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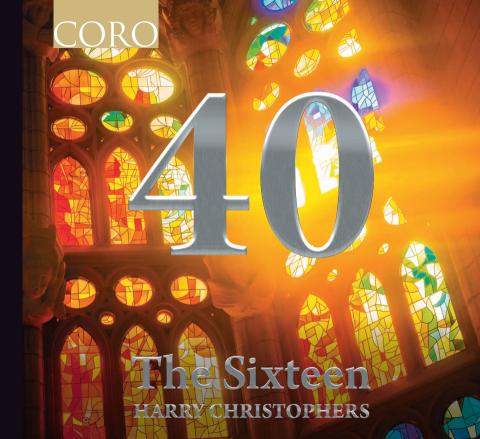




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40th Anniversary Collection

The Sixteen | HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

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1	G.F. Handel	How excellent thy name (from Saul HWV 53)	2.45	1	Igor Stravinsky	Exaudi orationem meam Domine (from Symphony of Psalms)	3.02
2	James MacMillan	O Radiant Dawn (From The Strathclyde Motets)	3.18	2	Frank Martin	Sanctus and Benedictus (from Mass for double choir)	4.29
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4	Tomás Luis de Victoria	O Domine Jesu Christe	3.39	4	G.P. da Palestrina	Ave Maria	4.26
5	Henry Purcell	Remember not, Lord, our offences (Z 50)	3.00	5	Thomas Tallis	Miserere nostri	2.59
6	Gregorio Allegri	Miserere (Evolution version)	11.28	6	Henry Purcell	Symphony / O sing unto the Lord (from O sing unto the Lord Z 44)	3.32
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8	Diogo Dias Melgás	Salve Regina	4.10	8	Olivier Messiaen	Cinq Rechants: I	4.55
9	John Tavener	Hymn for the Dormition of the Mother of God	4.50	9	James MacMillan	The Gallant Weaver	5.47
10	Arvo Pärt	The Deer's Cry	4.21	10	Alonso Lobo	Versa est in luctum	4.24
11	Robert Pearsall	Lay a garland	3.06	11	Francis Poulenc	Sanctus (from Mass in G FP 89)	2.29
12	Thomas Tallis	O nata lux	1.45	12	Claudio Monteverdi	Gloria (from Messa a quattro voci SV 190)	4.16
13	William Byrd	Haec dies	2.26	13	Heinrich Schütz	Herr, nun lässest du deinen Diener (SWV 432)	3.30
14	William Harris	Bring us, O Lord God	3.46	14	Marcin Mielczewski	Benedictio et claritas	4.50
15	G.F. Handel	Let thy hand be strengthened (from Coronation Anthem Let thy hand be strengthened HWV 259)	3.07	15	W.A. Mozart	Dixit Dominus (from Vespers K 339)	3.55
16	John Sheppard	In manus tuas I	3.44	16	Benjamin Britten	Balulalow (from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28)	1.20
17	Robert Parsons	Ave Maria	4.31	17	Howard Skempton	Adam lay ybounden	1.13
18	John Plummer	Tota pulchra es	3.37	18	Morten Lauridsen	O magnum mysterium	6.41
19	Gabriel Fauré	Sanctus (from Requiem)	3.11	19	Benjamin Britten	This little Babe (from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28)	1.22
20	J.S. Bach	Gott der Herr ist Sonn' und Schild (from Cantata 79 BWV 79)	4.53	20	G.F. Handel	Your voices tune (from Alexander's Feast HWV 75)	3.03
		Total Running Time	76.12			Total Running Time	72.51

40

elcome to The Sixteen's 40th anniversary album. Can it really be 40 years since a fledgling group of singers gave their first concert in May 1979? To celebrate this milestone in our life, my good friend Robin Tyson has waded through our extensive catalogue and chosen 40 tracks which display the group's incredible versatility.

Whether you are experiencing The Sixteen for the first time or are a regular follower of our work, I am sure you will be surprised by the sheer range of music and styles we have covered over the years. It has actually been quite a revelation to me.

Thank you to everyone involved in The Sixteen for making those 40 years such a joy.

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The Sixteen at 40

Two thoughts top so many about The Sixteen. The first, recalled countless times in reviews and feature articles, concerns its place in a tradition of great British choral singing, unbroken since Tudor times and with roots stretching deep into the medieval past. The second concerns its profound influence on the tradition to which it belongs. The recordings on this album, chosen from the mighty CORO catalogue, reflect the very best of tradition, the transmission from one generation to the next of the sheer pleasure of superlative ensemble singing and the collective knowledge of how it's done. Yet they also tell a story of tradition refreshed and remade.

The Sixteen's ruby anniversary tracklist contains delicacies from the Polish Baroque and the Counter-Reformation sounds of Palestrina and Victoria, exquisite miniatures by Messiaen and Stravinsky and modern masterworks by MacMillan, Pärt and Tavener. There's room for pieces once owned by mammoth amateur choral societies: *Messiah* and *Alexander's Feast*, Bach's *Mass in B minor*, even Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Fauré's *Requiem*. Anglican anthems, a jewel among Victorian partsongs, Allegri's legendary *Miserere*, the music of private devotion and public ritual – parts of a musical mix at once diverse and discerning, matched to The Sixteen's strengths of vibrant sound, immaculate intonation and intelligent musicianship.

Over the past 40 years The Sixteen has helped transform attitudes to choral music, not least by reaching out to new audiences as The Voices of Classic FM, creating red-letter dates in cathedral cities around the UK with its annual Choral Pilgrimage, flying the flag for professional British choirs overseas, and enhancing the international repertoire with such major commissions as James MacMillan's *O bone Jesu* and *Stabat mater*. While the Oxbridge collegiate choral scene remains a rich recruiting ground, The Sixteen has promoted the net-widening process with Genesis Sixteen, a de facto apprenticeship programme designed to nurture the next generation of ace ensemble singers.

The group's readiness to confront convention while preserving past wisdom, and the scale and scope of its repertoire, flow directly from its founder's nature. Harry Christophers was fortunate indeed to be a boy chorister at Canterbury Cathedral and choral scholar at Oxford's Magdalen College, led by choirmasters with minds open to new music, whether freshly made or rescued from dusty archives. Allan Wicks at Canterbury and Bernard Rose at Magdalen belonged to a generation of church musicians raised under the long shadow of the Victorian age. While Magdalen College Choir was known for its unusually wide repertoire, its sound quality remained subpar until Rose, a D-Day veteran and former prisoner of war, arrived as organist and *Informator Choristarum* in 1957. He replaced Magdalen's venerable lay clerks with hand-picked undergraduate choral scholars, and set standards that frequently matched and occasionally surpassed the best on offer from the Cambridge college choirs of King's and St John's.

Harry Christophers joined Rose's choir in the early 1970s and learned about choral discipline and wholehearted musical expression from the plain-speaking Yorkshireman. He also absorbed lasting lessons from David Wulstan, a former Magdalen alto, whose pioneering performances of early Tudor polyphony with the Clerkes of Oxenford set a high bar – and pitch – for others to match. The Sixteen emerged from Magdalen's marriage of tradition and renewal. The group's nucleus was formed in November 1977 for a supposedly one-off concert, given by Christophers and a handful of college friends at the request of Peter Nelson, a regular at Magdalen evensong with a passion for Tudor music. They performed his favourite sacred pieces and did so *sans* corporate name or future plans. The evening's success led to further concerts over the following year and the official birth of The Sixteen, delivered at Magdalen College Chapel on Saturday 5 May 1979, with a programme of works by Mundy, Purcell, Humfrey and Schütz. The freshly named ensemble gave their first London performance a week later at St John's, Smith Square, and soon caught the ear of John Shuttleworth, recent co-founder of Meridian Records, a small independent classical label known for its 'natural sound'.

Meridian booked The Sixteen to record an inspired programme of motets from the Eton Choirbook, the leading source of late 15th-century English sacred music. *Salve Regina*, recorded

in October 1980, proved a revelation. Although the slender Eton Choirbook discography contained an earlier benchmark recorded by the Purcell Consort, The Sixteen's debut album was in a class of its own. Those who bought *Salve Regina* and its 1982 companion discovered music as ornate as the fan-vaulted ceiling of King's College Chapel and pitched almost as high. And what discoveries! Here were works by men named Cornysh and Browne, Lambe and Wylkynson, as English as they come, to compare with the best and strikingly different compositions of their continental contemporaries.

It would have been easy, but almost certainly fatal, for The Sixteen and its conductor to have built their home in the land of late-medieval English Latin church music. Harry Christophers wisely determined not to limit his repertoire choices by time or place. The early Tudors remained a focus of The Sixteen's work in concert and on disc during its first decade but not an obsession. Their discography grew with pioneering recordings of music by Robert Fayrfax, John Taverner and John Sheppard, a reconstruction of Monteverdi's *Vespers for the Feast of Santa Barbara*, Bach's motets, Handel's *Messiah* and *Chandos Anthems*, and an album of Christmas music from medieval and Renaissance Europe. The Symphony of Harmony and Invention, billed today as The Orchestra of The Sixteen, was formed in 1986 for the group's first performance of *Messiah*. Its creation opened doors to fresh repertoire adventures and grand projects at home and overseas.

It's hard to imagine now a time before The Sixteen, when most of the Eton Choirbook's music rested silent in the pages of three great scholarly tomes, when exemplary technical consistency was more dream than reality, and living composers seemed determined to punish choristers with scores fraught with larynx-eroding salvoes of sound. The 40 tracks on this album, music of such ineffable beauty, span compositions from five centuries and more. They offer a sense, too, of The Sixteen's role in shaping choral music's present and creating ideal conditions for its flourishing.

40 CD 1

G.F. HANDEL How excellent thy name (from Saul HWV 53)

After approximately 10 minutes of introduction/overture, we get the idea, enough already, lovely strings, lovely organ blah, blah and then it hits you, the power, the force, the weight of beautiful human voices 'How excellent'. Wonderful on disc and spine-chilling on stage, Handel wrote one of the truly great opening scenes in all of oratorio and brings the choir, orchestra and audience to the most thrilling climax with the final 'Alleluia'. You know you're in for an aural three-Michelinstarred feast thereafter. Once experienced never forgotten.

Christopher Purves, bass

2 James MACMILLAN O Radiant Dawn (from The Strathclyde Motets)

I love the lucid simplicity of Jimmy's piece, it works so well amongst some of the more complex and intricate music we sing. I feel it's almost mantra-like in the repetition of phrases; the opening as a salutation and the closing 'Amens' – so moving in their quiet, still, insistence.

Kim Porter, alto

3 G.P. da PALESTRINA Surge amica mea

This piece of polyphony hits you right between the eyes. For two-and-a-half minutes (depending how enthusiastic the speed) it canters along, slowing only to frame particular sensual moments in the text – this is the Song of Songs after all. The listener is swept along on a wave of persuasion.

Emilia Morton, soprano

4 Tomás Luis de VICTORIA O Domine Jesu Christe

Having been singing since the age of seven it's quite rare to come across a piece which I have yet to sing! Discovering new repertoire is one of the many joys of singing for The Sixteen. This work

is everything one might expect from the genius of Victoria: evocative text setting, vivid harmonic writing and expressive counterpoint. The build-up to '…and given gall to drink' is thrilling! Victoria's faith shines through in his music, and this is no exception.

Daniel Collins, alto

5 Henry PURCELL Remember not, Lord, our offences (Z 50)

I sang this beautiful and very moving anthem in one of the early concerts given by The Sixteen on a bitterly cold February evening in St Margaret's Church, Westminster. Memorable for the warmth and emotional intensity which Harry Christophers brought to conducting this music, I knew I was part of a very special group.

Richard Price, tenor (Founding Member)

6 **Gregorio ALLEGRI** *Miserere* (Evolution version)

Allegri's *Miserere* is undoubtedly one of the best-known pieces we perform and this evolved version is very beautiful and is interesting to both listener and singer. It holds a special place for people, for different reasons. For me, having sung the famous high Cs on numerous occasions, it is the many venues the solo quartet has sung from – an organ loft, a broom cupboard, a stairwell, a bathroom, even a bar (unfortunately not serving at the time)!

Charlotte Mobbs, soprano

7 Claudio MONTEVERDI Deus in adiutorium meum intende (from Vespers of 1610 SV 206)

Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* is, to me, quite simply one of the finest pieces ever written. It is a virtuosic display of breathtaking flair and sensitivity, absolutely jammed with highlights. And it packs a punch right from the off – you get a short intonation and then POW! the spine-tingling, brassy sound of Venice launches you on this wonderful journey. I could never tire of it.

Mark Dobell, tenor

8 Diogo Dias MELGÁS Salve Regina

This track brings back wonderful memories of my early days as a member of The Sixteen. I'm reminded of the team spirit, the friendships formed, and the discovering of music such as this. Listening to this album again put me in mind of many beautiful concerts in Portugal...and Lisbon in particular, including two weeks working on Monteverdi's *Ulysses*, where we immersed ourselves in the culture and food, and almost certainly came back a kilo or two heavier than when we started!

Carolyn Sampson, soprano

9 John TAVENER Hymn for the Dormition of the Mother of God

I remember being very moved by this piece was when I was an 18-year-old choral scholar at Exeter Cathedral. I was struck by the meditative, tranquil mood of the music, especially in the final section's rich texture which has a very low second bass part moving in parallel fifths with the soprano.

Stuart Young, Bass

10 Arvo PÄRT The Deer's Cry

The Deer's Cry is such a memorable piece for a couple of reasons. I was lucky enough to be a member of the inaugural year of Genesis Sixteen and it was one of the first pieces I remember working on and loving. The Deer's Cry Choral Pilgrimage was my first as a regular member of The Sixteen and this piece by Pärt was the highlight of the programme for me.

Edward McMullan, alto

II Robert PEARSALL Lay a garland

Lay a garland is such a magical piece; although the poetry and music are profoundly sad, it is heart-breakingly beautiful. Pearsall expertly builds tension and a sense of mourning as he gradually adds layers creating stunning suspensions across parts. The piece is a wonderful example of 19th-century part-writing at its finest.

Emily Walker, Concerts & Artistic Planning Manager

12 Thomas TALLIS O nata lux

Whenever I hear this stunning little miniature I'm transported back to my first months with The Sixteen where it formed part of the repertoire for the 2005 Choral Pilgrimage as well as a rather eventful tour to the USA! I've listened to it hundreds of times but its simplicity is exquisite and I still stop what I'm doing whenever I hear it.

Cath Edwards, CORO Record Label Manager

13 William BYRD Haec dies

I have sung Byrd's *Haec dies* so many times over the years in services and concerts that I still know the alto line by heart. It is a gem of a piece. Short, but perfectly formed, with a delightful dancing time change for 'Let us rejoice and be glad in it'.

Robin Barda, alto (Founding Member)

[14] William HARRIS Bring us, O Lord God

I love this piece! It has always been a personal favourite ever since I was a chorister at St Paul's, especially as we sang it at my final evensong there. Beautiful text by John Donne, wonderfully rich harmonic textures, and a magical final chord.

George Pooley, tenor

15 G.F. HANDEL Let thy hand be strengthened

(from Coronation Anthem Let thy hand be strengthened HWV 259)

Amongst some of my earliest memories of performing with The Sixteen, *Let thy hand be strengthened* is simply a joy to sing. The slow middle movement contains, for me, one of the most spine-tingling musical moments: the suspension on the first utterance of 'Let mercy and truth go...' Just magical.

Alexandra Kidgell, soprano

16 John SHEPPARD In manus tuas I

Sheppard's music has been a significant part of my life ever since I was introduced to it by David Wulstan and the Clerkes of Oxenford in my student years, around the time that its long overdue revival got going. Boldly unconventional, quirky and distinctive: at other times profoundly serene and searingly beautiful music. Imagine yourself at the evening service of Compline in a candlelit chapel as you hear *In manus tuas Domine*; overnight survival was not a given, then or even now.

Sally Dunkley, soprano (Founding Member)

17 Robert PARSONS Ave Maria

Sitting with my eyes closed, enveloped in the simple but serene polyphony of Parsons' *Ave Maria*, I remember counting my blessings to be working for The Sixteen. The glorious *Ave Maria* seemed to epitomise The Sixteen's mantra of 'taking music back to the venues for which it was written' as the music – with its steady and lush polyphony culminating in its lengthy glorious *'Amen'* – soared up and round the rafters. That was more than a decade ago in early 2008, and The Sixteen's mission of taking this wonderful choral heritage around the length and breadth of the UK remains one of the things I admire most about the group. I heard the Parsons in over 20 of the UK's finest churches and cathedrals and it was the soundtrack to my first year with The Sixteen.

Marie-Sophie Willis, Chief Executive

18 John PLUMMER Tota pulchra es

This gem is one of John Plummer's few surviving compositions. It would seem that even then it was difficult to find a good Plummer! I love singing this music. Somehow its harmonic simplicity is beautifully balanced against its rhythmic complexity. The result is an ethereal and yet earthy music. Enjoy!

Simon Berridge, tenor

Gabriel FAURÉ Sanctus (from Requiem)

In Faure's *Requiem*, the *Sanctus* is a moment of ethereal stillness, and one where the sopranos in particular get to shine – it's a movement I've always loved singing, and being a part of The Sixteen soprano line I felt like one of a chorus of angels, the *'chorus angelorum'* we were singing about! The simplicity of the music, the purity of the vocal line, and the shaping of the text all combine to make this movement one into which I can pour my heart and soul.

Elin Manahan Thomas, soprano

[20] I.S. BACH Gott der Herr ist Sonn' und Schild (from Cantata 79 BWV 79)

This might be Bach's most emphatically and insistently joyous work. 13 independent and virtuosic parts weave a texture so ambitious, so demanding, so richly detailed it overwhelms our ears and minds. The reward, though, is a shared and unadulterated emotional response: elation. I am a convinced (or, at least, contented) humanist, but Bach's musical affirmation of faith not only has me believing in the possibility of God's power and protection, but briefly certain of it.

Joseph Crouch, cello

40 CD 2

☐ **Igor STRAVINSKY** Exaudi orationem meam Domine (from Symphony of Psalms)

My recollection of this piece is that we sang it on one of the group's many tours of the magnificent concert halls and cathedrals of Spain performing it alongside Faure's *Requiem* with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. The singers were in one bus and the orchestra in another but the orchestral bus had the best seat layout at the back for our favourite card game, Contract Whist, which helped to pass the time between venues, so we swapped buses! Needless to say I normally won!

Christopher Royall, alto (Founding Member)

2 Frank MARTIN Sanctus and Benedictus (from Mass for double choir)

Martin was a deeply religious man, brought up in a strictly Calvinist family and, due to this faith (he felt religious expression was a personal communication between Man and God, not for public consumption), this remains his only published, unaccompanied choral work. It is a very sensuous piece and, despite its protestant origins, is very chant-like in places (the *Benedictus* being a prime example). It makes extreme demands on the singers, especially in terms of range (even the alto part has a range of two octaves!), and is thus well suited to The Sixteen, imbued as it is with inherent virtuosity and an especially augmented and voluptuous mezzo-soprano section on this recording!

Rob Macdonald, bass

3 J.S. BACH Kyrie eleison II (from Mass in B minor BWV 232)

After the monumental opening 'Kyrie eleison', and the lyrical, almost joyful, duet 'Christe eleison', Bach moves to stern chromatic counterpoint, with a subject which is not the same, but similar to, B-A-C-H (in modern notation B flat-A-C-B natural) which he used in *The Art of Fugue*. The *Gloria* follows

this *Kyrie* immediately. Bach is a superb dramatist – towards the end of this movement we see the trumpets getting ready, warming up their instruments: bang, into the glorious D major of the *Gloria*!

Alastair Ross, organ & harpsichord

G.P. da PALESTRINA Ave Maria

Apart from The Sixteen, most of my singing is as a Lay Clerk at Westminster Cathedral. Our diet there is composed primarily of plainsong and music dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary – Palestrina's *Ave Maria* combines the two perfectly, inspired from the start by the themes of the plainsong antiphon.

Ian Aitkenhead, alto

5 Thomas TALLIS Miserere nostri

Miserere nostri – 'probably the best piece in the world'.

I love singing this piece. Mark Dobell and I usually sing together on the alto line (sounds much nicer when sung by a tenor...). It's quite challenging to sing as there are a couple of extremely long phrases. Both of us always try to do them in one breath. Next time you come to see us sing this, take a look at Mark and myself and see if you can spot when we both puff out our chests filled with air and then gradually turn blue as we near the end of the phrase...

Jeremy Budd, tenor

6 Henry PURCELL O sing unto the Lord (from O sing unto the Lord Z 44)

This verse anthem contains solo sections written for the bass, the Revd John Gostling. It is evident from other works that he had an exceptional, deep voice so as soloist in this piece the challenge is to sing with as much gravitas as possible while retaining the agility to manoeuvre around the florid, Italianate passages.

Ben Davies, bass

G.F. HANDEL And the glory of the Lord (from Messiah HWV 56)

If there is a conductor's equivalent to the well-timed cover drive, then the gesture that Harry Christophers infallibly delivers as the sopranos reach their climactic top A in *And the glory of the Lord* is it. Easy, graceful and highly effective.

Mark Padmore, tenor

8 Olivier MESSIAEN Cinq Rechants: I

Few professional singers have the opportunity to sing this towering monument of 20th-century music for vocal ensemble even once in a career, let alone several times, and with enough rehearsal time to get inside the challenging harmonic and rhythmic world of this most original of composers. But for The Sixteen's recording, Harry gathered together an ensemble of just such privileged performers, with the added bonus of the special *esprit de corps* that he always fostered right from the group's beginnings. And the juxtaposition of *Cinq Rechants* on the album with Jolivet's *Epithalamion* and Daniel-Lesur's *Le cantique des cantiques*, all written for the ground-breaking Ensemble Marcel Couraud, was a very considerable cherry on the cake!

Jeremy White, bass

9 James MACMILLAN The Gallant Weaver

The importance of James MacMillan's music in the lives of The Sixteen and for Harry and me is unsurpassable. Without his music our world would be a lesser place: thus *The Gallant Weaver* stands out as a firm favourite and was the choice for our son's wedding in 2018.

Veronica Christophers, Trustee

10 Alonso LOBO

Versa est in luctum

Versa est in luctum was written for the obsequies of Philip ll of Spain in 1598. We sang it in San Jerónimo el Real in Madrid without being aware that this was the very church where Philip's funeral had been held. The audience were visibly moved, but we only learned afterwards of its significance to them.

Tim Jones, bass

| Francis POULENC | Sanctus (from Mass in G FP 89)

Poulenc's *Sanctus* is a beguiling mix of glacial purity and visceral passion. The rhythmic pulsing of the text builds up to an emotional outpouring in the *'Hosanna'*, with the top sopranos and tenors pushed to their vocal extremes. The vast spacing between the upper and lower voices creates a sound that is both raw and glorious.

Julie Cooper, soprano

Claudio MONTEVERDI Gloria (from Messa a quattro voci SV 190)

The composer and contemporary of Monteverdi, Agostino Agazzari, wrote in 1607 an invaluable continuo playing treatise. I've always enjoyed this quote:

"The lute in the ensemble should play with nice inventions and diversity, sometimes beating and with sweet repetitions, sometimes with long passagi...And the lutenist should not do as some, who have a swift hand but little knowledge and do nothing else from beginning to end other than tic and tic, which is in truth an evil for the listener."

David Miller, lute & theorbo

13 Heinrich SCHÜTZ Herr, nun lässest du deinen Diener (SWV 432)

The glorious sounds of sackbuts and voices resounding in St Augustine's Church as they celebrate Simeon's recognition of Christ. Can we really have recorded that 20 years ago? This is fine music-making, and I have so many happy memories. I can hear voices of friends who have remained special ever since. We were more carefree then, and had fun. But even so, we and Harry knew we could do a great job bringing this music to life. It's astonishing what The Sixteen has achieved in 40 years. Happy birthday!

James Gilchrist, tenor

[14] Marcin MIELCZEWSKI Benedictio et claritas

Marcin Mielczewski – hardly a household name, but a composer of real quality and one who was a joy to discover as part of our series exploring music of the Polish Baroque. The first chord of *Benedictio et claritas* is a statement of intent, telling us to sit up and listen. The swagger and dancing steps of the instrumental introduction wonderfully set up the majestic impact of the choir's first entry which, somewhat unusually, proves to be a refrain or *ritornello* that reappears after the more intimate, florid solo passages. The textural splendour of the combined forces evokes the sound world of Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, showing how much Mielczewski learned from his Italian forbears.

Eamonn Dougan, bass & Associate Conductor

15 W.A. MOZART Dixit Dominus (from Vespers K 339)

Psalm 110 is the psalm which promises that the Lord will make your enemies your footstool: 'Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.' Oliver Cromwell had a special liking for it. But abstruse theology has reduced the violence to metaphor and made it feel right for Vespers, the sunset celebration. Innumerable composers have had a go at it: Handel, Monteverdi, Scarlatti, Vivaldi (twice), Rachmaninoff and others. There's a bit of Richard Rodgers' version in *The Sound of Music*.

Mozart came to it at a difficult moment. He had failed to make his mark in Paris. His mother had died there. Back in Salzburg he concentrated on his *Vespers* commission but an unmistakable operatic feeling infuses this militant psalm – and gives The Sixteen the opportunity to show off their thunderous side

Anthony Smith CBE, Trustee

Benjamin BRITTEN *Balulalow* (from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28)

I never tire of Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* and it seems to stay fresh and magical every year. I've been lucky to accompany a wide variety of choirs in this wonderful work, but a performance which I treasure was one of my first, with a choir of 'ordinary' schoolchildren from Hastings, directed by a lovely lady called Mary Spreadbury. The children sang their hearts out, they really loved the music, and the lullaby *Balulalow*, with its beautiful, haunting melody and lovely rocking harp accompaniment, alternating minor and major harmonies, was especially poignant for me as I was expecting my first child – who was born at Christmas a fortnight later!

Frances Kelly, harp

17 Howard SKEMPTON Adam lay ybounden

Howard Skempton came to hear us perform his *Adam lay ybounden* at Kings Place, when we sang it countrywide as part of the 2015 Christmas tour. It was a favourite among audience and singers alike for its succinct and whimsical otherworldliness; moreover, we sopranos like it when we nab the tune...

Katy Hill, soprano

Morten LAURIDSEN O magnum mysterium

Morten Lauridsen's O magnum mysterium is a joy to sing and audiences have absolutely loved it when it's been in our Christmas concert programme. It has beautiful long lines and sumptuous harmonies which give it a warmth and romanticism that is perfect for the season – a gorgeous hug of a piece!

Kirsty Hopkins, soprano

Benjamin BRITTEN This little Babe (from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28)

I love the energy and urgent rhythm of Britten's setting of Robert Southwell's call to arms. Both men endured their own wars: Britten's in 1942, and Southwell ministered the Catholic faith during the English Reformation and was killed for it. Shakespeare also quoted Southwell.

Dame Sarah Connolly, alto

G.F. HANDEL Your voices tune (from Alexander's Feast HWV 75)

Alexander's Feast is an incredible tribute to the emotional power of music. I remember playing it for the first time in the Sheldonian Theatre with The Sixteen in 2006 and being deeply moved by this vividly colourful work. It's easy to see why this is one of Handel's most enduring works as he takes us on a journey from sorrow and devotion to fierce revenge and then, ultimately, divine joy.

Sarah Sexton, violin & Leader

Our enormous thanks go to the following people who contributed to the fabulous recordings on this album:

Susan Addison	M.44h D
o dodiii i i dadioo ii	Matthew Brook
Ian Aitkenhead	David Brooker
Ildiko Allen	Zoe Brookshaw
Emma Alter	Sally Bruce-Payne
Siobhán Armstrong	Jeremy Budd
Jonathan Arnold	Michael Bundy
Caroline Ashton	Peter Burrows
Alex Ashworth	Margaret Cameron
Paul Badley	Andrew Carwood
Philip Bainbridge	Teresa Caudle
Sophie Barber	Philip Cave
Robin Barda	Harry Christophers
Benjamin Bayl	Fiona Clarke
Rachel Beckett	David Clegg
Lisa Beckley	Roger Cleverdon
Katarina Bengston	Jane Coe
Simon Berridge	Daniel Collins
David Bevan	Jane Compton
Jeremy Birchall	Sarah Connolly
Simon Birchall	Gary Cooper
David Blackadder	Julie Cooper
Robin Blaze	Marc Ashley Cooper
John Bowen	Joshua Cooter
Michael Brain	David Cox
Emma Brain-Gabbott	Libby Crabtree

Graham Cracknell Patrick Craig Joseph Crouch Laurence Cummings Philip Daggett Huw Daniel Angus Davidson Grace Davidson Ben Davies Robert Davies Simon Davies Ruth Dean Catherine Denley Matthew Dixon Mark Dobell Eamonn Dougan Iulia Dovle Claire Duff Sally Dunkley Stephanie Dver Richard Earle Daniel Edgar James Ellis Julian Empett

Robert Evans

Robert Farley	Lucinda Houghton	Duncan MacKenzie	Helen Orsler	Jane Rogers	Hilary Stock
Peter Fender	Thomas Hunt	Neil MacKenzie	Graham O'Sullivan	Alastair Ross	Julian Stocker
Cherry Forbes	John Hutchins	Amanda MacNamara	Rebecca Outram	David Roy	William Thorpe
Adrian France	Hugo Hymas	Elin Manahan Thomas	Mark Padmore	Christopher Royall	Hannah Tibell
Charles Fullbrook	Utako Ikeda	Ruth Massey	Nicholas Parle	Carolyn Sampson	Claire Tomlin
Miranda Fulleylove	Annette Isserlis	Michael McCarthy	Jean Paterson	Claire Sansom	Caroline Trevor
Christine Garratt	Sally Jackson	Rory McCleery	Clare Penkey	Stephen Saunders	Robin Tyson
Charles Gibbs	Robin Jeffrey	Sophie McKenna	Julian Perkins	Anneke Scott	William Unwin
James Gilchrist	Nicola Jenkin	Hannah McLaughlin	Christopher Pigram	Marion Scott	Helen Verney
Andrew Giles	Robert Johnson	Edward McMullan	George Pooley	Imogen Seth-Smith	Matthew Vine
Miles Golding	Andrea Jones	Claire Mera-Nelson	Kim Porter	Sarah Sexton	Joseph Walters
Jane Gordon	Rebecca Jones	Rebecca Miles	Katie Pringle	Zoë Shevlin	Ian Watson
Helen Groves	Simon Jones	Deborah Miles-Johnson	Ruth Provost	Nigel Short	Andrew Watts
Natanya Hadda	Stephen Jones	David Miller	William Purefoy	Alison Smart	Henrietta Wayne
Camilla Harris	Tim Jones	William Missin	Christopher Purves	Angus Smith	Daniel Weitz
Steven Harrold	Martin Kelly	Charlotte Mobbs	Eligio Luis Quinteiro	Joy Smith	Jeremy West
Micaela Haslam	Frances Kelly	Sarah Moffatt	Noel Rainbird	Pauline Smith	Emily White
Rosemary Hatterell	Nicola-Jane Kemp	Roger Montgomery	Tom Raskin	Jan Spencer	Jeremy White
Stephanie Heichelheim	Alexandra Kidgell	Amy Moore	Jonathan Rees	Susanna Spicer	Andrew Wicks
Katie Heller	William Knight	Emilia Morton	Valerie Reid	Siona Spillett	Sioned Williams
Rachel Helliwell	Carys Lane	Nicholas Mulroy	Walter Reiter	David Staff	Ian Wilson
Rebecca Hickey	Catherine Latham	Iwona Muszynska	Helen Roberts	Francis Steele	David Woodcock
Alison Hill	Michael Lees	Abigail Newman	Nicholas Robertson	Crispian Steele-Perkins	Adam Woolf
Katy Hill	Sarah Leonard	Philip Newton	Anthony Robson		Stuart Young
Lynne Hirst	Nia Lewis	Paul Nicholson			
Benedict Hoffnung	Matthew Long	Paul Nieman	BBC Pl	nilharmonic, Academy of St Martin in	the Fields
Jimmy Holliday	Tim Lyons	Jane Norman	Mark Brov	vn, Mike Clements, Andrew Connolly	, Mike Hatch,
Kirsty Hopkins	Robert Macdonald	Ellen O'Dell	Anthony Hov	vell, Andrew Keener, Julian Millard, Ra	aphaël Mouterde

tracks are taken from the following recordings by The Sixteen available on CORO:

CD1			CD2	
COR16103	Handel: Saul	1	COR16013	à la Gloire de Dieu
COR16096	James MacMillan: Miserere	2	COR16029	Frank Martin
COR16133	Palestrina Volume 6	3	COR16044	J.S. Bach: Mass in B minor
COR16001	The Flowering of Genius	4	COR16091	Palestrina Volume 1
COR16069	Bright Orb of Harmony	5	COR16140	The Deer's Cry
COR16118	The Queen of Heaven	6	COR16163	Purcell: Royal Welcome Songs for King Charles II
COR16126	Monteverdi: Vespers of 1610	7	COR16062	Handel: Messiah
COR16020	A Golden Age	_		La Jeune France
COR16015	Tavener: Ikon of Light	9		Poetry in Music
COR16140	The Deer's Cry	10	COR16128	Flight of Angels
COR16134	Poetry in Music	11	COR16149	Francis Poulenc
COR16111	An Immortal Legacy	12	COR16160	Monteverdi: Messa a quattro voci et
COR16077	Ceremony and Devotion			Vol. II
COR16134	Poetry in Music	13	COR16036	Schütz: Musikalische Exequien
COR16066	Handel: Coronation Anthems	14	COR16153	Marcin Mielczewski
COR16119	The Voice of the Turtle Dove	15	COR16057	Fauré: Requiem
COR16056	Treasures of Tudor England	16	COR16034	Britten: A Ceremony of Carols
COR16002	The Voices of Angels	17	COR16146	Song of the Nativity
COR16057	Fauré: Requiem	18	COR16146	Song of the Nativity
COR16120	J.S. Bach:	19	COR16034	Britten: A Ceremony of Carols
	Lutheran Masses Vol. II	20	COR16028	Handel: Alexander's Feast
	COR16103 COR16096 COR16133 COR16001 COR16069 COR16118 COR16020 COR16015 COR160140 COR16134 COR16111 COR16077 COR16134 COR16056 COR16056 COR16057	COR16103 Handel: Saul COR16096 James MacMillan: Miserere COR16133 Palestrina Volume 6 COR16001 The Flowering of Genius COR16069 Bright Orb of Harmony COR16118 The Queen of Heaven COR16126 Monteverdi: Vespers of 1610 COR16020 A Golden Age COR16015 Tavener: Ikon of Light COR16140 The Deer's Cry COR16134 Poetry in Music COR16111 An Immortal Legacy COR16077 Ceremony and Devotion COR16134 Poetry in Music COR16134 Poetry in Music COR16135 The Voice of the Turtle Dove COR16056 Treasures of Tudor England COR16002 The Voices of Angels COR16057 Fauré: Requiem COR16120 J.S. Bach:	COR16103 Handel: Saul 1 COR16096 James MacMillan: Miserere 2 COR16133 Palestrina Volume 6 3 COR16001 The Flowering of Genius 4 COR16009 Bright Orb of Harmony 5 COR16118 The Queen of Heaven 6 COR16126 Monteverdi: Vespers of 1610 7 COR16020 A Golden Age 8 COR16015 Tavener: Ikon of Light 9 COR16140 The Deer's Cry 10 COR16134 Poetry in Music 11 COR16017 Ceremony and Devotion 12 COR16014 Poetry in Music 13 COR16014 Poetry in Music 13 COR16015 The Voice of the Turtle Dove 16 COR16019 The Voice of the Turtle Dove 16 COR16056 Treasures of Tudor England 16 COR16002 The Voices of Angels 17 COR16120 J.S. Bach: 19	COR16103 Handel: Saul I COR16013 COR16096 James MacMillan: Miserere I COR16029 COR16133 Palestrina Volume 6 I COR16029 COR16001 The Flowering of Genius I COR16091 COR16069 Bright Orb of Harmony I COR16140 COR16118 The Queen of Heaven I COR16163 COR16126 Monteverdi: Vespers of 1610 I COR16062 COR16020 A Golden Age II COR16023 COR16015 Tavener: Ikon of Light I COR16023 COR16140 The Deer's Cry III COR16134 COR16134 Poetry in Music III COR16128 COR16134 Poetry in Music III COR16160 COR16077 Ceremony and Devotion III COR16160 COR16034 Poetry in Music III COR16153 COR16036 Handel: Coronation Anthems III COR16153 COR16056 Treasures of Tudor England III COR16057 COR16002 The Voices of Angels III COR16146 COR16057 Fauré: Requiem III COR16034

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

Harry Christophers stands among today's great champions of choral music. In partnership with The Sixteen, the ensemble he founded almost 40 years ago, he has set benchmark standards for the performance of everything from late medieval polyphony to important new works by contemporary composers. His international influence is supported by more than 150 recordings and has been enhanced by his work as Artistic Director of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society and as guest conductor worldwide.

The Sixteen's soundworld, rich in tonal variety and expressive nuance, reflects Christophers' determination to create a vibrant choral instrument from the blend of adult professional singers. Under his leadership The Sixteen has established its annual Choral Pilgrimage to cathedrals, churches and other UK venues, created the Sacred Music series for BBC television, and developed an acclaimed periodinstrument orchestra. Highlights of their recent work include an Artist Residency at Wigmore Hall, a large-scale tour of Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610, and the world premiere of Sir James MacMillan's Stabat mater; their future projects, meanwhile, comprise a new series devoted to Purcell and an ongoing survey of Handel's dramatic oratorios.

salmi



Harry has served as Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society since 2008. He was also appointed as Principal Guest Conductor of the City of Granada Orchestra in 2008 and has worked as guest conductor with, among others, the London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the Deutsches Kammerphilharmonie. Christophers' extensive commitment to opera has embraced productions for English National Opera and Lisbon Opera and work with the Granada, Buxton and Grange Park festivals.

He was appointed a CBE in the Queen's 2012 Birthday Honours for his services to music. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, as well as the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has Honorary Doctorates in Music from the Universities of Leicester, Canterbury Christ Church and Northumbria.



Whether performing a simple medieval hymn or expressing the complex musical and emotional language of a contemporary choral composition, The Sixteen does so with qualities common to all great ensembles. Tonal warmth, rhythmic precision and immaculate intonation are

clearly essential to the mix. But it is the courage and intensity with which The Sixteen makes music that speak above all to so many people.

The Sixteen gave its first concert in 1979 under the direction of Founder and Conductor Harry Christophers CBE. Their pioneering work since has made a profound impact on the performance of choral music and attracted a large new audience, not least as 'The Voices of Classic FM' and through BBC television's *Sacred Music* series.



The voices and period-instrument players of The Sixteen are at home in over five centuries of music, a breadth reflected in their annual *Choral Pilgrimage* to Britain's great cathedrals and sacred spaces, regular appearances at the world's leading concert halls, and award-winning recordings for The Sixteen's CORO and other labels.

Recent highlights include the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat mater*, commissioned for The Sixteen by the Genesis Foundation, an ambitious ongoing series of Handel oratorios, and a debut tour of China.