



Nailsea Choral Society welcomes you to its Spring Concert which features choral treasures from Venice, with works by Pitoni, Cavalli, Lotti, Scarlatti, Monteverdi, and Antonio Vivaldi's Gloria.

Thank you for your continued support.

We are delighted to be joined on this occasion by organist, James Gough, and soprano soloists, Sophie Cleobury and Julia Sinclair, and mezzo-soprano soloist, Billie Hylton.

Thanks are also due to the Minister and Leadership Team of Nailsea Methodist Church, for enabling us to use this venue this evening, and to our volunteers who act as 'front of house' staff and stewards.

We are, as always, indebted to our regular accompanist, Rosemary Burgon, and to our Assistant Conductor, Harry Kirby.

We greatly appreciate the patronage and support of our President, Sir David Pountney CBE, and of our Vice-President, Christopher Jennings.

We are most grateful for the service provided by Somerset Performing Arts Library and their steadfast provision of music scores. We are also most grateful for the patronage of Nailsea Town Council and the local retail outlets, who kindly permit the placing of our advertising material in their windows.

# Programme

**Cantate Domino** - Giuseppe Ottavio Pitoni (1657 - 1743)

**DUET - Stabat Mater** - Pergolesi (1710 - 1736)

**Alma Redemptoris Mater** - Francesco Cavalli (1602 - 1676)

**Crucifixus** - Antonio Lotti (1667 - 1740)

**Exsultate Deo** - Alessandro Scarlatti (1660 - 1725)

**DUET - De Torrente** - George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)

**Christe, adoramus te** - Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643)

## BRIEF INTERVAL

**Gloria** - Antonio Vivaldi (1678 - 1741)

## Translation of Texts

**Giuseppe Pitoni (1657-1743)**

**Cantate Domino (Psalm 148:1-2)**

Cantate Domino canticum novum;

*O sing unto the Lord a new song;*

laus eius in ecclesia sanctorum.

*let the congregation of saints praise him.*

Laetetur Israel in eo qui fecit eum,

*Let Israel rejoice in him that made him,*

et filii Sion exsultent in rege suo.

*And let the children of Sion be joyful in their King.*

**Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676) Alma Redemptoris Mater**

Alma Redemptoris Mater, quae pervia caeli porta manes,

et stella maris, succurre cadenti surgere qui curat populo:

Tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem:

Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave,

peccatorum miserere.

*Loving Mother of the Redeemer, who remains the gate by which*

*we mortals enter heaven,*

*and star of the sea, help your fallen people who strive to rise:*

*You who gave birth, amazing nature, to your sacred Creator:*

*Virgin prior and following, taking from the mouth of Gabriel that Hail,*

*have mercy on our sins.*

## Translation of Texts

### **Antonio Lotti (1667-1740) Crucifixus**

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub *He was crucified for us under*

Pontio Pilato: *Pontius Pilate:*

Passus, et sepultus est. *He suffered, and was buried.*

### **Alessandro Scarlatti (1660 - 1740) Exaltate Deo**

Exsultate Deo adjutori nostro. *Sing we merrily unto God our strength.*

Alleluia.

Jubilate Deo Jacob. *Make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.*

Alleluia.

### **Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) Christe, Adoramus Te**

Christe, adoramus te, *Christ, we adore you,*

et benedicimus tibi, *and we bless you,*

quia per sanctam crucem tuam *because by your holy cross*

redemisti mundum. *you have redeemed the world.*

Domine, miserere nobis. *Lord, have mercy on us.*

## Translation of Texts

### **Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741) Gloria**

1. CHORUS                    Gloria in excelsis Deo.    *Glorry to God in the highest.*
2. CHORUS                    Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis  
*And on earth peace, good will to all men*
3. S & A Duet                Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.  
*We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you.*
4. CHORUS                    Gratias agimus tibi    *We give thanks to you*
5. CHORUS                    Propter magnam gloriam tuam.    *for your great glory*
6. SOLO                        Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens,  
*Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty,*
7. CHORUS                    Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.  
*Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.*
8. ALTO SOLO &  
CHORUS                    Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, Rex caelestis  
Domine Fili unigenite, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis  
*Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, heavenly King,  
only-begotten Son, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us*
9. CHORUS                    Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram  
*Who takes away the sins of the world, receive our prayer*
10. ALTO SOLO                Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis  
*Who sits at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us*
11. CHORUS                    Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe  
*For you only are holy, you only are the Lord, you only are the most high, Jesus  
Christ*
12. CHORUS                    Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen  
*With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

## Programme Notes

Anyone who wanted to see the musical avant-garde at work around 1600 went south of the Alps. Italy pioneered an innovative repertoire and 'modern' styles, and became the mecca for musicians. Tonight we invite you to enjoy a programme of works that emanated from there, more specifically from Venice. At the time our composers were working, Venice was the capital of the Republic of Venice, a sovereign state and maritime republic that existed for 1,100 years, from 697 to 1797. It became home to an extremely wealthy merchant class, who patronised the arts. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century it became the Most Serene Republic of Venice, in Italian *Serenissima Repubblica di Venezia*. Welcome to *La Serenissima*!

The earliest work we are singing is by **Claudio Monteverdi**, who worked in Venice from 1613 until his death in 1643. He was born in Cremona in 1567, became a choirmaster, string player and composer of both secular and sacred music, and a pioneer in the development of opera. He is considered a crucial transitional figure between the Renaissance and Baroque periods of music history.

Monteverdi developed his career first at the court of Mantua (c. 1590–1613) and then, until his death, in the Republic of Venice, where he was *maestro di cappella* at St. Mark's Basilica. His surviving music includes nine books of madrigals, large-scale religious works, such as his *Vespro della Beata Vergine* (*Vespers for the Blessed Virgin*) of 1610, and three complete operas.

Tonight we sing his motet *Christe, adoramus te*, which was first published in *Libro primo de motetti*, the first of two collections of motets for one to eight voices with basso continuo that were published in Venice by Bartolomeo Magni in 1620, together with works by fellow composer Guilin Vesare Bianchi.

Working under Monteverdi's tutorship, **Francesco Cavalli** became a singer in St. Mark's in 1616. He was born Pietro Francesco Caletti-Bruni on 14 February 1602 in Crema, then an inland province of the Venetian Republic and became a composer, organist and singer of the early Baroque period. He succeeded Monteverdi as the leading opera composer of the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, writing more than forty operas, almost all of which premiered in the city's theatres. He took the name 'Cavalli' from his patron, Venetian nobleman Federico Cavalli.

Cavalli also wrote prolifically for the church, composing settings of the *Magnificat* in grand Venetian polychoral style, Marian antiphons, and other sacred music in a more conservative one. Tonight we sing his Marian antiphon *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, sung between the first day of Advent until Candlemas on February 2nd. It was published in *Musiche Sacre* by Alessandro Vicenti in Venice in 1656, dedicated to Cardinal Giancarlo de' Medici. Cavalli died in Venice on 14 January 1676 at the age of 73.

The year after the publication of Cavalli's antiphon, Pope Alexander VII made Cardinal Giancarlo de' Medici responsible for welcoming Queen Christina of Sweden, a new convert to Catholicism, to Rome. Christina had abdicated the Swedish throne and subsequently settled in the Palazzo Riario in Rome, where she became one of the most important musical benefactors. When, in 1700, public theatres in Rome were closed by papal decree, any musician aiming at establishing a stable career there was dependent upon the private music circuit fostered by clergy and nobility. Those sufficiently well-off could hire or commission them and enjoy the best performers and the latest music within the walls of their own city palace. This 'Queen of Arts' surrounded herself with the best musicians of the city, one of whom was Alessandro Scarlatti, whom she made her *maestro di capella*.

**Alessandro Scarlatti** was born in Palermo, Sicily on 2 May 1660. He is known especially for his operas, of which there are 115, and is considered the most important representative of the Neapolitan school of opera. In 1707, whilst holding a post at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, he wrote two large scale operas, *Il trionfo della libert * and *Il Mitridate Eupatore*, for production during the Carnival in Venice, and travelled there to supervise the performances. The libretto of both works was by the famous Venetian librettist Count Girolamo Frigimelica-Roberti. Tonight we sing Scarlatti's setting of Psalm 80:2 *Exaultate Deo*.

The involvement in Venice of two more of our featured composers, Antonio Lotti and Antonio Vivaldi, included work for two of its *Ospedali Grandi*. These had been founded at the time of the Crusades as hostels (ospedali) for pilgrims, but had later become institutions for abandoned and orphaned children. They were most famously recognised for educating female pupils to professional levels of musicianship, initially to provide the musical accompaniment for services in the churches attached to them, later giving public concerts that attracted many European tourists to hear them throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The musical training in the *Ospedali Grandi* is often thought of as a precursor to the training in European conservatories of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Antonio Lotti**, whose motet *Crucifixus* we sing tonight, wrote music for the choir based in the *Ospedale degli Incurabili*, and supervised the girls' musical training. Born in Venice in 1667, a hundred years after Monteverdi, Lotti spent most of his life in the service of the church, with his most notable appointment being *maestro di cappella* at St Mark's Basilica in 1736. However, it was during his time as court composer in Dresden, between 1717 and 1719, that *Crucifixus* was published, although it's likely that the work was written in Venice before this time. The text, from the Nicene Creed, describes Christ's crucifixion and death. Lotti wrote many versions of *Crucifixus*, for 4-, 5-, 6-, 8-, and 10-part choirs. Our version is the one most often sung, written in 8 parts. The motet is drawn from a larger *Credo in F* for choir and orchestra, which is part of his *Missa Sancti Christophori*. Each voice part enters bar by bar on the word 'Crucifixus', starting with the lowest basses, piling up the musical texture and creating a piercing intensity by the time the highest voice enters.

Best known of the *Ospedali Grandi* was the *Ospedale della Pieta* founded in 1335 by a group of Venetian nuns. A Franciscan monk, Fra Petruccio d'Assisi, would beg for alms on the streets of Venice on behalf of it, calling out 'Pieta, Pieta' (Piety! Piety!), hence its name. The girls were fortunate to have Antonio Vivaldi as their music teacher between 1704 and 1740. We're singing his *Gloria*, as the girls of the Pieta did, but they were obliged to do so hidden behind screens!



The girls were called *figlie del coro* (Daughters of the Coro or Music School) and did not have surnames, but were identified by the instruments they played or their voice. Vivaldi composed for them and his manuscripts show the names of the girls who were to perform them. The conservatory of the *Pietà* was the only one to remain active until approximately 1830. It still stands, now in the guise of the Metropole Hotel. The nearby church of the *Pietà* was completed in 1761, two decades after Vivaldi's death.

**Antonio Vivaldi** was born in Venice on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1678. He became a composer, virtuoso violinist and impresario of Baroque music. His influence during his lifetime was widespread across Europe. He composed instrumental music, sacred choral works and more than fifty operas, some staged in Vienna. After meeting the Emperor Charles VI, Vivaldi moved to Vienna in 1740, hoping for royal support, but the Emperor died soon after his arrival, and Vivaldi himself died in poverty there on 28 July 1741, aged 63.

After almost two centuries of decline, Vivaldi's musical reputation underwent a revival in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with many of his compositions, once thought lost, being rediscovered. We bring you one such work *Gloria*, which remained relatively unknown until its revival in Sienna in 1939. Now it's been recorded on nearly 100 CDs. The work is a setting of the hymn *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, with words probably dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, and an integral part of the mass ordinary. It was probably written in 1715. It's been performed in historically informed instrumentation, even with the use of an all-female choir to simulate choral conditions at the *Pietà*. Tonight we've let the gentlemen in, for the full SATB version.

Born in the same year as Antonio Lotti, **Giuseppe Ottavio Pitoni** is our 'odd man out' in as much as he never visited Venice. He was an organist and composer and became one of the leading musicians in Rome during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Of his 800 Psalm settings, we are singing Psalm 148/9 *Cantate domino*.

*Carol Buxton - February 2024*

## Tom Williams - Director

Tom Williams is a freelance choral conductor based in London. He has been the Musical Director of Nailsea Choral Society since 2012 and is Director of Music at St Matthew's, Kensington Olympia, where he heads up a newly established music foundation comprising several choirs. For six years he was the Choral Director at St Martins-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, where he conducted the renowned choir in services, concerts and broadcasts, and on several international tours.



Tom read music at the University of Bristol and continued to postgraduate level researching the performance practice of Early Music, and in particular the Magnificat settings of Franco-Flemish Renaissance composer, Nicolas Gombert. Since leaving Bristol, he has been most active as a choral conductor and has gained particular recognition for his interpretation of the music of the Renaissance period. In much demand as a workshop leader, he has led workshops for the Lætare Singers, the Clifton International Festival of Music, London Three Choirs Festival, and for groups of choral enthusiasts in Holland and France. He frequently gives lectures on a variety of musical subjects ranging from the Eton Choirbook, music of the Reformation, and the Tintinnabuli style of modern minimalist composer Arvo Pärt.

In 2012, Tom founded award-winning chamber choir, The Erebus Ensemble, with whom he has appeared on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM and Scala Radio, and in concerts across the UK and Europe. The group was Ensemble-in-Residence at the Bristol Proms (Bristol Old Vic Theatre) and a prize winner at the inaugural London International A Cappella Choir Competition at St John's Smith Square.

Alongside a busy performing schedule, Tom is Artistic Director of the Clifton International Festival of Music.

## **James Gough - Organist**

James Gough is a highly sought-after recitalist and the Assistant Organist at Southwark Cathedral. He began his organ studies with Huw Tregelles Williams OBE before moving to Bristol where James read Music and continued his organ studies with Dr David Ponsford. In 2009 James completed a Master's degree in Organ Performance at the Royal Academy of Music, where his principal organ teacher was Nicolas Kynaston. During his time at the Academy James completed the FRCO diploma, as well as the Licentiate diploma of the RAM, and was the recipient of several Academy prizes including the Eric Thiman Organ Prize. In recognition of his achievements he was selected to perform for the visit of Sir Elton John.

As a recitalist, James has played the complete works of J. S. Bach and Cesar Franck, and performed at some of the UK's most prestigious venues including St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, The Temple Church and Bath Abbey. Further afield James has given several recitals in France, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, and recent performances have included visits to the Lucerne Festival in Switzerland, the Herforder Orgelsommer in Germany and the Dulwich Festival of Music in London. Forthcoming recitals are planned for Bern, Switzerland, and Osnabrück Dom, Germany, as well as several across the UK.

James recently recorded the Trio Sonatas of J. S. Bach at Clifton Cathedral, which will be released on the Naxos label in 2024. This project came about following a collaboration with Dame Gillian Weir in which Dame Gillian gave an extensive analysis of the works whilst James played the sonatas as part of an event for the Clifton International Festival of Music.

James is very passionate about contemporary music and has given premieres of works by Piet Kee, Diana Burrell and David Bednall to great acclaim.

He has held positions at St Martin-in-the-Fields, St Bride's, Fleet Street and St Matthew's, Westminster, and spent a year covering the Assistant Organist role at Wells Cathedral. Alongside a busy performance career, James teaches the organ at the Royal College of Music Junior Department and at Westminster School.

## Soloists

### **Billie Hylton - Mezzo-Soprano**

Billie Hylton is a primary school teacher and singer from London. She sang regularly as a child and appeared in operas at the Royal Opera House and English National Opera. Whilst studying for a music degree, Billie sang in the chapel choir at King's College, London, under David Trendell, Gareth Wilson, and Joseph Fort. She now sings at St Luke's, Chelsea, under Jeremy Summerly. As well as singing at other churches and cathedrals in London, she sings with the Strand Consort and Sansara. She has been a member of the mixed-voice consort at the Edington Festival since 2015 and has also been the alto soloist for two of the recent choral workshops run by Edington Arts. She currently learns with Amanda Dean. Billie's singing has taken her to Vienna, New York, and Palestine, and she is looking forward to joining Nailsea Choral Society for their concert this evening.

### **Sophie Cleobury - Soprano**

Originally from Canterbury, Sophie began singing at the age of seven under the watchful eye of her mother who ran the village church choir. Sophie went on to study Music at Birmingham University, singing most often with the Birmingham University Singers and at the Birmingham Oratory. Since being in London, she has sung with many of the city's finest amateur choirs, including the Holst Singers and the Iken Scholars. For 11 years, Sophie also sang with the Choir of St Martin in the Fields, and now forms part of an octet on Sunday mornings at St Matthew's, Kensington Olympia. Sophie is Head of Academic Music at Emanuel School in Battersea.

### **Julia Sinclair - Soprano**

Julia is a London based soprano who balances her love of performing with her role as Head of Product for a property investing company. She regularly sings with professional London church choirs, including St Magnus the Martyr and St Bride's Fleet Street, and is a member of the Edington Consort, where she has featured as a soloist for the annual Radio 3 broadcast festival evensong. She has recorded with St Luke's Chelsea, Concanenda and Jesus College Cambridge, where she was a choral scholar and studied Engineering. Previous solo performances include: Mozart's "Coronation Mass" and "Solemn Vespers", Handel's "Dixit Dominus", Britten's "Rejoice in the Lamb", Pergolesi's "Stabat Mater" and the Fauré Requiem, performed in Ghent Cathedral. She has toured extensively, including China, India, Belgium and the US.

Upcoming work includes an album of chant and newly composed choral/electronic music, "Explorations of Hildegard Von Bingen", which was commissioned by the Richard Thomas foundation, created in collaboration with composer Marijn Cinjee and will be launched in December 2024 at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

## Singers

### **Sopranos**

Eira Barker

Kathryn Carter

Cynthia Dobson

Steph Foxwell

Marie Hammond

Sarah Harris

Elizabeth Holford

Lynn Hyde

Mary Jaggard

Diana Jones

Susan Jones

Julia Knight

Rosemary Peill

Patricia Pimm

Emma Pontin

Trudy Procter

Rhiannon Robinson

Deborah Shepperd

Emmie Simpson

Mary Southwood

Georgina Stock

Maria Strother-Smith

Jenny Ward

Elaine Wellingham

### **Altos**

Karen Barclay

Carol Buxton

Fiona Cunningham

Keith Donoghue

Jenny Faubel

Louise Hamey

Carol Hellen

Jill Martin

Gilyan Mears

Pauline McGibbon

Barbara Parker

Jill Perry

Nora Quas

Bridget Rollo

Heather Royle

Alison Soars

Margaret Stanton

Kate Wickens

## Singers

### **Tenors**

Ian Borland

Rosemary Burgon

Adrian Dimmock

Alan Emery

Ginny Gibbs

Gill Gray

Anne Greenhill

Ulricka Johansson

Pam Salisbury

Matt Thomas

David Walker

Lisette Webley

Peter Woolf

### **Basses**

John Broughton

Robert Brierley

Denis Burn

Jerry Buxton

Antony Evans

Tim Harland

Ivor Harrison

Terry Mears

David Quas

Carew Reynell

Kevan Royle

## **Nailsea Choral Society**



We are a friendly, happy group, open to all ages and voices. There are no auditions, but an ability to read music is useful.

We meet from September to June, and rehearsals take place on Tuesday evenings at Christ Church in Nailsea. We usually perform three concerts a year.

We would like to welcome new members, so please do get in touch if you are interested in joining the choir.

**[www.nailseachoral.org.uk](http://www.nailseachoral.org.uk)**

**[nailsea.choral.society@gmail.com](mailto:nailsea.choral.society@gmail.com)**

## **FUTURE CONCERTS**

25th May 2024 at 7:30pm, Nailsea Methodist Church

[Summer Concert of Theatrical Medleys - Bernstein, Sondheim & Lloyd Webber](#)

7th December 2024 at 4pm and 7pm,  
Nailsea Methodist Church

[Christmas Concert 2024 - Handel Messiah](#)

17th May 2025 at 7:30pm, Clifton Cathedral, Clifton Park, Bristol

[Centenary Concert - Elgar Dream of Gerontius](#)

If you would like to make a small donation towards the production of this programme and other publicity materials, we would be very grateful. A collection basket will be placed near the exit.

Thank you for your support.