

2008 Concert Season

November & December

Tour to Prague, Salzburg and Vienna with concerts at Martinu Hall in Lichenstein Palace, St Nicholas Church and the open-air Christmas Market in Prague, then Salzburg Cathedral, and finally in and around Vienna at the Australian Embassy, Pensionistenwohnhaus Prater, Melk Abbey Church and Vienna City Hall. (26 Nov–10 Dec)

Carolling at Toowong Village, Brisbane (11–23 Dec)

2009 Concert Season

Saturday 25 April — Anzac Day Jenkins *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* 3.00pm

Sunday 17 May — Haydn *The Seasons* (part of 4MBS Festival of Classics) 4.00pm

Saturday 4 July — Concert shared with Northwest Girlchoir from Seattle and Vox Pacifica

Saturday 18 July — Workshop/performance 'from scratch' Haydn *Mass in Time of War*

Sunday 20 September — A Cappella Concert

Sunday 6 December — Christmas Concert

Phone 3369 4866 for further details or to be placed on our mailing list.

www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com.au

O Magnum Mysterium



6pm Sunday 16th November, 2008

St Andrew's Uniting Church

Cnr Creek and Ann Sts, Brisbane

Musical Director **Debra Shearer-Dirié**

Guest Accompanist **Steven Nisbet**

Brisbane Concert Choir at St Andrew's

Phone (07) 3369 4866

chairman@brisbaneconcertchoir.com

www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com





O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

A Merry Christmas

**After the Concert
Please Join Us for Supper
in the Hall below the Church**

A word from our Chairman

Welcome to this our final concert (in Brisbane) for 2008, and thank you for your support. As you may be aware, we are heading off at the end of this month to sing in Prague, Salzburg and Vienna as part of Advent Festivals in those cities. We will be meeting and performing with people from other choirs around the world. No doubt we will also take every opportunity to sample the local delicacies and see the sights.

Not all singers from our choir will be making this journey, but I am very pleased to be able to say that no one will be left behind because they couldn't afford to go. Thanks to a lot of successful fundraising activities throughout the year, we were able to provide sufficient assistance to those who needed it. It was very gratifying to see the sustained commitment people put into this, including some who are not even touring. So in spite of a few challenges, such as the falling dollar, we were able to achieve our goal.

The other exciting news is that our new CD *Radiance* has been released. We are very pleased with the final result and hope that you will be too. The theme of light touches on most of the pieces, although I'd have to concede that it's a bit of a stretch for my humorous piece at the end. I guess we can say it's lighthearted. We would be delighted if you would tell your friends about this CD (but not "burn" them a copy). In this hi-tech age, anyone from around the world can listen to track samples on our website and purchase the CD online. From early indications, it seems to have a wide appeal because of the variety of musical styles which it contains.

We arrive back from Europe just in time to sing our usual Christmas carols at Toowong Village. We have a full program planned for 2009 and look forward to seeing you at future events.

Ian Maurer

Chairman - Brisbane Concert Choir

A word from St Andrew's Church

Welcome.

Because the Brisbane Concert Choir *at St Andrew's* will be leaving for their tour, we are being treated to a concert which leads us through two seasons which are just around the corner—Advent and Christmas.

These are seasons of reflection, glory, hope and wonder, words which also describe the performance offered to us this evening.

We thank the choir, wish them a safe and exciting journey and ask God's blessing upon them.

Reverend Ray Herrmann

Minister - St Andrew's Uniting Church

Musical Director

Dr Debra Shearer-Dirié



Dr. Debra Shearer-Dirié, originally from Perth, Western Australia, is currently established in Brisbane. With a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Western Australia, Dr Shearer-Dirié began her teaching career in the public and private elementary and high schools of WA. Here she taught both instrumental and choral music. After an exciting encounter with the teachers from the Kodály Intezét in Kecskemét, Hungary, she was accepted into the diploma program and spent the academic year of 1990-91 studying in Hungary. The high standard of music education that she observed there made her eager to

return to her own country to develop a similar system. She was invited to give several in-service sessions for the music educators in WA and was a clinician for the Australian Kodály Society to assist in spreading the word of Kodály and improving the standard of music education in Australia.

Dr Shearer-Dirié holds a Master of Music Education and Doctorate of Music degrees from Indiana University in the United States. After the completion of a Master of Music Education she turned her sights to choral conducting in pursuit of a Doctoral Degree (with minors in Music Education, Ethnomusicology, and Music History). While studying conducting with Mr Robert Porco, Dr Thomas Dunn and Dr Jan Harrington, Dr Shearer-Dirié became experienced in a broad selection of music. With such a profound composition department at Indiana University, Dr Shearer-Dirié also premiered several contemporary works such as: Jason Haney's *An Die Musik*, Gerardo Dirié's *All is Water* and *Tonos de Archangel*. During her time at Indiana University she was director of the Indiana University Children's and Youth Choir; assistant director to Paul Hillier with the Pro Arte Singers; and director of the International Vocal Ensemble at Indiana University for two consecutive years. From 2000-2001 she was selected as Artistic Director of the Northwest Girlchoir in Seattle Symphony Orchestra, directed by Gerard Schwarz.

After completing her dissertation, Dr Shearer-Dirié was invited to present at the National Conference of the American Choral Director's Association in New York 2003, and at the Australian National Choral Association (ANCA) National conferences in 2004 and 2006. She was appointed Musical Director of Brisbane Concert Choir, and in 2006 founded the Vox Pacifica Chamber Choir, a 16 voice auditioned youth chamber choir. She teaches at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels at the University of Queensland as well as mentoring young conductors in the Queensland region. She is in demand as an adjudicator, clinician, educator and conductor. In 2007 and 2008, Dr Shearer-Dirié served as guest editor for the ANCA National Journal and currently serves on the Queensland State ANCA committee. Her work in 2008 will take her to Perth, Copenhagen, New Zealand, Canberra and Europe.

The boobook calls across the night, the brown moths flutter in the light.
O, sleep my little one, sleep!

In Bethlehem long ago, when roads and paddocks gleamed with snow
On this same night, that mother mild lull'd into dreams her Royal Child,
So sleep, my little one, sleep.

Text by John Wheeler

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil, here will I sit and rest awhile
Under the shadow I will be of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying soul alive,
Which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Collection of Joshua Smith, 1784

Deck the Hall (audience sing)

Deck the hall with boughs of holly, *fa la la la la, fa la la la,*
Tis the season to be jolly, *fa la la la la, fa la la la,*
Fill the mead cup, drain the barrel, *fa la la la, fa la la la,*
Troll the ancient Christmas carol, *fa la la la la, fa la la la.*

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

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

Let's go with joy to the little stable - Cousins!
 Together around the crib we'll see - Oxen!
 The shepherds and the king - Who's black!
 Singing to the little Lord - Who lies there!
 Blas, Pedro, Juan and Tomas, black cousins, come see the oxen there.

Good King Wenceslas (audience sing)

All: Good King Wenceslas look'd out on the Feast of Stephen,
 When the snow lay round about, deep, and crisp, and even:
 Brightly shone the moon that night, thought the frost was cruel,
 When a poor man came in sight, gath'ring winter fuel.

Men: "Hither, page, and stand by me, if thou know'st it, telling,
 Yonder peasant, who is he? Where and what his dwelling?"

Women: "*Sire, he lives a good league hence, underneath the mountain,
 Right against the forest fence, By Saint Agnes' fountain.*"

Men: "Bring me flesh, and bring me wine, bring me pinelogs hither:
 Thou and I will see him dine, when we bear them thither."

All: Page and monarch, forth they went, forth they went together:
 Through the rude wind's wild lament, and the bitter weather.

Women: "*Sire, the night is darker now, and the wind blows stronger;
 Fails my heart, I know not how; I can go no longer.*"

Men: "Mark my footsteps, good my page; tread thou in them boldly:
 Thou shalt find the winter's rage freeze thy blood less coldly."

All: In his master's steps he trod, where the snow lay dinted;
 Heat was in the very sod which the saint had printed.
 Therefore, Christian men, be sure, wealth or rank possessing,
 Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourselves find blessing.

Away in a manger (children sing)

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 night.

The Silver Stars

The silver stars are in the sky, the red-gold moon is riding high,
 O, sleep my little one, sleep!
 Once long ago against her breast, a mother hush'd a babe to rest
 Who was the Prince of Heav'n above.
 The Lord of gentleness and love
 O, sleep my little one, sleep!

Brisbane Concert 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. The choir has recorded performances for broadcast on ABC-TV and 4MBS Classic-FM, and 2008 is shaping up to be a busy year with plans to record another CD and tour Western Australia.

Sopranos

Lindsay Blacow
 Bronwyn Cox
 Liz Denning
 Helen Fredericks
 Mary Gough
 Andrea Hall-Brown
 Jan Hungerford
 Stephanie Lloyd
 Sarah McBratney
 Janet McKeon
 Caitlin McMorro
 Suzana Milosevic
 Judy Neal
 Lucinda Thompson
 Ruby Westlake

Altos

Milly Blakeley

Jennifer Brown
 Christine Campbell
 Cathy Dean
 Asabi Goodman
 Sue Gray
 Kyla Hayden
 Nicolie Jenkins
 Barbara Lamb
 Cynthia Lie
 Lynne Maurer
 Joan Mooney
 Tricia Pezet
 Anna Scott
 Ceri Takken

Tenors

Ian Clarkson
 Lourens Feuth

John Holmes
 Ross Jelf
 Allen Kloeden

Basses

Malcolm Alexander
 Robert Bray
 Andrew Campbell
 Bruce Campbell
 Michael Dalley
 Geoff Hines
 Ian Maurer
 Robin Maurer
 Tom McIntosh
 Mark McKeon
 Jim McNicol
 Timothy Reeves
 Ross Salomon
 Michael Scott

Guest Accompanist—Dr Steven Nisbet

Dr Steven Nisbet has been the organist at St Andrew's Uniting Church (Creek St) since 1978. Prior to that he was organist at Wesley Methodist Church, Kangaroo Point for 14 years, and St Andrew's Anglican Church, South Brisbane for 1 year. As a church organist, Steven enjoys playing rousing recessionals at the conclusion of church services, and has written many reharmonisations and descants for final verses of hymns (90 at the last count). Steven's interest in music range from the classics to jazz and light popular music, as demonstrated by his series of concerts entitled "Pop Goes the Organ" at St Andrew's in recent years. Other recent performances include a recital at Brisbane City Hall in October last year, lunch-time concerts in September and October this year at St Andrew's and an "Organ Spectacular" also in October at St Andrew's.

Steven is the President of the Organ Society of Queensland and is actively involved in the promotion of organ music in the community. This has included presenting a number of demonstration/recitals entitled "Let the Organ Thunder" in the past three years at the Brisbane City Hall. He has also conducted series of tutorials for church organists in many areas of South-East Queensland. By profession, Steven is a Senior Lecturer in Mathematics Education at Griffith University. His doctoral studies were on children's learning of mathematics and music.

Rehearsal Accompanist—Mr John Woods

John was born in Stirling, Scotland and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow, and the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Prior to joining the staff of the Queensland Conservatorium he worked for the RNCM, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and Granada Television. He has accompanied singers and instrumentalists throughout the UK, Europe and Australia, on the concert platform and in radio and television broadcasts, and has also accompanied the master classes of several distinguished musicians including Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Janet Baker and Dame Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.

Choir Management

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Chairman | Ian Maurer | Musical Director | Debra Shearer-Dirié |
| Secretary | Nicolie Jenkins | Accompanist | John Woods |
| Treasurer | Tricia Pezet | Librarian | Mary Gough |
| Committee | Stella Jenks | St Andrew's Liaison | Steven Nisbet |
| | Stephanie Lloyd | Patron | Guy Jansen |
| | Caitlin McMorrow | | |
| | Heather Wearne | | |

Jerusalem Gaude

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Jerusalem, rejoice with great joy, For the saviour will come to you. | Alleluia. |
| I will place in Zion my salvation, And in Jerusalem my glory. | Alleluia. |
| The mountains and hills will be made low, And the crooked will become straight And the rough smooth paths. | |
| Come, Lord, and do not be late. Let us live justly and dutifully, Awaiting a blessed hope | Alleluia. |
| And the coming of the Lord. | Alleluia. |

Los coflades de la estleya

| | |
|--|--|
| Brothers and sisters of the League of the Star, Let's all go now to Bethlehem, Where we'll see our lovely Lady With our little Lord in the stable. Let's go, let's go running there! We'll hear a carol that Francisco will compose, with a gourd to keep the beat; Then Blas, Pedro, Juan and Tomas will sing it, and the refrain will go: Gulumbé, gulumbé, gulumbá. Guaché, guaché! O blacks from Safala! Let's see what Baltasar, Melchor and my cousin Gaspar are bringing from Angola to Our Lady and our little Lord. Let's go, let's go running there! So all you blacks who work at court, Yes, let's go, and follow the star, Behind the kings with the treasure They carry across the desert And you, Blas, Pedro, Juan and Tomas, let's all get going now. Let's go then, all you blacks For it guides us there, our star From it, like lightning dazzling bright Lots of light upon the stable And you, Blas, Pedro, Juan and Tomas, cousins, what a lovely night there'll be! Move out, you members of the League For our star is guiding us Behind the kings, for there To make the Child happy O yes, Blas, Petrito, Juanico and Tomas, our dance will go nicely. | - O yeah! - Let's go! - All of us! - to the stable! - Cousins! - Lovely! - Tonight! - will shine! - Lovely! - our own star! - dancing! - they go! |
|--|--|

This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
And with his blood mankind hath bought:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

Hodie Christus natus est

Today Christ is born;
Today the Saviour has appeared;
Today the angels sing,
Today the archangels rejoice;
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia!

Bring Rest, Sweet Dreaming Child

If you came at night, pushing your way down the long dark out into starlight;
Come now into our anxious, sleepless hours:
Bring rest, sweet dreaming child.

If you came at dawn, lifting a voice from the dumb void, your new song born;
Speak now into our shouting, stifled days:
Bring praise, sweet singing child.

If you came at day's noon, spreading out your arms to shade from anger's fierce sun-blaze;
Reach now into our frenzied, drifting years:
Bring peace, sweet trusting child.

If you came at dusk, warming our chill fears with the blood of love's sure pulse;
Touch now the numb limbs of our fading lives:
Bring love, sweet breathing child. *Text by Mark Pryce, 2003*

Xicochiconetzintle

Sleep, sleep, little child
for the angels have rocked you (your cradle).

O Magnum Mysterium

O great mystery, and wondrous sacrament,
That animals should see the new-born Lord lying in their manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear the Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia!

Programme

| | |
|---|--|
| Shiloh | William Billings (1746—1800) |
| A Maiden Most Gentle | French Traditional Melody <i>Arr. Andrew Carter (b. 1939)</i> |
| Hymn to Mary (Maríukvæði) | Porkell Sigurbjörnsson (b. 1938) |
| In dulci jubilo | 14th C German Carol <i>Arr. RL Pearsall (1795—1856)</i> |
| A Hymn of the Nativity | Kenneth Leighton (1929—1988) |
| Wexford Carol | Irish Traditional Carol <i>Arr. John Rutter (b. 1945)</i> |
| Audience Sing : God rest you merry, gentlemen (verses 1, 2, 4, 5) | |
| Joys Seven | English Traditional Carol <i>Arr. Steven Cleobury (b. 1948)</i> |
| Audience Sing : The First Nowell (verses 1, 2, 3, 6) | |
| Hodie Christus natus est | Niels La Cour (b. 1944) |
| Bring Rest, Sweet Dreaming Child | Tarik O'Regan (b. 1978) |

Interval

Xicochiconetzintle

Gaspar Fernandes (1566—1629)

O Magnum Mysterium

Jacob Handl (1550—1591)

Jerusalem gaude

Jacob Handl (1550—1591)

Los conflades de la estleya

Juan de Araujo (1646—1712)

Audience Sing : Good King Wenceslas

Two Variations on “In dulci jubilo”
Organist : Steven Nisbet

Paul Manz and J.S. Bach

Children Sing : Away in a Manger (verses 1 and 2)

The Silver Stars

Michael Bojesen (b. 1960)

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

Michael Leighton Jones (b. 1947)

Audience Sing : Deck the Halls

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Ralph Morton

A Merry Christmas

Traditional West Country Carol
Arr. Arthur Warrell (1883—1939)

They found him in a manger, where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling, unto the Lord did pray:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

Joys Seven

The first good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of one,
To see the blessed Jesus Christ when he was first her son,
When he was first her son, good man, and blessed may he be, both Father, Son and Holy Ghost through all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of two,
To see her own son Jesus Christ to make the lame to go:

The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of three,
To see her own son Jesus Christ to make the blind to see.

The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of four,
To see her own son Jesus Christ, to read the Bible o'er.

The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of five,
To see her own son Jesus Christ, to bring the dead alive.

The next good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of six,
To see her own son Jesus Christ upon the crucifix.

The last good joy that Mary had, it was the joy of seven,
To see her own son Jesus Christ to wear the crown of heaven.

The first Nowell (audience sing)

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

Welcome, to our wond'ring sight, Eternity shut in a span!
Summer in winter, day in night! Heaven in earth! And God in man!
Great little one, whose glorious birth lifts earth to Heav'n, stoops Heaven to earth.
To thee, meek Majesty, soft King of simple graces and sweet loves!

Each of us his lamb will bring, Each his pair of silver doves!
At last, in fire of thy fair eyes,
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice!

Richard Crashaw c. 1613—1649

Wexford Carol

Good people all, this Christmas time, consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done, in sending His beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray to God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon the morn there was a blest Messiah born.

The night before that happy tide, the noble virgin and her guide
Were long time seeking up and down to find a lodging in the town.
But mark how all things came to pass: from every door repelled, alas!
As long foretold, their refuge all was but a humble oxen stall.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear which put the shepherds in great fear.
"Prepare and go", the angels said, "To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn, a princely Babe, sweet Jesus born".

With thankful heart and joyful mind, the shepherds went the babe to find,
And as God's angel has foretold, they did our Saviour Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid, and by His side the virgin maid
Attending to the Lord of Life, who came on earth to end all strife.

God rest you merry, gentlemen (audience sing)

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father a blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

But when to Bethlehem they came, whereat this infant lay,

Programme Notes

It does seem a little premature to be thinking of Christmas celebrations in the middle of November, but it is never too early to be singing the stunning choral music that is associated with the Christmas season. Amongst some of the most beautiful Christmas music comes such phrases as “*Angels, from the realms of glory,*” “*A spotless rose is blooming, sprung from a tender root,*” “*The Prince of Peace,*” “*Mary, being great with child,*” “*When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy,*” and “*when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendours fling*”. These words bring such feelings of joy, beauty and peacefulness. I hope your Christmas season brings the same delights over the coming months.

It is with much excitement that the Brisbane Concert Choir will be taking this same repertoire to the beautiful churches and performing venues of Prague, Salzburg and Vienna. The singers of the Brisbane Concert Choir have worked incredibly hard this year both musically and financially to make this trip possible. I would like to thank all who have contributed to making this event happen.

Our programme this evening begins with a piece by the American composer William Billings (1746-1800), who is considered by many to be the foremost representative of Colonial American music. Born in Boston he was largely self-trained in music. His *Shiloh* uses a text taken from the Old Testament. The word ‘Shiloh’ is a Hebrew word used by Isaiah the prophet which means “Messiah” and foretells the birth of Jesus 600 years before the event. This song first appeared in The Suffolk Harmony in 1786 and adopts the singing idioms of the shape-note tradition of North America.

Andrew Carter's (b. 1939) *A Maiden Most Gentle* was the first of his carols to be sung at the Christmas Eve service at King's, Cambridge. The gentle melodic line that leads us through each verse moves through various textural changes, ending each time with the women's voices on the text “Ave Maria” (Hail Mary).

Another musical contribution in honour of the Virgin Mary is *Mariukvæði Hymn to Mary* by Þhorkell Sigurbjörnsson (b. 1938). This Icelandic hymn creates a beautifully evocative Nordic atmosphere as it sets three verses which are attributed to Jon Arason, Iceland's last Catholic bishop. Each verse consists of a solo soprano melody, beautiful in its simplicity, and a choral refrain which awakens us from the modal qualities of the solo soprano.



One night in 1328, the German mystic and Dominican monk Henrich Suso (c.1300-1366) had a vision in which he joined angels dancing as the angels sang to him *Nun singet und seid froh* or *In Dulci Jubilo* (In sweet jubilation). *In Dulci Jubilo* is among the oldest and most famous of the “macaronic” songs, one which combines Latin and a vernacular language, in this case English.

Kenneth Leighton’s (1929-1988) *A Hymn of the Nativity* sets the text of Richard Crashaw (c.1613-1649) in a mini-cantata set for chorus and soprano solo. The solo line opens the piece with a simple melody gathering excitement at the birth of Jesus which is shortly accompanied by unison chorus. The harmonic language almost contributes as an extra cradle to the words as it moves from unison to the most beautiful harmonies accentuating every word. The middle section employs exciting imitative entries to the text of “Welcome, to our wond’ring sight”, rising to the declamation of the “Great little one, whose glorious birth lifts earth to Heav’n”. This work concludes with a return to the gentle nature of the opening and the return of the soprano soloist.

Carúl Loch Garman or the *Wexford Carol* is a traditional religious Irish Christmas Carol origination from County Wexford dating to the 12th century. The subject of the song is that of the nativity of Jesus Christ.

The Seven Joys of the Virgin (or of Mary, the Mother of Jesus) is a popular devotion to events of the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary, arising from a trope of medieval devotional literature and art. Originally, there were five joys of the Virgin. Later, that number increased to seven, nine, and even fifteen in medieval literature, although seven remained the commonest number, and others are rarely found in art. The seven joys are usually listed as the Annunciation, Nativity of Jesus, Adoration of the Magi, Resurrection of Christ, Ascension of Christ to Heaven, Pentecost, and the Coronation of the Virgin.

The Danish composer Niels La Cour (b. 1944) sets the Latin text *Hodie Christus natus est* (Today Christ is born) in a simple a cappella setting allowing the Latin text to govern the rhythmic flow of the music. The *Hodie* comes from his Three Latin Motets composed in 1982

The final piece in this first half of this evening’s programme is *Bring Rest, Sweet Dreaming Child* by British born composer Tarik O’Regan (b. 1978). It is a carol setting of a poem by Mark Pryce, which in his own words, ‘reflects on the birth of the Christ-child who comes into the anxiety, noise and loneliness of the contemporary city, with its varied threats and fear of neighbour’.

Hymn to Mary

Mary the virgin brightest, your memory and honour
Deserving our praises, exultations, rev’rence, such a brilliant sunbeam.
You were one, so holy, pure, wreathed in highest honour.

Blessed among mankind, mistress of all the angels,
Gave birth to our Saviour, fair ‘gemma polorum, Gloria Sanctorum’.
You are rose in judgement mild, helper ‘miserorum’.

Mary the shining mother, flow’ring maidens’glory,
Most acclaim shall gather ‘mater gloriosa’, queen of all women.
You found grace across land and sea, living rose of our Lord.

Attrib. Jon Arason (1484-1550)

In dulci jubilo

In dulci jubilo, let us our homage shew:
Our heart’s joy reclineth, in praesepio;
And like a bright star shineth, Matris in gremio, Alpha es et O!

O Jesu parvule, I yearn for thee alway!
Hear me I beseech thee, O Puer optime!
My prayer let it reach Thee, O Princeps gloriae. Trahe me post te.

O Patris caritas! O Nati lenitas! Deeply were we stained.
Per nostra crimina; But thou for us hast gained
Coelorum gaudia, O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia, if that they be not there?
There are Angels singing Nova cantica;
And there the bells are ringing in Regis curia. O that we were there!

A Hymn of the Nativity

We saw thee in thy balmy nest, Young dawn of our eternal day;
We saw thine eyes break from the East, and chase the trembling shades away;
We saw thee, and we blest the sight, We saw thee by thine own sweet light.

I saw the obsequious seraphim their rosy fleece of fire bestow,
For well they now can spare their wings, since Heaven itself lies here below.
Well done, said I; But are you sure Your down, so warm, will pass for pure?

No, no, your King’s not yet to seek where to repose his royal head;
See, see how soon his new-bloom’d cheek ‘twixt mother’s breast is gone to bed!
Sweet choice, said we; no way but so, not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow.

Text/Translations

Shiloh

Me thinks I see an Heav'nly Host of angels on the Wing;
Me thinks I hear their cheerful notes, so merrily they sing.
Let all your fears be banished hence, glad tidings I proclaim;
For there is a Saviour born today and Jesus is his name.

Lay down your crooks and quit your flocks, to Bethlehem repair;
And let your wandering steps be squared by yonder shining star.
Seek not in Courts or Palaces; nor Royal curtains draw;
But search the stable, see your God extended on the straw.

Then learn from hence, ye rural swains, the meekness of your God,
Who left the boundless realms of joy, to ransom you with blood.
The master of the inn refused a more commodious place;
Ungen'rous soul of savage mould and destitute of grace.

Exult ye oxen, low for joy, ye tenants of the stall;
Pay your obeisance; on your knees unanimously fall.
The Royal Guest you entertain is not of common birth,
But second in the Great I Am, the God of Heav'n and earth.

Then suddenly a Heav'nly Host around the shepherds throng,
Exulting in the Three-fold God, and thus addressed their song.
To God the Father, Christ the Son, and Holy Ghost accord
The first and last, eternal praise afford.

From Suffolk Harmony 1786

A Maiden Most Gentle

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing:
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.

Ave Maria.

How bless'd is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.

Ave Maria.

The archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The lord of creation, and Saviour of all.

Ave Maria.

Three Kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.

Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless 'Ave'.

Ave Maria.

Originally written for chorus and harp, this evening's performance will accompany the voices on piano with its gently dissonances reminding us of the many unforeseen events that took place on the journey to Bethlehem and then following the birth.

Gaspar Fernandes (1566-1629) was a Portuguese composer and organist spending some time working in Mexico. He was a composer noted for his work in the vernacular. *Xicochi conetzintle* is an exquisite lullaby set in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs of central Mexico.

In *O Magnum Mysterium*, Jacol Handl (1550-1591) makes use of the Venetian polychoral style called *cori spezzati*, or separated choirs. The text is a responsorial chant from the Matins of Christmas and set here in a simplistic way to allow the text to be clearly understood. The second piece on the programme by Handl is *Jerusalem gaude*. This six-part motet treats the women and men parts of the choir as if they were two choir again creating an antiphonal texture.

Juan de Araujo (1646-1712) is proposed to be South America's greatest composer of the early to mid-Baroque and to be the last significant voice of the older Iberian tradition. Born in Spain, he moved to Lima with his family but was banished for some years from Lima by the then Viceroy, moving to Panama and then being ordained to the priesthood. He later returned to Lima as maestro of the Cathedral, and served his last post at the Cathedral of La Plata in Bolivia. He composed many villancicos, of which *Los coflades de la estleya* is one, which makes use of Cuban and West African rhythmic patterns. The subtitle 'Black song for the birth of our Lord' gives us a taste of the seasonal celebrations by the African slaves.

We conclude this evenings performance with three pieces by living composers, the Danish composer Michael Bojesen (b. 1960), and Australian composers Michael Leighton Jones and Ralph Morton. Each piece takes a well-known text and unites it with a musical language that creates, in each piece, and impressive timbral palette.

I hope you enjoy this evening's concert and I look forward to seeing you for our 2009 season.

Debra Shearer-Diricé

Recently released

A new choral CD to please a wide audience, with music both serious and humorous, old and newly composed from around the world.

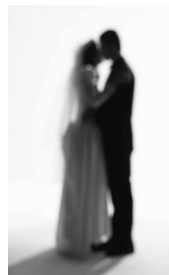
If you are looking for the ideal gift for lovers of choral music.....



The CD is also available on the web for friends interstate and overseas

www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com

A Special Touch



Brisbane Concert Choir performs regularly for weddings at the heritage-listed St Andrew's Uniting Church, as well as many other venues around Brisbane. With a large selection of wedding music available we can suggest repertoire which will blend perfectly with your wedding plans. To find out more call 3369 4866, email chairman@brisbaneconcertchoir.com or check out our website at www.brisbaneconcertchoir.com

Would you like to sing in our choir?

Brisbane Concert Choir welcomes new members. For further information about our audition process, please contact Ian Maurer on 3369 4866 or chairman@brisbaneconcertchoir.com.

If you are new to our audience, or your contact details have changed since we last saw you, please complete the form in your program and return it now, or by post or email, so that we can keep you informed of future events.

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. Please note that these doors open inwards.