

The King's Singers



AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND TOUR 2012

MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE

WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

THURSDAY 16TH FEBRUARY

GALLAGHER ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY

AUCKLAND TOWN HALL

SATURDAY 25TH FEBRUARY



The King's Singers

A cappella Program

*All Creatures now
are merry minded*

John Bennet

Though Amaryllis dance in green

William Byrd

*Thule, the period of
Cosmography*

Thomas Weelkes

Weep, weep mine eyes

John Wilbye

As Vesta was descending

Thomas Weelkes

La Tricotea Samartin

Alonso de Alba

Pasame por Dios barquero

Pedro de Escobar

La Bomba

Mateo Flecha

Folksongs from Britain, Australia
and New Zealand

*Po karekare ana**

Trad. Arr. Rice

Greensleeves

Trad. Arr. Chilcott

Danny Boy

Trad. Arr. Knight

*Dance to thy daddy***

Trad. Arr. Richards

*Botany Bay***

Trad. Arr. Rice

*The band played
Waltzing Matilda*

Eric Bogle Arr. Rice

*Po ata ran**

Trad. Arr. Gabbitas

INTERVAL

River's Lament

Elena Kats-Chernin

Close Harmony

Pieces from The King's Singers much-loved,
lighter repertoire

*New Zealand Program Only

** Australian Program Only

A cappella Program

Program Notes

Madrigals, the most polished form of secular choral music – usually sung to pastoral, amorous or philosophical words – first emerged in Italy in the early 1530's, but then swiftly became popular throughout Europe, supplanting a somewhat unsophisticated repertoire of native songs. The great popularizer of madrigals in England was Thomas Morley (1557-1602), who in his treatise, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, wrote for intending madrigal singers:

As for the music, it [the madrigal] is – next to the motet – the most artificial and, to men of understanding, most delightful. You must possess yourself with an amorous humour so that you must, in your music, be wavering like the wind, sometimes wanton, sometimes drooping and sometimes grave and staid, otherwhile effeminate, and the more variety you show the better you shall please.

Although the madrigal era was over by 1630, so great were the composers, that it is rightly remembered as a Golden Age of music. William Byrd (1543–1623) was perhaps the greatest master of the period and all the available evidence indicates that he was recognized as such by his contemporaries. He remained a Roman Catholic all his life, despite England's "conversion" to the Protestant faith, and continued writing music for the Catholic liturgy throughout his career. He was probably discreet in his adherence to Rome and his faith did not prevent him from writing music for the new Anglican rite. Undoubtedly though, his genius was at its height in his music for the Catholic Church. Although most famous for his sacred music, he also wrote instrumental music and some secular vocal songs. John Bennet (c. 1570-16??) was known primarily

as a composer of madrigals, and although he is not considered a direct disciple of Byrd, Bennet was no doubt influenced by those of his contemporaries who were Byrd's pupils, such as Thomas Morley and Thomas Tomkins. Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623), whose professional career spanned one of the most fertile periods in England's musical history, is without doubt one of her finest composers. He had a vivid imagination and love of experiment, and died prematurely at the peak of his creative powers, but not before he had composed a very large amount of music. Nowhere are Weelkes' outstanding musical abilities more evident than in his four sets of madrigals, which appeared between 1597 and 1608, and his splendidly sonorous full anthems. The English madrigal school reached its peak with Weelkes, the most original madrigalist, and John Wilbye, the most polished. John Wilbye (1574 – 1638) is something of a rarity amongst the composers of the English renaissance in that he seems only to have composed secular music. Two collections of his madrigals have survived, one dated from 1598 and the other from 1608, together containing 64 pieces. The son of a tanner, Wilbye received the patronage of the Cornwallis family, and the madrigalist has much to thank them for, for Wilbye's works are among the finest madrigals to come from England. His style is characterised by delicate writing for the voice, and by an acute sensitivity to the text.

Alonso de Alba (1475–1520) is thought to be the composer of *La Tricotea Samartin*. Little is known about this Spanish composer, but it is thought he was employed as a composer and singer in the court of Ferdinand and Isabel. The marriage of Isabel of Castille and Ferdinand of Aragon eventually brought stability to Spain, and allowed the arts to flourish. *La Tricotea Samartin* is a lively soldiers' drinking song,

and it is equally well known in its instrumental version as it is in the vocal form you will hear.

Mateo Flecha (1481–1553), who became famous for his ensaladas, was chapel-master at the Lerida Cathedral in his native Catalonia, and was also music teacher to the Castilian royal family. A popular form of program madrigal in Renaissance Spain was the ensalada: a 'mixed salad' or medley of popular and courtly tunes and idioms, often religious, always highly dramatic, and seasoned with a strong flavour of the burlesque. This ensalada is a kind of serio-comic allegory of the 'ship of life,' warning listeners of the need for prayer in order to save themselves from the perils of life. It begins with the melodramatic cries from the crew of a sinking ship.

Folksongs have been an integral part of the King's Singers' repertoire since their early performing days, and the collection sung tonight represents some brand new works that have been arranged especially for this tour. We hope that you enjoy our version of these popular songs. We hope that you enjoy our versions of these popular songs.

River's Lament, was written by the Uzbekistan born Australian composer Elena Kats-Chernin (born 1957). She studied composition in Russia, Australia and Germany, and has since composed diverse works, including ballet scores, operas, symphonies, chamber music and concertos. Her style combines a strong rhythmic impetus with a bittersweet harmonies and melodies.

The composer writes:

When The King's Singers commissioned *River's Lament*, Australia (the country where I live) had experienced recurring droughts. I wanted to write a piece from the perspective of the River itself.

To give it a voice. I asked renowned poet Charles Anthony Silvestri to collaborate with me on this project. It was a process that involved both of us reacting to each other's work as it was unfolding.

River's Lament is in four movements:

I am born where clouds descend

This is based on 3 notes, G, F sharp and A. It is in a reflective mood, ebbing and flowing as the voices intertwine.

Dinga Dinga Dinga

This is the 'daily jostle' of River life as a main thoroughfare; lively, fast-paced and energetic.

I am diminished

The River is waning. A single voice begins. The music is pared down, echoing the decline.

Storm clouds billowing

The final movement is a waltz, contented but with a hint of anxiousness. The theme from the first movement is reprised and the River is born again.

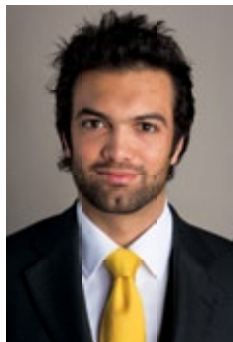
Very soon after I finished the piece the devastating Queensland floods happened. I became aware of the power as well as the life force of water.

The King's Singers end the concert with a collection of pieces from the lighter end of the repertoire to include pieces from the Grammy® winning album *Simple Gifts* and the follow up album *Swimming over London*, released in June 2010. Selections include arrangements of folk songs and spirituals, standard evergreens and contemporary pop material.

The King's Singers



David Hurley
countertenor



Timothy Wayne-Wright
countertenor



Paul Phoenix
tenor

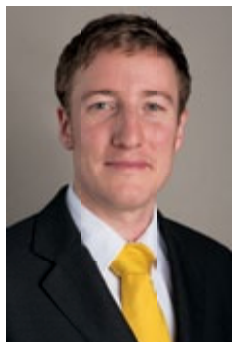
One of the world's most celebrated ensembles, The King's Singers have a packed schedule of concerts, recordings, media and education work that spans the globe. Championing the work of young and established composers, they remain consummate entertainers; a class-act with a delightfully British wit. From Gesualdo and György Ligeti to Michael Bublé, The King's Singers are instantly recognisable for their spot-on intonation, impeccable vocal blend, the flawless articulation of the text and incisive timing.

During the 2012 concert season, The King's Singers will perform across the globe in some of the world's most beautiful concert halls including the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, and the Berlin Philharmonie. The King's Singers will travel to Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany, the US and Canada, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Poland, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands, Switzerland, Finland, Mexico, Korea, Singapore and China.

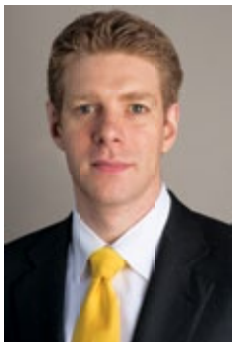
With a discography of well over 150 recordings The King's Singers have garnered both awards and significant critical acclaim. Their studio album *Simple Gifts* on Signum was awarded a Grammy® in 2009. *Swimming over London*, a disc that aligns KS 'favourites' with new songs and arrangements was released in 2010, alongside a world premiere recording of *Music for Vespers* by Pachelbel with Charivari Agréable. While touring the USA in February 2010, The King's Singers recorded an album with the renowned Concordia College Choir which included KS commissions by Eric Whitacre and Bob Chilcott and was released in autumn 2011. A DVD of Christmas repertoire was released for Christmas 2011.

The King's Singers maintain a deep commitment to new choral music and have commissioned over 200 works from a host of prominent contemporary composers including Richard Rodney Bennett, Luciano Berio, Peter Maxwell Davies, György Ligeti, Gian Carlo Menotti, Paweł Łukaszewski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Ned Rorem, John Rutter, Toru Takemitsu, and John Tavener.

The King's Singers have an extraordinary history on television. A favourite of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, with whom they performed as part of the Winter Olympics, they appeared on the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's Christmas Concert to a combined live audience of 80,000 which was



Christopher Bruerton
baritone



Christopher Gabbittas
baritone



Jonathan Howard
bass

broadcast on PBS across the US and is available on DVD. Following their televised *BBC Proms* performance at the Royal Albert Hall, London (also available on DVD – awarded a Midem International Classical Award in January 2010) they have appeared on *BBC Breakfast* television and performed frequently on *Songs of Praise*.

In addition to their sold-out concerts worldwide, The King's Singers share their artistry through numerous workshops and master classes. They have clocked up phenomenal sales of sheet music with over two million pieces of print in circulation with current publisher Hal Leonard. The King's Singers' arrangements are sung by schools, college choirs and amateur and professional ensembles the world over.

Visit www.kingssingers.com for the latest news, blog entries, video blogs, Tweets and YouTube updates.

MusicProductionsLtd

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marc wallace

The King's Singers have been dressed by Marc Wallace.
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swpr

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Sally Woodfield

