

Welcome to you all, from the Damon Singers. We are a choir from Chesham, and have been performing for more than 50 years (well, the Choir has - with our grandfathers and grandmothers in it, mostly!). We love venturing outside our “patch”, as we are doing tonight, and introducing ourselves to a wider audience. It is a pleasure to be sharing some of our favourite music with you, and helping raise funds for Sharon International Ministries.

## PROGRAMME

### All Creatures Now *John Bennet (c 1575 – 1614)*

To commemorate the Diamond Jubilee we include in this concert two pieces from a collection of madrigals published in 1601 in honour of the first Elizabeth. The ‘Triumphs of Oriana’ contain 25 pieces by 23 composers all ending with the refrain “Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana: Long Live Fair Oriana”. This celebratory piece is perhaps the best-known composition of John Bennet, who wrote music ranging from psalm settings to comic songs and dialogues.

### Im Walde

### Lerchengesang

*Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809–1847)*

These come from the two sets of ‘Six Songs to be sung outside’ which Mendelssohn wrote in the 1830s (Opp. 41 and 48). In typical Romantic mood, the texts tell of the poet’s longing to be as free as the birds in the forest, and of the lark which flies up to the sun as it sings, taking the writer with it.

Reading: Patrick Lunt

### Silent Noon *Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)*

Soprano solo: Helen Baker

This classic English song was composed in 1904 with words from 6 sonnets by Dante Gabriel Rossetti entitled the House of Life.

### Le Baylère *Trad arr Goff Richards*

This is perhaps the most famous of the Songs of the Auvergne, collected and originally arranged by Joseph Canteloube. The ‘bayle’ was the shepherd chosen to look after the flocks in the common pastures and Baylère his song. Canteloube recounts how he first heard this gorgeous melody sung by a shepherdess to a distant shepherd in the calm of the high peaks during summer twilight: “I am coming to find you...” This arrangement was penned originally for the King’s Singers.

**Blue Moon** Richard Rogers/Lorenz Hart arr David Blackwell  
A Rogers and Hart standard from 1934 - and a case of love at first sight.

### Tombeau sur la Mort de M. Comte de Logy

*Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1687-1750)*

Guitar solo: Simon Pearce

Weiss was a renowned baroque lutenist and contemporary of J.S. Bach. His magnificent Tombeaux were written for the 13 course lute, transcribed here for guitar by John Duarte.

### Sunburst *Andrew York*

Guitar solo: Simon Pearce

Andrew York is a contemporary American guitarist who has an extensive background in folk, jazz and classical guitar. His compositions reflect an important convergence of popular folk and rock idioms with baroque, classical and medieval influences. ‘Sunburst’ is one of York’s most performed and recorded pieces.

### Ca’ the Yowes *Trad. arr. R. Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)*

Tenor solo: Simon Beattie

This traditional setting of words by Robbie Burns was arranged by Vaughan Williams in 1922 for tenor solo and chorus. A shepherd pledges his love by the banks of Burns’s beloved Clouden. In standard English the refrain would be “Drive the ewes to the knolls, Drive them where the heather grows, Drive them where the streamlet runs, My lovely dear”. Definitely much better in Scots!

### The Lost Lady Found *Trad. arr. Percy Grainger (1882 – 1961)*

Lucy Broadwood noted in 1908 that Mrs. Hill, an old family nurse, and a native of Stamford, Lincolnshire learned this “delightful song when a child, from an old cook who danced as she sang it, beating time on the stone kitchen floor with her iron pattens”. Percy Grainger made several vocal and choral arrangements of the song and included it as the rousing finale of his ‘Lincolnshire Posy’ for concert band in 1937. As you will hear, Grainger did not forget the dance origins of this rattling tale about a kidnapped lady, a falsely-accused uncle and a faithful and persistent lover.

### Come Blessed Bird *Edward Johnson (fl. 1572 – 1601)*

“Diminished Damons”, directed by Martin Cunningham  
The precise meaning of this concluding madrigal from the

‘Triumphs of Oriana’ is a little obscure. The identity of Bonnyboots, who appears in a number of contemporary madrigals, is not known for certain, though it seems probable he was Henry Noel, one of the Queen’s gentleman pensioners who had died in 1597. The madrigal laments his recent death and calls on other now-unknown courtiers, Elpin and Dorus, to take his place in the choir. Edward Johnson was employed by the Kytson family at Hengrave Hall, Suffolk and his fine madrigal brings the Oriana collection to a rather wistful conclusion.

### Canon in D *Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)*

Guitar trio: Clive, Louise and Simon Pearce

Pachelbel was one of the finest performers of his day. His music is distinguished by the *cantabile* nature of his part writing, and the simplicity and clarity of his harmonies. The Canon in D is perhaps the best known of his works and was written for 3 violins and basso continuo. This is an arrangement for 3 guitars by Kevin Love.

### Spanish Dance *Francis Grey*

Guitar trio: Clive, Louise and Simon Pearce

‘Spanish Dance’ is based on *Malaguena*, a traditional flamenco theme, here extended and arranged by Francis Grey.

### I bought me a cat *Aaron Copland (1900–1990)*

Subtitled ‘Children’s Song’, this first appeared in Copland’s first set of ‘Old American Songs’ (1950), scored for voice and piano. It is transcribed here for chorus by Irving Fine, a close associate of Bernstein, Copland, and Stravinsky. “Baw, baw”, “Shimmy shack”, “Griffey, griffey”, “Fiddle eye fee” – listen out for some rather odd animal noises!

### Duetto buffo di due gatti

*Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)*

Duet: Helen Baker, Rachel Meldrum

Accompanist: Helen Cooke

The “humorous duet for two cats” was not actually written by Rossini - but it draws largely on his opera, *Otello*. It is likely to have been compiled by the English composer Robert Lucas de Pearsall, using the pseudonym “G. Berthold”.

### And so it goes SSAATTBB *Billy Joel (b. 1949)*

A well-known single from the album Storm Front (1989), by the best-selling American singer-songwriter. This is another arrangement for the King’s Singers, this time by Bob Chilcott.

### Night and Day *Cole Porter arr Andrew Carter*

Written in 1932 for the musical play Gay Divorcee, this song became so associated with Cole Porter that the film of his life story was called Night and Day. He claimed it was inspired by the local call to worship he heard on a trip to Morocco.

Reading: Ann Crisp

### Contrapunto Bestiale *Adriano Banchieri (1568 – 1634)*

Born in Bologna, Banchieri was a versatile composer, organist, theorist and dramatist who entered the Olivetan monastic order in his twenties. He wrote both sacred and secular music, the latter often drawing upon the themes and characters of the traditional Italian commedia dell’arte. The ‘Contrapunto Bestiale’ is from “Festino nella sera del giovedì grasso avanti cena” (Entertainment for the Eve of Carnival Thursday before Dinner) published in Venice in 1608. It introduces an animal chorus, a dog, a cuckoo, a cat and an owl, with the bass providing the necessary musical foundation in dog-Latin (“Deformed creatures aren’t to be trusted, but someone who squints is OK - write that down in the annals!”)

### Old McDonald had a farm *arr. George Mitchell*

Well, if you don’t know this one...



## THE DAMON SINGERS

Soprano:

Helen Baker, Helen Cooke,  
Ann Crisp, Penny Fray,  
Cleone Goddard, Bell King,  
Rachel Meldrum

Alto:

Alison Davidson, Anne MacDowell,  
Liz Martine, Louise Pearce,  
Uli Wright

Tenor:

Simon Beattie, Alan Power,  
Windsor Thomas, Chris Turner

Bass:

Mike Costin, Martin Cunningham,  
Patrick Lunt, John Reuter



Illustration from *La nobiltà dell' asino* (The Nobility of the Ass), by Banchieri, 1599

### **The Pearce Trio**

#### **Simon Pearce**

Simon has just left St Clement Danes School having completed his A levels. He is involved in a variety of music, playing violin, piano and guitar. He has been a member of the National Youth Guitar Ensemble, led by Gerald Garcia, for 3 years and has won a place to study guitar with John Mills (the guitarist!) at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from September 2012.

#### **Clive Pearce**

Clive has pursued a successful guitar teaching career around the South Bucks area since graduating in 1984 from City of Leeds College of Music. Clive & Louise regularly perform as a duo for local churches, charities and functions.

**Louise Pearce** has sung with the Damon Singers for many years. As you will hear tonight, she is also an accomplished guitarist. How can the whole family be so talented?!

### **David Cooke BA (hons), BMus (hons), ALCM**

David studied music at Liverpool and Oxford Universities. He specialised first in the early 16th Century keyboard repertoire, and then in the music of the later Middle Ages.

As an instrumentalist, David studied the trombone, piano and harpsichord. He has also performed widely as a player of several early wind instruments.

In recent years David has conducted productions of several operas including *The Magic Flute*, *La Bohème*, and Handel's *Semele*. He is presently also Musical Director of the Wycombe Philharmonic Choir & Orchestra, the Chess Valley Male Voice Choir, the Chiltern Hundreds Bach Choir and the Chorleywood Chamber Orchestra.

### **Have you got what it takes?**

The Damon Singers are always looking for new recruits... Not that we plan to grow much larger than the current number, but from time to time members move away from the area (it's a "swansong" for two of us this evening...)

If you would like to talk to us, and maybe sing with us, please contact the Secretary, Patrick Lunt.

Phone: 01494 712583  
Mobile: 07768 566588  
email: [patrick@patricklunt.com](mailto:patrick@patricklunt.com)

### **A date for your diary**

**16<sup>th</sup> December 2012 St. Mary's Church, Chesham  
The Damon Singers' Christmas singalong**

# St. Michael's Church, Beaconsfield

## **The Damon Singers**

**directed by David Cooke**

# **Songs of Summer**

Saturday July 21<sup>st</sup> 2012

7.30pm