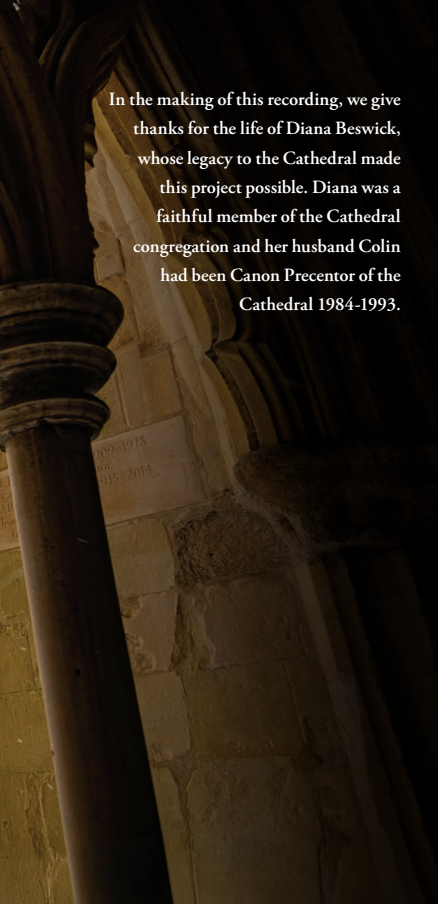


LORD OF THE DANCE



CHRISTMAS CAROLS FROM NORWICH CATHEDRAL
NORWICH CATHEDRAL CHOIR • ONYX BRASS • ASHLEY GROTE





In the making of this recording, we give thanks for the life of Diana Beswick, whose legacy to the Cathedral made this project possible. Diana was a faithful member of the Cathedral congregation and her husband Colin had been Canon Precentor of the Cathedral 1984-1993.

In the afternoon winter light of Christmas Eve, over two thousand people are crowded into Norwich Cathedral for the Christmas Procession. The service is just about to begin, and still more people are pouring through the doors, filling the aisles, standing against the pillars, finding room wherever they can. The prologue is read and then, from the gallery above the High Altar Sanctuary, the choir begins its first carol. A hush descends on the congregation below. *Once in Royal David's City* follows, and the procession begins, the choir and clergy weaving their way through the huge Norman Cathedral so that everyone present can catch a glimpse and be part of the liturgy which, for many in our fine city, marks the start of Christmas.

This album is intended to capture something of the feel of the Christmas season at Norwich Cathedral. It is not a carol service, or a concert, but rather a selection of repertoire that the Cathedral Choir has performed at Christmases here in recent years, along with some of the much-loved Christmas hymns that people sing at the many carol services that take place here each year. There are new works ►

and new arrangements, along with some mainstays of the Christmas choral repertoire from all different time periods.

The title track of the disc, *Lord of the Dance*, is my own re-working of the popular hymn-carol by Sydney Carter (1915-2004), adapted from the traditional Shaker melody, "Simple Gifts". The carol is a chronology of Christ's life, starting with his nativity; "I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth / At Bethlehem I had my birth". Carter's text is a gift for an arranger. Each verse has its own clear character and story to tell, which can be brought out in different musical ideas and textures. I used a simple soprano solo at the opening, with the sense that this is the dawn and the world is just beginning - the solo voice brings a sense of stillness and innocence. For Christ's time on earth, employing 7/8 rhythms to give the music life and vitality seemed like an obvious choice. The darker verses of the text, speaking of Christ's trial and Crucifixion, are accompanied by more angular, chromatic harmony, before the triumphant ending which speaks of the Resurrection - "the life that'll never, never die".

The traditional English carol, *I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In*, is masterfully presented by Stuart Nicholson (currently Organist & Master of the Choristers at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin), in an arrangement that is bright and joyous, with a little humour thrown in for good measure. The organ accompaniment is a relentless peal of Christmas bells, with melodic fragments that encompass sea shanties and even some George Gershwin!

My arrangements of the popular traditional carols *Away in a manger* and *Silent night* have been made for Norwich Cathedral Choir in recent years. Both are simply presented, in order to have an accessible and well-known melody at the start of our Christmas Procession that can immediately resonate with the large congregation, whilst still providing something fresh and new. Both carols are so popular that perhaps we take for granted their two beautiful melodies, both composed by 19th-century hymn writers, American and German respectively. Another traditional German carol documented here is *In dulci jubilo*, in the well-known arrangement by Robert Pearsall, included because it is in my opinion one of the most beautiful of all carols and a piece

that is strongly associated in my mind with our Christmas carol services here.

I have also included two contemporary works which have become staples of our Cathedral Choir's Christmas repertoire and favourites amongst our choristers. Sally Beamish's setting of a poem by Katrina Shepherd, *In the stillness*, is a masterclass in the beauty of simplicity, the combination of words and music capturing so perfectly and vividly the scene, "as we wait for a new morn / And the presence of a child soon to be born". Similarly, Will Todd's carol *My Lord has come* sets the composer's own words with a beautiful sense of intimacy, in music that feels like a very personal reflection which comes from the heart.

Bob Chilcott's *Alleluia! A New Work Is Come on Hand* was commissioned by the Dean & Chapter of Norwich Cathedral for the Christmas Processions in December 2023. Its well-known 15th-century text is cleverly set in a faux-medieval style that has a rustic, folk-like quality, the dancing ostinato accompaniment driving the piece forwards with tremendous energy and spirit. His

new arrangement of *The Sussex Carol* subjects this well-known traditional English carol to a rhythmic re-working with seven beats in the bar, lending it a contemporary dance-like feel. *Midwinter* is an original composition, setting the famous poem by Christina Rossetti, heard here in Chilcott's own arrangement for organ and brass quintet, in which the warmth of the soft brass tone lends a special quality to the choral texture.

The Cathedral Choir and organ are joined by Onyx Brass in arrangements of many of the popular Christmas hymns. Included here are just some of the brilliant arrangements by the late Sir David Willcocks, many of which were made famous during his tenure as Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge. *Once in Royal David's City* is heard with a last-verse arrangement by the late Sir Stephen Cleobury, successor but one to David Willcocks at King's. I was fortunate to be trained as a chorister and later an organ scholar at King's under Stephen, and it is this last verse descant which evokes my own childhood memories of singing in the *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*. I have added the brass parts myself, for which I hope Stephen would forgive me. ►

My own arrangement of *O Come, Emmanuel* was composed for an Advent Procession here at Norwich Cathedral, and similarly *While Shepherds watched* for use in Christmas services here.

Another highlight of each December here is our annual Cathedral Christmas concert. In many ways, this occasion could not be further from the mystery and reverence of the Christmas Eve Procession, but it attracts a large audience who gather for what is unapologetically an evening of good cheer – think Santa Claus and tinsel, rather than anything much more sophisticated! It seemed fitting to incorporate this part of Christmas at Norwich Cathedral into this disc, concluding with David Willcocks' arrangement of *Jingle Bells* and Arthur Warrell's choral version of *We wish you a Merry Christmas*.

The last recording of Christmas Carols by Norwich Cathedral Choir was made in 2015, a decade ago, and much has changed since then. When I arrived in Norwich, there had already been older girl choristers (of secondary school age) since 1995. The choristers of the Cathedral Choir were all boys, receiving scholarships to attend Norwich School.

Early on in my time here, I began to combine the girls and the boys frequently, for large concert works and for special services on major Feasts, partly so that the role of the girl choristers would become more central to our musical life, but also because the sound of the younger boys and the older girls together worked so well. Then in September 2024, the Dean & Chapter took the decision to admit both girls and boys to sing alongside each other as Cathedral Choristers from the age of 8-13, retaining the Senior Girl Choristers and also starting a choir for teenage boys with changing voices. Taking into account our Children's Choir, this means we can now offer high-quality singing opportunities for girls and boys alike from the age of 6 right up to 18, and the sound of the combined voices is beautifully enriched.

Another major change was the restoration of the Cathedral's magnificent 102-stop pipe organ in 2023. One of the largest and finest examples of any English Cathedral organ, this instrument was originally built by the Norwich-based firm, Norman and Beard, in 1899, and has always been loved for its richness of tone, its vast orchestral palette, and

its ability to fill the building with sound, such that even those sat at the very back of the nave would feel supported in hymn singing. Harrison and Harrison of Durham have done a wonderful job at retaining the character of the old instrument, whilst modernising it and redesigning the internal layout to achieve a more even distribution of sound East-West, with around a third of the pipe work being new. The golden star on the album cover is taken from the organ's Cymbelstern, a "toy" organ stop consisting of a metal or wooden star or wheel on which several small bells are mounted. When engaged, the star rotates, producing a continuous tinkling sound. It was common in northern Europe, Germany in particular, throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, but is unusual in an English Romantic-era organ. Its use is particularly appropriate in a lot of repertoire for Christmas and Epiphany, with the connotations of its rotating star.

Finally, this album marks our last recording project with Cathedral Organist David Dunnett, who has retired after serving Norwich Cathedral for 29 years, first as Organist & Master of Music

1996-2007, continuing as Organist until August 2025. David's experience and skill as a Cathedral Organist is second to none, and those who are familiar with his playing will know the inexpressible way in which it would uplift and transform any act of worship. He has a deep understanding of the music and liturgy that cannot be taught, and whenever he played, I always had the feeling that he was completely at one with the instrument and the building. It felt right that David should be at the keys for this first recording of the Cathedral Choir accompanied by the newly rebuilt organ, which he knew so well both in its new and former incarnation.

Wherever you are listening to this, and whether you have ever visited Norwich Cathedral or not, I hope that it will bring joy, beauty, inspiration and wonder to your Christmas as we celebrate again the gift of the Christ-child and the hope for our world that Christ's birth represents. ■

Ashley Grote

*Organist & Master of Music, Norwich Cathedral
2025*

1. O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

Music French 15th Century

Adapted Thomas Helmore (1811–1890)

Arr. Ashley Grote (b. 1982)

Words Ancient Advent Antiphons (Cologne 1710)

Translated Thomas Alexander Lacey (1853–1931)

O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Redeem thy captive Israel,
That into exile drear is gone
Far from the face of God's dear Son.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou branch of Jesse! Draw
The quarry from the lion's claw;
From the dread caverns of the grave,
From nether hell, thy people save.

O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
Pour on our souls thy healing light;
Dispel the long night's ling'ring gloom,
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.

O come, thou Lord of David's Key!
The royal door fling wide and free;
Safeguard for us the heavenward road,
And bar the way to death's abode.

O come, O come, Adonai,
Who in thy glorious majesty
From that high mountain clothed with awe,
Gavest thy folk the elder law. ■

2. AWAY IN A MANGER

Melody by W. J. Kirkpatrick (1838–1921)

Arr. Ashley Grote (b. 1982)

Words anon. 19th Century American

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the heavens looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there. ■

3. ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Music Henry John Gauntlett (1805–1876)

Revised Arthur Henry Mann (1850–1929)

*(and Editors) | Verse 6 Sir Stephen Cleobury
(1948–2019) | arr. Ashley Grote (b.1982)*

Words Cecil Frances Alexander (1818–1895)

Once in Royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed.
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall:

With the poor and mean and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly Maiden,
In whose gentle arms he lay.
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.

For he is our childhood's pattern:
Day by day like us he grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew;
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.



Not in that poor lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
We shall see him: but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high.
When like stars his children crowned,
All in white shall wait around. ■

4. LORD OF THE DANCE

*Melody trad. Shaker | Adapted by Sydney Carter
(1915–2004) | Arr. Ashley Grote (b. 1982)
Words Sydney Carter (1915–2004)*

I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
But they would not dance and they wouldn't
follow me,

I danced for the fishermen, for James and John –
They came with me and the dance went on.

I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
The holy people said it was a shame,
They whipped and they stripped and they hung
me high,
And they left me there on a cross to die.

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black –
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the Dance and I still go on.

They cut me down and I leapt up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me –
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. ■

5. THE FIRST NOWELL

Music English traditional carol

Arr. Sir David Willcocks (1919–2015)

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star,
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night:

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went:

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay:

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full rev'rently upon their knee,
And offered there in his presence
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense:
Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of nought,
And with his blood mankind hath bought. ■

6. ALLELUIA! A NEW WORK IS COME ON HAND

Music Bob Chilcott (b. 1955) | Words anon. 15th Century

Alleluia!

A new work is come on hand,
Through might and grace of God's son.
To save the lost of every land.
For now is free that erst was bound.
We may well sing *Alleluia!*
Now is fulfilled the prophecy,
Of David and of Jeremy,
And also of Isaiah.
Sing we therefore both loud and high *Alleluia!*



Alleluia, this sweetè song,
Out of a green branch it sprung;
God send us the life that lasteth long.
Now joy and bliss be him among.
That thus can sing *Alleluia!* ■

7. IN THE STILLNESS

Music by Sally Beamish (b. 1956)

Words by Katrina Shepherd

In the stillness of a church
Where candles glow,
In the softness of a fall
Of fresh white snow,
In the brightness of the stars
That shine this night,
In the calmness of a pool
Of healing light,

In the clearness of a choir
That softly sings,
In the oneness of a hush
Of angels' wings,
In the mildness of a gift

By stable bare,
In the quietness of a lull
Near cradle fair,
There's a patience as we wait
For a new morn,
And the presence of a child
Soon to be born. ■

8. O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Music English traditional tune

Arr. Ralph Vaughan-Williams (1872–1958)

Descant Thomas Armstrong (1898–1994)

Words Bishop Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together

Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us in today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel. ■

9. IN DULCI JUBILO

Old German melody

Arr. Robert Lucas Pearsall (1795–1856)

Words anon. (German and Latin)

In dulci jubilo,
Let us our homage show!
Our heart's joy reclineth
In praesepio;
And like a bright star shineth
Matris in gremio.
Alpha es et O,
Alpha es et O.

O Jesu parvule!
I yearn for Thee alway!
Hear me, I beseech thee,
O Puer optime!
My prayer let it reach Thee,
O Princeps gloriae.
Trahe me post te!
Trahe me post te!

O Patris caritas,
O nati lenitas!



Deeply were we stained

Per nostra crimina;

But Thou hast for us gained

Caelorum gaudia.

O that we were there!

O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia,

where, if that they be not there?

There are angels singing

Nova cantica,

There the bells are ringing

In regis curia:

O that we were there!

O that we were there! ■

10. I SAW THREE SHIPS

Music trad. (English)

Arr. Stuart Nicholson (b. 1975)

Words William Sandys (1792–1874)

I saw three ships come sailing in

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;

I saw three ships come sailing in

On Christmas Day in the morning,

And what was in those ships all three,

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?

And what was in those ships all three,

On Christmas day in the morning?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,

On Christmas day in the morning.

Pray whither sailed those ships all three,

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?

Pray whither sailed those ships all three,

On Christmas Day in the morning?

O they sailed into Bethlehem,

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;

O they sailed into Bethlehem,

On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth shall ring,

On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;

And all the bells on earth shall ring,

On Christmas Day in the morning,

And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the Angels in Heaven shall sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the Souls on Earth shall sing,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the Souls on Earth shall sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

Then let us all rejoice amain,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
Then let us all rejoice amain,
On Christmas Day in the morn. ■

11. IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

Music English traditional melody

Adapted Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900)

Descant Sir David Willcocks (1919–2015)

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,

From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
‘Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heav’n’s all-gracious King!’
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heav’nly music floats
O’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hov’ring wing,
And ever o’er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!



For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing. ■

12. SILENT NIGHT

Music Franz Xaver Grüber (1787–1863)

Arr. Ashley Grote (b.1982)

Words Joseph Mohr (1792–1848)

Translated John Freeman Young (1820–1885)

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright;
Round yon virgin mother and child;
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
 Sleep in heavenly peace.
 Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;

Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
 Christ the Saviour is born!
 Christ the Saviour is born!

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!
 Jesus, Lord, at thy birth! ■

13. MID-WINTER

Music Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

Words Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, Heav'n cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain:

Heaven and earth shall flee away

When he comes to reign:

In the bleak mid-winter

A stable-place sufficed

The Lord God Almighty

Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels

May have gathered there,

Cherubim and seraphim

Thronged the air;

But only his mother

In her maiden bliss

Worshipped the Beloved

With a kiss.

What can I give him,

Poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd

I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man

I would do my part;

Yet what I can, I give him,

Give my heart. ■

14. WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

Music from Este's Psalter (1592) | Verses 4 and 6 Arr.

Ashley Grote (b. 1982) | Words Nabum Tate (1652–1715)

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,

All seated on the ground,

The angel of the Lord came down,

And glory shone around.

'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread

Had seized their troubled mind);

'Glad tidings of great joy I bring

To you and all mankind.

'To you, in David's town this day,

Is born of David's line

A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;

And this shall be the sign:

'The heavenly babe you there shall find

To human view displayed,

All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,

And in a manger laid.'



Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels, praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

‘All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heav’n to men
Begin and never cease!’ ■

15. MY LORD HAS COME

Words and Music Will Todd (b. 1970)

Shepherds, called by angels,
Called by love and angels:
No place for them but a stable.

My Lord has come.

Sages, searching for stars,
Searching for love in heaven;
No place for them but a stable.

My Lord has come.

His love will hold me,
His love will cherish me,
Love will cradle me.

Lead me, lead me to see him,
Sages and shepherds and angels;
No place for me but a stable.

My Lord has come. ■

16. O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

Music anon. (probably 18th Century)

Arr. Sir David Willcocks (1919–2015)

Words John Francis Wade (c. 1711–1786)

Translated Frederick Oakeley (1802–1800) and

William Thomas Brooke (1848–1917)

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the King of Angels:

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten, not created:

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God
In the highest.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! ■

17. SUSSEX CAROL

*Music trad. (English) | Arr. Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)
Words trad. (English)*

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring;
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.
Then why should men on earth be sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
'Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen.' ■

18. HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Music Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47) | Adapted

*William Hayman Cummings (1831–1915) | Descant
and organ part Sir David Willcocks (1919–2015) |*

Words Charles Wesley (1707–88) and others

Hark! the herald angels sing,
‘Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:’
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim,
‘Christ is born in Bethlehem.’

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of the Virgin’s womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. ■

19. JINGLE, BELLS

Words and melody J. Pierpont (1822–1893)

Arr. Sir David Willcocks (1919–2015)

Dashing thro’ the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh,
O’er the fields we go,
Laughing all the way;
Bells on Bobtail ring,
Making spirits bright;
What fun it is to ride,
And sing a sleighing song tonight. Hi!

Jingle, bells, jingle, bells

Jingle all the way;

Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh!

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

20. A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Words and melody traditional (West country) carol

Arr. Arthur Warrell (1882–1939)

We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
We wish you a merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year.

*Good tidings we bring to you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year.*

Now bring us a figgy pudding
Now bring us a figgy pudding
Now bring us a figgy pudding,
And bring some out here.

For we all like figgy pudding,
For we all like figgy pudding,
For we all like figgy pudding,
So bring some out here.

We won't go till we've got some,
We won't go till we've got some,
We won't go till we've got some,
So bring some out here. ■

NORWICH CATHEDRAL CHOIR

Ashley Grote, Master of Music | David Dunnett, Organist

Norwich Cathedral Choir upholds a tradition of choral worship that stretches back almost unbroken to 1096. The choir's principal work is the daily singing of Choral Evensong, with a varied repertoire that stretches from plainchant right through to contemporary choral music.

The twenty boy and girl choristers of the Cathedral Choir receive scholarships to attend Norwich School, which is located in the beautiful and historic Cathedral Close. The Senior Girl Choristers are drawn from secondary schools across city of Norwich and surrounding area. The alto, tenor and bass parts are sung by six professional Lay Clerks and six Choral Scholars.

Alongside the singing of choral services, Norwich Cathedral Choir has a regular programme of concert performances, many in partnership with leading period instrument ensemble Norwich Baroque. Under the

direction of the Master of Music, Ashley Grote, the choir has gained a reputation as one of the finest Cathedral Choirs in the UK, with frequent broadcasts on national radio as well as commercial recordings that have received critical acclaim.

CHORISTERS: *Zoe Asamoah, Alfred Bufford-Agnew, George Blyth, Ben Chai Guo, Sébastien Dubroeuq, Luca Ficarra-Soards, Otter Gibbs Peel, Harry Henson, Vera Hilton-Mitzman, Theo Holden, Samuel Irvine, Max Kotzee, Moli Li, Jack Murphy, Felix Tooley, Max Wright, Sam Zhou*

SENIOR GIRL CHORISTERS: *Ren Cubitt, Jemima Curtis, Alice Dubroeuq, Sylvie Ellerby, Isla Flett, Otilie Ford, Isabella Grubb, Sophia Holden, Florence Humphrey, Hannah Kelleway, Lumia Kirby, Daisy Lamb, Isla Lowery, Grace Marriott, Sabrina Mitchell, Evelyn Norton, Eleanor Peel, Charlotte Platten, Lucy Platten, Anna Rechel, Abigail Riches, Rosa Williams Korteling, Beatrice Williamson, Poppy Zhang*



ALTO: *Eve Garrard, Colin Shaw, Willow Swiatek, Anya Warcaba-Wood. Percussion*

TENOR: *Arthur Elliott, William Falconer, Matthew Hutchinson, Fred Stanford*

BASS: *Isaac Cooper, Dhilan Gnanadurai, Gabriel Huc-Hepher, Luke Townshend ■*



ONYX BRASS

Niall Keatley and Gideon Brookes, Trumpet

Andrew Sutton, French Horn

Andrew White, Trombone

Dave Gordon-Shute, Tuba

Celebrating its 30th anniversary season in 2023, Onyx Brass continues to be the leading light in establishing the brass quintet as a medium for serious chamber music, combining “staggering virtuosity” (Sarah Walker, BBC Radio 3) with the entertaining and articulate style that has become the group’s trademark.

The group’s extensive discography (16 albums, and counting!) is regularly featured on BBC R3 and has received huge critical acclaim, Gramophone hailing “some of the most thrilling chamber brass-playing of its kind” and Record Review describing the group as a “wonderful, virtuosic brass quintet”.

New music and education are both at the heart of the ensemble’s remit: it has commissioned and premièred over 200 new works and has led



workshops and masterclasses from primary schools through to the Juilliard School; Onyx has held several residencies, including 15 years at Imperial College, London. The group also specialises



in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for professional musicians and has led several sessions for British Army Music in this area.

Work with singers also forms a central part of Onyx's work, often under the auspices of the John Armitage Memorial trust, with whom Onyx Brass has been affiliated since its inception. ■



ASHLEY GROTE

Ashley Grote was appointed Master of Music at Norwich Cathedral in September 2012 at the age of 30. Under his direction, Norwich Cathedral Choir has gained a reputation as one of the UK's leading Cathedral Choirs. Alongside their core work of singing daily choral services, the choir gives regular concerts, many alongside leading period instrument ensemble Norwich Baroque, broadcasts on national radio and has made numerous recordings to critical acclaim.

Previously, Ashley held positions as Assistant Director of Music at Gloucester Cathedral (2008-12), Assistant Organist of Westminster Abbey (2005-08) and Organist-in-Residence at Tonbridge School (2004-05). He was also Organist and later Director of the Edington Festival of Music within the Liturgy.

Ashley began his musical life as a chorister at King's College, Cambridge under the direction of the late Sir Stephen Cleobury, going on to be a music scholar at Uppingham School. Following a year as Organ



Scholar at St George's Cathedral, Cape Town, returned to King's College where he took up the organ scholarship and studied for a degree in music.

In recent years, Ashley has worked frequently with the BBC Singers as an accompanist and conductor. He has directed the Britten Sinfonia, the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and Norwich Baroque. Since September 2024, Ashley

has also been Chorus Conductor of Norwich Philharmonic Society.

As an organist, Ashley has performed throughout the UK, USA and Europe and has made three solo recordings to critical acclaim. He is an established composer and arranger of choral and organ works which have been published by Oxford University Press, Stainer & Bell, and Encore publications. ■

DXL1220

1	O come, Emmanuel	4:02	10	I saw three ships	2:23
	<i>Arr. Ashley Grote</i>			<i>Arr. Stuart Nicholson</i>	
2	Away in a manger	3:02	11	It came upon a midnight clear	3:21
	<i>Arr. Ashley Grote</i>			<i>Arr. David Willcocks</i>	
3	Once in Royal David's City	4:32	12	Silent night	3:47
	<i>Descant Stephen Cleobury</i>			<i>Arr. Ashley Grote</i>	
4	Lord of the Dance	4:04	13	Midwinter	4:07
	<i>Arr. Ashley Grote</i>			<i>Bob Chilcott</i>	
	<i>Charlotte Platten, Soprano</i>		14	While Shepherds watched their flocks	2:42
5	The First Nowell	5:23		<i>Arr. Ashley Grote</i>	
	<i>Arr. David Willcocks</i>		15	My Lord has come	3:41
6	Alleluia! A new work is come on hand	3:11		<i>Will Todd</i>	
	<i>Bob Chilcott</i>		16	O come, all ye faithful	4:43
7	In the stillness	2:21		<i>Arr. David Willcocks</i>	
	<i>Sally Beamish</i>		17	Sussex Carol	2:16
8	O Little town of Bethlehem	3:26		<i>Arr. Bob Chilcott</i>	
	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>		18	Hark! The herald-angels sing	4:03
9	In dulci jubilo	3:23		<i>Arr. David Willcocks</i>	
	<i>Arr. Robert Pearsall</i>		19	Jingle Bells	2:15
	<i>Sébastien Dubroeuq, Max Kotzee, Treble</i>			<i>Arr. David Willcocks</i>	
	<i>Willow Swiatek, Colin Shaw, Alto</i>		20	We wish you a merry Christmas	1:49
	<i>William Falconer, Fred Stanford, Tenor</i>			<i>Arr. Arthur Warrell</i>	
	<i>Dhilan Gnanadurai, Isaac Cooper, Bass</i>				

Total playing time: 1:08:30

Recording engineer Matthew Wadsworth | Recording Assistant Eila Chinkin | Producer Adrian Hunter | Cover and booklet design Tim A'Court

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