

BRISBANE CONCERT CHOIR at St Andrew's
Debra Shearer-Dirié, Musical Director

with the
BRISBANE BELLS



CHRISTMAS CHIMES

Sunday 7 December 2014

Saint Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane



PROGRAMME

- GAUDETE!** anon. from *Piae Cantiones*, arr. Adrian M Wall
- BEHOLD NEW JOY: ANCIENT CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS** compiled by Shawn Kirchner
organ, Kiseok Kim
- O JESU MI DULCISISME** from *Symphoniae Sacrae, liber secundus*, Giovanni Gabrieli
organ, Kiseok Kim
- ALL BELLS IN PARADISE** John Rutter
organ, Kiseok Kim
- CAROL OF THE BELLS** trad. Ukranian, arr. Arnold B Sherman
- WHAT CHILD IS THIS** trad. English, arr. Cynthia Dobrinski
- JINGLE BELLS** trad. Arr. Cynthia Dobrinski
- AWAY IN A MANGER** W J Kirkpatrick, arr. Willcocks
audience sing
- WHAT CAN I GIVE HIM** music by Gustav Holst, setting by Howard Helvey
- SING WE NOW OF CHRISTMAS** French carol, arr. Kevin McChesney
- JOY TO THE WORLD** Lowell Mason, arr. Rutter, text by Isaac Watts
audience sing

— INTERVAL —

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

A GERMAN CHRISTMAS

arr. with English text by Margaret R Tucker

GOOD KING WENCESLAS

Piae Cantiones, arr. Richard McKee

DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH / TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

trad. English
arr. Fred Gramann

O HOLY NIGHT

Adolphe Adam, arr. Douglas J Benton

DECK THE HALLS

audience sing

Welsh trad. carol, arr. Willcocks

SERENITY (O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM)

violin, Sue Jin Shim

Ola Gjeilo

QUATRE MOTETS POUR LE TEMPS DE NOËL

Francis Poulenc

1. O magnum mysterium
2. Quem vidistis pastores dicite
3. Videntes stellam
4. Hodie Christus natus est

BEFORE THE PALING OF THE STARS

Cecilia McDowall, text by Christina Rossetti

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

audience sing

trad. West country carol, arr. Arthur Warrell

After the concert, please join us for supper in the hall below the Church.



CHRISTMAS CHIMES

It is fantastic to be back on the podium with the singers of the Brisbane Concert Choir. I would like to thank Ross Jelf for leading the singers through a very rewarding season.

This evening's programme is filled with beauty, bells, and bright lights. We begin our evening back in the sixteenth Century with the sacred Christmas carol, *Gaudete!* The repetitive refrain, "Gaudete! Christus est natus", translates as "Rejoice, rejoice! Christ is born". The piece features each section of the choir in a Gregorian chant-like melody, interspersed within several refrains which drives the rhythmic energy in a mixed meter feel, governed by the stresses of the Latin text.

Both *Gaudete* and the carols in *Behold New Joy* appear in the *Piae Cantiones*, a collection of Finnish/Swedish sacred

songs published in 1582. In *Behold New Joy* the melodies of *Personent hodie*, *In dulci jubilo*, *Ecce novum gaudium*, and *Corde natus ex parentis*, come together to create a majestic and stirring setting accompanied by organ, transporting us back to the sixteenth Century.

One of the greatest music masters of the late sixteenth to early seventeenth Centuries is Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1557-1612). In the last decade of his life, Gabrieli was residing in Venice where the waning traits of the Renaissance period were being challenged by the new style of the Baroque period. His motet, *O Jesu mi dulcissime* ("O Jesus, my sweetest"), illustrates a mixture of these two styles. Set for double choir and continuo, this chromatic *madrigal* features beautiful harmonic nuances. Inspired by the sacred text, the musical lines are

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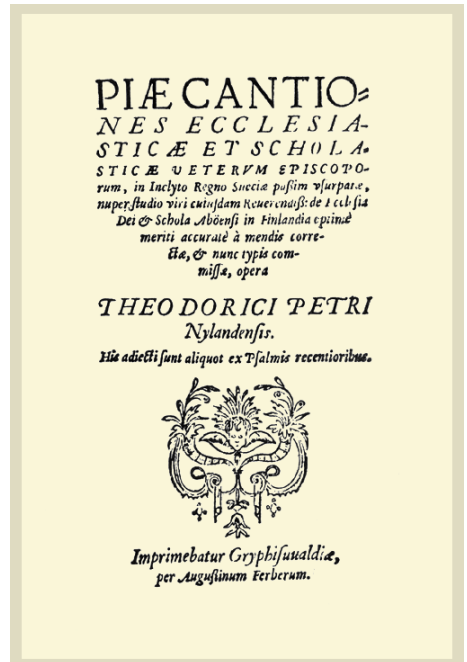
CHRISTMAS CHIMES

magnificently formed to create beautiful melodic lines which intertwine to create a perfect whole.

We are delighted to have the Brisbane Bells joining us this evening. Rutter's *All bells in paradise* introduces the Bells as they perform the first of their brackets.

Award winning Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978), is known for his cinematic sounds in choral music. *Serenity* takes the text of *O magnum mysterium* ("O great mystery") and sets the choral parts with a solo violin. The opening creates stillness in the spacious harmonies sung to the syllables of the words "O magnum mysterium". The violin enters and takes the music to great heights as the choir gravitates to the violin's register. As with many of Gjeilo's pieces, the symmetrical impulse of the format of the piece as a whole, allows the music to drift back down and hovers to its end on "Alleluia".

Now that your ears have been cleansed by the pureness of Gjeilo, we present



the Christmas motets of Francis Poulenc (1899-1963). These miniatures paint four colourful scenes from the nativity story. *O magnum mysterium* begins the set, and once again, it is the harmonies that create the great mystery in this text. Poulenc sets up a gentle harmonic movement across the



lower three sections of the chorus, over which the soprani section provide us with a melodic line that seems so seamless, even though its internal intervallic line is not what would usually be associated with a seamless line.

In the second piece, the text, *Quem vidistis*, makes two demands of the shepherds: “Who did you see?” is set with a searching quaver movement, and by contrast, the “Speak... and proclaim the birth of Christ” acts like a trumpet blast. In the third piece, the crystalline refrain of *Videntes stellam* evokes a calm and starlit night, through which the Magi travel with growing excitement. This reaches a rich climax as they enter the stable and present their gifts; outside the star shines on, undisturbed. In the final motet, *Hodie Christus natus est*, the faithful make

their response to the news with unbuttoned exuberance: “Gloria in excelsis Deo”.

The words of Christina Rossetti conclude the Concert Choir’s section of the programme in Cecilia McDowall’s setting of the text “Before the paling of the stars”.

Thank you for your delightful singing this evening and I look forward to talking to you over refreshments downstairs at the end of the performance. It has been a pleasure to work with the Brisbane Bells and their conductors Barbara McGeever and Samantha Cook.

DEBRA SHEARER-DIRIÉ
Musical Director



CHRISTMAS CHIMES

AWAY IN A MANGER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.



JOY TO THE WORLD!

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the World! the Saviour reigns;
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

DECK THE HALLS

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fa la la la la la la la!
'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Fill the mead cup drain the barrel,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Troll the ancient Christmas carol,
Fa la la la la la la la!

See the flowing bowl before us,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Strike the harp and join the chorus,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Follow me in merry measure,
Fa la la la la la la la!
While I sing of beauty's treasure,
Fa la la la la la la la!

Fast away the old year passes,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Hail the new, ye lads and lasses,
Fa la la la la la la la!
Laughing, quaffing all together!
Fa la la la la la la la!
Heedless of the wind and weather,
Fa la la la la la la la!



THE CHOIR



The Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's is an auditioned adult mixed voice choir. Formed in 1996, the Choir has established an excellent reputation for its performances of diverse repertoire ranging from a cappella pieces to full symphonic works.

Performances have included appearances with The Queensland Orchestra, Queensland Pops Orchestra and in prestigious festivals such as Brisbane Cathedrals Week and the 4MBS Festival of Classics. The Choir toured the North Island of New Zealand in 1999 and in June 2002, following the release of its first CD, *Journey*, the Choir embarked on a very successful tour to north Queensland.

2008 saw the release of a second CD, *Radiance*, and a first European tour which visited Prague, Salzburg and Vienna. The Choir toured to Italy in September 2011, where it was very well received and in December of that year, the Choir released a CD of music for the festive season, entitled *Rejoice!*

The Choir has recorded performances for broadcast on ABC TV and 4MBS Classic-FM.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

SOPRANO

Stephanye Bendell
Susan Burrows Prilick
Bronwyn Cox
Jane Deighton
Helen Fredericks
Mary Gough
Andrea Hall Brown
Jan Hungerford
Amy Jelacic
Stella Jenks
Janet McKeon
Suzana Milosevic
Judy Neal
Jill Samuels
Lucinda Thomson
Elizabeth Yee

TENOR

Simon Burgess
Ian Clarkson
Lourens Feuth
Brett Gordon
John Holmes
David Jackson
Paul Kennedy
David McNeven
Stuart Szigeti

ALTO

Jennifer Bendell
Milly Blakeley
Christine Campbell
Heather Conomos
Amanda Dee
Amelia Fotheringham
Sue Gray
Grete Hindsberger
Melissa Hutchinson
Nicki Jenkins
Barbara Lamb
Barbara Levien
Barbara Maenhaut
Lynne Maurer
Rosetta McGee
Kristin Metzeling
Jane Oliver
Anne Pook
Judy Shepherd
Ceri Takken
Kathy Teakle

BASS

Malcolm Alexander
Robert Bray
Bruce Campbell
Michael Dalley
Charl Hung
Ian Maurer
Mark McKeon
Timothy Reeves
Ross Salomon
Chris Whight

MUSICAL

DIRECTOR

Debra Shearer-Dirié

REHEARSAL

ACCOMPANIST

John Woods

MANAGEMENT

Chairperson

James McNicol

Secretary

Stella Jenks

Treasurer

Janet McKeon

Committee

Bronwyn Cox

Amy Jelacic

Sue Gray

Melissa Hutchinson

Librarian

Melissa Hutchinson

DEBRA SHEARER-DIRIÉ MUSICAL DIRECTOR



Originally from Perth, Western Australia, Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié maintains an active career as a choral conductor, music educator, clinician, scholar and editor. She holds a Master of Music Education degree and Doctor of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Indiana University in the United States. During her time at Indiana University she was director of the Indiana University Children's and Youth Choir; assistant director to maestro Paul Hillier with the Pro Arte Singers; and Director of the International Vocal Ensemble at Indiana University for two consecutive years.

Upon arriving in Brisbane mid-2003, Debra conducted the Queensland Young Conservatorium Chamber Choir through diverse repertoire which led them to an invitation to perform at the ANCA conference in 2004. In 2005, she was appointed Musical Director of the Brisbane Concert Choir, a 60 voice adult auditioned choir, and in 2006 she founded the Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir, which toured Tasmania in 2006 with several well-received performances, including appearances at the National ANCA conference.

In 2009, Debra founded Fusion Vocal Ensemble, which has become known for its performances of diverse repertoire with exceptional beauty. Fusion was one of only three Australian choirs to be invited to perform at the 5th World Forum on Music in Brisbane in 2013. In August 2014, Fusion was one of twenty-five international choirs who were selected to perform at the World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul, Korea.

In her work as Musical Director of the Brisbane Concert Choir, Fusion and Vintage Voices, Debra continually searches for opportunities to extend her singers in innovative ways. This may be in collaboration with other musical groups, composers, dancers, visual artists, multi-media experts, and cultural groups to challenge both herself as a musician and educator, and those that work with her.

Debra has lectured at the Queensland Conservatorium, the University of Queensland School of Music, and the Australian Catholic University. She currently serves as editor of the Australian National Choral Association's publication, *Sing Out*, and is on the board for the National Council of that organization.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

BRISBANE BELLS

Brisbane Bells was formed in 2007 by director Samantha Cook. The aim of the association is to promote handbell ringing in the Brisbane community and encourage local composers to write music for handbells. Most of our members have some form of musical training or play other instruments, and all share a joy in collaborative music making. Brisbane Bells work regularly with Brisbane choirs, and have performed with Ignite Choir, Thomas Cantley Singers, Brisbane Chamber Choir and St Peter's Chorale. Brisbane Bells currently has two large ensembles which rehearse at Coorparoo Secondary College on Tuesday evenings. New members to the group are always welcome. Our website is www.brisbanebells.com.au.

BARBARA MCGEEVER CONDUCTOR



Barbara McGeever is a Performing Arts Specialist and the Choral and Handbell Coordinator at Nudgee Junior College, Indooroopilly, Brisbane, where she teaches Primary and Middle School aged boys. Barbara is a Board Member of the Handbell Society of Australasia (HSA) and is passionate about Music Education and Training. She conducts and presents workshops at Australasian Festivals. Last August, Barbara represented HSA as their representative conductor and workshop leader at the 16th International Handbell Symposium held in South Korea.

*A sparkling selection of
music for the festive season!*



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CHRISTMAS CHIMES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Choir would like to thank St Andrew's Uniting Church and its congregation for their ongoing generosity in providing a home for the Choir and allowing us to use this beautiful, heritage listed building as our main concert venue. It is greatly appreciated.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the event of fire or other emergency, walk promptly to the rear of the building and exit through the glass doors. Do not congregate in the café area, but continue walking up the footpath to ensure that the exits are not blocked.

Assemble across the road outside the Suncorp building until advised by a responsible person that it is safe to re-enter the building.

Only if access to the main glass-door exit is blocked should you attempt to leave via the door to the right of the stage.



Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's Inc.

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