



## The Choir of Royal Holloway University of London

### Long Biography:

The Choir of Royal Holloway is considered to be one of the finest mixed-voice collegiate choirs in Britain. Their recordings on the Hyperion label have attracted top reviews from all major music publications. Equally at home on the concert platform, the choir gives 50-plus concerts a year with a particular specialism in music from the late renaissance and contemporary music, especially from the Baltic states. The choir also regularly collaborates with other ensembles such as the King's Singers, London Mozart Players and Fretwork, and in 2019 toured with the Britten Sinfonia with Thomas Adès in performances of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.

Created at the time of the foundation of Royal Holloway in 1886, the choir was originally only for women's voices. The mixed choir now comprises 24 Choral Scholars which are generously funded as a part of the Santander Universities Scheme. These choral scholars undertake a busy schedule of weekly services, as well as concerts, international tours, recordings and broadcasts. In addition to these, Royal Holloway is also the only university that still maintains a tradition of daily sung morning services.

Between 2009 and 2016, the choir has recorded nine discs on the Hyperion record label. It is through this relationship with Hyperion Records, and subsequent live performances, that the choir developed a particular reputation for the performance of music from the Baltic region. During a tour in the summer of 2013 of all three Baltic states the choir performed as a part of the Latvian Song Festival, and with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra in a concert (sung in Estonian) broadcast on the Estonian Day of Independence.

The choir has toured most European countries, appeared in Beijing and been broadcast on regional and national radio and television all over the world. In the UK BBC Radio 3 have produced live broadcasts of both services and concerts. During 2016 the choir toured the USA and Canada including performances in Toronto and Chicago, Cornell University, New York City and Dallas.

Many new works have been composed for the choir as it continues to enjoy close collaborations with living composers. Carson P. Cooman composed *The Revelations of Divine Love*, a large new oratorio, for the choir in 2009 and a live recording of the US première has now been released by Albany Records in the USA. Other works written for the choir include two major works for choir and jazz trio from Tim Garland and Gwilym Simcock, and pieces by René Clausen, James MacMillan, Gabriel Jackson, Richard Rodney Bennett, Antony Pitts and Paul Mealar.

The choir has been fortunate to sing at a number of high-profile events including the 2014 Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall (live on BBC TV), an awards ceremony at Buckingham Palace and performing a new John Rutter commission for the Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in front of HM The Queen, the Prime Minister and Archbishop of Canterbury.

Recent festival engagements have included the Spitalfields Festival, the Three Choirs Festival, the Windsor and Swaledale festivals, the Cheltenham Festival (with Dame Felicity Lott and the City of London Sinfonia), and residencies at the Presteigne Festival in 2011, 2015 and 2018. Recent recording projects have included a collaboration with Ola Gjeilo (*Winter Songs*: DECCA), which topped the UK and US classical chart, and forthcoming releases include music by Ben Parry, Joanna Marsh and James Francis Brown.



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## Short Biography

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