



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.



Trevor Defferd graduated in Music from Southampton University. Following sixteen years teaching music in secondary schools in Hampshire and Berkshire, he took a Postgraduate Musical Director's course at LAMDA in 1996. He now works as a freelance musician, dividing his time between teaching piano and theatre work as a Musical Director and keyboard player.

Professional work in London includes being Musical Director for Mapp and Lucia at the Jermyn Street Theatre and the revue Sweet Mr Shakespeare in Regent's Park. He has sung, played solo piano and conducted in the Royal Albert Hall and been a rehearsal pianist at the National Theatre. He performs regularly in cabaret at venues such as Crazy Coqs and The Pheasantry and is Aimi Macdonald's regular Musical Director. He played cocktail piano for nearly ten years at The Mill at Sonning, where he recorded his first CD of solo piano music, Out Here On My Own.

Trevor has worked on nearly 200 shows, including 80 as Musical Director. Locally, he has conducted musicals at the Corn Exchange, Newbury and The Hexagon in Reading, as well as The Haymarket and The Anvil in Basingstoke. He is also a Director of the newly-formed Triple Threat Theatre.

Tamesis Chamber Choir
presents

If Music be the Food of Love



Saturday 25th March 2023
7pm

St Mary's Church
Henley-on-Thames



Tamesis Chamber Choir

Sopranos

Miranda Bradshaw
Rebecca Connell
Clare Garner
Louise Hill
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

Andy Button
John Cobb
Andrew Grigg
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.

A big thank you

to Julie and the authorities here at St Mary's Church for their help and for the use of this beautiful venue, and to the wonderful Trevor Defferd for accompanying us this evening.

Mäntyjärvi's wild and resounding setting of the three witches' incantation of *Double double, toil and trouble* expresses their glee and anticipation as they hurl a horrid smorgasbord of ingredients into the cauldron and bring the spell to its climactic conclusion.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

A *summer sonnet* is one of Shakespeare's 154 published sonnets - it isn't part of a play. Its opening line is one of the most famous in poetry. Kevin Olson composed this arrangement for a planned all-Shakespeare concert in Chicago in 2002. It's in the bossa nova style, using the choir as an energetic backing band to the soloist who woos his fair maid.

Charlie Hobson and ChatGPT, March 2023

Dates for your diaries

Visit www.tamesischamberchoir.co.uk
for latest news and tickets

Saturday 24th June 2023, 7:30pm
Douai Abbey, Woolhampton

Tamesis Summer Concert

We are delighted to be returning to Douai Abbey for the first time in six years this June! Our concert will celebrate some of the best choral music ever written and will include composers such as Byrd, Wesley, Stanford, Holst, Mendelssohn, Bruckner and more.

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!

Programme

Twelfth night (1601-1602)

A comedy about mistaken identity and love triangles. Shipwrecked Viola disguises herself as a man and falls in love with Duke Orsino, who loves Olivia. Olivia falls for Viola's male disguise, creating a web of confusion and humour that eventually resolves into happy couples.

In *Songs and Sonnets*, Shearing sets *Hey ho the wind and the rain*, Feste the Fool's cautionary tale, reminding us that at every stage of life, there are disappointments. The choral refrain uses striking harmonies to highlight the recurring wind and rain. The song is also notable for its use of the word "toss-pots"! In *Come away, death*, Mäntyjärvi's poignant harmonies and tonality express the cruelty of unrequited love.

The merry wives of Windsor (1600-1602)

Falstaff, a boastful knight, is attempting to seduce two wealthy women. The wives, however, conspire to humiliate and outwit him, leading to a comical series of events that ultimately results in Falstaff's comeuppance.

Shearing's *Fie on Sinful fantasy* from *Songs and Sonnets* is over in a minute, castigating Falstaff for his lust in a driving, urgent setting that fades out along with the lyrics of the fairies' song. *Live with me and be my love* aka *The passionate shepherd to his love* is a popular poem that was actually written by Marlowe, a contemporary of Shakespeare. Perhaps because of this, Shearing's collection title *Songs and Sonnets* doesn't claim they're all by Shakespeare. There is a connection though - fragments of this exuberant song, which was very popular at the time, appear in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

A winter's tale (1609-1611)

A play about the jealousy and redemption of King Leontes, who falsely accuses his wife of infidelity and abandons their newborn daughter. Years later, a series of revelations and coincidences bring about a happy ending and family reunion.

When daffodils begin to peer celebrates the springing of spring and the rising of sap. Autolycus sings of tumbling in the hay with "my aunts" - not blood relatives in Shakespearian slang, but prostitutes. Shearing's vigorous musical setting in *Songs and Sonnets* evokes energy and desire.

The Tempest (1610-1611)

A sorcerer named Prospero uses his powers to create a storm that shipwrecks his enemies on his island. Through magic and manipulation, he seeks to regain his rightful place, while also exploring themes of forgiveness, redemption, and the transformative power of art.

Full fathom five, Ariel's eulogy for Ferdinand, evokes a mysterious and other-worldly atmosphere. Vaughan Williams offers a haunting melody and ethereal bells to chime with the lyrics. Wood's 1911 version is more lighthearted in approach, in the style of a madrigal.

The beautiful language of *The cloud capp'd towers* inspired Vaughan Williams to write lush harmonies and a soaring melody, fading to nothing as Prospero's soliloquy declares the transience of human achievements.

Macbeth (1606)

Scottish general Macbeth receives a prophecy that he will become king. Driven by his ambitious wife, he murders the king and others to secure his position. Guilt and paranoia lead to his downfall, and the rightful heir takes the throne.

Blow blow, thou winter wind Thomas Arne

Full fathom five Charles Wood

Three Shakespeare Songs Ralph Vaughan Williams
Full fathom five
The cloud capp'd towers
Over hill, over dale

INTERLUDE

Come away, death Roger Quilter
Baritone: David Webb, piano: Louise Rapple Moore

Two Shakespeare Songs Matthew Harris
Who is Sylvia? Tenor: Aled Elmore
Tell me, where is fancy bred?

INTERLUDE

Emilia's monologue from Othello, Act IV scene iii
Joanna Loxton

Three Shakespeare Songs Jaakko Mäntyjärvi
Come away, death
Lullaby
Double double, toil and trouble

A Summer Sonnet Kevin Olson
Tenor: Tim Beavan

INTERVAL

It was a lover and his lass Thomas Morley

Song for Athene John Tavener

INTERLUDE

O mistress mine Roger Quilter
Baritone: David Webb, piano: Louise Rapple Moore

Songs and Sonnets George Shearing
Live with me and be my love
When daffodils begin to peer
It was a lover and his lass
Spring
Who is Sylvia?
Fie on sinful fantasy
Hey ho, the wind and the rain
Bass guitar: Patrick Moore

INTERLUDE

Sonnets 116 and 130
Let me not to the marriage of true minds
My mistress's eyes are nothing like the sun
Andrew Grigg and Louise Rapple Moore

Sigh no more, ladies Roderick Williams

Choral Medley from West Side Story
Bernstein/Sondheim arr. Len Thomas

If music be the food of love...

Ever at the cutting edge, Tamesis has ventured into the world of artificial intelligence (AI) to bring you this evening's programme notes, using the recently launched ChatGPT app to generate a 40 word summary of each Shakespeare play.

ChatGPT, write me a sonnet about a concert called 'If music be the food of love'...

When music fills the air, my heart takes flight,
A symphony of sound that knows no bounds,
It fills my soul with joy and pure delight,
And lifts me up to where true love abounds.
For music is the food that feeds the heart,
A nourishment that all can partake,
It gives new life, a chance for a fresh start,
A journey that one's spirit can undertake.
In love, the melody takes hold and guides,
A passion that no other can replace,
It moves our souls and in us it abides,
And keeps our hearts in a constant embrace.
So let the music play and fill the air,
For in its sweet embrace, we all can share.

ChatGPT, 17/3/23

In tonight's programme, 21 of our 22 choral pieces are drawn from 13 of Shakespeare's total output of 38 known plays. They're listed below in chronological order, based on the estimated date of the first performance.

Two gentlemen of Verona (1590-1591)

A comedy that tells the story of two friends, Proteus and Valentine, and their romantic entanglements. The play features themes of love, loyalty, and friendship, and is known for its complex plot and witty dialogue.

Our two settings of *Who is Sylvia?* offer contrasting interpretations. Matthew Harris extols her virtues in the jazz style, with an energetic and besotted tenor soloist backed by the choir. Shearing's gentler arrangement is more introspective and loving. It's from *Songs and Sonnets*, first performed in 1999, with John Rutter conducting and Shearing at the piano.

Shearing was a British jazz pianist and composer. The cycle is notable for Shearing's inventive and sophisticated jazz harmonies, which provide a modern and fresh take on Shakespeare's classic poetry. *Who is Sylvia?* has a more traditional feel than some of the other arrangements in the seven-song cycle.

Love's labour's lost (1594-1595)

The King of Navarre and three of his lords vow to forgo the pleasures of the flesh for three years of study. In this comedy, their vows are soon tested when the Princess of France and her ladies arrive on the scene.

Shearing's *Spring*, from *Songs and Sonnets*, gambols through the jaunty verses and finishes each on a cautionary note with an emphatic reminder that usurping by cuckoos (and cuckolds) is a less welcome consequence of spring exuberance.

Romeo and Juliet (1594-1597)

In this tragic love story set in Verona, Italy, the young lovers from feuding families, secretly marry. But their happiness is short-lived: their families' feud leads to their tragic deaths.

The *Medley from West Side Story* brings together some of the best-loved numbers from the 1957 hit musical inspired by Romeo and Juliet.

A midsummer night's dream (1595-1596)

A group of lovers and amateur actors become entangled in a magical forest where fairies manipulate reality, causing chaos and confusion before everything resolves happily.

In *Over hill, over dale*, Vaughan Williams sets the Fairy's Song to Puck. It's a joyful and ethereal piece, which gallivants through the nocturnal forest and fades out into the distance. Mäntyjärvi too gives the fairies voice, in their protective *Lullaby* to their Queen. The composer says, "it is a soft and tranquil mood piece in Siciliano rhythm."

The merchant of Venice (1596-1597)

In 16th century Venice, a Jewish moneylender named Shylock lends money to a Christian merchant named Antonio, but demands a pound of his flesh as collateral. A trial ensues, with themes of justice, mercy and prejudice explored throughout.

In his own words, Matthew Harris "indulges in merry Elizabethan madrigal tradition" for *Tell me, where is fancy bred?* (It's hard to resist answering, "In the fancy bakery!")

Much ado about nothing (1598-1599)

In Messina, Italy, two couples navigate misunderstandings and deception while trying to fall in love. Meanwhile, a group conspires to ruin a woman's reputation. Ultimately, truth is revealed, love prevails, and the villain is punished.

Baritone Roderick Williams is a man of many talents: his whimsical arrangement of *Sigh no more, ladies* is as light-hearted and brittle as Shakespeare's lyrics. Conceived and completed during train journeys, the score carries a note "Melody from c1977-78. Banbury to London / London to Banbury 3 May 2022."

As you like it (1599-1600)

When Rosalind is banished by her uncle, she and her cousin flee to the forest of Arden, disguising themselves as men. There, they encounter love, comedy, and philosophical musings, before everyone returns to court for a joyful resolution.

English composer Arne was renowned for his art songs, often used on the stage in his 18th century heyday. In *Blow blow thou winter wind*, his arrangement reflects the superficially positive mood of the words rather than the negativity of the underlying message about the extent of human failings.

Shearing treats us to a jauntily swung jazz version of *It was a lover and his lass*, from his *Songs and Sonnets*. While Morley's madrigal setting pre-dates it by four centuries, its syncopation sounds surprisingly modern and fresh. Morley uses major tonality with dance rhythms and imitation to express a joyful text about a young couple in love.

Hamlet (1599-1602)

Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, seeks revenge on his uncle Claudius, who murdered his father to usurp the throne. Hamlet's hesitation and feigned madness lead to tragedy, with many characters dying before he finally exacts his revenge.

Tavener's *Song for Athene* is subtitled 'Alleluia. May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest,' a line from Hamlet. Written in 1993 in memory of a young family friend, Athene Hariades, the work is known for its hauntingly beautiful and deeply spiritual qualities. It was performed during the funeral of Princess Diana in 1997.