

O NIGHT DIVINE  
Extended Program Notes

The Victoria Scholars Men's Choral Ensemble

Jerzy Cichocki, CONDUCTOR

TRANSLATIONS (in program order)

VENI, VENI, EMMANUEL

Veni, veni, Emmanuel;  
captivum solve Israel,  
qui gemit in exilio,  
privatus Dei Filio.  
Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel,  
nascetur pro te, Israel.

Come, come, Emmanuel!  
Release the captive Israel,  
which groans in exile,  
deprived of the Son of God.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
will be born for you, Israel.

Veni, O Jesse Virgula;  
ex hostis tuos ungula,  
de specu tuos Tartari  
educ, et antro barathri.  
Gaude!...

Come, you Branch of Jesse!  
Draw your people from the enemy's clutch,  
from the chasm of Tartarus  
and the depths of the abyss.  
Rejoice!...

Veni, veni, O Oriens;  
solare nos adveniens;  
noctis depelle nebulas  
dirasque noctis tenebras.  
Gaude!...

Come, come, you Rising Sun!  
Comfort us as you dawn;  
drive away nocturnal mists  
and night's dreadful shadows.  
Rejoice!...

Veni, Clavis Davidica;  
regna reclude coelica;  
fac iter tutum supernum  
et claude vias inferum.  
Gaude!...

Come, you Key of David!  
Unlock the door to the heavenly kingdom;  
disclose a safe route to the upper realm  
and close off the paths to hell.  
Rejoice!...

Veni, veni, Adonai,  
qui populo in Sinai  
legem dedisti vertice  
in majestate gloriae.  
Gaude!...

Come, come, Adonai,  
you who in awesome majesty  
gave the Law to your people  
on the heights of Mount Sinai.  
Rejoice!...

CREATOR ALME SIDERUM

Creator alme siderum,  
Æterna lux credentium,  
Iesu, Redemptor omnium,  
Intende votis supplicum.

Loving creator of the heavens,  
Eternal light of believers,  
Jesus, redeemer of all,  
Heed your supplicants' prayers.

Qui daemonis ne fraudibus  
Periret orbis, impetu  
Amoris actus, languidi  
Mundi medela factus es.

So that the world would not perish  
At the wiles of the devil,  
Driven by the impulse of love  
You became the cure of a dying world.

Commune qui mundi nefas  
Ut expiaries, ad crucem  
E virginis sacrario  
Intacta prodis victima.

To atone for the sin of mankind,  
From the sacred womb of the Virgin  
Unto the cross,  
You went forth, a spotless victim.

Cuius postestas gloriae,  
Nomenque cum primum sonat,  
Et caelites et inferi  
Tremante curvantur genu.

At the very mention  
Of his glorious power and name,  
All above and below bow low  
On trembling knees.

Te deprecamur, ultimae  
Magnum diei iudicem,  
Armis supernae gratiae  
Defende nos ab hostibus.

We beseech you,  
Great Judge of the last day,  
Defend us from our enemies  
With the weapon of grace from on high.

Virtus, honor, laus, gloria  
Deo Patri cum Filio,  
Sancto simul Paraclito.  
In saeculorum saecula. Amen.

Power, honour, praise, and glory  
Be unto God the Father  
Together with the Son and the Holy Paraclete,  
For ever and ever. Amen.

VENI, REDEMPTOR GENTIUM  
Veni, Redemptor gentium,  
Ostende partum Virginis;  
Miretur omne saeculum:  
Talis decet partus Deum.

Saviour of the nations, come,  
recognized as the Virgin's Child,  
so that the world marvels  
that God ordained such a birth for Him.

Sit, Christe, rex piissime,  
Tibi Patrique gloria,  
Cum Spiritu Paraclito,  
In sempiterna saecula. Amen.

To Christ the most holy King  
and to you the Father be glory,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
world without end. Amen.

GAUDETE! GAUDETE! CHRISTUS EST  
NATUS

Gaudete! Gaudete! Christus est natus Ex  
Maria Virgine; gaudete!

Rejoice! rejoice! Christ is born of the Virgin Mary;  
rejoice!

Tempus adest gratiae, Hoc quod optabamus:  
Carmina laeticiae Devote reddamus.

The time of grace has come for which we have prayed;  
let us devoutly sing songs of joy.

Gaudete!...

Rejoice!...

Deus homo factus est, Natura mirante;  
Mundus renovatus est A Christo regnante.

God is made man, while nature wonders;  
the world is renewed by Christ the King.

Gaudete!...

Rejoice!...

Ezechielis porta Clausa pertransitur;  
Unde Lux est orta, Salus invenitur.

The closed gate of Ezekiel has been passed through;  
from where the Light has risen [the East] salvation is  
found.

Gaudete!...

Rejoice!...

Ergo nostra concio Psallat iam in lustro;  
Benedicat Domino: Salus Regi nostro.

Therefore let our assembly sing praises now at this  
time of purification;

let it bless the Lord: greetings to our King.

Gaudete!...

Rejoice!...

#### AVE MARIS STELLA

Ave maris stella,  
Dei Mater alma  
Atque semper virgo,  
Felix coeli porta.

Hail, star of the sea.  
Mild Mother of God,  
Eternal Virgin,  
Blessed gate of Heaven.

Sumens illud "Ave",  
Gabrielis ore,  
Funda nos in pace,  
Mutans "Evae" nomen.

You who heard that "Ave"  
From the mouth of Gabriel,  
Preserve us in peace,  
Changing the name of "Eva".

Solve vincla reis,  
Profer lumen caecis  
Mala nostra pelle,  
Bona cuncta posce.

Strike off the chains of the guilty,  
Bring light to the blind;  
Drive out our evil,  
Give us all that is good.

Virgo singularis,  
Inter omnes mitis,  
Nos culpis solutos,  
Mites fac et castos.

Virgin past compare,  
Meekest of all women,  
Make us, purged of our sins,  
Meek and chaste.

Vitam praesta puram,  
Iter para tutum  
Ut videntes Iesum,  
Semper collaetemur.

Grant us a pure life,  
Prepare a safe journey for us.  
That seeing Jesus,  
We may rejoice eternally.

Sit laus Deo Patri  
Summo Christo decus,  
Spiritus Sancto,  
Tribus honor unus. Amen.

Praise be to God the Father,  
And glory to Christ on high,  
And to the Holy Spirit  
Three in one. Amen.

AVE MARIA

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum,  
benedicta tu in mulieribus,  
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,  
ora pro nobis. Amen.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee,  
blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us. Amen.

AVE MARIA (ANGELUS DOMINI)

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae  
et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Dominus tecum,  
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,  
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.

Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini,  
fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Ave Maria...

Et verbum caro factum est  
et habitavit in nobis.

Ave Maria...

Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,  
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,  
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae.

Amen.

The angel of the Lord made his annunciation to Mary,  
and she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail, Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee,  
blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus

Mary said: Behold the handmaiden of the Lord;  
let it be unto me according to your word.

Hail Mary...

And the word was made flesh  
and dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners  
now and in the hour of our death.

Amen.

UBI CARITAS

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.  
Exultemus et in ipso jucundemur. Timeamus  
et amemus Deum vivum.  
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.  
Amen.

Where charity and love are, God is there.  
The love of Christ has brought us together into one.  
Let us rejoice and let us be glad in that love itself.  
Let us fear and love the living God.  
And from a sincere heart let us love one another.  
Amen.

A LA NANITA NANA

A la nanita nana.  
Mi Jesús tiene sueño bendito sea.  
Fuenticilla que corres clara y sonora,  
Rui-señor q'en la selva cantando lloras,  
Callad mientras la cuna se balancea.

A la nanita nana.

To the little tiny one, Jesus is sleeping, blessed is he.  
A little fountain runs clear and sonorous.  
A mocking bird in the jungle sings its cry.  
Be still, for the cradle is rocking.

PASTORALE

Tu scendi dalle stelle,  
O Re del cielo,  
E vieni in unna grotta  
Al freddo, al gelo;  
O Bambino mio Divino,  
Io Ti vedo qui tremar!  
O Dio beato!  
Oh, quanto Ti costò l'avermi amato!

From the starry skies thou comest,  
The King of Heaven foretold,  
Appearing in a manger,  
Near-frozen from the cold.  
Jesus, dearest little baby,  
How I long to make thee warm!  
To shelter thee from harm!  
My heart is filled with pity for thy tiny form!

Program Notes follow on the next page...

## PROGRAM NOTES (in program order)

### Veni, veni, Emmanuel

#### Gregorian chant

Gregorian chant is possibly the oldest surviving music of the ancient Western world. Its pure, unaccompanied melodic lines have never been surpassed for beauty or aptness to their texts. The text of *Veni, veni, Emmanuel* is based on a series of “O” antiphons sung at vespers on the days leading up to Christmas. This ever-popular medieval plainsong melody was first published in 1851.

### Creator alme siderum

This anonymous 7th century Gregorian chant is associated with Vespers from the first Sunday of Advent. This setting alternates the monophonic chant with newly composed homophonic music by American composer, Richard Burchard. It was commissioned by the Cathedral of the Assumption Choir, Louisville, KY, and dates from 2011.

### People, look east

The tune is an old Besançon carol tune, ‘Chantons, bargiés, Noué, Noué.’ The popular English words by the English author Eleanor Farjeon (1881-1965) are from 1928. Her most widely published work is the hymn *Morning has broken*.

### Veni, Redemptor gentium

The contemporary 2006 setting of *Veni, Redemptor gentium* by British-Norwegian composer Andrew Smith (b. 1970) was commissioned by the New York Polyphony, a classical vocal ensemble. Interweaving the melody of the ancient Gregorian Advent hymn, Smith’s idiom is poetic and distilled.

### E’en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come

Paul Otto Manz was an outstanding American Lutheran musician and composer of choral and organ music. The text of *E’en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come* is an adaptation of Revelation 22 by the composer’s wife, Ruth Manz. This Advent motet is Manz’s most famous choral work.

### Gaudete! Gaudete! Christus est natus

*Gaudete!* is one of the most popular of the Christmas pieces found in *Piae Cantiones* (1582) a collection of Finnish/Swedish sacred songs published in the North German city of Greifswald.

### Ave maris stella

Lajos Bárdos (1899-1986) was a Hungarian conductor and musicologist who studied with Zoltán Kodály. He was primarily active as a choral conductor and editor, and his efforts played an important role in the revival of choral singing in Hungary.

*Ave maris stella* (1937) is perhaps the composer’s most popular chorus for female voices, sung here in an arrangement for male voices. The text of the Marian hymn, attributed to Venantius Fortunatus (530-609), is sung at Evening Prayer for Solemnities of Our Lady.

### Gabriel's message

John Rutter (b. 1945) was born in London and educated at Clare College, Cambridge, where he first attracted attention as a composer, arranger, and conductor. To many people, his name brings to mind the many Christmas carols which he has composed and arranged. Knighted in the 2024 Birthday Honours for his service to music, Sir John is celebrating his 80th birthday this year.

### Ave Maria (after Jaques Arcadelt)

Jacques Arcadelt (1507-1568) was a Renaissance 'Belgian' composer of motets, madrigals, and chansons, written in the Franco-Flemish style. In the 19th century, Pierre-Louis-Philippe Dietsch revised Arcadelt's three-part madrigal of 1554 *Nous voyons que les hommes* by adding bar lines, a fourth part - the bass - and replacing the text with the Latin *Ave Maria* (known as a *contrafactum*: a song in which the melody is similar or even identical to another song yet contains different lyrics). Dietsch's four-part version was published in 1842 and became a very popular sacred motet. It has now been further re-arranged for men's voices.

### Ave Maria (Angelus Domini)

Franz Biebl (1906-2001) was a German composer and choir conductor who taught at the Mozarteum in Salzburg from 1939 until 1945. From 1948, he lived and worked in Bavaria as a private teacher and freelancer with Bavarian Radio, gaining recognition primarily as a composer of choral works. *Ave Maria (Angelus Domini)*, his best-known piece, is scored for a trio of soloists and four-part chorus, and alternates three chant-like passages with harmonically rich antiphonal writing.

### In the Bleak Mid-winter

Gustav Holst (1874-1934) was closely involved with choral music throughout his career. As a school boy in Cheltenham, England, he helped his father with music for church services and soon became a choirmaster himself. During the early 1900s, Holst's friend Ralph Vaughan Williams was working on the music for the new English Hymnal, and besides contributing some of the tunes himself, Holst was intrigued by the simple beauty of the plainsong melodies that were included in the collection. Holst composed his setting of *In the Bleak Mid-winter* in 1906, on a text by the well-known Anglo-Catholic poet, writer, and mystic, Christina Rossetti (1830-1894). Apparently, the poem and the phrase 'in the bleak mid-winter' was popular among the soldiers of the First World War.

### I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year

For most of his life, Sir William H. Harris (1883-1973) was a cathedral organist and teacher; from 1933 to 1961 he was organist at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. His published compositions are few, all of them church or organ music. *I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year* was dedicated by gracious permission to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Harris's setting of words by M. Louise Haskins (1875-1957) demonstrates the composer's usual care and sensitivity to text. These were also the words broadcast by King George VI in his Christmas radio broadcast to the people of the Empire on the first Christmas Day of the Second World War, in 1939.

### Ubi caritas

Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978) is a New York-based Norwegian composer and pianist. His music has been widely performed and recorded. Written in 2001, *Ubi caritas* has become one of Gjeilo's most performed works. Originally written for mixed chorus, the male chorus version appeared in 2009. Its fragile melody, inspired by the Gregorian chant tradition, is entirely original.

### Selections from Nine carols for male voices

The great British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams arranged *Coventry Carol*, *The First Nowell*, and *I saw three ships* during World War I for the "choir" he developed among the men in his Field Ambulance unit. In 1917 they were stationed in Greece, near Katerini, on a hillside with Mount Olympus towering above. Ursula Vaughan Williams, Ralph's wife and biographer, writes "Another experience, which no one who was there forgot, was carol singing on Christmas Eve: snow-capped Olympus, the clear night, the stars, and Ralph's choir singing carols with passionate nostalgia. The Choir made that Christmas so far from home one that had a special quality, a special beauty, long remembered."

### God rest you merry, gentlemen

"I am English by birth, Irish by extraction, Canadian by adoption, and Scotch by absorption." Healey Willan's (1880-1968) self-description gives us some insight into the character of one of the most beloved Canadian composers. Willan's arrangement of *God rest you merry, gentlemen* was written for Christmas, 1921.

### All poor men and humble

*All poor men and humble* is a free translation of the traditional Welsh carol *O Deued Pob Cristion*. Notice how similar the tune is, in part, to The Royal Anthem, God save our gracious King!

### A la nanita nana

Throughout his long career as a singer, arranger, composer, conductor, and publisher, Norman Luboff (1917-1987) made a tremendous contribution to American choral music. With over 6000 choral arrangements, Luboff worked in New York and Hollywood, arranging music for radio and television shows such as *The Milton Berle Show*, *The Jerry Lewis Show* and *The Dinah Shore Show*. Luboff contributed to more than eighty films and recorded with popular music icons Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, and Harry Belafonte.

*A la nanita nana* is a traditional Christmas carol that is popular throughout the Hispanic world. However, its origins remain somewhat murky: some believe it originated from 18th century Spain, whereas others claim that it is actually an Ecuadorian *villancico* (carol) by Segundo Cueva Celia, a celebrated composer from the city of Loja.

The change from minor to a major key is a common and distinctive device in Hispanic folk songs, with the phrase "a la nanita nana" a soothing refrain similar to "lullaby, lullaby" in English.

### Pastorale (Tu scendi dalle stelle)

The words of the famous Italian poem *Tu scendi dalle stelle* have often been attributed to Pope Pius IX (1792-1878), but in fact are by Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787), an 18th century Italian moral theologian. Even less is known about the much older traditional Italian melody or the composer or arranger of the *Pastorale*, Thomasso Capocci. Nevertheless, it is one of the most beautiful and inspiring among Italian carols.

### Wśród nocnej ciszy (In midnight's stillness)

Every Christian people has its own songs and customs for the season of Christmas, but perhaps no other surpass in beauty Polish *kolendy*, or carols. On Christmas Eve the family sits down to the evening meal – the *Wigilia*. Following dinner, they gather around the lighted Christmas tree and sing carols. The devotional *Wśród nocnej ciszy* displays the lyrical delight and charm of Polish folklore. This *kolenda* was arranged by Jerzy Cichocki in 2006 and is dedicated to the Victoria Scholars.

### Silent Night

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955) is Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Music Director of the Temple Square Chorale. In addition to his conducting responsibilities, he has been active as a pianist, chamber musician, clinician, composer, arranger, and guest conductor throughout the United States and abroad. He is the former Director of choral activities at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.

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