



## Choral Contemplations

A series of short concerts which forms part of the Chapel Choir's regular Tuesday schedule throughout semesters one and two. For information on forthcoming services and concerts, please see [www.chapelchoir.org](http://www.chapelchoir.org).

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### Choral Contemplations III: The Approach of Advent

The performance tonight features selected movements from *Lux Luminosa* (2023), exploring the themes of anticipation, revelation, and redemption. Woven into the fabric of the music are motifs from both Eastern (Asian) and Western (European) traditions, mirroring the rich tapestry of cultural influences on my native Singapore—a maritime city-state shaped by the currents of globalisation. The work serves as a broad metaphor for convergence of dualities: East and West, ancient and contemporary, unity in diversity.

The Latin texts for this piece draw from the "Great O Antiphons", ancient prayers embodying the anticipation of Christmas. Between each antiphon, the work interlaces texts resonant with the spirit of Advent, brimming with messages of hope and light. The gospel canticles – Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimittis – find voice in English. The work also features passages from the Keasberry New Testament in Bahasa Melayu, representing the global spread of Christian missionary work, and a metaphor for the message of Advent transcending language barriers.

This litany stands as a bridge, a personal expression of sacred music that synthesises Western traditions with Asian spirituality. Rather than eliminating Western influences, it seeks integration; a quest to define my identity as Asian Christian while embracing the missional heritage of the faith, while searching for unity in a world so often marked by division.

I extend my gratitude to the University of Glasgow Chapel Choir, Dr Katy Lavinia Cooper (director), Dr Kevin Bowyer (organ), and Andrew Keddie (percussion) for giving the first performance of these movements from my work.

Kenneth Tay

#### O Sapientia

*O Sapientia  
quae ex ore altissimi prodisti,  
attingens a fine usque ad finem,  
fortiter suaviter disponensque omnia:  
Veni ad docendum nos viam prudentie.*

O Wisdom  
Coming from the mouth of the Most High,  
extending strongly from pole to pole,  
which orders all things fittingly,  
Come and teach us the way of prudence.

#### Magnificat

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.  
He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

### O Adonai

*O Adonai, et Dux domus Israel,  
qui Moysi in igne flammae rubi apparuisti,  
et ei in Sina legem dedisti,  
veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.*

O Adonai and leader of the House of Israel,  
who appeared to Moses in the fire of the  
burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai:  
come to redeem us with outstretched arm.

### Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,  
And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;  
As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:  
That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;  
To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;  
The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us,  
that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,  
In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.  
And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face  
of the Lord to prepare his ways;  
To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,  
Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,  
To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the  
way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

### O Radix Jesse

*O Radix Jesse,  
qui stas in signum populorum,  
super quem continebunt reges os suum,  
quem gentes deprecabuntur:  
veni ad liberandum nos,  
jam noli tardare.*

O Root of Jesse,  
standing as a sign among the peoples;  
before you kings will shut their mouths,  
to you the nations will make their prayer: Come and  
deliver us,  
and delay no longer.

### Segala Lembah-lembah

*Segala lembah-lembah akan ditambah,  
Dan segala gunung dan bukit-bukit akan  
direndahkan  
Dan yang bengkok itu akan dibetulkan  
Dan jalan yang menggerutu itu akan dilicinkan*

Every valley shall be filled,  
And every mountain and hill shall be brought low;  
And the crooked shall be made straight,  
And the rough ways shall be made smooth.

### Waktu

*Maka sebab kami telah mengetahui akan Waktu  
Bahawa inilah ketikanya sudah sampai yang patut  
kita terbangkit daripada tidur  
Kerana sekarang ini selamat kita telah dekat  
daripada masa kita percaya*

And that, knowing the time,  
that now it is high time to awake out of sleep:  
for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

*Maka malam pun hamper habis  
Dan siang pun telah dekat  
Maka sebab itu hendaklah kita membuangkan  
perbuatan yang gelap itu  
Dan hendaklah kita memakai senjata terang.*

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us  
therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put  
on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the  
day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering  
and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

## O Oriens

*O Oriens,  
splendor lucis aeternae,  
et sol justitiae:  
veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris,  
et umbra mortis.*

O morning star,  
splendour of light eternal  
and sun of righteousness:  
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death.

## Nunc Dimittis

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,  
According to thy word:  
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,  
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;  
A light to lighten the Gentiles,  
And the glory of thy people Israel.  
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**Solos:** Sophie Boyd and Hannah Morgan (O Sapientia), Fiona Sharp (Magnificat), Joshua Roche and Angus Gibson (O Adonai), Rachel Taylor (Benedictus), Adam Chapple (O Radix Jesse), Jean Laborde and Philip Scott (Waktu) and Edward Marshall (Nunc Dimittis).

Cover art (featured on screen) by Justin Tan, *Green Coast Night* (2020). [tiangpong.com](http://tiangpong.com). Used with permission.

**Kenneth Tay** (b. 1992) is a Singaporean composer whose music has garnered acclaim, described as “exciting and refreshing” (Alan Cooper), and “original and harmonically engaging” (The Flying Inkpot). Composition highlights include works for the Victoria Chorale, SYC Ensemble Singers, One Chamber Choir, Choir of King’s College Aberdeen, and University of Glasgow Chapel Choir. Currently immersed in doctoral studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, in partnership with the University of St Andrews, Kenneth is generously supported by the RCS Trust and Tan Kah Kee Foundation. His research explores sacred music by integrating Western Judeo-Christian traditions with Asian spirituality, under the guidance of Oliver Searle, Stuart MacRae, and Zechariah Goh.

Kenneth’s endeavours extend to conducting, teaching, and choral performance. He is the founder and artistic director of Basement Bunch, a vocal ensemble dedicated to choral repertory spanning diverse Western and Asian languages. He is presently based in Glasgow, where he is Cantoris Bass in the University of Glasgow Chapel Choir and conductor of the University of Glasgow Medics Music Society. Kenneth holds an MMus with Distinction from the University of Aberdeen, where he studied under Phillip Cooke and Paul Mealor, and was recipient of the prestigious Carlaw-Ogston Master of Music Scholarship.

## Upcoming Events

*All events take place in the Chapel unless otherwise stated*

Wednesday 15 November, 1.10pm

**Organ Recital - Tim Collins (Lillehammer, Norway)**

Wednesday 22 November, 1.10pm

**Organ Recital – Kevin Bowyer (University Organist)**

Saturday 25 November, 7.30pm

**Choral Society and Chapel Choir Concert**

*Arion and the Dolphin* by Jonathan Dove

Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/36nhjt8y>

Tuesday 28 November, 6.10pm

**Taizé Prayers and Music**

Wednesday 29 November, 1.10pm

**Organ Recital - Kevin Bowyer (University Organist)**

Sunday 3 December, 6pm and 8pm

**Madrigals Advent Service**

Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/ysbc6ctx>

Tuesday 5 December, 6.10pm

**Advent Service of Lessons and Music**

Sunday 10 December, 6pm

**University Service of Nine Lessons and Carols**

Arrive early to avoid disappointment!

Tuesday 12 December, 6pm

**Family Carol Service in Chapel, followed by carol singing in the cloisters (TBC)**

Tickets: <https://tinyurl.com/498yu4yu>