

CANTEMUS

NEWBURY

Director: **Sheenagh Dernie**

Readers: **Jocelyn Glass, David Quest**

Saturday 10th July 2004
Church of St Michael & All Angels
Shalbourne

Entrance by Programme £6


**Making
Music**
THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF MUSIC SOCIETIES

Programme

Sing we at Pleasure <i>A Poetic Discussion</i>	Thomas Weelkes <i>John Hegley / Wendy Cope</i>
I Praise the Tender Flower <i>A Rosebud by my Early Walk</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.1 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>Robert Burns</i>
I Have Loved Flowers That Fade <i>Shall I compare thee to a Summer's Day?</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.2 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>Wm Shakespeare</i>
My Spirit Sang All Day <i>Three Men in a Boat (excerpt)</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.3 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>Jerome K Jerome</i>
Clear and gentle stream! <i>There's a Willow grows aslant a Brook</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.4 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>Wm Shakespeare, 'Hamlet' Act IV Scene VII</i>
Nightingales <i>You're...</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.5 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>Sylvia Plath</i>
Haste on, My Joys! <i>The Day is Gone</i>	Gerald Finzi, no.6 of '7 Poems of R Bridges' <i>John Keats</i>
Wherefore Tonight So Full of Care	Gerald Finzi, no.7 of '7 Poems of R Bridges'

Interval

<i>Rosabelle</i>	<i>Walter Scott</i>
Lay a Garland on her Hearse <i>School for Scandal (excerpt)</i>	Robert L de Pearsall <i>Richard Brinsley Sheridan</i>
Who shall win my Lady fair? <i>Upon Westminster Bridge</i>	Robert L de Pearsall <i>William Wordsworth</i>
Three London Songs 1. Missing (<i>solo: Joyce Refausse</i>) 2. Dusk 3. Fruit Machine	Bryan Kelly

Programme Notes

Thomas Weelkes was born in 1575, and during his life held posts as organist at Winchester College and Chichester Cathedral. He wrote much church music, music for the viol, and madrigals (*'As Vesta was from Patmos Hill descending'* being notable among these). He died in 1623.

Gerald Finzi was born in London in 1901. A series of tragedies dominated his early years: his father died just before his 8th birthday, and by the time he was 18 he had lost his 3 elder brothers and his much-loved teacher Ernest Farrar, killed in action. These events, and the appalling losses of the First World War, formed the backdrop to his adolescence and gave him an acute awareness of the transience of life, possibly explaining an underlying hint of melancholy in his music.

Finzi led a solitary life, immersing himself in poetry and literature, until in 1926 he moved to London and became part of a group of composers that included Vaughan Williams, Holst, Arthur Bliss, Edmund Rubbra, and Howard Ferguson with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. He was diagnosed with leukaemia at the age of 50, and died in Oxford in 1956.

Finzi's music springs from his love of literature and the English countryside - the same sources that inspired Elgar and Vaughan Williams. In addition, his music is distinguished by rhythmic intricacies, such as ties over the bar and changing time signatures that make bar-lines almost redundant. Yet the rhythmic flexibility and beautifully-crafted melodic lines make him well worth the discovery.

The *'Seven Poems of Robert Bridges'* (Op17, 1934-37) are an essentially English setting of lyrical poetry by Robert Bridges (1844-1930, appointed poet laureate in 1913), which Finzi treats with a balance of reverence and superb lyrical communication. Each song has its own style: the simple and direct setting of *'I praise the tender flower'*; the omission of the basses in *'I have loved flowers that fade'*; the elated emotions of *'My spirit sang all day'* (a tribute to Finzi's wife in the way he emphasises the word 'Joy'); the sultry summer by the river in *'Clear and gentle stream'*; the beautiful and ruminative *'Nightingales'* with its dramatic ending; the lightness of touch in *'Haste on, my joys'*; and finally the weighty emotions expressed in *'Wherefore tonight so full of care'*.

Robert Lucas de Pearsall was born at Clifton in 1795 into a well-established family. His first career was as a barrister, though he was also a translator. He emigrated to Germany, devoting himself to composing madrigals, anthems and choral ballads, often using poems he had written himself. His best-known work is probably the arrangement of the carol *'In dulci jubilo'*. He died in Germany in 1856.

Bryan Kelly was born in Oxford in 1934. He studied at the Royal College of Music with Gordon Jacob and Herbert Howells, then with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. After some years on the staff of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, he was appointed to a post at the Royal College of Music in 1963, and taught there for 22 years. The *'Three London Songs'* set was composed in 1969, commissioned by Donald James and the New London Singers using poems by John Fuller. More recently, Bryan has developed a career in Egypt as accompanist and teacher of orchestration, has worked at the Cairo Opera, and has taken part in projects sponsored by the American University in Cairo. Recent compositions include *'Don Quixote'*, a suite for saxophone and piano; and *'Umbrian Variations'* for eight cellos. Bryan currently divides his time between France, the UK and the Middle East.

Jocelyn Glass has been involved in the performing arts as actor, singer and musician from the age of 3 months. Her roles have included Teveye in *'Fiddler on the Roof'*, the servant in *'Way of the World'*, Wanda in *'Kennedy's Children'*, and the Archangel Gabriel in *'Noah and the Flood'*. She is able to play a variety of instruments, including the crumhorn, while for relaxation she spins fire and wraps flaming orbs around her legs!

David Quest was born in Liverpool and currently resides in Oxfordshire. An actor and teacher, he has been involved with historical entertainment since 1990. His roles have included Noah, Robin Hood, St George, Henry VIII, and Thor, God of Thunder, in venues such as Hampton Court, Warwick Castle, Somerset House, Kew Gardens and most of the Oxford colleges. Most recently he has been engaged at Glastonbury - though working backstage!

Sheenagh Dornie studied singing, piano and violin at RCM London. While completing a PGCE in Yorkshire she discovered a love of conducting, and has been doing it ever since. For 15 years she directed the *'Roundelay'* ladies choir and at present is a group conductor for *'Cor Meibion de Cymru'*, which, at around 130 voices, is the largest male voice choir in South Wales. Sheenagh also directs the 'small but perfectly formed' girls' choir *'Bel Canto'* at Our Lady's Convent Senior School, Abingdon, where she teaches singing, in addition to running a large private teaching practice.

'CANTEMUS (Newbury)' was formed in 1999 as a small mixed-voice chamber choir based in Newbury. The choir performs four concerts a year, featuring music from the 16th century onwards. It meets just a few weeks before its concert date in order to prepare a specific programme. Cantemus is affiliated to the National Federation of Music Societies, a body representing and supporting amateur vocal and instrumental groups throughout the UK.

The choir welcomes applications from singers of a suitable standard (contact: Ian Haslam, 01635 820379 or cantemus.2003@ntlworld.com). We also have spaces in our concert calendar and would welcome invitations from suitable venues in the Berkshire area (contact: Stephen Blinman, 0118 9734862).

Sopranos

Claire Hamilton
Alison Jestico
Joyce Refausse
Leanne Russell

Altos

Dinny Barker
Bridget Procter
Lynne Salt
Heather Sims

Tenors

Jonathan Cox
Barrie Seaman
David Wilcox

Basses

Mike Ananin
Andrew Blake
Stephen Blinman
Ian Haslam

Future Concerts:

- ~ 6th November at 7.30 pm, at the Church of St Peter & St Paul, Wantage; a programme of sacred music by Bruckner, Grieg, Rachmaninov, Stanford, Verdi and Williamson under the direction of Robert Ascott.
- ~ 11th December at 7.30 pm, at Mortimer West End, near Reading; a programme of Christmas music and readings under the direction of Ian Westley.

Cantemus would like to thank the Shalbourne PCC for kind permission to use this Church.

Tonight's proceeds will go to support the Church's local projects.