit.

*The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of  
grace and truth.*