

LUMINA & LYREBYRD

at Christmas

Sunday 18 December 2022
St John's Anglican Church
Halifax Street, Adelaide



PROGRAMME NOTES

Christmas is a time for celebration. Over the past 2,000 years, it is interesting how the festival has developed from being a significant date in the Christian calendar to being a much broader cultural festival - one which is celebrated in one way or another by a majority of the world's countries.

All those celebrating Christmas have developed their own traditions. In Australia, most of us share food and give presents. For those who attend services or concerts, we are treated to music that is steeped in tradition. Even most of our contemporary Christmas music contains echoes of a previous time.

When choosing music for today's program, we thought about the origins of some of our most enduring musical traditions.

Christmas was first celebrated in 336 BCE, a time when it is believed that all music was essentially one line – something later referred to as plainsong.

We begin today's Christmas celebration with **O come, O come Emmanuel**, a traditional carol that is based on an early medieval processional melody. The familiar chant has been adapted and arranged by David Willcocks to create a much-loved Christmas hymn.

It wasn't until the 1200s that music in two, three and more parts started to appear, both within the church and without. At the same time as medieval music was flourishing, we see an outpouring of exquisite art and architecture.

The person most often glorified by this medieval art and music was the Virgin Mary. During the Middle Ages, Mary was revered above all women and was even included as part of the Holy Trinity. Although that tradition has now changed, with Mary replaced by the Holy Ghost in the Trinity, the inspired musical outpourings from the period remain.

The next three pieces celebrate the Virgin Mary, starting with **Nowel - tydings true**, a stirring 15th Century carol telling the tale of the Annunciation. Lumina will perform this in the original Middle English.

One of the most significant composers of the late medieval period is John Dunstable. Believed to have been born in England, he spent much of his life composing in Italy.

Although the majority of his works are in three-parts, Lumina will today present a rare four-part work by this master of the Middle Ages: **Gaude Virgo Salutata**.

Where late medieval masters like Dunstable and Binchois left off, early Renaissance composers such as Dufay, Ockeghem and Josquin took up the baton. **Ave nobilissima creatura** is one of Josquin's most beautiful works dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

We now jump into the late Renaissance, with Lyrebyrd recorders playing a cheerful dance called **Tourdion**, followed by one of many settings of the delightful tune **In dulci Jubilo** by Michael Praetorius.

Before we leave the adoration of the Virgin Mary, Lumina's sopranos and altos will perform **Virgo, rosa virginum**, a 21st-century setting of medieval words by Australian composer David Yardley.

We return to 15th-century Prague, where a special collection of musical works was compiled. Most of these works celebrate Christmas and Lumina will perform three of these with the help of Lyrebyrd's Cacophonix consort of crumhorns, cornemuses and sackbut.

Sophia nasci fertur | In natali Domini | Nobis est natus

~ INTERVAL ~

We begin the second half of today's Christmas celebration with a piece by Lumina composer Rachel Sag. Rachel's late-20th century work is based on a text by 16th-century poet Robert Southwell. **Behold a silly tender babe** welcomes the Christ-child and marvels at the miracle of his birth in an humble manger.

Like so many of our traditions, the meaning of the word 'silly' has changed much over the years. Originally meaning happy, it then developed to mean blessed or pious and then innocent. It was only after the 16th century that it came to mean foolish or lacking in reason. Thus Rachel's work straddles 400 years of change and harks back to an earlier time.

Another popular piece marvelling at the story of a babe born in a stable is **Away in a manger**. Rather than the more familiar tune, Lumina will perform the traditional Normandy tune harmonised by Reginald Jacques.

Some of the oldest Christmas songs from England are the lullabies developed to lull a sleeping child to sleep. These songs often had a broader use than just at Christmas time, yet were none-the-less steeped in the story and symbolism of the original Christmas story.

The evocative words 'Lullay, lullow' appear in dozens of carols from the medieval period, many of which Lumina has sung in previous concerts. Today we premiere a new work by Lumina composer Anna Pope: **Lullay, lullow, thou little tiny child**.

'Inspired by medieval lullabies and carols, my Christmas lullaby
is also a lovesong.
The mother sings to her child, full of hope and unconditional love.
She will stay by his side forever.
Ostensibly about Mary and her baby Jesus, it is really a song for
anyone who loves - parents, children, then and now.'

*Lullay, lullow, thou little tiny child
The mother sings to her little one
Lullay, lullow*

*I shall watch over you, all the days that
God sends
I shall tend you and love you with all that
I am.
I shall tend to your followers, the lion and
the lamb
My little one, my dear one
No burden could be sweeter
Know that I am with you, all the days that
God sends
Know that I am with you, now and
forever.*

*I shall watch over you and wait for you
Even under the tree*

*By the stones I shall cry for you
And rejoice when you be free
My little one, my dear one
How great you will be
Through vinegar and briars, I will bide with
thee.*

*I shall rise to coelorum to stay by your side
If I be called queen, 'tis only for you,
My prince and my darling
'Tis only for you.
So sleep well my dear one, sleep safe in my
arms
And know that the world were lost but for
you
My dear one, my little one
Most blessèd, most prized.
All glory be yours, for now and evermore,
Amen*

The words “Lullay, lulla” also appear in the powerful 16th-century **Coventry Carol**. Originating in a play created by the 'shearmen and tailors' of Coventry in England, this work develops the idea of a lullaby into a cautionary tale about Herod's appalling slaughter of innocent children at the time of Christ's birth. Lumina will perform this in the original Middle English.

Another common type of carol in medieval England begins with “Nowell”. In the words of Bernard Mageean, scholar and former member of Lumina:

'Nowells' proclaim and picture God in the Christmas message in a way that is typical of English Christmas music of late medieval times. There is an enthusiastic delivery of good tidings and the provision of repeated chorus sections, suitable for group participation. The word 'Nowell' or 'Noel' is related to the Latinate 'natus' or 'natale' pointing to birth.'

We performed a 15th century annunciation carol at the beginning of our program today and now present the popular 15th-century carol **Nowell, sing we both all and some**, followed by **Nowel, el, el**, a setting of medieval words by David Yardley.

We finish our celebration of Christmas music through the ages with two uplifting carols. First, another setting of the beautiful **In dulci jubilo**. Earlier in the program, you heard Lyrebyrd's recorder octet playing the version by Praetorius. Lumina will now sing the lovely setting by early Victorian composer Robert Pearsall.

Finally, we wish you a Christmas full of peace and joy and leave you with this beautiful work from the Baroque period by Marc-Antoine Charpentier: **Salve Puerule**.

LUMINA VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Rachel Sag
Jen Bird
Anna Pope
Melanie Sandford-Morgan
Amy Myers
Carolyn Wilkins
Penny Dally
Meg Pope
Kate Tretheway
Rosemary Byron-Scott
Melinda Pike
Ellie Pope
Rebecca Muecke
Jo Pike
Tim Muecke
Peter Mahoney
Andrew Heitmann
Clive Conway
Kenneth Pope
BJ Moore

Lumina Vocal Ensemble has been working for over 23 years to perform music from 'outside the square'.

The group comprises experienced and emerging choral specialists and aims to share rare and inspiring music with SA audiences.

Not only specialising in medieval music, Lumina also supports contemporary composers, particularly SA women composers.

Lumina shares its performances with international audiences (~2m views), raising awareness of the huge talent we have in South Australia.

Lumina recordings are used in schools for music education across the world. Our aim is to educate, share and support great music and musicians.



LYREBYRD

Lyrebyrd Recorder Consort, Lyrebyrd Cacophonix and Lyrebyrd Viol Consort

Rachel Sag	descant recorder, garklein & soprano cornemuse
Anna Pope	descant recorder and soprano crumhorn
Kenneth Pope	treble recorder and alto cornemuse
Bronwyn Day	treble recorder and alto crumhorn
Kari Dawson	descant & tenor recorder, tenor cornemuse, & sackbut
Garth Rowe	descant & bass recorder, tenor crumhorn
Tim Muecke	tenor and great bass recorder, bass crumhorn, & treble viol
Rosemary Byron-Scott	bass recorder and bass cornemuse
Ellie Pope	bass viol, rebec
Meg Pope	bass viol, bowed psaltery
Peter Mahoney	bass drum



Lyrebyrd Consort has been performing early music on a range of instruments common in Medieval and Renaissance times since 2008.

Lyrebyrd's mission is to discover and perform rare and evocative music from the past, and to explore different sonorities and combinations of instruments and musical ideas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Rosemary Byron Scott

Lumina Management Committee Secretary and Lyrebyrd Manager

Penny Dally

Lumina Management Committee Member, Legal and Governance

BJ Moore

Lumina Management Committee Member, Venues and Regional Outreach

Carolyn Wilkins

Publicity and website

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Jen Bird

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Tom Burton

Language consultant

Front of house

Rosemary Byron Scott (Manager), Ruth Marshall, Zalia Blakeley, Josh, Marisen & Amy Tretheway



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PROGRAMME

Pavan 1

Anthony Holborne

Pavane La Venissiene and Galliard

Claude Gervaise

Pavana alla Ferrarese

Joan-Ambrosio Dalza

Sussex Carol

*English Traditional Carol arranged by Garth Rowe
for recorders after Willcocks arrangement for voices*

O come, O come Emmanuel	Traditional
Nowel - tydings true	Anonymous, English C15
Gaude Virgo Salutata	John Dunstable (1390?-1453)
Ave nobilissima	Josquin des Pres (1450?-1521)
Tourdion (<i>Lyrebyrd</i>)	Pierre Attaignant, c1530
In dulci jubilo (<i>Lyrebyrd</i>)	Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)
Virgo, rosa virginum	David Yardley (b 1978)
Sophia nasci fertur	Anonymous, Codex Specialnik, C15
In natali Domini	Anonymous, Codex Specialnik, C15
Nobis est natus	Anonymous, Codex Specialnik, C15

INTERVAL

Behold a silly tender babe	Rachel Sag (b 1974)
Away in a manger	Normandy tune
Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child	Anna Pope (b 1968)
Coventry carol	Anon, England C16
Nowell Sing We, Both All and Some	Anon, England C15
Nowel, el, el	David Yardley (b 1978)
In dulci jubilo	Robert Pearsall (1795-1856)
Salve puerule	Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704)

For full translations please visit our website: www.luminavocal.com.au/christmas