



## **Parry**

---

*Ode on St Cecilia's Day*  
*My Delight*

## **Purcell**

---

*Though knowest, Lord*  
*Funeral Sentences*  
*Jehova*

**Stanford** — *Heraclitus*

**St Michael's Church, Summertown**  
**8pm, Saturday 15th May, 2010**

# Programme

**Purcell**     *Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei*

*Funeral Sentences*

*Thou Knowest, Lord*

Voluntary in G (organ)

**Stanford**     *Heraclitus*

**Parry**     *My Delight and Thy Delight*

— interval of 20 minutes, at which wine will be served —

Please return your glasses to the tables before the concert resumes

**Parry**     *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*

Prelude

*Descend, ye Nine!* (chorus)

*By music* (baritone solo)

*But when our country's cause* (chorus)

*But when through all the infernal bounds* (soprano solo)

*By the streams that ever flow* (chorus)

*He sang, and Hell consented* (baritone solo)

*But soon, too soon* (soprano solo)

*Music the fiercest grief can charm* (chorus)

# Summertown Choral Society

*founded 1961*

Registered Charity 900317

Duncan Saunderson, *conductor*

*with*

Carys Lane, *soprano*

Stephen Burrows, *countertenor*

Guy Cutting, *tenor*

Tom Edwards, *bass*

*and*

Paul Lambert, Chris Hickman,

Duncan MacNaughton, Stephen Cutting, *brass*

Keith Fairbairn, *drum*

Julian Littlewood, *piano*

# Programme notes

In the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries the English musical world was dominated by European composers, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn. By contrast our programme this evening pays tribute to English composers of the 17th and 19th centuries: Purcell, Parry and Stanford (though Stanford was born in Dublin).

**Henry Purcell (1659-1695)** was born in the year before the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 at the start of the strong revival in English music encouraged by Charles II. Having been a boy chorister at the Chapel Royal, among the positions he held were organist of Westminster Abbey and of the Chapel Royal, and 'composer for the king's violins' and 'keeper of the king's wind and keyboard instruments'. By the time of his early death he was already acknowledged as the foremost English composer of his time, having written a wide range of music both secular and sacred: chamber music, anthems for church services and royal and ceremonial occasions, music for the theatre and six dramatic operas including *Dido and Aeneas*.

## ***Jehova, quam multi sunt hostes mei***

This motet, *How many are my enemies*, is a setting of Psalm 3 and is one of only two sacred motets for which Purcell used the Latin, or Vulgate, text. It is in the form of a 'verse' anthem, a dialogue between soloists and chorus, in this case tenor and bass soloists and five-part chorus, with two soprano lines. The choral writing is polyphonic with the voices often moving together in intervals of a third or a fifth.

## ***Funeral Sentences on the Death of Queen Mary***

Queen Mary II, wife of William III, died in December 1694 at the age of 32. For her state funeral Purcell set to music three sentences from the burial service in the Book of Common Prayer:

*Man that is born of a woman  
In the midst of life we are in death  
Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts*

As part of the ceremonies Purcell also wrote a funeral march which was 'sounded before her Chariot' during the procession to Westminster Abbey from the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, where her body lay in state, and a *Canzona* for four trumpets played during the service in the Abbey. The Funeral Sentences, which must be among the most sombre music ever written, were sung again at Purcell's own funeral in November 1695.

There are several manuscript sources for the *Sentences* from which it is clear that, as he did with much of his work, Purcell made a number of revisions to earlier settings and left no single definitive version. Modern editors have arranged these settings, 'verse' anthems in which verses sung by the four soloists are repeated by the chorus, into different versions which indicate the nature and extent of Purcell's revisions. Tonight we sing first a polyphonic, or counterpoint, version of all three *Sentences*, preceded by the March and with the *Canzona* after the first Sentence. This is followed by a homophonic version of the third Sentence *Thou knowest, Lord*, in which the melodic line of the sopranos is supported by chords in the three lower parts.

**Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)**, was born in Dublin and went up to Cambridge as a choral scholar, was organist of Trinity College for nearly 20 years, and professor of music for 37 years until his death. In 1883 he joined Parry at the Royal College of Music and, like him, was a major influence in the musical education of the rising generation of English composers. He was a notably more prolific composer than was Parry, his works including operas, symphonies, concertos, chamber and organ music, church anthems and service settings.

### ***Heraclitus***

The short poem *Heraclitus* is a free translation by William Cory (1823-1892) of an epigram by the 3rd century BC Greek poet Callimachus in memory of another poet Heraclitus of Caria (south-west Turkey). Cory, school master at Eton, classical scholar and poet, published in 1858 a volume of poems, versions of classical Greek and Roman poetry, including *Heraclitus* which soon became popular and was set to music by Stanford.

**Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918)** was recognised from his school days as having a strong musical talent, but at his father's insistence read law and history at Oxford and in the 1870s was an underwriter at Lloyds. However, during these years he was studying composition and musical analysis and in 1880 he published his first major works. In 1883 he was appointed to the newly established Royal College of Music, first as professor and then, from 1895 until his death, as director. From 1900 to 1908 he was professor of music at Oxford. Thus his time and energies were much taken up with teaching and administration, rather than writing music, but he was considered by Stanford and others to be the finest English composer since Purcell. Though his compositions included two oratorios and five symphonies, the modern audience knows little of his work except

his setting of Jerusalem, the majestic ode *Blest Pair of Sirens*, written in 1887, and his anthem *I was glad* composed for the coronation of Edward VII in 1902.

### ***My Delight and Thy Delight***

This is a setting of a poem which first appeared in a volume of *Shorter Poems* published in the 1890s by a contemporary of Parry's, Robert Bridges (1844-1930). Bridges was poet laureate from 1913 until his death, and a number of his poems were set to music by Parry and other English composers.

### ***Ode on St. Cecilia's Day***

St Cecilia is the patron saint of musicians. Her feast day has been marked by music from Purcell, Handel, Parry and Britten and poetry from Dryden and Pope, and it was Pope's poem in her honour which Parry used for his Ode, which he wrote for 'my friends of the Leeds Chorus' in 1889. Alexander Pope (1688-1744), regarded as the foremost English poet and satirist of his day, like his contemporaries was well read in the Greek and Roman classics. Without this classical background it is difficult to understand his Ode on St Cecilia's Day, published in 1708 (or 1713), a difficulty compounded by the stylistic language of the first half of the 18th century.

The poem first extols the power of music, with its varied instruments and sounds, to calm human passion, soothe the troubled breast and rouse to arms, and then goes on to recount in florid language the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice. Eurydice, wife of the renowned musician Orpheus, was bitten by a snake and died. Orpheus followed her down to Hell and, by his music, was able to persuade Proserpine and the powers of Hades to let her go, provided that he did not look back at her until they reached the upper world. He looked back and lost Eurydice for ever. But, where Orpheus' music failed, Cecilia's music can 'fate's severest rage disarm', and has the 'greater power' to charm the 'immortal powers' and 'lift the soul to heaven'.

Parry's setting is for soprano, baritone and chorus, and he divides the music between the three almost as in a 'verse' anthem of Purcell's time. The writing is dramatic, fitting well Pope's descriptions of the fearsome horrors of Hades and the bliss of the Elysian Fields, the echoes of Orpheus' voice calling in vain for Eurydice, and Cecilia's lifting of the soul to heaven.

*Clive Williams*

# The Choir

## Sopranos

Jane Amies, Gillian Atkinson, Judith Atkinson, Wendy Ball, Gillian Beattie, Jayne Bennett, Nicky Boughton, Victoria Cairns, Sue Cloke, Rosemary Dearden, Fiona Duxbury, Jackie Eatock Taylor, Deirdre Gleeson, De Grant, Alison Gunter, Angela Hassall, Ana Henriques, Victoria Lee, Mireille Levy, Adrienne Lingard, Kate Lush, Isidra McFarlane, Sally Prime, Melissa Shorten, Enid Stoye, Penny Ward, Julia Wigg, Beth Wooldridge and Valerie Worth.

## Altos

Diane Benfield, Philippa Berry, Emma Britton, Vicky Bullard, Emma Campbell, Diana Chandler, Gillian Chapman, Elizabeth Dale, Jo Eames, Lotti Ekert, Felicity Feeny, Jane Gordon-Cumming, Hilary Hullah, Eleanor Joslin, Manda Joyce, Beth Knight, Elsa Morgan, Meg Movshon, Anne Murphy, Andy Rimmer, Catrin Roberts, Marion Robertson, Amanda Saville, Jean Smith, Jane Stockton, Gay Sypel, Louise Talbot, Lynda Ware, Jackie Weaver and Jackie Wright.

## Tenors

Philip Booth, Charlie Crombie, Alastair Dent, Hugo Everitt, Aeron Goldby, Richard Haydon, Colin Kilpatrick, Stuart McFarlane, Iain McLean, Andrew Pritchard, Emma Sadler and Roger Sears.

## Basses

Nick Attwood, Christopher Ball, Clive Booth, Andrew Crispus-Jones, Ken Eames, Nigel Hamilton, Simon Jones, Robin Knight, John McLeod, Jean-Louis Metzger, Freddie Partridge, Wolfgang Ritter, Edward Todd, Gordon Waite, Clive Williams, Martyn Wilson and Ed Woodall.

Saturday September 11, New College Chapel, Oxford. 8pm.

*Oxford Liedertafel with James Bowman (countertenor)*

Further details at [www.liedertafel.org](http://www.liedertafel.org)

8pm, Saturday 5 February, 2011

---

Handel, *Messiah*

---

Our next concert will be held on Saturday 5 February 2011 in St Andrew's Church, Oxford. Rehearsals start on Thursday 9th September. New members are welcome. See the website for more details:

[www.summertownchoral.org.uk](http://www.summertownchoral.org.uk)

8pm, Saturday 2 July, 2011

50TH ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION CONCERT

---

*in the Sheldonian Theatre  
with James Gilchrist*

Handel: *Foundling Hospital Anthem*  
and music from works by Brahms, Tippett, Haasen,  
Copland, Ives and Philip Moore (new commission)