



The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

Tuesday 13 May 2025, 3.15pm
Southwark Cathedral

Choral Recital

The LFCCM Festival Singers
Alastair Carey *direction*

*A recital of contemporary choral music,
featuring works submitted to the Festival's
"Call for Scores" incubation project for new sacred music*

Cassie White O for a Closer Walk with God World premiere

Dominic McGonigal Ubi Caritas

*"Where there is love and charity, God is there."
– attrib. St Paulinus II of Aquileia (c. 796 AD)*

Richard Barnard Tantum ergo World premiere

*"Therefore, let us venerate so great a sacrament [Christ's sacrifice]."
– from "Pange lingua" (c. 1264 AD), St Thomas Aquinas*

Joseph Schubert Ave verum corpus World premiere

*"Hail, true body, born of the Virgin Mary, sacrificed on the cross for mankind."
– ? attrib. Pope Innocent III (13th century)*

Phillip Cooke Salve Regina

*"Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, to you we cry ... pray for us."
– ? trad. Marian hymn, c. 11th - 12th centuries*

Gregory Rose When David Heard World premiere

Sara Ramos Contioso Hoc est corpus UK premiere

*"This is my body, given for you: do this in remembrance of me ...
this cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you." – Luke 22:19-20*

C F Thompson Ave verum corpus

Paolo Furlan O salutaris hostia World premiere

*"O saving victim, who opens the gate of heaven ... give us your strength and aid."
– from "Verbum supernum prodiens" (13th century), St Thomas Aquinas*

Richard Nye Fear not, for I am with you London premiere

Tomas Bezkorowajnyj Call to Remembrance World premiere

Łukasz Urbaniak Exsultate Deo World premiere

*"Sing we merrily to God our strength ... rejoice,
make a cheerful song to the God of Jacob." – Psalm 80:1-2*

Programme notes

Cassie White: **O For a Closer Walk with God** is a setting of the William Cowper poem of the same name, made famous by a setting from Charles Villiers Stanford. This new setting, for SATB and soloists or for double choir, uses the two vocal groups as a representation of that closeness, with the two sections beginning on a steady unison pulse, and expanding out into rich polyphony and dense harmonic textures. The piece contains several musical ideas that mirror each other, much like in Cowper's poem, gradually transforming as though on a walk or journey themselves.

Dominic McGonigal: **Ubi Caritas** is a contemplative setting of the words "Where There Is Love, There Is God". For centuries, it was one of the antiphons sung at the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday. Now, it is used at the Offertory and for general use where the liturgical theme is love, including weddings. Like the famous Duruflé *Ubi Caritas*, this setting is based on the Gregorian chant. The beautiful flowing melodies appear in different voices in different modes, set against a pedal note. The harmonic colour is accentuated by the use of the words "Ubi Caritas" as a refrain. It is scored for *a cappella* mixed choir.

Richard Barnard: In this setting of **Tantum ergo** I wanted to capture the meaning, drama, and poetry of this text, and achieve a rich variety of emotions and colours with just three vocal lines. The opening switches between contrasting moods: declamatory uplifting phrases are followed by hushed, introverted 'bowed heads' and veiled senses. The second part moves with longer intertwining lines, one idea 'proceeding' from the others to form a unity. The jubilant climax of praise is followed by a reflective "Amen" section recalling the opening material.

Joseph Schubert: This setting of **Ave verum corpus** was written in July 2024, during an intensive five-day seminar in choral composition underwritten and sponsored by the Catholic Institute of Sacred Music at Saint Patrick's Seminary and University, Menlo Park, California. Dr. Frank La Rocca taught this seminar, using the techniques of 16th century species counterpoint as a means of providing a disciplined framework for the study of melodic shape, voice leading, harmony, texture, and the creative processes and refinements used in *a cappella* choral composition. The imitative counterpoint I employed is meant as an homage to that era. Some instances of word-painting include a 'cross' motive for "crucem"; descending crotchet motion for the words "fluxit aqua et sanguine"; dramatic high points for the words "cujus latus perforatum", and "mortis in examine"; and the contrast of bright and dark harmonies depending upon the text. A small quote from the chant is used in the final section.

Phillip Cooke: **Salve Regina**, composed in 2019, is a simple and sustained setting of the well-known Marian antiphon. It carries on a current desire to write shorter, easier motets that are more accessible to a wider range of choirs, though still retaining the thumbprints of my mature style. The motet is in a clear ABA form, with simple textures and flowing melodies.

Gregory Rose: **When David Heard** takes as its text one single, devastating sentence from the King James Bible; II Samuel, 18:33: "When David heard that Absalom was slain he went up into his chamber over the gate and wept, my son, my son, O Absalom my son, would God I had died for thee!" A popular choice from 16th-century composers Tomkins and Weelkes right up to Eric Whitacre's setting (1999), the work explores this sense of extreme grief felt so deeply by King David. The initially spare, quiet writing passing between upper and lower voices resolves in a

strong block of homophonic writing on a repeated “Absalom”, the work closing with tenor solo and a final solitary soprano soloist on the final disbelieving “my son”.

*Sara Ramos Contioso: **Hoc est corpus*** is a motet for mixed choir, drawing its textual foundation from Luke 22:19. The work adopts the character of a musical offering, articulated through a ternary formal design with a reprise of the opening section. The dissonant language is treated with expressive intentionality, underscoring the theological symbolism inherent in the liturgical text. Moreover, the predominantly homophonic texture facilitates a fluid temporal approach, responsive to the nuances of Latin prosody. *Hoc est corpus* was composed for the liturgical celebration of Saint John of God, and received its première on 8 March 2024 at the Basilica of Saint John of God in Granada, on the occasion of his feast day.

*C F Thompson: **Ave verum corpus*** is a short motet on the classic Latin text. Opening with a haunting but anticipatory dorian-esque hymn, it then winds through tortuous and tight harmonies to set the wounds and passion of Christ. The drips of blood give way to a torrent of mercy, before a return to the opening material and finally ending with a condolent series of pleas for mercy and an unexpected resolution.

*Paolo Furlan: **O salutaris hostia*** is a setting of one of the most beloved Eucharistic hymns. In just a few words, rich in meaning and flowing from the wisdom of its author (the great Doctor of the Church Thomas Aquinas), it reveals all the power of the sacrificial victim, to whom we Christians owe our eternal salvation. This musical setting is characterized by a sense of restraint and simplicity and seeks to highlight the depth of the text, occasionally employing simple madrigalisms, e.g. the triplets on “Uni trinoque Domino”.

*Richard Nye: **Fear Not, For I Am With You*** was written in March 2024 as a companion piece to my anthem *I Saw a New Heaven*, which was featured in LFCCM 2018 . The music to both is set to adapted biblical text from the Old and New Testaments, the works being written as a response to the struggles faced by innocent people caught up in conflict. *Fear Not, For I Am With You* (set to words adapted from Isaiah 41:10 and 13) has children in mind and considers their thoughts and fears, particularly at night. There is a middle section where the choir crescendos to forte, before the reassuring words “fear not” return. This setting was first performed by Choralia Milford in November 2024. The performance at this year’s LFCCM will mark the London premiere.

*Tomas Bezkorowajnyj: **Call to Remembrance*** just over a year ago. It remained unfinished up until very recently when I had the sudden inspiration to complete it, picking the piece up from where I left off about a minute or so in. The score is a sort of before and after image of my year's development of music writing. Listeners may notice a change in style after the pause, moving away from simple cadential patterns to more complicated and chromatic musical ideas.

*Łukasz Urbaniak: **Exultate Deo***, “sing with joy to God, our strength”, is a great inspiration for a composer like me. These words provide the opportunity to express – in a musical way of course – the glory of God, the happiness and hope coming from the resurrection.

I have two reasons to compose sacred music. The first is to praise God and to bring people closer to him. The second is to express my musical emotions, illustrating this metaphysic reality through the sound of choir. Each of my works is created from a little musical theme deeply combined with the text structure. I have an initial idea in my mind, then I improvise on the piano,

intuitively discovering the melody for the words and adding a harmonic plan. Step by step I develop dramaturgy, trying to combine every part of the piece in one work. I prefer neo-tonality, using traditional chords, but adding some extra notes. I like joining the chords in my own way, but always to build one organic whole, together with other musical components.

I hope that *Exultate Deo* will transfer the listener for a while to the world of sacrum and it will give them a little musical pleasure as well.

The LFCCM Festival Singers

Soprano Felicity Hayward Eve McGrath Tess Pearson Olivia Hugh-Jones
Alto Leonora Dawson-Bowling David McGregor Hannah Cooke
Tenor Graham Neal Matthew Howard Gareth Treseder
Bass Eoghan Desmond Stuart O'Hara Francis Brett Jon Stainsby

The Festival's own professional vocal ensemble, The LFCCM Festival Singers, brings together singers from across London's world-class choral institutions. Most members of the ensemble have come from a collegiate background and have studied as postgraduate students at one of the London conservatoires. This combination of superb sight-reading and world-class vocal training gives the group tremendous flexibility, enabling the performance of a repertory that spans five centuries: ranging from motets from the Eton Choirbook to new commissions by composers such as Roxanna Panufnik, Michael Berkeley, Cecilia McDowall, Howard Skempton, Michael Finnissy, Gabriel Jackson, Francis Pott, Sebastian Forbes, Francis Grier, Kerry Andrew, Antony Pitts, and many more.

Alastair Carey

Alastair Carey has been involved in choral performance since the age of six. He has performed, recorded and broadcast throughout the United Kingdom and Europe, appearing as a vocal performer with ensembles including The Gabrieli Consort, The Oxford Camerata, The Brabant Ensemble, and The Nederlandse Bachvereniging in performances ranging from the BBC Proms to the Leipzig Bach Festival. As a conductor, Alastair has directed concerts in Asia, Australasia, Europe, and throughout the United Kingdom, including award-winning performances at competitions in the European Grand Prix in Spain and the World Choir Games in South Korea.

The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music was founded by Christopher Batchelor in 2002 with the aim of showcasing contemporary liturgical music in both service and concert. Now more than 20 years old, the LFCCM has grown to include nearly 60 events, dozens of composers, hundreds of performers, and thousands of audience members, both live and online.

Make the LFCCM part of your Legacy

The LFCCM's endowment fund ensures the Festival's ongoing financial security and independence for generations to come. Your lasting legacy will be reflected in new commissions, live

performances, educational programmes, and supporting the development of church music in perpetuity.

Find out more at lfccm.com/support/legacy, or write to legacy@lfccm.com.

More events this week at The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

All events are free unless otherwise noted

Tuesday 13 May

5.30pm

Choral Evensong

Southwark Cathedral, SE1 9DA

Featuring music by Francis Bamford, David McGregor, and Matthew Martin, performed by the Choir of Southwark Cathedral.

Wednesday 14 May

5.15pm

Choral Evensong

Holy Sepulchre, Holborn Viaduct, EC1A 2DQ

Featuring music by Anthony Baldwin, Andrew Gant, Anna Lush, and David McGregor, performed by the Choir of Holy Sepulchre.

Friday 16 May

1.15pm

Lunchtime Recital by The LFCCM Festival Singers

Holy Sepulchre, Holborn Viaduct, EC1A 2DQ

A choral recital by The LFCCM Festival Singers, the Festival's own professional vocal ensemble drawn from London's top-flight church and cathedral singers, featuring themed selections by both British and international composers from the Festival's "Call for Scores" incubation project for new music, including works by young composers.

Saturday 17 May

5.30pm

Organ Recital by students of The Royal College of Music Junior Department

Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall, Royal College of Music, SW7 2BS

Contemporary organ music is featured in this delightful organ recital presented by students of The Royal College of Music Junior Department.

7.30pm

"Wisdom and Strength":

Concert at St Paul's Knightsbridge, SW1X 8SH

This event is ticketed. Book online at lfccm.com/tickets

Renowned British ensemble Siglo de Oro presents an exceptional programme of new sacred music by women composers to celebrate the launch of their new CD recording, *Wisdom and Strength*.

More details about these events and many others at
www.lfccm.com