

The performers

Soprano Mary Phillips

Tenor Guy Withers

Bass Charles Naylor

Flute James Rhodes

Clarinet Mary Phillips

Piano Antony Grey

Queen's Park Singers

Music Director **Peter Burtt-Jones**

Soprano

Evanthe Blandy, Jana Burtt-Jones, Christine Cargill, Jenny Garrett, Hinda Golding
Gill Hallifax, Jo Hurley, Jennifer Keller*, Una O'Gara, Margaret Page, Katy Payne*
Stella Ruszczynski, Rebecca Sheridan, Kathryn Worth

Alto

Graziella Doardo, Rachel Donnison, Helen Dymond, Monica Healy, Katherine Lawson
Denise O'Reilly, Linsay Samii Pour, Evelyn Velleman

Tenor

Colm Doherty, Cathie Hammond, Glyn Jones, Julie Krausz, Andrew Thornton
Sebastian Timpson*

Bass

Peter Burtt-Jones, Mark Hine, Simon Judge*, Adam Ritchie, David Till, Peter Walter

* solo parts in *Serenade to Music*



Please join us for refreshments in the rotunda after the concert.

We are very grateful to the Church of St Anne and St Andrew for permission to use the building.

The main title "This Scepter'd Isle" on this programme and the concert poster is set in IM FELL English type. The Fell Types are digitally reproduced from 17th century originals by Iginio Marini (www.iginomarini.com) to whom grateful acknowledgment is hereby made.

Local music is *alive!* www.queensparksingers.org.uk



Queen's Park Singers

This Scepter'd Isle

A concert to celebrate William
Shakespeare and the English
landscape

Sunday 13th March 6.30 pm

Church of St Anne & St Andrew

125 Salusbury Road NW6 6RG



Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958)

Serenade to Music

Words from *A Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare



David Podd (b. 1942)

Two songs (first performance)

Live with me and be my love

(words from *The Passionate Pilgrim* [1599] attributed there to Shakespeare)

The isle is full of noises (

words from *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare)



Joseph Haydn (1732 - 1809)

Spring, from *The Seasons*

1. Overture
2. Recitative *Behold where surly Winter flies!*
3. Chorus *Come gentle spring*
4. Recitative *At last the bounteous sun*
5. Bass aria *With joy the impatient husbandman*
6. Recitative *Laborious man hath done his part*
7. Trio & chorus *Be propitious, bounteous heaven*
8. Recitative & soprano aria *Our fervent prayers are heard*
9. Duet & chorus *Spring, her lovely charms unfolding*
10. Chorus *God of light*



Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (RVW) wrote this work to mark the fiftieth anniversary in 1938 of Sir Henry Wood's debut as a conductor. Wood, who is best known for founding the Proms in 1895, suggested a work for 16 singers who had sung with him many times at festivals and the Proms. For a text, RVW chose the Jessica and Lorenzo scene at the beginning of Act 5 of *The Merchant of Venice*, which he had always wanted to set, apportioning the text 'a little bit for each voice'. In this evening's performance, which will be directed from the piano by Antony Gray, the 'little bits' will be sung by soloists from and sections of the choir.

David Podd *Two Songs*

David Podd is a composer, pianist and conductor who has worked and performed with QPS on a number of occasions in recent years. To our great delight, he has composed these two settings of Shakespearean texts for the choir, and this evening's performance will be their first. They are for four-part choir, flute, clarinet and piano. The amorous argument of the poem *Live with me and be my love* is set appropriately in a madrigalian style. The text of *The isle is full of noises* is taken from a scene in *The Tempest* in which Caliban, the half-human son of a witch and a devil, who lived alone on the island until Prospero and Miranda landed there, explains to a pair of coarse and stupid men who have newly arrived that the strange sounds they hear are harmless - and, in doing so, reveals a sensibility and articulacy beyond the experience of his brutish companions. The 'noises' are represented in the instrumental accompaniment, while the choir reveals Caliban's thoughts and feelings.

NOTE Regarding the text of *Live with me*, the term 'Shakespearean' is used advisedly. The poem was published in 1599 in a collection with the title 'The Passionate Pilgrime. By W. Shakespeare'. Modern scholarship suggests that, of the 20 poems in the collection, 5 are by Shakespeare, 11 are of unknown authorship, and the other 4 'can confidently be attributed to other authors' - including *Live with me* which 'is attributed to Marlowe in *England's Helicon* (1600)'. It is likely that the printer, William Jaggard, inscribed Shakespeare's name as the author of the whole volume in the hope of capitalising on his rapidly growing reputation to increase sales - 'by 1598-9 - crucial years in the development of Shakespeare's reputation - his name had become a valuable commodity'.

[Quotations from Colin BURROW ed 2002 *The Oxford Shakespeare. The Complete Sonnets and Poems* OUP]

Haydn *The Seasons*

Haydn decided to compose *The Seasons* following the great success of his oratorio *The Creation* in 1798. The libretto, based on extracts from the long poem *The Seasons* by the Scottish poet James Thomson (published in 1830), was prepared by Baron Gottfried van Swieten, who had also provided the libretto for *The Creation*. The natural and social aspects of the four seasons are described by a chorus who are frequently presented as characters, and by three soloists who are given names - Jane is a soprano, Lucas a tenor, and Simon a bass. Haydn uses word painting - the technique of writing music that imitates the literal meaning of the text - to dramatise events and actions in the landscape: in the Spring section we hear Simon whistling as he ploughs and, in later sections, a bird shot by a hunter falls from the sky, and we see the sun rise and peasants dancing.