

King's College London Chapel

THE FOURTH  
CHOIR

# circle songs

on midsummer's eve

**20 June 2014**

**Artistic Director, Dominic Peckham**

The Fourth Choir welcomes you to

# Circle Songs

On Midsummer's Eve

The Fourth Choir perform a concert of choral soundscapes in the round in The Chapel at King's College London.

## **Artistic Director**

Dominic Peckham

## **Associate Conductor**

Andrea Brown

Featuring our

## **Composer in Residence**

Alexander Campkin



The performance will include the world première of “Unleash the beauty of your eyes” a setting of a love poem by the Greek lyric poet Sappho by acclaimed British composer Alexander Campkin. The première will open the second half of the concert and will be performed around the statue of Sappho (by German sculptor Ferdinand Seeboeck) located in the Entrance Hall of the King's Building.

# Programme

## St Nicholas

Music and Text: St Godric (c.1069 – 1170), arranged by Michael McGlynn

Born in Norfolk, Saint Godric, was a ship-owner and traveller, and after visiting Rome, Jerusalem and other holy places as a pilgrim, he completed the circle and returned to England where he became a hermit, living a life of extreme asceticism for almost 60 years. Although “entirely ignorant of music” according to his first biographer, he had visions in which he heard the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene and Saint Nicholas of Bari singing songs which they taught him and which he sang to more learned people who then wrote them down. These songs are reputed to be the earliest English songs to have survived with their music.

Saint Nicholas of Bari has been transformed by the vagaries of cultural history into Santa Claus (via his name in Dutch, Sint Niklass) but in the twelfth century, he was the patron saint of mariners and merchants, hence Godric’s devotion to him. The song had no contemporary associations with Christmas and is more appropriate to be sung in midsummer in memory of Saint Godric, the first English composer whose music has come down to us, whose feast day falls on May 21st.

Written in Middle English, the words of the chant are:

*Saint Nicholas, God’s darling,  
graciously prepare for us beautiful dwellings.  
By the merits of your birth, by the merits of your bier,  
Saint Nicholas, bring us safely there.*

## Cantate Domino

Music: Johann Crüger (1598 – 1662)

Text: Psalm 98 (translation from the King James Bible)

Johan Crüger was a German composer who was Cantor of the Nikolaikirche, the oldest church in Berlin, for 40 years. As Cantor, he was responsible for all music in the church including the choir, for whom he wrote many well-known hymns.

*Cantate Domino canticum novum;  
quia mirabilia fecit.  
salvavit dextera sua et brachio sancto.*

*O sing unto the Lord a new song;  
for he hath done marvellous things:  
his right hand, and his holy arm,  
hath gotten him the victory.*

## **Crux Fidelis**

Music: King John IV of Portugal (1604 – 1656)

Text: The eighth stanza of Pange Lingua Gloriosi, a sixth-century Latin hymn by Saint Venantius Fortunatus

John IV was proclaimed King of Portugal in the revolution of 1640 when Portugal freed itself from Spanish rule. By the time of his death, having recovered Brazil from the Dutch, the Portuguese empire had reached its zenith. His daughter, Catherine of Braganza, married Charles II and was Queen of England between 1662 and 1685.

John was a patron of the arts, a composer and a sophisticated writer on music, publishing amongst other works a defence of Palestrina. During his reign he collected one of the largest libraries in the world which sadly was destroyed in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755. No known manuscript of Crux fidelis exists so perhaps it too was destroyed in the earthquake: it was first published in France in 1869.

*Crux fidelis,  
inter omnes  
arbor una nobilis;  
nulla silva talem profert,  
fronde, flore, germine.  
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,  
dulce pondus sustinet!*

*Faithful Cross,  
amongst all others,  
this is the only noble tree;  
No other wood brings forth  
such foliage, flowers and seeds.  
Sweet the wood, sweet the nails  
and sweet the weight that's hung on thee!*

## **O Magnum Mysterium**

Music: Tomas Luis de Victoria (c.1548 – 1611)

Text: Liturgical Responsory from Christmas Matins

Victoria travelled from his native Spain to Rome at the age of seventeen where he studied with Palestrina, was ordained a priest and became one of the most influential composers of the Counter-Reformation.

*O magnum mysterium,  
et admirabile sacramentum,  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,  
jacentem in praesepio!  
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera  
meruerunt portare  
Dominum Christum.  
Alleluia.*

*O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the new-born Lord,  
lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear  
Christ the Lord.  
Alleluia!*

## Versa Est in Luctum

Music: Alonso Lobo (1555 – 1617)

Text: Book of Job, Chapter 30: translation from the King James Bible.

Lobo was a Spanish composer and contemporary of Victoria who considered him his equal as a composer. He was maestro de capilla at the Cathedrals of first Seville, then Toledo. This is his most famous composition and was written for the funeral of King Phillip II who died in 1598. The verses from the Book of Job are suitably funereal:

*Versa est in luctum cithara mea,  
et organum meum in vocem flentium.  
Parce mihi Domine,  
nihil enim sunt dies mei.*

*My harp is tuned for lamentation  
and my flute to the voice of those who weep.  
Spare me, O Lord,  
for my days are as nothing.*

## Tourdion

Text and Music: Anonymous

A “tourdion” is a lively dance which was popular in France in the 16th century. The name comes from the French verb “tordre” - to twist and turn - so it appears the French were doing the Twist four centuries before anyone else. Pierre Attaignant, the French Royal music publisher, popularized Tourdions by including several in his first collection of dance music, published in 1530. This is the most famous of these and was based on an anonymous melody entitled “La Magdalena”. The tune was later rearranged as a four-part vocal piece with appropriately bibulous words and the atmosphere of a lively party is further enhanced by the upper and lower voices singing different words simultaneously.

Quand je bois du vin claret  
Ami, tout tourne, tourne, tourne,  
Aussi désormais je bois  
Anjou ou Arbois.  
Chantons et buvons,  
A ce flacon faisons la guerre,  
Chantons et buvons  
Mes amis buvons donc.

*When I drink a Claret Wine,  
friends, everything turns, turns, turns,  
so from now on I'm drinking wine  
from Anjou or Arbois.  
Let's sing and drink,  
let's make war on this bottle,  
let's sing and drink,  
my friends, drink up then.*

Le bon vin nous a rendu gais,  
oublions nos peines, chantons!  
Buvons bien, buvons mes amis,  
trinquons, buvons, gaiement chantons!  
En mangeant de gras jambon,  
À ce flacon faisons la guerre!

*Good wine makes us gay,  
let's sing and forget our troubles!  
Lets drink my friends,  
drink, clink and gaily sing!  
While eating fat ham,  
let's make war on this bottle!*

## **Mit Fried und Freund fahr ich dahin**

Music: Adam Gumpelzhaimer (1559 – 1625)

Text: Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)

The wonderfully-named Adam Gumpelzhaimer was a Bavarian composer who became Cantor of the Augsburg Cathedral at the age of 22, a post he maintained until his death over forty years later. Luther's verse is a paraphrase of the Nunc Dimittis.

*Mit Fried und Freud fahr ich dahin  
In Gottes Wille.*

*Getrost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,  
sanft und stille.*

*Wie Gott mir verheißen hat,  
der Tod ist mein Schlaf worden.*

*With peace and joy I go on my way  
in God's will.*

*My heart and mind are comforted,  
peaceful and calm.*

*As God promised me,  
death has become my sleep.*

## **Subvenite Sancti Dei**

Music: Antonio Musch (1809 – 1888)

Text: the Gregorian Requiem Mass

Antonio Musch was an Italian priest and composer who was for many years the organist in the Cathedral in Trento in the Italian Alps. "Subvenite" is a movement from the Requiem Mass and is sung after the end of the Mass when the final farewells to the deceased are made.

*Subvenite, Sancti Dei,  
accurrite, Angeli Domini,  
suscipientes animam eius,  
offerentes eam in conspectu Altissimi.*

*Come to his aid, Saints of God,  
rush to meet him, Angels of the Lord;  
gather his soul to you  
and place it in the sight of the Most High.*

## **Ah Robin**

Text and Music: William Cornysh (1465 – 1523)

Cornysh was an English composer, dramatist, actor, and poet who reached the peak of his profession by becoming Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal during the reign of the young Henry VIII. As part of his duties, he was responsible for the musical and dramatic entertainments at court and during important diplomatic events, such as at the Field of the Cloth of Gold when Henry and Francis I of France entertained each other lavishly for two weeks. On the penultimate day of the festivities, a contemporary account tells us that

“a large and well-appointed chapel was set up on the grounds, decorated with ornate hangings and filled with statues of saints and holy relics. Later the lord cardinal said mass in the chapel – which had been built and fitted out entirely at King Henry’s expense. During the service the chaplains of both kings took it in turns to sing the refrains, which was heavenly to listen to. The mass completed, the kings and queens, together with their noble retinues, proceeded to the gallery beside the chapel to dine in great style.”

We may assume that Cornysh was in charge of the music on that occasion but his life was not always passed amongst such glamorous surroundings. His only surviving poem was written in Fleet Prison and in it he claims that he was convicted by false information and thus wrongly accused (though it is not known what the accusation was). Perhaps the rather melancholy *Ah Robin*, in which a happy and an unhappy lover compare their experiences, was also written in the gloomy surroundings of Fleet Prison.

*“Ah, Robin, gentle, Robin,  
Tell me how thy leman (lover) doth and thou shalt know of mine.”*

*“My lady is unkind I wis, Alack why is she so?  
She lov’th another better than me,  
and yet she will say no.”*

*“I cannot think such doubleness for I find women true,  
In faith my lady lov’th me well she will change for no new.”*

## **Calmes des Nuits**

Music: Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)

Text: Anonymous

*Calmes des nuits,  
fraicheur des soirs,  
Vaste scintillement des mondes,  
Grand silence des antres noirs  
Vous charmez les âmes profondes.  
L’éclat du soleil, la gaité,  
Le bruit plaisent aux plus futiles;  
Le poète seul est hanté  
Par l’amour des choses tranquiles.*

*Still periods of the nights,  
coolness of the evenings,  
Vast shimmering of the worlds,  
Great silence of black caverns  
You charm profound spirits.  
The burst of sunlight, merriment,  
Noise pleases the more frivolous;  
The poet alone is haunted  
By the love of quiet things.*

INTERVAL

## **Unleash the beauty of your eyes (World Première)**

Music: Alexander Campkin (b.1984)

Text: Sappho (630 - 570 BC) translation by the composer

The Fourth Choir is delighted to present its first commission, written especially for the Choir by the award-winning British composer and conductor, Alexander Campkin. Campkin has previously been commissioned by, amongst others, The Royal Opera House, the BBC Performing Arts Fund, the Southbank Centre, Vokalkapelle Munich and the Arts Councils of Britain and Sweden. His work has been performed and broadcasted in over thirty countries throughout Europe, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and South America.

The text is by Sappho, the ancient Greek poet from Lesbos. Although most of her work has been lost, her reputation in ancient times was immense: much admired by Horace and Catullus, Plato called her the tenth Muse.

*I stand before you, face to face,  
Captivated by your sight,  
Your soft laughter,  
And your voice most gentle.*

*When I see you  
A dead trembling overwhelms me,  
And everything else is darkness.  
I am silenced.*

*Then my heart flutters wildly.  
I hear my pulse thundering  
With the sweat of emotion.  
Fire tingles through my flesh.*

It is a particularly happy coincidence that the entrance hall to the Kings Building contains an enormous statue of Sappho. The statue, together with the statue of Sophocles across the hall, was presented to the College by the executors of Frida Mond, wife of a German industrialist who settled in England in the 1860s and who founded the company that eventually became ICI. Frida Mond used her husband's great wealth to patronise the arts, her particular enthusiasms being for literature and art. In these cultural interests, she was aided and abetted by her still more gifted former school-friend Henrietta Hertz (1846 - 1913), who had been summoned from Germany to keep her company in the early, lonely days in England, and had remained with her ever since. The Monds bought the Palazzo Zuccari in Rome for Henrietta and the three of them created an artistic salon there which was regularly attended by artists, musicians and writers, such as the poet D'Annunzio. It was in Rome in 1893 that the Monds commissioned the



Sappho statue from the German sculptor, Ferdinand Seeboeck (1864 – 1952) and it is not hard to imagine that Frida and Henrietta, with their passionate interests in art and literature, were the guiding spirits behind the commission. The statue has graced the entrance hall at Kings since 1923, a monument to the lifelong friendship between the two women.

## Circle Songs

Music: Bobby McFerrin (b. 1950)

Arranged by Dominic Peckham

Bobby McFerrin is an American conductor and vocalist who is perhaps best-known for his 1988 worldwide hit, Don't Worry, Be Happy. He regularly conducts all the major American orchestras and combines orchestral classical music with his own improvised vocal pieces. He often encourages the audience to sing a melody whilst he improvises on the theme. He switches rapidly between chest and falsetto registers to create polyphonic effects, performing both the main melody and the accompanying parts of songs. He records extensively and has won ten Grammy awards.

## Nunc Dimittis

Music: Paweł Łukaszewski (b. 1968)

Text: Luke's Gospel

Paweł Łukaszewski is Artistic Director and Conductor of the Musica Sacra Cathedral Choir in Warsaw. As a composer, he is best known for his “resolutely anti-modern sacred choral music”. The Nunc Dimittis is Simeon's Song of Praise when Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the Temple and placed him in Simeon's arms.

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace:  
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum  
Quod parasti ante faciem omnium populorum:  
Lumen ad revelationem gentium,  
et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.*

*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people:  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles  
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.*

## **Ubi Caritas and Tota Pulchra es**

Music: Maurice Duruflé (1902 – 1986)

Text: Gregorian Chants from the 4th Century

Duruflé was educated at a choir school in Rouen and choral plainsong was a profound influence on his compositions for the rest of his life. A famous organist, he gave the première of Poulenc's Organ Concerto in 1939 and toured widely in the 60s and 70s with his wife, Marie-Madeleine Chevalier, also an organist. He was extremely critical of his own compositions and published little, his Requiem of 1947 being his most famous work.

Ubi caritas and Tota pulchra es are the first two movements from Four Motets on Gregorian Themes which Duruflé published in 1960.

*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.  
Exsultemus et in ipso jucundemur.  
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.  
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.*

*Where charity and love are, God is there.  
Christ's love has gathered us into one.  
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.  
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.  
And love each other with a sincere heart.*

*Tota pulchra es, Maria,  
et macula originalis non est in te.  
Vestimentum tuum candidum quasi nix,  
et facies tua sicut sol.  
Tu gloria Jerusalem, tu laetitia Israel,  
tu honorificentia populi nostri.  
Tota pulchra es, Maria.*

*You are all beautiful, Mary,  
and the original stain of sin is not in you.  
Your clothing is white as snow,  
and your face is like the sun.  
You are the glory of Jerusalem,  
you are the joy of Israel,  
you give honour to our people.  
You are all beautiful, Mary.*

## **Till Österland**

Music: Swedish hymn tune, first published in 1695

Arrangement by Håkan Parkman (1955 – 1988)

Text: Anders Flöjja

The text of this haunting song was first published in Sweden in the mid-1700s, to be sung to a well-known hymn tune. At that time, Österland was one of the four provinces of Sweden but the term also has a spiritual dimension as the "East Land" would at the time also have suggested the Holy Land and going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. This spiritual dimension is deepened by the third verse of the song which is a paraphrase of a verse in the Song of Songs:

The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him who my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them but I found him whom my soul loveth.

Words and music were first printed together in a collection of folk songs in 1865 by which time the ancient province of Östland no longer belonged to Sweden, having been ceded to Russia as part of the spoils of war when Russia was victorious over Sweden in the Finnish War of 1808 – 1809 (Östland is now part of modern Finland). As a result, the song also has a patriotic dimension for Swedes, a plaintive longing for part of Sweden that has been lost forever. This arrangement was made by the Swedish composer and choral director, Håkan Parkman, who tragically died in a drowning accident at the age of 33.

The song therefore has multiple meanings – the soul yearning for God, the patriot yearning for a lost land, the lover yearning for the beloved – it means each of these things and, simultaneously, all of them.

*To Östland will I travel,  
for there my loved one lives,  
past peaks and valleys deep,  
where all is green as the lime tree.*

*I waited a little longer,  
all empty in the darkening night.  
Then I found the one who pleases  
and loves my soul.*

*My soul, make ready  
to go the same way  
over mountains and barren heaths  
until night falls on us.*

*One day in your bosom  
is better than a thousand years  
for us down here on earth:  
it's written in the psalm.*

*Hear me, you watchmen  
I shall now here meet.  
Have you not seen that friend,  
who my soul so dearly loves?*

### **She Moved Through the Fair**

Music: Traditional Irish tune, arranged by Dominic Peckham

Text: Padraic Colum (1881 – 1972)

Although the melody is said to date back to medieval times, this song was first collected by Padraic Colum and musicologist Herbert Hughes at the beginning of the twentieth century. The last verse is traditional but the other verses were written by Colum.

### **That Lonesome Road**

Words and Music: James Taylor (b. 1948) and Don Grolnick (1947 – 1996)

Arrangement by Simon Carrington of the Kings Singers

James Taylor wrote and recorded this song in 1981, just before his divorce from Carly Simon.

## The Fourth Choir

London's semi-professional LGBT chamber choir

The Fourth Choir was founded in September 2013 by a group of LGBT singers wishing to sing classical and modern choral works to the highest possible standard. Led by Artistic Director Dominic Peckham, one of the UK's finest young choral conductors, the choir's ambition is to represent the LGBT community in London's world-class classical music scene.

Just nine months old, we have performed at Leonard Street Gallery, St Giles-in-the-Fields, Old Finsbury Town Hall, and Cafe de Paris. In March, the Choir took part in celebrations for the change in the law to allow same-sex marriages in England and Wales. We performed at The Royal Festival Hall at I Do To Equal Marriage! on 29 March where Sandi and Debbie Toksvig renewed their vows in front of an audience of thousands – on the day of the first same-sex marriages in the UK.



Our own celebration was to post our first video on YouTube of the Choir singing Ed Rex's beautiful setting of 'This Marriage'. This has been viewed nearly 3,000 times and has received coverage in the gay press and various online blogs. The Fourth Choir also appeared on BBC Newsnight on 27 March as part of a discussion on same-sex marriage.

The Choir is set to perform at The Hackney Empire on Sunday evening, July 20 as part of a choral festival.

The Fourth Choir is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales: 1156769

## **Sopranos**

Anna Macham  
Andrea Brown  
Clouds Haberberg  
Georgie Lobo-Horth  
Jess Pigg  
Kathleen Holman

## **Altos**

Annie Beaumont  
Azura Farid  
Cat Jones  
Elly Barnes  
Philip Rayner  
Richard Tilbrook

## **Tenors**

Alex Luck  
Alvin Chua  
Amnon Shaked  
Ben Lee  
Chloe Clifford-Frith  
Ed Long  
James Murphy  
Julian Tolan  
Simon Peel

## **Basses**

Don Paige  
Roland Anderson  
Daniel Florea  
Gus Cairns  
John Holtorp  
Séamus McGreenera

## **Join Us!**

If you would like to join us, please visit our website to find out how to audition:  
[www.thefourthchoir.com](http://www.thefourthchoir.com)



## **Dominic Peckham, Artistic Director**

Dominic Peckham is regarded as one of the UK's finest young, dynamic orchestral and choral conductors. Hailed as 'one of the most exciting conductors of his generation', Peckham has been commended at home and abroad for his 'freshness and vitality' directing both orchestras and choirs whilst delivering 'gutsy, raw and exciting performances'.

In addition to his new appointment of The London Oriana Choir, Peckham holds an impressive array of posts including Artistic Director of The Royal Opera House's 'RM19' Youth Chorus, Assistant Music Director of The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, Artistic Director and Founder of iSingUK, Artistic Director of The Fourth Choir, Director of The Ulster Youth Training Choir and Guest Conductor for Aldeburgh Music. The many orchestras he has worked with include the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Scottish Opera.

Keen to promote and support new music, Peckham has conducted several world premieres, notably Oliver Searle's 'Pride, Poverty and Pianos' for the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. As a talented composer and arranger himself, Peckham's most recent premières include works with The National Youth Jazz Collective and The National Choir of Great Britain at the Barbican.

Future engagements include: The 'Big Sings' for The Royal Opera House, 'Shadow Dancing' at Birmingham Town Hall, 'Bright Sparks' for The London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, Vivaldi's 'Gloria' and a new commission by Toby Young with The London Mozart Players at St Paul's, Covent Garden, and performances of British Choral Icons in Tallinn, Estonia and world premières of ten new Friday Afternoon Commissions for The Aldeburgh Festival 2014 and Jubilee Opera.

This spring marked his debut as Guest Chorus Master of English National Opera in the world première of Julian Anderson's 'Thebans' at the London Coliseum.

## Thank you

*The Fourth Choir would like thank the following people for their generous support:*

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Our supporters have enabled us to commission the piece by Alexander Campkin that you heard tonight.

We have also been able to participate in three festivals, sing at a charity event for Kalidescope Trust, and record several songs including the gender-neutral 'This Marriage' – a setting by young composer Ed Rex of an ecstatic love poem by 13th century Persian poet Rumi.

These are important ways for us to represent the LGBT community in the wider classical and commercial music scene.

Please visit our website to find out how to become a friend of the Choir:  
[thefourthchoir.com](http://thefourthchoir.com)

# Setting Sappho to music

**Sappho wrote her poetry as lyrics to music – the poems were always intended to be sung, however none of the original music survives and until now, there has been no music in print that sets her poetry to music.**

Composer Alexander Campkin says: "The texts by Sappho contain so much energy, drive and emotion. While we have no record of how they were set to music, we're lucky to have the record of her words. Currently there is very little LGBT-specific choral music, which is something we want to change because music is such a powerful medium to bring people together, to convey emotion and inspire understanding."

**The Fourth Choir has launched a campaign to help fund the commissioning of a series of works based on her poems.**

Speaking about the commissioning project, Dominic Peckham says: "The struggles and challenges faced by LGBT people across the world vary. It's all a matter of equality. To feel excluded from any music because of its content is something that must change, and that's why we want to add to the range of music that is currently available."

## Please help us

Please consider donating to help us fund the commissioning and recording of works based on poems by Sappho. Visit our website to find out how you can donate: [thefourthchoir.com](http://thefourthchoir.com)

