

# GLASGOW MADRIGIRLS

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## There is a flower sprung from a tree

Music and readings for Advent

Sunday 3 December 2023, 6pm & 8pm  
University of Glasgow Memorial Chapel



## Welcome to Madrigirls' annual concert of music and readings for Advent.

Our programme tonight is inspired by a little-known poem from the early fourteenth century – *Cursor Mundi*. Written in Northumbrian Middle English it presents a retelling of the history of Christianity from creation to the doomsday. Largely forgotten outside certain circles it should be better known for being the first written record for over 1000 words in the Oxford English Dictionary. Our readings are mainly taken from it, and we're very grateful to Prof. Graham Caie for helping us to translate them into modern English for tonight! Our music likewise reflects the medieval theme, with fourteenth and fifteenth-century pieces alongside others either inspired by the period, or that use medieval lyrics in modern settings. One of these is a new setting of the fifteenth-century poem *There is a Flower* by Madrigirl Daisy Abbott, premiering tonight!

We hope you enjoy being part of our concert this year, and that it gives you a chance to reflect on what the season and time of year means to you, whatever your beliefs.

Katy & Catriona



Welcome Reverend Dr Carolyn Kelly, Chaplain, University of Glasgow

### **Derknessis departide**

**Music:** Alison Eales

**Words:** Catriona Downie, from Genesis 1:11-24, trans. John Wycliffe

This piece is a setting of a 'blackout' poem. This literary technique usually uses a sheet of newsprint, the poet literally blacking out the majority of the text and leaving only a few words visible – finding a new work hidden within the existing. The text here is created from John Wycliffe's English bible of 1395. Using the story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:1-24) it offers a new take on a very familiar tale. The music is by longtime Madrigirls member Alison Eales.

Derknessis departide, and appil tre brouyte forth liytis  
Sterris in the firmament schyne, bryngye forth a lyvyngye soul

**Reading 1** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 375–410

### **When Adam Walked in Eden Young**

**Music:** Tune transcr. Cecil Sharp from Jaspar Robertson, Burnsville, N. Carolina (29 September 1918) arr. and adapted by Katy Lavinia Cooper, harp arr. Graham Hair

**Words:** A.E.Housman (1859-1936) **Harp:** Esther Norie

This setting is taken from the larger work *Where the stars are led*, which Katy wrote for the ensemble Scottish Voices in 2018. Houseman's carol-like text uses Adam as a metaphor for wisdom. The tune is from the Appalachian carol *When Adam was created*, and was collected from Jasper Robertson who, according to Cecil Sharp, was 'a preacher who makes his living by riding through the mountains on horseback and peddling a patent nerve-medicine compounded of 17 herbs'.

When Adam walked in Eden young, oh, happy, 'tis writ, was he,  
While high the fruit of knowledge hung unbitten on the tree.  
Oh happy was he the livelong day; I doubt 'tis written wrong:  
The heart of man, for all they say was never happy long.  
And now my feet are tired of rest, and here they will not stay,  
And the soul fevers in my breast and aches to be away.

### The Truth from Above

**Music:** Trad. English, arr. Katy Lavinia Cooper **Words:** *A Good Christmas Box* (1847)

The text of this carol is selected from the sixteen verses given in *A Good Christmas Box*, an influential chapbook that contained 58 carols published by Walters of Dudley. This tune was collected by Cecil Sharp at Donnington Wood, Shropshire and published in his *English Folk-Carols* (1911).

1. This is the truth sent from above,  
The truth of God, the God of love;  
Therefore don't turn me from your door,  
But hearken all, both rich and poor.
2. The first thing, which I do relate,  
Is that God at first did man create.  
The next thing, which to you I tell,  
Woman was made with him to dwell.
3. Then after this, 'twas God's own choice  
To place them both in Paradise,  
There to remain from evil free  
Except they ate of such a tree.
4. Thus we were heirs to endless woes,  
Till God the Lord did interpose,  
For so a promise soon did run  
That He'd redeem us with His Son.
5. And at this season of the year,  
Our blest Redeemer did appear,  
He here did live, and here did preach,  
And many thousands He did teach.
6. Go preach the Gospel new,  
He said, To all the nations that are made,  
And he that does believe in me,  
From all his sins I'll set him free.

**Reading 2** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 755–822

### There is a flower sprung from a tree

**Music:** Daisy Abbott

**Words:** John Audelay (d. c.1436), Bodleian MS Douce 302, trans. Eleanor Parker

**Solos:** Lindis Kipp, Alison Eales, Jo Tucker

This beautiful poem is the work of John Audelay, a priest and poet from Haughmond Abbey in Shropshire. One of the few English poets of the period whose name is known to us, his manuscript includes some of the first Christmas carols recorded in English. You can view some pages here: <https://tinyurl.com/2rvkre65>.

There is a flower sprung from a tree,  
The root thereof is called Jesse,  
A flower of great worth;  
There is no other such in paradise.

This flower is fair and fresh of hue;  
It fades never, but ever is new;  
The blessed branch where this flower grew

When Gabriel this maiden met,  
With 'Ave, Maria,' he greeted  
Between them two this flower was set,

Was Mary mild who bore Jesu —  
A flower of grace,  
Against all sorrow it is solace.

And was kept, no-one should know it,  
Until one day  
In Bethlehem, it began to spread and spray.

Angels there came out of their tower  
To look upon this fresh flower —  
How fair he was in his colour,  
And how sweet in his savour —  
And to behold  
How such a flower might spring amid the cold.

### **Reading 3** Ave Maris Stella (read in Middle English)

Transcribed from Latin by William Herebert, early fourteenth century

Hail, lady, sea-star bright,  
God's mother, edy wight  
Maiden ever, first and late,  
Of heaven's realm the sely gate.  
The 'Ave' thou received in spell  
From the angel's mouth called Gabriel  
In grith us set and shielded from shame,  
And turneth backward Eva's name.  
Guilty men's bonds unbind,  
Bring light to them who are blind.  
Put from us our sin  
And earn for us all wyne.  
Show that thou art mother alone  
And before him take thou our bone  
Who for us thy child became

And of thee our kind name.  
Maid alone, thou wert with child,  
Among all so mild;  
Of sin release us in haste,  
And make us meek and chaste.  
Life give thou us clean,  
A safe way prepare, and lene  
That we Jesus see  
And ever blithe be.  
To Father, Christ and Holy Ghost be  
thanks and praising,  
To three persons and one God, one  
honour and worshipping.

trans. Eleanor Parker

### **Gabriel's Message**

**Music:** *Angelus Emittitur* from *Piae Cantiones*, 1582

**Words:** Trans. Rev. John Mason Neale (1818-1866)

The harmony of this spirited carol is largely based on the singing of four-man act 'Nowell Sing We Clear' (led by John Roberts and Tony Barrand), from a recording made in 1979. Both the tune and the original text are taken from *Piae Cantiones*, a collection of Latin songs compiled by Jakko Finne and published in Greifswald in 1582.

1. Gabriel's message does away  
Satan's curse and Satan's sway,  
out of darkness brings our Day:  
*So, behold, all the gates of heaven unfold.*

2. He that comes despised shall reign;  
he that cannot die, be slain;  
death by death its death shall gain:

3. Weakness shall the strong confound;  
by the hands, in grave clothes wound,  
Adam's chains shall be unbound.

4. By the sword that was his own,  
by that sword, and that alone,  
shall Goliath be o'erthrown:

5. Art by art shall be assailed;  
to the cross shall Life be nailed;  
from the grave shall hope be hailed:

**Reading 4** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 10835–10886

**Gabriel fram heven-king**

**Music & words:** Anon, fourteenth century, Dublin Troper,  
Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 710

**Solos:** Catriona Downie & Sophie Boyd **Harp:** Esther Norie

The Latin religious song *Angelus ad Virginem* was extremely popular in England during the later Middle Ages. This English translation probably dates from the late thirteenth century and occurs in several manuscripts. We are using two settings of the tune from the same manuscript. The tune itself is thought to date from the late thirteenth century and the versions we are using from the fourteenth century.

1. Gabriel, fram-heven king, sent to the maide sweete  
    Broute hir blisful tiding and fair he gan hir greet"  
"Hail be thu, ful of grace aright! For Godes son, this heven-light,  
    For mannes love wil man bicom and take  
        Fles of thee, maide bright,  
    Manken free for to make of sen and devles might."
2. Mildelich him gan andswere the milde maide thanne:  
    "Whichwise sold ich bere child withute manne?"  
Th'angel seid "Ne dred tee nout; Thurw t'holigast sal been iwrount  
    This ilche thing warof tiding ich bringe  
        All manken wurth ibout  
    Thurw thine sweet childinge and ut of pine ibrought.
3. Wan the maiden understood and th'angels wordes herde,  
    Mildelich with milde mood to th'angel hie answerde:  
"Ure lords thewe maid iwis ich am, that here aboven is.  
    Anentis me fulfuthed be thi sawe  
        That ich, sith his wil is,  
    Maid withuten lawe of moder has the blis"
4. Maiden-moder makeless, of milce ful ibunde,  
    Bid for us thim that tee ches, at wam thu grace funde,  
That he forgive us sen and wrake and clene of evri gelt us make  
    And heven-blis wan ur time is to sterve  
        Us give, for thine sake,  
    Him so heer for to serve that he us to him take.

**Reading 5** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 10905–10924

**Awake, Joseph, Awake**

**Words:** Cambridge University Library MS Ee 1.12

**Music:** Based on plainsong hymn *Quem terra ponus sidera* from *Hymnarium Cisterciense*, (Westmalle, 1909)

The text for this carol is recorded in an extensive manuscript of similar material compiled by the Canterbury Franciscan James Ryman in the last decade of the fifteenth century. Giving a very human perspective on the story of the Incarnation, Joseph is presented as an ordinary

man caught up in an extraordinary situation. The plainsong sung here is often used for a Marian hymn.

*'Awake, Joseph, awake, awake,  
And to Mary thy way thou take.'*

1. Joseph would have fled from that maid,  
Not for sin nor for offence,  
But to abide he was afraid  
In her so good and pure presence;  
Extans virgo concipiens,  
Because the mystery he knew  
In her of such great virtue.
2. 'With her,' he said, 'why should I dwell?  
Than I of degree she is more,  
And in virtue she doth excel:  
I will depart from her therefore.'  
But God, that hath all grace in store,  
Sent an angel, who was full bright,  
Unto Joseph upon a night.
3. And unto him that angel said: 'Dread not,  
Joseph, son of David, To take Mary thy wife,  
that maid, For the child that she got with,  
Is God's Son: be not afraid.  
Long time before Scripture hath said,  
That a pure maid should bear a child  
To save mankind, that was exiled.'
4. Joseph arose and went full right  
Unto Mary, that maiden mild,  
And through virtue of God Almighty  
He found that maiden great with child;  
And yet she had him not beguiled,  
For Jesus, the Son of Right,  
From bliss into her womb did light.
5. Behold, how Eve, that woman wild,  
Hath borne her fruit in care and woe,  
But virgin Mary, mother mild,  
Hath borne her fruit, and nothing so;  
For she hath borne Christ and no mo  
For to defend us from the fiend  
And give us bliss without an end.
6. The fruit of death Eve gave to us,  
But that pure maid and mother dear  
Gave us the fruit of life, Jesus,  
Wherefore next God she hath no peer  
Above in bliss nor in earth here,  
For her seat is next the throne  
Of God, that is both three and one.

**Reading 6** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 11134–11172

### **Four Songs for Voice and Violin**

Gustav Holst, arr. Katy Lavinia Cooper

i. Jesu Sweet & iii. I Sing of a Maiden

Solos: Moira McKenzie, Katy Lavinia Cooper and Catriona Downie

These settings, originally written for voice and violin, but here performed by voice only, were premiered in Thaxted in 1917. The fifteenth-century lyrics are taken from *A Medieval Anthology*, edited by Miss Mary Segar.

1. Jesu Sweet, now will I sing  
To Thee a song of love longing;  
Do in my heart a quick well spring  
Thee to love above all thing.
2. Jesu Sweet, my dim heart's gleam  
Brighter than the sunnèbeam!  
As thou wert born in Bethlehem  
Make in me thy lovèdream.
3. Jesu Sweet, my dark heart's light  
Thou art day withouten night;  
Give me strength and eke might  
For to loven Thee aright.
4. Jesu Sweet, well may he be  
That in Thy bliss Thyself shall see:  
With love cords then draw Thou me  
That I may come and dwell with Thee.

1. I sing of a maiden  
That matchless is.  
King of all Kings  
Was her Son iwis.

3. He came all so still,  
To His mother's bower  
As dew in April  
That falleth on flower.

5. Mother and maiden  
Was ne'er none but she:  
Well may such a lady  
God's mother be.

2. He came all so still,  
Where His mother was  
As dew in April  
That falleth on grass:

4. He came all so still,  
Where His mother lay  
As dew in April  
That formeth on spray.

### Reading 7 Lullay my Liking, anon., fifteenth century

#### Stella Nuova & Gloria in Coelo

**Music & words:** Trad. thirteenth-century laude from the *Laudario di Cortona* (Biblioteca del Comune e dell'Accademia Etrusca, Ms. 91)

**Solos:** Phoebe Warren, Pat Nehls, Daisy Abbott, Kirsty Oates, Helen Beaumont

**Drums:** Alan Wright

Laude were the principal genre of non-liturgical religious song in Italy in the late Middle ages and Renaissance. These two Marian pieces are taken from a collection of Laude associated with Confraternita di S Maria delle Laude attached to the church of San Francesco in Cortona.

*Stella nuova 'n fra la gente  
k'aparuiisti novamente!*

New star which newly appeared  
amongst humankind

*Stella k'aparuiisti al mundo  
quando nacque 'I re iocondo,  
stett'en mezz'o a tutto 'I mondo  
per aluminar la gente.*

The star which appeared to the earth  
when the joy-bringing King was born,  
stood in the centre of the whole world  
to give light to the people.

*Le tre Magi l'abber veduto,  
tosto l'ebber cognosciuto;  
diser: "Nat'è lo saluto,  
Dio padre omnipotente."*

The three wise men saw it  
and immediately recognised it;  
they said: "Our salvation is born,  
God the Father almighty."

*Gloria in cielo e pace in terra:  
nat'è il nostro Salvatore!*

Glory in heaven and peace on earth!  
Born is our Saviour!

*Nat'è Cristo glorioso, l'alto Dio maravelioso,  
Fact'è hom desideroso, lo benigno Creatore.*

Born is Christ glorious, God most high, wonderful  
the long-desired made man, the loving Creator.

*Pace 'n terra sia cantata,  
gloria 'n ciel desiderata:  
la douçella consecrata, parturì tal Salvatore!*

Sing peace on earth, glory in heaven long-desired,  
the consecrated virgin has brought forth a  
Saviour.

*Parturito l'à cum canto  
pieno de lo Spiritu Santo  
de li bracia li fe' manto  
cum grandissimo fervore*

He is born with singing all around,  
Full of the Holy Sprit,  
He puts on the cloak of mortality  
With great eagerness.

**Reading 8** from *Cursor Mundi*, lines 11211–11250

### **A Wild Midwinter Carol**

Liz Dillnott Johnson

**Solo:** Roslyn Potter **Harp:** Esther Norie

This secular carol features familiar weather, wild animals, birds and trees from the British countryside in winter. The melody is in the mixolydian mode, giving the music an ancient, folk-like feel, and the accompaniment of bells and chimes was written so that singers can accompany themselves and sing this piece outside in the natural environment. Though tonight we are choosing to stay inside...! Liz Dillnott Johnson is currently composer-in-residence for Birmingham-based vocal ensemble Ex Cathedra.

All on a frosty dawning the hare is on the hill,  
the robin sings from the old oak tree, all on Midwinter's morn.

Now we too raise our voices, all in a circle sing  
for love, for love, for tender love across the hill and vale.

All on a snowy evening the fox is in the wood,  
the tawny owl calls from the alder tree, all on Midwinter's eve.

Now we too raise our voices, all in a circle sing  
for calm, for calm, for soothing calm across the woody heath.

All on a rainy noon-tide the seal is in the bay,  
the little wren sings from the hawthorn tree, all on Midwinter's day.

Now we too raise our voices, all in a circle sing  
for peace, for peace, for gentle peace across the deep sea.

All on a clear-skied midnight the child is watching on,  
the quiet dove sits in the holly tree all on Midwinter's night.

Now we too join in silence, all in a circle stand  
for hope, for hope, for brightest hope across the sea and land

Now we too raise our voices, all in a circle sing  
for joy, for, joy, for nature's joy across the land and sea.

**Reading 9** A God and yet a man, anon., fifteenth century

### **Like Noah's Weary Dove**

**Music:** attrib. Jeremiah Ingalls (1764–1838), arr. Aaron Chapin (1768–?), Marsha Genensky & Katy Lavinia Cooper. **Words:** William A. Muhlenberg (1827)

**Solos:** Anna Crawford, Anna Novak

We first encountered the two-part arrangement of this American folk-hymn on the Anonymous 4 album *Gloryland*. The tune first appears in a shape-note arrangement in 1812.



1. Like Noah's weary dove, that soar'd the earth around,  
But not a resting place above the cheerless waters found.
2. O cease my wand'ring soul, on restless wing to roam,  
All the wide world, to either pole, has not for thee a home.
3. Behold the Ark of God, behold the open door;  
Hasten to gain that dear abode, and rove my soul no more.
4. There safe thou shalt abide, there sweet shall be thy rest,  
And every longing satisfied with full salvation bless'd.
5. And when the waves of ire again the earth shall fill,  
Then the Ark shall ride the sea of fire, then rest on Zion's hill.

### Gaudete!

**Music & words:** *Piae Cantiones*, compiled by Jaakko Finne (c.1540–1588)

Additional arr. Katy Lavinia Cooper (verse), Michael Neaum (descant)

**Solos:** Moira McKenzie, Phoebe Warren, Anna Crawford, Kirsty Oates, Pat Nehls

**Drum:** Allan Wright

This Latin song is found in *Piae Cantiones*, a collection of Finnish and Swedish sacred songs first published in the 1580s. Jaakko Finne was a member of the clergy at the cathedral school at Åbo (now Turku) and it seems likely that the collection he compiled for his *Piae Cantiones* contains the medieval repertory of that school.

*Gaudete, gaudete! Christus est natus  
Ex Maria Virgine, Gaudete!*

Rejoice, Rejoice! Christ is born,  
Of the Virgin Mary. Rejoice!

*Tempus adest gratiae, hoc quod optabamus;  
Carmina laetitiae, devote reddamus  
Deus homo factus est, natura mirante;  
Mundus renovatus est, a Christo regnante.*

It is now the time of grace, that we have desired;  
Let us sing songs of joy, let us give devotion.  
God was made man, and nature marvels;  
The world was renewed by the reigning Christ.

*Ezechielis porta, clausa pertransitur;  
Unde Lux est orta, salus invenitur*

The closed gate of Ezechiel has been passed through;  
from where the light rises, Salvation is found.

*Ergo nostra contio, psallat iam in lustro;  
Benedicat Domino, salus Regi nostro*

Therefore let our preaching now sing in brightness;  
Let it bless the Lord, greetings to our King.

Readings 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 8 from *Cursor Mundi (The Cursor o the World). A Northumbrian Poem of the XIVth Century*, ed. Rev Richard Morris, Early English Text Society (London, 1874-1892).

Trans. Prof. Graham Caie, ed. Catriona Downie



As well as fundraising for Madrigirls' own activities, we are proud to support the homelessness charity Shelter tonight. Their work is always vital but particularly at this time of year, so thank you for supporting them by buying a ticket. If you would like to give more you can give online at [scotland.shelter.org.uk](http://scotland.shelter.org.uk)

## **Madrigirls 2023**

**Conductor:** Katy Lavinia Cooper

**Co-directors:** Catriona Downie & Katy Lavinia Cooper

Daisy Abbott, Cailene Barone, Helen Beaumont, Sophie Boyd, Anna Crawford, Catriona Downie, Alison Eales, Claudia Galdi, Charlotte Gouck, Ruby Hirsch, Frances Hume, Hannah Jackson, Claire Johnston, Emma Kerr, Lindis Kipp, Luca Kozma, Olivia Llewellyn, Moira McKenzie, Lindsay McIntyre, Sarah Mills, Naomi Mitchell, Rhian Nicholas, Pat Nehls, Anna Novak, Kirsty Oates, Roslyn Potter, Lauren Relaford, Alexandra Renfrew, Karen Rowney, Rachel Rutherford, Jennie Scammell, Liv Thomas, Louise Thomas, Jo Tucker, Megan Walker, Cameron Ward, Phoebe Warren & Fiona Webber

**Madriguys:** Harry Campbell, Edward Marshall, Alasdair Robertson, Philip Scott, Kenneth Tay, and Allan Wright (percussion)

**Harp:** Esther Norie

**With many thanks to:** our readers – Graham Caie, Harry Campbell, Carolyn Hutchinson & Lindsay McIntyre; Warwick Edwards for the loan of the instruments; Carolyn Kelly, Joan Keenan and the University of Glasgow Chaplaincy; our front of house team and all our candle lighters, stewards and firewatchers.

We would also like to give huge thanks to Rev. Stuart MacQuarrie, former Chaplain to the University of Glasgow, who very sadly passed away recently. Stuart was a great friend to Madrigirls, and was instrumental in encouraging and enabling us to organise our very first Advent concert in the chapel 22 years ago. Without his support over the years we wouldn't still be doing it. He will be much missed.

**[madrigirls.org.uk](http://madrigirls.org.uk)**



## Tack Together

Madrigirls celebrated 20 years in 2021 and as part of our anniversary year we commissioned three new pieces from composer Emily Hall.

This project has become a real celebration of the very varied talents of Madrigirls! Each piece has lyrics written by members of the group, recorded in three beautiful films by Jennie Scammell. You can watch them all now, and find out more about the project on our website.

As part of the filming, Catriona Downie created an original linocut to reflect elements of each lyric – then printed by Rhian Nicholas of [thepassengerpress.com](http://thepassengerpress.com). You can buy limited edition prints tonight, as well as sets of cards. Look out for them as you leave!

