



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

musical director:
Louise Rapple Moore

presents

Organs for the Organ

Saturday 29th June 2024
English Martyrs Church
7:30pm

www.tamesischamberchoir.com



Tamesis Chamber Choir

Sopranos

Rebecca Connell-Bloomer
Clare Garner
Vicky Elmore
Louise Hill
Tanya Houghton
Julie Kench
Joanna Loxton
Anne Owen
Miranda Phillips
Suzanne Smith

Altos

Emily Cooper
Sarah Finch
Charlie Hobson
Alison James
Emily Reed

Tenors

Tim Beavan
Nick Brown
Laurence Hicks
Jude Watts

Basses

James Allen
Andy Button
John Cobb
Trevor Mansfield
Patrick Moore
Stephen Nicholls

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.



Dates for your diaries
Visit www.tamesischamberchoir.com
for latest news and tickets

Saturday 30th November 2024, 7pm
venue to be confirmed

People, look East!
A concert of Advent music

We are looking forward to preparing a concert of some of the glorious music that has been composed to celebrate Advent over the past few centuries.

Thursday 12th December 2024, 7:30pm
Eton College Chapel

Christmas Carol Concert
in aid of Thames Hospice

We are delighted to be singing once again for the wonderful Thames Hospice at their biennial charity carol concert in this fabulous venue. Tickets sell out fast for this popular event, so keep an eye on our website and social media for details nearer the time.

Tuesday 17th December 2024, 7pm
Wellington College Chapel

Christmas Carol Concert
in aid of St John's Ambulance

A fundraiser for another worthy charity, we are back in the beautiful Chapel at Wellington College for this not-to-be-missed Christmas event. Our website will direct you to ticket details in the autumn.

different aspect to his music in the virtuosic force and rhythms of his short anthem, *O clap your hands*, composed in 1973. We were delighted to hear this week that he has been awarded a richly-deserved knighthood in the King's birthday honours.

Contemporary composer Eric Whitacre's *With a lily in your hand* sets a love poem by Federico Garcia Lorca to exciting Spanish flamenco rhythms. Whitacre's performance directions ask the choir to contrast the fluid texture of water with the searing energy of fire, for an elemental feel.

Eyes

Our programme takes an entertaining turn with these two great arrangements of modern classics: the Broadway favourite *Smoke gets in your eyes* and Van Morrison's toe-tapping *Brown-eyed girl*.

Heads

The Call of Wisdom by Will Todd was commissioned by the Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral for the Diamond Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II. We are interpreting 'wisdom' as a characteristic of the head for our concert tonight. It is a reverent tribute to the monarch's intelligence and attitude of service. British choral music director and composer Walford Davies set the short prayer *God be in my head* for four-part choir in 1910.

Bodies

In context of our theme, we consider the body as a collection of organs. So, we present Mawby's *Ave Verum Corpus* (Hail, blessed body,) an atmospheric contemporary setting that builds to soaring, joyful peaks of sound. Bairstow's dramatic and mysterious Introit *Let all mortal flesh keep silence* (1906) makes a collective call to our embodied existence. One of his 'Four Motets', Duruflé's *Ubi caritas* is composed around a Gregorian chant melody and has us gathered in one body (Simul ergo cum in unum congregamur.)

Monteverdi's popular late Renaissance motet *Beatus Vir* (Blessed is the man) celebrates the entire being of the virtuous man, with further reference to his heart in the text. And in Parsons' setting of *Ave Maria* from the Tudor era, Mary's grace and purity is celebrated, as well as the blessings of her womb (benedictus fructus ventri tuae). Listen out for the exquisite Amen coda.

Charlie Hobson, June 2024

A big thank you

to Sarah Finch and the clergy and congregation of English Martyrs for their welcome to this lovely Church, and for offering us refreshments this evening. Thanks also, as always, to the incomparable Simon Dinsdale for playing for us this evening.

Programme

God be in my head Henry Walford Davies

Beatus vir Claudio Monteverdi
Sopranos: Julie Kench and Joanna Loxton, tenors:
Nick Brown and Jude Watts, bass: Stephen Nicholls

Ave Maria Robert Parsons

INTERLUDE

Marche triomphale: Nun danket alle Gott
Sigfrid Karg-Elert
Organ: Simon Dinsdale

Ave verum corpus Colin Mawby

Let all mortal flesh keep silence Edward Bairstow

Ubi caritas Maurice Duruflé

Hymn to St Cecilia Benjamin Britten
Soprano: Joanna Loxton, alto: Charlie Hobson,
tenor: Nick Brown, bass: Patrick Moore

INTERVAL

O clap your hands John Rutter

Upon your heart Eleanor Daley

Crown my heart James Whitbourn

The call of wisdom Will Todd

INTERLUDE

Toccata in seven John Rutter
Organ: Simon Dinsdale

With a lily in your hand Eric Whitacre

One hand, one heart/Somewhere
Stephen Sondheim/Leonard Bernstein
Tenor: Jude Watts

Smoke gets in your eyes
Jerome Kern/Otto Harbach arr. David Blackwell
Soprano: Julie Kench, tenor: Tim Beavan

Brown-eyed girl Van Morrison arr. Deke Sharon
Tenor: Tim Beavan

Heart and soul Frank Loesser/Hoagy Carmichael
arr. Roger Emerson

Organs for the organ

We're delighted to lend our voices to the worthy cause of restoring English Martyrs' beautiful Holdich organ, whose eye-catching blue pipes you can see in the church tonight. Our choral repertoire includes many liturgical works with magnificent organ accompaniments, so we are strong advocates for the preservation of these splendid instruments in community churches like this one. When the work is complete, we look forward to returning to join this organ in music-making of renewed power and tunefulness!

Our programme tonight is therefore themed around organs, either musical or bodily. We invite you to join us on a musical journey that embraces a wide range of choral styles, from ancient to modern, featuring hands, hearts, heads, eyes and more!

About the English Martyrs Organ

George Maydwell Holdich built this organ in 1855. It's a well-travelled instrument, as it began its musical career in Aldershot, moving to Farnborough and Haslemere before it was installed at English Martyrs in 1981 by the influential organ restorer Saxon Aldred.

Holdich organs were known for their meticulous craftsmanship and rich tonal quality. They often featured ornate cases and fine woodwork. The company was innovative in its designs, incorporating new mechanical and acoustic techniques to enhance the performance and sound of their organs. You can find out more about the organ and other fundraising activities to support its restoration on the English Martyrs website at <https://englishmartyrsrdg.com/>

Hymn to St Cecilia

The centrepiece of our concert is Britten's *Hymn to St Cecilia*. Benjamin Britten's birthday fell on St Cecilia's feast day, 22nd November. His friend WH Auden composed the poem *Hymn to St Cecilia* with this knowledge and sent it to Britten to set to music, while he was voyaging back to England from America in 1942.

Auden's poem celebrates Cecilia as patron saint of music. It's a sophisticated and grandiose piece of writing, packed with classical and religious allusions and beautiful language, which Britten skilfully amplifies and embellishes in his musical setting.

The legend of St Cecilia dates from Roman times. A maiden who took vows of chastity, she was martyred for her Christian faith. Her association with music came about later, when artists portrayed her with musical instruments and especially the organ. It's thought that the link may have arisen from inaccuracies in translations of the Latin document *The Acts of St Cecilia!* She was proclaimed patroness of church music at the end of the sixteenth century.

Unpacking the meaning of Auden's poem is a challenge! You may consider that it is enough to enjoy the richness of the interwoven words and music and to be entertained by the contrasting styles of each section. For the purposes of this concert, the opening section makes direct and specific reference to our organ theme:

*And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.*

Auden proceeds to contrast the musical achievements of the martyred and chaste Cecilia with the response of sensual Aphrodite, who is 'excited' by the music.

The stanzas of the poem make more sense with the knowledge that they variously express the voices of a third party narrator, of music itself, of St Cecilia, of fallen humanity and of prayer for redemption. The refrain that recurs at the end of each main section is a clear exhortation to music's patron saint to bless human composers with extra talent.

*Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire.
Translated daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.*

The lightly dancing second section puts words in the mouth of music itself, as a celestial sprite who transcends mortal concerns in its pure beauty and spirit. Music can accompany humans on their journey of joy or suffering, but has no power to change it.

*I cannot grow, I have no shadow to run away from,
I only play...
I shall never be different. Love me.*

The third section begins tensely, evoking humankind in a drained and exhausted state. Auden's words may reflect the pervasive climate of fear and disruption as the Second World War unfolded. It also references the classical idea of humanity's fall from grace, leading to an inability to hear the beautiful harmonies of music that emanated from the celestial spheres.

*Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released
And Dread borne whole and normal like a beast
Into our world of truths that never change.*

The plea of mortals to 'Restore our fallen day; O rearrange' is answered by St Cecilia herself in a tender soprano solo, addressing her naive 'children, casual as birds' who have wrought destruction through ignorance and silliness.

Anguished and regretful, acknowledging their folly, humankind receives the blessing of music from Cecilia in consolation: 'O weep child, weep, O weep away the stain.' She takes the voice of music, as a violin, a drum, a flute and a trumpet, to bequeath her message of atonement. She offers hope for a future with the inspirational gift of music to sustain and transport the mortal world to immortal heights.

Corporeal organs

Hearts

The heart has always appealed to composers from classical to pop - tonight we present some very different treatments. Eleanor Daley's *Upon your heart* was composed in 1999 for a wedding anniversary celebration. It has a fittingly tender and devoted mood. Whitbourn's *Crown my heart*, also written in 1999, is based on the theme music of the BBC 2 series Cathedral Calls. It's a short and sweet anthem marked as 'suitable for services of marriage and blessing.'

There's a taste of the passionate romance of the musical theatre hit *West Side Story* in our extracts from Bernstein's *One hand, one heart/Somewhere*. You may know *Heart and Soul* as a simple piano duet: the popular song version was composed by Hoagy Carmichael to Frank Loesser's lyrics in 1938. The chord progression may also be familiar - it's a staple of 1950s and 60s doo-wop hits.

Hands

If your main acquaintance with John Rutter is through his perennially popular Christmas carol arrangements and lyrical *Requiem*, you will hear a