



ST STEPHEN'S CONCERT SERIES 2013

Concert 1

Sunday May 19 @ 4pm
The Cathedral Of St Stephen
249 Elizabeth St Brisbane



Britten and Friends

University of Queensland presents

UQ Chorale with the Pulse Orchestra

St Luke's Church Toowoomba May 11, 2013

Program

Hymn to St Cecilia – Benjamin Britten

Suite for Orchestra – Frank Bridge

Prelude, Intermezzo, Nocturne, Finale

The Company of Heaven – Benjamin Britten

Sveltana Seaman – soprano soloist

Part One: Before the Creation

I Chaos

II The morning stars

Part Two: Angles in Scripture

III a,b,c Jacob, Elisha, Hail Mary

V Christ, the Fair Glory

V War in heaven

Part Three: Angles in Common Life and at our Death

VI Heaven is here

VII A thousand thousand gleaming fires

VIII Funeral march for a boy

IX Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High

X Lento maestoso

XI Ye watchers and ye holy ones

Featured Artists Company of Heaven

Organist: Ralph Morton

Vocal Soloists:

Jane Eadie (IIIc & IV)

Madeline Gibbs (VI)

Jessica Taylor (XI)

Chris Steinmuller Tenor



Artists

UQ Chorale

The UQ Chorale is an auditioned ensemble and includes students from the University of Queensland School of Music's Music degrees, Education degrees, Concurrent Diploma, as well as students from other faculties across the University.

Repertoire performed by the Chorale reflects a wide range of genres from all over the world, including established masterpieces as well as modern compositions. In addition to holding numerous performances throughout Brisbane and Queensland, the Chorale regularly collaborates with ensembles to perform large-scale choral orchestral works in major performing venues. Recent collaborations have been with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*), and the Queensland Youth Orchestra. The UQ Chorale is directed by UQ's Choral Conducting Fellow, Graeme Morton AM.

Recent performances include John Rutter *Magnificat*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Brahms *Requiem*, and Kodaly *Laudes Organi*.

Pulse Chamber Orchestra

String students at the University of Queensland's School of Music formed the Pulse Chamber Orchestra in 2011. Pulse Chamber Orchestra encapsulates the spirit of chamber music by performing without the assistance of a conductor. All members contribute equally to the artistic direction of the ensemble. UQ's resident cellist, Patrick Murphy is at the forefront of this orchestra.

Pulse's repertoire already spans from early baroque to twentieth century, and will be extending into contemporary repertoire in their next season. Their current season includes performances at Customs House, the UQ Art Museum and St Stephen's Cathedral Brisbane.

UQ Chorale

Soprano

Emily Arkosi
Hannah Avery
Rebekah Barns
Hannah Brennan-Silwood
Siobhan Buttin
Vanessa Cooper
*Jane Eadie**
Serena Eakin
Christina Fern
Margaret Francis
Emma-Shay Gallenti-Guilfoyle
Madeline Gibbs
Marisol Gray
Amy Holland
Laura Manton
Mairead Matthews
Madeline McGrath
Amy Nipper
Jessica Norup
*Zoe Penman**
Johanna Rosenthal
*Svetlana Seaman**
Kirby Shivnen*
Jessica Skinner
Rebecca Slade
Emma Stamp
Jessica Taylor
Nickea Warrrener
Adeline Williams

Alto

*Ivana Berberic**
Tamara Browne
Kathy Chen
Madeline Dorland

Samantha Flohr
*Alexandria Gain**

Carmel Hedger
Dana Henley
Rachael Jory
Emma Killey
Madeline Kinraid
Ellen Lamprecht
Maddie Lawler
Isabel Manfield
Georgia Martel
Eloise McIntyre
Zoe Mollenhauer
Luisa Morosin
Libby Myers
*Kaitlynn O'Reilly**
Maja Puseljic
Sarah Stranger
Christabel Turnbull
Jean Wong
Mimi Xu
Chun Yen

Tenor

Lawrence Agar
Klayton Brisby
Samuel Buckley
Dave Campbell
*Spencer Chapman**
Daniel Dempster
Joseph Fallon
Xuanlu Hu
Daniel Little
Thomas Marshall
Francisco Martell
Campbell Robinson

Alexander Rodrigueus
Selwyn Smith
Chris Steinmuller
Nick Turnbull
Rollin Zhao
Mak King Wang

Bass

Connor D'Netto
Louis Dooner
Benjamin Ellerby
Harry Fitz-Walter
Peter Harvey
Greg Hasking
Chris Healey
Ben Heim
Charl Hung
Oscar Jemmott
Brenton Kanowski
Benedict Leong
Andrew Morgan
Luke Moxey
Samuel Muller
Tristan Murray
Enoch Pang
Dominic Retschlag
Josh Rivory
John Rotar
Zachariah Schuurs
Nathan Smith
Alex Takoushi
Ben Turnbull

** Members of the 2013 UQ Chorale Committee*

Pulse Chamber Orchestra

Violin 1

Ann Patrick
Rollin Zhao
Tilly Watkins
Rachel Yip

Viola

Sariah Xu
Christine
Cheng

Timpani

Michael Stegeman

Violin 2

Sam Andrews
Tess McLennan
Jacqueline Webber
Stephanie Fox

Cello

Tim Andrews
Georgia Shine
Amy Naumann

Bass

Katryn Strong

Patrick Murphy

Award-winning cellist Patrick Murphy holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Western Australia where he studied with Gregory Baron and Michael Goldschlager, and completed his Master's degree at the University of Christchurch, studying with Alexander Ivashkin and Natalya Pavluskaya.

Murphy's was a founding member of the Tankstream Quartet (now Australian String Quartet) who were the winners of the 2002 Osaka International Chamber Music Competition, the 2nd National Chamber Music Competition in Melbourne 2001, and third prize and audience prize at the 2003 Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition. He was also the cellist of the Grainger Quartet, the Whitely Trio and Nexus-2MBS Virtuosi and has toured with the Australian String Quartet. Murphy has toured throughout Europe, Japan and Canada, where he was an Artist in Residence at the Banff Centre for the Arts with the Halcyon Quartet.

Narrator: Blair Martin

Graeme Morton

Graeme Morton is one of Australia's eclectic choral musicians, with a wealth of experience as a conductor, teacher, composer and broadcaster of choral music, and as an organist. Graeme holds the position of Choral Conducting Fellow at the University of Queensland School of Music. Graeme is also Director of Choral Music at St John's Cathedral, and Director of the Brisbane Chamber Choir, which is also the Chamber Choir of St John's Cathedral, which maintains a vigorous performance schedule of traditional and new choral works. As Co-Founder and first Director of The Australian Voices, Graeme helped further establish a new awareness of Australian choral music.

Graeme has conducted several Australian premiers, including Morten Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*, Benjamin Britten's *The Company of Heaven* and *The World of the Spirit*, Andrew Carter's *Benedicite* and *Missa Sancti Pauli*, Javia Busto's *Requiem* and Dominic Argento's *A Toccata of Galuppi's*.

Graeme has commissioned many pieces that have become Australian choral classics – including *Past Life Melodies* and *Ngana* – from composers such as Paul-Antoni Bonetti, Ross Edwards, Iain Grandage, Sarah Hopkins, Michael Knopf, Stephen Leek, Matthew Orlovich, Vincent Plush Paul Stanhope and Joseph Twist.

Graeme also hosts a weekly radio programme of choral Music titled *The Choir Room* on radio 4MBS.



About the Music

'Benjamin Britten' is a name that will be encountered frequently this year. The centenary of Britten's birth gives us a wonderful opportunity to explore the vast and extraordinary output of England's most significant composer of the twentieth century and, arguably, the most important since Purcell. Born in Suffolk, November 1913, Britten showed extraordinary musical gifting at a remarkably young age. His mother was convinced he would become one of the 'great Bs' in music, which is ironic considering his later dislike of Beethoven and Brahms. A month before his 14th birthday, by which stage he had already produced a significant number of startlingly mature works, Britten began lessons with composer Frank Bridge. As much a parental figure as a musical mentor, Bridge set young Ben on the path to technical mastery through long, grueling lessons and rigorous compositional exercises while still encouraging him to be nothing more, nor less, than himself. 'You should try to find yourself and be true to what you found' was how Britten later summed up what Bridge had taught him.

It is unfortunate though that Frank Bridge seems to only be recognized in the context of Britten's well-loved early work for string orchestra, Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge. He was, however, far more than a talented pedagogue but a highly gifted composer in his own right. He achieved almost instant recognition when he entered the Royal College of Music in 1899 with his highly expressive, lyrical style united with firmly

About the Music

controlled counterpoint. Following the First World War, his music took a great turn toward greater intensity and austerity approaching that of the 'atonal' Second Viennese School. Quite possibly motivated by his own pacifism, his music moved far beyond what his audiences expected of him, perhaps explaining his fall into obscurity. These wonderfully original later works are thankfully starting to receive long overdue attention.

The Suite for Stings (1909-10) reflects his poignant lyricism of his early years. The sonorous effects are the result of Bridge's thorough familiarity with the strings and their possibilities. The 'Prelude' sets the gentle and delicate mood. It is in no sense an overture, filled with lively outbursts, but rather contemplative invitation. The 'Intermezzo' is a touch lighter, with hints of graceful conversation and even a suggestion of occasional dance steps. The 'Nocturne' is particularly hushed, with a sustained elegance of exceptional beauty. Following this, the rollicking bounce of the 'Finale' serves the same function as the Gigue in Baroque suites.

On the occasion of Michaelmas 1937 (the feast day of St Michael



About the Music

and all Angels), the BBC was somewhat dumfounded when Britten returned with the score of *The Company of Heaven*, a full-scale cantata for two soloists, chorus, orchestra with interpolated readings. For this, being his second essay in the realm of radio incidental music, Britten collaborated with Richard Ellis Roberts who compiled biblical passages with the words of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Christina Rossetti, Emily Brontë, William Blake, John Bunyan, Theodosius and others. The work plunges us into the middle of the war between the Angels and Satan. Part One relates the fall of the Angels, their ejection from Heaven, and the battle with Lucifer. The second part comprises of biblical stories of angels culminating in the second war between Michael and Satan, referring to the famous text found in Revelations beginning with 'And there was war in heaven.' The final section deals with stories and poems on the manifestation of angels to modern men and women.

Although initially annoyed with the idea of writing a work with such overt religious themes, Britten must have found the opportunity to work with the BBC's excellent singers and instrumentalists rather appealing. His diaries show great

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delight in the results: "My side of it goes marvelously- & I do like some of it. People are enthusiastic (the orchestra are affirming that it's the best incidental music they've ever played!)." The disparate narrations were delivered by three well-known actors of the day- Felix Aylmer, Ian Dawson and Stewart Rome.

He was also writing for two leading soloists- Swiss soprano Sophie Wyss, whom Britten recommended after his dissatisfaction with the initial soprano soloist, and Peter Pears who was, at the time, a member of the BBC Singers. It is perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the work that it contains Britten's first music written specifically for Pears, who would become his life partner and muse. The lasting relationship between Britten and Pears proved to be one of the most artistically fruitful partnerships throughout history and we see its very beginnings in *The Company of Heaven*.

Britten was very fond of the image of St Cecilia for a number of reasons and long wished to write a work dedicated to her. Firstly, she is the patron saint of music and Britten was rather aptly born on St Cecilia's day, November 22nd. There was also a long lasting



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tradition of English composers writing odes to St Cecilia, including Henry Purcell, George Frederic Handel and Hubert Parry. The first evidence of Britten's desire to write such a work was in a diary entry in 1935 where he wrote "I'm having great difficulty in finding Latin words for a proposed Hymn to St Cecilia- spend morning hunting."

Britten received his desired poem from W. H. Auden whom he met while working for the GPO Film Unit. It was a fruitful partnership resulting in a number of large-scale works, including the operetta Paul Bunyan. It was, however, a complicated relationship. Britten often found Auden overbearing and demanding and he did exert a substantial, arguably unhealthy, influence on the composer. There are also many speculations of unreciprocated love, which was further complicated by the Britten's growing relationship with Peters Pears in the late 1930's. Throughout 1940, Auden sent Britten sections of the poems, which would become his Hymn to St Cecilia along with some rather frank advice on how to be a better artist. According to Pears in 1980 "Ben was on a different track now, and he was no longer prepared to be dominated– bullied – by Wystan... Perhaps he may have been said to have said goodbye to working with Wystan with his marvellous setting of the Hymn

to St Cecilia."

Britten began setting the words in late 1940 in the United States where Britten, Pears and Auden had exiled themselves as open objectors to the second world war. The work was finished on the Atlantic crossing while returning to England in 1942. New York customs had confiscated the manuscript of the first section, thinking it may have been some sort of code and so Britten reproduced it from memory. The first sketch of *A Ceremony of Carols* was finished on the same journey. The three poems by Auden are full of lines that Britten would have found irresistible to set to music. The moment in the third poem where the soprano separates herself from the lower voices (O dear white children casual as birds, Playing among the ruined languages) as an image of vulnerable innocence was a stunning musical moment clearly laid out by the poet. Auden evokes musical instruments, which is typical of St Cecilia themed works, of which Britten chose the trumpet for the tenors to fanfare the final plea for the Saint to come down and startle composing mortals with immortal fire. Variations of this invocation close off each of the previous movements.

First, simple and timeless, and second a pattering scherzo coming to rest on the final cry 'Love me.' As Michael Oliver describes, "It is a masterpiece that always seems to occupy more space than the mere eleven minutes it takes to sing."

- Sam Mitchell

UQ Chorale

For further information about courses at the University of Queensland or the chorale please contact the School of Music.



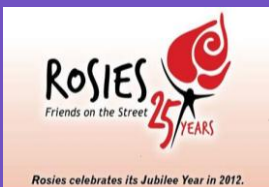
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In 2013, St Stephen's Concert Series presents its twelveth season of fine music concerts in the delightful and pleasing acoustic of the historic Cathedral of St Stephen, which opened in 1874.

The Series will again present to Brisbane music-lovers a variety of choral and instrumental concerts performed by artists who enjoy international, national and local recognition. Items chosen will be drawn from the vast repertoire of traditional western music, both sacred and secular, with a carefully balanced selection from different periods of music history.

Concert Enquires 3336 9104



We are proud to be associated with Rosies Youth Mission and congratulate the organisation on achieving its Jubilee Year – twenty five years of service to the community.