

**Vienna Boys Choir
2012 Holiday Tour of the USA
PROGRAM NOTES**

**The Longest Time. Doo-wop song (1984)
Billy Joel (b. 1949)**

Like *This Night*, *The Longest Time* was released on the album *An Innocent Man*. On the original recording, Joel sings all the vocals: he recorded 14 different background tracks which were all mixed together. The song is accompanied only by bass guitar, hi-hats, and finger clicks.

Text:

Woa, oh, oh, oh
For the longest time
Woa, oh, oh
For the longest

If you said goodbye to me tonight
There would still be music left to write
What else could I do
I'm so inspired by you
That hasn't happened for the longest time

Once I thought my innocence was gone
Now I know that happiness goes on
That's where you found me
When you put your arms around me
I haven't been there for the longest time

Woa, oh, oh, oh
For the longest time
Woa, oh, oh
For the longest

I'm that voice you're hearing in the hall
And the greatest miracle of all
Is how I need you
And how you needed me too
That hasn't happened for the longest time

Maybe this won't last very long
But you feel so right
And I could be wrong
Maybe I've been hoping too hard
But I've gone this far
And it's more than I hoped for

Who knows how much further we'll go on
Maybe I'll be sorry when you're gone
I'll take my chances
I forgot how nice romance is
I haven't been there for the longest time

I had second thoughts at the start
I said to myself
Hold on to your heart
Now I know the woman that you are
You're wonderful so far
And it's more than I hoped for

Ego sum panis vivus (I am the living bread)
Antonio Caldara (1670 – 1736)

Antonio Caldara, a Venetian, became Vice-Kapellmeister in the Viennese Chapel Imperial in 1716; his enormous output comprises over 3400 works, among them 100 operas. *Ego sum panis vivus* (“I am the living bread”) is a motet for Corpus Christi; the text is from the gospel of St. John 6:51-52.

Text:

*Ego sum panis vivus
qui de coelo descendi
si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane
vivet in aeternum.
Alleluia*

Translation:

I am the living bread
who descended from Heaven
whosoever eats from this bread
shall live forever.
Alleluia.

Anima nostra (Our soul) from the offertory for the Feast of the Holy Innocents, MH 452
Michael Haydn (1737 - 1806)

The younger brother of Franz Joseph Haydn, Johann Michael Haydn was born in Rohrau in 1737. Like his brother, he left home as an eight-year-old to become a chorister at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna – since the court tried to save money, the cathedral choristers were in effect also the court choristers at that time.

From 1762, Haydn worked in Salzburg. In 1781 he succeeded W.A. Mozart as cathedral and court organist in the employ of the archbishop of Salzburg. He held this post until his death. Michael Haydn is particularly well-known for his many sacred compositions. In 1782, he was asked to edit the Austrian hymnal to make it more accessible to the people. Basically this meant translating Latin texts into German and simplifying and transposing melodies to encourage the congregation to join in the singing.

Anima nostra was written for *the Feast of the Innocents* on 28 December, which commemorates the mass infanticide in Bethlehem described in Matthew 2:16. The Magi had prophesied King Herod the Great that he would lose his throne to a newborn King of the Jews in Bethlehem, and Herod had all male children in the village killed to prevent this. This would tie in with Herod's deteriorating mental and physical health and his increasing paranoia fed by his family's intrigues, but there is no evidence that the massacre actually took place, and most modern scholars take it to be anecdotal.

The text is from Psalm 124 (123):7, attributed to King David who in this psalm praises God as Saviour of Israel.

Text:

*Anima nostra sicut passer erepta est de laqueo venantium.
Laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus.*

Translation:

Our soul is sprung like a bird from the fowler's net.
The net is ripped and we are set free.

Più non si trovano, K. 549 (1788)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)
Text: Pietro Metastasio (1698 – 1782)

The canzonetta *Più non si trovano* is one of six *notturni* written by Mozart on a text from Pietro Metastasio's opera *L'Olimpiade* – a libretto set to music by no fewer than 17 composers between 1733 and 1817, among them Vivaldi, Pergolesi, Hasse, Cimarosa, and Donizetti

In the 1780s, Mozart spent much time with the family of Baron Joseph Nikolaus von Jacquin (1727 – 1817). Jacquin, a famous University professor of botany and chemistry, hosted weekly salons, and Mozart wrote several pieces for these. The two youngest Jacquins, Emil Gottfried (1767 – 1792) and Franziska (1769 – 1850), were among Mozart's most talented pupils. There is some speculation as to whether Gottfried might have written some of the vocal parts of the *notturni*; they were published in 1803 under his name. Mozart himself probably did note these pieces for publication.

A (duetto) *notturmo*, literally “night duet” is a short vocal piece for two voices, often with an instrumental bass line. The form was popular in the 18th and 19th centuries; the pieces – which quite often were about love - were for entertainment, and would often be performed outdoors at night. Mozart turned the bass line into a third voice, thus creating a trio for two sopranos and bass. The Vienna Boys Choir performs the piece as it was written; two boys will be joined by their choirmaster, Kerem Sezen, singing bass.

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Text:

*Più non si trovano fra mille amanti
Sol due bell' anime, che sian costanti,
E tutti parlano di fedeltà!*

*E il reo costume tanto s' avanza,
Che la costanza di chi ben ama
Ormai si chiama semplicità.*

Translation:

One cannot find anymore among a thousand lovers
even two beautiful souls that are faithful,
and everybody talks about fidelity.

And the cause of such goings-on
is that the (only) constant of one who knows how to love well
from now on will be called simple-mindedness.

Der Gondelfahrer (The gondolier), D. 809 (1824)

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)

Text: Johann Baptist Mayrhofer (1787 – 1836)

Franz Peter Schubert was born in Lichtenthal (now a district of Vienna) in 1797. His father, a teacher, gave him violin and piano lessons. In 1808, 11-year-old Schubert auditioned for the imperial court choir and was given one of two places in the choir – this makes him one of the most famous alumni of the Vienna Boys Choir. Antonio Salieri, who was head of the Chapel at the time, became his teacher. Schubert loved the music; he did well at the choir school and wrote his first compositions there, but he complained about the food, or the lack thereof. He wrote to his brother Ferdinand, begging for an apple or money, because “it is hard to subsist on gruel and to wait for hours from one paltry meal to the next”.

In spite of his enormous talent, Schubert was never able to live off his music; he had to eke out a meagre living from teaching. First he worked as an assistant teacher at his father’s school, later he taught music at the Hungarian estate of Count Esterházy.

Schubert wrote eight symphonies, six masses and chamber music. He is most famous for his lieder; he wrote more than six hundred songs on poems by Goethe, Heine, Shakespeare and others. Schubert died at the age of 31, possibly from medicine he was given to treat an illness.

Mayrhofer, a poet from Upper Austria, met Schubert in Vienna in 1814; they became close friends. Schubert set 47 of Mayrhofer's poems to music, and Mayrhofer wrote the libretti of at least two unfinished operas for his friend.

“The gondolier” is typically Romantic. It can be read as a poem describing a night in Venice and celebrating escapism: It is midnight, the poet (or the skipper, as the case may be) is out on the waters in Venice, having a grand old time basking in the moonlight. There is however a gloomy undertow: “meine Barke”, my skiff, might also refer to the poet himself, who – unfettered, is being rocked by “des Meeres Schoß”, literally the bottom of the sea. The choice of words would support this, a “Barke” is the kind of boat Charon uses to ferry the deceased across the River Styx. Death is the ultimate freedom.

Finally, St. Mark's campanile strikes midnight – the pianist strikes the same chord twelve times. Everybody is asleep, only the skipper – the poet – is awake, or should we say conscious. No one else has seen or understood.

However one chooses to interpret the words, one thing remains clear – the first verse conveys a feeling, a longing to be shot of mundane worries, to be free. This certainly applied to Mayrhofer, who was forced to work for the censor's office, a job he loathed. In the end, sadly, Mayrhofer, who suffered from depression, killed himself; he jumped out of his office window in Vienna.

Text:

*Es tanzen Mond und Sterne
Den flücht'gen Geisterreih'n
Wer wird von Erdensorgen
Befangen immer sein!*

*Du kannst in Mondesstrahlen
Nun, meine Barke, wallen
Und aller Schranken los
Wiegt dich des Meeres Schoß.*

*Vom Markusturme tönte
Der Spruch der Mitternacht:
Sie schlummern friedlich alle,
Und nur der Schiffer wacht.*

Translation:

Moon and stars dance
A fleeting ghostly round -
Who wants to be caught
In earthly worries forever!

My little skiff, you can
Sail by the moonlight now,
And unfettered and unhampered
The sea will rock (dandle) you.

From St Mark's campanile
Sounds the midnight hour:
They all sleep peacefully,
Only the skipper is awake.

Wie lieblich sind Deine Wohnungen (How beautiful are your dwellings), Op. 35 (1865)
Josef Gabriel Rheinberger (1839 – 1901)
Hymn based on Psalm 84 (V 83)

Josef Gabriel Rheinberger was born in Liechtenstein; he was the son of the Prince of Liechtenstein's treasurer. Rheinberger was a nineteenth century wunderkind; at the ripe old age of seven, he became organist at Vaduz Parish Church, and his first composition was officially performed when he was eight. The treasurer – Rheinberger senior – was not taken with this chosen career, but by 1851, when Josef was 12, he gave in and allowed his son to enrol at the Munich Conservatory. Rheinberger was a quick study; at 19, he joined the staff of the conservatory, teaching piano and composition. In 1877, he became court composer to the Bavarian King Ludwig II. He was much respected and highly influential in his time.

Rheinberger, who had particular regard for Bach, Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms, had a number of illustrious pupils, among them Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, Engelbert Humperdinck, and Wilhelm Furtwängler.

Among his compositions are 14 masses, a requiem, and a Stabat Mater. He wrote operas, symphonies, chamber music, and works for organ. The latter in particular are difficult to play; the organ was very much his instrument.

The text of tonight's piece is based on Psalm 84 (V 83), verses 1 – 4 and 11. The original Biblical Psalm is a pilgrimage song, praising God as host in his temple, offering happiness and forgiveness to anyone who comes to the sanctuary, literally or figuratively speaking. Anyone who finds God will find his altars and will know how to lead a blameless life. Anyone who leads a blameless life is granted bliss.

Text:

*Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen, o Herr!
Es sehnt sich meine Seele nach dem Vorhof des Herrn.
Mein Herz frohlockt in dem lebendigen Gott.*

*Denn der Sperling findet sein Haus und die Taube Obdach im Sturm.
Ich finde deine Altäre, o du mein König, Herr und Gott.*

*Selig sind, die in deinem Hause wohnen,
in alle Ewigkeit loben sie dich!*

*Barmherzigkeit und Wahrheit liebt Gott,
und denen, die da wandeln in Unschuld gibt er Gnade und Herrlichkeit.
O wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen!*

Translation:

How beautiful are your dwellings, o Lord.
My soul longs for the court of the Lord.
My heart cries out for joy to God.

For the sparrow has found a home and the dove shelter from the storm.
I find your altars, o my King, Lord, and God.

Blessed are those who live in your house,
they shall praise you forever.

God loves mercy and truth
And he gives grace and glory to those who are innocent.
Oh, how beautiful are your dwellings.

**Selections from *Vier Gesänge* (Four songs)
Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)**

Der Gärtner (The Gardener)
Text: Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff (1788 – 1857)

Gesang aus Fingal (Song from Fingal)
Text: James Macpherson (1736 – 1796); German text by an anonymous author

Hamburg-born Johannes Brahms was a reserved, logical and thorough man, whose terse manner is reflected in his works. He knew a lot of music, and had obviously studied ancient music in some detail (this is reflected in his own use of Renaissance and Baroque polyphony). When writing vocal music, Brahms paid close attention to words; his sacred music is a deeply felt, non-denominational statement of faith.

Brahms, who for a while was the artistic director of a women's choir in Hamburg, wrote much music for high voices, motets, lieder and folk songs. He made use of traditional folk tunes, sometimes simply arranging them but also invented his own, such as his famous lullaby.

Brahms wrote the four melancholy songs for his women's chorus. All four deal with unrequited love, death or dying in some form; these are highly romantic topics. The unusual instrumentation, two French horns and a harp, matches the mood. There is an alternative version by Brahms himself, for choir and piano.

Der Gärtner (The Gardener)

Eichendorff's text clearly hit a contemporary nerve; there is also a famous duet by Mendelssohn. Brahms's version is a song with verses, in 6/8 time.

Text:

*Wohin ich geh und schaue,
in Feld und Wald und Tal,
vom Berg hinab in die Aue:
viel schöne, hohe Fraue,
grüß' ich dich tausendmal.*

*In meinem Garten find ich
viel Blumen schön und fein,
viel Kränze wohl draus wind ich
und tausend Gedanken bind' ich
und Grüße mit darein.*

*Ihr darf ich keinen reichen,
sie ist zu hoch und schön,
die müssen alle verbleichen,
die Liebe nur ohne gleichen
bleibt ewig im Herzen stehn.*

*Ich schein' wohl froher Dinge
und schaffe auf und ab,
und ob das Herz zerspringe
Ich grabe fort und singe
und grab' mir bald mein Grab.*

Translation:

Wherever I may wander in field and wood and plains.
From hill or valley yonder,
I send you ever fonder a thousand sweet refrains.

My garden now discloses the fairest flow'rs I know
A thousand thoughts it encloses,
and with my garlands of roses a thousand greetings go.

Alas, the one I cherish, she is a thing apart,
my wreaths must wither and perish,
but boundless love will flourish
forever in my heart.

I try to bear it gladly
And labour bravely forth,
and though my heart beats madly
I work there singing sadly
And dig my grave on earth.

Gesang aus Fingal (Song from Fingal)

Gesang aus Fingal ("Song from the Fingal epic") is a lament for the death of Scottish warrior, "graceful Trenar". Passages for women's voices *a cappella* alternate with accompanied passages, first with one horn, then two, then harp, effectively creating the mood.

The text is a poetic German rendition of a passage from James MacPherson's *Fingal*, first published in 1762. MacPherson claimed to have discovered fragments of an ancient Gaelic epic by Ossian, the son of Fingal, a third-century king of Scotland. MacPherson's heroes are noble savages, combining the virtues of Achilles in combat with "civilised" and enlightened reasoning, and the "discovery" was greeted with enthusiasm. An Ossian craze swept Europe, and visitors flocked to Scotland to visit Ossian's and Fingal's caves. Napoleon was known to carry a copy of the book, and Goethe's Werther drops *The Iliad*, his favourite bedtime reading, for *Fingal*, which he feels is infinitely more stirring and "closer to his roots".

Despite the book's phenomenal success, contemporary critics suspected MacPherson of forgery, in particular, as he never made the original manuscripts available to other scholars. The dispute was not settled until years after MacPherson's death, when it was established that *Fingal* was indeed one of the more spectacular literary hoaxes of its time. By the time Brahms wrote his song, he would probably have known that the epic was a fake, and its author Ossian a pastiche of several Celtic heroes and bards, as imagined by MacPherson.

Text:

*Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde
weine o Mädchen von Inistore!
Beug' über die Wogen dein schönes Haupt,
lieblicher du als der Geist der Berge wenn er um Mittag in einem Sonnenstrahl
über das Schweigen von Morven fährt.
Er ist gefallen, dein Jünglein liegt darnieder, bleich sank er unter Cuthullins Schwert.
Nimmer wird Mut deinen Liebling mehr reizen,
das Blut von Königen zu vergiessen.*

*Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde,
weine, o Mädchen, von Inistore.
Trenar, der liebliche Trenar, starb. O Mädchen von Inistore!
Seine grauen Hunde heulen daheim; sie sehen seinen Geist vorüberziehen.
Trenar, der liebliche Trenar, starb. O Mädchen von Inistore.*

*Sein Bogen hängt ungespannt in der Halle nichts regt sich auf der Heide der Rehe.
Wein' an den Felsen der brausenden Winde, weine, o Mädchen von Inistore. Wein!*

Translation:

Weep on the rocks where the storm winds are raging,
weep, o thou maiden of Inistore!
Bend over the waters thy lovely head;
Fairer art thou than the mountain spirit
When he at noon in the brightness of the sun
Touches the silence of Morven's height.

For he is fallen, thy true love lies defeated,
slain by the might of Cuthullin's sword.
Never again will his valour inspire him
To sheathe his sword in the blood of princes.

Weep on the rocks where the storm winds are raging,
weep, o thou maiden of Inistore.
Trenar, ah, Trenar the fair is dead! Dead, o maiden of Inistore.
See his growling hounds, they howl in his hall; suspicious his ghost walks past the door.
Trenar, ah, Trenar the fair is dead. Dead, o maiden of Inistore. [...]
His bow is unstrung and hangs in his castle;
Hushed, hushed silence is where deer once did wander.
Weep on the rocks where the storm winds are raging,
weep, o thou maiden of Inistore. Weep! [...]

**Laudate Dominum (Praise the Lord) from the *Missa vocalis*, Op. 40b (1981)
Balduin Sulzer (b. 1932)**

Balduin Sulzer was born in Grossraming, Upper Austria. He studied philosophy, theology, history, and music in Linz, Rome, and in Vienna. Sulzer became organist at the cathedral in Linz, and taught at the city's famous Bruckner-Konservatorium. He founded an orchestra and a choir at the Musikgymnasium Linz, a grammar school with a curriculum devised for future musicians. Both ensembles recorded for EMI classics.

To date, Sulzer has written 360 different works; he has composed three operas, seven symphonies, one passion, 12 concertos for solo instruments, chamber music, and much vocal music. His works have been performed by the London Philharmonic, the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra, the Stockholm Chamber Orchestra, the Bruckner Orchestra in Linz, and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra.

His compositions always start with an improvisation, either on the piano or on the organ. Sulzer throws everything into the mix, “let your imagination run wild, invent, be playful and put your playfulness to good use, let your mind dance, be poetic, meditate, by all means philosophise, create drama and always be mindful of the little satyr in you“. The music should speak for itself, it should appeal directly to the listeners' senses.

Text:

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes
Laudate Dominum omnes populi
Laudate eum gentes
Laudate Dominum
Alleluja
Amen

Translation:

Praise the Lord, all nations
Praise the Lord, all peoples
Praise him, nations
Praise the Lord
Alleluja
Amen

Derweil i noch klein war - I bin z'schwach auf der Brust (When I was little)

Louis Roth (1843 – 1929)

Text: Carl Lorens (1851 – 1909)

Louis Roth was a Viennese composer and conductor. He worked in Berlin for a long time, composing Viennese operettas. Roth, whose brother was also a composer, has twelve operettas to his name. Carl Lorens on the other hand – one of the most important exponents of the Wienerlied genre – was self-taught. He started giving improvised performances in his late teens. Lorens became popular very quickly, both as a singer and as author of Wienerlieder. He wrote over 3000 texts and melodies; around 2000 have been published. In 1908, Carl Lorens celebrated 40 years as a performer, and in 1909, shortly before his death, he recorded eight songs.

Text:

*Derweil i noch klein war,
bin gelegn in der Wiegn
hab nach der Musik
im Walzertakt geschriegn*

*Die Leut warn ganz narrisch
Wann i hab so plärrt
Denn mich ham's bestimmt glei
Drei Häuser weit gehört*

*Und so bin i älter
Und größer dann worn
Doch d'Neigung zum Singan
Hab i net verlorn.*

*Ich singat auch heut noch
Voll Liebe und Lust
Doch i kann net, i kann net
Bin z'schwach auf der Brust.*

Translation:

When I was still little
I lay in my cot
I screamed for music
In waltz time.

It made people crazy
When I bawled like that
They probably heard me
Three houses down the road

And then I got older
And bigger
But I have not lost
My passion for singing.

I would sing today
Enthusiastically
But I cannot, I cannot
I am too weak in the chest.

Kikeriki-Marsch

Text: Ludwig Gruber (1874 – 1964)

Carl Wilhelm Drescher was a choirboy at the Vienna Kärntnertortheater, where he also sang as an adult. He played the violin in a number of ensembles, and in 1868 and 1869, he was a member of the Strauss-Kapelle. In 1874, Drescher founded his own successful group, and became known as King of the Vienna “Salonkapellen” – as opposed to Strauss, who remained the Waltz King.

Ludwig Gruber was a prolific writer of maudlin Wiener Lieder. *Kikeriki* is the German for "cock-a-doodle-doo", and it was also the name of a satirical magazine in Vienna.

Text:

*Kikeriki! Kikeriki!
Hört! Schon kräht der Hahn!
Kinder, stosset an,
schnell ein Gläschen noch,
setzet an, trinket aus, lebet hoch!
Lieber Kikeriki! Dank für deine Müh!
Eh der Hahn s'dritte Mal hat gekräht,
sind auch wir Drahrer schon im Bett.*

Translation:

Cockadoodle-doo!
Listen! The cock is crowing!
Come on, let's clink glasses,
quickly, another glass,
raise it, drain it, celebrate each other!
Dear Rooster! Thank you for your trouble,
before the cock crows a third time,
even we night owls will be in bed.

Taubenvergiften (Poisoning pigeons)
Georg Kreisler (1922 – 2011)

Georg Kreisler was an author, poet, and a composer. Born in Vienna to Jewish parents, Kreisler fled Austria in 1938; the family settled in the USA. Kreisler became an American citizen and wrote songs for soldiers in Britain and France during World War II. After the war, he started to perform in clubs. Kreisler had a way with words, and a particularly black sense of humour. Songs like “Please Shoot Your Husband” were considered “Un-American” in the late 1940s, and Kreisler returned to Europe. His humour and his outspoken criticism of society and politics continued to cause him trouble, and led to repeated bans of his songs from radio and television.

Taubenvergiften was first released as Frühlingslied, spring song. The song is so similar to Tom Lehrer's song, *Poisoning Pigeons in the Park*, that both men were accused of copying it from the other. Both men have denied this. Lehrer referred to Kreisler in an interview as “a Viennese who stole two of my songs”. Kreisler wrote in his autobiography, “I do not want to suggest in any way that Lehrer copied from me, that would make me no more intelligent than him.” He suggests that someone may have talked to Lehrer about Kreisler's song without mentioning his name, or that they may have hit on the idea independently.

Text:

*Schatz, das Wetter ist wunderschön
Da leid ich's net länger zu Haus
Heute muss man ins Grüne gehn
In den bunten Frühling hinaus!
Jeder Bursch und sein Mäderl
Mit einem Fresspaketerl
Sitzen heute im grünen Klee -
Schatz, ich hab' eine Idee:*

*Schau, die Sonne ist warm und die Lüfte sind lau
Gehn wir Tauben vergiften im Park!
Die Bäume sind grün und der Himmel ist blau
Gehn wir Tauben vergiften im Park!
Wir sitzen zusamm' in der Laube
Und ein jeder vergiftet a Taube
Der Frühling, der dringt bis ins innerste Mark
Beim Tauben vergiften im Park*

*Schatz, geh, bring das Arsen gschwind her
Das tut sich am besten bewährn
Streu's auf a Grahambrot kreuz über quer
Nimm's Scherzel, das fressen's so gern
Erst verjag'mer die Spatzen
Denn die tun'am alles verpatzen
So a Spatz ist zu gschwind, der frisst's Gift auf im Nu
Und das arme Tauberl schaut zu*

*Ja, der Frühling, der Frühling, der Frühling ist hier
Gehn wir Tauben vergiften im Park!
Kann's geben im Leben ein grössres Plaisir
Als das Tauben vergiften im Park?
Der Hansl geht gern mit der Mali
Denn die Mali, die zahlt's Zyankali
Die Herzen sind schwach und die Liebe ist stark
Beim Tauben vergiften im Park...
Nimm für uns was zu naschen -
In der anderen Taschen!
Gehn wir Tauben vergiften im Park!*

Translation:

Darling, the weather is lovely
I cannot sit around at home
Today one must simply go out
Into the bright spring.
Every boy and his girl
With a small hamper
They sit in the green clover
Darling, I have an idea:

Look, the sun is warm and the air is mild
Let's go poisoning pigeons in the park.
The trees are green and the sky is blue
Let's go poisoning pigeons in the park.
We sit together in a gazebo
And everyone poisons a pigeon
Spring fills your innermost being
When you poison pigeons in the park

Darling, come on, bring on the arsenic
That always works best
Sprinkle it on the Graham bread
Take the heel, they really like that
First we chase away the sparrows
For they always spoil everything
A sparrow is fast, swallows the poison at once
And the poor little pigeon looks on

Well, spring, spring, spring is here
Let's go poisoning pigeons in the park.
Can there be anything more pleasurable in life
Than to poison pigeons in the park?
Hans likes to go with Mali
Mali pays for the cyanide
The hearts are weak and the love is strong
When we go poisoning pigeons in the park
Take some nosh for us
But in the other bag!
Let's go poisoning pigeons in the park!

This Night (1984)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827), Arr. Billy Joel (b. 1949)

This Night was released on Billy Joel's album *An Innocent Man*, in August of 1984. The chorus uses the second movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Pathétique Sonata*.

Text:

Didn't I say
I wasn't ready for a romance
Didn't we promise
We would only be friends

And so we danced
Though it was only a slow dance
I started breaking my promises
Right there and then

Didn't I swear
There would be no complications
Didn't you want
Someone who's seen it all before

Now that you're here
It's not the same situation
Suddenly I don't remember the rules anymore

This night is mine
It's only you and I
Tomorrow
Is a long time away
This night can last forever

I've been around
Someone like me should know better
Falling in love
Would be the worst thing I could do

Didn't I say
I needed time to forget her
Aren't you running from someone
Who's not over you

How many nights
Have I been lonely without you
I tell myself
How much I really don't care

How many nights
Have I been thinking about you
Wanting to hold you
But knowing you would not be there

This night
You're mine
It's only you and I
I'll tell you
To forget yesterday
This night we are together

This night
Is mine
It's only you and I
Tomorrow
Is such a long time away
This night can last forever

Tomorrow
Is such a long time away
This night can last forever

Bohemian Rhapsody *from the album A Night at the Opera (1975)*
Arr. Raoul Gehringer

Text:
Is this the real life?
Is this just fantasy?
Caught in a landslide
No escape from reality
Open your eyes, look up to the skies and see
I'm just a poor boy, I need no sympathy,
Because I'm easy come, easy go,
A little high, little low,
Anyway the wind blows, doesn't really matter to me.

Mama, I just killed a man,
put a gun against his head,
pulled my trigger, now he's dead
Mama, life had just begun
But now I've gone and thrown it all away
Mama, uh, didn't mean to make you cry
If I'm not back again this time tomorrow
Carry on, as if nothing really matters

Too late, my time has come
sends shivers down my spine
body's aching all the time
good-bye everybody, I've got to go
Gotta leave you all behind and face the truth.
Mama, uh, anyway the wind blows
I don't want to die
I sometimes wish I'd never been born at all

I see the little silhouetto of a man,
Scaramouche, Scaramouche, will you do the fandango,
Thunderbolt and lightning, very, very frightening me
Galileo, Figaro, magnifico

But I'm just a poor boy, nobody loves me
He's just a poor boy from a poor family
Spare him his life from this monstrosity
Easy come, easy go, will you let me go
Bismillah! We will not let you go, let him go,
let me go, never let you go.
Mamma mia, let me go,
Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me.

So you think you can stone me and spit in my eye
So you think you can love me and leave me to die
Oh baby, can't do this to me baby,
Just gotta get out, right outta here.

Oh yeah, nothing really matters,
anyone can see, nothing really matters to me.

Benjamin Britten (1913 - 1976)
Procession from A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28

After three successful years in America, Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears boarded a Swedish cargo vessel, the Axel Johnson, on the 16th March 1942 for their return to Britain. The journey took nearly a month, and the mood must have been subdued. A war was on, and there were U-boats about. Britten had intended to continue work on Hymn to St. Cecilia and a piece for Benny Goodman, but customs officials confiscated the manuscripts fearing that they might be in code.

During the voyage the ship berthed at Halifax, Nova Scotia, where Britten came across a book of medieval poems, most of them of religious content with a distinctly pagan flavor. Some of these he set during the voyage as the Ceremony of Carols, a work for boys' choir and harp. This is more than a set of jolly Christmas carols: Britten's carefully crafted music captures the poems' medieval spirit and evokes the fight of light against dark, good against evil.

Program Notes continued on the next page

The work opens and ends with the choir processing to Latin plainsong, an effect that creates a church atmosphere. The Ceremony's opening procession is unaccompanied, although Britten has indicated an accompaniment should an actual procession prove impossible.

Hodie Christus natus est, "today Christ is born", the antiphon for the Vespers of the Nativity, sets the theme and the mood of the piece. Angels and archangels spread the news of Christ's birth, the Saviour has come.

Text:

*Hodie Christus natus est:
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt angeli:
laetantur archangeli:
hodie exsultant justi dicentes:
gloria in excelsis Deo. Alleluia!*

Translation:

Today Christ is born;
today the Savior has appeared.
Today the angels sing on earth;
the archangels rejoice.
Today the righteous exult, saying:
Glory to God on high! Alleluia!

Adeste fideles (O Come All Ye Faithful)

John Francis Wade (c. 1711 – 1786)

Arr. Gerald Wirth

The original Latin text is a hymn for Christmas, written by John Francis Wade, an English Catholic who spent many years in French exile; it seems that the tune is his also. There are additional contemporary verses by French abbot Etienne Jean François Borderies (1764 – 1832). *Adeste fideles* became popular throughout Europe in the 1740s, and there are translations into virtually every language. The English translation of Frederick Oakeley (1802 - 1880), an Anglican priest who converted to Catholicism in 1845, has become standard in English speaking countries.

It is possible that Wade's carol has older roots. *Adeste* is sometimes referred to as Portuguese; some say this is because the Duke of Leeds – who served as Foreign Secretary under William Pitt the Younger - heard it in the Portuguese Embassy in London in 1795.

Another theory has it that King John IV of Portugal wrote the hymn when his daughter Catherine married King Charles II in 1662. Wherever she went, she would be announced by this music, like a theme tune. The two theories do not exclude one another; they might well both be true.

Text:

Adeste fideles

Laeti triumphantes

Venite in Bethlehem.

*Natum videte regem angelorum,
venite adoremus Dominum.*

Aeterni parentis splendorem aeternum

Velatum sub carne videbimus.

*Deum infantem pannis involutum,
venite adoremus Dominum.*

Translation:

O come all ye faithful

Joyful and triumphant,

O come ye to Bethlehem.

Come and behold him, born the King of Angels,

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

The eternal father's eternal splendour

We will see manifest in flesh:

The child God swaddled in cloth.

O come let us adore the Lord.

Es wird scho glei dumpa (It will be dark soon)

Sacred lullaby from the Tyrol

Arr. Gerald Wirth

This is a Tyrolean shepherd carol. Shepherd carols focus on the shepherds' role in the Christmas story; their belief, their dignity, their reliability. While shepherding may be a rural profession, it was seen as noble. The Near Eastern kings thought of themselves as shepherds of their people, and God is addressed as the Good Shepherd in the Bible. This particular carol takes the form of a lullaby.

Most shepherd carols are of medieval origin. In the 18th and 19th centuries, singers in Austrian rural communities would act out the text while singing; and it was customary to come up with at least one new carol each year. Most of these carols are written and sung in the local dialect.

Text:

Es wird scho glei dumpa,

Es wird scho glei Nacht.

Drum kimm i zu dir her,

Mein Heiland, auf d'Wacht.

Will singen a Liadl

Dem Liebling, dem kloan,

Du mågst ja net schlåfn,

I hör' di nur woan.

Hei, hei, hei, hei!
Schlaf süß, herzliabs Kind!

Vergiss hiaz, o Kinderl, dein Kummer, dei Load,
daß d'dâda muaßt leidn im Ställ auf da Hoad.
Es ziern jâ die Engerl dei Liegerstatt aus.
Möcht schöna nit sein drin an König sei Haus.

Hei, hei . . .

Jâ Kinderl, du bist hålt im Kripperl so schen,
mi ziemt, i kânn nimmer dâ weg von dir gehn.
I wünsch dir von Herzen die süasste Ruah,
die Engerl vom Himmel, die deckn di zua.

Hei, hei . . .

Translation:

It will be dark soon,
it will soon be night.
Therefore I come to you,
My saviour, to guard (you).
I want to sing a carol
for (my) darling, the little one.
You cannot sleep:
I hear you fret.

Hei, hei, hei, hei.
Sleep softly, (my) darling child.

Now forget, o child, your sorrow, your pain,
Which makes you suffer in the stable, on the heather.
Angels adorn your bedstead.
It could not be prettier in a king's house.

Hei, hei, hei, hei.
Sleep softly, (my) darling child.

Yes, (my) child, you are so beautiful in your crib,
That I feel as if I could not part from you.
I wish you with all my heart the sweetest of rests,
(for) the angels from heaven tuck you in.

Hei, hei . . .

Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging (Mary walked through a thorn brush)
Sacred carol from Thuringia
Arr. Uwe Theimer

This moving carol originated in the 16th century (a version of it was published in 1608). It is firmly rooted in the Catholic tradition of medieval hymns to Mary: the miracle of Christ's birth is told as a simple legend, using a number of metaphors well-known in the 16th century.

The *Dornwald* (thorn brush) mentioned in the text is a symbol of the fallen world (Genesis 2:9, 3:18), the blossoming roses represent the birth of Christ. 1850 saw another edition of the carol in Thuringia, and since then it has been very popular in German-speaking countries.

Text:

Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging
Kyrie eleison.
Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging,
der hat seit sieben Jahren kein Laub getragen.
Kyrie eleison.

Was trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen?
Kyrie eleison.
Ein kleines Kindlein ohne Schmerzen,
das trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen.
Kyrie eleison.

Da hab'n die Dornen Rosen getragen.
Kyrie eleison.
Als das Kindlein durch den Wald getragen,
da hab'n die Dornen Rosen getragen.
Kyrie eleison.

Translation:

Mary walked through a thorn brush,
Kyrie eleison.
Mary walked through a thorn brush,
that hadn't shown any green for seven years.
Kyrie eleison.

What did Mary carry beneath her heart?
Kyrie eleison.
A small child without pain,
Mary carried beneath her heart.
Kyrie eleison.

And then the thorns bore roses,
Kyrie eleison.
When the child was carried through the brush,
the thorns bore roses.
Kyrie eleison.

The gift (Oh come, little children)

Johann Abraham Peter Schulz (1747 – 1800)

Arr. William Cutter

Text: Christoph von Schmid

Ihr Kinderlein kommet describes the adoration of the Christ child in the manger. It originated in the Biedermeier period between 1798 and 1810. The text was written by the catholic theologian Christoph von Schmid (1768 – 1854), a chaplain in Bavaria. Schmid wrote many instructive treatises for the improvement of young people. He put his text to a secular song by Johann Abraham Peter Schulz (1747 – 1800). Schulz is known in German-speaking countries for his song, *Der Mond ist aufgegangen*.

Text:

Oh, come, little children, oh, come, one and all,
To Bethlehem's stable, in Bethlehem's stall.
And see with rejoicing this glorious sight,
Our Father in heaven has sent us this night.
Oh, see in the manger, in hallowed light
A star throws its beam on this holiest sight.
In clean swaddling clothes lies the heavenly Child,
More lovely than angels, this Baby so mild.
Oh, there lies the Christ Child, on hay and on straw;
The shepherds are kneeling before Him with awe.
And Mary and Joseph smile on Him with love,
While angels are singing sweet songs from above.

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

English carol

Arr. John Rutter

This carol goes back to Medieval times. The speaker is Jesus who basically offers a preview of his entire biography before his birth. The line 'To see the legend of my play' suggests that the carol may have been part of a mystery play, performed for Corpus Christi.

The dance here may be taken both literally and in a figurative sense; to dance is an expression of joy; to dance is to live. The 'true love' is the soul of a believer, and this fits well with Medieval mysticism, where the soul is the bride and Jesus is the groom. The imagery in the song is closely related to that in "Lord of the Dance".

The text and this tune first appeared together in print in William Sandys's Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern (1833).

Text:

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day,
I would my true love did so chance
to see the legend of my play,
to call my true love to my dance.

Chorus –

Sing, oh! my love, oh! my love, my love, my love,
This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure.
Of her I took fleshly substance
Thus was I knit to man's nature,
To call my true love to my dance.

Chorus

In a manger laid and wrapped I was,
so very poor, this was my chance,
betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass
to call my true love to my dance.

Chorus

Christmas Day (The North wind is tossing the leaves, 1957)

William Garnet James (1892 – 1977)

Text: John Wheeler

"Christmas Day" is one of a collection of 14 Australian Christmas carols written by William James and John Wheeler, for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. James, a native of Ballarat, who was educated at Melbourne University, was a concert pianist. He lived in London for a while, playing concerts and writing a number of Australian songs for Dame Nellie Melba. Upon his return, James became music director at the ABC. He used his position to help develop contemporary music in Australia. Wheeler, who was born in Colac, Victoria, was a writer at the ABC.

James's and Wheeler's carols have a distinct local flavor; Christmas in Australia, after all, is a hot affair.

Text:

The north wind is tossing the leaves.
The red dust is over the town;
The sparrows are under the eaves,
And the grass in the paddock is brown;
As we lift up our voices and sing,
To the Christ-child the heavenly King.

The tree ferns in green gullies sway;
The cool stream flows silently by;
The joy bells are greeting the day,
And the chimes are adrift in the sky,
As we lift up our voices and sing,
To the Christ-child the heavenly King.

Carol (Mary Laid Her Child)

David John Fisher (b. 1952)

Text: Norman Cornthwaite Nicholson (1914 – 1987)

David Fisher was born in Northumberland and educated in Leicester. He was a chorister at Leicester Cathedral. Fisher received his first composition lessons at the age of eleven; later, he went on to study music at Bede College, Durham University. For thirty-six years, he was Head of Music and later Head of the Performing Arts Faculty at a Leicestershire college. In 1992, he founded Kingfisher Chorale, which has gone on to become one of the leading chamber choirs in the UK. In addition to Kingfisher Chorale, he has conducted Derby Choral Union, and the Leicester Bach Choir. At the premiere of his own Augsburg Elegy, David Fisher led Emma Kirkby, James Gilchrist, and Alan Ewing, Michaelsteiner Kammerchor and the Batzdorfer Hofkapelle.

David Fisher writes mainly sacred choral music. Among his works are anthems, a setting of the Mass ordinary, and a Requiem. He has won awards, and several of his compositions have been released on CD.

His carol was initially written for Peter White and Leicester Cathedral Choir. In 1972, the Vienna Boys Choir asked Fisher to arrange the piece for them, and this version was first performed by the choir in Gloucester Cathedral on 4 October of that same year. The first verse is unisono. Fisher adds a second and third voice in the following verses. The final stunning verse is sung in six parts.

Norman Nicholson's straightforward text deals with miracles worked by Christ simply by being, and has inspired several composers. There are settings by John McCabe, Francis Pott, and Nigel Waugh.

Text:

Mary laid her Child among
The bracken fronds of night
And by the glimmer round his head
All the barn was lit

Mary held her Child above
The miry, frozen farm
And by the fire in his limbs
The resting roots were warm

Mary hid her Child between
Hillocks of hard sand
By singing water in his veins
Grass sprang from the ground.

Mary nursed her Child beside
The gardens of a grave
And by the death within his bones
The dead became alive

Jingle Bells (1857)

Text and music: James Lord Pierpont (1822 – 1893)

Arr. Alexander L'Estrange

"Jingle Bells" was first published in 1857 under the name, "One Horse Open Sleigh". It is not a Christmas carol, but a song about sleigh races in Massachusetts where James Pierpont was born.

Pierpont led a wild and unsettled life. At 14, he ran away to sea (aboard a ship called "Shark"); later, he joined the gold rush in California where he worked as a photographer. He lost all his possessions in a fire. After that, he returned to Massachusetts. In 1853, he followed his brother John to Savannah, Georgia, where he took up a post as organist. By 1860, John was back in the North, but James stayed, fighting for the confederacy and writing battle songs such as We Conquer or Die.

Jingle Bells is often parodied, and it was the first song broadcast from space. In December 1965, Gemini 6 astronauts Tom Stafford and Wally Schirra reported seeing a command module with eight smaller modules in front, with a pilot in a red suit, and then played Jingle Bells to their mission control.

Text:

Dashing through the snow
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way
Bells on bob tails ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to laugh and sing
A sleighing song tonight

Chorus –

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one horse open sleigh

A day or two ago
I thought I'd take a ride
And soon Miss Fanny Bright
Was seated by my side
The horse was lean and lank
Misfortune seemed his lot
We got into a drifted bank
And then we got upsot

Chorus

Now the ground is white,
Go it while you're young,
Take the girls tonight
And sing this sleighing song;
Just get a bob tailed bay
Two forty as his speed
Hitch him to an open sleigh
And crack, you'll take the lead.

Chorus

Solo to be announced from the stage

Nu zijt wellecome
Carol from the Netherlands.
Arr. Job Maarse

Nu zijt wellecome is one of the most popular Dutch carols today. The text, or a version of it, appears to have been sung as Gregorian chant; variants of the song attested in Aachen in the 13th, and in Limburg in the 14th centuries. The current melody probably dates to the 16th century.

Dutch children receive their presents on the morning of 6 December, when Sinterklaas comes to visit. They put out their shoes the night before, usually with some food and water for Amerigo, his horse and helper. Sinterklaas also has a sidekick, Black Pete, who helps deal with potentially naughty children. Sinterklaas and Black Pete correspond to Nikolo and Krampus in Austria.

Text:

Nu zijt wellecome, Jesu lieve Heer
Gij komt van also hooge, van also veer
Nu zijt wellecome van de hoogen hemel neer
Hier al in dit aardrijk zijt gij gezien nooit meer
Kyrieleis

Christe Kyrieleison, laat ons zingen blij
Daarmed ook onze leisen beginnen vrij.
Jezus is geboren op den heilige kerstnacht
Van een maged reine, die hoog moet zijn geacht
Kyrieleis

*D'herders op den velde hoorden een nieuw lied
Dat Jezus was geboren, zij wisten 't niet
Gaat aan geender straten en gij zult Hem vinden klaar
Bethlem is de stede, daar is 't geschiedt voorwaar
Kyrieleis*

Translation:

Be welcome now, gentle Lord Jesus,
You came from very high, from very far.
Be welcome now from the high heaven
Here on this earth, you were not seen anymore
Lord, have mercy

Christe eleison, let us sing joyfully
so our songs can start freely
Jesus has been born in the holy Christmas night
of a pure maid, who must be held in high esteem.
Lord, have mercy

The shepherds in the field heard a new song
That Jesus was born, they had no idea
Follow that road and you will see him there,
Bethlehem is the place where it happened
Lord, have mercy

Noël (L'airain resonne: the ore resounds) 1895
Jules Massenet (1842 – 1912)

Massenet was taught piano by his mother; at age 11, he was good enough to be accepted at the Paris Conservatoire. To support himself as a student, Massenet worked as a timpanist in theatres, and played piano in a café. At age 20, he won the Prix de Rome and spent three years living and working on his music. From 1878, Massenet taught at the Paris Conservatoire. He composed 25 successful operas. Hard-working Massenet often started his day at 4 am, and his pieces were all created out of the imagination, without a piano. The composer must have been modest; Massenet is known to have never attended public rehearsals or performances of his works.

Today, *Manon* and *Werther* are part of the standard opera repertoire; other operas such as *Thais* or *Esclarmonde* have been “rediscovered” lately. *Noel*, an original work for upper voices and soprano solo, is classic Massenet, with sweeping melodies and a very effective solo line.

Text:

*L'airain résonne, il est minuit.
J'entends l'écho des saints cantiques,
il est minuit.
Le Sauveur est né cette nuit.
Des chrétiens la pieuse voix
exalte la gloire infinie
de l'enfant qui parle au génie
et commande au sceptre des rois!*

*L'airain résonne, il est minuit.
Dors, chérubin, frêle roseau
Tout repose dans la nature, tout dort.
La feuille, l'insecte et l'oiseau.
Des chrétiens la pieuse voix
exalte la gloire infinie
de l'enfant qui parle au génie
et commande au sceptre des rois!
Il est minuit.*

Translation:

The ore resounds, it is midnight.
I hear the echo of sacred songs,
it is midnight,
the Saviour is born tonight.
Pious Christians
praise the eternal glory
of the child who talks like a sage
and rules like a king.

The ore resounds, it is midnight.
Sleep, little cherub, frail reed,
Everything in nature rests, everything sleeps.
The leaf, the insect, and the bird.
Pious Christians . . .

Noël (Chant des religieuses de Uhland) 1866

Charles Gounod (1818 – 1893)

Text: Paul Jules Barbier (1825 – 1901), after a poem by Ludwig Uhland (1787 – 1862)

Charles Gounod was born in Paris; his mother was a pianist, his father a painter. Charles, who inherited both gifts, went to study with Fromental Halévy at the Paris Conservatoire. He competed for the Prix de Rome twice before winning it in 1839. The prestigious three-year government grant allowed him to study in Italy, Germany, and Austria.

He rose to fame with the composition of the opera Faust in 1859. Today, he is probably best known for the "Ave Maria" melody he wrote to the first prelude of Bach's *Das wohltemperirte Clavier*.

Gounod composed the lyrical *Noël* for high voices and solo soprano in 1866, the French text is inspired by Uhland's rather florid "Song of the Nuns". The piece features in the 1947 MGM film *The Bishop's Wife* where it is sung by the Robert Mitchell Boy Choir. None other than Cary Grant, as Angel Dudley, uses his powers to boost the performance.

Text:

*Montez à Dieu, chants d'allégresse!
O coeurs brûlés d'un saint amour.
Chantez Noël! voici le jour
Le ciel entier frémit d'ivresse!
Que la nuit sombre disparaisse!
Voici le jour! voici le jour!
Montez à Dieu, chants d'allégresse!*

*Ô Vierge mère, berce encore
L'enfant divin, et dans ses yeux
Aspire la clarté des cieux!
De son regard, céleste aurore,
Sur ton front pur qui se colore.
Une auréole semble éclore!*

*Ô Dieu sauveur, ma voix t'appelle,
De tes enfants j'entends le chœur
Remplir les cieux d'un chant vainqueur!
Laisse à mon âme ouvrir son aîle!
Qu'elle s'envole et sente en elle
Rayonner ta flamme éternelle.*

Translation:

Ascend to God, songs of joy,
oh hearts burning with a sacred love,
Sing Noel! The day has come
when all of heaven trembles with anticipation.
May the dark night disappear.
The day has come, the day has come.
Ascend to God, songs of joy!

Oh virgin mother, continue to rock
the divine child, and in his eyes
see the clear skies.
From his gaze, heavenly dawn,
a halo seems to glow on your pure
and blushing forehead.

Oh God and Savior, my voice calls out to you,
I can hear the choir of your children
fill the heavens with songs of victory.
Let my soul spread its wings,
Let it fly off, feeling within
your eternal flame.

O du stille Zeit (O quiet time)

Cesar Bresgen (1913 – 1988)

Arr. Willi Träder

Text: Joseph von Eichendorff (1788 - 1857)

Cesar Bresgen was a professor of music in Salzburg. He wrote operas and chamber music, and edited the songs of Herman of Salzburg, a 14th century monk. Like his friend Carl Orff, Bresgen was a champion and a pioneer of music education for children, which is reflected in his musical output. *O du stille Zeit* was first published in 1938, in a volume of songs by Romantic poet Joseph von Eichendorff.

Text:

O du stille Zeit

Kommst eh' wir's gedacht

Über die Berge weit,

Gute Nacht.

In der Einsamkeit

Rauscht es nun so sacht

Über die Berge weit,

Gute Nacht.

Translation:

O, quiet time,

You arrive sooner than we think

Across the faraway mountains,

Good night.

In the loneliness

There is a soft rustling

Across the faraway mountains,

Good night