

The Carice Singers The Song Sung True

Friday 3 July 2026 | St Giles Cripplegate

Judith Weir

The Song Sung True

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- i. Song
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Cloe Hotham

Oak

George W. Parris

The Voice of the Rain

Luigi Dallapiccola

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The Carice Singers

Sopranos – Eve McGrath, Olivia Hugh-Jones, Hannah Dienes-Williams

Altos – Anna Semple, Joy Sutcliffe, Jessica Gillingwater

Tenors – James Robinson, Will Wright, Hugh Beckwith

Basses – David Le Prevost, Eoghan Desmond, Thomas Lowen

George Parris Conductor

The Carice Singers, described by The Guardian as “one of the UK’s most adventurous and accomplished choirs” (2025), is committed to performing contemporary choral music and tracing its roots through musical history. Founded by its Artistic Director George Parris in 2011 and named after Sir Edward Elgar’s daughter, the choir offers programmes that honour the UK’s rich musical heritage in a way that frequently reaches out to other cultures and regularly collaborates with other performers and today’s composers. The group was delighted to have been shortlisted for the Royal Philharmonic Society’s Ensemble Award in 2026.

Recently The Carice Singers has commissioned and premiered a number of major new works, including Daniel Kidane’s N’dehou for the 2025 New Music Biennial, Anibal Vidal’s Theatre of Origins with Spitalfields Music, and Evelin Seppar’s Kuskil maailma äärel. Last year, the choir’s Arvo Pärt at 90 series saw it perform a significant number of Pärt’s choral works in concerts at St Martin-in-the-Fields, St James’ Church in Chipping Campden, Barbican, Oxford’s University Church, and at the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. The group is also in demand for its workshops with composers, collaborating in summer composer academies at Cheltenham Music Festival and the Three Choirs Festival, and joining residencies run by Britten Pears Arts at Snape Maltings. The Carice Singers’ forthcoming recording of Sir Michael Tippett’s unaccompanied choral works will be released on Signum Records in November.

As a registered charity, The Carice Singers is fully funded by concerts and the generosity of its Friends and Patrons. For further information about how you can help, go to: www.thecaricesingers.co.uk

George Parris is a conductor recognised for captivating performances, imaginative concert programmes, and his work with contemporary composers. His commitment to choral music in particular has resulted in major collaborations with festivals and venues such as Kings Place, Music at Oxford, the Three Choirs Festival, Spitalfields Music and the Arvo Pärt Centre. As Founding Artistic Director of The Carice Singers, he has commissioned and premiered a number of new choral works, presenting these alongside music of the last one hundred years.

Elsewhere, George is Co-artistic director of the Aurore Renaissance Music Festival in Helsinki, is Principal Conductor of the North Cotswold Chamber Choir, and is one of Schott Music’s freelance editors. He has worked as a

chorus master for such conductors as Sakari Oramo (Holst, The Planets), John Storgard (Beethoven, Symphony no. 9), and Peter Whelan (J.S. Bach, Mass in B Minor), and was for a time Associate Conductor of Birmingham-based Ex Cathedral, working alongside Jeffrey Skidmore. He studied at the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, followed by a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki.

Cloe Hotham is a London-based composer, singer, and artist working across music, visual art, photography, and fibre arts. She trained as a flautist at the Royal College of Music Junior Department and Chetham's School of Music, and later studied classical composition at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Cloe loves working with text across her artistic practices. She draws inspiration from a wide range of sources and is especially interested in working with texts not traditionally seen as poetic. Through musical setting, she aims to bring focused attention to language that is compelling and important, but that might otherwise appear mundane, and to create a space that elevates the experience of reflecting on this language into something beautiful. Text similarly occupies a central role and function in her visual art.

Cloe's musical and artistic work can be found at her website cloehotham.co.uk, and on her Instagram @cloehotham

George W. Parris is a London-based composer with a particular interest in choral music and theatre. His work has been performed across the country at prestigious festivals such as JAM on the Marsh, The Leeds Lieder Festival and Tête à Tête: The Opera Festival, and by a variety of ensembles including The Carice Singers, Sestina Music, The ORA Singers, voces8, and the BBC Singers. George's compositional style combines his love for musical theatre, with influences from both the traditional and contemporary worlds of choral music to create a sound and style of composition with story-telling at its heart.

Hannah Siddiqui is a composer, improviser, and poet from Manchester, working across contemporary music, folk, classical, and electroacoustic soundworlds. Frequent themes within her work include womanhood and feminism, interculturality, human-nature relationships, and secular spiritualism. She studied at The University of Oxford (Worcester College) and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. In 2025, Hannah collaborated with Chamber Music Scotland's 2022-4 Ensemble in Residence, Dopey Monkey, fusing contemporary improvisation and extended techniques with northern industrial folk music and Hindustani Classical Music. She has worked with Columbian-American soprano Stephanie Lamprea and Matilda Nevin, a PhD student at the University of St Andrews, to musically respond to Nevin's research on women's experiences of multilingualism and exile in transnational autofiction, and she was one of the selected composers in Cheltenham Music Festival's 2025 Composer Academy with the Carice Singers. For the 50th anniversary of her local concert

society, Hannah composed a piece based on her own poem in which the Pennine moors are inhabited by, and constructed of, an imagined folk deity, infusing this invented tradition into local folk tradition. As well as several theatre, dance, and film projects, including composing music for a production of Wuthering Heights, Hannah has co-directed a grassroots opera which was performed in a disused shop, and is currently developing a series of workshops on interpreting text scores for the Glasgow branch of Contemporary Music for All.

Sam Buttler (b. 1996) is a Welsh composer and educator. He was the recipient of the 2024 Paul Mealor Award for Young Composers from the Welsh Music Guild. He has upcoming commissions with the Llangollen International Eisteddfod as part of their 'Harmony Without Borders' programme, and is currently taking part in the 'Compose for Cello' scheme at the Presteigne Festival. In March 2026, Canterbury Symphony Orchestra will premiere his new piece Moon Asks Sun to Dance. He took part in the 2025 Composers Academy at the Cheltenham Festival, writing a new work for George Parris and The Carice Singers. He was also a member of the 2024 JAM on the Marsh Composer's Residency, writing an opera based on the films of Derek Jarman with a libretto by Grahame Davies. In 2024, he also released his debut EP with Ensemble Matters, To the waters and the wild... for pierrot ensemble.

He graduated in 2017 with a BA in Music from St Peter's College, Oxford. He then received a Distinction in his MMus in Composition at Royal Holloway, University of London with Aaron Holloway-Nahum, John Traill, and Chris Whiter in 2018. He is currently in the final stages of a PhD in Composition at King's College, London, supervised by Edward Nesbit and George Benjamin.

Please scan the QR code here to access the full texts of each of the works



This concert is generously supported by The Vaughan Williams Foundation, The Bliss Trust, and The Hinrichsen Foundation.



Sung Texts

in programme order

Judith Weir (b. 1954)

The Song Sung True (2013)

I. Sing

(homage to Gertrude Stein)

every single thing sings
everything sings
is singular
sings
in singularity sings and rings
tell the bell
the song sung true
sing everything
is a thing is a thing
is a thing is a thing
is a thing is a thing
sing

Alan Spence

II. Song

the littlest bird
sang all for me
its song was love
it set me free
sang at my birth
sang at my death
it sang its song
with my last breath
the littlest bird
sang in my soul
its song was joy
it made me whole
it made me whole
it set me free
it sang its song
its song was me
Alan Spence

III. Orpheus

Orpheus with his Lute made Trees,
And the Mountaine tops that freeze,
Bow themselves when he did sing.
To his Musicke, Plants and Flowers,
Euer Spring; as Sunne and Showers,
There had made a lasting Spring.
Every thing that heard him play,
Euen the Billowes of the Sea,
Hung their heads, & then lay by.
In sweet Musicke is such Art,
Killing care, & griefe of heart,
Fall asleepe, or hearing dye.

William Shakespeare/John Fletcher (from *Henry VIII*)

IV. Folk Song

There was an old man of the Isles,
Whose face was pervaded with smiles;
He sang "High dum diddle",
And played on the fiddle,
That amiable man of the Isles.

Edward Lear, from *A Book of Nonsense*

Cloe Hotham

Oak (2025)

men came to use the varied sounds of speech,
by taking up the names of things, when talking each to each,
and in what way the awe of gods slipped into the heart,
which on the globe of earth keeps some thing sacred and apart:
the altars, shrines, lakes, groves, gods' graven images in art.

quove modo genus humanum variante loquella
coeperit inter se vesci per nomina rerum;
et quibus ille modis divom metus insinuarit
pectora, terrarum qui in orbi sancta tuetur
fana lacus lucos aras simulacraque divom.

Lucretius, from *De Rerum Natura* (*On the Nature of Things*)

English translation by A. E. Stallings

George W. Parris

THE VOICE OF THE RAIN 2025)

And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of Earth, said the voice of the rain,
Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed, and yet the same,
I descend to lave the drouths, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,
And all that in them without me were seeds, only latest, unborn;
And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin, and make pure and beautify it;
(For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfilment, wandering,
Reck'd or unreck'd, duly with love returns).

Walt Whitman, from *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

Luigi Dallapiccola (b. 1904-1975)

DUE CORI DI MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI IL GIOVANE (1933)

I. Il Coro della Malmaritate

All'altrui spese, donzelle, imparate,
All'altrui spese imparate, donzelle,
Per non aver a dir piangendo poi:
Triste, malmaritate!
Quant'era me' per noi!
Chiuderci per le celle,
Scavezzarci le chiome,
Mutarci abito e nome,
Vestir nero, bigio o bianco,
Arrandellarci 'l fianco
Di cordigli e di cuoi
Quant'era me per noi!
Quant'era me per noi
Levarci a' mattutini,
Dar mano a' lumicini
Prima che canti il gallo!
Cacciarci in un Bigallo,
Entrare in un Rosano,
Metterci in un Majano,
Al Portico, al Boldrone
Darci, o'in Pian di Mugnone
Farci vestire a Lapo,
O ver ficcare il capo
'N un Monticel di buoi.
Quant'era me' per noi!
Però imparate e pensateci ben ben ben ben prima,
Ch'e' non vi s'abbia a dir poi: lima, lima.

Bigallo, Rosano, Majano etc., are names of monasteries in the province of Florence.

II. Il Coro dei Malammogliati

Chi imparar vuole a tòr moglie
Mastri esperti eccoci qui;
E diciam che chi la toglie
Dato aver vedrà in duo di

I. Chorus of the ill-married women

From the errors of others, young girls, learn,
From the errors of others, young girls,
So that afterwards you will not tearfully say:
Unhappy, ill-married!
How much better it would have been!
Lock us in a monastery cell,
Shave off our hair,
Change our clothes and name,
Dress in black, grey, or white,
Wrap ourselves tight,
With ropes and leather
It would have been much better!
It would have been much better
To get up at matins,
Light tapers
Before the cock crows!
To get into Bigallo,
To enter Rosano,
To put us in Majano,
To go to Portico, to Boldrone,
Or to the plain of Mugnone,
They will dress us at Lapo,
Or else shoving our heads
Into a mound of oxen.*
It would have been much better!
So learn; think hard upon it,
So you would not have to say: repent, repent.

* An archaic Italian expression for burying one's head in the sand.

II. Chorus of the ill-married men

He who would learn how to take a wife
Expert masters, here we are:
And we say that whoever takes her
Will see in two days

'N una diavolo infernale,
'N una zucca senza sale.

Me ne stetti al detto altrui:
Un buon uom mi disse: "Fa";
Oh minchion, minchion ch'io fui!
Inciampai (e ben mi sta)
'N una diavolo infernale,
'N una zucca senza sale.

Ohimé! Ché per bellezza
Che era tutta frondi e fior
Colsi poi frutti d'asprezza,
M'incontrai, ebbro d'amor,
'N una diavolo infernale,
'N una zucca senza sale.

Zie, sorelle, madri e nonne
Lo staranno a inzipillar,
E dieci altre mone Cionne
Per finirlo d'affogar
'N una diavola infernale,
'N una zucca senza sale.

Michelangelo Buonarroti il giovane (1568-1646)

A hellish devil-woman,
A pumpkin without salt**.

I relied on what others said:
A good man said to me: "Go ahead"
Oh fool, fool that I was!
I stumbled (and serves me right)
Upon a hellish devil-woman,
A pumpkin without salt**.

Alas! For despite her beauty,
Which was all leaves and flowers,
Her fruits were bitter,
I met her, drunk of love,
A hellish devil-woman,
A pumpkin without salt**.

Aunts, sisters, mothers, and grandmothers
Will be there goading him,
And ten other worthless women,
To finish drowning him
A hellish devil-woman,
A pumpkin without salt**.

** a pea-brain

Hannah Siddiqui

SEAFARINGS (2025)

As one who sails upon a wide, blue sea
Far out of sight of land, his mind intent
Upon the sailing of his little boat,
On tightening ropes and shaping fair his course,
Hears suddenly, across the restless sea,
The rhythmic striking of some towered clock,
And wakes from thoughtless idleness to time:
Time, the slow pulse which beats eternity!
So through the vacancy of busy life
At intervals you cross my path and bring
The deep solemnity of passing years.
For you I have shed bitter tears, for you
I have relinquished that for which my heart
Cried out in selfish longing. And to-night
Having just left you, I can say: "T'is well.
Thank God that I have known a soul so true,
So nobly just, so worthy to be loved!"

Amy Lowell, *Venetian Glass* (1912)

Sam Buttler

WHO HAS SEEN (2025)

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you:

But when the leaves hang trembling,

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I:

But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Jean-Yves Daniel-Lesur (1908-2002)

LE CANTIQUE DES CANTIQUES (1952)

I. Dialogue

Alleluia.

A ma cavale attelée au char Pharaon, je te compare.

Mon bien-aimé est à moi comme un bouquet de

myrrhe qui repose entre mes seins.

Que tu es belle ma bien-aimée; tes yeux sont des colombes.

Comme le lis entre les chardons, telle est ma bien-aimée entre les jeunes filles.

Comme le pommier parmi les arbres du verger, tel est mon bien-aimé parmi les jeunes hommes. J'ai désiré son ombrage et m'y suis assise et son fruit est doux à ma bouche.

Il m'a menée au cellier du vin et la bannière qu'il dresse sur moi c'est l'amour.

Filles de Jérusalem, n'éveillez pas la bien-aimée avant l'heure de son bon plaisir.

II. La Voix du Bien-Aimé

J'entends mon Bien-aimé: voici qu'il arrive sautant sur les montagnes, bondissant sur les collines.

Mon Bien-aimé est semblable à une gazelle a un jeune faon.

Mon Bien-aimé élève la voix, il me dit

Hâte toi la mienne amie, ma colombe et viens.

Car déjà l'hiver est passé, la pluie s'en est allée et retirée. Sur notre terre les fleurs sont apparues. La voix de la tourterelle s'est fait entendre. Le figuier a produit ses figues. Les vignes florissantes exhalent leur parfum.

Montre moi ton visage ma colombe cachée, que ta voix sonne en mes oreilles, car douce est ta voix et beau ton visage

Mon bien-aimé est à moi et moi à lui; il pait son troupeau parmi les lis.

Avant que poigne le jour et que s'abaissent les ombres,

I. Dialogue

Alleluia.

I have compared thee, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots.

My beloved is to me a sachet of myrrh resting between my breasts.

How beautiful you are, my beloved; your eyes are like doves.

As a lily among thistles, so is my beloved among the young women.

Like an apple tree among the trees of the orchard, so is my beloved among the young men.

I longed for his shade and sat down there, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me is love.

Daughters of Jerusalem, do not awaken the beloved until it pleases.

II. My beloved's voice

I hear my Beloved, behold, he comes leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

My Beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.

My Beloved raises his voice, and says to me,

"Arise, my love, my dove, and come away.

For now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

Flowers have appeared in our land. The voice of the turtle dove is heard. The fig tree ripens its figs. The blossoming vines give forth their fragrance.

Let me see your face, my veiled dove, let your voice resound in my ears, for your voice is sweet and your face is lovely.

My Beloved is mine and I am his; he tends his flock among the lilies.

Before the day breaks and the shadows flee,

Reviens, sois semblable mon Bien-aimé à une gazelle
au jeune faon sur les montagnes de l'alliance.

III. Le Songe

Sur ma couche la nuit j'ai cherché celui que mon cœur
aime.

Je l'ai cherché mais ne l'ai pas trouvé.

Je me lèverai donc et parcourrai la ville

Dans les rues et sur les places,

Je chercherai celui que mon cœur aime;

Je l'ai cherché mais ne l'ai pas trouvé.

Les gardes m'ont rencontrée

Ceux qui font la ronde dans la ville,

Avez-vous vu celui que mon cœur aime?

Filles de Jérusalem, n'éveillez pas la bien-aimée
avant l'heure de son bon plaisir.

IV. Le Roi Salomon

Qu'est ce là qui monte du désert comme une
colonne de fumée, vapeur d'aromates de myrrhe et
d'encens, de tous parfums exotiques?

Voici le lit de Salomon, soixante hommes vaillants
guerriers l'environnent, les plus forts d'Israël. Vétérans
des combats, le glaive au côté.

Le roi Salomon s'est fait un trône en cèdre du Liban, le
dossier d'or, le siège de pourpre.

Venez filles de Sion contempler Salomon portant le
diadème dont le couronna sa mère au jour de ses
noces de la joie de son cœur.

V. Le jardin clos

Que tu es belle ma bien-aimée; tes yeux sont des
colombes.

Tes cheveux comme un troupeau de chèvres ondulant
sur les pentes du Galaad;

Tes dents comme un troupeau de brebis tondues
qui remontent du bain; chacune a sa jumelle.

Tes joues sont comme deux moitiés de grenades
à travers ton voile.

Tes deux seins sont comme deux bichelots gémeaux
de la biche qui paissent parmi les lis.

Return, my Beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag
on the mountains of Bethel.

III. The Dream

On my bed at night I sought the one I love;

I sought him but did not find him.

I will arise now and go about the city,

Through the streets and through the squares,

I will seek the one I love;

So I sought him but did not find him.

The watchmen came across me,

Those who patrol the city.

"Have you seen the one I love?"

Daughters of Jerusalem, do not awaken the beloved until
it pleases.

IV. King Solomon

Who is this coming up from the wilderness like a column
of smoke, scented with myrrh and frankincense, of all
exotic perfumes?

Behold, it is Solomon's carriage, escorted by sixty of
Israel's mightiest men.

Veterans of battle, with swords at their sides.

King Solomon has made himself a throne from the cedar
of Lebanon, its base of gold, its seat of purple.

Come, daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,
wearing the crown which his mother crowned him on his
wedding day, the day of his heart's rejoicing.

V. The Enclosed Garden

How beautiful you are, my beloved; your eyes are like
doves.

Your hair is like a flock of goats, descending the slopes of
Mount Gilead.

Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn sheep, coming
up from the bath; each has its twin.

Your cheeks are like two halves of a pomegranate,
Behind your veil.

Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a doe grazing
among the lilies.

Tu me fais perdre le sens, ma sœur, ma fiancée, par un seul de tes regards.

Viens du Liban et tu seras couronnée du chef d'Amana!

Elle est un jardin bien clos, ma soeur,
ma fiancée, une source scellée.

Que mon Bien-aimé entre dans son jardin et qu'il en goûte les fruits délicieux.

VI. La Sulamite

Pourquoi regardez-vous la Sulamite dansant
comme en un double cœur?

Que tes pieds sont beaux dans tes sandales, fille
de prince!

La courbe de tes flancs est comme un collier;

Ton chef se dresse semblable au Carmel;

Tes cheveux sont comme la pourpre, un roi est pris à
ses boucles.

Mon amour, mes délices,

Dans son élan tu ressembles au palmier; tes seins en
sont les grappes.

J'ai dit je monterai au palmier, j'en saisirai les régimes.

Je suis à mon Bien-aimé et son désir tend vers moi.

Viens mon Bien-aimé sortons dans la campagne;

Nous passerons la nuit dans les villages;

Dès le matin nous irons dans les vignes.

Là je te ferai le don de mes amours.

Filles de Jérusalem, n'éveillez pas la bien-aimée
avant l'heure de son bon plaisir.

VII. Epithalame

Veni sponsa Christi accipe coronam

Quam tibi Dominus praeparavit in aeternum.

Alleluia.

Pose moi comme un sceau sur ton cœur, comme un
sceau sur ton bras: car l'amour est fort comme la mort.

La jalousie est dure comme l'enfer, ses traits sont de
feu, une flamme de Yahvé! Les grandes eaux n'ont pu
éteindre l'amour, les fleuves ne le submergeront pas!

Alleluia!

Song of Solomon

You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride, with just
one glance of your eyes.

Come with me from Lebanon, and be crowned on the
peak of Mount Amana!

She is a garden enclosed, my sister, my bride, a sealed
garden spring.

Let my Beloved enter his garden and taste its delicious
fruits.

VI. The Shulamite

Why do you gaze upon the Shulamite dancing as if in two
choirs?

How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O princely
daughter!

The curve of your hips is like a necklace;

Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel,
your hair is like purple threads; a king is caught in its
tresses.

My love, my delight,

Your stature is like a palm tree; your breasts are clusters
of fruit.

I said, "I will climb the palm tree; I will take hold of its
fruit."

I belong to my Beloved, and his desire is for me.

Come, my Beloved, let us go out into the countryside;

We will spend the night in the villages;

Early in the morning we will go to the vineyards.

There I will bestow my love upon you.

Daughters of Jerusalem, do not awaken the beloved until
it pleases.

VII. Epithalamium

Come, bride of Christ, receive the crown

Which the Lord has prepared for you eternally.

Alleluia.

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your
arm: for love is as strong as death.

Jealousy is as harsh as hell, its darts are like a flame from
the Lord! Many waters cannot quench love, neither can
the floods drown it!

Alleluia!