



Thomas Tallis Society Choir
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



Constant Lambert by Christopher Wood, 1926
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CONSTANT LAMBERT
THE RIO GRANDE

STANFORD
PART SONGS

PHILLIP COOKE
GLORIA

PIANO
TYLER HAY
JACK REDMAN

Tonight's Programme

Charles V Stanford	Glorious and powerful God Sweet Innisfallen Sing, sweet harp	Charles V Stanford	To the Soul Joy, shipmate joy It is not the tear The sword of Erin
Phillip Cooke	Gloria (English premiere)	Constant Lambert	The Rio Grande
Charles V Stanford	Three waltzes, op. 178 Farewell, my joy Heraclitus		

The concert will run without an interval. Drinks will be served in the church hall after the concert. Please join us there.

PROGRAMME NOTES



Charles Villiers Stanford had a profound influence on a whole generation of English composers, either as a composition teacher or as a presence in the musical community who could not be ignored. This influence extends today - anyone familiar with music for the Anglican liturgy will have encountered his canticle settings which remain a staple part of the repertoire of cathedrals throughout the country.

While not actually his student, Constant Lambert was one of those to be influenced by Stanford and Philip Cooke follows in his footsteps, writing numerous sacred choral works. This programme also explores some of the less well-known corners of Stanford's output - his partsongs (with a particular focus on melodies from his native Ireland), piano works and solo songs.

Glorious and powerful God (1913)

Charles V Stanford (1852-1924)

No. 3 from Three motets for Chorus, Op. 135

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford was one of the most influential British musicians at the turn of the 20th century. He was born in Dublin and studied at Cambridge, in Leipzig, and in Berlin. He became organist at Trinity College, Cambridge and was one of the founding professors of the Royal College of Music, where he taught composition for the rest of his life.

Glorious and powerful God is one example of his immense contribution to Anglican sacred music - a repertoire that has been standardized in churches both internationally and nationally. Composed in 1913, it is one of three motets belonging to his Op. 135 works, along with *Ye holy angels bright* and *Eternal Father*. This anonymous text is set in a declamatory way, moving from impassioned realizations of God's power to reflections on peace and rest.

Sweet Innisfallen (1923)

Sing, sweet harp (1904)

Charles V Stanford

Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

As well as his position at the Royal College of Music, Stanford was also Professor of Music at Cambridge. Over his lifetime he had many pupils who became well-known, Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams, John Ireland, Frank Bridge, Arthur Bliss, Herbert Howells, and Edgar Bainton. It seems inconsistent that we know so much of their music, but far less of the output of Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, their composition teacher.

There is no doubt however, that Stanford was a considerable composer in his own right. He was not only at ease with large musical structures - nine operas, seven symphonies, ten concertos, six Irish rhapsodies, four masses and eight string quartets among others, are ample witness - but he was also gifted in writing musical miniatures and his songs have charm, lyricism and a sensitivity to the rhythm of words. His part-songs are often viewed as the peak of the form in that era. A passionate Irishman, he wrote many settings of Irish Airs and used texts by the popular Irish poets including Thomas Moore (1779-1852), the famous Irish poet and lyricist who enjoyed widespread popularity across Europe and North America,

These two Irish folksongs arranged to poems by Thomas Moore were never published in the UK and thus left unknown to scholars for nearly a century.

Gloria (English premiere)

Phillip Cooke (b.1980)

from *Missa Borealis* - A setting of the Greater Doxology

Phillip Cooke writes:

My setting of the *Gloria* was written during the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020, and what I imagined might initially be an introspective and melancholy work actually turned out to be one of my most ebullient and colourful pieces, spurred on by this unusual and percussive collection of instruments. The piece combines three distinct types of music, which all jostle for attention and prominence in the ten-minute duration. The first is declamatory and static, with the solo baritone orating dramatically beneath sustained metallic clangs. The second is smoother and more modal, moving obliquely from an opening tone. The final music is what dominates, colourful tableaux which are often quicker in tempo with piquant chromaticisms puncturing the harmonic backdrop.

Three waltzes, op. 178

Charles V Stanford

1. *Tempo di valse, un poco rubato*, 2. *Vivace*, 3. *Grazioso e non troppo mosso*

Stanford first composed Six Waltzes for piano when he was 24 years old. Many years later he revisited the form with his Three Waltzes, op.178. They were published in 1923, but had probably been composed some three years earlier. They are evocative reminiscences of an earlier age. Look out for allusions to Beethoven's *Fur Elise* in the opening number. Waltz No.2 is full of energy and exuberance. Number 3 delivers good characterisation of contemporary salon music.

Farewell, my joy (1910)

Charles V Stanford
Mary E Coleridge (1860-1907)

Stanford's Eight Partsongs (op.119), settings of poetry by Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, were written in memory of her, following her early death in 1907 from acute appendicitis. The set is best known for the third song, *The Bluebird* - an acknowledged masterpiece - but the rest of the collection show Stanford's skill in setting the English language and painting scenes and emotions in a natural, but emotive fashion. In *Farewell, my joy*, Stanford responds to the poet's seeming rejection of happiness with a passionate outburst of emotion, coloured by plangent dissonance, conveying the loss and regret.

Heraclitus (1910)

Charles V Stanford
William Johnson Cory (1823-1892)

This Heraclitus is not the pre-Socratic philosopher, but a poet from the 3rd century BC, hailing from Caria, the ancient name of a region in south west Anatolia, now Bodrum in Turkey. He was friends with a fellow poet, Callimachus of Cyrene, who, upon hearing for the death of his colleague, wrote this epitaph, which was translated by Eton Classics master William Johnson Cory (1823-92), who was also the private tutor of Elizabeth Mary Coleridge. Stanford's setting is direct and heartfelt, full of warmth and the obvious affection which existed between the two friends.

To the Soul (1906) Joy, shipmate joy (1906)

Charles V Stanford
Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

No.4 & 6 from *Songs of Faith*, op.97

Stanford's *Songs of Faith*, published in 1907, comprises six songs; three each of settings of Alfred Tennyson and Walt Whitman. A pupil of Stanford's, Vaughan Williams also set the text in 1907 in his choral work *Toward the Unknown Region*. In this poem, Whitman describes the soul's journey into the unknown, which he seems to embrace joyfully, though he does not know anything about this future state other than that we will 'dwell beyond the bounds of Time and Space'.

The final song in the series, *Joy, Shipmate, Joy!* also speaks of the soul's joyful embracing of death as it leaves its anchorage, like a ship setting sail into the unknown. The poem climaxes with a repetition of the first line, 'Joy, shipmate, joy'; echoed in Stanford's writing, a musical climax suggests that the soul, having greeted us for the last time, turns and sails away, illustrated through the music fading away.

It is not the tear (1901)
The sword of Erin (1901)

Charles V Stanford
Thomas Moore

No. 5 & 4 from *Six Irish folksongs*, op. 78

These two songs are taken from Stanford's *Six Irish Folksongs*, op.78. Thomas Moore won instant acclaim with the success of his *Irish Melodies*, in which he took traditional Irish airs and set them to his own sensitive, atmospheric lyrics. *It is not the tear* (setting the air *The Sixpence*) recounts how a memory "fondly kept" of one who has passed away, is a most fitting tribute, growing richer and more cherished with age. *The sword of Erin* (setting the air *Cruachan na Feine*), tells of the bloody revenge wrought upon King Conor MacNessa after he betrayed and slaughtered the sons of Usnach (the second Sorrow of Irish storytelling).

The Rio Grande

Constant Lambert (1905-1951)
Sacheverell Sitwell (1897-1988)

The Rio Grande is a secular cantata by English composer Constant Lambert. Written in 1927, it achieved instant and long-lasting popularity on its appearance on the concert stage in 1929. As an example of symphonic jazz, it is not unlike the style of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, although it is very much Lambert's individual conception. Syncopated jazz forms combine with lithe Latin American dance rhythms to create an air of haunting nostalgia. It was dedicated to his lifelong friend Angus Morrison, who played piano at its first (broadcast) performance.

The text is a poem by Sacheverell Sitwell, first published in his collection *The Thirteenth Caesar, and other Poems* (1924). The poem refers to a river in Brazil which flows through a town and over a waterfall, although it is not clear if it is meant to refer to a real location or if it is entirely imaginary.

No other work of Lambert's achieved the level of popularity achieved by *The Rio Grande*. It is still performed regularly today, at the BBC Proms (including the Last Night in 2001) and by choral societies in the UK and abroad.

Lambert once claimed that "the greatest English music has always been literary, in the best sense of the word, just as English poetry has always laid great stress on the purely musical value of sounds as apart from sense". Lambert's setting of his friend Sitwell's poem epitomises this maxim, playing with rhythm, textures and hiatuses, that bring out the word-play of the poem.

Music critic Christopher Palmer said of this piece that:

"Lambert would be the first to concede, today, that some of the harmonic and rhythmic clichés he decried in others had slipped into his own work. Yet, for all that, *The Rio Grande* retains a pristine quality. It is above all the work of a poet, and Lambert's poetic sensibility has ensured the survival of his best music. The free-fantasy form is simplicity itself: first section (allegro) – cadenza for piano and percussion – slow central section, in the style of a nostalgic tango – recapitulation – tranquil coda."

By the Rio Grande
They dance no sarabande
On level banks like lawns above the glassy, lolling tide;
Nor sing they forlorn madrigals
Whose sad note stirs the sleeping gales
Till they wake among the trees and shake the boughs,
And fright the nightingales;
But they dance in the city, down the public squares,
On the marble pavers with each colour laid in shares,

At the open church doors loud with light within.
At the bell's huge tolling,
By the river music, gurgling, thin
Through the soft Brazilian air.
The Comendador and Alguacil are there
On horseback, hid with feathers, loud and shrill
Blowing orders on their trumpets like a bird's sharp bill
Through boughs, like a bitter wind, calling

They shine like steady starlight while those other sparks are failing
 In burnished armour, with their plumes of fire,
 Tireless while all others tire.
 The noisy streets are empty and hushed is the town
 To where, in the square, they dance and the band is playing ;
 Such a space of silence through the town to the river
 That the water murmurs loud -
 Above the band and crowd together;
 And the strains of the sarabande,
 More lively than a madrigal,
 Go hand in hand
 Like the river and its waterfall
 As the great Rio Grande rolls down to the sea.
 Loud is the marimba's note

Above these half-salt waves,
 And louder still the tympanum,
 The plectrum, and the kettle-drum,
 Sullen and menacing
 Do these brazen voices ring.
 They ride outside,
 Above the salt-sea's tide.
 Till the ships at anchor there
 Hear this enchantment,
 Of the soft Brazilian air,
 By those Southern winds wafted,
 Slow and gentle,
 Their fierceness tempered
 By the air that flows between.

EAMONN DOUGAN



Eamonn Dougan is an inspirational conductor and renowned vocal coach and baritone. He is Associate Conductor of The Sixteen, founding Director of Britten Sinfonia Voices, Music Director of the Thomas Tallis Society, and Chief Conductor for Jersey Chamber Orchestra and Ryedale Festival Opera.

Recent conducting debuts include Handel's *Semele* at Sibelius Summer Academy and Haydn's *Seven Last Words of our Saviour on the Cross* with the English National Opera. Forthcoming conducting engagements include performances as part of the Royal Academy of Music's Bach the European series, concerts with Chorwerk Ruhr, celebrating Byrd's 400th anniversary, a Christmas tour with Ars Nova, Copenhagen and Messiah with Chamber Choir Ireland and the Seville Baroque Orchestra. His third recording with De Profundis will be released in 2024.

Eamonn is vocal consultant for the ongoing Bach series at the Royal Academy of Music, where he also gives conducting masterclasses. He is a Visiting Professor to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, where he teaches ensemble singing and directs the Guildhall Consort. Eamonn read music at New College, Oxford, before continuing his vocal and conducting studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Eamonn Dougan is managed worldwide by Percius. www.percius.co.uk.

TYLER HAY - PIANO



Tyler Hay first showed a prodigious talent for the piano when he won the Dennis Loveland award in Kent for his performance of Liszt's Mephisto Waltz no 1 at the age of 11. He gained a place to study at the Purcell School in 2007 where he studied under Tessa Nicholson. He continued his studies with Graham Scott and Frank Wibaut at the Royal Northern College of Music and with Niel Immelman and Gordon Fergus-Thompson for a Masters degree at the Royal College of Music.

Tyler has performed programmes at Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall and the Purcell Room and has played Ravel's Concerto for Left Hand Alone at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto no 2 at Symphony Hall with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. In 2016, Tyler won first prize in the keyboard section of the Royal Overseas League Competition and as well as winning the RNCM's Gold medal competition, also won first prize in the Liszt Society International Competition. Tyler won 1st prize in the Dudley International Piano Competition in November, 2022. CDs of Liszt, John Ogdon, Kalkbrenner and Field are available on Brilliant Classics and an album of virtuoso piano music by contemporary British composer Simon Proctor is also available on Navona Records.

JACK REDMAN – PIANO



Jack is a freelance pianist and répétiteur based in London. He recently completed a masters in piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Michael Dussek and James Baillieu. Graduating with a DipRAM and Regency prize, he won the Marjorie Thomas Art of Song Prize in competition. A thoroughly rewarding two years at the Academy produced many highlights with some extremely talented soloists. He has earned a place on the Oxford Lieder Young Artist's programme with soprano Clara Orif, performed as part of the Academy's Song Circle, and performed at Wigmore

Hall with trombonist Isobel Daws.

Jack has acted as répétiteur for a range of productions, most recently Massenet's *Werther* for Lyric Opera Ireland, and also productions of Bizet's *Carmen*, Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, and Adam Gorb's new opera *The Path to Heaven*. He also sings professionally for choirs and opera chorus, including under Carlo Rizzi for Opera Rara's performance of Mercadante's *Il Proscritto* at the Barbican.

ALEX BOWER-BROWN – BARITONE



Alex Bower-Brown is a British baritone, currently studying with a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music. Alex studies with the professors Glenville Hargreaves and Iain Ledingham. Whilst at the Academy, Alex has been a regular performer in the Royal Academy Bach consort, performing with some of the best conductors of our age including Philippe Herreweghe, John Butt and Jane Glover. A highlight of the series was singing 'Pilate' in a production of Bach's *St John Passion*, conducted by Philippe Herreweghe. In 2020 Alex performed the title role in Michael Finnissy's new opera *Mankind* in a series of premier performances around Norfolk.

Alex has performed as a soloist in a wide variety of works including Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Brahms' *Requiem* and Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs*. He was also part of the chorus for Hurn Court's production of *Dido and Aeneas*. As a member of professional choirs Alex has toured much of the USA and Europe, singing in some of the most illustrious venues in the world including the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Festival Hall, the Sheldonian Theatre, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and St Thomas' 5th Avenue in New York.

NAOMI QUANT – ALTO



As well as a regular member of the TTS soprano section, Naomi Quant is a dramatic coloratura soprano with a number of leading roles under her belt. Most recently she has performed the role of Violetta in *La Traviata* with Brent Opera and Abigaille in *Nabucco* with Southgate Opera.

Naomi gained her MMus from Trinity Laban Conservatoire in 2016 and has since had the pleasure of singing several famous roles such as the Queen of the Night in Mozart's *Magic Flute*, Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Santuzza (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), and the eponymous *Norma* as well as performing the soprano solos in oratorio works such as

Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and Brahms' *Requiem*.

All this is a long way from her day job as a VAT consultant - as they say, it isn't over until the VAT lady sings!!

PERCUSSION

Matthew Turner (Timpani)

George English

Ryan Hepburn

Kiyomi Seed

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY CHOIR

With around 60 auditioned voices TTS presents four or five concerts a year in the beautiful setting of St Alfege Church. Although many of the choir members live locally in Greenwich, TTS attracts musicians from all over London owing to the high standards it maintains. All singers are required to have very good sight-reading abilities as the choir works on a few concentrated rehearsals before each concert.

We are always keen to recruit new voices. If you are interested, please contact our membership secretary Kathryn Strachan strac157@ntlworld.com.

Sopranos Phoebe Clapham, Alana Clark, Dandy Freeman, Tetiana Hnatink, Philippa Kent, Chloe Lam, Caroline Molloy, Rosemary Naylor, Romy Nuttall, Olivia Peacock, Jill Pollock, Naomi Quant, Kathryn Strachan, **Emma Wilkins**

Altos Christine Balls, Joanna Clark, Miriam Crozier, Susan Dean, Bryony Ford, Sally Hughes, Emma Humphries, Philippa John, Melanie McCabe, Sophy Miles, Katherine Pile, Alice Shelton

Tenors David Abrahams, Justin Eeles, Andrew Green, Larry Howes, Nathan Killen, David Lowick

Basses Dermot Agnew, Richard Brooks, Cyril Cleary, Simon Gallie, Stephen Jackson, Jonathan Louth, Tom Perry, Geoff Woodhouse

Bold denotes Choral Ambassadors.

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And look out for updates on our website www.thomas-tallis-society.org.uk.

NEXT SEASON 2024 DATES

Saturday 28 September conducted by Olivia Shotton.

Britten – A.M.D.G – a challenging a capella tour de force.

Cozzolani – motets by this rediscovered renaissance female composer.

Saturday 9 November conducted by Eamonn Dougan.

A Polychoral Extravaganza building on the success of last year's event, focussing on Italian composers including Palestrina and Pacelli - con instrumenti.

Sunday 15 December conducted by Eamonn Dougan.

Respighi – Lauda per la Nativita del Signore – with woodwind and piano.

Christmas motets and carols.

FRIENDS AND PATRONS

We are very grateful to our faithful group of Patrons and Friends that have been loyally supporting us for a number of years. Their generosity and support have really helped the Society to keep going. A reliable yearly income is a huge benefit in planning programmes and means we can budget more accurately.

We are very keen to increase the number of Patrons and Friends to help us go forward in a sustainable manner and we would love your support as either a Patron or Friend.

A Friend contributes £30 per year and this special relationship with the choir is recognised by:

- A newsletter with early notification of concerts
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party
- Recognition of support in TTS programmes.

As a Patron of the Society you receive additional benefits in recognition of an annual donation of £150:

- A complimentary top price ticket to all concerts
- Free concert programmes
- Separate interval or pre-concert complimentary drinks table
- Acknowledgment of support of the Society in the programme
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party.

Please consider whether you could support TTS by becoming a Patron or a Friend of the Society. Speak to Carole tonight or contact her at carolelowe@rocketmail.com.

We would like to recognise the important contribution of the following TTS Patrons:

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With thanks to the Churchwardens of St Alfege for their continued support.