



resonus

Snow Queens

JUICE VOCAL ENSEMBLE



Snow Queens

Juice Vocal Ensemble

Anna Snow *soprano*
Sarah Dacey *soprano*
Kerry Andrew *alto*

About Juice Vocal Ensemble:

'The 21st century's answer to the Swingles or the King's Singers'
The Times

'[...] the variety and virtuosity are astonishing, and rewarding'
BBC Music Magazine

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Snow Queens

Every now and again, Juice would get asked to perform at a new music scene Christmas party; we always struggled for repertoire that was firstly suitable for three female voices as opposed to children's and secondly that didn't include a harp or piano accompaniment. The 'Snow Queens' project was conceived to fill that void. As well as commissioning a new piece from Emily Hall in 2015, we started a yearly call for works for pieces with a wintry theme from composers of any age from around the world. It's been a fantastic way of meeting new composers, of building new working relationships and an absolute pleasure and a privilege to be able to include five of their pieces here. Other works have been written especially for us by composers who we've befriended and whose work we've admired for many years. It has also provided Juice with the perfect excuse to indulge ourselves in creating new arrangements of our personal winter favourites.

Kerry Andrew (b. 1978)

1. Apples, Plums, Cherries

This was originally for SATB choir (published by Oxford University Press as *The Cherry-Tree Carol* in their *Oxford Book of Flexible Carols*); it was a pleasure to re-arrange it for Juice, with a light Swedish kulning influence in the yelping section at the end. (KA)

Ah, my swete husband, wold ye telle to me
What tre is yon standynge upon yon hill?
'Forsoth, Mary, it is clepyd a chery tre,
In time of yer ye myght fede you y on y fylle.'

Joseph took Mary to the orchard wood
Where there were apples, plums, cherries,
as red as any blood.

Then bespoke Mary so meek and so mild,
'Get me some cherries, for my body's
bound with child.'

Joseph he's taken these words so unkind,
'Let them get you cherries, Mary,
that did your body bind.'

Mary said to the cherry tree, 'bow down to my knee,
That I may pluck cherries, by one, two and three.'

The uppermost sprig then bowed down to her knee:
'Thus you may see, Joseph, these cherries are for me.'

Mary got cherries by one, two and three.
Mary got cherries for her young son and she.

Mary plucked a cherry as red as the blood.
Mary went home with her heavy load.

Trad. collected by Cecil Sharp, William Sandys, Henry Ramsden Bramley and John Stainer, and 'Mystery VIII' of the Coventry Mysteries, arranged and adapted by Kerry Andrew.

David Breslin (b. 1980)

2. **Verdandi**

A hand-tinted setting for Kerry Andrew's bluish-yellow poem... The interlocking, 'ne'er the twain shall meet' rhythm is modelled on the drumming of the Dagomba tribe in West Africa. The ornamentation is inspired by South Indian singing.

Urdr is a poem based on the three Nordic fate goddesses, the Norns, who hover at the cradle of a newborn child; Urd is the child's past, Verdandi their present and Skuld their future. (DB)

i am the sundanced day
i lace the lake with figures-of-eights
and spin in breezes hung with song
i braid harp wires into hammocks
knit show-shoes from a thousand trees
and make the ribboning rivers converse

we weave your breath
you breath our thread
you tread our web
we speed your death

Verdandi, taken from Urdr, by Kerry Andrew

David Lancaster (b.1960)

3. **Confound Winter**

with anxious clouds of breath –
watch for fog on steps

hide under a sky crosshatched
with trees – naked creak and echo
Far from the frozen eye of trains

melt occasional snow

toast the idyll night
drink up the luxury – wake
To find a world reduced to shapes
covered in white

how long will this season survive –
love monumental with cold

more feverish than spring

Tess Kincaid (b. 1956)

Traditional arr. by Anna Snow (b. 1980)

4. **Lully, Lulla (Coventry Carol)**

Lully, Lulla or the Coventry Carol dates from

the sixteenth century where it appeared as part of a mystery play, sung by despairing women immediately after King Herod had ordered that their babies be slaughtered. My arrangement was written in 2014: Juice had been invited by *Sinfini Music* to film a song to be released in time for Christmas. We had recently performed in the hugely atmospheric Dennis Severs' House in Spitalfields, London, and were very keen to return and film there. In the fading Autumn light with a backdrop of candle-lit paintings, the haunting lullaby Lully, Lulla seemed a perfect fit. (AS)

Lully, lulla
Thou little tiny child
By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do
For to preserve this day
This poor youngling for whom we do sing:
By, by, lully, lullay.

Herod the King in his raging
Charged he hath this day
His men of might in his own sight
All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor child, for thee!
And ever morn and say
For thy parting neither say nor sing:
By, by, lully lullay.

The Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors

Benjamin Tassie (b.1987)
5. **Sun**

Another hazy afternoon
jugglers in the square
in yellow tights and yellow leaves
cover the paving stones.
A massive raspberry balloon –
I hang over the town and fall
into a hissing sea of flame
and then I stop and call your name:
Come faithful Winter, come cold.

Cover my face and let me sleep
on a low forgotten shelf.
Take your turn around the town.
Chill the air and crack the pipe.
Lift each collar round each face.
Let the music ring out clear.
Let fires blaze in every grate.
Cut the holly. Fill your plate.
Come faithful Winter, come cold.

Just when they think me gone for good,
the ground as hard as any stone,
the car won't start, the bird won't sing,
the old complaining of their joints,
the pavement slippery with ice,
one day that ends before it starts
such a shaft of light I'll throw
but until that glorious hour,
Come faithful Winter, come cold.

*Text from The Sun Looks Forward to Winter
by Annie Freud (b. 1948)*

Tarik O'Regan (b. 1978)

6. Tell Me

'Tell Me' is a new arrangement of the first movement from *Now fatal change*. My original work was written in 2012 for solo violin and countertenor and sets the poem *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation* by Nahum Tate. The same text was set by Henry Purcell and published in 1693 as *Tell me, some pitying angel*. (T O'R)

Tell me, some pitying angel, quickly say,
Where does my soul's sweet darling stay,
In tiger's, or more cruel Herod's way?

Nahum Tate (1652–1715)

Phil Maguire (b. 1989)

7. /SOUCH/DRON/HUM/

An aimless walk through an empty landscape.
Deathly still, freezing air; snow crunching
underfoot; snowstorm in the distance.
Ghosts of winter drift, sway, surrounding
and slowly consuming the listener. (PM)

Words

Souch – the sound of the wind; a long breeze
Dron – Drone; often referring to bagpipes
Wheesk – creak softly; footsteps in snow
Dreich – gloomy, oppressive weather
Cailleach – Celtic Goddess of Winter

Objects

Manipulate these in any way, in order to
make quiet, crunching sounds. Like footsteps
on snow, or melting ice:

Aluminium foil
Tracing paper
Bubble wrap
Packing peanuts in a small cardboard box
Pine cones

Trad. arranged by Kerry Andrew

8. hollyberry song (Sans Day Carol)

The 'Sans Day Carol', or the 'St. Day Carol', is
really a spring carol, though shares similarities
with 'The Holly and The Ivy'. My favourite
version is by The Watsons on their
1965 album *Frost and Fire*. (KA)

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who was wrapped up in silk:
And Mary she bore Jesus our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood,
it was the holly.

Holly! Holly! Holly!
And the first tree that's in the greenwood,
it was the holly!

Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died on the cross
And Mary she bore Jesus our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood,
it was the holly.

Holly! Holly!...

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal,
And Mary she bore Jesus, who died for us all:
And Mary she bore Jesus our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood,
it was the holly.

Holly! Holly!...

Now the holly bears a berry, as blood it is red,
Then trust we our Saviour, who rose from the dead
And Mary she bore Jesus our Saviour for to be,
And the first tree that's in the greenwood,
it was the holly.

Holly! Holly!...

Thomas Campion (1567–1620)

arr. Sarah Dacey (b. 1979)

9. Cold Nights Freeze Me Dead

Juice often get asked whether we sing
'early' music. When we first started out,
we did try it and just found that it didn't
sit right with us vocally or musically. I'm
always on the look out for potential material
to adapt and arrange though and discovered
this song quite by chance. The lyrics are so
unusually creepy and morose.

Shall I come, sweet Love, to thee
When the evening beams are set?
Shall I not excluded be?
Will you find no feigned let?

Let me not, for pity, more
Tell the long hours at your door.

Who can tell what thief or foe
In the covert of the night,
For his prey will work my woe,
Or through wicked foul despite?
So may I die unredressed
Ere my long love be possessed.

But to let such dangers pass,
Which a lover's thoughts disdain,
Tis' enough in such a place,
To attend love's joys in vain.
Do not mock me in thy bed,
While those cold nights freeze me dead.

*Music & Words from Shall I Come, Sweet Love
to Thee by Thomas Campion, arranged and
adapted by Sarah Dacey (b. 1979)*

Chris Warner (b. 1976)

10. **Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind**
Shakespeare's *As You Like It* is a play whose
overall theme deals with familial injustice,
and one of its most famous songs 'Blow, blow
thou winter wind' is indeed a bitter examination
of the hurt and wrongs done to us by our
nearest and dearest: the pain and misery of
harsh winter weather is nothing compared
to the ingratitude, feigned love and cruelty
of our friends. Given this context, the ironic
refrain, 'this life is so jolly', could be imagined
coming from the mouth of someone who,
in their despair, has taken to the bottle. It

will therefore come as no surprise that this particular setting sees the performers taking solace in playing, clutching, chinking and ultimately consuming the contents of their assorted (tuned) wine and beer bottles. (CW)

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly...

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

Billy Edd Wheeler (b. 1932), arr. Sarah Dacey
11. **Winter Sky**

I used to love watching Judy Collins perform on television when I was little. I thought she was so glamorous and this song was one of my favourites. (SD)

Out under the winter sky
Out under the winter sky
Stars come trembling on my eye
Stars to tremble my eye

And I feel like someone's gonna die
And I feel like someone's gonna die
I feel like someone's gonna die
Hand me wings for to fly

High is heaven in early morn
High is heaven in early morn
Men lie sleeping in beds that are warm
Sleep in beds that are warm

And I feel like someone's being born
And I feel like someone's being born
I feel like someone's being born
Tells my soul not to moan

Billy Edd Wheeler

Alison Willis (b. 1971)
12. **The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver**

"Son," said my mother,
When I was knee-high,
"You've need of clothes to cover you,
And not a rag have I.

"There's nothing in the house
To make a boy breeches,
Nor shears to cut a cloth with
Nor thread to take stitches.

"There's nothing in the house
But a loaf-end of rye,
And a harp with a woman's head
Nobody will buy,"
And she began to cry.

That was in the early fall.
When came the late fall,
"Son," she said, "the sight of you
Makes your mother's blood crawl,—

"Little skinny shoulder-blades
Sticking through your clothes!
And where you'll get a jacket from
God above knows.

"It's lucky for me, lad,
Your daddy's in the ground,
And can't see the way I let
His son go around!"
And she made a queer sound.

That was in the late fall.
When the winter came,
I'd not a pair of breeches
Nor a shirt to my name.

I couldn't go to school,
Or out of doors to play.
And all the other little boys
Passed our way.

"Son," said my mother,
"Come, climb into my lap,
And I'll chafe your little bones
While you take a nap."

And, oh, but we were silly
For half an hour or more,
Me with my long legs
Dragging on the floor,

A-rock-rock-rocking
To a mother-goose rhyme!
Oh, but we were happy
For half an hour's time!

But there was I, a great boy,
And what would folks say
To hear my mother singing me
To sleep all day,
In such a daft way?

Men say the winter
Was bad that year;
Fuel was scarce,
And food was dear.

A wind with a wolf's head
Howled about our door,
And we burned up the chairs
And sat on the floor.

All that was left us
Was a chair we couldn't break,
And the harp with a woman's head
Nobody would take,
For song or pity's sake.

The night before Christmas
I cried with the cold,
I cried myself to sleep
Like a two-year-old.

And in the deep night
I felt my mother rise,
And stare down upon me
With love in her eyes.

I saw my mother sitting
On the one good chair,
A light falling on her
From I couldn't tell where,

Looking nineteen,
And not a day older,
And the harp with a woman's head
Leaned against her shoulder.

Her thin fingers, moving
In the thin, tall strings,
Were weav-weav-weaving
Wonderful things.

Many bright threads,
From where I couldn't see,
Were running through the harp-strings
Rapidly,

And gold threads whistling
Through my mother's hand.
I saw the web grow,
And the pattern expand.

She wove a child's jacket,
And when it was done
She laid it on the floor
And wove another one.

She wove a red cloak
So regal to see,
"She's made it for a king's son,"
I said, "and not for me."
But I knew it was for me.

She wove a pair of breeches
Quicker than that!
She wove a pair of boots
And a little cocked hat.

She wove a pair of mittens,
She wove a little blouse,
She wove all night
In the still, cold house.

She sang as she worked,
And the harp-strings spoke;
Her voice never faltered,
And the thread never broke.
And when I awoke,—

There sat my mother
With the harp against her shoulder
Looking nineteen
And not a day older,

A smile about her lips,
And a light about her head,
And her hands in the harp-strings
Frozen dead.

And piled up beside her
And toppling to the skies,
Were the clothes of a king's son,
Just my size.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950)

Emily Hall (b. 1978)
13. 4.05

This commission was generously supported
by the Britten-Pears Foundation and the
RVW Trust.

4.05 is about the shortest day of the year in
London and a break up. Words by Polish
writer Agnieszka Dale

My day ends at four-oh-five
I see the first star
(Maybe Venus?)
So early! In the dark sky

My day ends at four-oh-five
I blow you a kiss
(Do you still love me?)
Let's try; let's have a bath

My day ends at four-oh-five
You already had two showers
(Why two, why?)
And a long, long bath that night

My day ends at four-oh-five
There is no hot water left
(Who is it?)
But I'd rather not, ask not, not ask

My day ends at four-oh-five
You pass me a towel with stars
(Which is Venus?)
Your palm tree towel already packed

My day ends at four-oh-five
I close my eyes
(I have no questions)
I try not to slam them too hard

My day ends at four-oh-five
I'm still lucky to have Venus
(What time is it?)
Sky's wide open thighs don't lie

My day ends at four-oh-five
Venus gives me her lipstick
(Chanel Rouge Coco)
With her lipstick I can both die and not die

My day ends at four-oh-five
I don't speak to any men now
(Men all hurt)
I hibernate, I scream, I count

My day ends at four-oh-five
A few stars to choose from
(Hello Pluto)
Kind and handsome at four-oh-nine

Text taken from 4.05 by Agnieszka Dale (b. 1975)

Traditional English, arr. by Sarah Dacey

14. Down in Yon Forest

One of my favourite winter tunes has always been Britten's *Corpus Christi Carol*. I was introduced to it whilst singing in church choirs as a teenager and later came to love the Jeff Buckley version. The original folk tune is actually a relatively recent discovery for me and with so many fantastic arrangements available already, I struggled to see how I might create a new version for Juice. I eventually just improvised on the melody until I found myself a way in...

Down in yon forest there stands a hall,
The bells of paradise I hear them ring,
It's covered all over with purple and pall,
And I love my Lord Jesus above anything.

A knight there lies upon a bed,
The bells of paradise I hear them ring,
All scarlets the colour that over it spread,
And I love my Lord Jesus above anything.

Now round the bed there grows a thorn,
The bells of paradise I hear them ring,
The blooms its white blossom the day he was born,
And I love my Lord Jesus above anything.

Under that bed there runs a flood,
The bells of paradise I hear them ring,
One half it runs water, the other runs blood,
And I love my Lord Jesus above anything.

And over that place the moon shines bright,
The bells of paradise I hear them ring,
To tell that our Saviour was born this night,
And I love my Lord Jesus above anything.

Traditional English

Simon Speare (b. 1962)

15. Christmas in England

A 'How to Write for Juice' workshop delivered by the group for my composition students at the Royal College of Music Junior Department last year proved to be so inspiring that I had a go at writing a demonstration piece myself the following day (something I always try to do when setting students a task). *Christmas in England* was the result. The piece was a gentle response to Brexit and the climate of Little Englander parochialism and creeping xenophobia that seemed to be permeating the country in the winter of 2017. I kept hearing about a cosy, bureaucracy-free former England, where everyone could leave their front doors open and there was no waiting at the doctor's. In this happy place at Christmas, families sang carols joyously around a table groaning with meat and trimmings (accompanied by the family pianist). This is as far from any reality as are the snow-filled images on Christmas cards representing the first Christmas in the (far from snowy) Middle East, where, in fact a young, poor Semitic family soon to seek asylum in a neighbouring land, sought refuge. I'm afraid Christmas in England is now often a time for rain, indigestion, overspending, alcohol

misuse and arguments in a land unwelcoming to today's asylum seekers. So while traditional musical responses to Christmas such as bells, carol singing and a comforting G major tonality are evoked, the piece has a slight chill and the occasional unsettling surprise within, as the echoing bells of the opening turn into echoes of increasing isolation. (SS)

Ding, dong, ding, dong bell.
It's Christmas in England
And there is no snow,
Just like the Holy Land long ago.

No snow, no snow.
It's Christmas Eve in Engerland,
Mid-winter's not deep.
The family are tetchy, the children can't sleep.

Sleep, sleep, weep.
We wake up in England
On Christmas day,
And the Holy Land is far, far, far away.

It's Christmas in England,
It's Christmas in England,
Christmas in England,
Far, far away,
Far, far away.

Simon Speare

Bernard Hughes (b. 1974)

16. The winter it is past

The winter it is past is an arrangement, made by the composer specially for Juice, of his 2014 setting of a bleakly beautiful poem by Robert Burns (1759–1796). Dating from 1788 it describes the end of a love affair in terms of the passing of the seasons. The musical setting uses a folk-like melody within a slightly lopsided 5/4 time signature

The winter it is past, and the summer comes at last
And the small birds, they sing on ev'ry tree;
Now ev'ry thing is glad, while I am very sad,
Since my true love is parted from me.

The rose upon the breer, by the waters running clear,
May have charms for the linnet or the bee;
Their little loves are blest, and their little hearts at rest,
But my true love is parted from me.

Robert Burns (1759–1796)

Thanks to the Britten Pears Foundation and the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust for funding our commission of Emily Hall's new work. Thanks to Aubrey Botsford for his donation, Morag Galloway for the photos, Robin T. Hatton-Gore of Shoreditch Church, London for his support and Adam Binks of Resonus Classics. Also many thanks to the PRS Foundation's The Open Fund for Music Creators to enable us to record this album.

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Juice Vocal Ensemble

Juice Vocal Ensemble ('The 21st century's answer to the Swingles or the King's Singers' – *The Times*) are at the forefront of the UK's experimental/classical scene, performing new vocal music which draws on world music, jazz, folk, pop, improvisation and theatre. They have had new music written for them by Anna Meredith, Gavin Bryars, Mica Levi, Errollyn Wallen, Gabriel Jackson, beatboxer Shlomo and folk artist Jim Moray. They have featured on BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. In 2011, they made their US debut with concerts in New York and at the famed SXSW Festival in Austin, Texas. In 2007, they were the first UK prize winners in the history of the internationally-renowned Tampere Vocal Festival.

Juice's debut album *Songspin* (Nonclassical, 2011) won an international Independent Music Award for Best Contemporary Classical Album in 2012. In 2014 they released *Laid Bare: Love Songs* (Nonclassical), their second album of love songs and anti-love songs, which features originals and creative covers. Their third album, *Sliding The Same Way* was a collaboration with innovative singer-

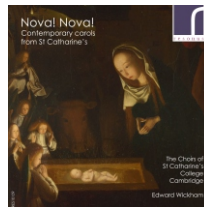
songwriter David Thomas Broughton (Song by Toad, 2014).

Juice regularly commission and premiere new works, and collaborate widely: recent projects have included performing Hannah Kendall's new opera, *The Knife of Dawn* at The Roundhouse; premiering a work about the female welders of London's bridges in the Bascule Chambers of Tower Bridge; and singing about the legalities of copyright on BBC Radio 3's *The Verb*. Their music has been choreographed to by Maurice Causey from the Netherlands Dans Theatre; they devised their own live vocal score to the 1916 film *The Danger Girl* (BFI Southbank, Latitude Festival, King's Place with the Bird's Eye View Film Festival); performed live for a London College of Fashion Graduate Show; and have worked with internationally-renowned beatboxers Shlomo and Beardyman.

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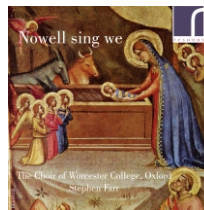


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Recorded in St Hilda's Church, Sherburn, North Yorkshire on 26–28 July 2017 & 17 January 2018

Producer, engineer & editor: Adam Binks

Session Photography © Resonus Limited

Recorded at 24-bit/96kHz resolution

Cover image: Morag Galloway

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