

PUDDING CONCERT 2015



***6 From Near & Far*
Directed by David Cooke**

**7.30 p.m. Saturday, July 11th
United Reformed Church, Chesham**

PROGRAMME

Canción mixteca José López Alavez
(1889–1974)

The melody of this much-loved Mexican song was composed by Alavez in 1912, adding the words three years later to express nostalgia for his home region of Oaxaca after a move to Mexico City. 'How far I am from the land where I was born! Oh Land of Sun! I yearn to see you!'

Ellan Vannin F. H. Townend
arr. Maurice Jacobson

Manx for 'the Isle of Man', *Ellan Vannin* is a poem by Eliza Craven Green from 1854 which, with the tune by the otherwise unknown Townend, has become the island's unofficial national anthem.

Waste not, want not Les Barker
Reading by Patrick Lunt

The Teddy Bears' Picnic
John W. Bratton (1867–1947)
arr. Andrew Carter

This much-loved 'English' song is not as 'near' as it might seem. It actually began life as an instrumental piece in 1907, written by the (otherwise long-forgotten) American composer, John Walter Bratton. The words, by Irish songwriter Jimmy Kennedy, were only added 25 years later, in 1932.

GUITAR: SIMON PEARCE
Suite Venezolana: Registro and Vals
Antonio Lauro (1917-1986)

Antonio Lauro of Venezuela was considered to be one of the most prolific 20th-century guitar composers from South America. He was keen to celebrate his nation's music and mix it with western styles, as can be seen from these two movements from his 'Suite Venezolana.'

La Catedral, Agustín Barrios (1885-1944)
Prelude, Andante Religioso, Allegro Soleme
This work, one of Barrios' great master-

pieces, was originally written in 1914 in a two movement form, Andante Religioso and Allegro Soleme. The inspiration for these movements came from an experience he had whilst listening to J.S. Bach's music on the organ in the Cathedral of San Jose in Montevideo, Uruguay and the contrast once he stepped out onto the busy streets. The Prelude was added in 1938 to lament the death of his wife, Gloria.

Hanacpachap cussicuinin Anonymous
Soprano solo: Rachel Meldrum
Published in Lima in 1631, this anonymous Peruvian hymn to the Virgin Mary in the Quechua language is the earliest printed polyphonic music from the Americas. The Franciscan friar Juan Pérez Bocanegra included it in a manual for priests as music to be sung for procession. It references both Christian and Inca traditions in its text and music. 'Heaven's joy! A thousand times shall we praise you. O hope of humankind, hear our prayer!'

Shenandoah American folk-song
arr. James Erb

A traditional boatmen's song, which originally referred to an Oneida Iroquois chief ('Shenandoah') and a canoe-going trader on the Missouri who wanted to marry his daughter. As often with folk-songs, over time the words and the meaning have changed, so that it now seems to refer to the Shenandoah River, which is in Virginia (about 1000 miles away from the Missouri!). That confusion aside, it's a lovely song, here in an eight-part arrangement written for the University of Richmond Choir in 1971. We dedicate tonight's performance to former Damon, Jean Cornell, who passed away last year.

'Adjust' (from "Maximum City: Bombay lost and found") Suketa Mehta
Reading by Malavika Legge

Dravidian Dithyramb

Victor Paranjoti (1906–1967)

Paranjoti was an Indian musician with a deep love for Western Classical music, and pioneered the performance of choral music in India. This infectious piece was written in 1962, but receives its Damons premiere tonight. ‘Dravidian’ refers to the peoples of southern India; a ‘dithyramb’ was a passionate choral hymn in honour of Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility.

Skip to my loo *arr. David Cooke*

This arrangement was made especially for the Damons in 2013. 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 *love*.

O mio babbino caro

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Soprano solo: Coral Ash

This aria from *Gianni Schicchi* is sung by Lauretta, after tensions between her father Schicchi and the family of Rinuccio, the boy she loves, have reached a breaking point that threatens to separate her from Rinuccio.

Something

George Harrison (1943–2001)

arr. Robin Grayson

John Lennon thought this the best song on the 1969 *Abbey Road* album; Paul McCartney has called it the best song George Harrison ever wrote. Tonight we perform an arrangement originally written for pupils at Aylesbury Grammar School.

The grandmother of the aunt of the gardener

Dorothy Parker

Reading by Ann Crisp

Alouette

French folk-song

arr. John Bertalot (b.1931)

Though now a jaunty children’s song, the text is much more sinister: it warns the lark of the title that its feathers will be plucked out in retribution for waking the singer up! The song may originally have

been sung while women plucked fowls; it first appears in print in a 19th-century Canadian collection. The arranger is an English organist and composer who served as organist of Trinity Church, Princeton, 1983–98, during which time he wrote this for The Princeton Singers.

And so it goes

Billy Joel (b.1949)

arr. Bob Chilcott

Tenor solo: Andy Scott

Soprano solo: Helen Baker

A beautiful Billy Joel ballad, inspired by his doomed relationship with the model Elle Macpherson. The arrangement was made for the King’s Singers.

GUITAR: SIMON PEARCE

Sonatina

Federico Moreno Torroba (1891-1982)

Torroba, a Spanish composer, wrote many important guitar works for the guitar maestro, Andres Segovia. *Sonatina* uses many traditional Spanish writing techniques. The first movement, Allegretto, representing a journey across Spanish countryside; the second, Andante, being a traditional lullaby; and the last, Allegro, a lively Spanish Dance.

Moon River *Henry Mancini (1924–1994)*

arr. Alex Flood

Alto solo: Malavika Legge

Tenor solo: Simon Beattie

Paddy McGinty’s Goat

Bert Lee & R. P. Weston

arr. Richard G. Grylls

Lastly, a couple more arrangements written by two of the Damons’ (former) directors of music; both are firm favourites with the choir. Alex arranged the Oscar-winning *Moon River* (from *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*) for us in 2003, and we’ve been singing Richard’s version of *Paddy McGinty* – a music-hall song from 1917, popularised more recently by the late Val Doonican – for about fifteen years!

Programme notes by Simon Beattie and Martin Cunningham.

David Cooke B.A. (hons), B.Mus (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 Pearce has played the guitar since the age of nine and went on to be a scholar with the Bucks music service. He played with the the National Youth Guitar Ensemble directed by Gerald Garcia. Simon achieved a place at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in 2012 to study with the renowned guitarist John Mills. He is now in his third year and hopes to continue his studies after he graduates in 2016.

The Damon Singers' Summer Pudding Concert has become something of a tradition. Nobody seems able to remember where or when it began, but the idea is that as a reward for coming to listen to our singing, we will give you your 'just desserts'!

In other words, don't just go home at the end of the concert - come and join us for an enormous selection of puddings, many of which have been crafted by our own fair hands...You have been warned!

The Damon Singers

Soprano

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

Alto

Alison Davidson
Malavika Legge
Louise Pearce
Madeleine Symes
Uli Wright

Tenor

Simon Beattie
Chris Turner

Baritone

Sebastian Gibbs
Andy Scott

Bass

Roderick Holburn
Patrick Lunt
John Reuter

The Damon Singers were founded in 1957 as a choir for Chesham.

Read more about us on www.damonsingers.co.uk or find us on Facebook.