



ASCOLTA

Hodie!

Saturday 6 December | 6-7pm

Newman University Church

in aid of

The Children's Health Foundation

*Welcome to our annual Christmas Concert!
Thank you for joining us. We hope you enjoy your evening*

Wexford Carol

Michael McGlynn

A haunting arrangement of the classic Irish Christmas carol by Anúna's Michael McGlynn.

Soloist: James Aherne

Good people all, this Christmas time,
Consider well and bear in mind
What our good God for us has done,
In sending His beloved Son.

With Mary holy we should pray
To God with love this Christmas Day
In Bethlehem upon the morn
There was a blessed Messiah born.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep
Their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep;
To whom God's angels did appear
Which put the shepherds in great fear.

Prepare and go, the angels said,
To Bethlehem, be not afraid;
For there you'll find, this happy morn,
A princely babe, sweet Jesus born.

With thankful heart and joyful mind,
The shepherds went the babe to find,

And as God's angel has foretold,
They did our Savior Christ behold.

Within a manger He was laid,
And by His side the virgin maid
Attending to the Lord of Life,
Who came on earth to end all strife.

Winter Wonderland

Paul Ayres

London-born Paul Ayres wrote this particular arrangement for the London College of Music Chamber Choir in 2007.

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening?
In the lane, snow is glistening
A beautiful sight, we're happy tonight
Walking in a winter wonderland

Gone away is the bluebird
Here to stay is a new bird
He sings a love song as we go along
Walking in a winter wonderland

In the meadow, we can build a snowman
(with a carrot for a nose)
And pretend that he is Parson Brown
(he's the curate don't you know)
He'll say, "Are you married?" We'll say, "No man"
But you can do the job when you're in town

Later on, we'll conspire
As we dream by the fire
To face unafraid, the plans that we've made
Walking in a winter wonderland

While we were
Walking in a winter wonderland

Hodie Christus Natus Est

Giovanni Gabrieli

Giovanni Gabrieli's "Hodie Christus Natus Est" is a polychoral Christmas motet for eight voices, a masterpiece of the Venetian style, where two choirs alternate and echo each other to create an antiphonal effect.

*Hodie Christus natus est
hodie Salvator apparuit:
hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli:
hodie exsultant justi,
dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
alleluja.*

Today Christ is born;
today the Saviour has
appeared;
today the Angels sing,
the Archangels rejoice;
today the righteous rejoice,
saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Alleluia

Gaudete

Anna Lapwood

Former Music Director of Pembroke College Cambridge and award-winning organist Anna Lapwood writes beautifully for upper voices. “We wanted something that had rhythmic impetus and drive”.

Featuring Audrey, Lea, Gráinne and Katherine, with a special surprise performance by Séamus!

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

*Tempus adest gratiæ
Hoc quod optabamus,
Carmina lætitiæ
Devote reddamus.*

*Deus homo factus est
Natura mirante,
Mundus renovatus est
A Christo regnante.*

*Ezechielis porta
Clausa pertransitur,
Unde lux est orta
Salus invenitur.*

*Ergo nostra contio
Psallat iam in lustro;
Benedicat Domino:
Salus Regi nostro.*

Rejoice, rejoice!
Christ is born
Of the Virgin Mary –
Rejoice!

The time of grace has
come—
What we have wished for;
Songs of joy
Let us give back faithfully.

God has become man,
With nature marvelling,
The world has been
renewed
By the reigning Christ.

The closed gate of Ezekiel
Is passed through,
Whence the light is risen;
Salvation has been found.

Therefore, let our assembly
Now sing in brightness
Let it bless the Lord:
Greetings to our King.

Angels We Have Heard On High

Matthew Culloton

In a truly unique arrangement of this Christmas favorite on the tune Gloria, the composer establishes a motif with a repeated “Gloria” theme creating a rhythmic pulse that is prevalent throughout the piece. Originally commissioned for The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists.

Gloria!

Angels we have heard on
high,
Sweetly singing o'er the
plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains
prolong?
What the gladsome tidings
be
Which inspire your heavn'ly
song?

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels
sing.
Come, adore on bended
knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn
King.

See him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels
praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid
While our hearts in love we
raise.

Hodie Christus Natus Est

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

The first Hodie of this evening's programme is a Renaissance Christmas motet, originally published in 1619. The five-voice setting is structured as a festive call-and-response piece with rich harmonies and a joyful, rhythmically inventive style, often featuring cascading "Noe" and "Alleluia" motifs.

Featuring: Audrey, Lea, Gráinne, James and Kevin

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Alleluia

The Child Within

Elaine Agnew

The original version of this beautiful piece was commissioned by RTÉ lyric fm and written for two voices. Elaine has kindly arranged this particular setting for four voices specifically for Ascolta - and you are hearing the premiere performance this evening!

We are performing this as a set with the following piece, Curoo Curoo.

A hearty fire
Piled winter-high,
Stars of wonder
In the sky;

Turn out the lights,
The Christmas tree
Has light enough
For all to see;

And in the darkness
All aglow
We share this night
From long ago
And in the darkness
All aglow
We share this night
From long ago

With men and women
Of good will,
The child within us
Godlike still,

The child within us
Godlike still,

The child within us
Godlike still,

Godlike still,

Godlike still

Curoo Curoo

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Full many a bird did wake and fly
Curoo curoo curoo
Full many a bird did wake and fly
To the manger bed with a wandering cry
On Christmas day in the morning
Curoo curoo curoo

The lark the dove the red bird came
Curoo curoo curoo
The lark the dove the red bird came
And they did sing in sweet Jesus' name
On Christmas day in the morning
Curoo curoo curoo

The owl was there with eyes so wide
Curoo curoo curoo
The owl was there with eyes so wide
And he did sit at sweet Mary's side
On Christmas day in the morning
Curoo curoo curoo

The shepherds knelt upon the hay
Curoo curoo curoo
The shepherds knelt upon the hay
And angels sang the night away
On Christmas day in the morning
Curoo curoo curoo

Stille Nacht

Eoin Conway

The classic Christmas song as you won't have heard it before. Enjoy the melodies moving between the voices and some stunning harmonies in this beautiful arrangement by celebrated Irish composer Eoin Conway.

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
nur das traute heilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht
Lieb aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
da uns schlägt die rettende Stund,
Jesus in deiner Geburt,
Jesus in deiner Geburt.

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht,
Hirten erst kundgemacht,
durch der Engel Alleluia,
tönt es laut bei Ferne und nah:
Jesus der Retter, ist da,
Jesus der Retter, ist da!

Hodie Christus Natus Est

Healey Willan

Healey Willan's *Hodie, Christus Natus Est* is a 1935 Christmas motet for a cappella choir. The piece is a modern, rhythmic work blending the original Gregorian chant with Willan's own style. It is characterised by its bright, joyful, and celebratory tone.

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Alleluia

It's Beginning to look like Christmas

Willis A. Diekema

A fun, light-hearted barbershop arrangement of the popular modern carol. Expertly performed by the Ascolta gentlemen!

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Everywhere you go
Take a look at the five and ten, glistening once again
With candy canes and silver lanes that glow

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Toys in every store
But the prettiest sight to see is the holly that will be
On your own front door

A pair of Hopalong boots and a pistol that shoots
Is the wish of Barney and Ben
Dolls that'll talk and will go for a walk
Is the hope of Janice and Jen
And Mom and Dad can hardly wait for school to start again

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Everywhere you go
There's a tree in the Grand Hotel, one in the park as well
The sturdy kind that doesn't mind the snow

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Soon the bells will start
And the thing that'll make 'em ring is the carol that you sing
Right within your heart

Ding Dong Merrily On High

Carolyn Jennings

A crowd favorite carol, we're exploring a new arrangement this year by American composer Carolyn Jennings. Enjoy the melodies passing through the different voices and some fun festive harmonies.
Featuring David on triangle.

Ding dong, merrily on high!
In heav'n the bells are ringing;
ding dong, verily the sky
is riv'n with angel singing.
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
let steeple bells be swungen,
And io, io, io,
by priest and people sungen.
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!

Pray ye dutifully prime
your matin chime, ye ringers;
may ye beautifully rhyme
your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!
Gloria, hosannah in excelsis!

Hodie!

Laura Sheils

Our final Hodie this evening is a lively contemporary arrangement of the text by Irish composer Laura Sheils. It is a joyous and vibrant setting that is both rewarding and fun to sing. Wonderful choral sonorities are contrasted with dance-like sections full of syncopation and rhythmic appeal.

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Nativity Carol

John Rutter

In John Rutter's 80th year, we selected one of his more beautiful Christmas pieces to complement the theme of "Today Christ is Born".

Born in a stable so bare
Born so long ago
Born 'neath light of star
He who loved us so

*Far away, silent he lay
Born today, your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day*

Cradled by mother so fair
Tender her lullaby
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky

Wise men from distant far land
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare
Hearts with his warmth he fills

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow
Innocent dreaming babe
Make me thy love to know

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

Peter Gritton

We close our concert with this beautiful arrangement of the well known festive tune, featuring warm harmonies throughout and few fun glissandi moments near the end!

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Let your heart be light
Next year all our troubles will be out of sight

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make the Yuletide gay
Next year all our troubles will be miles away

Once again as in olden days
Happy golden days of yore
Faithful friends who are dear to us
Gather near to us once more

Some day soon we all will be together
If the fates allow
Until then we'll have to muddle through somehow
So have yourself a merry little Christmas now