

PROGRAMME

Hard by a Crystal Fountain

Thomas Morley (c.1557–1602)

In 1601, towards the end of his career, Thomas Morley, the foremost composer of the English Madrigal School, compiled and published a collection of 25 pieces by himself and his contemporaries in honour of Elizabeth I. Many of them have become classics of the genre. This, Morley's second piece in the collection and written in six parts, provides a suitably gushing opener for our concert this evening, in which we present a number of pieces with a watery theme.

Linden Lea

R. Vaughan Williams (1872–1958), arr. Sir Arthur Somervell (1863–1937)

Exactly 300 years later another great English composer was just starting out. Vaughan Williams wrote his famous song, a setting of words by the Dorset dialect poet William Barnes, in 1901. It was his first published work. Originally scored for voice and piano, it was arranged here for mixed voices in 1912.

Reading

The Streamlet's Slumber Song

Frederick Delius (1862–1934)

Duet: Louise Pearce, Maddy Symes

To be sung of a Summer Night on the Water

Delius

The first work here comes from Delius's Two Songs for Children (1913), commissioned for the American 'Progressive Music Series' for school pupils, but in the event reckoned too difficult for children. The second, a six-part vocalise (i.e. a song without words), is the first of two pieces 'to be sung of a summer night on the water', written in 1917 for a leading amateur chamber choir, the Oriana Madrigal Society, which premiered the pieces in 1920.

Simon Pearce (guitar)

Suite in Modo Polonico

Alexandre Tansman (1897–1986)

Tansman was born in Poland, but spent most of his life in Paris. His music is well known for using Polish musical traditions and mixing these with modern harmonies and rhythms. The Suite in Modo Polonico, written in 1962 for Andrés Segovia, the father of modern classical guitar, is mainly based on medieval Polish courtly dances. You will hear four of the Suite's nine movements tonight: Entrée; Gaillarde; Kujawiak (Mazurka Lente); Oberek (Mazurka Vive).

Down by the Riverside

arr. John Rutter (b.1945)

Across the water to America now, where this well-known gospel song first appeared in a collection called Plantation Melodies in Chicago in 1918. In this arrangement you, the audience, have the opportunity (or should we say the obligation) to join in the final verse:

I'm gain' to put on my starry crown

Down by the riverside,

Down by the riverside,

Down by the riverside,

I'm gain' to put on my starry crown

Down by the riverside,

And I ain't gonna study war no more.

I ain't gonna study war no more (Repeat).

Summertime

George Gershwin (1898–1937)

Solo: Coral Ash

This, one of Gershwin's finest songs, was written for Porgy and Bess in 1935 and quickly became a jazz standard. According to Wikipedia, it is one of the most covered songs in the history of recorded music: over 33,000 versions!

Wade in the Water

Spiritual, arr. Sigrid Schultz-Kokerbeck (b.1957)

Another song from the African-American tradition, first published in 1901 in New Jubilee Songs as sung by the Fisk Jubilee Singers (of Nashville, Tennessee). The text refers to the Israelites' journey out of Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea, reflecting the slaves' hope of freedom from oppression in the New World.

O Waly waly

Somerset folk-song, arr. Rutter

Just as the tide was flowing*arr. Vaughan Williams*

'O Waly, waly' (= 'Wail, wail') is one of the songs collected in 1906 by Cecil Sharp, the great folk music collector who so inspired Vaughan Williams's work, but the text has much older origins. 'Just as the tide' celebrates its centenary this year: it was one of the Five English Folk Songs Vaughan Williams 'freely arranged' and published in 1913.

Simon Pearce (guitar):

Prelude No.1 *Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959)*

The great Brazilian composer wrote his set of five preludes for guitar in 1940. Prelude No. 1 is perhaps the best known of the set and is a favourite of the repertoire.

Maxixe

Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885–1944)

Barrios is one of the most influential guitar composers of his time. Born in Paraguay, he was scarcely known until John Williams initiated a revival of his work in the 1970s and 80s. He wrote over 300 works for the guitar and was a flamboyant virtuoso performer himself, earning himself the soubriquet 'the Paganini of the jungles of Paraguay'. The maxixe, sometimes known as the Brazilian tango, was a popular dance which, in turn, influenced the samba and the lambada.

Skip to my loo

arr. David Cooke

You are hearing a premiere tonight. Next week, we shall be singing this piece again at St Faith's, Newton Longville, a village where one of our sopranos lives (and to whom the arrangement is dedicated), in honour of the church's new facilities. While now generally known as a dance-song from the frontier days of the American West, 'Skip to my Lou' also appears, less widely, as 'Skip to my/the loo', a corruption of the Scots lue, or lave.

Over the Rainbow

Harold Arlen (1905–1986), arr. Guy Turner

Ranked 'the greatest movie song of all time', this was written, of course, for Judy Garland in The Wizard of Oz. That was in 1939, making next year the song's 75th anniversary. This arrangement was made for the Oxford Pro Musica Singers, one of the country's best chamber choirs.

Reading

Il est bel et bon *Pierre Passereau (fl.1509–1547)*

Across the water again, this time to Europe. Passereau is remembered for his lively chansons, often with unsophisticated texts and indelicate subject matter. 'Il est bel et bon' ('He's a good chap'), from 1536, is one of his most famous. 'There were two women from the same region, asking each other "What's your husband like?" He's a good chap, my husband, I tell you, neighbour. He doesn't annoy me or beat me, he does the housework and feeds the chickens while I enjoy myself. I tell you, it's a laugh when the chickens cluck: "Little coquette, cock-a-doodle-doo. What's all this?" Listen out for the hens!'

Pas'el agoa

Galician and French, early 16th century, ed. David Cooke

This lively Renaissance macaronic song (i.e. using two different languages) is, like the Passereau, mildly suggestive: 'Come to me across the water, my Lady Juliet,

come to me. I went into the forest, there to pluck three roses. My little Lady Juliet, come across the water. Come to me.' It appears in the Cancionero de Palacio, the large song book compiled in the years around 1500 of music apparently used at the courts of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile.



We can't remember where the idea for our "Pudding Concerts" came from, but they have become regular summer fixtures for the Damons. It works like this: we provide a vast number of pies, puddings, tarts and sweets (many of which are home-made), and you bring the mouths to feed! We hope you will join us in the Church Rooms at the end of the concert, to socialise and get your "just desserts" - and to let us know if there was anything in the concert that you particularly enjoyed.

THE DAMON SINGERS

Soprano:

Coral Ash, Helen Cooke, Ann Crisp,
Jane Featherstone-Witty, Penny Fray,
Cleone Goddard, Bell King,
Janine Page

Alto:

Malavika Legge, Liz Martine,
Louise Pearce, Maddy Symes,
Uli Wright

Tenor:

Simon Beattie, Windsor Thomas,
Chris Turner

Bass:

Martin Cunningham, Patrick Lunt,
John Reuter, Andy Scott

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 Chiltern Hundreds Bach Choir and the Chorleywood Chamber Orchestra.



Simon Pearce

Simon is currently studying music and specialising in the Classical Guitar at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama under the acclaimed classical guitarist John Mills. He was formerly a scholar at the Amersham Music Centre and a member of the National Youth Guitar Ensemble.



Have you got what it takes?

The Damon Singers are always on the lookout for new recruits... Not that we plan to grow much larger than we currently are, but from time to time members move away from the area, or their circumstances change...

If you would like to talk to us, and join us for an evening, please contact the Secretary, Patrick Lunt.

Phone: 01494 712583
Mobile: 07768 566588
email: patrick@patricklunt.com

Read more about The Damon Singers on our Facebook page; and, by the way, we would love you to like us!

Future Damons concert dates

20th July 2013 St Faith's Church, Newton Longville
15th December 2013 Christmas concert (venue tba)

St. Mary's Church, Chesham

The Damon Singers

directed by David Cooke

Summer "Pudding" Concert



Saturday July 13th 2013

7.30pm