

# CHRISTMAS CONCERT

St. Mary's Parish Church - Goudhurst

Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 6.30 pm



Audience carols with the Wadhurst Brass Band

Choir carols - including:

Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols - with harp accompaniment

Conducted by Rebecca Miller

Programme £2

*Royal Tunbridge Wells*

**CHORAL  
SOCIETY**

[www.rtwcs.org.uk](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)



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# Programme

Wadhurst Band: Overture

**1 Choir carol:** *The Shepherds' farewell*  
- Hector Berlioz

**2 Audience carol:**  
*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

**3 Choir: A Ceremony of Carols**  
- Benjamin Britten

*Wolcum Yole*

*There is no Rose*

*Balulalow*

*As dew in Aprille*

Interlude (harp solo)

*In Freezing Winter Night*

*Deo Gratias*

**4 Organ solo**  
Chorale Prelude: *In Dulci Jubilo*  
- JS Bach

**5 Audience carol:**  
*O Come all ye Faithful*

**6 Choir carols:**  
*Nativity Carol* - Rutter  
*Shepherds Pipe song* - Rutter  
*Ding Dong Merrily on High*

**7 Wadhurst Band**

**8 Audience carol:**  
While shepherds Watched

**9 Harp solo:**  
*Au Matin* - Marcel Tournier

**10 Audience carol:**  
*It Came Upon The Midnight Clear*

**11 Choir:**  
*We Wish You A Merry Christmas!*

Wadhurst Band plays out

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*RTWCS is grateful to Burfields House Wealth Management, Goudhurst, and John Lewis at Home, Tunbridge Wells for their contribution towards the financing of this season's concerts.*

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## Programme Notes



### Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

*The Shepherds' Farewell* -  
*from The Childhood of Christ (L'Enfance du Christ), Op. 25*

*L'Enfance du Christ* is arguably Berlioz's most intimate and exquisitely sensitive work, but it was, in truth, sparked off by a party joke. At a card party, Berlioz was asked by a friend, the architect

Louis Duc, to write some music in his autograph album. He did so, and signed it with an imaginary composer's name similar to that of his friend, "*Pierre Ducre, Maitre de musique de la Sainte-Chapelle*". He had written the piece deliberately in an old-fashioned style and had dated it 1679. Towards the end of 1850 this short chorus was performed in public under the title "*The Shepherds' Farewell*". Both audience and critics found it delightful. (Berlioz, rather cynically, maintained that they would not have done so had they known it was his!)

Soon afterwards he added a 'little fugue' and a tenor solo to make up a complete cantata, "*The Flight into Egypt*". Two more cantatas were later added to make up the complete oratorio of "*L'Enfance du Christ*" which was published in 1854.

# Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)



## *A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28*

A Ceremony of Carols (op. 28) was written by Benjamin Britten in March 1942, while at sea aboard the M.S. Axel Johnson. Originally written for Treble Choir and harp, the piece was first performed by the Morrision Boy Chorus, under the composer. Because of the immense popularity of the piece, the mixed chorus setting to be heard tonight was arranged by Julius Harrison at the request of the publishing house of Boosey and Hawkes. The texts, which are reproduced below, are taken from a range of medieval and Renaissance poetry, and Britten's music also reflects the influence of earlier times.

The first two carols set 14th-century texts. The joyful cries of Wolcum Yole! contrast with the gentle setting of *There Is No Rose*, in which the repeated C/F bass ostinato in the harp only changes briefly to a long E flat at the third statement of the word *transeamus*. In the lullaby *Balulalow* the cross-rhythms of the harp accompaniment provide a continuous rocking motion for the cradle. The cold minor-key opening of *In freezing winter night* contrasts with the warmer major of the verse *This stable in a Prince's court*. Joyful shouts of *Deo gracias* introduce the final carol, and canonic entries of the same figure are used to create a tumultuous climax.

*adapted from a note by Cappella Novocastriensis -  
supplied through the programme note service of "Making Music".*

Four numbers will be omitted today: the opening Procession and closing Recession *Hodie*, which are specific for Christmas Day, *That yongè Child*, *This little Babe*, and the *Spring Carol*.

**The words of "A Ceremony of Carols"** are mostly of anonymous origin, but two numbers have named authors. The lullaby *Balulalow* was written by three brothers, well known 16th Century Scottish poets and ballad writers, while *In Freezing Winter Night* was penned by Robert Southwell, a Jesuit priest, also from the 16th century, who was hanged in 1597 but canonised by Pope Paul VI as one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales in 1970 - some 28 years after Britten set his words to music. The precise spelling of the old texts is open to argument, but it is understood Britten was relaxed about the variations of pronunciation heard in performances.

### **Wolcum Yole**

Wolcum, Wolcum,  
Wolcum be thou heavenè king,  
Wolcume, born in one morning,  
Welcome, for whom we sall sing!

Wolcum be ye, Stevene and Jon,  
Wolcum, Innocentes every one,  
Wolcum, Thomas marter one,  
Wolcum be ye, good New Yere,  
Wolcum Twelfth Day both in fere,  
Wolcum seintes lefe and dere.

Candelmesse, Queene of Bliss,  
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse.  
Wolcum be ye that are here,  
Wolcum alle and make good cheer.  
Wolcum alle another yere.  
Wolcum Yole, Wolcum!

*Anon.*

### **There is no rose**

There is no rose of such vertu  
As is the rose that bare Jesu.  
Alleluia, Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was  
Heaven and earth in litel space  
Res Miranda, Res Miranda.

By that rose we may well see  
There be one God in persons three,  
Pares forma, Pares forma.

The aungels sungen the shepherds to:  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Gaudeamus, Gaudeamus.

Leave we all this werdly mirth,  
And follow we this joyful mirth.  
Transeamus, Transeamus.

*Anon.*

## Balulalow

O my deare hert, young Jesu sweat  
Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,  
And I sall rock thee to my hert,  
And never mair from thee depart.  
But I sall praise thee evermoir  
With sanges sweat unto thy gloir;  
The knees of my hert sall I bow  
And sing that richt Balulalow!

*James, John & Robert Wedderburn*

## As dew in Aprille

I sing of a maiden that is makelès:  
King of all kings to her son she ches.

He came al so stille there his moder was,  
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the grass.

He came also stille to his moders bour,  
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the flour.

He came also stille there his moder lay  
As dew in Aprille that falleth on the spray.

Moder and mayden was never none but she  
Well may such a lady Goddes moder be.

*Anon.*

## In Freezing Winter Night

Behold, a silly tender babe,  
in freezing winter night,  
In homely manger trembling lies  
Alas, a piteous sight!

The inns are full; no man will yield  
This little pilgrim bed.  
But forced he is with silly beasts  
In crib to shroud his head.

This stable is a Prince's court,  
This crib his chair of State;  
The beasts are parcel of his pomp,  
The wooden dish his plate

The persons in that poor attire  
His royal liveries wear  
The prince himself is come from heav'n;  
This pomp is prized there

With joy approach, O Christian wight,  
Do homage to thy King  
And highly praise his humble pomp,  
wich he from Heav'n doth bring

*Saint Robert Southwell*

## Deo Gracias

Deo Gracias! Deo Gracias!  
Adam lay ibounden, bounden in a bond,  
Four thousand winter thought he not too long.

And all was for an appil,  
An appil that he tok,  
As clerkès finden written in their book.  
Deo Gracias! Deo Gracias!

Ne had the appil takè been,  
The appil takè been,  
Ne haddè never our lady  
A ben hevenè quene.

Blessed be the time  
That appil takè was.  
Therefore we moun singen,  
Deo Gracias! Deo Gracias!

*Anon*

## J.S. Bach - Chorale Prelude: *In Dulci Jubilo* (BWV 729).

The *In Dulci Jubilo* melody can be traced back to the fourteenth century. From the sixteenth century it was incorporated into Lutheran Hymnals with its Christmas text, which is where Bach would have come across it. His chorale prelude for organ *In Dulci Jubilo* for sets out the chorale melody supported by block chordal harmony at the outset, and the phrases of the chorale are separated by improvisatory flourishes. As the piece progresses, the decorative flourishes start to tangle with the chorale melody itself, creating an increasingly complex contrapuntal texture.



## The performers

### Rebecca Miller - Conductor

Acclaimed by both press and audiences as a compelling, insightful and energetic force on the podium, Rebecca is at home in both the orchestral and choral worlds. As First Prize winner in the Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition in Mexico City, she has guest conducted extensively in Mexico, including repeat performances with the National Symphony of Mexico, the Orquesta Filarmonica del UNAM, among many others. In 2010, she completed a highly successful tenure as Resident Conductor of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, where she ran her own series, the *Casual Classics*, as well as conducted classical, community, education, and cross-cultural and cross-genre performances, and where she was particularly admired for her ability to communicate with audiences of all ages.



Among her guest conducting credits are performances with the Southbank Sinfonia, the Chicago College of the Performing Arts, the London Sinfonietta, the Reno Philharmonic, the Huntsville Symphony, the Orchestra of the Swan, and the Jerusalem Symphony. Rebecca's previous positions include being Conducting Fellow of the Houston Symphony, Assistant Conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony, Junior Fellow at the Royal College of Music, Music Director of the Kingston University Orchestra and Chorus, and Music Director of the Sine Nomine Singers. She has released two CDs with her critically-acclaimed orchestra, The New Professionals, the latter of which received an 'Outstanding Recording' award from International Record Review, and 'Recording of the Year' by MusicWeb International.

Rebecca comes from California and trained as a pianist and soprano at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and at Northwestern University. She is currently based in London with her two children and her husband, the British pianist Danny Driver.

### Anna Wynne - harp

Anna Wynne studied at Birmingham and Leeds Universities, achieving a BA(hons) in English and Music, and an MMus in Performance.

Since completing her studies, Anna has embarked upon a busy freelance career both at home and abroad. Recent performances have included appearances at the Rye Festival as a member of the Sussex based Tilling Ensemble, plus performances of Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* at St Martins-in-the-Fields and Portsmouth Cathedral, Handel's Harp Concerto with the Voce Ensemble, Debussy's *Danses* at the Brighton Fringe Festival and Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto on a number of occasions.



She made her Purcell Room and BBC Radio 3 debuts in 2004 in a Halloween concert at the Purcell Room with James Bowman, Peter Medhurst, Linda Howarth and Carol Wells. In addition she appeared with the film director Ken Russell in a recent BBC Television series "A Picture of Britain".

In recent years Anna has played with the Orquesta Sinfonica de Tenerife, Orquesta Filarmónica de Gran Canaria, Britten-Pears Orchestra, and Southbank Sinfonia. Anna regularly performs at functions around the UK, and has played for the Prime Minister, Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, the Lord Mayor and the Mayor of London. Anna has performed several times for RTWCS, her last appearance being at our highly successful concert in the Tunbridge Wells Assembly hall in November 2013.

## The Wadhurst Brass Band

The present band owes its life to Algy Hoare, a local school teacher who formed a school band in 1957 and he and his players became great ambassadors for the school. Success led naturally into the “Youth Band” that evolved in 1974 into the “Wadhurst Brass Band” that we know today. Algy was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) earlier this year for his “services to music”. The band developed a friendly and welcoming style in which players both young and old were able to develop their musicianship.



The Wadhurst Brass Band is a group of friends, from all walks of life, who share a love of music-making and entertaining local communities. We continue to attract talented players and welcome players of all abilities. We are particularly proud of our growing training band “L-Plate” Brass. Anyone interested in joining the band should visit the website [www.wadhurstbrassband.co.uk](http://www.wadhurstbrassband.co.uk).

## Jeffrey Gray

Jeffrey read Music at Magdalen College where he was a Choral Scholar, singing in the celebrated Chapel Choir. After leaving Oxford, he held teaching posts in Worcestershire and York before becoming Director of Music at Monmouth School. He worked there for eight successful years, not least with the school's choirs, which performed in collaboration with BBCNOW and Welsh National Opera and toured widely throughout Europe and in the USA.

After a short period as Director of Music at Caterham School, Jeffrey gave up full time teaching for a while and spent a time pursuing his interest in politics amongst other things. He now finds himself with a full teaching programme again. He teaches at The Kings School, Rochester, at Junior King's Canterbury and at Marlborough House. Jeffrey sings with Rochester Cathedral Choir and is the Musical Director of the Cranbrook Choral Society and the Organist of Goudhurst Parish Church. He also examines for the ABRSM.

## The Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

RTWCS is a long established and very friendly choir made up of about 100 mixed voices drawn from Kent and East Sussex. In addition to a Christmas Concert, and other informal events, the choir presents two major concerts a year in the Tunbridge Wells Assembly Hall Theatre, accompanied by its own orchestra,



# Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

## Forthcoming Concerts and other Events

### Friday 7th February 2014 at 7.30 pm

in St John's Church Hall, Tunbridge Wells (Grosvenor room):

*"How Argo got it Wrong"* - A first-hand account of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

This lecture will be a fund-raising event, and delivered by choir member, Martin Williams, who was stationed in Tehran during the 1979 revolution.

### Saturday 15th March 2014 at 7.30 pm

*"If Music be the Food of Love"*

Informal concert at Holmewood House in celebration of the 450th Anniversary of Shakespeare's birth.

With Anthony Zerpa-Falcon and Jong-Gyung Park (piano) - Programme to include Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzes*.



### Monday 14th April at 7.30 pm

#### St John's Church, Tunbridge Wells

*Piano Recital by Anthony Zerpa-Falcon*

A fund-raising concert by the talented RTWCS accompanist and concert pianist.



### Saturday 10th May at 7.30 pm in the Assembly Hall Theatre

*An Evening at the Opera*

A programme of choruses and arias from the Operas featuring the celebrated Royal Opera House soloists Simona Mihai, *soprano* and Luis Gomez, *tenor* (right)



**To reserve tickets for any of the above events, please call 07506 557142.**

*Future concerts programmes may be subject to changes - please check our website for up-to-date details of all our future concerts, tickets and much more.*

**Interested in singing with RTWCS? - Why not give us a try!**

We welcome enquiries from potential new members of the society, whether experienced or not. We do not hold auditions and offer newcomers the opportunity to join one or two rehearsals before deciding whether they wish to become a member.

If you wish to give us a try, please telephone our registrar (Olivia Seaman) on 01892 863760 or the general secretary (Trevor Hurrell) on 07770 823104. Alternatively visit the membership section of our website, [www.rtwcs.org.uk](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)

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We have the experience to help you successfully secure and enhance your financial future by offering specialist advice in a wide range of areas including:

- Investments
- Retirement planning
- Tax and estate planning
- Long term care planning

For further information, or to request your complimentary guide to wealth management please contact us quoting RTWCS. In the meantime, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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*Principal Partner Provider of St. James's Place Wealth Management*

Burfields House, The Plain, Goudhurst, TN17 1AL  
Tel: 01580 211 211

Email: [burfieldshouse@sjpp.co.uk](mailto:burfieldshouse@sjpp.co.uk)

Web: [www.burfieldshouse.co.uk](http://www.burfieldshouse.co.uk)



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