

# spring concert

antonio vivaldi  
**gloria**

frederick delius  
**two aquarelles**

henry purcell  
**chaconne in g minor**

and choral works by parry, stanford,  
wesley and walford davies

conductors: benjamin wolf, andrew rochford



Hampstead  
Sinfonietta

Royal *f*ree  
Music Society

7.30 pm, saturday 21 march 2015, st mark's church, nw1  
programme £12

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# programme

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**delius**

*deux aquarelles (orchestra)*

**walford davies**

*god be in my head (choir)*

**parry**

*my soul, there is a country (choir)*

*I know my soul hath power (choir)*

**stanford**

*justorum animae (choir)*

*beati quorum via (choir)*

**wesley**

*thou wilt keep him (choir + orchestra)*

**handel**

*zadok the priest (choir + orchestra)*

## ***interval***

**purcell**

*chacony in g minor (orchestra)*

**vivaldi**

*gloria (choir + orchestra)*

## **soloists**

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leah jackson (soprano)

rose martin (mezzo-soprano)

**the hampstead sinfonietta** is led by rob chatley

# welcome

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Dear Audience

Welcome to our Spring concert, and if you attended our Christmas concert in December or any of our other concerts, welcome back!

Some of you may already know that the Reverend Tom Devonshire Jones, who was previously the vicar at St Mark's, sadly died on 27th February. It was Tom who first offered the society the opportunity to perform in St Marks and he was instrumental in forming the bond between the music society and the church. He was a wonderful friend to us in the early days and will be fondly remembered. We extend our sympathies to his wife and family.

By the time you read this we will be back from our short Italian tour. Many of the choir members travelled to Genoa early in March to sing with two Italian choirs during a weekend of music and cultural exchange. We are very happy to report that our first international tour was a great success and much enjoyed by all who came, and tonight you will hear some of the pieces we performed in Genoa. These were our third and fourth concerts with other choirs in the last two years, which are proving to be pleasant and effective experiences.

As always we would like to extend thanks to our inspirational music director, Ben Wolf, and our excellent accompanist, Gill Cracknell; to Andy Rochford for his continued commitment to the orchestra, and to the orchestra itself; to the members of the committee who have put a lot of time and effort in to organizing and managing the choir in all its aspects including concerts, finances, publicity, and music; the Royal Free Hospital who provide our rehearsal space; the Reverend William Gulliford and the parish of St Mark's for this wonderful concert venue; to the patrons for their continued support, and to the Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust from whom we received our first grant last year.

Once again, please make a note of our concert dates for this year and, if you would like to join the performers rather than the audience, you will find all details on our website [www.royalfreemusicsociety.org.uk](http://www.royalfreemusicsociety.org.uk). We are always ready to welcome new members.

We hope you enjoy the concert.

**Lucinda Sturgis and Nick Jackson**  
**RFMS Co-chairs**

# programme notes

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by Benjamin Wolf and Andrew Rochford

**Frederick Delius (1862 - 1934)**

***Deux Aquarelles***

*Lento ma non troppo (Gaily, but not too quick)*

Delius' music reflects his cosmopolitan upbringing - born in England to a German father, he started composing whilst in Florida and spent most of his life living in rural France. This music was originally written during the First World War for unaccompanied choir and entitled 'To be sung at night on the water'. Towards the end of his life, as he became progressively more disabled by syphilis, Delius revisited the piece and rescored it as *Deux Aquarelles* for string orchestra.

**Sir Henry Walford Davies (1869 - 1941)**

***God Be In My Head***

Sir Henry Walford Davies was a well-known British composer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He was also well-known as a lecturer, broadcaster and university professor. He studied with both Parry and Stanford (whose music is also included in tonight's concert). This is a short and beautiful introit for unaccompanied choir: *God be in my head and in my understanding. God be in my eyes and in my looking. God be in my mouth and in my speaking. God be in my heart and in my thinking. God be at mine end and at my departing.*

**Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848 - 1918)**

***My Soul, There is a Country***

***I Know My Soul Hath Power***

Parry was one of Victorian Britain's most popular and most celebrated composers, and he came to be regarded as one of the architects of the so-called 'Renaissance' of English composition. He was an important influence on composers such as Elgar, Holst and Vaughan Williams. During his lifetime he was known as an orchestral composer as much as a choral composer, but it his choral works (such as *Blessed Pair of Sirens* and *Jerusalem*) which have secured his posthumous reputation. These were also popular with the many choirs that flourished in Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The *Songs of Farewell* are recognised as one of the finest sets of motets written by an English composer. The texts are primarily by British poets, though Parry also set words from the Book of Psalms. These texts deal with death and the afterlife, and are elegiac, wistful and even, given the subject matter, optimistic. The motets were written three years before the composer's death, and encapsulate both the theological and the musical reflections of an eminent musician towards the end of his life.

### **Charles Villiers Stanford (1852 - 1924)**

*Justorum Animae*

*Beati Quorum Via*

Like Parry, the Irish composer Charles Villiers Stanford was one of the best-known composers of Victorian Britain. Queen Victoria did much to promote music, largely encouraged by Prince Albert, who was a keen musician and composer. Stanford was one of the first professors at the Royal College of Music, founded under Victoria's auspices in 1881, and he became famous as a composition teacher as well as a composer. His church music has become a staple of the Anglican tradition. These motets date from various times in his career, and are dedicated to the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge. The first - *Justorum Animae* - declares that 'the souls of the just are in the hand of God'. The second is more reflective - *Beati quorum via integra est*: 'Blessed are those whose path is blameless'.

### **Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)**

*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace*

A beautiful and gentle anthem written in contrasting sections, this piece was included in the order of service for the Queen's coronation in 1953. It begins with a slow section for full choir (which recurs twice more during the anthem). This is contrasted with faster sections in which different voice-parts enter only gradually, and whose texts serve as a contrast to the more gentle text of the opening. Although originally written with organ accompaniment, this evening we will be performing with a specially-arranged string orchestra accompaniment.

### **George Frideric Handel (1685 - 1759)**

*Zadok the Priest*

*Zadok the Priest* (along with three other anthems) was commissioned from George Frederick Handel (1685 - 1759) for the coronation of George II in 1727. The text is the biblical account of the anointing of Solomon by

Zadok and Nathan and the people's rejoicing at this event. Handel's setting has been used at every coronation since 1727. It is traditionally performed during the sovereign's anointing.

The opening was clearly intended to make an overwhelming effect. The slow build-up of sound throughout the orchestral introduction leads to an impressive outburst with the choir's initial full-blooded entry. The mood is suitably festive throughout all three sections of the anthem and in the second part 'And all the people rejoic'd', the orchestra joins in the fun with a dance-like accompaniment against the choir's more sober rhythms. The final section, 'God save the King', continues the celebratory theme and after a few irrepressible bars of joyful semiquavers for all the voice parts in turn, Handel brings the festivities to a close with repeated Allelujachs and Amens.

### **Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695)** ***Chacony in G minor (Z.730)***

Henry Purcell is considered one of England's finest composers although his Baroque music often contained Italian and French stylistic elements. A chaconne (Purcell interestingly titles this piece 'Chacony') is similar to a Passacaglia and features a repeated bass line with variations played out in the upper parts. Chaconne was composed to accompany dancing, either at court or in the theatre. It is thought that Purcell may have composed this piece c.1680 following his appointment as composer to the court musicians the Twenty Four violins.

### **Antonio Vivaldi (1678 - 1741)** ***Gloria***

Vivaldi's fame as a choral composer rests primarily on the *Gloria* in D Major, though his *Credo*, *Magnificat* and *Stabat Mater* are also regularly performed. The *Gloria* was probably written at some point during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, when Vivaldi was employed at the Pio Ospedale della Pietà, one of four Venetian institutions devoted to the care of orphaned children. Vivaldi was responsible for their musical education, and it is likely that the solo arias in his choral works were intended for performance by his students.

The *Gloria* contains 11 or 12 separate movements (depending on the divisions made in different editions). The first is a bright *Gloria* in D major, containing declamatory octave leaps on the trumpet, and a fanfare-like

dotted rhythm in the choir's proclamation of the word 'Gloria'. The Second movement - *Et in Terra Pax Hominibus* - is in the relative minor (B minor). It is a slower movement, and rests upon a running quaver pulse in the lower strings. The text proclaims a desire for peace. There is an element of pathos and pleading in this movement, evoked particularly through the use of chromatic harmonies and suspensions.

The third movement is a duet in G major for two sopranos. The words - 'We praise you and glorify you' - recall the sprightly mood of the first movement. There follows a short transition (*Gratias Agimus*) - four majestic bars in which the choir gives thanks to the Lord. These bars prepare us for the E-minor harmony of the 'propter magnam gloriam' ('On account of your great glory') - a dynamic, and often harmonically surprising, movement. The *Domine Deus* is a soprano aria - a lilting hymn to the Lord, 'almighty father.' The *Domine Fili Unigenite* is sprightly, written in an energetic F major. It is an imitative dance, evoking the motifs of instrumental music of the period.

In the next movement - the *Domine Deus, Agnus Dei* - we have an echo of the initial key of the *Gloria*. This is a slow movement (marked 'Adagio'), in D minor (rather than D major), for contralto solo and choir. As with most slow movements, the tempo indicates suffering and penitent prayer, and the singers invoke the God who 'lifts up the sins of the world'. In the *Qui Tollis* Vivaldi presents us with another short transition passage - seven bars of Adagio and thirteen bars at a swift tempo - in which the choir asks for God to accept their prayer. This is followed by the *Qui Sedes ad dexteram patris* ('You who sit at the right hand of the father') - a contralto solo, and another dance-like, lilting movement. In the *Quoniam tu solus sanctus* the original motif of the *Gloria* returns, heralded by the same declamatory octaves in the trumpet. Here the fanfare-like rhythm declaims the words 'since you alone are holy'. The final movement is a masterpiece of contrapuntal composition - the main, fugal motif being supplemented by a more lively counter-rhythm introduced almost immediately by the sopranos. This movement proclaims the words 'with the holy spirit, in the glory of God the father. Amen.'

## 2015 concert dates

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Please make a note of our upcoming concert dates in your diary!

**20 June 2015:** Dixit Dominus (Handel), Te Deum (Haydn) - tbc

**21 November 2015:** Petite Messe Solennelle (Rossini)

# conductors

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## Andrew Rochford

Andrew has a variety of musical interests. At school he studied singing with Geraldine Hackett-Jones and started playing the bassoon at the age of 10 under the tutelage of Charles Cracknell, OBE. He has since had tuition from Gareth Newman (London Mozart Players & Royal Academy of Music, and an old pupil of Charles). Andrew has performed solo concerti with Lawyers Music and the Abbots Langley Symphony Orchestra; and when time permits, he plays with the London Charity Orchestra. After leaving school in Canterbury, Andrew completed a degree in Medical Biochemistry at King's College, London. He then studied Medicine at the Royal Free where he was a founding member of the choir in 1995.

Andrew trained in North London and is now Clinical Lead for Gastroenterology at Newham University Hospital, Barts Health NHS Trust and has a special interest in Intestinal Failure and Clinical Leadership.

## Benjamin Wolf

Benjamin Wolf works as a conductor, pianist, composer, singer and academic. He is Musical Director of the Zemel Choir, the Wallace Ensemble and the Royal Free Music Society, Choirmaster of Belsize Square Synagogue and a regular conductor of the Quorum Chamber Choir. Performances with the Zemel Choir have included Holocaust memorial services for the Mayor of London, concerts at the South Bank and St John's Smith Square, a broadcast for the BBC's Songs of Praise and tours to Europe, Israel and the USA. Activities with the Wallace Ensemble have included performances at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room, while the professional choir of Belsize Square Synagogue has been featured on documentaries for BBC radio and television. Recent performances have included Westminster Abbey's 'Service of Solemn Remembrance and Hope on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kristallnacht' and performances for the International Louis Lewandowski Festival in Berlin.

As composer, he has written music for the concert hall and the stage, including works using the texts and modes of Ancient Greek, a piano concerto and a cello concerto commissioned for the 70th anniversary of Belsize Square synagogue. He has written a number of pieces for the Zemel Choir and wrote new instrumental works for the Chichester Festival in 2013 and 2014. As pianist, he works as both accompanist and solo recitalist, while his singing is primarily focussed on performances with his own Jewish barbershop quartet, bOYbershop, for which he has written a number of arrangements and original compositions, including comic songs *The Only Jewish Cowgirl* and *Fifty Shades of Hay*.

Following the award of a PhD in 2010, he worked as a visiting lecturer at Royal Holloway and Senior Associate Teacher at Bristol University. In 2011 he was appointed as Lecturer in Music at Regent's University, London, where he teaches both academic courses and runs the newly formed choirs of the Regent's School of Drama, Film and Media. He has given conference papers in the UK and America, and was on the organising team for a conference at the IMR in January 2013 (focussing on music in twentieth-century Britain). He has also worked as a researcher on a Royal Holloway project investigating the use of music to accompany silent films.

## soloists

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### Leah Jackson soprano)

Leah Jackson began her musical training as a chorister at Wells Cathedral School, performing upon a number of recordings and live radio broadcasts, and touring to the USA and Namibia. After completing her schooling in Somerset, Leah went on to gain a Bachelors Degree in Music at King's College London and the Royal Academy of Music where she graduated in 2005. In 2008 Leah was awarded a generous scholarship from the Seary Charitable Trust to continue her vocal studies with Robert Dean, and to develop her voice further on the Morley College opera course, where she performed a number of Handel and Donizetti Roles.

Highlights of her oratorio performances include Handel's Messiah and Dixit Dominus, Haydn's Creation and Nelson Mass, St John Passion by Bach, Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, The Monteverdi Vespers and Mozart's Requiem and C minor Mass, many of these performances taking place at St. Martin in the Fields, The Cadogan Hall, St John's Smith Square, St James Palace, Spenser House, The Royal Hospital Chelsea, Exeter Cathedral, Wells Cathedral, Sherbourne Abbey and Chatsworth House.

Leah also enjoys singing with a number of professional consort groups, and has performed with the Academy of Ancient Music for the BBC 3 early music show, and at the Wigmore Hall, as well as touring to China, Hong Kong, Spain, Brugge and Utrecht for performances of Handel's Messiah and Haydn's Nelson Mass.

In Opera Leah has sung with Opera Holland Park in performances of La Boheme and with British Youth Opera at the Peacock Theatre in performances of the Rake's Progress.

Leah can also be heard singing upon a number of film soundtracks including 'Pirates of the Caribbean', 'Alice in Wonderland,' 'How to Train Your Dragon' and 'Hell Boy Two' among many others.

## **Rose Martin (mezzo-soprano)**

Mezzo Rose Martin comes from Kent. At the age of sixteen she was awarded a scholarship to study at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester. She went on to read Music as a choral scholar at King's College London, from which she graduated in 2011. She trained with Harry Christophers on the inaugural Genesis Sixteen scheme, and now enjoys a varied career as a member of several stellar choral ensembles, including the Platinum Consort, the Erebus Ensemble and Siglo de Oro. She has also sung with The Sixteen and Gabrielli Consort. She co-founded the Fieri Consort in 2012, performing all over the UK and touring to Australia last summer. Rose is also passionate about teaching and community music, working with several schools and hospitals and youth choirs. She plays an awful lot of folk music in her spare time!

# the royal free music society

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The Royal Free Music Society Choir was originally formed by a group of healthcare professionals working in the hospital and has grown into a vibrant choir with membership from the hospital, the local area and further afield. The choir meets for rehearsals on a weekly basis in the Royal Free Hospital and puts on four concerts a year. The choir's repertoire covers a wide variety of music and performances have included Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Haydn's *Creation*, *Harmoniemesse*, *Heiligmesse* and *Paukenmesse*, Schubert's *Mass in G*, Faure's *Requiem*, Mozart's *Requiem*, *Grand Mass in C Minor* and *Coronation Mass*, Brahms's *German Requiem*, Elgar's *The Music Makers*, Dvorak's *Mass in D Major*, Rutter's *Magnificat*, Stainer's *Crucifixion*, Gounod's *St Cecilia Mass*, Handel's *Coronation Anthems* and *Chandos Anthems*, as well as some lighter works for the summer concert. The choir has also premiered work, such as Stephen Gillespie's *Gloria*, and has had a number of successful collaborations, most recently with the Beckenham Concert Band and the Zemel Choir.

For major works, we are joined by a local amateur orchestra, the Hampstead Sinfonietta.

Visit us at [www.royalfreemusicsociety.org.uk](http://www.royalfreemusicsociety.org.uk)  
and [www.HampsteadSinfonietta.org.uk](http://www.HampsteadSinfonietta.org.uk)

## the royal free music society committee

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# the royal free music society

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Kat Maundes

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Annie Sedley

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Jessie Twiest

Maike Wennemer

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Barbara Foster

Wilder Gutterson

Richard Haydon

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Robert Salmon

## Bass

Laurence Grace

Gallin Hornick

Paul Humberstone

Nick Jackson

James Kennedy

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Aled Parry

# the hampstead sinfonietta

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## Violin I

Robert Chatley

Johanna Saarinen

Ewa Gawkowska

Jeannie Okikiolu

Varuni Paronavitane

Juleka Nwankwo

Rhiannon Mayon-White

## Cello

Irene Hadjipateras

Nanette Lee

Claire Parker

## Violin II

James Perry

Anne Bradley

Gavin Topham

Amanda Roberts

Nick Roberts

## Double Bass

Cat Stack

## Oboe

Juliette Murray-Topham

## Viola

Helen Dodd

## Trumpet

Giles Taylor

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