

Sing of Christmas

Presented by the Australian Boys Choral Institute
in association with Australian Digital Concert Hall

Australian Boys Choir | The Vocal Consort
Melbourne Baroque Orchestra | Fiore Chamber Ensemble

Monika Harris, soprano | Alexander Ritter, countertenor
Anish Nair, tenor | Lachlan McDonald, baritone

Nicholas Dinopoulos, conductor

Philip Carmody, organ
The Kelly Gang | Training Choirs of the ABCI
Naomi Heyden, conductor

To ensure the enjoyment of other patrons, kindly switch off all mobile devices.

Photography or video recording of this performance is not permitted. Thank you.

Concert duration is approximately 120 minutes (including one 20-minute interval).

Sunday 10th December 2023
Elisabeth Murdoch Hall
Melbourne Recital Centre, Southbank

www.australianboyschoir.com.au

*We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and
Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we live, work, learn and perform today.*

From the Institute Chair...

When I think back to the achievements of 2023 at the Australian Boys Choral Institute, I do so with great pride. This year's concert season has been one of joyful song across a range of splendid venues. There is nothing quite like being back at Melbourne Recital Centre in December though – an event which brings together both current and past families alike.

Our organisation turns 85 next year, and this sense of community has long been a hallmark of the ABCI. The current season of reflection serves as a reminder of just how grateful we should be to be a part of something very special which is also bigger than ourselves.

Above all, the uniqueness of our organisation is something to be celebrated and preserved. Our Artistic Director, Mr Nick Dinopoulos, assures me that his plans for next year will serve to further strengthen and steadily grow our organisation as we move towards our centenary.

On your behalf, I want to thank our music staff, General Manager, Ms Elizabeth Lindner, and Administrative Assistant, Ms Julia Gilchrist, for their sterling efforts again this year. We are sad to be farewelling Julia at this time but wish her all the best as she relocates to the UK.

Thanks to you too for your support this year. I wish you and your family all the best for this festive season and look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year.

Professor Stephen Duffy
ABCI Board Chair

From the Artistic Director...

Welcome to the final instalment of this year's ABCI concert season. We have sought to raise the roof of each of our marvellous venues this year with some exciting massed repertoire, which has not only enhanced the skills of our young singers but also enchanted audiences.

Our concert offerings have boasted more singers and more songs than ever before, and we continue to expand our recent collaborative efforts. As such, we are thrilled to be joining with the Melbourne Baroque Orchestra for the first time today. MBO excels in Bach's music, and I can think of no better ensemble with which to present the composer's great *Missa Brevis*.

We are also proud to welcome four superb vocal soloists for this magnificent piece today, all of whom have a proud, enduring connection with the ABCI. It is often said that you can't be what you can't see. Today we showcase the very pinnacle of the ABCI training program.

I extend my thanks to all of our audience this year, not only for your support but also your belief in our young singers. Being a member of the ABCI requires the highest tenacity and dedication, and their achievement far exceeds other groups of a similar age. All are very proud to share this music with you today, and we hope you will join us in singing loudly!

Nicholas Dinopoulos
ABCI Artistic Director

Program...

Missa Brevis in A major BWV 234

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

- I – Kyrie (Chorus & Soloists)
- II – Gloria (Chorus & Soloists)
- III – Domine Deus (Bass Solo)
- IV – Qui Tollis (Soprano Solo)
- V – Quoniam (Alto Solo)
- VI – Cum Sancto (Chorus)

Please hold your applause until the conclusion of the entire work.

Visit www.australianboyschoir.com.au/whats-on/news on your device for detailed notes about this piece, texts and translations and information about today's performers.

Interval – 20 minutes

The First Nowell

English Traditional Carol
arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

The audience sings:

The__ first_____ No - well the__ an - gel did

say Was to cer-tain poor shep-herds in fields as they lay; In__

fields__ where they lay,__ keep-ing their sheep, On a cold win-ter's

night__ that was__ so deep:

No - well,__ No - well, No - well, No -

- well, Born is the King__ of Is - ra - el!

[The choirs sing Verses 2 & 3. The audience joins for Verse 4.]

4. Then let us all with one accord
 Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
 That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
 And with his blood mankind hath bought:
 Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
 Born is the King of Israel!

Joy to the World

Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

after Handel, arr. Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

The audience sings:



1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let
 2. Joy to the world! the Sa - viour reigns; Let
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, Nor
 earth re - ceive her King. Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 men their songs em - ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills and
 thorns in - fest the ground; He comes to make his bless - ings
 room, And heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 flow Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.

[Organ Interlude]

4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of his righteousness
 And wonders of his love,
 And wonders of his love,
 And wonders, wonders of his love.

Star Carol

John Rutter (b. 1945)

Performed by the Junior Singer Training Group

The Piglets' Christmas

Mary Goetze (b. 1943)

Performed by the Tyro Training Group

Christmas Star

John Williams (b. 1932)

Performed by the Tyro and Junior Singer Training Groups

Wexford Carol

Irish Traditional Carol

arr. Timothy Mallis (b. 1996)

Performed by The Vocal Consort

Betelehemu

Babatunde Olatunji (1927-2003)

arr. Wendell Whalum (1931-1987)

Performed by The Vocal Consort, The Kelly Gang and Cambiata Training Group

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

English Traditional Carol

arr. Timothy Mallis (b. 1996)

Performed by The Vocal Consort, The Kelly Gang and Cambiata Training Group

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

English Traditional Carol

arr. Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) & David Willcocks (1919-2015)

The audience sings:

1. It___ came up - on the___ mid - night clear, That glo - rious song___ of
old, From___ an - gels bend - ing near the earth To___
touch___ their harps of gold: 'Peace on the earth, good -
- will to men, From heav'n's all - gra - cious King!' The
world in so - lemn still - ness lay To___ hear the an - gels sing.

The musical score is written on five staves in 4/4 time. The melody is in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined to indicate phrasing. The score ends with a double bar line.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heav'nly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lonely plains
They bend on hov'ring wing;
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessèd angels sing.

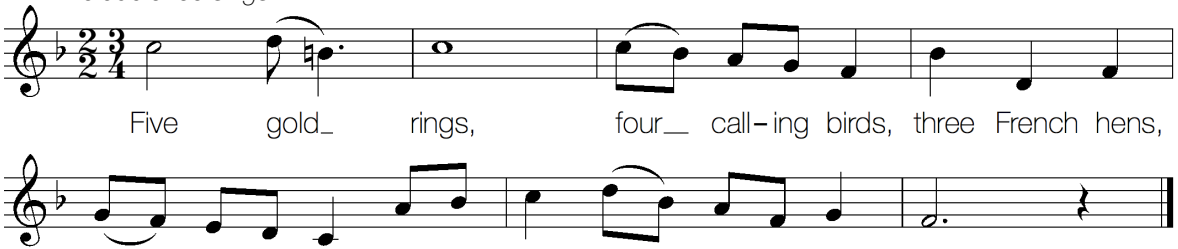
3. Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

4. For lo! the days are hast'ning on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When, with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

English Traditional Carol
arr. John Rutter (b. 1945)

The audience sings:



Five gold_ rings, four_ call-ing birds, three French hens,
two_ tur-tle doves and a par-tridge in a pear tree.

The image shows the first two lines of musical notation for the song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a time signature of 3/4. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are written below the staff, with some words underlined to indicate the rhythm. The first line of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics, and the second line of music corresponds to the second line of lyrics. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

We Three Kings of Orient are

John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891)
arr. Paul Leddington Wright (b. 1951)

The audience sings:



1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are; Bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
Field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der star:
O _____ star of won - der, star of night, Star with roy - al
beau - ty bright, West - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing,
Guide us to thy per - fect light.

[The choirs sing Verses 2-4. The audience joins for Verse 5.]

5. Glorious now, behold him arise; King, and God and sacrifice!
Heav'n sings Alleluia; Alleluia the earth replies:
O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding; Guide us to thy perfect light.

Season 2024...

Sweet & Low
17 March 2024
Wesley Church Melbourne

St. Matthew Passion
24 March 2024
Alexander Theatre Clayton

Voices of a Land
23 June 2024
Auburn Uniting Church

Mystical Songs
4 August 2024
St. John's Camberwell

To Reach the Stars
13 October 2024
St. John's Camberwell

A Mighty Wonder
14 December 2024
Melbourne Recital Centre

Regional and international touring dates to be announced.

Tickets on sale early 2024 via www.australianboyschoir.com.au/concerts.

The Vocal Consort

Originally formed in 1984 to complement the work of the Australian Boys Choir and celebrating 40 years in 2024, The Vocal Consort has gone on to establish a distinct musical life of its own as one of the country's finest vocal ensembles.

Seeking to develop new formats and audience for vocal performance, and setting a standard rarely achieved by other Australian groups, it makes numerous concert, soirée and festival appearances each year and continues to earn superlatives from critics and audiences alike.

Most members of the Consort gained their early training through the Australian Boys Choir and now provide inspiring role models for the boys in a repertoire ranging from plainchant and sacred polyphony through to various contemporary styles.

The Vocal Consort has toured internationally eight times encompassing tours across Europe, Asia and North America. They regularly perform throughout regional Australia, and in 2008 were a featured ensemble of the Hobart Festival of Voices.

TVC has released three CDs to date, the most recent of which launched in 2012. They have been proud to participate in the Pemulwuy National Male Voice Festival in Brisbane since its inception and again returned to perform at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in 2023.

Melbourne Baroque Orchestra

Melbourne Baroque Orchestra was founded in 2015 by local period instrumentalists eager to nurture and develop historical performance practice in Melbourne.

Founding musicians include violinists Shane Lestideau and David Irving, baroque flautist Greg Dikmans and cellist Rosanne Hunt. The orchestra enjoys the patronage of Elizabeth Wallfisch.

In and around Melbourne, MBO hosts its own annual concert series presenting baroque and classical repertoire on original instruments and showcasing the outstanding qualities of our local players.

Melbourne Baroque Orchestra regularly collaborates with the Australian Chamber Choir, the Choir of Newman College, Polyphonic Voices, the Choir of Christ Church South Yarra, the Scots' Church Choir, and in December 2023 will debut with The Australian Boys Choir.

The support of the Robert Salzer Foundation, The Erica Foundation, Creative Partnerships Australia, and our growing family of generous private donors is gratefully acknowledged.

Leader: Shane Lestideau | Violin: James Armstrong, Stephanie Eldridge, Jaso Sasaki
Viola: Dovi Hanner | Violoncello: Rosanne Hunt | Double Bass: Christine Gelok
Flute: Greg Dikmans, Alison Catanach | Theorbo: Samantha Cohen | Organ: Michael Fulcher

[www.melbournebaroqueorchestra.com]

Fiore Chamber Ensemble

Dynamic, polished, sparkling and cheeky; Fiore brings the full vibrancy of choral repertoire to audiences Australia-wide.

Featuring four of Melbourne's biggest choir obsessives: soprano – Monika Harris, countertenor – Alex Ritter, tenor – Anish Nair, and baritone – Lachlan McDonald, these performers know each other's voices intimately through decades of combined experience singing with each other and strive to delight audiences with polished performances of pristine polyphony.

Since their formation in 2022, Fiore has toured Victoria extensively, headlined Fairfield in Feb 2023 with the City of Yarra, had performances broadcast through 3MBS, and has commissioned over 12 works from 9 Australian composers.

Expect a captivating performance with rich expression and incredible detail, coupled with seemingly effortless teamwork that is a testimony to lifelong friendship.

Monika Harris, soprano

Monika is a Melbourne soprano who began her choral education at the age of seven at the Young Voices of Melbourne. Since joining the Australian Boys Choral Institute staff in 2015, she has taught at all levels of the choir and currently is the Teacher-in-Charge of Probationers. Monika studied voice at The University of Melbourne graduating with honours in 2017 and has since maintained a busy performance schedule including recitals, album recordings, concerts, and theatre, whilst also working as a music teacher and speech pathologist. Monika is thrilled to be performing as a featured soloist with her chamber ensemble Fiore in the ABCI 'Sing of Christmas' concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre.

Alexander Ritter, countertenor

Countertenor Alex Ritter is an in-demand chamber singer, chorister, and choral soloist. His love of ensemble singing began as a member of the Australian Boys Choir, and then only grew following his time in The Vocal Consort and the National Youth Choir of Australia. He now performs with a wide variety of Melbourne's choirs and vocal ensembles, including Divisi Chamber Singers, The Consort of Melbourne, Alta Collective, Fiore, and Polyphonic Voices, and is a choral scholar at St John's Anglican Church Camberwell. As a soloist, Alex has featured in works such as Handel's Messiah and Bach's St John Passion. Although choral music is his first love, Alex enjoys stretching his musical horizons, performing with his award-winning a cappella jazz quintet Burgundy Blue and indie rock-funk quartet Tracksuit Larry. Outside of his musical pursuits, Alex is undertaking a PhD in dark matter particle physics at The University of Melbourne.

Anish Nair, tenor

Anish Nair's love for music began as a chorister with the Australian Boys Choir, whilst studying piano and later tuba/jazz trombone during high school. After his 1st of six seasons with the National Youth Choir of Australia, he further dove into the choral scene, and is

currently a freelance tenor having sung regularly with numerous choirs around Melbourne and Australia, including the Australian Chamber Choir, Polyphonic Voices, and Divisi Chamber Singers. As the Principal Tenor at Scots Church Melbourne for 3 years, he was a soloist in several Bach Cantatas, and has sung large works from Bach's Passion's to Mozart's Requiem. He has also had the opportunity to work closely with artists and conductors such as David Hill, A.R. Rahman, Joe Hisaishi, and John Rutter. He is currently a founding member, manager, and performer of classical choral quartet Fiore, performs and tours regularly with the St John's Camberwell Choral Scholars, manages the National Youth Choir of Australia, and enjoys his day job at an environmental consulting firm.

Lachlan McDonald, baritone

Lachlan McDonald is a Melbourne-based baritone, composer, and conductor. Under the tutelage of Stephen Grant, Lachlan completed his Bachelor of Music at The University of Melbourne in 2017, majoring in classical voice. An experienced ensemble singer, Lachlan is a frequent performer in many of Australia's finest vocal ensembles, including Fiore Chamber, Consort of Melbourne, and Polyphonic Voices. He was also a former member of the National Youth Choir of Australia, and The Vocal Consort. Lachlan is in high demand as a freelance singer and soloist. After coming through the institute as a boy chorister, Lachlan was on the music staff at the Australian Boys Choir from 2015-2021 holding many posts, including Teacher-in-Charge of the Cambiata training group. As a conductor, Lachlan trained under Michael Fulcher, and is the founding director of Fiore Chamber. Since 2018, he has held the post of Director of Music at St John's Anglican Church, East Malvern. Lachlan was the conductor of the Monash University Choral Society since from 2021-23. Lachlan is also an award-winning composer, specialising in vocal music (both art song and choral).

Philip Carmody, organ

Philip resigned as Co-Artistic Director of the National Boys Choir of Australia at the start of 2022, having commenced as accompanist in 1985. Highlights over that time range from performances with The Three Tenors and Barbra Streisand, and services at Westminster Abbey and St Peter's Basilica, Rome.

As Director of Music at Melbourne Grammar School, Philip and the MGS Chapel Choir have collaborated on four concert series with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra for whom Philip has been a guest conductor. Philip is also on the staff of organists at St Francis' Church, Lonsdale Street in Melbourne.

Naomi Heyden, director of training choirs

Naomi Heyden holds tertiary qualifications in both Music and Education from Monash and Deakin Universities and joined the staff of the ABCI in 2001. She has taught across the breadth of Institute's training program and was appointed to her current role in 2018.

Having a particular interest in Kodály education, she has also taught at Erasmus Primary School, Ivanhoe Grammar School, St. Kevin's College and Melbourne Youth Chorale. As an experienced performer she has been a member of various Melbourne choirs.

Nicholas Dinopoulos, artistic director

Nicholas Dinopoulos studied singing at The University of Melbourne under Merlyn Quaife AM and furthered his training as a studio artist of Gertrude Opera. He maintains a busy performance schedule consisting of various concert, recital and operatic engagements, most notably as a core member of Songmakers Australia.

Opera credits include *Caronte / Plutone* (L'Orfeo), *Ercole* (Il Giasone), *Un Scythe / Le Ministre du Sanctuaire* (Iphigénie en Tauride), *Bartolo / Antonio* (Le Nozze di Figaro), *Leporello* (Don Giovanni), *Martino* (L'Occasione fa il Ladro), *L'Apparizione / Il Medico* (Macbeth), *Mars* (Orphée aux Enfers), *The Goldsmith* (The Juniper Tree) and Cimarosa's *Maestro di Cappella*.

He has been heard frequently in national live-to-air broadcasts on ABC Classic, 3MBS FM and Australian Digital Concert Hall, and his performances have been recorded by both the Chandos and Pinchgut Live labels. He has also given the world premiere performances of several significant new works from among the rising generation of Australian composers.

Engagements as a guest soloist have included performances of the Grainger Tribute to Foster for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra under Sir Andrew Davis, *El Cantor* (María de Buenos Aires) for Victorian Opera, *Polyphemus* (Acis & Galatea) for Genesis Baroque, *Keeper of the Madhouse* (The Rake's Progress) for the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, the Schubert *Schwanengesang* for Art Song Canberra with pianist Andrea Katz with follow-up performances of *Winterreise*, the Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* for the Melbourne Festival, Michael Haydn *Requiem* with the Australian Haydn Ensemble, four successive invitations to the Peninsula Summer Musical Festival, several return appearances for Bach Musica NZ, and recitals with Songmakers Australia at the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Melbourne Recital Centre and for Musica Viva Australia.

As a conductor and educator, he has held positions at The University of Melbourne (Music Director, Melbourne Conservatorium Chamber Choir, 2019-present) and the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music (Music Director, Monash University Singers & Sessional Voice Teacher, 2014-2020). He was also resident vocal consultant to the National Youth Choir of Australia for four consecutive seasons from 2015-2018 and has served as guest chorus director for several large-scale projects with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Australian Chamber Orchestra. In 2024, he commences his tenure as Artistic Director of Western Australia's premier chamber choir, the Giovanni Consort, founded in 1995.

A specialist in the field of changing voice and young men's singing, he has also served on the staff of the Australian Boys Choral Institute since 2007. He is only the fifth Artistic Director appointed in the Choir's nearly 85-year history. [\[www.nickdinopoulos.com\]](http://www.nickdinopoulos.com)

Join the Conductor's Circle...

Like most major arts organisations, the Australian Boys Choral Institute is a not-for-profit organisation that cannot rely on income earned through tuition and performance fees to meet all its financial obligations.

All donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible and will assist in promoting and improving the Australian Boys Choir's commitment to excellence. Donate \$50 or more to join the Conductor's Circle.

If you would like to find out how you can assist, please visit
www.givenow.com.au/australianboyschoir or phone the Choir on (03) 9818 4818.

Support of this kind plays a vital role in maintaining and furthering our work. Thank you.

The Australian Boys Choral Institute

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