

The  
**ELYSIAN  
SINGERS**  
of London

with Chelys

Director: Sam Laughton



## Music from the Jacobean Court

St Paul's, Covent Garden  
7.30pm, Friday 10 October 2014

The reign of the artistically minded King James I between 1603 and 1625 coincided with one of the greatest creative periods in English history. Alongside the obvious dramatic achievements of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, was an extraordinary flowering of sacred and secular music, especially for voices and for viol consort. Building on the already long career of the great William Byrd were younger composers from around the now-united kingdom, such as London-born John Dowland, Orlando Gibbons from Cambridge, the Welshman Thomas Tomkins, and Sussex's Thomas Weelkes.

## PROGRAMME

O clap your hands	Orlando Gibbons
<i>Fantasia a3 no. 1</i>	<i>Orlando Gibbons</i>
Be strong and of good courage	Thomas Tomkins
Thou mighty God	John Dowland
Draw on, sweet night	John Wilbye
This is the record of John	Orlando Gibbons
<i>Pavan a4</i>	<i>Thomas Tomkins</i>
Know you not	Thomas Tomkins

## \*\*\* INTERVAL \*\*\*

Sleep, fleshly birth	Robert Ramsey
<i>Fantasia a4</i>	<i>John Ward</i>
When David heard	Thomas Weelkes
Great King of Gods	Orlando Gibbons
<i>In Nomine a4</i>	<i>William Byrd</i>
O all true faithful hearts	Orlando Gibbons
Ave verum corpus	William Byrd
See, see the word is incarnate	Orlando Gibbons

**O clap your hands**

Words: from Psalm 47, with Gloria

**Orlando Gibbons**

(1583-1625)

This full anthem for double choir was performed, probably for the first time, on 17 May 1622, when Gibbons' friend William Heyther, and possibly Gibbons himself, were admitted to the degree of Doctor of Music at Oxford. That the music only survives in part-books dating from some 50 years later, now in the library of York Minster, indicates how highly Gibbons continued to be regarded throughout the century.

*O clap your hands together, all ye people: O sing unto God with the voice of melody.  
 For the Lord is high, and to be feared: He is the great King of all the earth.  
 He shall subdue the people under us: and the nations under our feet.  
 He shall choose out an heritage for us: even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved.  
 God is gone up with a merry noise: and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.  
 O sing praises, sing praises unto our God: O sing praises, sing praises unto the Lord our King.  
 For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with the understanding.  
 God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon his holy seat.  
 For God, which is highly exalted, doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield.*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

**Fantasia a 3 no. 1****Be strong and of good courage**

Words: after Deuteronomy 31:6 &amp; Joshua 1:6

**Orlando Gibbons****Thomas Tomkins**

(1572-1656)

The text of this antiphon is an English translation of that which had long been used, in the Latin as *Confortare et esto vir*, at medieval coronations. This music was almost certainly sung at the very moment that James was being crowned in Westminster Abbey on 25 July 1603.

*Be strong and of a good courage, and observe the commandements of our God, to walk in his ways, and keep his ceremonies, testimonies and judgements, and Almighty God prosper thee whithersoever thou goest. The Lord is thy ruler, therefore thou shalt want nothing.*

**Thou mighty God**

Words: Anonymous

Solo: Lois Gallagher

**John Dowland**

(c. 1563-1626)

*Thou mighty God, that rightest every wrong,  
 Listen to Patience in a dying song.*

*When Job had lost his children, lands, and goods,  
 Patience assuaged his excessive pain;  
 And when his sorrows came as fast as floods,  
 Hope kept his heart till Comfort came again.*

*When the poor cripple by the pool did lie  
 Full many years in misery and pain.  
 No sooner he on Christ had set his eye  
 But he was well, and comfort came again.*

*When David's life by Saul was often sought,  
 And worlds of woes did compass him about,  
 On dire revenge he never had a thought,  
 But in his griefs, Hope still did help him out.*

*No David, Job, nor cripple in more grief,  
 Christ, give me patience and my hope's relief.*

**Draw on, sweet night**

Words: Anonymous

**John Wilbye**

(1574-1638)

John Wilbye was born in Norfolk and spent his entire life living and working in East Anglia. In 1593, at the age of 19, he was appointed household musician to the Kytson family of Hengrave Hall near Bury St Edmunds, where remained in their service for thirty years. This masterpiece was published in 1609 as part of *The Second Set of Madrigals To 3. 4. 5. and 6. parts, apt both for Voyals and Voices.*

<i>Draw on, sweet Night, best friend unto those cares</i>	<i>Sweet Night, draw on; my griefs, when they be told</i>
<i>That do arise from painful melancholy;</i>	<i>To shades and darkness, find some ease from paining;</i>
<i>My life so ill through want of comfort fares,</i>	<i>And while thou all in silence dost enfold,</i>
<i>That unto thee I consecrate it wholly.</i>	<i>I then shall have best time for my complaining.</i>

**This is the record of John****Orlando Gibbons**

Words: John 1: 19-23

Solo: Nick Richmond-Smith

This verse anthem, a setting of the words of the Gospel set for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent, is stated on the manuscript to have been 'made for Dr Laud president of Sant Johns'. William Laud (later Archbishop of Canterbury under Charles I) was President of St John's College, Oxford between 1611 and 1621.

*This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him: Who art thou?  
And he confessed and denied not; and said plainly: I am not the Christ.  
And they asked him: What art thou then? Art thou Elias? And he said, I am not. Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.  
Then said they unto him: What art thou? That we may give an answer unto them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?  
And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord.*

**Pavan a4****Thomas Tomkins****Know you not****Thomas Tomkins**

Words: Arthur Lake, Dean of Worcester

Solos: Anne Taylor, Sally de Frates, Francesca Trundle, Anne Webster, Tony Zacaroli, Martin Hurst, Andy Chan, Jonathan Glasspool

In 1612 James's elder son, Prince Henry, died of typhoid fever at the age of 18, giving rise to a sense of overwhelming loss felt by the whole nation and an outpouring of poetical and musical elegies. This remarkable anthem was composed in considerable haste for Henry's funeral.

*Know you not that a prince, a great prince, is fallen this day in Israel?  
Alas, woe worth the day!  
The precious son of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how is he esteemed, as a pitcher the work of the hand of the potter.  
Surely, as men of low degree are vanity, so men of high degree are but a lie.  
Great Britain, mourn. Let every family mourn.  
O family of David, O family of Levi, sorrowing for him as for thy first born.  
Sigh and say, sob and sing: Ah, Lord, ah, his glory!*

\*\*\* INTERVAL \*\*\*

**Sleep, fleshly birth**

Words: Anonymous

**Robert Ramsey**

(d.1644)

Ramsey was organist of Trinity College, Cambridge, for nearly 30 years from 1615 until his death. This remarkable madrigal was also written as a tribute to the late Prince Henry, and its highly expressive style reflects the influence of the Italian school of composers.

*Sleep, fleshly birth,  
In peaceful earth,  
And let thine ears  
List to the music of the spheres,  
While we around  
This fairy ground  
Thy doleful obit keeping,  
Make marble melt with weeping.*

*With num'rous feet  
We'll part and meet.  
Then chorus-like in a ring  
Thy praises sing,  
While showers of flowers bestrew thee,  
We'll thus with tears bedew thee.  
Rest in soft peace, sweet youth, and there remain  
Till soul and body meet to join again.*

**Fantasia a4**

**John Ward**

(1571–1638)

**When David heard**

Words: 2 Samuel 18:33

**Thomas Weelkes**

(1576-1623)

Weelkes was Sussex-born, and organist of Chichester Cathedral from 1602 until 1617, when his career was ignominiously ended after being 'noted and famed for a comon drunckard and notorious swearer & blasphemer'. This vivid 'sacred madrigal' sets words that were popular among composers of this period, perhaps as an allegory for James' grief over Prince Henry.

*When David heard that Absalom was slain, he went up to his chamber over the gate, and wept: and thus he said,  
O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!*

**Great king of gods**

Words: Anonymous

Solos: Katie Parker, Heather Devine

**Orlando Gibbons**

Gibbons, wrote this verse anthem especially for James's visit to Scotland in 1617. The entire English Chapel Royal had travelled to Edinburgh by sea, and were allowed 'a good shipp well victualled for our passage & carriage of the Chappell stuffe and our own necessaries'.

*Great king of gods, whose gracious hand hath led  
Our sacred sovereign head  
Unto the place where all our bliss was bred.*

*Dear be his life, all glorious be his days,  
And prospering all his ways  
Late add thy last crown to his peace and praise.*

*O send thine angels to his blessed side,  
And bid them there abide,  
To be at once his guardian and his guide.*

*And when he hath outlived the world's long date,  
Let thy last change translate  
His living flesh to thy celestial state. Amen.*

**In Nomine a4****William Byrd****O all true faithful hearts****Orlando Gibbons**

Words: Anonymous

Solos: Harriet Gritton, Helly Seeley, Francesca Trundle, Laura Taylor, Richard Warren, Ben Driver

'A thanks Giving for the Kings happie recoverie from a great dangerous sicknes': probably sung in St Paul's Cathedral in April 1619.

*O all true faithful hearts with one accord  
United in one head sing to the Lord,  
For he our David from the snares of Death  
Hath freed; prolong his days, enlarge his breath.*

*His life is worth ten thousand, therefore give  
Each soul, ten thousand thanks that he doth live  
To lead his people forth to pastures green;  
To praise his God whose love to us is seen.*

*Rejoice in him, give thanks, his great Name bless,  
For a remembrance of his holiness.*

*Rejoice in him, give thanks, his great Name bless,  
For a remembrance of his holiness.*

*Now for the righteous is sprung up a light,  
And gladness unto each true-hearted wight,  
Joy we in him with thanks, that he may bring  
More joy unto ourselves, health to our King.*

*Rejoice in him, give thanks, his great Name bless,  
For a remembrance of his holiness. Amen.*

**Ave verum corpus****William Byrd**

Words: Hymn to the Blessed Sacrament

(1543-1623)

The most famous motet from Byrd's first volume of *Gradualia* published in 1605. These were collections of vocal works for the celebration of Mass by the now largely underground Catholic church, of which Byrd was the undisputed musical leader.

*Ave verum corpus, natum  
De Maria Virgine:  
Vere passum immolatum  
In cruce pro homine.*

*Hail, true body, born  
of the Virgin Mary:  
truly you suffer, offered in sacrifice  
on the cross for man.*

*Cuius latus perforatum  
Unda fluxit sanguine:  
Esto nobis praegustatum  
In mortis examine.*

*From whose pierced side  
flowed the blood:  
may we have tasted of you  
when we come to the hour of death.*

*O dulcis, o pie, o Jesu, Fili Mariae,  
miserere mei. Amen.*

*O gentle, loving Jesus, Son of Mary,  
have mercy on me. Amen.*

**See, see the word is incarnate****Orlando Gibbons**

Words: Bishop Godfrey Goodman

Solos: Luisa Brennan, Francesca Trundle, Laura Taylor, Stephen Cviic, David Parker

In this masterpiece of the verse anthem tradition, the unusually long prose text traces Christ's history from birth to resurrection.

*See, see, the Word is incarnate; God is made man in the womb of a Virgin. Shepherds rejoice, wise men adore, and angels sing:*

*Glory be to God on high: peace on earth, goodwill towards men.*

*The law is cancelled, Jews and Gentiles all converted by the preaching of glad tidings of salvation. The blind have sight and cripples have their motion; diseases cured, the dead are raised, and miracles are wrought.*

*Let us welcome such a guest with Hosanna.*

*The Paschal Lamb is offered, Christ Jesus made a sacrifice for sin.*

*The earth quakes, the sun is darkened, the powers of hell are shaken; and lo, he is risen up in victory.*

*Sing Halleluia.*

*See, O see the fresh wounds, the goring blood, the pricks of thorns, the print of nails;  
and in the sight of multitudes*

*A glorious Ascension.*

*When now he sits on God's right hand, where all the choir of heaven all jointly sing:*

*Glory be to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne. Let us continue our wonted note with Hosanna:*

*Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord; with Halleluia, we triumph in victory:*

*the serpent's head bruised, Christ's kingdom exalted, and heaven laid open to sinners. Amen.*

## **The Elysian Singers**

Luisa Brennan  
Sally de Frates  
Lois Gallagher  
Harriet Gritton  
Julia Higgins  
Soo-Lin Lui  
Ellen Parkes  
Alice Ruffle  
Helly Seeley  
Anne Taylor  
Katie Parker  
Heather Devine  
Francesca Trundle

Anne Webster  
Laura Taylor  
Stephen Cviic  
Martin Hurst  
Nick Richmond-Smith  
Richard Warren  
Tony Zacaroli  
Andy Chan  
Andrew Daws  
Ben Driver  
Jonathan Glasspool  
David Parker  
Dingeman Wolfert

## **Chelys**

Emily Ashton  
Ibi Aziz

Jenny Bullock  
Alison Kinder

### **Sam Laughton**

Whilst reading music at Cambridge University, Sam Laughton developed his instrumental, conducting, and organizational skills as organ scholar of Sidney Sussex College. He now juggles busy careers as a barrister and musician. He is musical director of the Elysian Singers, Craswall Players, Chiltern Camerata and Trinity Camerata, and Director of the Speen Festival. Sam is devoted to conducting and organising the music camps at Pigotts. He is in demand as a conductor and keyboard player, working with such orchestras as the Oxford Sinfonia, Kensington Chamber Orchestra, Kew Sinfonia, Orchestra of the City and Crendon Chamber Orchestra. He has also worked with the groups as varied as Oxford Philomusica, the Joyful Company of Singers and ENO Baylis.

### **Chelys**

The members of Chelys trained at Trinity College of Music, London, and the Royal Academy. All are now experienced and enthusiastic players and teachers enjoying busy and varied careers. The word 'Chelys' is derived from the ancient Greeks and

referred to a bowed lyre, said to have been invented by the god Hermes. It was also used by the great English violist and theorist Christopher Simpson, on the title page of his treatise 'The Division Viol' in 1665. In March 2013 Chelys began a series of recitals in each of London's Hawksmoor churches, with a diversity of programmes ranging from consort songs to the rather more unusual line-up of four 7-string basses. Chelys play both on their own with 4-part instrumental programmes, and also frequently with singers, highlights of the last year being two pieces composed newly for them, one a Nunc Dimittis with vocal quartet by award winning composer Jill Jarman, and the other an 8-part setting of the Latin text of Zadok the Priest with chamber choir by Michael Mullen. Another exciting project is the imminent release of their debut CD, featuring Christopher Simpson's *Airs for 2 trebles and 2 basses*, which was recorded in the chapel of Girton College Cambridge. The members of Chelys are active in the wider Early Music world, playing with leading ensembles such as the Rose Consort of Viols, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Phantasm and Charivari Agreeable. They teach on courses around the UK and abroad, including the Benslow Trust, NORVIS, the Irish Recorder and Viol Summer School and the Easter Early Music Course in Ascot.

### **The Elysian Singers**

The Elysian Singers of London, under musical director Sam Laughton, is one of the UK's leading chamber choirs. Known for its adventurous programming and imaginative repertoire, the choir gives concerts both in and outside London, and has recorded widely acclaimed CDs. The Elysians pride themselves on maintaining consistently high performance standards, but a friendly and relaxed atmosphere is also regarded as essential for attracting and keeping good singers. Founded in 1986 by Matthew Greenall, the group quickly developed a special interest in contemporary music, giving the world premières of works by John Woolrich, Howard Skempton and Sir John Tavener who, since 2002, has been the choir's Patron. Matthew was succeeded as music director by Sam Laughton in 2000. Recent world premières include John Habron's 'Salve Regina' (2008), and 'Exile Lamentations' (2009) a new commission from the Australian composer Paul Stanhope. London premières during the past six years include works by Peter Maxwell Davies, James MacMillan, James Whitbourn and Henryk Górecki. The choir regularly performs Baroque and Romantic masterpieces at venues such as St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. John's Smith Square, and sings with guest conductors, including Jeremy Summerly. It has also participated in numerous festivals around the country, including the Spitalfields Festival, the Corsham Festival, the London Festival of Contemporary Church Music, the Malcolm Arnold Festival, the York Late Music concert series and the English Music Festival. In 2008 it took part in a performance of Elizabeth Maconchy's rarely-heard masterpiece 'Héloïse and Abelard' at LSO St. Luke's. In 2004 the Elysians released a CD of music by James MacMillan – 'Cantos Sagrados' – which received a 5-star rating from BBC Music Magazine. Reviewing 'Songs of the Isles', the choir's 2009 Bantock release, the same publication spoke of the Elysians' 'young, fresh-toned voices, brightly attentive to text without becoming over-punctilious'. There have been several radio and television broadcasts, including the first broadcast performances of Henryk Górecki's 'Miserere' and 'Three Lullabies' on BBC Radio 3, the finals of the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition at the Albert Hall, and BBC2's Lesley Garrett Easter Special. Twice in 2011, the choir performed live on Radio 3's 'In Tune', first introducing the première of its latest commission, 'Timepieces' by Ian Stephens, and later the choir's CD, 'The Spirit of Christmas Present', released on Meridian. In January 2012 the choir was invited to present a lunchtime concert in the Royal Festival Hall foyer as part of the Southbank's Festival of Death. The choir returned to the Royal Festival Hall in March 2014 as part of a Gala Concert to celebrate the restoration of the organ, performing a specially commissioned work by Sir John Tavener, 'Monument to Beethoven'. The choir's latest CD, 'Timepieces', is now available. It features works that were given their premiere performances, either worldwide or in the UK, by the Elysian Singers.



**Thanks** to the choir's friends and benefactors, including Mr & Mrs P Mynors and Mrs C Cviic.

### **Forthcoming concerts by the Elysian Singers**

#### **Messiah (excerpts)**

7 December 2014 at 6.00 pm, St Peter's Church, Petersham, Surrey

#### **Christmas in War and Peace**

20 December 2014 at 7:30pm, St Paul's Knightsbridge, London SW1

#### **Rachmaninoff: All-Night Vigil**

7 February 2015 at 7.30 pm, Holy Trinity Sloane Square, London SW1

#### **Music for Lent**

17 March 2015 at 7.30 pm, St Martin-in-the Fields, Trafalgar Square, London

If you would like to join the Elysian Singers' mailing list, please write to  
Richard Warren, 20 Downs Road, Beckenham BR3 5JY or email [mailinglist@elysiansingers.com](mailto:mailinglist@elysiansingers.com).

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