



Chapelle du Roi

director: *Alistair Dixon*

New Lamps for Old

Paired 16th century and contemporary settings of Christmas texts

Christmas has inspired composers for more than five hundred years. The legacy of English and continental composers from the Renaissance is rich and varied.

In recent years a 'Second English Renaissance' has seen contemporary composers taking inspiration from plainchant, secular carols and polyphonic masterworks of the sixteenth century. A new tradition of Renaissance-inspired music flourishes in the hands of composers such as those featured in this programme.

In **New Lamps for Old** *Chapelle du Roi* explores the links between works by sixteenth century masters such as Thomas Tallis, Giovanni Pierluigi de la Palestrina, Tomás Luis de Victoria, Francisco Guerrero and contemporary composers from England and America.

Chapelle du Roi's starting point for this programme was to approach composers who have had some association with the ensemble in the past and to seek their reactions to the set of Christmas texts included here; one antiphon, two carols and three responds.

Three composers had existing works based on our texts, though one (Gabriel Jackson) has taken the opportunity to re-write his setting of *Hodie Nobis*. Two of the pieces were commissioned by *Chapelle du Roi* for this programme and we were delighted to premiere the works by Paul Ayres and Robert Hugill on 19 December 2009 at St John's Smith Square.

We also include two contrasting works by composers from further afield. Kenneth Leighton (d. 1988) was one of post-war England's most distinguished musical voices and, having been a boy chorister at Wakefield Cathedral, he was a towering influence in the world of church music.

Morten Lauridsen is the only non-English composer included, and we must not forget the enormous contribution to the church music repertoire made by American composers and publishers.

This programme takes the listener from the *amuse bouche* of the opening carols to the *vino dulce* that concludes it. The result is a balance of sumptuous textures, harmonies and contrasting approaches to the great Christmas texts.

Programme

- Lullay my lyking* Traditional
Francis Pott
- Coventry Carol Traditional
Kenneth Leighton
- Hodie Nobis* Thomas Tallis
Gabriel Jackson
Paul Ayres

Interval

- O Magnum Mysterium* Giovanni Palestrina
Nicholas O'Neill
Morten Lauridsen
- Videte Miraculum* Thomas Tallis
Robert Hugill
- Alma Redemptoris* Francisco Guerrero
Tomas Luis de la Victoria



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