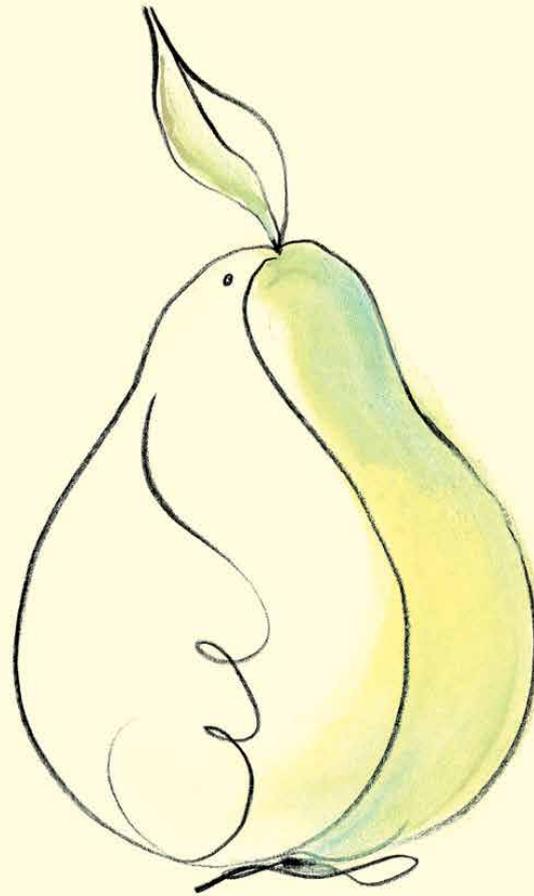


The 12 Days of Christmas

The Choir of Ormond College



- 1** Sunny Bank (Christmas Day in the morning) Peter Hurford 1'46"
- 2** A Babe is Born Johann Hermann Schein 2'15"
- 3** Christ was Born on Christmas Day German trad. 1'45"
- 4** Child in a Manger Celtic trad. 2'43"
- 5** Cold and Dark is Holy Night Alfred E Floyd 3'01"
- 6** Torches John Joubert 1'33"
- 7** In the Bleak Midwinter Harold Darke 4'24"
- 8** Tryste Noël Herbert Howells 6'34"
- 9** He Smiles Within His Cradle Austrian trad. 2'53"
- 10** A Boy was Born Benjamin Britten 2'10"
- 11** Silent Night Franz Gruber 3'21"
- 12** A Child this Day is Born English trad. 2'16"
- 13** Il est né le divin enfant French trad. 2'31"
- 14** Wexford Carol Irish trad. 4'02"
- 15** Ave Maris Stella Plainchant 6'11"
- 16** Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth German trad. 2'02"
- 17** I Sing of a Maiden Patrick Hadley 2'41"
- 18** Legend Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky 2'39"
- 19** Hymne à la Vierge Pierre de Villette 4'20"
- 20** Masters in this Hall French trad. 4'15"
- 21** In dulci jubilo German trad. 3'57"
- 22** Deck the Hall Welsh trad. 2'01"
- 23** The Twelve Days of Christmas English trad. 4'46"
- 24** Sir Christèmas William Mathias 1'35"

Directed by
Douglas Lawrence
Rhys Boak organ
Stephen McIntyre piano



Hymne à la Vierge (Hymn to the Virgin)

O all beautiful virgin Mary,
Your soul finds in God the perfect love
He reclothes you in the cloak of Grace
Like a betrothed adorned with her jewels.
Alleluia, Alleluia.

You were born before the hills,
O wisdom of God the Gate of Salvation
Happy are they who walk in your footsteps
Who lend their hearts to the voice of your counsel
Alleluia, Alleluia.

Before the stars you were present
Mother of the Creator in the heavens
When God fixed the bounds of the world you
shared his heart
Being at work with him.
Alleluia, Alleluia.

I will sing your praises, Lord,
For you have taken care of me,
For you have wrapped me in the veil of innocence.

I will sing your praises, Lord,
For you made me before day,
For you made me precede the bursting forth of
springs.

Coda: O all beautiful Virgin Mary.

*A poem by Roland Bouh ret — Music by Pierre de Villette
Translation by Sarah Lawson*

Il est n , le divin Enfant

(Refrain)
*He is born, the divine child,
Play, oboes! Resound, bagpipes!
He is born, the divine child,
Let us sing of his coming.*

For more than four thousand years,
The prophets have promised him to us,
For more than four thousand years,
We have waited for this fortunate day.
(Refrain)

Ah! How beautiful he is! How charming!
Ah! He is perfect in all his graces!
Ah! How beautiful he is! How charming!
How gentle he is, this divine infant!
(Refrain)

A cowshed (stable) is his lodging,
A bit of straw is his bedding,
A cowshed (stable) is his lodging,
How humbling for a God!
(Refrain)

Oh, Jesus! Oh, almighty king!
As a tiny infant you are among us,
Oh, Jesus! Oh, almighty king!
Reign over us completely.

Ave Maris Stella

Hail, O Star of the ocean,
God's own Mother blest,
ever sinless Virgin,
gate of heav'nly rest.

Taking that sweet greeting,
which from Gabriel came,
peace confirm within us,
changing Eve's name.

Break the sinners' fetters,
make our blindness day.
Chase all evils from us,
for all blessings pray.

Show thyself a Mother;
may the Word Divine,
born for us thy Infant,
hear our prayers through thine.

Virgin all excelling,
mildest of the mild,
freed from guilt, preserve us,
meek and undefiled.

Keep our life all spotless,
make our way secure,
till we find in Jesus
joy for evermore.

Through the highest heaven
to the Almighty Three
Father, Son, and Sprit
one same glory be. Amen.

Tryste Noel

The Ox he openeth wide the Doore
And from the Snowe he calls her inne,
And he hath seen her Smile therefore,
Our Ladye without Sinne.
Now soone from Sleepe
A Starre shall leap,
And soon arrive both King and Hinde;
Amen, Amen:
But O, the place co'd I but finde!

The Ox hath husht his voyce and bent
Trew e eyes of Pitty ore the Mow,
And on his lovelie Neck, forspent,
The Blessed lays her Bowe.
Around her feet
Full Warme and Sweete
His bowerie Breath doth meeklie dwell;
Amen, Amen:
But sore am I with Vaine Trav l!

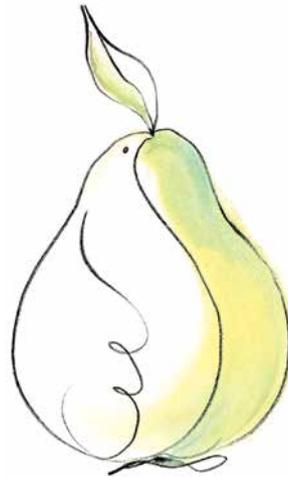
The Ox is host to Juda's stall,
And Host of more than onelie one,
For close she gathereth withal
Our Lorde her littel Sonne.
Glad Hinde and King
Their Gyfte may bring
But wo'd to-night my Teares were there,
Amen, Amen:
Between her Bosom and His hayre!

*Louise Imogen Guiney (1861-1920)
(This original poem was slightly modified by Howells – in the
first two verses 'Amen' becomes 'Ah, me!')*

Ho hum; another carol CD! ah yes, but this one is different. The Choir of Ormond College sings several carols long held in affection around the world but adds to these newer works accompanied by renowned Australian pianist, Stephen McIntyre. The organ is not forgotten as Rhys Boak accompanies four of the carols on the mighty Rieger organ in the Scots' Church, Melbourne. The Scots Church organ was built by the Austrian firm, Rieger Orgelbau in 1999. It has four keyboards and pedals and 64 speaking stops. All the solos on this CD were sung by choir members.

The music comes from England, Ireland, Wales, Germany, Austria, France, Russia and Australia. This CD is perfect for the 12 days of Christmas but you will play many of these pieces throughout the year.

1 Sunny Bank is a variant of I Saw Three Ships, in a lively setting by the English organist Peter Hurford (b. 1930). The constantly shifting metres keep the musicians on their toes, and a novel touch is the addition in one place of "...a few, good, musical, accurate whistlers...", as Hurford desired.



Johann Hermann Schein (1586-1630) was appointed the Thomaskantor in Leipzig, a position JS Bach later held. His setting of the chorale **2** A Babe is Born in Bethlehem is an early example of the chorale tradition that found its apotheosis in the more intricate and famous settings of Bach.

3 Christ was Born on Christmas Day is the mediæval German tune Resonet in Laudibus arranged by David Willcocks with words by JM Neale.

The tune of **4** Child in a Manger is better known as Morning has Broken. However both songs add new words to the traditional Celtic folk tune. John Rutter's sensitive setting features intertwining flute-like lines in the piano part.

5 Cold and Dark is Holy Night by Alfred E. Floyd who was for many years the distinguished organist at St. Paul's Cathedral Melbourne. Floyd successfully transferred the English cathedral style of music to the antipodes. The words of this gentle and rhythmical setting were written by Alfred C. Fryer.

The stirring **6** Torches by South African-born John Joubert (b.1917) is followed by a beautiful and atmospheric setting of **7** In the bleak mid winter by Harold Edwin Darke (1888-1977). The poem is by the Victorian English poet Christina Rossetti (1830-1894). It features the sweet voice of soprano Kate McBride and the baritone/composer Steven Hodgson.

Also included is a rare recording of **8** Tryste Noel by Herbert Howells (1892-1983). The poem by Louise Imogen Guiney (1861-1920) captures the mood (and spelling style) of early English carols. The musical setting, which features Stephen McIntyre and tenor Samuel Qualtrough, is

unmistakably Howells in its harmonies and rich chords.

9 He Smiles Within His Cradle is an Austrian carol, arranged by David Willcocks which features soloist Hildy Essex.

Benjamin Britten's (1913-1976) **10** A Boy was Born is from a longer choral work of the same name. The British public was introduced to his music when this piece was performed live on national radio, kick-starting the long and fruitful career of the then 19 year-old composer.

11 Silent Night began on the road to worldwide fame in provincial Austria as a hurriedly written carol to be sung with guitar. Rutter's setting departs from its origins and features the tenors and the baritone Steven Hodgson.

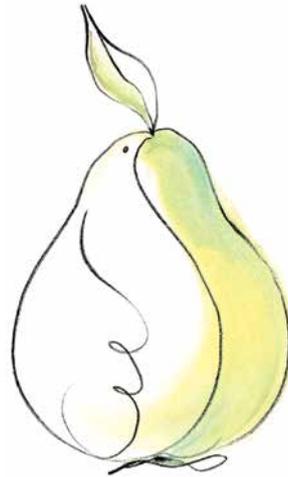
12 A Child this Day is Born is a classic David Willcocks arrangement of a traditional English carol.

13 Il est né le divin enfant French trad. arr. John Rutter is a spirited French Noël featuring baritone Jonathan Wallis. Its melody is derived from a eighteenth century hunting-horn call from the time of Louis XV.

14 Wexford Carol comes from the south-eastern corner of Ireland, with diverse cultural influences including

Gaelic, Anglo-Irish and Norman. Its main centre Wexford Town was founded by Vikings and developed by the Normans. The baritone soloist is Ross Abraham.

15 Ave Maris Stella is a famous Marian hymn from the Middle Ages. This simple, hypnotic setting by Melbourne composer Jonathan Wallis (b. 1974) begins with the plainchant alone and gradually builds to a five-voiced texture at the end.



16 Come thou Redeemer of the Earth took 1600 years to reach us in its present form. The words of this ancient hymn are by St. Ambrose (340-397), the traditional melody was adapted and written down by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), then finally arranged for choir and organ by David Willcocks in 1970.

17 I Sing of a Maiden (1936) is Patrick Hadley's (1899-1973) most well-known composition. Hadley was friendly with other British composers of his time and taught many of the younger generation. This composition is for women's voices; sadly his many arrangements for men's voices have been lost.

18 The Crown of Roses (Legend) (Christ in His Garden) (1884) is by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The words are by Plechtchév, translated by Geoffrey Dearmer.

Pierre Villette (1926-1998) was born in Duclair, France, into a family of musicians, and began studying organ at the age of six. He wrote in many styles, for example the final chord of **19** O toute belle shows a distinctive jazz influence. The soloist is Bianca Scimizzi.

20 Masters in this Hall is a French traditional carol arranged by David Willcocks, with words by William Morris in 1860.

Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795-1856), an excellent English composer, had the misfortune to live between Handel and Sullivan. His arrangement of **21** In dulci júbilo is his most famous work, and was influenced by chorale settings of centuries before. He explained the use of long note values

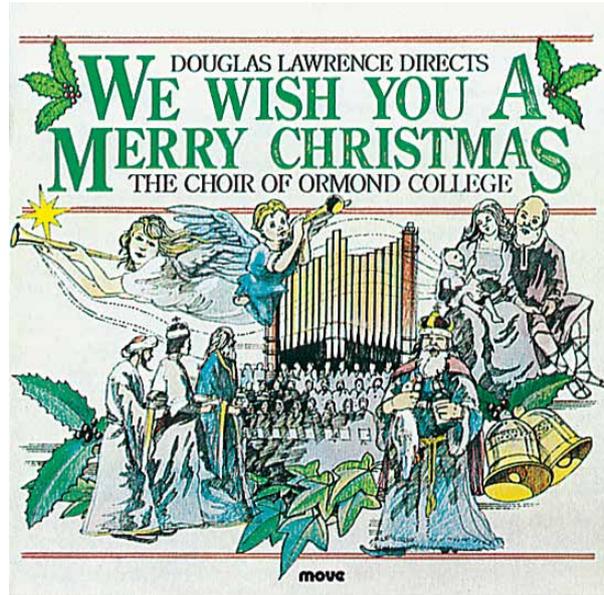
with the following footnote: "The time of the melody should not be taken very slow. It must be borne in mind that the Semibreve and Minim were two of the shortest notes employed by Ancient Composers."

Rutter's arrangement of **22** Deck the Hall (composed before 1784) significantly postdates Willcocks' two earlier settings. Probably mindful of this, Rutter's setting is not at all influenced by the others, and includes interesting sections such as the depiction of bells to bring in the New Year in the third verse.

A setting of **23** The Twelve Days of Christmas is a marathon task, but Rutter is up to the task and he only uses two key changes! The song is in the public domain except for the melody (four notes) of "five gold rings" which were written later by Frederic Austin in 1909 (Novello). A fascinating refutation of the theory that this carol was a coded catechism for Catholics in post-reformation England is available at <http://www.snopes.com/holidays/christmas/12days.asp>

24 Sir Christèmas by William Mathias (1934-1992) was a very versatile Welsh composer. His anthem Let the People Praise Thee was performed to 75 million people at the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana. This

boisterous setting of old words from anon. c.1500 is very characteristic of his harmonically and rhythmically adventurous style.



WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS is another wonderfully varied carol recording by the Ormond choir. It was recorded at St Patrick's Cathedral and as a bonus features six solo organ tracks: *In dulci jubilo* (chorale, trio, double canon and fantasia) by JS Bach, and *Vom Himmel hoch* (trio and fugue) by Pachelbel. These are performed by John Mallinson.

Also available by the Ormond choir is Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, the major work on **BACH BYRD BRITTEN**.

Details at move.com.au

Rhys Boak is the College organist
Special thanks to **Stephen McIntyre**
Thanks to Neil Lawrence and also to the Scots' Church.

Recordings: Martin Wright

Editing: Vaughan McAlley

Cover concept and artwork: Judith Calov

Booklet layout: Move Records

Program notes: Vaughan McAlley and Douglas Lawrence

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