

Serendipity

the choir

with guitarist Kjell Goyer

Global Roaming

A musical journey around the world



Programme

The International Plea	text & arrangement A & M Podd / Pachelbel
My spirit sang all day	Bridges / Finzi
Anthem from 'Chess'	words & music Andersen, Rice & Ulvaeus
Kjell Goyer – guitarist	
Flamenco Dances	arr. Goyer
O'Carolans Concerto	Turlough O'Carolan (Ireland)
Rhute si Nevrhute (Small Talk)	Rumania arr. Goyer
Sons de Carilhoes	Brazilian folksongs arr. Pernambuco
Earth Song	words & music Frank Ticheli
Snow on Snow	words & music Andy Beck
Cantique de Jean Raçine	Raçine translated Rutter / Fauré
Yonder Come day	trad. Georgia Sea Islands arr. Podd & Podd

soloist: Fiona Schubert
percussion: Keva Abotomey
Kjell Goyer
Louise Cassidy

Interval

A Caterpillar of Society	words & music Martin & Peter Wesley-Smith
Aloha Spirit	words & music Ruth M Gray
Il Est Né, le Divin Enfant	trad. French carol/text & music arrangement Snyder
Niño Lindo <i>soloists:</i> <i>Christine Evans</i> <i>Fiona Schubert</i>	trad. Venezuelan carol / arr. Rivas
Mairi's Wedding	Roberton / trad. tune notated McLeod
The Music Comes from Thee <i>percussion: Louise Cassidy</i> <i>Kjell Goyer</i>	Rumi/Sufi chant arr. Trobaugh
A New Life	Alighieri/Whitehill
El Vito	trad. Andalusian carol / arr. Gilpin

Programme Notes

I have discovered, since assuming the role of programme notes provider, that the hardest part is knowing where to start. This possibly applies to writers in all sorts of undertakings; but I'm a bit of a newcomer, so it has been an interesting journey. I have decided to divide our pieces into easily defined groups, as this programme is even more eclectic than is usual for Serendipity.

The first and by far largest group of offerings comes from our original programme entitled 'Global Roaming'. The programme was to have been presented in May of this year, but the combined effects of illness and travel proved to be too much, and we were forced to cancel the concerts. I should add that the title for that concert was decided last year, and predates the ABC using the name for a new radio programme in 2024.

The stirring *Anthem*, from the musical 'Chess', speaks of the patriotic sentiment that most feel toward their country of birth. *Earth Song*, a great favourite of the choir, has at its core, a call for peace. Unusually both the poem and music were written by Frank Ticheli; the piece itself challenges us to think and act globally, for the good of all. The beautiful anthem *Cantique de Jean Racine*, composed by that most French of composers, Gabriel Fauré, is as much a joy to sing as to hear. And the contrast with *Yonder Come Day*, a traditional spiritual from the South Sea Georgia islands, could not be greater. This song, in the style of a work song incorporating the call and response technique used in slave work gangs, is enlivened by added percussion, played today by an interesting trio of performers.

Still in the group of original global roaming pieces, *Aloha Spirit* is much more than a greeting. 'Aloha' is also an acronym that represents the spirit of the

Hawaiian culture. This rhythmic piece celebrates the five traits of aloha, which are sung in Hawaiian by the women, and then defined in English by the men. The two

independent melodic lines are then combined in a harmonious partnering. The arranger suggests the addition of ukulele. Watch this space.

Perhaps our most unusual offering is Eben Trobaugh's *The Music Comes from Thee*. Inspired by a traditional medieval chant and a poem by the Sufi mystic Rumi, this piece reminds us that music lives within each person. There is some simple body percussion, which the choir is required to do whilst singing. There have been challenges here but the result is quite lovely.

Still in our global roaming category we have *A New Life*, taken from 'La Vita Nuova' composed by contemporary choral writer Eric Whitehill. This artistic setting of text from the famed Italian poet Dante Alighieri is rich, expressive and full of musicality. And it is also the shortest offering presented today. *El Vito*, a traditional Spanish folk song and dance from Andalusia, has origins which can be traced back to the 16th century. Its name refers to Saint Vitus, patron of dancers, and it includes steps in the art of bullfighting. Ola!

The last in this category of global roaming, *The International Plea*, features the music of Pachelbel with text and musical arrangement by brothers Adam and Matt Podd.

This brings us to the second group of pieces in our programme. This group contains pieces which I have selfishly chosen to include, as I wanted to have a final opportunity to conduct these with the choir. There are so many wonderful works I could have included but had to resist, including the wonderful 'Bohemian Rhapsody' of Queen; but I have limited myself to just a few. *My Spirit Sang All Day*, a gloriously exuberant setting by Gerald Finzi of the love poem written by Robert Bridges, has twice featured in past

programmes. I love it. *Snow on Snow* is one of the gentlest, most delicate pieces of choral writing I have heard, and is another example of a piece in which both words and music come from the pen of a single person. We sang *Snow* for the first time last December, and I really wanted to give it a second hearing. Such evocative, gentle writing.

I simply could not finish my tenure as Music Director of Serendipity without asking the ladies of the choir to present *A Caterpillar of Society*, an amazing piece written by the twin Wesley-Smith brothers, Martin and Peter. Plays on words as never heard before feature – you have to listen carefully. And musical styles abound. The ladies of the choir have arranged this performance especially for you.

And so to our last group, pieces chosen and conducted by Keva Abotomey, soon to be music director of Serendipity: the choir. Keva has chosen pieces which suit both the global roaming theme, and our offerings for Christmas. *Il Est Né* is another French representative in the programme, light-hearted and joyous in nature as it tells of the birth of Christ. *Niño Lindo*, from Venezuela, is a beautiful, gentle song, with an intriguing time signature of 5/8. The tradition of veneration of the Virgin Mary is found throughout Hispanic countries, and this lullaby is thought to be sung by Mary to her infant Son. And Keva's final offering is the exuberant Scottish *Mairi's Wedding*, which effectively leaves the singers breathless by the end.

Please sit back, relax and enjoy our musical offerings.

Kerith Fowles OAM

Music Director

Serendipity: the choir 2008 – 2024

The Performers

Conductors

Kerith Fowles OAM

Keva Abotomey

Pianist Ann Clipsham Guitarist Kjell Goyer

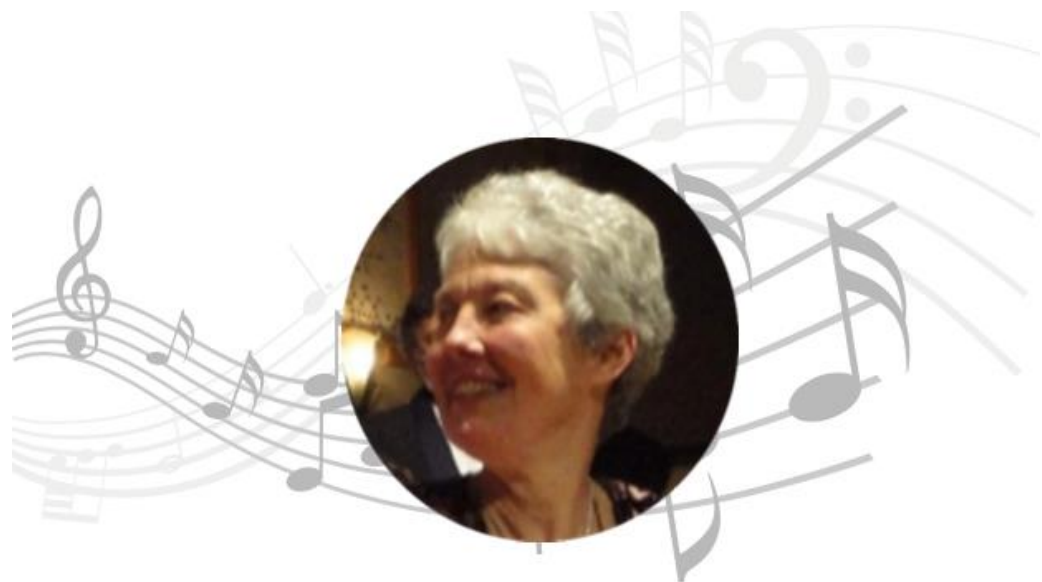
Singers

Andrea Skrt	Jan King
Brian Goodes	Jane Irwin
Cathy Hughes	Jean de Hosson
Chris Koumi	Karen Granger *
Christine Evans	Lorelei Tait
Desley O'Farrell	Louise Cassidy ◊
Eric Conley	Maureen Veness
Fiona Schubert	Meg Herbert
Fran Bosly-Craft	Richard Bosly-Craft
Georgie Hurba	Rose Conley
Graeme Whisker	Steven Goddard
Graham Warner	Stuart Reid
Heather Bone	Sue Reid
Ian O'Farrell	

*ukulele

◊ percussion





Serendipity
the choir

bids a fond farewell to
our Founder and Music Director,
Kerith Fowles

but are delighted to welcome her
as our new Honorary Patron