

The Fourth Choir presents

Chiesa d'Oro



Songs from under the Venetian stars

A concert inspired by the San Marco
Basilica in Venice

Saturday 28 October 2017
Thursday 2 November 2017

**THE FOURTH
CHOIR**

Artistic Director
Dominic Peckham

Chiesa d'Oro

Welcome to *Chiesa d'Oro* - Songs from under the Venetian stars!

Chiesa d'Oro – church of gold – is the long established and beautifully evocative nickname given to the Basilica San Marco in Venice. Tonight, we would like to transport you there, with a programme inspired by Venetian opulence and featuring music by some of San Marco's greatest graduates.

The first half of the concert showcases music written by composers who lived or studied in Venice when the Venetian Republic was at the height of its power and influence in the 16th and 17th centuries. You will be hearing music by Giovanni Gabriele, born in Venice around 1555, who became principal organist at San Marco, and Giovanni Legrenzi and Claudio Monteverdi, both of whom held the coveted post of *maestro di cappella* at San Marco.

We will also be singing works by two northern European composers who were heavily influenced by Italian music. Giaches de Wert, from Flanders, spent most of his life in Italy and, despite a scandalous private life involving public infidelities, murder plots (which resulted in his estranged wife dying in prison) and an affair with a famous opera singer, de Wert was a prolific composer whose work influenced Monteverdi. The German composer Heinrich Schütz also spent time in Venice, studying first as a young man with Gabrieli in 1609 and later with Monteverdi himself in 1628.

We are also delighted to be singing a piece by Barbara Strozzi, (1619 – 1677), the most famous singer in 17th century Venice. Strozzi was the illegitimate daughter of the poet Giulio Strozzi, who encouraged her musical talents and sent her to study composition with Cavalli. It is indicative of how liberal Venetian society was at this time, when the talents of women in other parts of Europe were ruthlessly suppressed, that Strozzi became an extremely successful composer and is said to have been the most prolific composer of secular music in Venice at the time.

The second half of the concert takes up the theme of stars, consisting of glittering repertoire by living composers – James Macmillan, Bob Chilcott, Ben Parry, Eric Whitacre and Kim André Arnesen.

Die Himmel erzählen die Ehre Gottes

Music: Heinrich Schütz (1585 - 1672) Text: Psalm 19

*The heavens describe the glory of God
And the firmament proclaims the work of His hands.
One day tells it to another,
And one night makes the next aware of it.
There is no speech or language
In which their voice is not heard
Their tale is sent forth into all the lands,
And their story to the ends of the earth.
He has made a tabernacle for the sun within them
And it goes forth
Like a bridegroom out of his chamber
And rejoices like a hero
To run its course
It emerges from one end of heaven
And circles around again to the same point
And nothing remains hidden from its heat.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
And also to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and always,
And forever and ever. Amen.*

S'Al Discoprir

Music: Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1554 - 1612) Text: unknown

*When at first I saw that honourable brow
which fills every heart with an adventurous ardour,
I saw the verdant mountain
its peak alive with beautiful colours.
I heard the birds murmuring, singing in your honour
Revelling, celebrating your name.
I saw the grass, flowers and plants bending to the ground
Bowing in the splendour of your eyes,
Saying to each other that no other sun had illuminated them
Enlightened or touched them before.
There is only one sun in whose light I want to bathe
Because until now
The light of my desire was hidden.*

O vos insipientes mortales

Music: Giovanni Legrenzi (1625 - 1690)

*O, you foolish mortals
You that care for earthly pleasures
At last have learned that all good things are gifted*

*By the immense generosity of the heavens.
Glittering gold is borrowed light from the sun
Shining jewels are the dawn, stripped of tears
The purple rose is raised by His hand
Made beautiful by the breeze and fed with dew.*

*The colour of flowers, the scent of their balms
The sweetness of honey
Know that they come from heaven.
Understand, mortals, that in this valley of tears,
Earthly things can bring unhappiness.
Clutched by the thorns of suffering, fallen and corrupt;
True joys wander only in celestial spaces.*

*Eternal delight is found in the swirling motion of the spheres
Tears and pain are driven away in the dance of the stars.
Now, faithful soul, follow the footsteps of Christ,
Despise all earthly things and turn to heavenly goods.*

L'Amante Modesto

Music: Barbara Strozzi (1619 – c.1664)

*The days fly swiftly and soon
It'll be a century that I'm loving you, Cloris.
And for my long, devoted love,
not even a small reward have I asked.*

*I am a lover but a pure and modest one.
I want my heart to adore you silently,
and I wish to relieve my internal passions
with the mute breath of an honest sigh.*

*Let he who is born more fortunate than I
enjoy impure delights. For me it is enough
to know that I am loved by my Cloris.*

*Thus, our rivalry is never at war,
never in conflict; we are different types:
he loves you wantonly, I love you chastely.*

Valle che de' lamenti miei se piena

Music: Giaches de Wert (1535 – 1596)

Text: Francesco Petrarca (1304 - 1374)

*Valley so filled with all my laments,
River so often swollen with my tears,
Wild beasts, wandering birds and fish,
Reined in by these two green river-banks,
Air warmed and calmed by my sighs,
Sweet path that ends in such bitterness,
Hill that pleased me, that now saddens,
Where by habit Love still leads me:
I recognize familiar forms in you,
Not, alas, in me, whose happy life,
Has become the house of endless grief.*

*I saw my good from here: and with these steps
Turn to see where she went naked to the sky
Leaving what's left of her beauty in the earth.*

*I recognise familiar forms in you,
not, alas, in me, whose happy life,
has become the house of endless grief.
I saw my beloved from here: and with these steps
turn to see where she went naked to the sky,
leaving what's left of her beauty in the earth.*

Adoramus Te

Music: Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643) Text: Stations of the cross

*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because with your precious blood
you have redeemed the world.
Have mercy on us.*

INTERVAL

O Radiant Dawn

Music: James Macmillan (b.1959) Text: Advent Antiphons

Sun Soul

Music: Ben Parry (b. 1965) Text: Garth Bardsley

Lux Aurumque

Music: Eric Whitacre (b. 1970),

Text: Edward Esch with Latin translation by Charles Anthony Silvestri

*Light, warm and heavy as pure gold
and angels sing softly
to the new-born babe.*

Sun, Moon, Sea and Stars

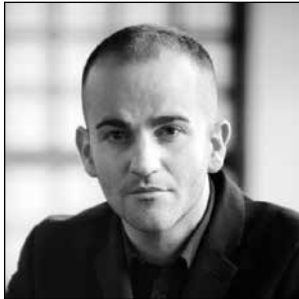
Music and Text: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

Even When He is Silent

Music: Kim André Arnesen (b. 1980)

Text: an anonymous poem scratched onto a wall of a concentration camp by a victim of the Holocaust

Dominic Ellis-Peckham



Dominic Ellis-Peckham is regarded as one of the UK's finest young orchestral and choral conductors. A conductor of immense energy and focus, Dominic is renowned for his dedication to the Renaissance and Baroque era, whilst also passionate about the delivery of new works and inspirational collaborations.

In addition to being Artistic Director of The Fourth Choir, Dominic holds an impressive array of posts including Musical Director of The London Oriana Choir, Guest Conductor for The Royal Opera House, Assistant Music Director of The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain, Artistic Director and Founder of iSingUK, Artistic Director of The Ulster Youth Choir and Guest Conductor for Trinity Laban College of Music and Aldeburgh Music.

Other previous positions include Chorus Master for English National Opera (during which Dominic received critical acclaim from The New York Times 'a powerful and accomplished chorus' and The Guardian 'superbly prepared' for the world premiere of Julian Anderson's *Thebans*).

Always keen to promote and support new music, Dominic has commissioned many new composers and conducted numerous world premieres, notably Alexander Campkin's *Unleash The Beauty of Your Eyes* with The Fourth Choir, Oliver Searle's *Pride, Poverty and Pianos* for the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Toby Young's *Love and Harmony* for The London Mozart Players, and *Friday Afternoons* for Aldeburgh Music. In 2016 he launched a pioneering commissioning programme for women composers spanning five years, with performances across the world.

The Fourth Choir

The Fourth Choir was founded in September 2013 by a group of LGBT+ singers aspiring to sing classical and modern choral works to the highest possible standard. Led by Artistic Director Dominic Ellis-Peckham, our goal is to represent the LGBT+ community in London's world-class classical music scene.

At four years old, the Choir is going from strength to strength. We have performed in many of the city's top cultural venues, including twice at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe, Hall One at King's Place, the Royal Festival Hall, the British Museum and the British Library. The Choir has also performed abroad, in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, at Antwerp's Queer Arts festival and, last summer, in the stunning Palazzo Doria Pamphilj in Rome.

In addition to our own charitable aims, we are proud to support other causes in our music making. We celebrated the legalisation of same-sex marriages in the UK, appearing on Newsnight and singing at an event in 2014 where Sandi and Debbie Toksvig renewed their vows in front of an audience of thousands.

The choir welcomes experienced singers of all backgrounds and identities. While our members are not all LGBT, we assume that anyone who works with us celebrates diversity and equal rights. To register your interest in singing with us, please see our website: thefourthchoir.com.

The Fourth Choir is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales, number 1156769.



Thank you

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

Benefactors

Gill Phillips
Dennis Stevenson
David Sturgeon

4C Friends

Flora Allen
Cherry Almond
Elizabeth Ambridge
Clive Barbour
Leah Barngrover
Graham Bennett
Tony Bingham
Jonathan Blake
Caroline Bradford

Graeme Calf
Penelope Cooper
Anthony De Koning
Georgina Ferry
Patricia Gilliland
Catherine Gilson
Katharine Goldsmith
Martin Gossauer
Caroline Hebbert
Renata Henkes
Georgina Hicks
Linden Ife
Camilla Imperiali
Karen Liebenguth
Frederick Lock

Iris Lynch
Cathy Mae
Charlotte Nicholls
Mark Pearson
Mark Ramsden
Judi Russell
Alison Taggart
Jane Wainwright
Christina Webb
Kenneth Wolfe

If you would like to become a 4C Friend and enjoy priority booking and other benefits, please visit our website.



THE FOURTH CHOIR & the London Gay Symphony Orchestra
Joyeux Noël!

An evening of traditional Christmas music - including the London premiere of *Les Douze Noëls* by baroque master Louis-Claude Daquin, arranged by Simon Wright.

Saturday 9 December 2017, 7.30
St Clement Danes, the Strand, London

Tickets at www.thefourthchoir.com