

# Festival Singers

Director: Rosemary Russell

Organist: Jonathan Berkahn

## *From Shadow to Light*

*Purcell, Pärt,  
Rutter, Dumbleton*

- Recorder ensemble
- Barbara & Lesley Graham

4.00 -5.30pm Saturday 1 Dec. 2012

St Ninian's Uniting Church

208 Karori Road, Wellington



**Musical Director:** Rosemary Russell

**Sopranos:** Barbara Graham, Lesley Graham

**Piano and Organ:** Jonathan Berkahn

**Piano:** Janet Gibbs

**Recorders:**

Tenor, Treble: Bernard Wells ~ Bass in F: Judith Urry

Tenor, Great Bass in C: Hamish Nelson ~ Contrabass in F, Descant: Ron McNulty

**Soloists from the Choir:**

Altos: Libbie Wride, Margaret Seconi

Tenors: Evan Dumbleton, Joe Fecteau. Bass: Brian Patchett

## From Shadow to Light

Today's concert takes us on a journey counter to that of ordinary life, which is naturally from birth to death. Rather, this pilgrimage takes us from death to life.

We begin in the tonal and thought world of the 1600s with unusually deep timbred recorders. Purcell's England was barely past the great Plague when these pieces were written. Through the stately and hauntingly beautiful *Funeral Sentences*, *Elegy on the Death of Queen Mary* and *When I am Laid in Earth*, we have time to consider the complex experiences of life and death and how we honour those who have contributed to life and gone on. *Pari Intervallo* played by recorders, keeps the mood sombre but being without text, allows space for our thoughts. Whilst it is a recent composition, its ancient musical roots of Gregorian chant allow it to enter subtly. Otto Goldschmidt's little hymn, quietly introduces the theme of Hope through Christ. We celebrate this and look forward through Purcell's Anthem *Rejoice in the Lord Always*.

The joyful duet *Sound the Trumpet* announces a new spirit, the vocal parts imitating trumpet-

like patterns. *Let us Wander* also resounds with new found freedom. *Come, Dance and Sing* gives us a premonition of the 20th century, harmonically. The significance of Jesus' mother, Mary, is introduced through *Ave Maria*, by Saint Saens. But from *Born to be our Saviour*, (a delicious mix of energetic rhythms and jazzy chords), the Christmas story is well on it's way in a fusion of sacred and secular that you might say resonates with Jesus' own take on life. We are now ready to launch into the Angelic host singing Rutter's *Gloria*. The second movement echoes the cries of Job heard in the *Funeral Sentences*, *deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death, suffer us not to fall away from Thee at our last hour* by beseeching *You who take away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us*. The Trinity is applauded and given full affirmation through a rhythmic and melodic party in the last movement. The final *Praise Ye the Lord* gathers together the richness and history of both our musical and spiritual journey. May this Christmas time be one of both reflection and celebration for you, perhaps initiated by this concert.

# Programme

## **Funeral Sentences and Funeral music for Queen Mary: Henry Purcell**

In the Anglican Prayer book (1662) the liturgy of the Burial of the Dead includes seven "sentences" drawn largely from the scriptures: a group of three at the beginning of the service, three at the graveside and the final one after the interment. The much loved Queen Mary died of smallpox at the end of 1694. Her funeral was delayed on account of a bitterly cold winter. She was buried in Westminster Abbey. The Great Plague of 1665 was still a potent memory for Londoners. Less than nine months later, Purcell himself died. That he was so well revered is evident by his own interment also in Westminster Abbey and the use at his funeral of the very music he had so recently composed for his sovereign.

Our presentation combines two of Purcell's original Funeral Sentences with a third one that is actually a replacement piece written by Purcell in a simpler harmonic style, probably to replace a lost piece from a setting by another composer. These three pieces are bracketed by the March which was used in the Funeral procession and the Canzona which would have been played inside the Abbey. These are played by low toned recorders rather than the flat mournful trumpets used in 1695.\* Purcell's setting is both intimate in mood yet powerful in musical setting with harmonic highlighting of crucial words such as *fall*, *secrets*, and *pains of eternal death* by dissonance and chromaticism. The brevity of the Funeral Sentences should not blind us to the profundity of the restrained grief expressed.

## **Elegy upon the Death of Queen Mary**

Soloists: Barbara and Lesley Graham

This is the closing chorus of Purcell's opera *The Fairy Queen*. In it the death of the Queen is anticipated, and in fact it was only 6 years later that Queen Mary died. The Elegy was composed for and performed at the State funeral of Queen Mary which took place on 5 March 1695. It too was performed at Purcell's funeral eight months later.

## **When I am Laid in Earth Purcell arr: Evan Dumbleton**

Soloist: Lesley Graham

This aria is from Purcell's most famous opera *Dido and Aeneas*, with choral accompaniment instead of the original instrumental continuo.

## **Pari Intervallo: Arvo Pärt**

Arvo Pärt is known for his meditative compositions, in which he seeks unity in a world of complexity. This uses Pärt's minimalistic compositional technique of tintinnabulum (bells), where one part plays notes from chords repetitively.

## **Lost is my Quiet: Purcell**

**A Tender Shoot:  
Otto Goldschmidt (1829–1907)  
Text: William Bartholomew (1793–1867)**

**Rejoice in the Lord Always  
(the Bell Anthem): Purcell**

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INTERVAL

### **Sound the Trumpet: Purcell**

Originally written for two counter tenors, this can be sung by two sopranos or soprano and alto.

### **Let us Wander: Purcell**

**Trio by William Green, NZ. (1962– )**  
*Introduction – Adagio – Fugue*

**Come Dance and Sing: Herbert Howells**  
Soloist: Barbara Graham

### **Ave Maria: Saint-Saëns**

Apart from his popular *Christmas Oratorio* (Op.12), Saint Saëns' vocal music has been largely forgotten. As organist for various churches in Paris, he wrote a considerable number of short pieces of church music for various combinations of voices and instruments. This *Ave Maria* was written for two equal voices and organ.

### **Born to be our Saviour: Evan Dumbleton**

Being premiered today, this Christmas work is dedicated to the Festival Singers, with music and text by Evan Dumbleton. Unusually, it commences with a prologue from Isaiah 7:14, with the following choruses based on the appearance of the angels to the shepherds in the field of Luke 2:11, and the four verses offering commentary. The style of the music and text reflects jazz, gospel and modal harmonic influences.

### **Gloria: John Rutter:**

Soloists: Lesley Graham, Barbara Graham,  
Libbie Wride

### **Praise Ye the Lord: John Rutter**

Soloist: Joe Fecteau

## **Henry Purcell (1659–95)**

Henry Purcell, although sadly shortlived, was the finest and most original composer of his day. There was a renewed flowering of music after the Restoration of the Monarchy and as the son of a Court musician, a chorister at the Chapel Royal, and the holder of continuing royal appointments until his death, Purcell worked in Westminster for three different Kings over 25 years. In the Chapel Royal young Purcell studied with Dr John Blow. In 1679, Purcell succeeded Dr Blow as organist of Westminster Abbey. On Purcell's death in 1695 Blow returned to the post and wrote a noble *Ode on the Death of Purcell* in recognition of his musicianship.

Purcell wrote operas, overtures, incidental stage music (for more than 40 plays), harpsichord suites and trio sonatas, and became involved with one of the most important musical

developments in Restoration London - the gradual establishment of regular public concerts. In the 1670s there were highly skilled players of the violin, cello, and flute, as well as exponents of the relatively new art of playing continuo instruments, especially the organ and the harpsichord. Much of his instrumental music was published in 1697, by his widow. Purcell's one true opera, *Dido and Aeneas*, is an enduring masterpiece, full of melodic and harmonic inventiveness. Purcell's sensitivity to text in his songs, has been matched by few masters in musical history.

\*Flat trumpets were equipped with slides rather like a trombone, but famously awkward to play as the slides were behind the player not in front. We are thrilled to have a tenor, bass, contrabass in F and great bass recorder in C accompanying us today and very grateful for the loan of these bass instruments of which there are only 2 or 3 in New Zealand.

## Funeral Sentences

### Man that is born of a woman

Man that is born of a woman  
hath but a short time to live,  
and is full of misery.  
He cometh up and is cut down,  
like a flower;  
he fleeth as it were a shadow  
and ne'er continueth  
in one stay.

### In the Midst of Life

In the midst of life we are in death;  
of whom may we seek for succour  
but of Thee, O Lord?  
who for our sins art justly displeased.

Yet, O Lord, O Lord most mighty,  
O Holy and most merciful Saviour,  
deliver us not into the bitter pains  
of eternal death.

### Thou Knowest, Lord

Thou knowest, Lord,  
the secrets of our hearts;  
shut not thy merciful ears unto our pray'rs;  
but spare us, Lord most holy.  
O God, most mighty,  
O holy and most merciful Saviour  
Thou most worthy judge eternal,  
suffer us not, at our last hour  
for any pains of death,  
to fall from Thee. Amen.

## Dido's Lament

Thy hand, Belinda!  
Darkness shades me,  
on thy bosom let me rest,  
more I would, but death invades me  
death is now a welcome guest.

When laid in earth,  
may my wrongs create no trouble in thy breast.

Remember me,  
but ah!, forget my fate.

When earth enfolds me,  
embraced in death,  
remember me, but not my fate.

## Born to be Our Saviour

Behold, behold:  
The Lord himself will give you a sign.  
A maiden shall conceive and shall bear a son.  
You shall call his name Immanuel, God with us.

### Refrain:

*In the city of David is born this day,  
go find the humble manger where infant he lay.  
Born to be your Saviour, he is Christ the Lord.  
So go forth, go tell, the good news impart:  
Infant there in manger, he is Christ the Lord.*

The child, he is Jesus, for so long foretold.  
Though wise men bore gifts,  
He seeks not our gold;  
but ever to listen, and live in His Word,  
as Mary, she welcomed the will of the Lord.

No room at the inn; there's no bed for to sleep,  
God's son he was born midst the  
oxen and sheep.

Make room in your heart  
for the Saviour's grace,  
his humble birth our old life to efface.

Such love freely given, such love unsurpassed,  
demands our thanks as his praises we sing.  
From his birth on this day to Calvary,  
God's love, so great, that will set us free.

The Glory of God is shining around;  
Good news for all people, let great joy abound.  
This miracle brought us, the virgin birth;  
believe in this sign that God has come to earth.

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## Gloria

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, Jesu Christe.  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei. Filius Patris.

Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus. Tu solus Dominus.  
Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.  
Cum sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.

Glory be to God on high,  
and on earth, peace to all of good will.  
We praise thee. We bless thee.  
We adore thee. We glorify thee.  
We give thee thanks  
for thy great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King.  
God almighty Father.  
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.  
Most High Lord God, Lamb of God.  
Son of the Father.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.  
Thou who takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou who sittest at the right hand of the  
Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou alone art the Holy One.  
Thou alone art the Lord,  
Thou, Jesus Christ, alone art the Most High.  
With the Holy Ghost  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

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## Praise ye the Lord (Ps 150)

Praise ye the Lord.  
Praise God in his holiness:  
Praise him in the firmament of his power.  
Praise him in his noble acts:  
Praise him according to his excellent greatness.  
Praise him in the sound of the trumpet;

Praise him upon the lute and harp.  
Praise him in the cymbals and dances:  
Praise him upon the strings and pipe:  
Praise him upon the well tuned cymbals;  
Praise him upon the loud cymbals  
Let everything that hath breath:  
Praise the Lord.

## **Rosemary Russell - Musical Director**

Rosemary (B.A. LRSM, Dip Tchg) enjoys the life of a musician/teacher. She has directed the Festival Singers for nine years through a range of music from the Messiah and Haydn's Seasons through recently composed NZ art music to folk music from around the world. This is Rosemary's last concert with the choir. She sings in both the Orpheus Choir and Nota Bene, doing some accompanying and leading with them and is having singing lessons with Lesley Graham at present.

Currently Rosemary is working with university graduates training to be secondary school music teachers, but from 2013 will be HOD music at Sacred Heart College.

A recent musical foray has been into the world of violin, playing in a string trio. Rosemary also plays the piano, sings and leads worship at Titahi Bay Community Church and is currently writing some children's songs.

## **Jonathan Berkahn - Organist**

Festival Singers' deputy conductor and accompanist Jonathan Berkahn, came to Wellington in 1990 to study at Victoria University. Since then he has acquired a B Mus in composition, a B Mus (Hons) in performance (organ, harpsichord, and fortepiano), and a PhD in music history.

He currently teaches theory and analysis at the New Zealand School of Music, freelances as a performer and composer, and is Director of Music at St Barnabas' Anglican Church, Khandallah.

In his spare time he sings and plays accordion at the Kitty O'Shea's Irish session. He has been with Festival Singers since 2000.

## **Lesley Graham - Soprano**

Lesley has been a regular performer in oratorio, opera and ensemble works for many years. Lesley regularly sings with the NBR NZ Opera chorus and in 2009 she was invited to sing a recital in Japan. Other recent solo performances include Haydn's *Creation*, Handel's *Messiah* and *Dixit Dominus*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* and the role of Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus* for the Wellington G&S Light Opera Society.

## **Barbara Graham - Soprano**

Barbara is a graduate of the PwC Dame Malvina Major Emerging Artist programme with NBR New Zealand Opera (2007–8). In 2007 she completed a BMus in Vocal Performance with Emily Mair at Victoria University in Wellington, subsequently studying at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, France, with Nathalie Spinosi in 2010. Also in 2010 she won awards in the Napier Computer Systems Aria, the Symphonies d'Automne in Macon, France, and in the Festival de Musique et de Langue Française in Paris. Her recent roles include Despina in Opera Studio's *Così fan tutte*, Cunegonde in *I, Belinda* in *Dido and Aeneas*, Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Bastienne in *Bastien and Bastienne*.

## **Evan Dumbleton – composer**

Evan has both music and engineering degrees from the University of Canterbury. During a career in engineering, he was also a chorister, musical director, pianist and arranger for musical theatre and cabaret, and a church organist. In 2010, he returned to composition, including being awarded first prize in the New Zealand Organists' composition with a work based on *In Dulci Jubilo*, which was premiered on the Auckland Town Hall organ

## Introducing the Choir

Festival Singers is a Wellington-based community choir of around 40 members, established in 1976. Our repertoire ranges from larger classical works with orchestra through to smaller art and folk songs.

We like to seek out music that is not often performed e.g. the masses for choir, soloists and two organs by Saint Saens and Widor and last year, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. Most years we have collaborated with another choir - last year the Wainuiomata Choir, exposing some rarely heard works by Salieri.

We also believe our local composers are very important. In 2009 we commissioned Jonathan Berkahn to write a Cantata, *The Third Day*, for the choir. In 2011 we presented this 50 minute work for choir, soloists and band again, in Palmerston North and Waikanae, along with varied folk songs from around the world.

Our members joined the NZ Choral Federation workshop on 11 & 12 May this year to learn and sing Verdi's *Requiem*.

The Festival Singers has a Christian basis and particularly enjoys singing music of a spiritual nature, although not exclusively of course. The choir is available to sing at weddings, funerals and in local churches.

If you are currently missing out on the joy of regular singing and musical friendship and would like to join an energetic, interesting choir, please email committee member Bill Gebbie:

**Bill.Gebbie@dol.govt.nz**

Visit our website for information about future concerts and events:

**[www.festival-singers.org.nz](http://www.festival-singers.org.nz)**

## Sopranos

Christine Austin  
Gail Duncan  
Janie Elrick\*  
Heather Garside  
Sylvie Gentry  
Barbara Gillon  
Diana Helen  
Carol Inge  
Anne Keen  
Audrey Misipeka\*  
Pam Southey  
Judith Urry  
Brenda Vale  
Wendy Wilson  
Pauline Woolley

## Tenors

Evan Dumbleton\*\*  
Joe Fecteau\*\*  
Alan Spinks  
Robin Willink

\* On leave

\*\* Soloists

## Altos

Jennifer Armstrong\*  
Rosemary Biss  
Heather Collins  
Heather Jones  
Adrienne Leuchars  
Wendy Nelson\*  
Margaret Pearson  
Jill Peel  
Shelley Richardson\*  
Margaret Seconi\*\*  
Irene Swadling  
Rita Urry  
Libbie Wride\*\*

## Basses

Philip Garside  
Bill Gebbie  
Ian Livingstone  
Tom Lumb\*  
Brian Patchett\*\*

## Special Thanks to

St Ninian's Uniting Church

Bernard Wells

Philip Garside - programme design