

# On Christmas Morn

Presented by the Australian Boys Choral Institute

Australian Boys Choir | The Vocal Consort

The Kelly Gang | Training Choirs of the ABCI  
Robyn Cochrane, piano | Philip Carmody, organ

Naomi Heyden & Timothy Mallis, associate conductors  
Nicholas Dinopoulos, artistic director & 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).

Saturday 13th December 2025  
Elisabeth Murdoch Hall  
Melbourne Recital Centre, Southbank

[www.australianboyschoir.com.au](http://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.*

## *How can we keep from singing?*

It's been 40 years since I first joined the Australian Boys Choir at the Probationer level in 1985 - goodness how time flies! My time with the Australian Boys Choral Institute (ABCI) has been a unique journey.

I began as a boy soprano, then as a founding member of the Junior Consort (now the Kelly Gang), member of The Vocal Consort, a member of music teaching staff, convenor of the Concert Committee, as well as one-time music librarian, and nowadays as a guest artist. I've been fortunate to have travelled with the choir on performance tours to Europe and the USA.

My time with the ABCI has not only brought me to interesting places but has also put me in touch with many interesting people from around the world, including choral leaders of their time such as the late Westin Noble from the USA and former King Singer Bob Chilcott from the UK.

But above all, in a world that is filled with great uncertainty, it has brought me the gift of music. Singing has always been my constant. I turn to it in my time of need as a source of refuge and comfort, as well as a source of support and inspiration.

As an individual who experiences mental health challenges, I can attest to the positive impact that singing has upon my emotional and mental wellbeing. This is backed up by so many scientific studies that have shown a positive correlation between music and mental health.

My journey from singing with the Australian Boys Choir to that of international opera singer has been extremely rewarding but also challenging at times, and I am most grateful for my ongoing relationship with the choir.

The Australian Boys Choral Institute provides a nurturing and safe environment for boys and young men to better develop resilience and coping mechanisms to help them face their respective life challenges.

By supporting the ABCI you are not only contributing to continued musical excellence through singing but also supporting an ethos that creates resilient leaders and role models of our young people in our wider community. This, I believe, is a legacy worthy of your support.

Henry Choo

International Operatic Tenor

former ABCI Music Staff Member & Alumnus



Donate online today

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*The Australian Boys Choral Institute/The Australian Boys  
Choir Fund is an endorsed Deductible Gift Recipient.  
Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*

## From the Institute Chair...

What a joy it is to return to the Melbourne Recital Centre for our end-of-year gala, celebrating another remarkable year of music-making by our singers. We treasure this moment in the calendar, when we come together as families, friends and fellow musicians to sing side by side.

These are exciting times at the ABCI. The Board and I are energised by our strong current position and the possibilities that lie ahead. We are committed to building on this momentum as we shape the next chapter of our organisation's journey. It has been particularly exciting to have launched the Australian Boys Choir channel on YouTube last month and be looking forward to sharing previous CD recordings on streaming services worldwide this December.

On behalf of the Board, my heartfelt thanks go to our singers, who are the reason we're all here. Thank you to our staff, led by Nick Dinopoulos and Liz Lindner, who pursue our vision with tireless commitment. And thank you to our volunteers and donors, without whom this organisation simply could not exist.

Finally, thank you to each of you reading this program, for supporting your son and the Choir by joining us here at the Melbourne Recital Centre. Please do sing along with gusto!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a joyful festive season. We look forward to seeing you in 2026.

Tim Staindl  
ABCI Board Chair

## From the Artistic Director...

The anticipation that December brings each year is something special. The many catchups, warmer weather, the thought of maybe going on holiday...no matter how you celebrate, it's certainly a time for reflection, connection, and the chance to take a deep breath and pause.

There is a phenomenon that I have been very curious to observe recently, however: that of the increasing individualised and individualistic society. Anything that affords an opportunity for more association, more mindfulness and increasing joy seems well to be the antidote...

And what greater celebration and joining together can there be than through music and song that is shared? The music we share with you today celebrates the wonderful diversity of our community and our tremendous young singers, who also share their great gifts and talents.

The Australian Boys Choral Institute continues to offer extraordinarily comprehensive training and exceptional opportunities to its singers. All of this combines with a chance to foster a life-long love of music and life-long friendships. It is the great power of music that binds us.

I am so very grateful for our wonderful Choir community, and enormously proud of all we have worked to achieve again this year. A little extra effort certainly goes a long way, and Choir is such a tremendously worthwhile activity. Together we can, and surely, we must!

Nicholas Dinopoulos  
ABCI Artistic Director

Program...

*The Silver Stars are in the Sky*

Words: John Wheeler (1901-1984)

William G. James (1892-1977)

*On Christmas Morn*

David L. Brunner (b.1953)

*Noël des enfants qui  
n'ont plus de maison*

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

*La vierge à la crèche*

Text: Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897)

César Franck (1822-1890)

*Performed by The Australian Boys Choir*

*Canite Tuba*

Text: Vespers antiphon for Advent IV

Jacob Händl (1550-1591)

*Wassail Song*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

*Love came down at Christmas*

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Eleanor Daley (b.1955)

*Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)  
arr. Jeff Funk (b.1971)

*Performed by The Vocal Consort*

*Carol of the Sun*

Natalie Williams (2000)

*Away in a Manger*

Text translated by T. A. Lacey

W.J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)  
arr. Michael Leighton Jones (b.1947)

*If Christ had been born in another time*

Text: Pat Edwards (1925-2013)

Matthew Orlovich (b.1970)

*Performed by The Australian Boys Choir & The Vocal Consort*

# As with Gladness Men of Old

Words: William Chatterton Dix

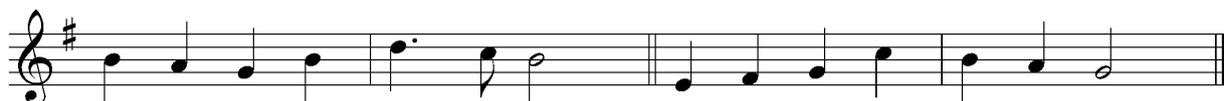
Conrad Kocher (1786-1872)

arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

*The audience sings:*



1. As with glad-ness men of old      Did the guid-ing star be-hold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,      Lead-ing on-ward, beam ing bright,



So, most gracious Lord, may we      Ev - er - more be led to thee.

2. As with joyful steps they sped  
to that lowly manger-bed,  
there to bend the knee before  
him whom heav'n and earth adore;  
so may we with willing feet  
ever seek thy mercy-seat.

3. As they offered gifts most rare  
at that cradle rude and bare;  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure, and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.

4. Holy Jesu, ev'ry day  
keep us in the narrow way;  
and when earthly things are past,  
bring our ransomed souls at last  
where they need no star to guide,  
where no clouds thy glory hide.

5. In the heav'nly country bright  
need they no created light;  
thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
thou its sun which goes not down;  
there forever may we sing  
alleluias to our King.

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Interval – 20 minutes

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# O Come, All ye Faithful

Text: Translated by F Oakley, W.T. Brooke *et. al.*

J.F. Wade (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. [Chorus]

3. Lo! Star-led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,  
Offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
We to the Christ Child bring our hearts' oblations. [Chorus]

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

5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born that happy morning,  
Jesu, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing. [Chorus]

# *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 four - 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 the refrain.]*

5. Glorious now, behold him arise;  
King, and God and sacrifice!  
Heav'n sings Alleluia;  
Alleluia the earth replies:

*Refrain: O star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding;  
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

# *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*

*I Saw Three Ships*

English Traditional Carol

arr. Timothy Mallis (b. 1996)

*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*

*Sing Aloud on this Day*

Words from *Piae Cantiones*

translated by John A. Parkinson

Traditional German Carol

arr. Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

*Performed by the Australian Boys Choral Institute*

*A Christmas Carol*

Text: Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Joshua Adams (b. 1997)

*Performed by the Australian Boys Choral Institute*

# Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words: Charles Wesley *et. al.*

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;  
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of right - eous - ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild,\_ God and sin - ners re - con - ciled:  
Late in time be - hold him come\_ Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb:  
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in his wings;



Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise,\_ Join the tri - umph of the skies,\_  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see,\_ Hail th'in - car - nate De i - ty!\_  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by,\_ Born that man no more may die,\_



With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, Christ is\_ born in Beth - le - hem.  
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Je - sus\_ our Em - man - u - el.  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to\_ give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing Glo - ry\_ to the new - born King.

## Season 2026...

*Bach: St John Passion*

29 March 2026

with Genesis Baroque  
St. Andrew's Brighton

*Crossing the Bar*

23 June 2026

with The Gesualdo Six (UK)  
St. Andrew's Brighton

*Antiphons & Anthems*

26 July 2026

with Fiore Chamber  
St. John's Camberwell

*Songs & Stories*

3 October 2026

with pianist Timothy Mallis  
St. John's Camberwell

*Sweet & Low*

10 October 2026

The Vocal Consort  
St. Mary's Geelong

*A Ceremony of Carols*

12 December 2026

with harpist Delyth Stafford  
Melbourne Recital Centre

Further regional & touring dates to be announced.

Tickets on sale early February via [www.australianboyschoir.com.au/concerts](http://www.australianboyschoir.com.au/concerts).

## Guest Artists & Conductors...

### Robyn Cochrane, piano

Robyn works at Melbourne Girls Grammar School as accompanist and teacher of piano and theory. She was the accompanist for the National Boys Choir of Australia from 1995 until 2020. Robyn accompanied the choir on the piano, harpsichord and chamber organ with and without orchestra. She played on tours both throughout Australia and Internationally including Europe, Japan, China, New Zealand and the United States. For Robyn, one of the highlights of the choir's international tours was working with John Rutter in Cambridge and when the choir sang at the Three Tenors concert in Melbourne. During her time with the choir, she was the accompanist for the premiere performance and recordings of works by Calvin Bowman and Todd McNeal. Robyn accompanied guest soloists including Joanna Cole and Jacqui Porter and worked under guest conductors including Graham Abbott, Richard Gill, Sir Andrew Davis and Nicholas Brathwaite.

### 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, conductor

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 role as the Institute's Director of Training Choirs 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. She has also been a member of various Melbourne choirs.

### Timothy Mallis, conductor

Timothy Mallis is recognised as one of Melbourne's leading collaborative pianists and composers. He is a steadfast supporter of music education and committed to bringing new Australian compositions to life. As a graduate of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, Tim is in high demand as an accompanist, organist, and conductor. He has written for some of Australia's finest ensembles and is frequently commissioned for works by national arts bodies. Tim was the recipient of the 2019 Archbishop's Prize for New Composers and is a graduate of the Franz-Schubert-Institut studying German Lieder. Among his most recent roles, he was the Associate Director of Music at St Andrew's Anglican Church and is the current répétiteur for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Specialising in choirs, Tim works with the Australian Boys Choral Institute, The Yarra Voices, and is a member of The Vocal Consort. Tim is passionate about educating the next generation of musicians. He is currently on staff at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and Camberwell Girls Grammar teaching musicianship, music theory, composition, and choral accompaniment. He is also employed by Opera Australia and Victorian Opera as a surtitle specialist.

## Nicholas Dinopoulos, artistic director

Nicholas Dinopoulos studied singing at The University of Melbourne under Merlyn Quaife AM. He maintains a busy performance schedule consisting of various concert, recital and operatic engagements, most notably as a core member of Songmakers Australia. Also active as a conductor and educator, he serves on staff at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and is artistic director of the Australian Boys Choir and the Giovanni Consort (Perth).

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 the Bach *Coffee Cantata* and Grainger *Tribute to Foster* for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, El Cantor (*María de Buenos Aires*) for Victorian Opera, Polyphemus (*Acis & Galatea*) for Genesis Baroque, Christ in the *St. Matthew Passion* with the Melbourne Baroque Orchestra, Keeper of the Madhouse (*The Rake's Progress*) for Auckland Philharmonia, *Winterreise* with pianist Andrea Katz, the Schubert *Schwanengesang* for Art Song Canberra, the Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostri* for the Melbourne Festival, Michael Haydn *Requiem* with the Australian Haydn Ensemble, the Verdi *Requiem* for Camberwell Chorale, four successive invitations to the Peninsula Summer Musical Festival, several return appearances for Bach Musica NZ and the Sydney Cantata Project, plus 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 commenced 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 87-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](http://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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