

**Vivaldi** was both a priest and a noted violinist and was actually known to have written at least three settings of the *Gloria*, two of which survive. Tonight's (RV 589) is the more famous since its revival in the 1960's. It was composed during Vivaldi's employment at the *Ospedale della Pieta*, the Venetian girls' orphanage, and is in the Late Baroque style.

*Song for Athene* was written in 1993 for the funeral of Athene Hariades, a young actress killed in a cycling accident. Its text is from both the Orthodox funeral liturgy and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. It features **John Tavener's** characteristic 'ison', a low-pitched drone sounding throughout as the 'eternity note' attesting to the presence of God. It was also performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997.

**Bruckner** wrote many anthems for the Roman Catholic liturgy, to which he was profoundly devoted. This 1861 version of the *Ave Maria* annunciation hymn is the best known of the three he composed. Scored for seven voices, it marked his debut as composer/ conductor while organist of Linz Cathedral.

**Harris** was organist of New College Oxford, Christ Church Cathedral, and St George's, Windsor. Although contemporary with Stravinsky, his music is of the late-Romantic English school. Its most distinguishing feature is the use of key modulations; thus *Faire is the Heaven* (1925) starts and ends in D flat major, but passes through C sharp and A major on the way.

**Mary Westley** studied music at Reading University, and is now Assistant Director of Music at Crosfields School, Reading, as well as Director of Music at St John's Church, Mortimer.

**Ian Westley** studied music at Reading University where he specialized in piano and organ. He is an instrumental and singing teacher, accompanist and repetiteur. He directs the Erleigh Cantors of Reading and the choir of St Peter's Church, Caversham.

**Mark Kesel** studied at the Royal Academy of Music and at Reading University, where he later taught the trumpet. He was principal trumpet with the touring company Opera East for twelve years, and is now freelance. He founded Chaconne Brass in 1984.

**Frances Jones** teaches and performs on almost everything in the wind department, specializing in oboe, saxophone and horn.

**Cantemus:**

**Sopranos:** Deborah Cox, Leanne Cox, Sheenagh Dernie, Claire Hamilton, Sarah Holland, Joyce Refausse

**Altos:** Dinny Barker, Alison Jestico, Bridget Procter, Heather Sims, Lynne Salt

**Tenors:** Alex Byrne, John Meager, Ian Westley, David Wilcox

**Basses:** Mike Ananin, Geoff Anderson, Andrew Blake, Stephen Blinman, Ian Haslam

## St Mary's Church Mortimer

*presents*

# Voices in Concert

*'Heaven and the Angels'*

*Saturday 19th May 2007 at 7.30pm*

*performed by*

CANTEMUS  
NEWBURY

*Director: Mary Westley*

*with*

*Ian Westley – Organ*

*Mark Kesel – Trumpet*

*Frances Jones – Oboe*

*Jonathan Cox – Piano*

[www.cantemus-newbury.org.uk](http://www.cantemus-newbury.org.uk)

# Programme

**The Heavens are Telling** Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)  
*From 'The Creation'*  
(Soloists: Leanne Cox, John Meager, Ian Haslam)

**My Soul, there is a Country** C. Hubert Parry (1848-1918)  
*From 'Songs of Farewell'. Words by Henry Vaughan*

**Panis Angelicus** César Franck (1822-1890)  
*Words by St Thomas Aquinas*

**The Lord is my Shepherd** John Rutter (1945-)  
*From 'Requiem'. Words from Psalm 23*

**Nunc Dimittis** Geoffrey Burgon (1941-)  
*(Soprano: Leanne Cox)*

**The Armed Man (extracts)** Karl Jenkins (1944-)  
*Kyrie – Sanctus – Benedictus – Agnus Dei – Hymn before Action*  
(Soloist: Deborah Cox)

## Interval

**Gloria** Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)  
*(Soloists: Claire Hamilton, Deborah Cox, Sheenagh Dernie, Heather Sims)*

**Song for Athene** John Tavener (1944-)

**Ave Maria** Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

**Faire is the Heaven** William Harris (1883-1973)  
*Words by Edmund Spenser*

**I was Glad** C. Hubert Parry (1848-1918)  
*Words from Psalm 122*

## Notes on the Music

*The Heavens are Telling* is the mightiest chorus from **Haydn's** *The Creation*, first performed in Vienna in 1799 and drawn from Genesis, the Psalms, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It begins with celebratory choral passages alternating with meditative sequences from three soloists representing the angels Gabriel (soprano), Uriel (tenor), and Raphael (bass). It ends with a fugue on the words 'The wonder of his works displays the firmament.'

**Hubert Parry** was Professor of Music at Oxford and Director of the Royal College of Music, two posts he held concurrently from 1894 until he died. His six *Songs of Farewell*, of which *My Soul, there is a Country* is the first, were written between 1916 and 1918, and reflect on how profoundly the Great War affected him before his own death. *I was Glad* was written for the coronation of Edward VII in 1902, revised in 1911 for George V's coronation (when Parry added the well-known organ introduction), and has been used at subsequent coronations for the entry of the monarch.

The origin of the *Panis Angelicus* tune was an organ improvisation played by **Franck** in Paris at Christmas, 1861. He adapted it into his *Messe à Trois Voix* in a version for tenor solo, organ, harp and cello. The words come from a Corpus Christi hymn by St Thomas Aquinas and mean 'Bread of the angel host, sent down from God above; Body of Christ our Lord in token of his love: O gift most wonderful! Christ as our sacrament: the humble, the lowly, all share his sacred feast.'

**Rutter's** *Requiem* (1985) was composed for the First United Methodist Church Choir, Omaha, and first performed in Dallas. Its text is drawn from the Requiem Mass and the Book of Common Prayer. *The Lord is my Shepherd* sets the peaceful Psalm 23 against a melancholy oboe solo.

**Geoffrey Burgon** came late to composing, having first followed a career as a trumpeter. *Nunc Dimittis* typifies the success he had as a composer of TV signature tunes (he also wrote for *Brideshead Revisited*) as well as cathedral music. *Nunc Dimittis*, the evensong setting of the Song of Simeon, was written in 1979 for the BBC adaptation of John le Carré's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Such was its popularity it even made it into the pop charts. It had been intended as a stand-alone 'single' but Burgon was later persuaded to write a companion *Magnificat*.

*The Armed Man* was a millennium commission from the Royal Armouries Museum in memory of the victims of Kosovo. Its title comes from a 15<sup>th</sup> century French song of the same name, and it uses sacred and secular texts to plot the descent into and consequences of war. Ironically, **Karl Jenkins'** CD recording of the work was released just one day before the 9/11 atrocities.