



**Louise Rapple Moore** studied conducting at the Conservatoire de Pau in southern France whilst at university and began her conducting career by directing the Reading University Singers. She spent several years in Church music as an organist and choir director and founded Tamesis in 2003. She also directs Tamesis Cathedral Singers, an occasional choir that sings Cathedral Evensongs each year.

Louise is founder and director of Shiplake and Hagbourne Community Choirs, both choirs for singers of all ages and abilities singing a mainly popular repertoire. In October 2013 she was delighted to be recognised for both her work as a Choral Director and her charitable fund-raising efforts by being named Creative Woman of the Year in Sue Ryder's annual 'Women of Achievement' awards at the Madejski Stadium in Reading. In 2017 she gained her LRSM in Choral Conducting via the Advanced Conducting Course with the Association of British Choral Directors.



**Simon Dinsdale** is a former Organ Scholar of Chichester Cathedral, where he accompanied the world-renowned choir regularly during daily services in the cathedral. He moved on to become Director of Music at St. Mary's Choir School, Reigate and organist for its professional choir.

Simon moved to Reading in 1998 and now travels extensively as accompanist, continuo player and organist to a number of choirs including Tamesis, and regularly plays at cathedrals up and down the country. He has appeared as organist with the London Welsh Male Voice Choir and is a regular organist with the Chameleon Arts Orchestra. Concert tours have taken him to Ireland, Germany, Belgium and the USA in recent years; he has broadcast on BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio Berkshire and Classic FM and is frequently in demand for recordings.

Simon counts being accidentally locked in Westminster Abbey one Friday night whilst playing the organ amongst his lifetime's achievements! As sub-organist at The Royal Memorial Chapel, The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst since 2005, Simon has the weekly pleasure of playing the largest Allen digital organ in the UK.

Tamesis Chamber Choir  
presents

# From the heavens

Saturday 24th June 2023  
7.30pm

at Douai Abbey  
Woolhampton



## Tamesis Chamber Choir

### Sopranos

Miranda Bradshaw  
Rebecca Connell  
Clare Garner  
Louise Hill  
Julie Kench  
Joanna Loxton  
Anne Owen  
Suzanne Smith  
Tamsyn Wilson

### Altos

Sarah Finch  
Charlie Hobson  
Catherine Mann  
Emily Reed  
Alison Wilkins

### Tenors

Tim Beavan  
Nick Brown  
Aled Elmore  
Laurence Hicks  
Jude Watts

### Basses

James Allen  
Andy Button  
John Cobb  
Edward Hobson  
Trevor Mansfield  
Patrick Moore  
David Webb

**Tamesis Chamber Choir** was founded in 2003. The choir of around 28 singers has carved a niche in the Berkshire area: members are auditioned each year to maintain the highest standards, and we sing high-quality music with only a few rehearsals for each concert. It's also important to us that we have a lively social aspect!

Tamesis is the Latin name for the River Thames, reflecting our links to Reading and the surrounding area. We regularly perform to raise funds for local and national charities including Macmillan, Sue Ryder, Water Aid, ABF The Soldiers' Charity and Rotary International. The choir has featured several times on local radio and on BBC Radio 3.

Tamesis has been styled 'one of Berkshire's best ensembles' in local press. Our repertoire ranges from sacred to popular music, spanning the centuries from the renaissance period to the present day. Our three CDs, *Spirituals*, *Remembrance* and *Christmas*, will be on sale this evening.

We re-audition formally each September but do sometimes have vacancies during the year, so if you are interested in singing with us, contact Louise on [lourap@gmail.com](mailto:lourap@gmail.com).



Tamesis at Douai in 2017

### Dates for your diaries

Visit [www.tamesischamberchoir.com](http://www.tamesischamberchoir.com)  
for latest news and tickets

Saturday 14th October 2023, 7pm  
Reading University Great Hall

### Joint concert with Trinity Concert Band

We're looking forward to joining Trinity Concert Band again for a concert in Reading University's beautiful Great Hall. We haven't planned the repertoire yet but it will certainly be a rousing occasion so do put the date into your diaries!

Friday 8th December 2023, 6:30pm  
All Saints' Church, Bisham, near  
Marlow, SL7 1RW

### Christmas Carol Concert In aid of St John's Ambulance

Come and join us for our annual carols in aid of this wonderful charity. The perfect evening to get you into the festive spirit - something which seems rather a long way off as I write this in the garden in the sunshine!

## Biebl - Ave Maria

Franz Biebl studied composition and conducting at the Musikhochschule in Munich. He worked as a conductor and music director for several choirs, including the Männerchor (male voice choir) of the Bavarian Broadcasting Corporation. Biebl's compositions often reflect his strong choral background, and he wrote extensively for all kinds of vocal ensembles, including mixed choirs and children's choirs.

Ave Maria was written in 1964 for a firemen's choir to sing at a choral competition with other work-based choirs. The work began to gain popularity from 1970, with recordings by The Harvard Glee Club and Chanticleer. Biebl eventually rearranged the work for mixed voices, launching a popular and well-loved modern choral classic.

## Hawes - Quanta qualia

Patrick Hawes is a British composer born in 1958 in Lincolnshire. Hawes has a local connection - his first job was as a teacher of music and English at Pangbourne College, where he wrote his first major work. He currently lives near the Norfolk coast, and his music is inspired by the beauty of surrounding nature, English literature and heritage, and his Christian faith.

Patrick's older brother Andrew Hawes wrote the text of this piece: O anima mea, Mane! O quanta qualia conventus gaudia erunt. It means: O my soul, Wait! O how great and how wonderful the joys of meeting will be. You may find the music familiar - it was covered by Hayley Westenra on her 2005 hit album *Odyssey*.

## Holst - Psalm 148

Gustav Holst drew inspiration for Psalm 148 from the Psalter, a collection of poetic and religious texts found in the Hebrew Bible. This psalm praises God's creation and calls upon all elements of nature and humanity to join in harmony and worship. You might recognise the main theme of this piece from the hymn *All creatures of our God and King*.

Holst's fascination with spirituality and his affinity for celestial themes make the text a perfect fit for his compositional style - an engaging blend of Romantic and modernist influences, combining lush harmonies and vivid orchestration with innovative structural techniques. The work is loved both as a testament to his exceptional craftsmanship and as a moving expression of praise and awe towards the divine.

## Dubra - Ave Maria I

Latvian composer Rihards Dubra's wrote *Ave Maria I* in 1989, just before the end of the Soviet occupation, expressing an understated joy. The motet's main theme always resolves upwards into the tonic key - eighteenth-century poet and musician Christian Schubart opined that 'full delight lies in E major' and it's easy to agree when listening to this piece! The repetition of the Ave Maria theme builds an atmosphere of spiritual calmness, towards a oneness with God.

Dubra's compositions are fuelled by his philosophical view that the purpose of music is to influence a person through the emotions. He sees himself as a creator of 'pure music, not using... technical tricks.'

*Charlie Hobson (with special thanks to Alison Wilkins)*  
June 2023

## Programme

Hear my prayer, O Lord Henry Purcell

Ascribe unto the Lord Samuel Sebastian Wesley

*INTERLUDE*  
*Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C Major*  
Dietrich Buxtehude  
Organ: John Cobb

Three motets Anton Bruckner  
Os justi  
Locus iste  
Virga Jesse

Richte mich, Gott Felix Mendelssohn

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*INTERVAL*  
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Exalt thyself O God William Byrd

Three motets Charles Villiers Stanford  
Justorum animae  
Coelos ascendit hodie  
Beati quorum via

Ave Maria Franz Biebl

*INTERLUDE*  
*Concerto in A minor, BWV 593 (first movement)*  
JS Bach / Antonio Vivaldi  
Organ: Simon Dinsdale

Quanta qualia Patrick Hawes  
Soprano: Julie Kench

Psalm 148 Gustav Holst

Ave Maria I Rihards Dubra

**A big thank you**  
to Fr Oliver and everyone here at Douai  
Abbey for welcoming us to this beautiful  
venue, and to the wonderful Simon  
Dinsdale for playing for us this evening.



## From the heavens

We are delighted to be back at Douai Abbey at last, after a gap of six years. It's one of our favourite performance venues and we have missed singing here after the intervention of Covid and a bookings backlog! Perhaps it was meant to be - some kind of sign 'from the heavens'? - since this concert marks the end of the twentieth season for Tamesis. We are thrilled to be celebrating a milestone anniversary with you in the peaceful grandeur of this building and indulging our voices in its rich acoustic.

### Purcell - Hear my prayer

*Hear my prayer, O Lord* was most likely composed in the early 1680s while Purcell was organist at the Chapel Royal, a post he took on in 1679. It is one of nearly 70 anthems and services that Purcell composed from 1679 until his early death in 1695.

Scholars deduce from the manuscript, which survives in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, that this is the opening fragment of a never-completed work. The manuscript is in Purcell's own hand and includes supplementary ruled pages in preparation for additional music. This piece is an exquisite expression of the anguish of the text - Hear my prayer O Lord and let my crying come unto thee - a single span of music gradually increasing in tension to a powerful climax.

### Wesley - Ascribe unto the Lord

Samuel Sebastian Wesley was the grandson of prolific hymn composer Charles Wesley, who founded the Methodist church along with his brother, the celebrated preacher John Wesley. As a boy, he was a chorister at the Chapel Royal, where the Master of the Choristers declared him 'the best boy I had ever had.'

*Ascribe unto the Lord* was written around 1851 for a service in aid of Church missions - hence the references to the 'gods of the heathen!' It is based on Psalm 29:1-2, which reads: Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye mighty, Ascribe unto the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

Wesley's musical setting of these verses captures the grandeur and reverence expressed in the biblical text. It has a majestic and uplifting feel, making use of rich harmonies, powerful organ accompaniment and soaring melodies.

### Bruckner - three motets

*Os justi*  
*Locus iste*  
*Virga Jesse*

Bruckner was a simple, country teacher and organist with a deep Catholic faith. By contrast, his musical output was expansive and his composition style was ahead of its time. His choral works are often grand, harmonically rich and dramatic. He makes masterful use of counterpoint and soaring melodies to create a sense of reverence and grandeur to befit the devotional texts.

*Locus iste* (This place was made by God) is a gradual (a chant or hymn written for use in the Eucharist) for the dedication of a Church, written in 1869 while Bruckner was organist at Linz Cathedral. *Os justi* (The just man, in his heart, shall see wisdom from the Lord) is a motet in the Lydian mode, written in 1879. *Virga Jesse* (The rod of Jesse has blossomed) is a text from the Feast of the Annunciation, written in 1885.

## Mendelssohn - Richtete mich Gott

*Richtete mich, Gott* (Guide Me, O God) was composed in 1843. It's based on the first five verses of Psalm 43, imploring God for guidance and strength. Mendelssohn's musical setting is led by the text, with changes of mood reflecting each verse. After the despairing plea to save us from deceitful and wicked men and the anguish of having been cast off in sorrow, the joy and hope of *Sende dein Licht und deine Wahrheit* (Send out your light and your truth) brings wonderful relief. The motet unfolds with a sense of yearning and supplication, gradually building in intensity before reaching a sublime and heartfelt conclusion.

### Byrd - Exalt thyself O God

Byrd's beautiful anthem is a classic of its genre, challenging each choir section to hold fast to their relentless part while maintaining a beautiful blend of sound.

We are particularly proud to perform *Exalt thyself O God* because it was reconstructed and edited by the late Peter James (1940-2016), father of Tamesis alto Alison Wilkins and wife of Heather, who is in the audience tonight. Peter was a renowned choral musician and scholar - his doctoral research was on the verse anthem from Byrd to Tomkins. His talent for researching and reconstructing pieces with missing parts became the basis for his specialist publishing firm, Cathedral Press. Retiring at 55 from his role as Vice Principal at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) due to a hearing condition, he devoted himself anew to his beloved research. Peter produced 57 pieces for Cathedral Press, now held at the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) and performed by cathedrals and church choirs everywhere.

Writing in 1998, Peter described the process of restoration. Initially, "all that was known to have survived of the anthem was its bass part and text." After painstaking research to correlate multiple sources and performing skilful musical first aid, Peter revealed the results: "Here was a high quality, six-part anthem, unperformed and virtually unknown since the 17th century, worthy of being placed alongside such established works as *Sing joyfully unto God*." He was justifiably proud of his work, especially in the context of his lifelong commitment to the Church and liturgical music. "The restoration of one of Byrd's finest and most striking full anthems has been gratifying. It is... rewarding that *Exalt thyself O God*... is once more available to enhance the repertoire of Byrd's sacred music for church performance."

### Stanford - three motets

*Justorum animae*  
*Coelos ascendit*  
*Beati quorum via*

The *Three Motets* are among the most popular works by Stanford (1852-1924). They were published in 1905 but composed around 1890. Edmund Fellowes suggests they were written as anthems to be sung in the Hall of Trinity College Cambridge on feast days.

*Justorum animae* sets verses one to three of the third chapter of the Book of Wisdom, on the theme of eternal peace. The piece's ternary form contains a more animated central section. *Coelos ascendit*, also in ternary form, jubilantly celebrates Christ's ascension. It's set for double choir, with exchanges between the two adding to the energy of the piece, culminating in a triumphant, ascending Amen. *Beati quorum via* sets the first verse of Psalm 119 and is the best known of the motets, regarded by many as one of Stanford's most exceptional works. Beautiful in melody and harmony, it pits the three upper parts against the three lower parts of the choir and contrasts this with sections for all voices.