

# My Spirit Sang All Day

A very warm welcome to you for tonight's concert at the church of St Peter and St Paul, Hathern.

Our programme this evening is the culmination of a very enjoyable two months for me, working with the Shepshed Singers. We decided to mark this by delivering a concert of inspiring and diverse words and music at the beginning of Spring, looking forward to a new phase of their existence as a choir.

The music I have chosen shows the variety of secular choral repertoire that the singers enjoy performing and includes pieces from several different historical eras, sung in four different languages.

We begin with a collection of madrigals: three from the English School of Thomas Morley, Thomas Campion, John Dowland and then a group from Northern Europe. Giovanni Gabrieli's double choir *Lieto Godea* - reminiscent of antiphonal motets written for St Mark's Venice is swiftly followed by an elegant courtly dance from Hans Leo Hassler, ending in Passereau's cheeky little Chanson *Il est bel et bon*. In amongst these early compositions, you can enjoy a poem in awe of the creative abilities of John Dowland by his contemporary Richard Barnfield and also the musings of Renaissance travel writer Thomas Coryat on Venetian music.

Our next set places the listener at the very core of English choral repertory written for the amateur chamber choir. Ralph Vaughan Williams *Five Folk Song Settings* display all the composer's mastery of word painting and careful characterisation through a choral idiom, as he sets some evocative folk poetry, both lively and lugubrious. In the place of the Christmas Song Wassail, we give you another gem, this time from the pen of Gerald Finzi and his inspiring and life-affirming setting of Robert Bridges poem *My spirit sang all day*. In amongst these romantic part songs, comes a haunting poem by Christian Mystic Christina Rossetti, *Maude Clare*, a tale of deception and love spurned.

Before our final duo of songs, you can enjoy the perfect sentiment of Franz Von Schober's poem *An die Musik*, most famous through its stunning musical setting by Franz Schubert. On this occasion, we let the text speak for itself. And so to our final duo: for this we take a walk on the lighter side, singing two close harmony arrangements of popular jazz standards. An arrangement from the pen of Alan Simmons; Cole Porter's title song from the hit show of the same name *Anything Goes*. They are given perfect complement by a piece of jazz poetry, *Jazz Fantasia*, by Carl Sandburg. Andrew Carter's bluesy version of George Shearing's iconic *Lullaby of Birdland*, brings the concert to an end.

My bonny lass she smileth  
Never weather-beaten sail  
Weep you no more, sad fountains

Thomas Morley  
Thomas Campion  
John Dowland

*A Sonnet,*  
*from The Passionate Pilgrim 1599*

*Read by Rosamund Thorpe*

*Il est bel et bon* Pierre Passereau

*He is handsome and fine, my husband is, there were two gossiping women in the village, saying one to the other, do you have a good husband? He doesn't scold me, or beat me either. He does the chores, He feeds the chickens And I take my pleasure. Really you have to laugh to hear the cries of the chicks and hens: Co, co, co, co, da, little flirt, what's this?*

*Tanzen und springen* Hans Leo Hassler

*Dancing and leaping  
singing and ringing, fa-la-la-la, ...  
Lutes and violins as well  
are not expected to be silent;  
playing my instrument  
and singing joyfully  
is all my wish. Fa-la-la-la, ...*

*Pretty maidens  
on green meads, fa-la-la-la, ...  
strolling with them  
and conversing with them,  
dallying gallantly  
delights my heart  
more than silver and gold. Fa-la-la-la, ...*

*Leito godea* Giovanni Gabrieli

*I sat happily enjoying  
the breeze that sweetly trembling April breathes;  
every hour every animal sighs with love.  
With his mortal dart  
Love came flying and pierced my heart;  
and, alas, he escapes to my sorrow:  
and I shall die of it  
unless fate grants my happiness.*

*On Venetian Music, 1608*  
*Read by Gerard Stevens and Martin Cooke*

*The Dark Eyed Sailor* Ralph Vaughan Williams  
*The Spring Time of the Year*

*Maude Clare*  
*Christina Rossetti*  
*Read by Heather Rees*

*The Lover's Ghost* Ralph Vaughan Williams  
*Just as the Tide was Flowing*

*My Spirit sang all day* Gerald Finzi  
*An Die Musik* Franz von Schober  
*Read by Tom Williams and Margaret Dartnall*

*Anything Goes* Porter arr Alan Simmons

*Jazz Fantasia* Carl Sandburg  
*Read by Wendy Burns*

*Lullaby of Birdland* Shearing arr. Andrew Carter

## SHEPSHED SINGERS

**Sopranos** – Jeni Beasley, Sue Champneys, Janet Clitheroe, Sue Cooke, Ann Dale, Alison Dash, Margaret Dartnall, Patti Garlick, Anne Morris, Gail Pitman-Gibson, Liz Twitchell, Janet Wilkinson, Vanessa Wright.

**Altos** – Glynis Booth, Chris Branford, Wendy Burns, Jean Hayes, Jo Milner, Lis Muller, Jan Nisbet, Heather Rees, Rosamund Thorpe, Christina Walter.

**Tenors** – Mike Bailey, Dave Booth, Peter Finch, Alan Garlick, Bill Hing, Steve Pallett, Malcolm Steward.

**Basses** - Colin Butler, Martin Cooke, Andrew Lawson, Alan Speight, Gerard Stevens, Ed Thorpe.



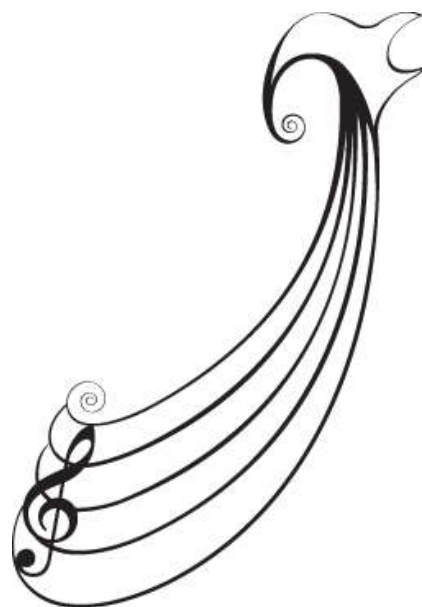
### TOM WILLIAMS

Countertenor Tom Williams enjoys a successful career as a performer, conductor and teacher. He has sung as a soloist in major international concert venues and has worked as an ensemble singer for a number of the world's leading conductors and composers. With EXAUDI, Tom enjoys a busy European concert diary, specialising in contemporary and early music. As Director of Leicestershire Chorale, he has received critical acclaim from both UK and international press. He also directs the Templars and has coordinated the Vocal Ensemble Course at Dartington International Summer School. He has conducted Finchley Children's Music Group and acts as vocal coach for the RSCM and the National Youth Choir of Poland.



Shepshed Singers is currently advertising for a new musical director. If interested, please visit our website at: [www.shepsheidsingers.org.uk](http://www.shepsheidsingers.org.uk).

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Shepshed Singers

Conducted by  
Tom Williams

St Peter and St Paul  
Hathern  
8.00pm

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March  
2014