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Artistic Director

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Handel and Haydn Society
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Thomas Cooley, Nathan Berg

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monument in Mozart's musical
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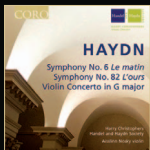
Haydn: Symphony No. 85 *La Reine*

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*"This disc captures the vitality and theatricality
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THE BOSTON GLOBE

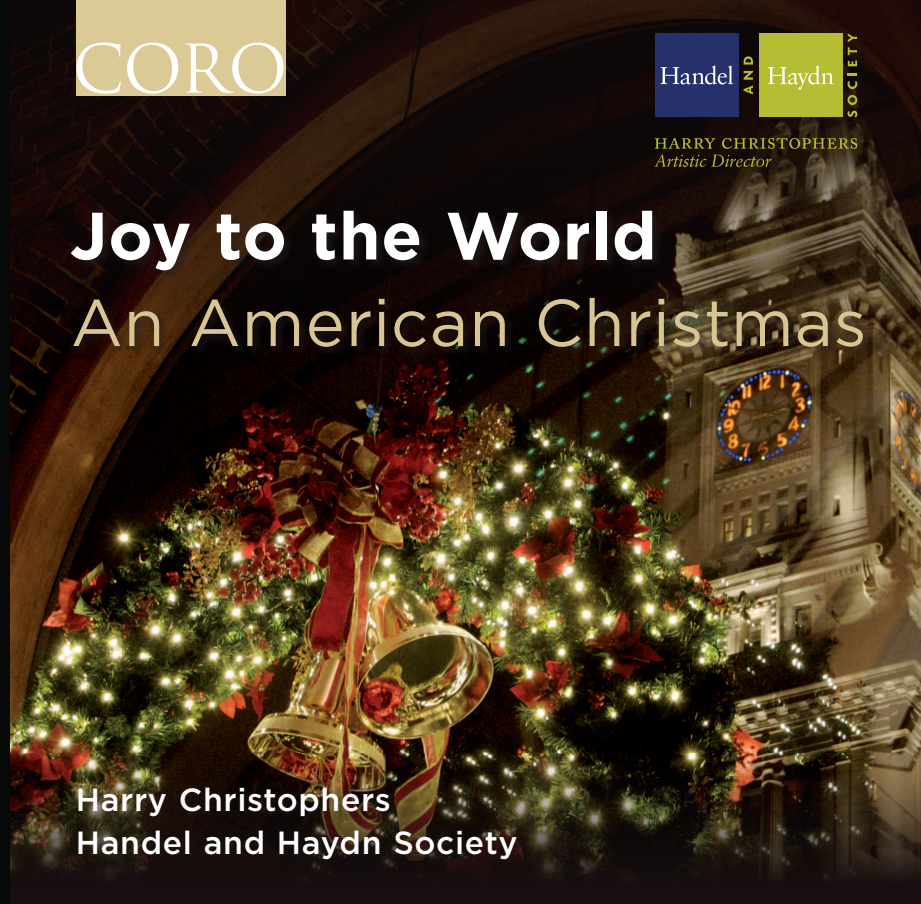
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Haydn: Symphonies Nos. 6 *Le matin* and 82 *L'ours* Violin Concerto in G major

The first disc in H&H's new Haydn series on CORO showcases two of
Haydn's symphonies. Completing the album is Haydn's Violin Concerto
in G major performed by Handel and Haydn's fiery and expressive
Concertmaster, Aisslinn Nosky.

Joy to the World An American Christmas



Harry Christophers
Handel and Haydn Society

When putting together this collection of music for Christmas, I canvassed many eminent people in the US, and in particular Boston, as to which carols were the most popular. I was surprised to find that *It came upon the midnight clear* ranked amongst the top three, beautiful though it is. When I came to rehearse it, I expressed my surprise to the singers only for them to respond “but Harry, this isn’t the tune we know!” That was also their reaction to *O little town of Bethlehem*, the words of which incidentally were written by Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts. I had also asked notable organists and choirmasters what were the most frequently performed Christmas anthems only to be told that they were undoubtedly works by Rutter and Howells.

Thus what I have presented is a sort of survey of the most popular carols sung in the US, occasionally alongside their English counterparts, as well as a selection of American and English anthems for the festive season. I was particularly delighted to come across Charles Ives’ wonderfully simple but so effective carol, equally simply entitled *A Christmas Carol* and James Bassi’s setting of *Quem pastores laudavere* with its blend of barbershop and sensual harmonies, and then there is, of course, the ever popular *Carol of the Bells*, which every lover of Christmas films (and that includes me!) knows from Home Alone and The Santa Clause.

But I have also returned to the origins of Handel and Haydn Society and the carols of William Billings. In fact one of the reasons that H&H was founded in 1815 was as a reaction to these earthily rugged and syllabic, dare I say rough-hewn, carol hymns. H&H were desperate to bring quality music back to the ears of the Boston public. Methinks they have succeeded.

Harry
Christopher,

Joy to the World

1	TRADITIONAL I wonder as I wander	2.33
2	MORTEN LAURIDSEN O magnum mysterium	6.05
3	TRADITIONAL Joy to the world	2.25
4	TRADITIONAL It came upon the midnight clear	2.46
5	GUSTAV HOLST In the bleak midwinter	4.36
6	WILLIAM BILLINGS Shepherds, rejoice!	1.52
7	TRADITIONAL In dulci júbilo (original English)	3.07
8	BOB CHILCOTT The Shepherd’s Carol	3.28
9	CHARLES IVES A Christmas Carol	2.23
10	JOHN RUTTER There is a flower	4.34
11	TRADITIONAL O little town of Bethlehem (American)	3.25
12	TRADITIONAL Angels we have heard on high	2.55
13	HERBERT HOWELLS A spotless Rose	3.18
14	HIERONYMOUS PRAETORIUS In dulci júbilo (German)	3.43
15	JAMES BASSI Quem pastores laudavere	4.25
16	WILLIAM BILLINGS A virgin unspotted	2.50
17	R. L. PEARSALL In dulci júbilo	3.35
18	TRADITIONAL O little town of Bethlehem (traditional)	3.29
19	MYKOLA LEONTOVICH Carol of the Bells	1.25
	Total running time:	63.02

Christmas in America

Most Americans are astonished to realise that their favourite holiday celebration was outlawed in colonial America, in particular by both the Plymouth Pilgrims and the neighbouring Boston Puritans. It was not until 1870 that Congress declared Christmas a federal holiday. But the emergence of Christmas as both a cherished religious observance and America's most successful commercial season mirror the growth and development of America, both in practice and in concept.

More than most holidays, Christmas has become about family and the sharing of tradition. What the Puritans so despised about Christmas was driven in part by the festival's pagan associations, the seemingly arbitrary date for the birth of Christ, and, perhaps more than anything, the public and drunken debauchery it occasioned in the working classes. In the 19th century, the legend of Santa Claus grew out of Dutch traditions in New York, and Protestants there sought to shift Christmas's observance from public indulgence to an emphasis on peaceful civic and family celebration. The

warm-hearted, nostalgic images of family and friends gathered around a hearth come from the imaginative pen of Washington Irving's *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, gent.*, published in 1819.

Perhaps more directly, Christmas symbolised the age-old rift between Catholics and Protestants, and in Boston, Puritans and anyone else. The Handel and Haydn Society gave its first performance on Christmas Day 1815, and later premiered Handel's *Messiah* in the United States on December 25, 1818. That public performances took place on a holiday now so associated with family indicates both that December 25 was a regular working day, but, at the same time, points to society's broader interest in transforming a controversial religious festival to a peaceful and ecumenical civic observance.

In the American South, the singing traditions of Moravians in both Pennsylvania and North Carolina reinforced the spread of a new evangelism from brothers John and Charles Wesley, in

what would be called the Great Awakening. In 1774, Boston composer William Billings established a famous singing school in Stoughton, bringing congregational and choral singing to rural areas, giving rise to a group of composers now known as the First New England School. Some years later, Medford, MA banker Lowell Mason (elected president of the Handel and Haydn Society in 1827) would become the father of music education in America. Through his later efforts at building congregational singing at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian in New York, this style of corporate hymn singing would become the musical hallmark of Protestant churches throughout America.

Each of these musical prophets published his own hymnal furthering the spread of singing in America, both in churches and schools. With the broader societal acceptance of Christmas, American hymns to honour the day and the birth of Christ appeared more openly. Lowell Mason's *Joy to the World* is a product of this period, as is the American carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* and the lyrical tune for the popular *It came upon a midnight clear*.

Each American region has its particular practices associated with Christmas, most often stemming from Old World religious traditions. Today, across the American mid-west, December is a busy time for the many Lutheran colleges in preparation for annual Christmas performances, school and community-wide celebrations of the season. Collegiate chapels all across America light candles toward the end of term each December in their own versions of the famous King's College, Cambridge, Service of Lessons and Carols. As with King's, all of these Christmas traditions, civic and congregational, have provided a framework for new music and creative aspiration, a continuing and living American Christmas tradition.

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Joy to the World

Christmas was one of many cherished institutions to catch the full force of the Protestant Reformation. In the early 1560s the Scottish Kirk, the recently established national church of Scotland, excluded

Christmas and all other evangelical feasts from its worship books. English Puritans likewise regarded Christmas as an abhorrence, a dangerous remnant of Catholic idolatry to be uprooted and destroyed. In the summer of 1647 England's so-called Long Parliament, informed by the Directory of Public Worship, passed a law banning Christmas and other 'superstitiously used' church feasts. Although pro-Christmas riots broke out later that year, many people chose simply to celebrate the nativity in clandestine services. The law was repealed in England following the monarchy's restoration in 1660; the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony, meanwhile, outlawed Christmas between 1659 and 1681, imposing a fine of five shillings on anyone caught observing the feast or 'forbearing of labor.'

New England Puritans argued over Christmas at least until the second half of the 19th century. In his study of American Christmas traditions, written with children in mind, the Austrian-born Jesuit priest and teacher Francis Xavier Weiser recalled that 'December twenty-fifth until 1856 was a common workday in Boston [and

throughout Massachusetts], and those who refused to go to work on Christmas day were often dismissed. In New England today [1952] there are many who remember their grandparents telling them that in some instances factory owners would change the starting hours on Christmas day to five o'clock or some equally early hour in order that workers who wanted to attend church services would have to forego, or be dismissed for being late for work. As late as 1870, classes were held in the public schools of Boston on Christmas day and any pupil who stayed at home to observe the Feast was gravely punished, even shamed by public dismissal.' Boston-born William Billings, who published seven Christmas pieces among his many simple psalm settings and hymns, was clearly more in tune with the season of goodwill. His carols found favour with minds opposed to Puritan diatribes against the 'childishness' of making music at Christmas. In the 'Musical Dictionary' contained within the long preface to *The Singing Master's Assistant* (Boston, 1778), source of *Boston* ('Shepherds rejoice') and *Judaea* ('A Virgin unspotted'), Billings defined a carol as 'A song, or hymn of joy, on a feast, or birth day,' perhaps to divert

attention from the overt Christmas themes of his book's carol compositions.

Many of the works on this album arose from the ground of religious reform: some were inspired by it, others created despite it. Their joyful collective essence runs contrary to common caricatures of New England Puritans and their hostility to Christmas; rather, it captures the potent spirit of popular devotion and strong feelings evoked by traditional celebrations of Jesus's birth. *I wonder as I wander* certainly catches the general spirit if not the precise letter of American folk-worship. The piece, first published by John Jacob Niles in his 1934 anthology *Songs of the Hill Folk*, was reportedly 'collected' in Murphy, North Carolina. Niles later admitted that the work 'grew out of three lines of music sung for me by a girl who called herself Annie Morgan,' the angelic daughter of a revivalist preacher. The Morgan family, deemed a public nuisance by the local police, were about to be evicted from Murphy and needed money to buy gasoline. 'At twenty-five cents a performance, I tried to get [Annie] to sing all the song,' recalled Niles. 'After eight tries, all of which are

carefully recorded in my notes, I had only three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material... and a magnificent idea. With the writing of additional verses and the development of the original melodic material, *I wonder as I wander* came into being. I sang it for five years in my concerts before it caught on.' Ever since, he concluded, the piece has been performed 'by soloists and choral groups wherever the English language is spoken and sung.'

Massachusetts native Lowell Mason, like William Billings before him, was drawn to the words of the English hymn-writer Isaac Watts (1674-1748). Mason appears to have composed the rousing setting of Watts's *Joy to the World*, originally printed in *The Modern Psalmist* in 1839 and later revised for inclusion in *The National Psalmist*, published in Boston in 1848. Although the 1839 source states that the carol was 'arranged from Handel', its tune bears only passing resemblance to familiar melodies from Handel's oratorio *Messiah*, the first four notes of the chorus 'Glory to God' most obvious among them. Recent research suggests that Mason may have lifted the melody of *Joy to the World* from an existing

fuguing tune, used in the Congregational meeting-houses of New England to carry psalm and hymn texts. The Massachusetts Christmas hymn's national and international popularity took root slowly but flourished following its appearance in the 1909 anthology *Heart Songs*.

The story of *In dulci jubilo* opens in pre-Reformation times and remains alive today thanks not least to the popularity of Robert Lucas Pearsall's impressive arrangement of 1837. The piece began life as an emblem of sacred mystery, its words and music apparently taught by angels to the German Dominican monk Heinrich Seuse or Suso, a 14th-century mystic known to his contemporaries as 'Servant of the Eternal Wisdom'. During one of his many visions, a company of angels drew Suso into a heavenly dance and taught him, as he recalled in 1328, 'a joyous song ... which runs thus: "In dulci jubilo", etc. When the Servant heard the beloved name of Jesus sounding thus so sweetly, he became joyful in his heart and feeling...' The original melody predates Suso's third-person autobiography, perhaps conceived as a sacred dance-song in the

late 1200s. Its music and words, a mix of Latin and German, were preserved and acquired new verses over the centuries. Lutheran congregations included the piece in their Christmas rites, albeit adapted to suit Protestant sensibilities. Hieronymus Praetorius, first organist of Hamburg's St Jacobi-Kirche, created a splendidly sonorous arrangement of the authorised Protestant text for double choir, striking in the rhythmic energy of its part-writing for eight voices. *In dulci jubilo* stands today as a global landmark of Protestant Christmas music, its position assured by the annual broadcast of Pearsall's arrangement from the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

During the Second World War, Herbert Howells deputised for the organist of St John's College, Cambridge, who was then serving as an intelligence officer in the Royal Air Force. *A spotless Rose*, the second of *Three Carol-Anthems* by Howells, was written in 1919 or 'Peace Year', as it was optimistically styled in Britain at the time. The composer created his exquisite Christmas miniature 'after idly watching some shunting from the window of a

cottage in Gloucester which overlooked the Midland Railway.... I wrote it for and dedicated it to my mother – it always moves me when I hear it, just as if it were written by someone else.'

The distinctive combination of Cambridge, Christmas and choral singing helped define Bob Chilcott's formative experiences as a boy chorister in the 1960s and later as choral scholar at King's College. *The Shepherd's Carol* was commissioned by King's for its celebrated carol service in 2000. Chilcott's contemplative piece, made timeless by its folksong idioms, considers the nativity story from the perspective of the shepherds drawn by starlight to Bethlehem. Almost four decades before Chilcott created his haunting composition, a young Cambridge-based musician made a seminal contribution to the future of sacred Christmas music. John Rutter's work as co-editor of the second volume of *Carols for Choirs* introduced amateur and professional choirs to a rich repertoire of restored and new seasonal compositions, his own *Shepherd's Pipe Carol* among them. *There is a flower*, a reflective setting of words by the early 15th-century priest and poet John Audelay, was written

for the Choir of St John's College, Cambridge in the mid-1980s. The motet's eloquent simplicity bears witness to its composer's deep feeling for the Christmas message.

New England transcendentalism, which originated in Massachusetts in the 1820s, survived briefly as a philosophical and religious movement but left lasting impressions on the course of American individualism. The thoughts of Ralph Waldo Emerson and meditative observations of Henry David Thoreau undermined the controlling authority of Calvinist bureaucracy, invited individuals to cultivate self-reliance and promoted ancient beliefs in the self as a clear reflection of nature's ceaseless ebb and flow.

Charles Ives, raised in Danbury, Connecticut, was inspired by transcendentalist philosophy to develop a highly personal language of musical expression. *A Christmas Carol*, written according to its composer's much later recollection 'in 1894 and sung in a New Haven Sunday school Christmas service of that year', subverts the tune of a rather conventional lullaby through melodic repetition, silent bars and rhythmic shifts.

Ives's words and music nudge listeners away from sentimental thoughts towards contemplation of the nativity's ineffable mystery. The same could be said for Morten Lauridsen's 1994 setting of *O magnum mysterium*, the fourth of nine Latin responsories at Matins for Christmas Day.

Before moving to Los Angeles in the 1960s to study and thereafter teach composition at the University of Southern California, Lauridsen served as a Forest Service firefighter near Mount St Helens in his home state of Washington. The composer's empathy for the vast natural landscapes of the Pacific Northwest resound in his motet's shimmering harmonic reverberations. Lauridsen's work was directly inspired by *Still life with lemons, oranges and a rose* by Francisco Zurbarán (1598-1664). 'I sought to impart, as Zurbarán did before me, a transforming spiritual experience within what I call "a quiet song of profound inner joy". I wanted this piece to resonate immediately and deeply into the core of the listener, to *illumine* through sound.'

New York-based pianist and composer James Bassi, like musicians of old, has made

a virtue of versatility. His career credits include everything from recitals with Jessye Norman and Ute Lemper to dates as music director at Lincoln Center and for Off-Broadway shows. Bassi's skills as a singer underpin the arching melodic lines and sumptuous harmonic suspensions of *Quem pastores laudavere*. The carol's Latin text, crafted in 14th-century Germany, praises the majesty of the infant Jesus.

Boston's Trinity Church, a treasure of North American architecture, was built under the aegis of Phillips Brooks during his time as rector of the parish. Brooks, born in Boston in 1835, earned his reputation as a moral authority, an outspoken opponent of slavery and open-minded student of sacred traditions beyond those of the Episcopal Church. He was elected Bishop of Boston a few years before his death in 1893. Brooks's fame rests today on the carol text he wrote during his time as rector of Philadelphia's Church of the Holy Trinity. *O little town of Bethlehem*, inspired by its author's pilgrimage to Palestine, was set to music on Christmas Eve 1868 by Holy Trinity's organist, Lewis Redner, and first performed two days

later. While Redner's setting, formally known as 'St Louis', established a lasting place in American Christmas culture, the carol is best known in Britain to the tune adapted by Ralph Vaughan Williams in the early 1900s from the folk-ballad 'The Ploughboy's Dream'. The lilting melody of the Christmas hymn *It came upon the midnight clear* belongs to an organ study by Richard Storrs Willis (1819-1900), a Bostonian composer trained in Leipzig and influenced there by his close friend Felix Mendelssohn. Willis's keyboard tune was later arranged and set to the thought-provoking words of Edmund H. Sears, first published in Boston in 1850. The familiar flowing melody of *Angels we have heard on high* almost certainly derives from an old French *noël*, perhaps created in Lorraine or Provence in the early 1700s. A punchy version of it, arranged by the organist Edward Shippen Barnes, reached a massive audience after its publication in the 1940 American Episcopal *Hymnal*.

Mykola Dmytrovych Leontovich studied at the theological seminary at Kamyanets-Podil'skyi in his native Ukraine in the 1890s before becoming a music teacher in

village primary and middle schools. He was compelled to note down the peasant songs and dances he heard while working in the Podolia region of Galicia. Many years later, following studies at the St Petersburg court chapel choir and composition lessons with Boleslav Yavorsky in Kiev, he drew from the well of Ukrainian folk melody as inspiration for his own choral works and songs, *Shchedryk* ('*Epiphany Carol*') the most popular among them. Leontovich's Christmas composition makes dramatic use of a four-note folk mantra, repeated many times above a structure of bell-like chords. The piece was first performed in the United States in Carnegie Hall by the 47-strong Ukrainian National Chorus and their charismatic conductor, Alexander Koshetz, in October 1921. The choir's North American tours established *Shchedryk's* popularity, a position secured in the 1930s with the publication of Peter Wilhousky's English-language version titled *Carol of the Bells*. Leontovich, who may have been murdered by Lenin's secret state police, did not live to enjoy his composition's international success.

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1 Traditional I wonder as I wander

Appalachian traditional (Niles, 1934. Arr. Editors)

solo: Sonja DuToit Tengblad

I wonder as I wander,
out under the sky,
how Jesus the Saviour
did come for to die.
For poor on'ry people like you and like I;
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.

If Jesus had wanted
for any wee thing,
A star in the sky or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heaven for to sing,
He surely would have it 'cause he was the King.

When Mary birthed Jesus,
'twas in a cow's stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all;
But high from the heavens a star's light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

2 Morten Lauridsen (b.1943) O magnum mysterium

*O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in praesepio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Christum.
Alleluia.*

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that the animals see the newborn Lord
lying in the manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
Christ the Lord.
Alleluia!

3 Traditional Joy to the world

Music: before 1833, revised Holford/Clark Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

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!

Joy to the earth! The savior reigns:
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground:
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found.

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

4 Traditional It came upon the midnight clear

Music: Richard Storrs Willis Words: Edmund H. Sears

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold.
'Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
from heaven's all gracious King.'
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way,
with painful steps and slow,
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hast'ning on,
by prophet bards foretold,
when, with the ever circling years
comes round the age of gold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

What can I give Him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb.
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

5 Gustav Holst (1874-1934) In the bleak midwinter

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

solo: Stefan Reed

In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone.
Snow had fallen snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter long ago.

God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed:
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air.
But His mother only
in her maiden bliss,
worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

6 William Billings (1746-1800) Shepherds, rejoice!

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Shepherds, rejoice! lift up your eyes,
And send your fears away;
News from the region of the skies:
Salvation's born today!
Jesus, the God whom angels fear,
Comes down to dwell with you;
Today he makes his entrance here,
But not as monarchs do.

No gold, nor purple swaddling bands,
Nor royal shining things;
A manger for his cradle stands,
And holds the King of kings.
Go, shepherds, where the Infant lies,
And see his humble throne;
With tears of joy in all your eyes,
Go shepherds, kiss the Son.

Thus Gabriel sang, and straight around
The heavenly armies throng;
They tune their harps to lofty sound
And thus conclude the song:
'Glory to God that reigns above,
Let peace surround the earth;
Mortals shall know their Maker's love
At their Redeemer's birth.'

Lord! and shall angels have their songs
And men no tunes to rise?
O may we lose these useless tongues
When they forget to praise!
'Glory to God that reigns above,
That pitied us forlorn!
We join to sing our Maker's love,
For there's a Saviour born.

7 Traditional **In dulci jubilo** (original version sung in English)

German, 14th-century (harmonised Gesius 1601, final verse J.S. Bach)

In dulci jubilo
Now sing with hearts aglow!
Our delight and pleasure
Lies in praesepio,
Like sunshine is our treasure
Matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu, parvule,
For thee I long alway;
Comfort my heart's blindness,
O puer optime,
With all thy loving kindness,
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 gainèd
Coelorum gaudia,
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia
In any place but there?
There are angels singing
Nova cantica,
And there the bells are ringing
In Regis curia.
O that we were there!

8 Bob Chilcott (b.1955) **The Shepherd's Carol**

Words: Clive Sansom (1910-81)

We stood on the hills, Lady,
Our day's work done,
Watching the frosted meadow
That winter had won.

The evening was calm, Lady,
The air so calm
Silence more lovely than music,
Folded the hill.

There was a star, Lady,
Shone in the night,
Larger than Venus it was
And bright, so bright.

Oh, a voice from the sky, Lady,
It seemed to us then
Telling of God being born
In the world of men.

And so we have come, Lady,
Our day's work done,
Our love, our hopes, ourselves,
We give to your son.

9 Charles Ives (1874-1954) **A Christmas carol**

Arr. Paul C. Echols

Little star of Bethlehem!
Do we see thee now?
Do we see thee shining
O'er the tall trees?

Little Child of Bethlehem!
Do we hear Thee in our hearts?
Hear the angels singing:
Peace on earth, good will to men!
Noel!

O'er the cradle of a King,
Hear the angels sing:
In Excelsis Gloria, Gloria!
From His Father's home on high,
Lo! For us He came to die;
Hear the angels sing:

Venite adoremus Dominum.

10 John Rutter (b.1945) **There is a flower**

Words: John Audelay (15th century)

solo: Sonja DuToit Tengblad

There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,
The root there of is callèd Jesse,
A flow'r of price;
There is none such in paradise.

This flow'r is fair and fresh of hue,
It fadeth never, but ever is new;
The blessed branch this flow'r on grew
Was Mary mild that bare Jesu;
A flow'r of grace;
Against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed here of was Goddes sand,
That God himself sowed with his hand,
In Nazareth that holy land,
Amidst her arbour a maiden found;
This blessed flow'r
Sprang never but in Mary's bower.

When Gabriel this maid did meet,
With 'Ave Maria' he did her greet;
Between them two this flow'r was set
And safe was kept, no man should wit,
Till on a day In Bethlehem
it could spread and spray.

When that fair flow'r began to spread
And his sweet blossom began to bed,
Then rich and poor of ev'ry land
They marvelled how this flow'r might spread.
Till kinges three
That blessed flower came to see.

Alleluia.
Angels there came from heaven's tower
To look upon this freshele flow'r,
How fair he was in his colour
And how sweet in his savour;
And to behold
How such a flow'r might spring in gold.

There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,
The root there of is callèd Jesse,
A flow'r of price
There is none such in paradise.

11 Traditional **O little town of Bethlehem**

Music: American tune by Lewis H. Redner (1831-1908)

Words: Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts (1835-93)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep,
The angels keep
Their watch of wand'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n.
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessing of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin,
and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

12 Traditional **Angels we have heard on high**

Old French tune (Arr. Reginald Jacques (1894-1969))

Angels we have heard on high,
Singing sweetly o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing:
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

See Him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
While our hearts in love we raise.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

13 Herbert Howells (1892-1983) **A spotless Rose**

Words: 14th century

solo: Woodrow Bynum

A spotless Rose is blowing,
Sprung from a tender root,
Of ancient seers' foreshowing,
Of Jesse promised fruit;
Its fairest bud unfolds to light
Amid the cold, cold winter,
And in the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,
Whereof Isaiah said,
Is from its sweet root springing
In Mary, purest Maid;
For through our God's great love and might,
The Blessed Babe she bare us
In a cold, cold winter's night.

14 Hieronymous Praetorius (1560-1629) **In dulci jubilo**

Old German Carol. Words: German traditional

In dulci jubilo
Nun singet und seid froh!
Unser's Herzens Wonne
Liegt *in praesepe*,
Und leuchtet als die Sonne
Matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O!

O Jesu, parvule,
Nach dir ist mir so weh!
Tröst mir mein Gemüte
O puer optime
Durch alle deine Güte
O princeps gloriae.
Trahe me post te!

O patris caritas!
O Nati lenitas!
Wir wär'n all verloren
Per nostra crimina
So hat er uns erworben
Coelorum gaudia,
Eia, wär'n wir da!

Ubi sunt gaudia
Nirgend mehr denn da!
Da die Engel singen
Nova cantica,
Und da die Schellen klingen
In Regis curia.
Eia, wär'n wir da!

15 James Bassi (b.1961) **Quem pastores laudavere**

Words: traditional

Quem pastores laudavere,
quibus angeli dixere,
absit vobis jam timere,
natus est rex gloriae.

Shepherds sang their praises o'er him,
Called by angels to adore him:
"Have no fear but come before him:
Born is now your glorious King!"

*Ad quem magi ambulabant,
Aurum, thus, myrrham portabant,
Immolabant Nato regi gloriae.*

*Christo regi, Deo nato,
Per Mariam nobis dato,
Merito resonet vere
Laus honor et gloria.*

Eastern sages came to view him,
Judah's conqu'ring Lion knew him,
Gold and myrrh to him their tribute offering.

Christ our King, from Mary springing,
God made man, salvation bringing,
Thee we worship ever singing:
"Honor praise, and glory be!"

To teach us humility all this was done;
Then learn we from hence haughty pride
for to shun;
A manger's His cradle who came from above,
The great God of mercy,
of peace, and of love.

Then let us be merry...

Then presently after, the shepherds did spy
Vast numbers of angels to stand in the sky;
So merrily talking, so sweetly they did sing,
"All glory and praise to our heavenly King!"

Then let us be merry...

16 William Billings (1746-1800) **A virgin unspotted**

Words: traditional

A virgin unspotted, the prophet foretold,
Should bring forth a Saviour,
which now we behold,
To be our Redeemer from death, hell and sin,
Which Adam's transgression involved us in.

*Then let us be merry, put sorrow away:
Our Saviour, Christ Jesus, was born on this day.*

Through Bethlehem city, in Jury, it was
That Joseph and Mary together did pass,
And for to be taxed when thither they came,
Since Caesar Augustus commanded the same.

Then let us be merry...

But Mary's full time being come, as we find,
She brought forth her first-born
to save all mankind;
The inn being full, for this heavenly guest
No place there was found
where to lay him at rest.

Then let us be merry...

But Mary, blest Mary, so meek and so mild,
Soon wrapped up in swaddlings
this heavenly Child:
Contented, she laid him where oxen do feed;
The great God of nature approved of the deed.

Then let us be merry...

17 Arr. R.L. Pearsall (1795-1856) **In dulci jubilo**

Old German Carol, edited and adapted by Reginald Jacques

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 hast for us gained
Coelorum gaudia.
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia, where
If that they be not there?
There are angels singing,
Nova cantica;
There the bells are ringing
In Regis curia.
O that we were there!

18 Traditional O little town of Bethlehem

Music: English traditional tune. Arr. R. Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Descant: Thomas Armstrong (1898-1994)

Words: Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts (1835-93)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessing of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

19 Mykola Leontovich (1877-1921) Carol of the Bells

Words and Arr. Peter J. Wilhousky (1902-1978)

Hark how the bells,
sweet silver bells,
all seem to say,
“throw cares away.”

Christmas is here,
bringing good cheer,
to young and old,
meek and the bold,

Ding dong ding dong
that is their song
with joyful ring
all caroling

One seems to hear
words of good cheer
from ev'rywhere
filling the air

Oh, how they pound,
raising the sound,
o'er hill and dale,
telling their tale,

Gaily they ring
while people sing
songs of good cheer,
Christmas is here,

Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas,
Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas,
On, on they send,
on without end,
their joyful tone
to every home
Dong Ding dong ding... dong! Bohm!

Handel and Haydn Society Harry Christophers *Artistic Director*

SOPRANO

Jennifer Ashe
Jessica Cooper
Margot Rood
Sonja DuToit Tengblad
Erika Vogel
Brenna Wells

TENOR

Jonas Budris
Marcio de Oliveira
Thomas Gregg
Randy McGee
Alex Powell
Stefan Reed

ALTO

Mary Gerbi
Catherine Hedberg
Margaret Lias
Miranda Loud
Emily Marvosh
Martin Near

BASS

Jonathan Barnhart
Woodrow Bynum
Jacob Cooper
Thomas Dawkins
Bradford Gleim
Donald Wilkinson

Harry Christophers



Photograph: Stu Rosner

Harry Christophers began his tenure as Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society (H&H) with the 2009–2010 Season. Christophers and H&H have since embarked on an

ambitious artistic journey towards the organisation's 2015 Bicentennial with a showcase of works premiered in the United States by H&H since 1815, education programming, community

outreach activities and partnerships, and the release of a series of recordings on the CORO label.

Christophers is known internationally as founder and conductor of the UK-based choir and period instrument ensemble The Sixteen. He has directed The Sixteen throughout Europe, America, and the Far East, gaining a distinguished reputation for his work in Renaissance, baroque, and 20th- and 21st-century music. In 2000, he instituted The Choral Pilgrimage, a tour of British cathedrals from York to Canterbury. He has recorded over 120 titles for which he has won numerous awards, including a Grand Prix du Disque for Handel *Messiah*, numerous Preise der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik (German Record Critics Awards), the coveted Gramophone Award for Early Music, and the prestigious Classical Brit Award (2005) for his disc entitled *Renaissance*. In 2009 he received one

of classical music's highest accolades, the Classic FM Gramophone Awards Artist of the Year Award; The Sixteen also won the Baroque Vocal Award for Handel *Coronation Anthems*, a CD that also received a 2010 Grammy Award nomination.

Harry Christophers is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Granada Symphony Orchestra and a regular guest conductor with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. In October 2008, Christophers was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Leicester. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford and also of the Royal Welsh Academy for Music and Drama and was awarded a CBE in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Handel and Haydn Society



Handel and Haydn Society (H&H) is a professional Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus and an internationally recognised leader in the field of Historically Informed Performance, a revelatory style that

uses the instruments and techniques of the composer's time. Founded in Boston in 1815, H&H will mark a major historical milestone with the celebration of its Bicentennial in 2015. H&H is considered the

oldest continuously performing arts organisation in the United States and has a longstanding commitment to excellence and innovation: it gave the American premieres of Handel's *Messiah* (1818), Haydn's *The Creation* (1819), Verdi's *Requiem* (1878), and Bach's *St Matthew Passion* (1879). H&H today, under Artistic Director Harry Christophers' leadership, is committed to its mission to enrich life and influence culture by performing baroque and classical music at the highest levels of artistic excellence, and by providing engaging, accessible, and broadly inclusive music education and training activities. H&H is widely known through its local subscription series, concert broadcasts on WGBH/99.5 Classical New England and National Public Radio, recordings, and tours, including performances of Handel's *Jephtha* in California in

April 2013. Its recording of Sir John Tavener's *Lamentations and Praises* won a 2003 Grammy Award and two of its recordings, *All is Bright* and *Peace*, appeared simultaneously in the top ten on Billboard Magazine's classical music chart. Since the release of its first collaboration with Harry Christophers on the CORO label in September 2010, it has made available three live commercial recordings of works by Mozart – *Mass in C minor* (2010), *Requiem* (2011), and *Coronation Mass* (2012) as well as *Haydn, Vol. 1* (September 2013). H&H's award-winning Karen S. and George D. Levy Educational Outreach Program, which recently marked its 25th anniversary, brings music education, vocal training, and performance opportunities to 10,000 students annually throughout Greater Boston and beyond.



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WGBH RADIO OPERATIONS MANAGER:

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