

15th Nov 86.

# Nantwich Choral Society

## NANTWICH SINFONIA

(leader: Ralph Chadwick)

Catrin Ley, soprano

Sarah Wright, soprano

Derek Acock, alto

James Watson, tenor

Benjamin Odom, bass

William Munks, organ

conducted by  
Stephen Buckman



### CANTATA NO. 61

J.S. Bach

"Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland"

1. Overture: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (chorus)
2. Recitativo: Der Heiland ist gekommen (tenor)
3. Aria: Komm, Jesu, komm (tenor)
4. Recitativo: Siehe, Siehe! (bass)
5. Aria: Öffne dich, mein ganzes Herze (soprano)
6. Choral: Amen! (chorus)

Cantata No. 61, for the first Sunday in Advent, was composed in 1714, while Bach was still at Weimar. The first movement combines a French overture with the melody and words of the first verse of Luther's chorale "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland". The dotted rhythms of the orchestra at the beginning and end of the Overture are in sharp contrast to the voices' spacious chorale melody, the third line of which provides the subject of the fast, fugal middle section. The last two lines of another great Advent chorale, "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern", bring the cantata to a close confident in the coming of the Saviour.

### "LAUTER WONNE, LAUTE FREUDE"

G. Ph. Telemann

This cantata, for the fourth Sunday in Advent, is one of a series of 72 solo cantatas called "Der harmonische Gottesdienst". Telemann wrote these cantatas for performance throughout the Church's year. This work is scored for Soprano, treble recorder, viola da gamba and organ.

### NOËLS POUR LES INSTRUMENTS

M-A. Charpentier

1. Les bourgeois de Châtre (2nd version)
2. Joseph est bien marié
3. Or nous dites, Marie
4. Vous qui désirez sans fin
5. A la venue de Noël
6. Une jeune pucelle
7. Ou s'en vont ces gais bergers?
8. Les bourgeois de Châtre (1st version)

Much of Charpentier's enormous volume of Church music was intended for performance during the Christmas season. As well as numerous settings of the Christmas story itself, Charpentier wrote a Midnight Mass and a series of eight Advent antiphons interspersed with instrumental Noël's to be performed during Vespers on the eight days before Christmas. These Noël's (French carols) probably date from around 1690, and are scored for recorders, strings and organs. Recordors (at that time called simply "flutes") are specified in many of Charpentier's Christmas pieces as they were typically associated with shepherds and so emphasise the pastoral nature of the music.

### INTERVAL

### MESSE DE MINUIT POUR NOËL

M-A. Charpentier

The Midnight Mass is based largely on the melodies of old French Christmas carols (many of which appear in the "Noëls pour les instruments"). Charpentier wrote down the titles of the carols before each section of the Mass, as follows:

Kyrie I: Joseph est bien marié  
Christie: Or nous dites Marie  
Kyrie II: Une jeune pucelle  
GLORIA:  
Laudamus te: Les bourgeois de Châtre  
Quoniam tu solus: Ou s'en vont ces guays bergers  
CREDO:  
Deum de De: Vous qui désirez sans fins  
Crucifixus: Voicy le jour solennel de Noël  
Et in Spiritum Sanctum: A la venue de Noël  
SANCTUS: O Dieu que n'estois-je en vie  
AGNUS DEI: A minuit fut fait un réveil

After each of the two Kyries, Charpentier wrote, "Icy l'orgue joue le mesme Noël" ("Here the organ plays the same carol") leaving the organist free to improvise on the appropriate theme. For this performance, we are using Charpentier's own harmonisation of "Joseph est bien marié" and a setting of "Or nous dites Marie", by Nicolas Lebeque. After the "Et incarnatus est" in the Credo (the most important point in a mass for Christmas Eve) there is the instruction "Faites icy un grand silence" ("Make a long pause here"), and at the offertory (between the Credo and the Sanctus) the instruments should play the carol "Laissez paistre vos bestes". At the end of the manuscript Charpentier indicates that the "simphonie," played before the Agnus Dei should be repeated so that the words "dona nobis pacem" are never heard. We should imagine the words being sung as we listen to the final carol "A minuit fut fait un réveil" ("At midnight there was an awakening")