

A Mighty Wonder

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

Australian Boys Choir | The Vocal Consort

Nicholas Dinopoulos, conductor

Anna Pokorny, cello | Philip Carmody, organ & piano

The Kelly Gang | Training Choirs of the ABCI

Naomi Heyden, conductor

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

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

Saturday 14th December 2024
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.*

The future of excellence...

Determining the influence that the Australian Boys Choir has had on my life is, to be honest, quite a difficult thing to do. Joining the ABCI when I was eight has been, I think, the most life-changing event of my life, and so weighing up its effect seems like too large of a task to accomplish. The Choir's indelible imprint can be found in every part of my life – it has taught me not only about music, but also about confidence, performance, discipline, commitment, community and, most importantly, the ability to resist scratching an itch while on stage.

There are, of course, some very clear ways in which the choir has changed my life. I work in part as a professional singer, mainly as a countertenor in small vocal ensembles and also as a soloist. The world of one-to-two-per-part chamber vocal groups in Melbourne is a niche one, but an undeniable fact is that it is absolutely full of ABCI alumni. This is a testament to the choir's incredibly high quality of musicianship training, which gives you not only an appreciation of music, but the skills to perform it to a high standard.

These skills provide an excellent musical base that extends beyond choral singing – I also sing with a jazz a cappella quintet, I conduct a church choir, and have even picked up the bass guitar and joined a band with some friends. Even though my fingers may be plucking strings, my mind is still filled with a steady stream of solfa.

However, I think that one of the strengths of the choir is that through teaching you how to be an excellent musician, it teaches you how to pursue excellence itself. It teaches attention to detail, which was essential in my studies outside music, where I have just completed a PhD in Physics.

The choir also focuses on maintaining high standards, even in the smallest things. One of my proudest moments as a Chorister was organising the choir at the Installation ceremonies to sit and stand perfectly together, without a conductor, just by following a single breath. This may seem like something very tiny, but it represents the level of care that is expected and fostered in this organisation – for kids who like trying hard, the Institute provides a safe place to unashamedly care deeply.

And I think it is this level of care that allows the ABCI to operate at such a world-class standard, despite the fact that it is still an independent, grass-roots organisation. This level of care is shared by the talented and committed music staff, the tireless administration, and especially by the generous army of parent volunteers that keep the whole thing ticking.

So, as the season of giving approaches, I encourage you to share the gift of your support with this excellent organisation. The ABCI has changed my life, just as it has changed the lives of so many others, and with your help it can continue to change the lives of many more.

Yours sincerely



Alex Ritter
ABCI Alumnus

Donate online today:

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From the Institute Chair...

This 85th year of the ABCI has been one of success, progress and joy. We have been spoiled with an outstanding concert series featuring works from home and abroad. Our performing choirs crossed the ditch for an exciting tour of Aotearoa/New Zealand, and we have again grown our community of volunteers and contributors.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to our singers who put in the hard work to succeed. Thank you to our staff, led by Nick Dinopoulos and Liz Lindner, who are tireless in pursuing our vision for this organisation. Thank you to our volunteers and donors, without whom we simply would not exist.

Finally, thanks to each of you reading this program, for supporting our singers and the Choir by being in the audience here at the Melbourne Recital Centre. Please do sing along with gusto! I wish you all the very best for this festive season and look forward to sharing our 86th year alongside you.

Tim Staindl
ABCI Board Chair

From the Artistic Director...

Welcome to the final instalment of this year's 85th anniversary ABCI concert season. It has been another year of outstanding achievement, firmly cementing our place as Australia's 'first and finest' choir for boys and young men. I am also proud to say ours is a true community.

Weaving a thread through today's musical offerings is the ancient text 'O Magnum Mysterium' or *O Great Mystery*. (This title is sometimes translated as *O Mighty Wonder*, hence the name of today's program.) Choral music has the amazing power to function as time-travel, so you will also be transported back to Christmas in the 12th and 13th centuries.

We have a whole host of singers spanning the breadth of the Australian Boys Choral Institute on stage today. While they are contributing the music, it is you, our audience, who make it a concert. We hope you will raise your voices with ours to make today a truly special event.

I cannot wait to share what we have in store for season 2025 with you all. Despite the fact we seem to say it almost annually, it's no exaggeration that next year's plans are bigger and bolder than ever before. Music also has the incredible ability to unite people – audience, singers and supporters into a single family. Here's to another 85 years of doing what we do!

Nicholas Dinopoulos
ABCI Artistic Director

Scan here for the full text of each work:



Program...

A great and mighty wonder

14th-century German melody
arr. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

The audience sings:



1. A great and might-y won - der, A full and ho - ly cure!
The Vir - gin bears the In - fant With vir-gin - hon - our pure.



Re - peat the hymn a - gain! 'To God on high be



glo - ry, And peace on earth to men!'

2. The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high!
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.

Repeat the hymn again...

3. While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, ye vales and mountains,
Ye oceans clap your hands.

Repeat the hymn again...

4. Since all he comes to ransom,
By all be he adored,
The Infant born in Bethl'em
The Saviour and the Lord.

Repeat the hymn again...

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

O Magnum Mysterium

12th-century chant
Anonymous

O Magnum Mysterium

Jacob Gallus (Handl)
(Slovenia, 1550-1591)

Performed by The Australian Boys Choir:

Just One Star

Ben van Tienen
(Australia, 2010)

O Magnum Mysterium

Ivo Antognini
(Switzerland, b.1963)

Performed by The Australian Boys Choir and The Vocal Consort:

Serenity (O Magnum Mysterium)

Ola Gjeilo
(Norway, b.1978)

Freuet euch, ihr Christen alle

Andreas Hammerschmidt
(Germany, c.1612-1675)

Hodie Christus natus est

John Winstanley
(Australia, 1922-2014)

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:

Chorus:



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 choir sings 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...

Interval – 20 minutes

O come, all ye faithful

John Francis Wade (c.1711-1786)

arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

The audience sings:



1. O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant,
O come ye, O come_ ye to Beth - le - hem;
Come and be - hold him Born the King of An - gels:
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

2. See how the shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks,
draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps:

O come, let us adore him...

3. Lo! star-led chieftains,
Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer him incense,
gold, and myrrh;
We to the Christ Child
Bring our hearts' oblations:

O come, let us adore him...

4. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens
of heav'n above;
Glory to God
In the highest:

O come, let us adore him...

5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born that happy morning,
Jesu to thee
be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him...

Joy to the world

Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

arr. Mack Wilberg (b.1955)

The audience sings:



1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let earth re-ceive her King.



Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him room,



And heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing,



and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.

2. Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;

Let men their songs employ;

While fields and floods,

rocks, hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,

Nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make

his blessings flow

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.

Scan here for the full text of each work:



Performed by the Junior Singer Training Group:

Dors, dors, petit bébé

Traditional Cajun Folksong
arr. Cristi Cary Miller (b.1959)

Performed by the Tyro Training Group:

Dormi, dormi

Traditional Italian Carol
arr. Mary Goetze (b.1943)

Performed by the Tyro and Junior Singer Training Groups:

Stille Nacht

Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863)
arr. Peter Hunt (2004)

Performed by The Vocal Consort:

Viderunt omnes

Pérotin le Grand
(c.1200)

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

Ave Maria

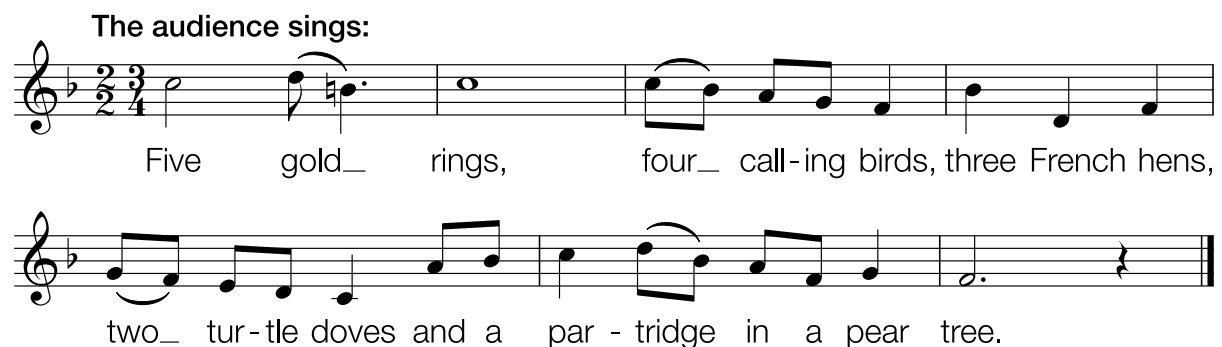
Franz Biebl
(Germany, 1906-2001)

Performed by all singers:

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 two staves of musical notation in 2/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined to indicate where the audience should sing.

Hark! the herald-angels sing

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

The audience sings:



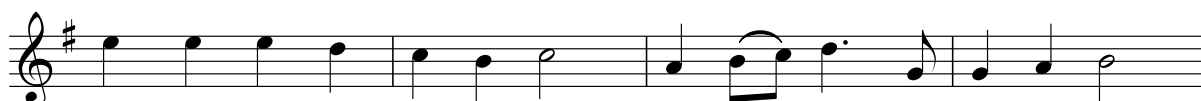
1. Hark! the he - rald - an - gels sing__ Glo - ry to the new-born King;



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild,__ God and sin - ners re - con - ciled:



Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise,__ Join the tri - umph of the skies,



With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, Christ is__ born in Beth - le - hem.



Hark! the he - rald - an - gels sing Glo - ry__ to the new-born King.

2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come
Offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,
Hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.

3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King.

Season 2025...

St Mark Passion

Sunday 30 March 2025
Wesley Church

A Child's Book of Beasts

Sunday 29 June 2025
Auburn Uniting Church

Incantations

Sunday 3 August 2025
St Patrick's Cathedral

French Classics

Sunday 12 October 2025
St Andrew's, Brighton

On Christmas Morn

Saturday 13 December 2025
Melbourne Recital Centre

Tickets now on sale (including Early Bird discounts) at australianboyschoir.com.au/concerts

The Vocal Consort

Originally formed in 1984 to complement the work of the Australian Boys Choir, The Vocal Consort has gone on to establish a distinct musical life of its own as arguably the country's finest all-male vocal ensemble.

Most members of the Consort gained their early training through the Australian Boys Choir and now provide an inspiring role model 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 was launched in 2012.

Philip Carmody, organ & piano

Philip resigned as Co-Artistic Director of the National Boys Choir of Australia at the start of this year, 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.

Anna Pokorny, cello

Anna Pokorny is a freelance cellist currently based in Melbourne, Australia. She has the pleasure of performing regularly with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria. As a chamber musician Anna has appeared at numerous festivals and concert series around Australia and internationally including the Adam Chamber Music Festival, Musica Viva Festival, Ukaria Concert Series, Perth International Arts Festival, Melbourne Recital Centre Local Heroes, and Melbourne International Arts Festival. Anna performs regularly with Melbourne based gut-string ensemble *Wattleseed* and the Melbourne Chamber Players.

Originally from Perth, Western Australia, Anna completed studies at the University of Western Australia, Australian National Academy of Music, and the International Menuhin Music Academy in Switzerland (under the tutelage of Dr Suzanne Wijsman, Howard Penny and Niall Brown respectively).

Anna is passionate about music outreach and education. She has performed in aged care centres across Victoria through the Melbourne Recital Centre's *Music Always* series, as well as schools' concerts with Inventi Ensemble, Musica Viva, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, and the ACO Collective. She has tutored for the Australian Chamber Orchestra Academy and Melbourne Youth Orchestras, and in 2022 was a juror in the Musica Viva Strike a Chord competition. She has also worked with the music therapy team and ACO's Inspire Quartet at the Melbourne Children's Hospital.

Naomi Heyden, Director of Training Choirs

Naomi 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 the 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.

He has appeared as a guest soloist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Bach Musica NZ, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic, Australian Haydn Ensemble, Ludovico's Band, Latitude 37, Victorian Opera (Melbourne) and Pinchgut Opera (Sydney). He has been frequently heard in national live-to-air broadcasts on ABC Classic & 3MBS FM, and his performances have been recorded by both the Chandos and Pinchgut Live labels.

A specialist in the field of changing voice and young men's singing, he has served on the staff of the Australian Boys Choral Institute since 2007. He is only the fifth Artistic Director appointed in the Choir's 85-year history.

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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.