



Thomas Tallis Society Choir
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



A CONCERT FOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

with **REGENT BRASS**

James MacMillan - All the
hills and vales along

Tenor - Nick Pritchard

Kerensa Briggs
Cecilia McDowall
Bernard Hughes

and music for brass

Tonight's Programme

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--|-----------------|
| For the fallen | Jamie W.Hall | Perhaps | Bernard Hughes |
| Media Vita | Kerensa Briggs | When you see millions of the mouthless dead | James MacMillan |
| The Lord is Good | Cecilia McDowall | Epiphany (World premiere) | Bernard Hughes |
| Tallis Figures (UK premiere) | Peter Yarde | All the hills and vales along | James MacMillan |
| Imagined Dances (UK premiere) | Freddie Myers | | |

12 November 2022

For the fallen

Jamie W.Hall (b1983)

Born into a Yorkshire mining village to a non-musical family, Jamie W. Hall discovered his love of music early, but his talent as a singer only after initially studying piano. He became a full-time member of the BBC Singers in 2009, where – he has said – “I found myself surrounded by older colleagues who have taught me by their own example just about everything I know today. As a singer, as a conductor and as a composer I have been shaped by the BBC Singers.” His greatest inspiration as a composer was Richard Rodney Bennett: “it was he who first inspired me to put pen to paper. I remember singing his setting of ‘The Holly and The Ivy’ and being amazed that his version kicked the old familiar melody right out of my head. That night I went home and composed my Op. 1: a setting of ‘Silent Night’. I tend to gravitate towards composers who are able – within or around the framework of tonality – to say something new and surprising – notably James Macmillan, John McCabe, Judith Weir and Cecilia McDowall.” (Rather pleasingly, two of those four composers he cited feature in our programme tonight!)

Hall has written about his setting of Laurence Binyon’s famous text (the poem originally published in *The Times* in 1914): “For the Fallen – or A Great Chishill Remembrance, as it was originally called – was written for a newly resurrected village choir which hasn’t sung together since before the pandemic; and as such, the piece was initially score for sopranos, altos and men, knowing that – like many small community choirs – we might end up with four ladies and a border collie!

“In the quiet days following the death of the late Queen, the piece stayed with me, and I ended up reworking it for a full SATB choir, though it remains at heart a piece for community singing – simple and heartfelt.”

Media Vita

Kerensa Briggs (b1991)

Kerensa Briggs is a London-based composer with a rich background in choral singing, having sung with the Gloucester Cathedral Youth Choir, then with Trinity College Cambridge and King’s College, London where she held a Choral Scholarship and undertook an MMus in composition. *Media Vita* was composed to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the English Renaissance composer John Sheppard. Its text is attributed to Notker ‘the Stammerer’, a Benedictine monk of St Gall Abbey (now in Switzerland) who died in 912. It is said that Notker was inspired to write it having watched workmen building the great bridge of Martinsbruck at considerable risk to their lives. For a while the text served as a battle hymn, but by the 13th century it had become part of the German service for the burial of the dead.

As Briggs has noted, her setting for a cappella double choir pays conscious tribute to John Sheppard: ‘The piece draws inspiration from both the intensity and ebb and flow found within Sheppard’s work and the text itself. False relations and imitative writing remain but these ideas are incorporated into a rich harmonic language and reflective sonority, depicting an awareness of death in life alongside a hope for redemption or salvation.’

The Lord is Good

Cecilia McDowall (b1951)

Born in London, daughter of a professional flute player, Cecilia McDowall read music at the University of Edinburgh, continuing her studies in singing, piano and cello at Trinity College of Music, London. She was encouraged to pursue composition after winning various competitions, and studied under Joseph Horowitz, Robert Saxton and Adam Gorb.

As a trained singer, McDowall has a particular affinity and interest in choral music. In an interview with *Choir and Organ*, she has said: “I enjoy the challenges of writing for both amateur and professional choirs and always like to sing through the vocal lines in all the parts to see how they lie on the voice. I really enjoy looking for suitable texts for choral music – it’s half the fun of it. It does take time to find just the ‘right’ words and I do feel they must be ‘good’ words – words which express an idea economically and with beauty. And always when setting a text I try to get as far into the meaning of the words as I can.”

The Lord is Good, commissioned by the Oxford-based choir, Sospiri, sets a selection of texts from *Lamentations* for choir and two soprano soloists. The two soloists sing their twining, ecstatically high-lying parts against a lower-lying but harmonically expressive choral background.

Tallis Figures (UK premiere)

Peter Yarde Martin (b1988)

Peter Yarde Martin is a London-based composer and musician. His composition explores spaces connecting the disparate musical worlds in which he works: experimental and familiar, old and new, sacred and secular. *Tallis Figures*, receiving its UK premiere this evening, is based upon *Felix Namque II*, an organ work by Thomas Tallis, written in 1564. It makes particular use of antiphonal groupings and dialogue between differing combinations of instruments.

Imagined Dances (UK premiere)

Freddie Myers (b1996)

Freddie Meyers is a composer whose musical language explores the ever-shifting notion of time in musical creation. His works have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and performed by ensembles including Aurora Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Oxford Philharmonic.

Imagined Dances takes a number of works by William Byrd and John Dowland and transports them into a contemporary setting. As with *Tallis Figures*, tonight's performance is a UK premiere.

The suite has six movements:

1. Intrada: "Come Again"
2. Mr Duguid's Galliard (dedicated to the conductor of Regent Brass)
3. Come Again
4. Pavane Lachrymae
5. Come Again... (Scherzo)
6. Mr Knight's Galliard.

Perhaps

Bernard Hughes (b1974)

Bernard Hughes studied composition at Goldsmiths College, London under Peter Dickinson, then under Philip Cashian at Royal Holloway College, where he was awarded a PhD in Composition.

He is now composer-in-residence at St Paul's Girls' School in London. *Perhaps*, originally composed for the school choir, sets Vera Brittain's touching poem written in memory of her fiancé killed during the First World War. Hughes later rearranged his simple and touching setting into the version for full mixed choir being performed by the Thomas Tallis Society this evening. The work was retrospectively dedicated to the conductor Tom Hammond, a friend of the composer who died suddenly over Christmas 2021.

When you see millions of the mouthless dead

James MacMillan (b1959)

The Scottish composer James MacMillan studied composition in Edinburgh under Kenneth Leighton, then with John Casken at Durham University. MacMillan first gained worldwide attention with his spectacular concerto for the percussionist Evelyn Glennie, *Veni, Veni Emmanuel*. However, it is almost certainly his choral music, which gives direct expression to his Roman Catholic faith, which has secured MacMillan his widest and most appreciative audience.

This short motet, composed for the 2015 Cumnock Tryst, is a relatively straightforward setting of one of the most trenchant poems of the First World War by the Scottish poet Charles Hamilton Sorley. Born in Aberdeen, the son of a professor of moral philosophy, Charles was a child of exceptional intelligence. The family moved to Cambridge when he was five, where he attended King's College Choir School, then Marlborough College with some time studying in Germany. World War I broke out when he was still in Germany; he was perhaps fortunate in being interned for just one night in Trier Prison before he was able to make his way back to England. He enlisted, and served in France where he was killed, aged 20, at the battle of Loos on 13 October 1915. His last poem, set by MacMillan's motet, was discovered in his kitbag after his death.

MacMillan's motet was first performed on 3 October 2015 in Cumnock Old Church by Genesis Sixteen, directed by the conductor of tonight's concert, Eamonn Dougan, to whom the composer dedicated the work.

Perhaps not coincidentally, given his position at St Paul's Girls' School, Hughes's new work, *Epiphany*, opens in a manner which strongly recalls music by Gustav Holst, who was the school's first director of music: like two of Holst's choral works – the *Nunc dimittis* and the setting of Keats's 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' (which appears in Holst's *Choral Symphony*) – *Epiphany* opens with a series of rising fifths, creating a distinctive harmonic sound.

Epiphany, receiving its premiere performance in this concert, was specially commissioned in honour of Thomas Tallis Society choir member Philippa John, who started singing with TTS 50 years ago. The poet Hywel John, who supplied the text for this work, has provided the following explanation of its significance: "For probably 40 years Phil has held an Epiphany party where she mixes music with food and lots of wine. Over the years she has persuaded reticent neighbours and friends to join in and it has always been a joy to see 60 people, of differing musical standards, joining in on rounds as well as listening to her more talented friends 'do their thing'. Covid changed many things... but it did prompt the poem."

Now a chorus in a dream
Unawakened and unseen
Sings epiphanies of where
The revelation hides in air

Listen close, this sound is sleep,
Listen here, your heart might leap
With some unknown now knowing –
Wake to sing! Yes sing this showing!

Sudden burst of soul, a gift,
Something less now whole, a shift
In struggle, in all our dream
That waits to sing – *Yes sing, be seen!*

Hywel John - Berlin, 5th November 2021



INTERVAL



Drinks are available in the hall across the courtyard

Tenor: Nick Pritchard

Of our final and most substantial work to be performed this evening, Eamonn Dougan writes: "James MacMillan's war memorial cantata *All the Hills and Vales Along* was specially composed for the festival chorus of The Cumnock Tryst, the festival James founded in his home town in Ayrshire. It is settings of poems by Charles Hamilton Sorley – a Scottish WWI poet. I conducted the premiere of this work a few years ago – it's scored for choir, brass band, strings and tenor soloist. It's a wonderful piece, not overly difficult but very skilfully written, as you'd expect, and very moving. *The Times's* review of the work stated that it is 'a work to touch your soul and keep you transfixed'."

The British music expert and choral director Paul Spicer adds: "The interesting thing about this work is how essentially simple it is. It is as if [MacMillan] wants Sorley's message to be as clear as possible. The orchestration is luminous and unfussy and the use of the brass band ignites feelings of the colliery band (MacMillan's grandfather was a coalminer) and the ordinary man who went out, as so many did, in hope but simply met their death. The work is full of powerful resonances in this way."

The following programme note is by the composer himself:

All the Hills and Vales Along is an oratorio based on poems by Charles Hamilton Sorley who was killed at the Battle of Loos in 1915. He was born in Aberdeen in 1895 and his body of work is small, although John Masefield and Robert Graves thought of him as one of the most significant war poets.

My work takes five of his poems and sets them for tenor solo, chorus, strings and brass band. There are two versions; one for a quintet of solo strings [as being used tonight], the other involving a full string section.

A main theme, long notes accompanied by sad chords, is presented on quiet strings before various marching themes strike up in the band. The first text ("All the Hills") is martial, defiant and sardonic with matching music. This is followed by a short movement for singer and strings on their own, the nocturnal and reflective "Rooks". "When you see millions of the mouthless dead" is a slow chorale-like movement for choir and band, but a quartet of high solo strings interject with free, floating music at crucial punctuation points.

A fast 'aria' for solo voice and strings follows, "A Hundred Thousand Million Mites We Go". It evokes the chaos and fury of battle, but in the background there is the forlorn "sounds of hymns of praise" which clash with echoes of curses, snapping the air. The last movement "To Germany" points hopefully to a coming peace and resolution with old enemy, in music which brings the various different vocal and instrumental forces together in a more integrated way. Various threads from earlier movements are brought together with a new hymn-like melody, and the work ends with the main theme, this time blared out in the band, with distant chords on humming voices and strings.

Programme note © James MacMillan 2018

EAMONN DOUGAN



Eamonn Dougan is an inspirational conductor and renowned vocal coach and baritone. He is Associate Conductor of The Sixteen, founding Director of Britten Sinfonia Voices, Music Director of the Thomas Tallis Society, and Chief Conductor for Jersey Chamber Orchestra.

Recent conducting debuts include Handel's *Semele* at Sibelius Summer Academy and Haydn's *Seven Last Words of our Saviour on the Cross* with the English National Opera. Forthcoming conducting engagements include performances as part of the Royal Academy of Music's Bach European series, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with University of York Choir and Orchestra, return visits to the Cumnock Tryst Festival, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, VokalEnsemblet and KoncertKor, Jersey Chamber Orchestra, and a new disc series with De Profundis. He will assist Sir Mark Elder in the next Opera Rara recording *Zingari*. This alongside his continued work educating choral groups across the world.

Further highlights have included the world premiere of James MacMillan *All the Hills and Vales Along* at the Cumnock Tryst Festival, he assisted Sir Mark Elder for the world premiere concert and recording of Puccini *Le Villi* with Opera Rara and the London Philharmonic Orchestra; and conducted the off-stage chorus for Berlioz *L'Enfance du Christ* with The Hallé, Britten Sinfonia Voices and Genesis Sixteen for BBC Proms 2019 at the Royal Albert Hall. With Britten Sinfonia Voices he has conducted several world premieres including Sir John Tavener *Flood of Beauty*, Esenvalds *Aqua*, Nico Muhly *Looking Forward* for the Britten Sinfonia's 20th birthday and the choral premiere of Jóhann Jóhannsson *Orphée* at the Barbican.

Eamonn has a highly successful five-disc Polish Baroque series with The Sixteen. The first disc, music by Bartłomiej Pekieli, was shortlisted for a Gramophone Award. Subsequent discs in the series include *The Blossoming Vine*, music by Gorczycki, and *Helper and Protector*. The fifth disc, music by Marcin Mielczewski, was released in 2017.

Eamonn is a Visiting Professor to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, where he teaches ensemble singing and directs the Guildhall Consort. During the Autumn 2020 term, Eamonn was Acting Director of Music – Choir of The Queen's College, Oxford. Eamonn read music at New College, Oxford, before continuing his vocal and conducting studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Eamonn Dougan is managed worldwide by Percius. www.percius.co.uk

NICK PRITCHARD – TENOR



Nick Pritchard read music as a choral scholar at New College, Oxford and studied at the Royal College of Music International Opera School. He was an inaugural member of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's 'Rising Stars' scheme (2017-19) and is a Samling Artist.

Described as a 'Masterly Evangelist' in *The Guardian*, he has sung the role in Bach's St John and Matthew Passions with The Instruments of Time and Truth in New York, with The Choir of New College, Oxford, with Polyphony, with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and notably with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam.

In concert he has performed with Ensemble Pygmalion, Concerto Köln, Les Talens Lyriques, Les Violons du Roy, The English Concert, Philharmonia Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Gabrieli Consort, Britten Sinfonia, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, and L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris. He has worked with conductors including David Bates, Harry Bicket, John Butt, Jonathan Cohen, Christian Curnyn, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Emmanuelle Haïm, Laurence Cummings, Raphaël Pichon, Christophe Rousset, and Sir András Schiff.

Opera highlights include leading roles for Glyndebourne, Irish National Opera, Opera Holland Park, the Royal Opera House, Opéra de Lille, The Grange Festival, London Handel Festival, and the Aldeburgh Festival. In 2017, he won the *Whatsonstage* award for Breakthrough Artist in UK Opera. In the 2021/22 season, Nick sang the role of Oronte in the acclaimed Opera North production of *Alcina*, stopping 'hearts and time' (*The Telegraph*) with his rendition of "Un momento di contento".

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY CHOIR

The Thomas Tallis Society, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in the 2015-16 season, takes its name from the 16th century composer who worked in the Royal Court in Greenwich and is buried in the crypt of the Parish Church of St Alfege.

The choir was founded by Philip Simms, who was organist and choirmaster at the church from 1964 to 2000, and our links with the church continue to the present.

Philip was succeeded by Stephen Dagg, Director of the Centre for Young Musicians at Morley College, London and organist at St Alfege Church, in 2006. During our 50th anniversary year we were delighted to appoint Eamonn Dougan as our new Musical Director.

With around 60 auditioned voices TTS presents four or five concerts a year in the beautiful setting of St Alfege Church. Although many of the choir members live locally in Greenwich, TTS attracts musicians from all over London owing to the high standards it maintains. All singers are required to have very good sight-reading abilities as the choir works on a few concentrated rehearsals before each concert.

We are always keen to recruit new voices. If you are interested, please contact our membership secretary Kathryn Strachan strac157@ntlworld.com.

Follow us on Twitter: @TTSoc. Look out for updates on [facebook.com/ThomasTallisSociety](https://www.facebook.com/ThomasTallisSociety) and www.thomas-tallis-society.org.uk.

Sopranos Megan Armson, Phoebe Clapham, Alana Clark, Julia Corfe Press, Pippa Jackson, Claire Jones, Philippa Kent, Caroline Molloy, Nelly Nickerson, Romy Nutall, Naomi Quant, Kathryn Strachan

Altos Miriam Crozier, Susan Dean, Sian Evans, Moira Fitzgerald, Emma Humphries, Emily John, Philippa John, Sonia Johnson, Sophy Miles, Cathy Norbury, Alice Shelton, Ruthie Smith, Anna Townsend

Tenors Justin Eeles, Andrew Green, Rob Guthrie, Larry Howes, Andrew Lang, David Lowick, Alexander MacLaren, Chris Moody

Basses Dermot Agnew, Rick Brooks, Cyril Cleary, Quentin Evans, David Houghton, Daniel Jaffé, Jonathan Louth, Antonio Oliveira, Nigel Press, John Sutton

Bold denotes TTS Ambassadors

ALAN DUGUID – CONDUCTOR



Alan is a Scottish conductor and composer based in London. A native of Aberdeen, Alan attended the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama from 2000-2005, studying composition with Dr Gordon McPherson and Rory Boyle and conducting with Alasdair Mitchell. In 2001, Alan won the Scottish heat of the NABBC Conductor Competition, going on to represent Scotland at the NABBC finals in 2003. Alan reached the quarter final of the 2011 European Conductor Competition in Montreux, representing the UK at this prestigious event.

Alan has worked with a number of bands in the UK and overseas, including the Aveley & Newham Band, Bon-Accord Silver Band, Redbridge Brass, Aarhus Brass Band and Tokyo Brass Concord. From 2006-2013 he was the musical director of Regent Brass, presiding over a very successful period which saw the band rise to the Championship Section, being crowned the London & Southern Counties Champions in 2013 and representing the south-east at the National Finals in the Royal Albert Hall. He returned to work with the band again in January 2021.

In 2014, Alan was accepted as a member of the Association of Brass Band Adjudicators following accreditation. He is currently the Director of Music at St Ignatius College in Enfield and is also Musical Director of the Enfield Brass Band and City of London Symphonic Winds.

REGENT BRASS

Soprano Cornet

Ocean Cheung

Solo Cornets

Pete Yarde-Martin

Steve Hair

Benedict Russell

Cath French

Peter Moye

Repiano Cornet

Stuart Black

2nd Cornet

David D'Costa

Natasha Fretwell

3rd Cornet

Ian Hayes

Dylan Leyland

Flugel

Jill Rowlinson

Solo Horn

Neil Rossiter

1st Horn

Eldfrid Rongvaer-Boother

2nd Horn

Stephen Carney

Euphonium

Sam Noden

Aqua Moye (Hitchin)

1st Baritone

Steve Rongevær-Boother

2nd Baritone

Joey Gold

1st Trombone

Saffina Frazer-Brown

2nd Trombone

Zara Brooks

Bass Trombone

Duncan Futter

Eb Bass

Ed Frazer-Brown

Emily Peart

Bb Bass

Rene Spoors

Steve Richardson

Percussion

Glenn Mead

Matt Ludford-King

FRIENDS AND PATRONS

We are very grateful to our faithful group of Patrons and Friends that have been loyally supporting us for a number of years, especially throughout the pandemic. Their generosity and support have really helped the Society to keep going. A reliable yearly income is a huge benefit in planning programmes and means we can budget more accurately.

We are very keen to increase the number of Patrons and Friends to help us go forward in a sustainable manner and we would love your support as either a Patron or Friend.

A Friend contributes £30 per year and this special relationship with the choir is recognised by:

- A newsletter with early notification of concerts
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party
- Recognition of support in TTS programmes.

As a Patron of the Society you receive additional benefits in recognition of an annual donation of £150:

- A complimentary top price ticket to all concerts
- Free concert programmes
- Separate interval or pre-concert complimentary drinks table
- Acknowledgment of support of the Society in the programme
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party.

Please consider whether you could support TTS by becoming a Patron or a Friend of the Society. Speak to Carole tonight or contact her at carolelowe@rocketmail.com.

We would like to recognise the important contribution of the following TTS Patrons:

Mrs Daphne Barnett
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Mr and Mrs P Sankey-Barker
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Dr T C Stokes

FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 3rd December 2022
A Very English Christmas

Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Christmas Carols
Finzi: In terra pax
Britten: A Ceremony of Carols

Celebrating Vaughan Williams's 150th anniversary and continuing our exploration of the works of Gerald Finzi, begin your Christmas season with these three quintessentially English works.



With thanks to the Churchwardens of St Alfege for their continued support.