

A black and white photograph of a snowy landscape under a night sky with a prominent aurora borealis (Northern Lights) display. The lights are bright and streaky, arching across the sky. The ground is covered in snow, with some evergreen trees visible in the distance.

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

presents

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Sunday, 26 August 2012

St Andrew's Uniting Church

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.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

PROGRAMME

Vespers — “All Night Vigil” (selection) Sergei Rachmaninoff

Finlandia — “Be Still, My Soul” Jean Sibelius
English text by Jane Laurie Borthwick

Songs of Nature Antonin Dvorak
English text by Harold Heiberg

Northern Lights Ola Gjeilo
Text from the Song of Solomon

Interval

Songs of Farewell C.H.H. Parry
I. My soul, there is a country Text by Henry Vaughan
II. I know my soul hath power Text by John Davies
III. Never weather beaten sail Text by Thomas Campion
IV. There is an old belief Text by J.G. Lockhart

Loch Lomond Trad. Scottish arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Linden Lea Ralph Vaughan Williams arr. Arthur Somervell
Text by William Barnes

Greensleeves Trad. arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Strawberry Fair West country folk song arr. Donald James

The Keel Row Trad. Tyneside arr. John Byrt

It was a lover and his lass John Rutter

MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié



Originally from Perth, Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié maintains an active career as a choral conductor, music educator, clinician and scholar. She holds a Master of Music Education degree and Doctor of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Indiana University. During her time there she directed the Indiana University Children's and Youth Choir, was assistant director to maestro Paul Hillier with the Pro Arte Singers, and Director of the International Vocal Ensemble at Indiana University for two years. From 2000 to 2001, she conducted the Northwest Girlchoir in Seattle, a 400-voice organization of young women who perform frequently with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra.

Debra has received numerous invitations to present at national conferences both abroad and in Australia, including the National Conference of the American Choral Director's Association in New York in 2003, and has been invited to present at each Australian National Choral Association (ANCA) Chorfest since she has returned to Australia in 2003.

Upon arriving in Brisbane mid 2003, she conducted the Queensland Young Conservatorium Chamber Choir through diverse repertoire which led to an

invitation to perform at the ANCA conference in 2004. In 2005, she was appointed Musical Director of Brisbane Concert Choir, and in 2006 founded Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir. In 2009 she founded Fusion, a semi-professional adult a capella ensemble. She continually searches for opportunities to collaborate with other musical groups, composers, dancers, visual artists and cultural groups. Debra's most recent vocal ensemble is Vintage Voices, a programme for older people in the community to join in song. She began leading this group 18 months ago.

Debra is currently serving as editor of the ANCA journal *Sing Out*, and on the National Council for ANCA. She is in demand as an adjudicator, clinician and conductor for festivals and eisteddfods throughout Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

“The Composer’s Landscape”

There are many aspects that contribute to a piece of music when a composer puts pen to paper, or nowadays sits at his or her computer to create music. For certain, the composer’s cultural background, the landscape upon which he lives, the language he hears, the length of seasons of the year. It is some of these factors that come into play in our programme this afternoon, in particular, Ola Gjeilo’s *Northern Lights*.

This afternoon’s programme begins with a sort of “best of” Rachmaninoff *Vespers*. Composed in less than two weeks and premiered in 1915, Sergei Rachmaninoff’s (1873-1943) *All-Night Vigil* is a night-long service which consists of settings of texts taken from the Russian Orthodox *All-night vigil* ceremony. The *All-night vigil* combines the three canonical hours of Vespers, Matins, and the First hour. This is perhaps the finest of Rachmaninoff’s sacred works with several sections based on chant.

We stay in the Baltic region with Jean Sibelius’ *Finlandia* to the words ‘Be still my soul.’ Certainly one of the most moving hymns, this serene musical setting of the text by Katharina von Schlegel fills us with contentment in its closing verse:

*“Be still, my soul: begin the song of praise
On earth, believing, to Thy Lord on high;
Acknowledge Him in all thy words and ways,
So shall He view thee with a well pleased eye.
Be still, my soul: the Sun of life divine
Through passing clouds shall but more brightly shine.”*

From the sacred of Rachmaninoff we move to the secular of Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904) in his *V prirode* (Songs of Nature). With such delightful titles translated from Russian, these quaint pieces tell us about the many wonderful delights of nature. From the beauty of

sunrise, to the awakening of the birds as the vesper bells ring, each of these episodes in nature has a lasting impression on each of us, and can sometimes arouse quite different emotions from one person to the next.

Dvorak's musical palette compliments the text perfectly with its gently rising melodic lines and harmonic inflections.

Our first half of the programme is completed with Ola Gjeilo's (b. 1978) *Northern Lights*. Gjeilo, a Manhattan-based Norwegian composer, whilst sitting in an attic near Oslo at Christmas time, composed the music of this piece while observing the playfulness of the *aurora borealis*. In his

Dvorak's musical palette compliments the text perfectly with its gently rising melodic lines and harmonic inflections.

own words, Gjeilo says of the lights:

"It is one of the most beautiful natural phenomena I've ever witnessed, and has such a powerful, electric quality that must have been both mesmerizing and terrifying to people in the past."

Gjeilo unites this music with the Latin text *Pulchra es amica mea* (Thou art beautiful, O my love).

The second half of our programme this afternoon will travel across land and water to the music of some of

England's greatest choral composers. Although best-known for sacred works such as *I Was Glad* and *Jerusalem*, Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) made a substantial contribution to the secular partsong genre as well.

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“The Composer’s Landscape”

Of these are his *Songs of Farewell*, six motets in all, of which you will hear four this afternoon, take from a variety of poets and are philosophical in nature. The first motet, *My soul, there is a country*, a setting of Henry Vaughan’s *Peace*, is perhaps the most well-known. The most concise setting is the second, to the words of John Davies (1569–1626); the use of rests to punctuate lines and draw attention to the text is highly effective. An increasing number of vocal parts are used as the set progresses, culminating in six-voiced writing in *There is an old belief*.

Our programme today concludes with a set of folk song and traditional songs from areas of Britain. Of course, a great deal of this type of music was inspired by the landscape and nature. The words in the chorus of the Scottish folk song *Loch Lomond*, ‘But me and my true love will never meet again on the

bonnie, bonnie banks o’ Loch Lomond,’ take us to the banks of the Scottish loch, in this arrangement by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). Vaughan Williams’ delightful arrangements of *Linden Lea* and *Greensleeves* will be followed by the cheekiness of the English folk song *Strawberry Fair*, and finally *The Keel Row*, evoking the life and work of the keelmen of Newcastle upon Tyne.

DEBRA SHEARER-DIRIÉ
Musical Director

ALL NIGHT VIGIL — TRANSLATION

1. Come, let us worship God, our King.
Come, let us worship and fall down
before Christ, our King and our God.
Come, let us worship and fall down
before the very Christ,
our King and our God.
Come, let us worship
and fall down before Him.

2. Bless the Lord, O my soul,
blessed art Thou, O Lord.
O Lord my God, Thou art very great.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
Thou art clothed
with honour and majesty.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
The waters stand upon the mountains.
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.
The waters flow between the hills.
Marvellous are Thy works, O Lord.
In wisdom hast Thou made all things.
Glory to Thee, O Lord,
who hast created all!

3. Blessed is the man, who walks not in
the counsel of the wicked.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.
For the Lord knows
the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.
Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice in Him with trembling.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.
Arise, O Lord! Save me, O my God!
Salvation is of the Lord;
and Thy blessing is upon Thy people.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit,
both now and ever
and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
glory to Thee, O God!

6. Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos,
Mary full of grace, the Lord is with
Thee.
Blessed art Thou among women,
and blessed is the Fruit of Thy womb,
for Thou hast borne the Saviour of
souls.

8. Praise the name of the Lord. Alleluia.
Praise the Lord, O you His servants.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Blessed be the Lord from Zion,
He who dwells in Jerusalem. Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the Lord,
for He is good.
Alleluia, alleluia.
For His mercy endures forever. Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the God of Heaven.
Alleluia, alleluia.
For His mercy endures forever. Alleluia.

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13. Today salvation
has come to the world.
Let us sing to Him
who rose from the dead,
the Author of our life.
Having destroyed death by death,
He has given us
the victory and great mercy.

15. To Thee, the victorious Leader of
triumphant hosts,
we Thy servants, delivered from evil,
offer hymns of thanksgiving,
O Theotokos!
Since Thou dost possess
invincible might,
set us free from all calamities,
so that we may cry to Thee:
"Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!"

NICOLIE JENKINS ALTO

Nicki works as a dentist and has always enjoyed singing. She was awarded AMusA in 2002 and completed a Graduate Certificate in Music Studies at the Queensland Conservatorium in 2003.

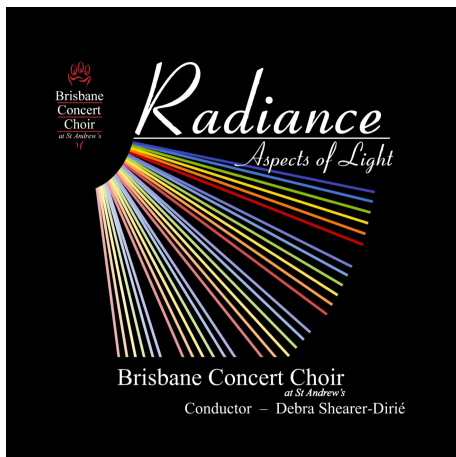
NORTHERN LIGHTS — TRANSLATION

Pulchra es amica mea,
suavis et decora sicut Jerusalem,
terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata.
Averte oculos tuos a me
quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Thou art beautiful, O my love,
sweet and comely as Jerusalem,
terrible as an army set in array.
Turn away thy eyes from me,
for they have made me flee away.

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THE CHOIR



The Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's is an auditioned adult mixed voice choir. Formed in 1996 by Dr Guy Jansen, 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.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

SINGERS

Turi Agostino
Shannon Atkin
Malcolm Alexander
Milly Blakeley
Robert Bray
Simon Burgess
Susan Burrows Prilick
Bruce Campbell
Christine Campbell
Katherine Chan
Ian Clarkson
Sorcha Delaney
Lourens Feuth
Mary Gough
Sue Gray
Vanessa Hill
Grete Hinderberger
John Holmes
Jan Hungerford
Melissa Hutchinson
Nicki Jenkins
Paul Kennedy

Allen Kloeden
Barbara Lamb
Freddy Madsen
Barbara Maenhaut
Ian Maurer
Lynne Maurer
James McNicol
Suzana Milosevic
Bronwyn Mitchell
Joan Mooney
Judy Neal
Jane Oliver
Tricia Pezet
Annemette Popp
Ross Salomon
Michael Scott
Murray Smith
Kathy Teakle
Lucinda Thomson
Chris Whight
Elizabeth Yee

MUSICAL

DIRECTOR

Debra Shearer-Dirié

REHEARSAL

ACCOMPANIST

John Woods

MANAGEMENT

Chairperson

Janet McKeon

Secretary

Stella Jenks

Treasurer

Lourens Feuth

Committee

Christine Campbell

Sue Gray

James McNicol

Michael Scott

Librarian

Mary Gough



CONCERT SEASON

2012

Christmas Concert

Sunday 2 December 6.00pm


Join us for all the festive fun, with music to suit all ages in our annual Christmas concert. Sing along with choir and orchestra.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

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.



Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's

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