

**Saturday 5th July 2025, 7:30pm**  
**West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge**

# *The Glories of* **Vivaldi**

*Choral & Orchestral Works inc. Gloria RV588*



**Collegium  
Laureatum**

**Ian Cobb, conductor**

**soloists:**

**Catherine White  
Katherine Mann  
Alexandria Moon  
Fergus McKie  
Oliver Jones**



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***West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge***

**J.S. Bach and his contemporaries**

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<sup>o</sup>The cover image is the Chiesa de la Pieta in Venice where Vivaldi worked.



# COLLEGIUM LAUREATUM CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA

Ian Cobb (conductor)

Catherine White (soprano)      Katherine Mann (soprano)  
Alexandria Moon (alto)      Fergus McKie (tenor)      Oliver Jones (bass)

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Credo</b> RV591                  | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Concerto for strings</b> RV158   | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Laudate Dominum</b> RV606        | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Laetatus sum</b> RV607           | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Concerto alla rustica</b> RV151  | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Magnificat</b> RV610             | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Interval</b>                     |                |
| <b>Concerto for two oboes</b> RV535 | <b>Vivaldi</b> |
| <b>Introduzione e Gloria</b> RV588  | <b>Vivaldi</b> |

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Antonio Vivaldi was born on the 4th March 1678 in Venice. His father, a professional violinist playing in the orchestra of San Marco, taught his son to play the violin. As the eldest son of a poor family he was destined for the church and at the age of 15½ he was received into minor holy orders as an Ostario. In 1737 he wrote of his church experiences: "*When I had barely been ordained a priest I said Mass for a year or a little more. Then I had to leave the altar without completing it because of this ailment*" (probably asthma).

In 1703 Vivaldi was engaged at the Ospedale della Pietà as a violin teacher. During this time he published a set of trio sonatas and twelve sonatas for violin and harpsichord. In 1709 he was voted out of office and until 1711 seems to have been involved in opera. By 1711 he was re-appointed to the Pietà: "*Dom Antonio to be re-appointed to the post of violin master, the governing body being certain that he will exercise his talents to the utmost in the good service of this pious establishment, and for the greater profit of those girls.*"

Michel Angelo Gasparini, *Maestro di Coro* at the Pietà, left on sick leave in 1713 and Vivaldi took on the composition of choral works for the chapel. Although voted out of office in March 1716, by May he was reinstated as *Maestro de' Concerti*, but the following year he left Venice for Mantua and was appointed *Maestro di Cappella da Camera* to Prince Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt. Here he was able to write purely secular music and pursue his ambitions with opera. One opera, *Tito Manlio*, has the inscription *Music by Vivaldi written in five days*. His last opera written before returning to Venice was produced in 1720 during Carnival season.

Vivaldi returned to Venice, his fame as an opera composer assured, as performances in this genre were given in Florence, Milan and Rome. He re-established contact with the Pietà in 1723 and the governors asked him to produce two concerts every month, even if he was absent from Venice, *providing the postage was not charged to the Pietà*. In 1725 the Gazette of Amsterdam announced the appearance of *Il cimento dell' armonia e dell' inventione* (The Test of Harmony and Invention), a set of twelve concertos. The first four were entitled *Le Quattro Stagioni* (The Four Seasons). They were an immediate success and remain the most popular of his concertos.

Visits to Rome and opera performances showed Vivaldi to be at the height of his operatic powers. In 1727 he dedicated a set of twelve concertos entitled *La Cetra* (The Lyre) to the Emperor Charles VI.

"The Emperor has given Vivaldi much money, together with a golden chain and medal, and made him a knight." A request for leave from the Pietà in 1731 found him in Prague to revive his popular opera *Farnace* and to compose a new opera *Agrippa*.

In 1732 he was back in Italy and by 1735 he was once again engaged as *Maestro de' Concerti*. A report stated that Vivaldi would remain in Venice "without any more thought of leaving, as he had done in past years." Several attempts to mount an opera season at Ferrara came to nothing. By now composition opportunities in Venice were declining and Charles de Brosses, a French diplomat and historian touring Italy wrote in his *Lettres historiques et critiques sur l'Italie*: "Vivaldi is an old man with a mania for composing. I have heard him boast of composing a concerto in all its parts more quickly than a copyist could write them down. To my great astonishment, I have found that he is not as well regarded as he deserves in these parts."

In 1740 Vivaldi left Venice for Vienna, but on 27th July 1741 he died. The cause of death was stated as an internal inflammation. He was buried in the Hospital Cemetery with little ceremony or expense, a pauper's peal of bells, six pall-bearers and six choirboys from St. Stephen's Cathedral, including a young Joseph Haydn. The pauper's funeral and anonymous grave portend Mozart's demise. The *Commemoriali Gradenigo* states: "Abbé Dom Antonio Vivaldi, incomparable virtuoso of the violin, known as the Red Priest, much esteemed for his compositions and concertos, who earned more than 50,000 ducats in his life, but his disorderly prodigality caused him to die a pauper in Vienna."

Vivaldi's output was vast and his thematic catalogue of music compiled by Peter Rysom in 1974 amounts to over 780 compositions.

## **Credo** **RV591**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

The *Credo* is Vivaldi's only sacred composition without soloists to be in more than one movement and dates from his earliest period at the Ospedale della Pietà.

1. The opening chorus has the chorus singing block chords against a background of semi-quaver figurations in the strings.
2. A slow section of block chords with some unexpected harmonies.
3. This section has great originality. Vivaldi represents the slow walk to Calvary with detached notes in the bass.
4. A return to the opening sequence leads to a fugato with a counter subject clearly sounding plainsong-like in character.

## **Concerto for strings** **RV158**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

### **1. Allegro   2. Andante   3. Allegro**

Vivaldi wrote about sixty ripieno concertos scored for string instruments without soloists. This concerto was written in the later stages of his career.

The first movement is notable for the imitation between the two violin parts, with chasing scalar passages. The second movement is slower and more subdued. The third movement is a bright allegro with constantly moving quavers in the lower strings and descending semiquavers in upper strings.

## **Laudate Dominum** **RV606**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

With violins maintaining a continuous semiquaver accompaniment, the chorus sings in a chord-like style throughout this short setting of Psalm 117: *Praise the Lord, all ye nations.*

## **Laetatus sum** **RV607**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

This second Psalm setting has violins playing a repeated ostinato melody whilst the choir maintains a chord-like style throughout. It is a setting of Psalm 122: *I was glad.*

## **Concerto alla rustica** **RV151**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

### **1. Presto   2. Adagio   3. Allegro**

This concerto is probably a late work c.1730. It is a concerto without a solo instrument. Its most surprising feature is the ending of the first movement, which although in G major, ends in the minor key. The quiet chordal slow movement leads into a quasi-folk music finale.

## **Magnificat** **RV610**

**Vivaldi**  
**1678 - 1741**

Written in 1715 the text from Luke is Mary's canticle of praise at the knowledge that she is to be the mother of the Saviour.

- 1.** The work opens with dramatic hymn-like chords progressing upwards chromatically.
- 2.** An extended sinfonia leads into the soprano aria. The choir join briefly on the words *omnes generationes*.
- 3.** Pulsing quavers pervade the entire movement.
- 4 & 5.** Fast and furious.
- 6.** Duet between Soprano and Alto soloists with both voices alternating between imitation and pairing in thirds.
- 7.** A slow chordal section leads to a return to the opening slow chords.
- 8.** Soprano, Alto and Bass solos accompanied by joyous strings.
- 9.** The finale begins with hymn-like chords that lead to a double fugue.

## ***Interval***

# Concerto for two oboes

RV535

**Vivaldi**

1678 - 1741

**Soloists: Jenny Sewell and Hilary Hymas**

**1. Largo, Allegro 2. Largo 3. Allegro molto**

Among the more than 500 concertos Vivaldi wrote, 20 are for solo oboe and strings. This concerto is one of three for two oboes and strings.

An unusual slow introduction leads to the Allegro section in which oboes trade phrases back and forth with the violins. The slow movement has oboes spinning out long melodies accompanied by solo cello and continuo. The finale features a lively introduction in octaves ending in a slow cadence; the original tempo returns and the oboes exchange contrapuntal phrases. The introduction returns with its slow cadence and the restatement of the main theme brings the work to a conclusion.

# Introduzione e Gloria

RV588

**Vivaldi**

1678 - 1741

This setting of the *Gloria* is very rarely performed, as opposed to the more famous other work of the same name. It was probably written after 1713, the year in which Francesco Gasparini left the position of Maestro di Coro, allowing Vivaldi to turn his attention to the composition of sacred music. Because of the non-liturgical solo passages, there were misgivings as to its use in the liturgy.

Unlike the more well-known *Gloria*, the solo parts are written for two sopranos, alto, tenor and bass. The closing *Cum Sancto Spiritu* uses the same fugue based on the work by Giovanni Ruggieri of 1708.

## Introduzione

**Jubilate o amoeni chori  
In tua solemni pompa**

**Aria (Alto)  
Recitative (Alto)**

## Gloria

- |                                 |                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Gloria in excelsis           | Solo & Chorus        |
| 2. Et in terra pax              | Chorus               |
| 3. Laudamus te                  | Duet (Soprano 1 & 2) |
| 4. Gratias agimus tibi          | Chorus               |
| 5. Domine Deus                  | Solo (Tenor)         |
| 6. Domine Fili unigenite        | Chorus               |
| 7. Domine Dei, Agnus Dei        | Aria (Soprano)       |
| 8. Qui tollis peccata mundi     | Chorus               |
| 9. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris | Aria (Alto)          |
| 10. Quoniam tu solus sanctus    | Aria (Soprano)       |
| 11. Cum Sancto Spiritu          | Chorus               |

## Ian Cobb (conductor)

Ian Cobb began his teaching career at Wandsworth School, helping to form the boys' choir which would achieve an international reputation. He worked with many composers, particularly Benjamin Britten, as well as leading conductors and orchestras. In 1969 Britten wrote *Children's Crusade* for the choir, recorded by Decca. The association with Britten led to many performances of the *War Requiem*. Recordings of Bach's *St. John Passion* and Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* followed.

Following a move to Suffolk, Ian formed the Suffolk Symphony Orchestra, performing a wide range of works from the symphonic and concerto repertoire. He was a founder director of Suffolk Chamber Opera, conducting Britten's *Albert Herring*, Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* and Carey Blyton's *The Girl from Nogami*.

In 1980 Ian became Music Director of Cambridge-based Collegium Laureatum. With the choir, he has conducted music ranging from early Renaissance pieces to the large-scale works of the choral repertoire. Ian retired from teaching in 2005, giving him more time to concentrate on producing and arranging music.

## Catherine White (soprano)

Catherine White is a Cambridge-based singer with a particular love for Baroque and early Classical music. She sang for many years in the chapel choirs of Selwyn and Trinity Colleges, studying with Anita Morrison, Ashley Stafford and Sheila Barnes.

These days, she focuses on solo, recital and project-based singing, which fits well alongside her work designing new ways to recycle plastic. Catherine performs regularly with the Erasmus Chamber Ensemble and is often found among the ranks of the lay clerks at Ely Cathedral.

In February 2025, she gave a recital of Telemann, Bach and Handel with Dan Tidhar (harpichord) and Patrick Welche (traverso), with future performances to include music by Monteverdi and Purcell. In April this year, she toured Turkey with the Ishirini choir - accompanied by her husband (a second bass) and their two young daughters, who sang their first concerts.



## Katherine Mann (soprano)

Katherine Mann sang as a Choral Exhibitioner at Selwyn College. As a member of Selwyn Choir, Katherine performed as soprano soloist on two of their recordings; as Clara Sciffi in Bryan Kelly's *St. Francis of Assisi*, and Mary Magdalene in Jonathan Bielby's *Seven Last Words of Jesus*. In the University Chamber Choir, Katherine performed in many large-scale works; as a soloist as in the Bach *St. John Passion*, or often one-to-a-part, as in Schütz' *Musikalische Exequien* and Tallis' *Spem in Alium*.

Other recent solo highlights include Michal in *Saul* (Cambridge University Opera Society), Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Gonville and Caius College Music Society) and performing at Peterborough Choral Society's April Concert. In May, Katherine performed in a recital featuring the premiere of composer Marcus Budack's latest song cycle of French *mélodie*.



Katherine is a Lay Clerk with the Choir of Gonville and Caius College and is also a member of the Cambridge University Schola Cantorum.



## Alexandria Moon (alto)

British mezzo-soprano Alexandria Moon is a member of the opera studio at the Royal College of Music in London and is the Lotti Masterson and H&F Music Award holder, studying with Dinah Harris.

Alexandria recently made her role debut as Lucretia in a new production at the Brunel Museum in Rotherhithe mentored by Dame Sarah Connolly (*The Rape of Lucretia*, British Youth Opera). Other role highlights include Concepción (*L'heure espagnole*, RCM), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, Westminster Opera), L'enfant (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*, RCM), Mistress Ford (*Sir John in Love*, Opera Holland Park and British Youth Opera) and the Older Woman (*Flight*, RCM).

Alexandria debuted at the Wigmore Hall in their first ever concert in collaboration with the RCM's vocal department, where she performed the world premiere of a long-lost scenario by RCM alumni Samuel Coleridge-Taylor titled "*Nourmahal's Song*". Competition highlights include 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the Maureen Lehane 2023 Vocal Awards, 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 2024 Concerto Competition at the RCM with Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the Lies Askonas 2023 competition at the RCM.



## Fergus McKie (tenor)

Born in London, Fergus first discovered his love of singing as a chorister under David Flood at Canterbury Cathedral. Since then, he has been involved with ensembles such as the Rodolfus Choir and the London Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Currently he is pursuing an undergraduate degree in music from the University of Cambridge, alongside being a choral scholar in the Choir of King's College Cambridge.

Performance highlights so far have included performing for both the Pope and Archbishop of Canterbury in Rome, Carols from King's on the television and the world-famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, broadcast to millions around the world on Christmas Eve.

Outside of music, along with pursuing his degree, Fergus enjoys following and playing sport along with long walks with his dog Seamus.



## Oliver Jones (bass)

Oliver was a choral scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge under Sarah MacDonald. He now lives in London and sings with The Renaissance Singers and Philharmonia Chorus.

This summer he takes part in the Veneto Opera Summer School. His teacher is Louis Hurst.



# COLLEGIUM LAUREATUM ORCHESTRA

**LEADER: Mateja Kaluza**

|                      |                 |               |
|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <b>Oboe :</b>        | Jenny Sewell    | Hilary Hymas  |
| <b>Trumpet :</b>     | William Kirkup  |               |
| <b>Violin 1 :</b>    | Mateja Kaluza   | Helen Gibbens |
|                      | Jonathan Acton  | Sue Thomas    |
| <b>Violin 2 :</b>    | Judy Runnacles  | Molly Craxton |
|                      | Nigel Hymas     |               |
| <b>Viola :</b>       | Anne Atkinson   | Cleo Loi      |
| <b>Cello :</b>       | Isabella Warren | Julia Lale    |
|                      | Hin-Tak Leung   |               |
| <b>Double bass :</b> | Alex Baker      |               |
| <b>Continuo :</b>    | Benedict Todd   |               |

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# COLLEGIUM LAUREATUM CHOIR

*Current members of the choir*

## **Soprano**

Lois Arnold  
Fran Dawson  
Helen Eisner  
Jane Fellows  
Miranda Francis  
Danielle Kijewski  
Nicola Lythgoe  
Rosamond McKitterick  
Hannah Mitchell  
Alison Powell  
Mary Prechner  
Daphne Ridge  
Ruth Saxl  
Teresia Schaedler  
Juliet Short  
Pip Smith  
Julia Stibbs  
Catriona Syed  
Liz Tavner  
Raquel Torras  
Keren Turton  
Wyn Unsworth  
Brenda Whitfield  
Amy Whittaker  
Kicki Wikstrom

## **Alto**

Vera Ahrfelt  
Ruth Cheung  
Lorna Cox  
Tabitha Driver  
Jane Fleming  
Sue Grace  
Eleanor Pippard  
Ann Prentice  
Valerie Reader  
Rachel Russell  
Lorna Scott-Campbell  
Sarah Smalley  
Margaret Spencer-Thomas  
Clare Tupman  
Marj Winter

## **Tenor**

Philip Blakely  
Anthony Clay  
Peter Debenham  
David Hathaway  
Peter Radden

## **Bass**

Neil Caplan  
Aidan Challen  
Philip Cross  
Tim Entecott  
Chris Ford  
John Gatiss  
Ieuen Hughes  
Alex Riley  
Tony Spring  
Alan Winter

Collegium Laureatum (Society of Graduates) was founded in 1974 by Don Neville as an informal madrigal group of graduate students, fellows and friends of Corpus Christi College. In 1980 Ian Cobb was appointed Music Director. The choir's membership increased rapidly, outgrowing its college basis, and performed many of the large-scale choral works from the Baroque to the twentieth century, including rediscovering some works by lesser-known composers. In 1989 the choir gave the world premiere of *Fiat Lux*, a specially commissioned work by Ian Kellam, in St. Edmundsbury Cathedral. The choir has toured several times in Europe.



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