

# CHOIR & CELLO MEDITATIONS

SATURDAY

1<sup>st</sup> JULY 2023 . 7.30pm

St James the Greater, Leicester

**Bach:** Cello Suite no. 6: Allemande

**Arensky:** Three Quartets

**Rutter:** Out of the Deep

**Tabakova:** Whispered Lullaby

**Dupré:** Cortège et Litanie

**Tavener:** Svyati

**Bach:** Cello Suite no. 1: Prelude

**Gjeilo:** Serenity

**Bach:** Erbarme Dich

**Franck:** Panis Angelicus

**Ešenvalds:** In Paradisum

**Cello** Matthew Sharp

**Viola** Rose Redgrave

**Organ** Simon Hogan

**Conductor** Richard Laing



Matthew Sharp



## About the LBC...

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### Become a Friend of the LBC

Enjoy ticket discounts and more -  
 Contact Pat Taylor (Friends' Secretary)  
 email: [patto1247@gmail.com](mailto:patto1247@gmail.com)

## Sing with Us....

### If you like what we do why not join us?

The Leicester Bach Choir is a progressive and forward-looking choir which is continually looking to welcome new members. Gail Hobbs, our choir secretary, would be delighted to tell you more. All you need is reasonable musical ability and to be able to attend weekly Wednesday evening rehearsals.

### Interested?

*Why not pop along to a rehearsal to see what you think?*

Entrance is by audition but as a prospective singer you're welcome to join rehearsals for a couple of weeks before committing. Dedicated to providing musical opportunities for the next generation of musicians we offer scholarships (providing free membership and music) for all full time students and a reduced subscription for singers under 26.

### Want to know more?

Contact Gail : 0116 270 7462  
[secretary@leicesterbachchoir.org.uk](mailto:secretary@leicesterbachchoir.org.uk)  
 or talk to a choir member at the concert today.

Thanks to **The Edith Murphy Trust** for financial support throughout our 2022/2023 Season.

## Cello and Choir Meditations | Summer 2023

A trio of top soloists joins the Leicester Bach Choir for a soul-searching programme of profound choral and instrumental music. Devised by Music Director Richard Laing, *Choir and Cello Meditations* features nuanced reflection on human life, Wagner-meets-Russia, and upbeat warmth.

### Programme

- J.S. Bach:** *Cello Suite no.6 in D major, BWV 1012, mvt II: Allemande*
- Anton Arensky:** *Three Vocal Quartets for cello and choir*  
*I Serenade*  
*II To the Dying Stars*
- John Rutter:** *'Out of the Deep' from Requiem*
- Dobrinka Tabakova:** *Whispered Lullaby for viola and piano*
- Marcel Dupré:** *Cortège et Litanie, op.19 no.2*
- John Tavener:** *СВЯТЫЙ (Svyati – 'O Holy One')*

### Interval

- J.S. Bach:** *Cello Suite no.1 in G major, BWV 1007, mvt I: Prelude*
- Anton Arensky:** *Three Vocal Quartets for cello and choir*  
*III The Hot Spring*
- Ola Gjeilo:** *Serenity (O Magnum mysterium)*
- J. S. Bach:** *'Erbarme dich' from St Matthew Passion*
- César Franck:** *Panis Angelicus*
- Ērik Ešenvalds:** *In paradisum for choir, viola and cello*

# Musicians



**Matthew Sharp**  
Cello



**Simon Hogan**  
Organ



**Rose Redgrave**  
Viola



**Richard Laing**  
Music Director



## Matthew Sharp | Cello

'Virtuoso of the arts' (*The Times*), **Matthew Sharp**, has performed worldwide as solo cellist, baritone, actor and director: solo appearances with the RPO, LPO, RLPO, CBSO; singing principal roles for the Royal Opera House and Opera North; acting principal roles at the Young Vic and National Theatre Studio; directing for the BBC and Opera North. From Glastonbury to Glyndebourne, Sydney Opera House to Wigmore Hall, he has worked with an extraordinary spectrum of leading artists from Sir John Tavener to Marta Eggert to Dave McKean to Caryl Churchill. His own music

and theatre works have toured to major festivals globally. He has given over sixty world premieres and recorded for Sony, EMI, Decca, Naxos, Somm, NMC, Avie and Whirlwind.

[www.matthewsharp.net](http://www.matthewsharp.net)

## Rose Redgrave | Viola

Rose studied at the Royal Northern College and Royal Academy of Music, where her teachers for chamber music included Vicci Wardman, John White and Christopher Rowland, and where she was awarded all of the prizes for viola. She currently has an international performing career with groups such as The King's Consort, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Musica Saeculorum in Italy, Music Theatre Wales, Scottish Ensemble, Adderbury Ensemble and Psapha. She often plays as principal viola at the Summer Endellion Festival.

Rose is a member of the Incus Trio, Fews Ensemble in Ireland and of the Milbrook Ensemble. As a member of the Coull Quartet (2010-2014) she undertook a busy schedule of concerts and recordings alongside a full-time residency at Warwick University. A committed teacher, Rose teaches at Birmingham Conservatoire and Birmingham University and privately. She has also recently given classes, judged the viola prize and been external examiner at the Royal Academy of Music.

## Simon Hogan | Organ

Simon is the Sub-Organist and Assistant Director of Music at Southwark Cathedral, a post which he combines with being Organist to the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and a portfolio of freelance work in and around London.

Simon's musical life began as a chorister at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol. Following organ scholarships at Bristol and Salisbury Cathedrals, he moved to London in 2008 to study organ performance at the Royal College of Music, where he subsequently graduated with first-class honours. In his final year he held the Organ Scholarship at St Paul's Cathedral, before becoming Assistant Director of Music at Southwell Minster, a post he held for seven years.

As a soloist Simon has given recitals in venues across the UK, including the cathedrals of Durham, Hereford and Westminster, The Albert Hall, Nottingham, and Rochdale Town Hall. He is also the principal organist for JAM, an organisation which commissions and performs new music for brass, organ and choir by leading contemporary composers.

[www.simonhogan.co.uk](http://www.simonhogan.co.uk)

## Richard Laing | Music Director

**Richard Laing** is Music Director of Leicester Bach Choir, Nottingham Harmonic Choir, Somerset Chamber Choir and Leamington Chamber Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Associate Conductor of Chandos Symphony Orchestra, No.3 First Violin with the English Symphony Orchestra, a core player with the Orchestra of the Swan, a competition adjudicator and external examiner at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Reviews Editor of *The Wagner Journal*. He frequently undertakes choral preparation, off-stage conducting and pre-concert talks for orchestras such as the Hallé and the BBC Symphony.

While still an undergraduate, Richard won the Kaiser Award for American History. He has presented papers at the International Conferences on Film and Literature at Florida State University and at the International Wagner Symposium at the University of Adelaide. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Arts and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society.

[www.richardlaing.co.uk](http://www.richardlaing.co.uk)



# The Leicester Bach Choir



## Sopranos

Sue Brookes  
Penny Campling  
Rosie Craig  
Helen Herd  
Jane Hoskyns  
Liz Hudson  
Beth Kalus  
Emily Milburn  
Eleanor Montgomery  
Christine Pierce  
Cornelia Wiesender  
Karina Wodjat  
Sally Woods  
Angela Zemplak

## Altos

Jacquie Burden  
Gill Carter

Dinah Cheney  
Jennifer Clegg  
Jane Friendship  
Rebecca Hames  
Gail Hobbs  
Rachel Jackson  
Pam Laurenti  
Nicki Little  
Vivienne Masson  
Claire Morton  
Janet Nisbet  
Bridget Puddepha  
Yvonne Randle  
Heather Rees  
Maggie Ridgewell  
Ruth Rigby  
Sue Smith  
Jennifer Wilkinson  
Kate Windridge

## Tenors

Richard Blewitt  
Caroline Brook  
Alison Deacon  
Peter MacKenzie  
Pat Taylor  
John Tebbutt  
Sam Wood

## Basses

Karl Barton  
Owen Bentley  
Geoffrey Carter  
Michael Dukes  
Tim Healy  
Robert Hunter  
David Lawton  
Paul Leonard-Williams



## Programme Notes



J.S Bach  
1685-1750

### J.S. Bach | *Cello Suite no.6 in D major, BWV 1012, mvt II: Allemande*

Bach's six suites mark the pinnacle of the repertoire for solo cello. They were probably written around 1720 for Ferdinand Christian Abel, cellist at the court of the enthusiastic musician Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen, where Bach was *Kapellmeister*. Each suite consists of a Prelude followed by various dances, including jigs, gavottes, sarabands and the occasional allemande, an ancient dance-form often of ceremonial character and featuring arpeggiated melodies.

The sixth and most demanding of Bach's cello suites was written for an instrument with five strings rather than the usual four, so presents huge challenges to the performer. Listening to this music, one can understand Pablo Casals's declaration, 'I need Bach almost more than I need food and water.'



Anton Arensky  
1861-1906

### Anton Arensky | *Three Vocal Quartets for cello and choir, op.57*

Arensky began composing as a very small boy. He went on to study at the Conservatory in St Petersburg with Rimsky-Korsakov (who, rather unkindly, said 'he will quickly be forgotten' and criticised him for his drinking and gambling), and he subsequently taught at the Moscow Conservatory, where his students included Rachmaninov and Scriabin. For a while Arensky was the conductor of the Imperial Choir. He was heavily influenced by the music of Tchaikovsky, but the rich harmonic language of



the vocal quartets bears similarities with the music of Wagner and his acolytes.



John Rutter  
b.1945

### John Rutter | 'Out of the Deep' from *Requiem*

John Rutter was born in London and educated at Highgate School, where a fellow pupil was the composer John Tavener. He read music at Clare College, Cambridge and was subsequently Director of Music there for four years. In recent times he has become one of the best-known composers of choral music; his *Shepherd's Pipe Carol*, for example, is reputed to have sold over a million copies. Rutter's music is influenced by jazz and blues as well as by Vaughan Williams and Walton.

*Requiem* was first performed in Dallas in 1985. The second movement, 'Out of the Deep', is a setting of Psalm 130.



Dobrinka Tabakova  
b.1980

### Dobrinka Tabakova | *Whispered Lullaby* for viola and piano

The Bulgarian composer Dobrinka Tabakova was educated in London, and her music has been performed around the world, including at St Paul's Cathedral to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. *Whispered Lullaby* was written in 2004 and uses unusual overtone techniques on the viola to evoke a particular atmosphere. Tabakova writes: 'This musical sketch was inspired by a passage from Goethe's *Faust*, where The Spirits paint a nocturnal picture of a still lake reflecting a glistening full moon.'



## Marcel Dupré 1886-1971

### Marcel Dupré | *Cortège et Litanie*, op.19 no.2

Dupré allegedly performed more than 2,000 organ recitals around the world, including two series of ten concerts where he played all of Bach's organ works from memory. He has been referred to as the Paganini of the organ, writing music that is fiendishly difficult to play, though often wonderfully exciting to hear. The *Cortège et Litanie* started life as a piano piece in 1922, and was subsequently adapted by the composer for organ, to which it seems ideally suited.



## John Tavener 1944-2013

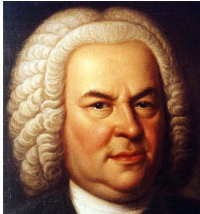
### John Tavener | Святый (*Svyati* – 'O Holy One')

Святый features a choir divided into twelve parts alongside an impassioned cello line. It is surely one of Tavener's most atmospheric and moving compositions.

When asked why he wrote music, Tavener answered that he wished to transmit and make accessible to others an inner vision. 'I hope that my music resembles 'icons in sound,' insofar as I see music as 'a window of sound' on to the divine world.' He became an Orthodox Christian whilst still fulfilling his post as organist at St John's Church, Kensington, and most of his music reflects his immersion in the chants and traditions of that religion. He wrote

I began to write Святый in early 1995: while sketching it, I learned that John Williams, father of Jane, my dear friend and publisher, was dying. I could not refrain from dedicating it to Jane and to the memory of her father.

The text is in Church Slavonic, and it is used at almost every Russian Orthodox service, perhaps most poignantly after the congregation have kissed the body in an open coffin at an Orthodox funeral. The choir sings Святы́й Бо́же as the coffin is closed and borne out of the church, followed by mourners with lighted candles. The cello represents the Priest or Ikona of Christ. As in Greek drama, choir and priest are in dialogue with each other.



J.S Bach  
1685-1750

### J.S. Bach | Cello Suite no.1 in G major, BWV 1007, mvt I: Prelude

There can be few pieces by Bach that are better-known than this, particularly since Yo-Yo Ma played it in Episode 10 of the second series of *The West Wing*. Yet for 150 years after Bach's death this, like all of Bach's music for solo cello, was hardly ever played. Indeed, all six cello suites might have been lost forever had not Pablo Casals discovered a battered copy in a second-hand shop in the 1890s and reintroduced this extraordinary music to an unsuspecting public.



Ola Gjeilo  
b.1978

### Ola Gjeilo | Serenity (O Magnum mysterium)

Born in Norway, Gjeilo moved to New York in 2001 to study composition at the Juilliard School, and he continues to live and work there today. He writes of this work:

With *Serenity*, I wanted to write a *cappella* music that has a symphonic, abundant feel. This is a case with quite a few of my

more recent choral works. I love a warm, lush sound that can give a feeling of space and evocativeness, but still be intimate, somehow. But mainly, all I wanted to do with this piece was to write something that came straight from my heart, without any pretense or filters.



J.S Bach  
1685-1750

J. S. Bach | arr. Norbert Gerl, 'Erbarme dich' from *St Matthew Passion*

'Erbarme dich' is one of the most beautiful arias in the *Passion according to St Matthew*, occurring immediately after Peter has thrice denied knowing Jesus and, remembering Jesus's prediction, goes out and weeps bitterly. This arrangement gives the vocal line to the solo cello, while retaining the exquisite violin solo. The text of the original is:

Have mercy Lord my God, because of this my weeping! Look thou here: heart and eyes now weep for thee bitterly.



César Franck  
1822-1890

César Franck | *Panis Angelicus*

**Soprano soloist: Emily Milburn**

Never again will you struggle to name a famous Belgian, for César Franck was one, though he emigrated with his family to Paris at the age of 14.

(For the record, the other three famous Belgians are the Emperor Charlemagne, Audrey Hepburn and Hercule Poirot.) Franck studied for a time at the Paris Conservatoire and was appointed professor of organ there in 1872. He had a profound admiration for the music of J. S. Bach, and was a particular master of the fugue. He died having been struck by a horse-bus.

*Panis Angelicus* is said to have begun life as an organ improvisation that Franck played at a Christmas service at Sainte-Clothilde in 1861. The words are from Thomas Aquinas's Corpus Christi hymn *Sacris Solemnis*:

The angelic bread becomes the bread of men; the heavenly bread ends all prefigurations: What wonder! The Lord is eaten by a poor and humble servant.



Ēriks Ešenvalds  
b.1977

### Ēriks Ešenvalds | *In paradisum* for choir, viola and cello

The Latvian composer Ēriks Ešenvalds has written many exquisite choral pieces; *In paradisum* dates from 2012. In the words of Gabriel Jackson, it is 'accompanied by solo viola and cello, whose fluttering tremolandos represent the gently-beating wings of angels who lead us into paradise. It is a setting of the Requiem Mass antiphon that is sung as the body is taken from the church for burial. The choral writing is homophonic throughout, while strings sing a series of exquisite descants that eventually achieve an "eternal rest" as their star-like harmonics fade into eternity.'

## Texts

Arensky | Three Vocal Quartets  
for cello and choir, op.57 |  
Translations © Kay Schlapp

### I Serenade:

Quietly, evening has fallen,  
touching the mountains with gold;  
the sultry air is cooling.  
Sleep, my child.

The nightingales began to sing  
long since; dusk is here; strings  
have begun to sound faintly.  
Sleep, my child.

Angels' eyes are watching. They  
shine, trembling, so light is the  
breath of night!  
Sleep, my child.

### II To the dying stars:

Did I take long to heed your  
twinkling, with my searching  
eyes, you of the deep blue sky?

Did I take long to sense that there  
is nothing higher and more  
beautiful than you In the house of  
the night?

Perhaps nothing remains of you  
behind those specks of light;  
perhaps the epoch has  
extinguished you.

So even unto death I will fly with  
my verse, To you, the ghosts of  
stars.

I shall be the ghost of a sigh.

### III The Hot Spring:

Do you remember that hot spring,  
how pure it was, how free-  
flowing, how the sun trembled in  
it, how its radiance shimmered?  
How it coloured the nearby pine  
forest, how it turned the high  
mountains white, how warmly the  
starry choir was echoed in it?

It grew shallow and cold as if  
running into the earth, leaving a  
trace of pale reddish salt.

For a long, long time I yearned  
for it; I searched for the ardent  
vein in the rock face with its  
mysterious fervour, but in vain.

Suddenly in the mountains there  
came a clap of thunder. The earth  
shook all around; I fled,  
abandoning the place where I was  
terrified. I turned and saw a  
wonderful sight: the old spring  
had burst through the granite, and  
over the chasm hung a cloud of  
steam!

John Rutter | 'Out of the Deep'  
from Requiem | words from  
Psalm 130

Out of the deep have I called unto  
thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.

O let thine ears consider well the  
voice of my complaint.

If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to  
mark what is done amiss,  
O Lord, who may abide it?

For there is mercy with thee:  
therefore shalt thou be feared.

I look for the Lord; my soul doth  
wait for him: In his word is my  
trust.

My soul fleeth unto the Lord,  
before the morning watch I say,  
before the morning watch.

O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with  
the Lord there is mercy.

And with him is plenteous  
redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all  
his sins.

Out of the deep have I called unto  
thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.

John Tavener | Святы́й (Svyati –  
'O Holy One') | words from  
Russian Orthodox Service

Holy God, Holy and Strong, Holy  
and Immortal, have mercy on us.

J. S. Bach | 'Erbarme dich' from *St  
Matthew Passion*

Have mercy Lord my God, because  
of this my weeping! Look thou  
here: heart and eyes now weep for  
thee bitterly.

César Franck | *Panis Angelicus* |  
words from Thomas Aquinas's  
Corpus Christi hymn *Sacris  
Solemnis*:

The angelic bread becomes the  
bread of men; the heavenly bread  
ends all prefigurations:

What wonder! The Lord is eaten  
by a poor and humble servant.

Ēriķ Ešēnvalds | *In paradisum*

May the angels lead you into  
paradise; may the martyrs greet  
you at your arrival and lead you  
into the holy City of Jerusalem.  
May the choir of Angels greet you  
and, like Lazarus, who once was a  
poor man, may you have eternal  
rest.



Concert Day  
with the  
Leicester  
Bach Choir

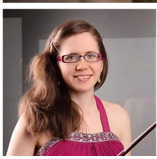
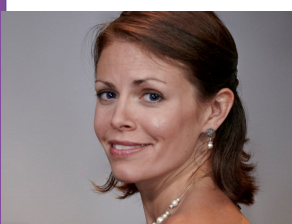


Join us again in 2023

# Messiah by Candlelight

Saturday 9 December 2023

Performing with **Katie Trethewey | Soprano**  
**Cathy Bell | Mezzo-soprano**  
**Nathan Vale | Tenor**  
**Stephen Gadd | Baritone**  
**Bach Camerata | leader Shulah Oliver**



## 2023-24 Season

Saturday 16 March 2024 | Spring Concert  
Saturday 22 June 2024 | Summer Concert

## Come and Sing | Puccini *Messa di Gloria*

Saturday 27 January 2024

Our next 'Come and Sing' event will feature Puccini *Messa di Gloria*. More details will be available on our website.



[www.leicesterbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.leicesterbachchoir.org.uk)  
LeicesterBachChoir

