

Pegasus

<i>Soprano</i>	<i>Alto</i>	<i>Tenor</i>	<i>Bass</i>
Christina Bosanko	Kathy Bannister	Simon Dixon	Patrick Johns
Anna Kirby	Chrissy Kinsella	Samir Savant	Graham Kirk
Sarah Moule	Zannis Mavrogordato	Martin Toyer	James McKeown
Katy McAdam	Alison Sheppard	Scott Wellstead	Benjamin Styles
Fleur Ruda	Anna Steinitz		Tom Raggett
Danielle Toyer	Natasha Woodward		

Pegasus is a young, dynamic chamber choir with a varied and extensive repertoire. Taking its name from the winged horse of mythology which is the symbol for Robinson College, Cambridge, where the group was first formed in 1993, *Pegasus* is now London-based and rehearses at St.Clement's in the City, a Christopher Wren church, which features in the *Oranges and Lemons* rhyme.

In its short history, *Pegasus* has performed in many prestigious venues in London, including St.James's, Piccadilly, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Lambeth Palace, and has even appeared live on *The Big Breakfast*. In August of this year, *Pegasus* appeared on Channel 4 as the chorus in the television premiere of Jonathan Dove's opera *When She Died* – about the effect of the death of Princess Diana on ordinary people.

Works the choir has performed include the Monteverdi Vespers, Bach's Mass in B Minor, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, settings of the *Requiem* mass by Howells, Fauré and Duruflé, Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* (in which the choir formed the semi-chorus), and Mass settings by Kodaly, Rubbra, Rheinberger, Poulenc and Stravinsky. The choir is equally at home giving smaller-scale recitals of light music, including cabaret, jazz and close-harmony, and boasts many excellent solo voices.

Pegasus is available for weddings, receptions, after-dinner entertainment and services and we would be happy to advise you on the choice of music for your special occasion – please contact Samir Savant (Chairman) on 07956 300535.

Details of our next concert...

ADVENT CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

To include world premiere of A Christmas Laudario

**St.Patrick's, Soho Square W1
Sunday 15th December 2002, 8.00pm**

<http://www.pegasusmusic.org.uk>

PEGASUS

Conductor: Matthew Altham

Silence and Music

**Sunday 13th October 2002
St.Patrick's Church, Soho Square**

Think you know Walton? Think you know Howells? Think again. In tonight's programme, we bring you a collection of some well known and some lesser-known pieces by Stanford, Vaughan Williams, Howells, Walton and Harris spanning the 20th century. These composers are inextricably linked, and were a great influence on each other – Stanford actually taught both Howells and Harris, and the pieces we shall perform tonight were almost all written within 50 years of each other.

We begin with the ethereal *Silence and Music* based on a poem by Ursula Wood, written in 1953 as one of a collection of pieces - "A Garland for a Queen" as a tribute to the new monarch Elizabeth. Vaughan Williams dedicated this piece to Stanford "and his Blue Bird", a piece we shall perform later in the programme.

This year marks the centenary of the birth of William Walton, the Oldham boy made good, who was able to conjure up the grand, ceremonial gestures needed on state occasions, such as his *Jubilate* and *Te Deum* while still retaining a cynical edge – he termed his patron Walter Hussey, rather indelicately, "the queer dean".

Where does is an eloquent setting of a ruminative, almost mystic poem by John Masefield. The closing bars are particularly effective, with *divisi* upper voices soaring above sustained lower voices to create a celestial climax. The piece is dedicated to Sir Henry Wood, and was first performed in 1946 where his ashes lie at St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, the Musicians' Church. *Set me* needs no introduction. Sung at countless weddings, it is a setting of words from the Song of Solomon, and was written in 1938 for the son of Lady Alice Wimborne, Walton's then mistress.

Charles Villiers Stanford was born in 1852 and is the earliest of the composers we perform tonight, although *The Blue Bird*, set to words by Mary Coleridge, dates from 1910. The piece is devastating in its simplicity – the soprano soloist hovers and soars above the sonorous accompaniment in the lower voices.

Vaughan Williams' *Shakespeare Songs*, written in 1951 towards the end of his life, are a triumph of a *capella* composition. The words for the first two songs are taken from *The Tempest*, and for the final one from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The rather eerie *Full Fathom Five* conveys the effect of underwater voices and bells. This is followed by Prospero's farewell speech - the serene and stately *Cloud Capp'd Towers* which contrasts well with the blithe and brisk *Over Hill*.

William Harris was a Professor at the Royal College of Music and Organist of St. George's, Windsor, where one of his duties was to teach the young Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret to sing madrigals. Although never a prolific composer, his works contain a rare passion and English tonality, which commanded respect among his peers – Howells referred to him as "a man for all occasions". His 1959 setting of the John Donne poem *Bring us* for double-choir is sublime in its subtly crafted textures and harmonies, evoking the other-worldly quality of the words.

Herbert Howells is famous for his accompanied settings of the Evening Canticles, but perhaps less known for his unaccompanied music. *Salve Regina* was written

for Westminster Cathedral in 1915, and has its roots in the motet tradition of Byrd and Philips, the imitation between voices producing an intense central climax.

The conventional version of Walton's *Litany* we shall sing is actually a revision dating from 1930, based on a much earlier setting written in 1916 when Walton was just 15 and a chorister at Christ Church, Oxford. This short motet is deeply memorable with its harmonic piquancy and beautiful vocal phrasing.

The motet *Take Him, Earth* was completed in 1964 following President Kennedy's assassination, and is a setting of lines by the 4th century poet Prudentius, translated from the Latin by Helen Waddell. Howells originally intended to set the text in his *Hymnus Paradisi* written for his son Michael and so, the motet, though dedicated to Kennedy's memory, is yet another work expressing Howells' grief for his son.

Programme

Silence and Music Ralph Vaughan Williams

Where does the Uttered Music Go? William Walton

Set Me as a Seal William Walton
Soloists – Samir Savant, Fleur Ruda

The Blue Bird Charles Villiers Stanford
Soloist – Christina Bosanko

Three Shakespeare Songs Ralph Vaughan Williams
i) *Full Fathom Five*
ii) *The Cloud Capp'd Towers*
iii) *Over Hill, Over Dale*

Pause (5 minutes)

Bring Us, O Lord God William Harris

Salve Regina Herbert Howells
Soloist – Anna Kirby

A Litany William Walton

Take Him, Earth for Cherishing Herbert Howells

Because of the particular structure of this evening's programme, we kindly ask you to reserve your applause until the end of each half. We hope you enjoy tonight's concert.