

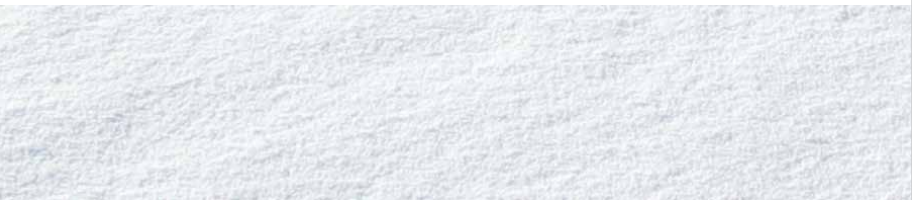
THE TUDOR CHOIR AND PLAYERS
DOUG FULLINGTON



CHRISTMAS
DAY

TRADITIONAL CAROLS
FOR **CHRISTMAS**
AND **THE NEW YEAR**

SCRIBE RECORDS



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THE TUDOR CHOIR AND PLAYERS

Doug Fullington, director

SOPRANO

Rebekah Gilmore
Maria Mannisto
Margaret Obenza
Christina Siemens
Linda Strandberg

ALTO

Joshua Haberman
Anne Lyman
Linda Sabee
Sarra Sharif

TENOR

Orrin Doyle
David Hendrix
Jesson Mata
Wesley Rogers

BASS

Gustave Blazek (12)
Willimark Obenza
Jonathan Silvia (1-9,11)
Manard Stewart
David Stutz (7,9,11)
Thomas Thompson

VIOLIN 1

Michael Jinsoo Lim, leader
Natasha Bazhanov
Tom Dziekonski

VIOLIN 2

Adrianna Hulscher
John Kim
Mitchell Drury

VIOLA

Laura Renz
Sue Jane Bryant

CELLO

Page Smith
Virginia Dziekonski

BASS

Stephen Schermer

HARP

John Carrington

PERCUSSION

Gunnar Folsom
Rob Tucker

PRODUCER

Markdavin Obenza

SOUND ENGINEER

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GRAPHIC DESIGN

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CHRISTMAS DAY

TRADITIONAL CAROLS FOR **CHRISTMAS** AND **THE NEW YEAR**

1	Ding dong! merrily on high	arr. Charles Wood	1:56
2	I saw a fair maiden	Peter Warlock	4:51
3	Fantasia on "Greensleeves"	Ralph Vaughan Williams	4:36
4	The holly and the ivy Rebekah Gilmore, <i>soprano</i> ; Sarra Sharif, <i>alto</i> ; David Hendrix, <i>tenor</i> ; Thomas Thompson, <i>baritone</i>	arr. Henry Walford Davies	2:53
5	"Pieds-en-l'air" from Capriol Suite	Peter Warlock	3:13
6	Lullaby my Jesus	Peter Warlock, trans. Andrew Carter	3:23
7	Fantasia on Christmas Carols Jonathan Silvia, <i>baritone</i> ; Page Smith, <i>cello</i>	Ralph Vaughan Williams	13:55
8	A virgin most pure	arr. Charles Wood	5:05
9	Christmas Day Margaret Obenza, <i>soprano</i> ; Sarra Sharif, <i>alto</i> ; Orrin Doyle & David Hendrix, <i>tenors</i> ; Jonathan Silvia, <i>baritone</i>	Gustav Holst	6:59
10	A New Year carol John Carrington, <i>harp</i>	Benjamin Britten	2:59
11	In the bleak midwinter David Hendrix, <i>tenor</i>	Harold Darke	5:07
12	In terra pax Christina Siemens, <i>soprano</i> ; Thomas Thompson, <i>baritone</i>	Gerald Finzi	15:20
Total time			70:12

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CHRISTMAS DAY

TRADITIONAL CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR



uch of the music on this disc is from the turn of the 20th century, a time when the English holiday “traditions” created by the Victorians began to take on new meaning and depth for contemporary artists who were exploring the medieval customs and art of their people. They were simultaneously reviving the works of the past and composing new music inspired by their research. A rich past-meets-present repertory developed.

No work is more representative of this effort than Ralph Vaughan Williams’ *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, assembled in 1912 using folks carols retrieved through field research. Vaughan Williams gave the tunes a grand symphonic setting, featuring baritone solo and choir. The work has been become a classic of English holiday fare.

Gerald Finzi’s *In terra pax* (On earth peace) was written in 1954 and revised for full orchestra in 1956, just before the composer’s death. The musical language is firmly rooted in the English pastoral tradition, a style based on lyricism that shunned the dissonant developments of the Second Viennese School of composition favored by academia throughout the mid-20th century. That the music is tinged with melancholy comes as no surprise to those familiar with Finzi’s musical output. Having lost his father at a young age, and three brothers and his beloved composition teacher in the First World War, Finzi’s music regularly explores loss of innocence, a by-product of adulthood often accompanied by nostalgia and regret. These emotions are deeply felt particularly during the holidays, and composers of sensitivity, at least a number of those represented herein (including Holst in his *Christmas Day*), have tended to balance the festivity of the season with the trouble of

human experience. This characteristic of concurrent wonderment and sobriety (or, realism) is one that modern composers have shared with the anonymous musicians and poets who penned chants and carols in the Middle Ages. One era that seems to have exempted itself from this dichotomy, at least with regard to its holiday music, is the period encompassing the late-17th and 18th centuries—western Europe’s “classical” era. Country carols of this period (here, *A virgin most pure* and *God rest you merry, gentlemen*) revel in the long-standing musical influence of Handel’s *Messiah* and effuse unfailingly good-natured optimism.

But I am convinced that the trends of the early-20th century English artistic community are those that continue to resonate with early-21st century life. And the movement was not limited to music and poetry. The decorative arts underwent a similar renaissance in what was largely a response to ever-increasing industrialization and the threat (and eventual manifestation) of worldwide cataclysm. Appreciation was renewed for the handcrafted, the well-made, for personalization and pragmatism, with an idealized view of the Middle Ages (the “Gothic”) as inspiration. The oft-times bitter reality of finite humanity is mitigated by opportunity for beauty.

Tidings of comfort, tidings of joy.

Doug Fullington

1. **D**ING DONG! MERRILY ON HIGH

WORDS: George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848–1934)

MUSIC: Thoinot Arbeau (1520–1595), arranged by Charles Wood (1866–1926)

This popular tune was culled from Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchésographie*, a book of French dances first published in 1588, and turned into a carol by the author of its words, the Anglican priest and scholar George Ratcliffe Woodward.

Ding dong! merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing:

Ding dong! verily the sky is riv'n with angel singing.

Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;

May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.

Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,

And io, io, io, by priest and people sungen.

Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

2. **I** SAW A FAIR MAIDEN

WORDS: Sloane Manuscript, 15th century

MUSIC: Peter Warlock (1894–1930)

Though Peter Warlock (whose given name was Philip Heseltine) found the holidays to be a personally difficult time of year, he nevertheless produced a number of enchanting carols, including this setting of a popular 15th-century text.

I saw a fair maiden sitten and sing,
She lulled a little child, a sweeté lording.

*Lullay, mine liking, my dear son, mine sweeting,
Lullay, my dear heart, mine own dear darling.*

That same lord is He that made allé thing,
Of allé lordis He is lord, of allé kingés king.

There was mickle melody at that childés birth,
All that were in Heaven's bliss they made mickle mirth.

Angelys bright they sung that night and saiden to that child:
Blessed be thou and so be she that is both meek and mild.

Pray we now to that Child, and to His mother dear,
Grant them His blessing that now maken cheer.

3. ANTASIA ON “GREENSLEEVES”

Music: Traditional, arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

The folk tune *Greensleeves* has become closely associated with the carol *What child is this*. Vaughan Williams' classic instrumental setting, adapted from his opera *Sir John in Love* (1929), also incorporates the folk tune *Lovely Joan*.

4. THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

WORDS AND MUSIC: English traditional carol, arranged by Henry Walford Davies (1869–1941)

The text and tune of this traditional carol were transcribed by the English musician and folk music collector Cecil Sharp (1859–1924) from a Mrs. Mary Clayton at Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, and published in Sharp's *English Folk-Carols* in 1911. The well-known setting for choir by Henry Walford Davies dates from 1913.

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown;
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown.

*O the rising of the sun
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good.

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.

The holly bears a blossom
As white as any flower;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour.

The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall:
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.

5. “PIEDS-EN-L’AIR” FROM CAPRIOL SUITE

MUSIC: Peter Warlock, from *Capriol Suite*

Peter Warlock’s *Capriol Suite* is a set of dances composed in October 1926 and one of his most popular works. Originally written for piano duet, Warlock later scored the suite for both string and full orchestras. According to the composer, the music was based on tunes in Arbeau’s *Orchésographie*. “Pieds-en-l’air” is the fifth of the suite’s six movements.

6. LULLABY MY JESUS

WORDS: Andrew Carter (born 1939)

MUSIC: Peter Warlock (1894–1930), from *Capriol Suite*,
transcribed by Andrew Carter

Lullaby my Jesus,
Lullaby my King,
Lullaby my lording
Whom I sweetly sing.
Slumber softly,
Slumber on your mother’s arm;
She will rock you,
She will keep you safe from harm.

Lullaby my Jesus,
Lullaby my son.
Lullaby my child
In whom God’s will is done.
Be at peace,
Soft dreams beguile you as you lie;
I will rock you,
I will sing a lullaby.

7. **F**ANTASIA ON CHRISTMAS CAROLS

WORDS AND MUSIC: English traditional carols, arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams

Composed in 1912, Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* captures the spirit of Christmas like few other works. Solo cello and baritone begin by announcing "The truth from above." Later, the choir delivers a country Christmas greeting, and all finally send us off with wishes for a happy New Year.

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love:
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I will relate
Is that God did man create,
The next thing which to you I'll tell,
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Then, after this, 'twas God's own choice
To place them both in Paradise,
There to remain, from evil free,
Except they ate of such a tree.

And they did eat, which was a sin,
And thus their ruin did begin,
Ruined themselves, both you and me,
And all of their posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose,
And so a promise soon did run,
That he would redeem us by his Son.

—*HEREFORDSHIRE CAROL*

Come all you worthy gentlemen that may be standing by,
Christ our blessed Saviour was born on Christmas day.
The blessed Virgin Mary unto the Lord did pray.
O we wish you the comfort and tidings of joy.

Christ our blessed Saviour now in the manger lay.
He's lying in the manger, while the oxen feed on hay.
The blessed Virgin Mary unto the Lord did pray.
O we wish you the comfort and tidings of joy.

—*SOMERSET CAROL*

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring;
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before thy grace,
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

Baritone

God bless the ruler of this house and long may he reign,
Many happy Christmases he live to see again!
God bless our generation, who live both far and near,
And we wish them a happy New Year.

Choir

From out of darkness we have light
Which makes the angels sing this night,
Glory to God and peace to men
Both now and evermore. Amen.

—SUSSEX CAROL

8. VIRGIN MOST PURE

WORDS AND MUSIC: English traditional carol, arranged by Charles Wood

The earliest known version of this carol's text was published in *New Carolls for this Merry Time of Christmas* (London, 1661). The tune is from *Some Ancient Christmas Carols, with tunes to which they were formerly sung in the West of England*, published in 1822 by Davies Gilbert (1767–1839) and derived from manuscript gallery tunes of the 18th-century Cornish carol repertory.

A virgin most pure, as the prophets do tell,
Hath brought forth a baby, as it hath befell;
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,
Which Adam's transgression had wrapped us in.

*Aye, and therefore be merry;
Rejoice, and be you merry;
Set sorrow aside;
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born at this tide.*

In Bethlehem Jewry a city there was,
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,
And there to be taxed with many one mo,
For Caesar commanded the same should be so.

But when they had enter'd the city so far,
A number of people so mighty was there,
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all.

Then they were constrain'd in a stable to lie,
Where horses and asses they us'd for to tie;
Their lodging so simple they took it no scorn,
But against the next morning our Saviour was born.

The King of all kings to this world being brought,
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was sought;
And when she had swaddled her young son so sweet,
Within an ox-manger she laid him to sleep.

Then God sent an angel from heaven on high,
To certain poor shepherds in fields where they lie,
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay,
Because that our Saviour was born on this day.

Then presently after the shepherds did spy
A number of angels that stood in the sky;
They joyfully talked and sweetly did sing,
'To God be all glory our heavenly King.'

9. HRISTMAS DAY

WORDS AND MUSIC: Traditional carols, arranged by Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

Christmas Day, a “Choral Fantasy on Old Carols,” was composed in 1910 for the amateur singers of Morley College, where Holst had been teaching since 1907.

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
News! News! Jesus Christ is born today:
Ox and ass before him bow,
And he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!

—GERMAN TRADITIONAL CAROL

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from woe and sin,
When we were gone astray,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

In Bethlehem, in Jewry,
This blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger,
Upon that holy morn;
The which his mother, Mary,
Did nothing take in scorn.
O tidings of comfort and joy.
—ENGLISH TRADITIONAL CAROL

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath oped the heav'nly door,
And man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this!

Come, ye lofty, come, ye lowly,
Let your songs of gladness ring;
In a stable lies the Holy,
In a manger rests the King;
See, in Mary's arms reposing,
Christ by highest heav'n adored;
Come, your circle round him closing,
Pious hearts that love the Lord.
—OLD BRETON MELODY

The first Nowell the angels did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.
—ENGLISH TRADITIONAL CAROL

Come, ye poor, no pomp of station
Robes the child your hearts adore:
He, the Lord of all salvation,
Shares your want, is weak and poor:

Oxen, round about behold them;
Rafters naked, cold and bare,
See the shepherds, God has told them
That the Prince of Life lies there.

Come, ye children, blithe and merry,
This one child your model make;
Christmas holly, leaf and berry,
All be prized for his dear sake;
Come, ye gentle hearts, and tender,
Come, ye spirits, keen and bold;
All in all your homage render,
Weak and mighty, young and old.

High above a star is shining,
And the Wisemen haste from far:
Come, glad hearts, and spirits pining:
For you all has risen the star.
Let us bring our poor oblations,
Thanks and love and faith and praise:
Come, ye people, come, ye nations,
All in all draw nigh to gaze.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one, and calls you all,
To gain his everlasting hall:
Christ was born to save!

10. NEW YEAR CAROL

WORDS: Welsh traditional **MUSIC:** Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Benjamin Britten's *A New Year carol* is a setting of an anonymous text from Walter de le Mare's 1931 collection, *Tom Tiddler's Ground*. The piece is part of Britten's collection *Friday Afternoons*, which was composed for his brother's preparatory school in Prestatyn, Wales.

Here we bring new water from the well so clear,
For to worship God with, this happy New Year.

*Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water and the wine;
The seven bright gold wires and the bugles that do shine.*

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her toe,
Open you the West Door, and turn the Old Year go.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, with gold upon her chin,
Open you the East Door, and the let the New Year in.

11. N THE BLEAK MIDWINTER

WORDS: Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) **MUSIC:** Harold Darke (1888–1976)

Christina Rossetti penned *In the bleak midwinter* by 1872 in response to a request from the magazine *Scribner's Monthly* for a Christmas poem, which was published posthumously in 1904. Harold Darke's setting, which omits Rossetti's fourth verse, dates from 1911, shortly before the composer began a 50-year stint as organist of the Church of St. Michael, Cornhill, in London. During the Second World War, Darke was substitute organist-choirmaster at King's College, Cambridge, where his carol gained fame as part of the annual Festival of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve.

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone:
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain:
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay.
Enough for him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him—
Give my heart.

12. IN TERRA PAX

WORDS: Robert Bridges (1844–1930) and St Luke 2:8–14

MUSIC: Gerald Finzi (1901–1956)

A series of tragedies profoundly affected Gerald Finzi in his early years. By the time he was eighteen he had lost his father, three elder brothers and his much-loved music teacher, killed in action. This dreadful sequence of events, and the appalling losses of the First World War that formed the backdrop to his adolescence, gave Finzi an acute awareness of the impermanence of life, confirmed with grim finality when at the age of fifty he discovered he was dying of leukemia. These experiences to a large extent account for the hint of melancholy underlying much of his music.

Finzi's musical inspiration sprang primarily from his love of literature and the English countryside—the same sources that inspired Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

In terra pax was composed in 1954 and was almost the last piece Finzi wrote, though its genesis can be traced to an event some thirty years previously, when one Christmas Eve he had climbed up to the church at the top of his beloved Chosen Hill, between Gloucester and Cheltenham. The sound of the midnight bells ringing out across the frosty Gloucestershire valleys evidently made a lasting impression on him, retrospectively providing the idea for *In terra pax*, as he told Vaughan Williams.

The work is a setting of two verses from Robert Bridges' fine poem, "Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913," subtitled "Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis" (Peace and goodwill to all men), which Finzi imaginatively and skilfully uses to frame St Luke's account of the angels' appearance to the shepherds. *In terra pax* is subtitled "Christmas Scene," and Finzi explained that "the Nativity becomes a vision seen by a wanderer on a dark and frosty Christmas Eve in our own familiar landscape." This placing of the Biblical story into an English pastoral context is entirely consistent with Finzi's close affinity with the English Romantic tradition and his lifelong dedication to the creation of his own rural paradise at his home in Ashmansworth, near Newbury.

The two soloists and chorus have clearly defined musical roles; the baritone soloist takes the voice of the poet, the soprano is cast as the angel, whilst the chorus narrates the familiar biblical text. In the opening section, the poet is standing on a hill contemplating the events of the very first Christmas, the sound of the distant church bells becoming for him the sound of an angel choir. This image is expressed in a pealing-bells motif which, together with the refrain from *The First Nowell*, provides the musical fabric of the piece.

Finzi, perhaps more than most, must have been aware of the terrible irony of Bridges' reassuring Pax hominibus being swiftly followed by the outbreak of World War I; yet despite this, and despite his own terminal decline, *In terra pax* is a radiant, optimistic work of great beauty and sincerity—a miniature masterpiece that unites emotions, images, and the familiar events of the Christmas story into a compelling musical narrative that is at once personal yet universal.

In terra pax notes by *John Bawden*

A frosty Christmas Eve when the stars were shining
Fared I forth alone where westward falls the hill,
And from many a village in the water'd valley
Distant music reach'd me peals of bells a-ringing:

The constellated sounds ran sprinkling on earth's floor
As the dark vault above with stars was spangled o'er.
Then sped my thoughts to keep that first Christmas of all
When the shepherds watching by their folds ere the dawn
Heard music in the fields and marvelling could not tell
Whether it were angels or the bright stars singing.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them: Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

But to me heard afar it was starry music
Angels' song, comforting as the comfort of Christ
When he spake tenderly to his sorrowful flock:
The old words came to me by the riches of time
Mellow'd and transfigured as I stood on the hill
Heark'ning in the aspect of th'eternal silence.

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