

Heathfield
Choral Society
presents:

When Icicles Hang



A selection of secular and sacred seasonal works

with

The South East Sinfonia

Stephen Charlesworth *baritone*

Alex Haigh *tenor*

Sebastian Charlesworth *conductor*

Saturday 14th December 2019 7.30pm

PROGRAMME

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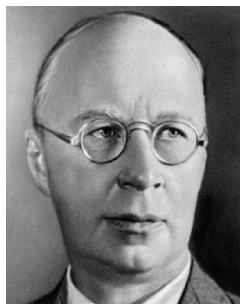
Programme

Troika (orchestra)	Sergei Prokofiev
Ding Dong Merrily on High	trad, arr. Rathbone
The Shepherd's Farewell	Hector Berlioz
O Come All Ye Faithful - <i>congregational, words p16</i>	
The Three Kings	arr Peter Cornelius
When Icicles Hang (<i>words p14-15</i>)	John Rutter

1. Icicles
2. Winter nights
3. Good ale
4. Blow, blow, thou winter wind
5. Winter wakeneth all my care
6. Hay, ay

~~ Interval ~~

The Adoration of the Magi (orchestra)	Otto Respighi
The Shepherd's Carol	Bob Chilcott
Nativity Carol	John Rutter
Adam Lay Ybounden	Boris Ord
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing - <i>congregational, words p17</i>	
O Holy Night	Adolphe Adam, arr Rutter
Fantasia on Christmas Carols	Ralph Vaughan Williams



Sergei Prokofiev (1891—1953) is one of the best known Russian composers of the twentieth century. After graduating from the St Petersburg Conservatory, he made his living as a composer/pianist, before - unusually - being allowed to leave the Soviet Union to live in the US after the Revolution of 1917. Perhaps even more unusually, he went on to move back to the USSR in 1936. His death in 1953 gained a brief mention on page 116 of the leading Russian music periodical of

the time - he happened to die on the same day as Stalin, and the preceding 115 pages were devoted to him!

Lieutenant Kijé is one of Prokofiev's best loved works. An orchestral suite in 5 movements, it was originally written to accompany a film of the same name. It tells the story of the fictitious Kijé, who was invented by courtiers to the Czar to deflect blame for a nocturnal disturbance. **Troika** is the fourth movement, and is based on a traditional Hussar song. Its evocation of sleigh bells has become a firm favourite in the Christmas season.

Ding Dong, Merrily on High is based on a secular dance tune dating from the early 16th century, but the words were added much later, by the English composer George Woodward. This evening's arrangement is by Jonathan Rathbone, formerly a member of the Swingle Singers, for whom he also created many arrangements. As well as composing and arranging, he lectures and runs workshops on close harmony singing and choral techniques and performance.

The Shepherd's Farewell, by Hector Berlioz, is a chorus from his oratorio *L'Enfance du Christ*, but was originally composed in 1850 as an organ piece to which the words were added later. It is also the basis of a rather splendid hoax, in which Berlioz, whose music attracted much criticism at the time, had it performed attributed to the imaginary 17th century composer "Ducre". It attracted much praise, with one critic going so far as to say "Berlioz would never be able to write a piece as simple and charming as this little piece by Ducre"! Although perhaps not the best known carol, it's quiet serenity makes the point rather well that Berlioz was more than capable of subtlety as well as the large scale orchestration for which he is best known.

The Three Kings will be instantly familiar to anyone who has listened to the service of carols from King's College, Cambridge. Arranged by the German composer, Peter Cornelius, it originally had the soloist singing with a piano accompaniment. The version that we hear tonight was further modified by Ivor Atkins, and has the choir singing the hymn "How Brightly Shines the Morning Star" alongside the soloist.



John Rutter is one of Britain's best known and loved composers. He was born in London in 1945 and received his first musical education as a chorister at Highgate School. He went on to study music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he wrote his first published compositions and conducted his first recording while still a student.

His compositional career has embraced both large and small-scale choral works, orchestral and instrumental pieces, a piano concerto, two children's operas, music for television, and specialist writing for such groups as the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble and the King's Singers. His larger scale choral works such as Gloria (1974), Requiem (1985), Magnificat (1990), Psalmfest (1993) and Mass of the Children (2003) have been performed many times around the world.

When Icicles Hang. Rutter received an early commission for a piece of music that was "seasonal" for winter, though not necessarily linked to the Christian traditions of Christmas, in the early '70s. The request came from his friend Russell Burgess, a well-known conductor in the English musical scene and head of the Wandsworth School Boys' Choir through the '60s and '70s. Rutter responded with a six-movement work for orchestra, boys' choir, and mixed chorus, called When Icicles Hang. He chose his texts, characteristically, from Elizabethan and other early English poetry, each text dealing with images from the wintry season, be they the cold, ice-bound landscape and its winds; an older man's weariness in the face of the season; or the contrapuntal pleasures of ale and "honey love" for those safely inside on winter nights. Rutter's own words confess a dependence of his music upon the personality of Burgess his patron: Burgess' "rumbustiousness in 'Good ale' and 'hay, ay;' his gentleness in 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind;'

perhaps also something of his underlying melancholy... in 'Winter wakeneth all my care.'"

The first movement, "**Icicles**", sets images from Shakespeare of an icicle-strewn landscape, begins with a brittle instrumental opening in the upper strings and mallet percussion. The upper voices sing the first melody, rife with open intervals; the owl's song contrasts with swing rhythms and suddenly rich chordal textures. The second movement, "**Winter nights**," turns to some images from the pen of Thomas Campion that speak of enjoying the indoor delights of blazing chimneys, overflowing wine, revels, and "honey love," which can beguile the long winter nights away; Rutter's music bristles with madrigalian sensitivity to specific words such as "blaze," "amaze," "riddles," and "harmony." The third movement continues a similar strain, with a repeated chorus demanding "**Bring us in good ale!**" Each verse complains about a different foodstuff: beef has bones, bacon has fat, mutton is too lean, eggs have too many shells; but nothing compares to the cheering presence of good ale!

The fourth movement, "**Blow, blow**", returns to the more astringent seasonal aspects, using Shakespeare's images of the winter wind. Sometimes performed as a standalone piece, a harpsichord mixes texture contrasts with a soulful tune reflecting Rutter's understanding of Elizabethan melody and harmony. Then comes "**Winter wakeneth**", which explores further the harshness of the season, both lyrically and harmonically! After a bitter opening in flute and tenor solos, we are presented with a meditative and melancholy reflection on the darkness of the season; we are reminded that all shall die, and we must pray to be shielded from hell.

Fortunately, the final movement "**Hay, ay!**" capers back into festivity with more carols and drinking; perhaps to remind us that Christmas is, after all, a time for celebration. And it's certainly a good way to herald the interval!

Notes Timothy Dickey / www.allmusic.com

Ottorino Respighi (1879—1936) was an Italian violinist and composer best known for his trilogy of tone poems on Roman landmarks. This evening's piece is taken from another trilogy, this time based on paintings by Botticelli. Written in 1927, **The Adoration of the Magi** shows off Respighi's orchestration skills to good effect, and incorporates the well known Christmas tune "O come, O come Emmanuel".

Bob Chilcott has established himself as one of the UK's leading contemporary choral composers. Formerly a chorister at King's College, Cambridge and subsequently a member of the King's Singers, his music spans a wide range of genres. **The Shepherd's Carol** is a quiet and soulful exploration of the Nativity from the perspective of the shepherds. Commissioned for the "Carol's from King's" broadcast by the BBC, it was first sung in 2000. Based on a poem by Clive Sansom, its deceptively simple melody hides a multiplicity of rhythms and time signatures. Although mostly a gentle work, it swells to a dramatic fortissimo to announce "...a voice from the sky..." before settling back to a conclude on a hummed and restful D major chord.

Written in 1963, John Rutter's **Nativity Carol** is one of his earliest and most popular works. Although many of his works rely on texts from other writers, both the words and music of this carol were written by Rutter. Its gentle harmonies and simple melody follow a traditional carol structure, and present an interesting contrast to what we heard earlier in "Icicles".



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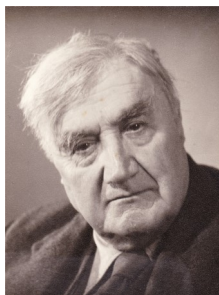
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Adam Lay Ybounden is one of the earliest songs that make up the Christmas repertoire, although its links to the Nativity are tenuous! Dated to around 1400 (and possibly earlier), the first two verses relate the story of Man's fall from grace courtesy of the apple in the Garden of Eden. It's not until the third verse that we hear the possible link to Christmas, with the reference to "Our Lady" becoming heaven's queen—assumed to be Mary, the mother of Jesus. This evening's version was written in 1957 by Boris Ord, the organist at King's College, Cambridge. It has become a regular part of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

O Holy Night was composed by Adolphe Adam in 1847 to the French poem "Minuit, chrétiens" (Midnight, Christians). In both the French and the English version of the carol, the text reflects on the birth of Jesus and on humanity's redemption. This evening's version is an arrangement by John Rutter.



Ralph Vaughan Williams is one of the pillars of the English musical establishment. Born in 1872, he studied the piano and violin at both the Royal College of Music and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was heavily influenced by the First World War, in which he served on active duty despite his age. Although perhaps best known as a symphonist, he wrote a number of choral works, several of which the choir has sung in previous years. He died in 1958.

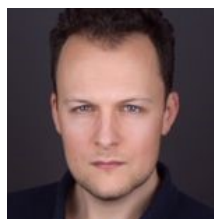
Written in 1912, the first part of **Fantasia on Christmas Carols** is based on a melody collected in Herefordshire: 'There is a fountain of Christ's blood' recorded on phonograph with a 70-year-old labourer in October 1908. The setting is evocative perhaps of a wintry rural English landscape. Vaughan Williams then introduces the more jovial 'Somerset Carol' ('Come all you worthy gentlemen'), collected by Cecil Sharp in Bridgwater and published in 1909. Its climax is marked by the brief but telling citation of 'The First Nowell' before leading into a third section based on another of Vaughan Williams's collected carols, the 'Sussex Carol' ('On Christmas Night, all Christians sing'), sung by Mrs Verrall of Monk's Gate, Horsham, on May 24, 1904. At the very end, Vaughan Williams removes us from the high spirits of merry-making in a poignant blessing for unaccompanied chorus, and we are carried back, across the snow-covered fields and away into the night.



Stephen Charlesworth (*baritone*) - known by all his friends as Larry, or by tonight's conductor as 'Dad' - attended the Royal College of Music back in the distant 1970s. Whilst there he studied singing with Hervey Alan who, coincidentally, made a famous recording of the Vaughan Williams 'Fantasia on Christmas Carols' with the choir of King's College, Cambridge sixty years ago in 1959.

Over the years Stephen has appeared as a soloist and on recordings with many of the UK's leading ensembles - the Monteverdi Choir, Taverner Choir and Consort, The Sixteen and the Gabrieli Consort. Since 1988 he is proud and privileged to have been a member of the country's only full-time chamber choir, the BBC Singers, with whom he has had the opportunity to perform under the baton of some of the world's great conductors.

He also has a particular interest in early music and continues to sing and record regularly with the renaissance music specialists, The Tallis Scholars, with whom he has now performed in over 200 concerts; and the medieval group, Gothic Voices, who have recently released a new recording of Christmas music entitled 'Nowell synge we bothe all and som'.



Alex Haigh (*tenor*) is a winner of an Opera Awards Foundation Bursary in 2016, and read Music and Drama at Hull University. He received a scholarship from Trinity Laban Conservatoire to complete a Masters Degree in vocal performance, afterwards attending ENO's 'Opera Works'. He has sung with Grange Park Opera, Grange Festival, Longborough Festival Opera, Kings Head Theatre

and many others. He most recently toured with Opera Holloway as Rodolfo in their production of *La Bohème*, and his 2020 season includes singing Ferrando with Opera on the Move's 'Cosi fan tutte', St. Brioche for Iford Arts' 'Merry Widow' and oratorio work includes Obadiah in Mendelsohn's *Elijah* (conducted by Gavin Carr). Alex is represented by Helen Sykes Artists' Management.

The South East Sinfonia is made up of some of the finest freelance players in London. Among their number are players who are members of, or play regularly with, all the major UK orchestras including BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Academy of Ancient Music, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra,

Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to name but a few.

Tom Elliott (*leader*) was a student at the Royal Academy of Music where he studied for four years with Clarence Myerscough. Tom then embarked on a freelance career that combined orchestral playing with chamber music and teaching. He was a member of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields from 2000-2008 during which time he played at many of the world's most famous concert halls. Tom now focusses on teaching the violin, and lives in Kent with his wife, the flautist, Katherine Baker and their four children.



Sebastian Charlesworth was delighted to be appointed Musical Director of Heathfield Choral Society in May 2019. He is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he initially trained as a bassoonist. On graduating, and deciding that the best thing to do with a degree in bassoon was to pursue a career in singing he has, for the last decade, been working as a professional chorister and soloist on both the concert and opera

stages. As a session singer, he can be heard on many recent blockbusters including multiple scores for composers including Danny Elfman and the late Scott Walker. In recent years, conducting/musical direction has become a mainstay of his work and, alongside HCS, he is MD for the chamber choir New Sussex Singers and has worked as guest conductor with Musicians of All Saints, Lewes. He is a teacher of both singing and bassoon across 5 different schools and travels the world with the company Moving Performance, facilitating transformational leadership programmes within businesses. In his 'spare' time, he enjoys fine dining, home improvement and spending as much time as possible with his wife, family and, in particular, seeing his two beautiful nieces as often as he can!



Gavin Stevens has been accompanist for Heathfield Choral Society since 1999. He works as a teacher of piano and guitar. As a composer, Gavin has written a wide range of works for piano and a growing number of pieces for guitar, among works for other instruments and voices. Gavin gives frequent piano recitals and he likes to include works by 20th century British composers in these concerts alongside his own music and more standard repertoire.

Our next concert..
Heathfield Choral Society
presents:



Gabriel Fauré - REQUIEM

John Rutter - REQUIEM

Saturday May 16th 2020
7.30pm State Hall, Heathfield

Further information to follow

Please reserve the date!

The South East Sinfonia

Violin 1:

Tom Elliott (Leader)
Eloise Macdonald
Colm O'Braoin
Fra Rustumji
Mike Parkin

Violin 2:

Oliver Cave
Hannah Wells
Charlotte Ward-Caddle

Viola:

Victoria Strudwick
George White

Cello:

Christopher Hedges
Bethan Lloyd

D Bass:

Sophie Roper

Flute:

Chloe Vincent
Suzie Clements (+ piccolo)

Clarinet:

Max Mausen
Greg Hearle

Oboe:

Huw Clement Evans (+ Tenor Sax)
Joe Harper

Bassoon:

Ashley Myall

French Horn:

Letty Stott
Martin Grainger

Trumpet:

Ed Phillips
Sarah Campbell

Percussion/Timpani:

Scott Bywater
Joley Cragg

Keyboard:

Gavin Stevens

Publishers:

Troika: Muzgiz
Adam Lay Ybouden: Novello
Ding Dong: Rathbone
Respighi: Ricordi
Vaughan Williams: Stainer & Bell
All others: Oxford University Press

The Choir

Sopranos

Sue Carter
Phyllis Chalk
Sarah Christie
Philippa Clark
Kathryn Dewhurst
Rita Dimsdale
Kathy Fisher
Francesca Hunt
Carol Kemp
Vivienne Lindley
Ruth McDermott
Sarah Norris
Georgina Penticost
Helen Porter
Heather Pryce
Maureen Ramsay
Colleen Robinson
Lucy Smith
Gillian Stevens
Caroline Thompson
Mary Wilce
Jeni Woodhouse

Altos

Judith Berkeley
Alma Burch
Carolyn Burgess
Helen Comyns
Jenny Crisford
Glenda Davis
Linda Davis
Linda Dearsley
Rosemary Docker
Vivienne Durne
Shineen Galloway
Pat Harwood
Moirá James
Ann Kenward
Sandra Lay-Flurrie
Jenny Mayhew
Kate Peckham
Audrey Smith
Wendy Stimpson
Jane Thomas
Susan Tranter
Chrissie White
Pam White
Anne Yarrow

Tenors

Mike Dimsdale
Richard Gray
Nick Howard
Lily James
Peter Lewis
Rod McDermott
Katherine Owers
Nick Rees

Basses

Howard Burgess
Martin Clay
Nick Clennett
Ray James
John Jenkins
Howard Jones
Bernard Maishman
Richard Penticost
Peter Perry
Chris Thompson
Colin Thompson
Richard White

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Words.

When Icicles Hang

1. *When Icicles Hang* (Shakespeare)

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Toms bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
To-wit, to-whoo!, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all around the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw
And birds sit brooding in the snow
And Marian's nose looks red and raw
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl
To-wit, to-whoo!, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

2. *Winter Nights* (Thomas Campion)

Now winter lights enlarge
The number of their hours,
And clouds their storms discharge
Upon the airy towers.
Now let the chimneys blaze;
And cups o'erflow with wine
Let well tuned words amaze
With harmony divine

Now yellow waxen lights
Shall wait on honey love,
While youthful revels, masques, and courtly sights
Sleep's leaden spells remove.

This time doth well dispense
With lovers' long discourse;
Much speech hath some defence
Though beauty no remorse

All doth not all things well
Some measures comely tread
Some knotted riddles tell
Some poems smoothly read

The summer hath his joys,
And winter his delights;
Though love and all his pleasures are but toys,
They shorten tedious nights.

3. *Good Ale* (15th century)

Bring us in good ale, and bring us in good ale;
For our blessed Lady's sake, bring us in good ale.

Bring us in no brown bread for that is made of bran,
Nor bring us in no white bread, for therein is no
game,
But bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no beef, for there is many bones,
But bring us in good ale, for that go'th down at once
And bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no bacon, for that is passing fat
But bring us in good ale, and give enough of that,
And bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no mutton, for that is often lean,
Nor bring us in no tripes, for they be seldom clean,
But bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no eggs, for there are many shells,
But bring us in good ale, ad give us nothing else,
And bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no puddings, for therein is all goat's blood,
Nor bring us in no venison, for that is not for our
good,
But bring us in good ale!

Bring us in no capon's flesh, for that is often dear,
Nor bring us in no duck's flesh, for they slobber in the
mere,
But bring us in good ale!

4. *Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind*

(Shakespeare)

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze thou bitter sky,
That does not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

5. *Winter Wakeneth All My Care*

(14th century)

Winter wak'neth all my care,
Now these leaves waxeth bare;
Oft I sigh and mourne sore
When it cometh in my thought
Of this worldes joy, how it goeth all to nought.

Now it is, and now it is not,
As if it never were, ywis;
What many man saith, sooth it is
All goeth but Goddes will.
All we shall die, though us like ill.

All the grove groweth green,
Now it falloweth all bidden.
Jesu, help that it be seen,

And shield us from hell!
For I know not wither I shall,
Ne how long here dwell.

6. *Hay, Ay* (Anon, c1500)

Hay, ay, hay, ay.....
Make we merry as we may.
Now is Yule comen with gentil cheer;
Of mirth and gamen he has no peer;
In ev'ry land where he comes near
Is mirth and gamen I dare well say.

Now is comen a messenger
Of your Lorde, Sir New Year,
Bids us all be merry here
And make as merry as we may.

Therefore ev'ry man that is here,
Sing a carol on his manere;
If he can none, we shall him lere
So that we be merry alway.

Whosoever makes heavy cheer,
Were he never to me dear;
In a ditch I would he were
To dry his clothes till it were day!

Mend the fire and make good cheer!
Fill the cup, Sir Botelere!
Let ev'ry man drink to his fere.
This ends my carol, with care away.

O Come All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!	God of God, Light of Light
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem	Lo, He abhors not the Virgin's womb
Come and behold Him	Very God
Born the King of Angels	Begotten, not created
O come, let us adore Him	O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him	O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him	O come, let us adore Him
Christ the Lord!	Christ the Lord!

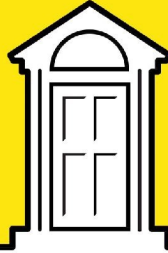
Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
All glory in the highest
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him
Christ the Lord!

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark the herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled"
Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"



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Heathfield Choral Society was formed in 1945 and now has a membership of around 80 singers drawn from Heathfield and the surrounding towns and villages. It is recognized as one of the most enterprising choirs in the area, performing regularly with professional orchestras and soloists. Its concerts have included a wide variety of sacred and secular works and first performances in the area. In 2009 the choir gave the first performance in East Sussex of Howard Goodall's work, *Eternal Light*, and in November 2016 joined an international group to perform this work in New York's Carnegie Hall – a great honour for the choir, of whom around 25 were able to take part.

As a founder member of the Eastbourne and District Choirs' Association, the Society has played a pivotal role in extending the work of choirs in the area, by promoting open rehearsals, combined concerts and co-operation between member choirs. The choir supported South Downs Opera's productions of *Tosca* (2012) and *Aida* (2015).

The Society welcomes new singers, and is very happy for you to try a couple of rehearsals before joining. **There are no auditions!** Please contact Kate at membership@heathfieldchoral.org.uk for more information, or speak to a choir member.

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