

*Christmas with Vasari* is an annual favourite with both the choir and our supporters. So, although the current situation means that we needed to abandon our regular concert in Covent Garden, we decided that we still wanted to do something to celebrate Christmas with you all, particularly in this, our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. Tonight's online event includes performances by the choir of some of our favourite Christmas music from our two Christmas recordings and our recently released recording, *Heaven full of Stars*.

We have two feature items for you: firstly, a recording of some of the choir doing the first performance (socially distanced) of *Music on Christmas Morning*, a beautiful piece which we commissioned for our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary from the amazing young composer, Helena Paish. We are also delighted to be able to share a recording of Sir Richard Stilgoe reading his Lockdown Poem, written for the Michael Varah Memorial Fund, a charity

both Sir Richard and Vasari Singers have supported at the Fund's annual Christmas event for the last ten years.

Finally, no *Christmas with Vasari* would be complete without audience carols, wine and mince pies. So please sing along as loudly as you would like - you will be on mute - and we're sorry that on this occasion you are providing your own refreshments.

We hope you enjoy *Christmas with Vasari 2020* and we look forward to welcoming you back to Covent Garden next year.

*Alex Brougham, Chairman*

### Running order

Once in royal David's City: *Please join in verses 3 & 4 at home; words are below*

Mary's Lullaby (John Rutter)

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day (John Gardner)

Interview with Helena Paish

Music on Christmas Morning (Helena Paish) *First performance of our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commission*

O little town of Bethlehem: *Please join in at home; words are below*

I sing of a maiden (Bob Chilcott)

Lockdown Poem (written and read by Sir Richard Stilgoe)

O Holy Night (Adolphe Adam, arr. John E. West)

O come all ye faithful: *Please join in at home; words are below*

Away in a manger (arr. Nigel Short)

Carol Medley (arr. Jonathan Rathbone)

Hark the herald angels sing: *Please join in at home; words are below*

Jingle Bells (Trad. English, arr. Ben Parry)

### Once in royal David's city

Verse 1: Solo, Verse 2: Choir only

3. And our eyes at last shall see Him,  
Through His own redeeming love;  
For that Child so dear and gentle  
Is our Lord in heaven above,  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.
4. Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by,  
We shall see Him; but in heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high;  
Where like stars His children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.

### O little town of Bethlehem

1. O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.
2. O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth;  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.
3. How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him,  
Still the dear Christ enters in.
4. O holy child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell:  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel.



### O come, all ye faithful

1. O come, all ye faithful,  
Joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
Come and behold Him,  
Born the King of Angels;  
*O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord!*
2. God of God,  
Light of light,  
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God,  
begotten not created;  
*O come, let us adore Him...*
3. Sing, choirs of angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God in the highest;  
*O come, let us adore Him...*
4. Yea Lord, we greet Thee,  
Born that happy morning;  
Jesu, to Thee be glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing;  
*O come, let us adore Him...*

### Hark! The herald angels sing

1. Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled".  
Joyful, all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With the angelic host proclaim:  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem".  
*Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"*
2. Christ by highest heav'n adored,  
Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come,  
Offspring of a Virgin's womb  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,  
Hail the incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with man to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
*Hark! The herald angels sing...*
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.  
*Hark! The herald angels sing...*

## Vasari Merchandise

Why not sort your last minute Christmas shopping with this special Vasari Merchandise, available on our website ([www.vasarisingers.org](http://www.vasarisingers.org)):

### *Vasari Singers: A History - the first 40 Years*

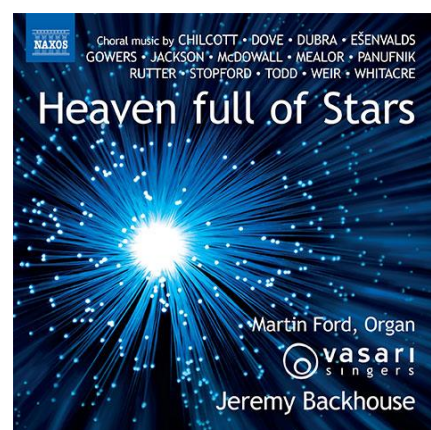
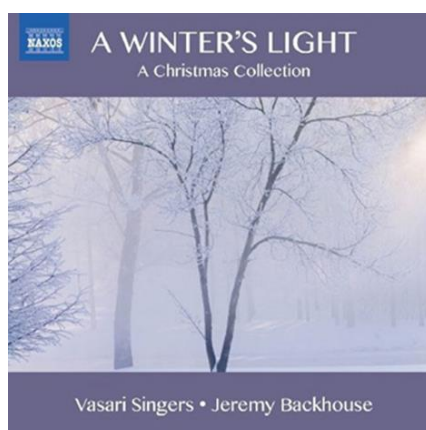
A newly-released and lavishly illustrated book celebrating 40 years of Vasari Singers, compiled by founder members Julia and Malcolm Field and co-edited by Jeremy Backhouse.



*Vasari Singers 40th Anniversary Water Bottle*  
Our 40th Anniversary light-weight aluminium screw top bottle is a practical way to support the choir and a must have for singers and non-singers alike.

### *Vasari Singers Recordings*

If you haven't already got them, then you mustn't miss out on our two Christmas CDs (as often heard on Classic FM) or our newest release, the shimmering and light-filled *Heaven full of Stars*.



## Thank you to:

- Sir Richard Stilgoe and the Michael Varah Memorial Fund for his Lockdown Poem
- Helena Paish, for her interview and the wonderful commission for our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Martin Ford, for new recordings made for this evening
- Our Technical Team: Imants Auziņš, Alison Benton, Dan Burges, John Hunt, Paul Robertson, Tim Slorick, Paul Waton and Susan Waton
- Julia Ridout, for this programme
- and Jeremy Backhouse for all of his contributions to Christmas with Vasari

***Vasari Singers wishes you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy and safe New Year, when we look forward to welcoming you back to events, whether in person or otherwise***