



CARNEGIE HALL

March 2014

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Saturday Evening, March 29, 2014, at 7:30
Judy and Arthur Zankel Hall

An Evening of Welsh Music

Noson o Gerddoriaeth Gymreig

CÔRDYDD

PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

with

HUW ALUN FOULKES, *Conductor*

STEFFAN JONES, *Conductor*

IEUAN JONES, *Piano*

CARADOG ROBERTS/
MORSWYN

arr. Jeffrey Howard

In Memoriam/Craig yr Oesoedd ("Rock of Ages")

CÔRDYDD

MANSEL THOMAS/
T.GWYNN JONES

Cennin Aur (Daffodils)

CÔRDYDD

PAUL MEALOR

*Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal: Four Madrigals
on Rose Texts*

- I. "Now sleeps the crimson petal" (Tennyson)
- II. "Lady, when I behold the roses sprouting" (Anon.)
- III. "Upon a bank with roses set about" (John Ward)
- IV. "A Spotless Rose" (Anon.)

CÔRDYDD

PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

WILLIAM MATHIAS

Santa Fe Suite

- I. Landscape
- II. Nocturne
- III. Sun Dance

GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

KARL JENKINS

Adiemus

CÔRDYDD and GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

(continued)

PAUL MEALOR

*Wherever You Are
Salvator Mundi: Greater Love*

CÔRDYDD

NIA TUDUR, BETSAN POWYS, OWEN SAER, and

STEFFAN JONES, *Soloists*

PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

Intermission

PAUL MEALOR

Ubi Caritas

CÔRDYDD and PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

NIA TUDUR, *Soloist*

PAUL MEALOR/
GRAHAME DAVIES

Gweddi Gymreig ("A Welsh Prayer")

CÔRDYDD

GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

DAVID WATKINS

Passacaglia

TRADITIONAL
arr. John Thomas

*Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn ("Watching the White
Wheat")*

GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

MORRIS EDDIE EVANS/
W. RHYS NICHOLAS
arr. Jeffrey Howard

Pantymfedwen (Welsh hymn)

RHYS JONES/
LESLIE HARRIS
arr. Jeffrey Howard

O Gymru ("O, Wales")

CÔRDYDD

PAUL MEALOR

Stabat Mater

I. *Stabat mater dolorosa*

II. *Eia mater, fons amoris*

III. *Virgo virginum praeclar*

IV. *Christe, cum sit hinc exire*

CÔRDYDD

GWENLLIAN LLYR, *Harp*

NIA TUDUR, *Soloist*

PAUL MEALOR, *Conductor*

Welcome

Croeso and welcome to an evening of Welsh choral music with Paul Mealor and Côrddydd. We look forward to performing a varied program of contemporary works by Paul Mealor and other Welsh composers who have achieved international recognition. Our guest performer is Welsh harpist Gwenllïan Llyr, who recently graduated from The Juilliard School in New York.

Many singers and performers have come from Wales to the United States over many years and made their mark on stage and screen. Indeed, Wales has produced more than its share of talents, for a country of just over 3 million people. One name that stands out in recent years is Bryn Terfel, with whom Côrddydd worked on a recording of Christmas songs in 2010. For Côrddydd, as for Bryn Terfel, the Welsh language is an important part of our identity. Many of us socialize and work through the medium of Welsh, and choir rehearsals of course, are conducted in Welsh. You will hear the Welsh language sung tonight in new arrangements of traditional hymns or in Mansel Thomas' beautiful, lyrical melody, *Cennin Aur* ("Daffodils"), which has long been a choir favorite. At the same time, we embrace a wide variety of international music, including classical repertoire and contemporary works in different languages.

Our visit to New York is not our first American connection. We have had the good fortune to work with eminent American composers Eric Whitacre and Morten Lauridsen, and performed in concert with Lauridsen in Wales in 2013. Our ambition to sing with Lauridsen was realized through his connection with Welsh composer Paul Mealor. This year, we are honored to reciprocate by singing Paul Mealor's music in the United States, and to showcase Welsh choral music at its best. Among the many highlights of the program is a United States premiere of *Gweddi Gymreig* ("A Welsh Prayer") by Paul Mealor, with words by poet Grahame Davies.

Another Welsh tradition which has been adopted in many countries, particularly the United States, is the Eisteddfod, which is a competitive festival of song, poetry, and much more. Côrddydd can claim to be Eisteddfod aficionados, and we have succeeded in winning the festival choir prize at the annual National Eisteddfod on more than one occasion. We are indebted to the National Eisteddfod of Wales for their part in supporting this venture to New York.

For a small choir of amateur singers such as Côrddydd, it is indeed a privilege to come to perform at one of the most famous concert venues in the world. We hope you enjoy this evening's program at Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, and we hope too that this visit to the United States will not be our last.

Notes ON THE PROGRAM

CARADOG ROBERTS/MORSWYN *In Memoriam/Craig yr Oesoedd* ("Rock of Ages")

One of Wales' most well-known hymns, *In Memoriam* was composed by Caradog Roberts (1878–1935) in memory of Welsh composer Harry Evans. The words *Craig yr Oesoedd* ("Rock of Ages") by Samuel Jonathan Griffith or Morswyn from Anglesey (1850–93) were inspired by the view

over Porth Dafarch beach near Holyhead. This arrangement of the hymn by Jeff Howard was commissioned by Côrddydd to perform in the Choir of Wales competition on Welsh television channel S4C in 2009, in which the choir won the category of best mixed voice choir.

MANSEL THOMAS/T. GWYNN JONES *Cennin Aur* ("Daffodils")

Mansel Thomas (1909–86) was one of the most influential musicians of his generation in Wales, and was known as a composer, conductor, and adjudicator. *Cennin Aur* was composed in the mid-1920s for his local male voice choir, Côr Meibion Pendyrus in Tylorstown, Rhondda. It was his first notable

composition, and remains a firm favorite for male and mixed choirs in Wales. The poem, by English poet and cleric Robert Herrick (1591–1674), translated into Welsh by leading Welsh poet and scholar T. Gwynn Jones (1871–1949), depicts the daffodils as a symbol of both the beauty and fragility of nature and life itself.

PAUL MEALOR *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal: Four Madrigals on Rose texts*

This work was commissioned in 2010 by John Armitage Memorial, and first performed by the joint choirs of the University of St. Andrews Chapel Choir, University of Aberdeen Chamber Choir, and the Edinburgh University Chamber Choir, conducted by Michael Bawtree in October 2010. The four texts for this short choral cycle are all connected by roses—either directly or as a metaphor for love. "Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal" by Tennyson is an erotic, sensual poem that compares human beauty to

that of the rose and lily—the closing of the lily representing the union of two lovers. "Lady, When I Behold the Roses Sprouting" compares a woman's red lips to that of the deep red rose. "Upon a Bank" by John Ward presents an idyllic scene of a trickling brook with roses set around it and small turtle doves kissing. However, 'love' is wounded and surrounded by this beautiful setting, cannot be appeased. "A Spotless Rose," is the emotional heart of the cycle, and recalls the music of the previous movements.

WILLIAM MATHIAS *Santa Fe Suite*

William Mathias (1934–92) is one of Wales' most famous composers. He was known as a conductor and pianist, and his compositions have reached large and varied audiences both in Britain and abroad. The *Santa Fe Suite*, a colorful and attractive suite for solo

harp, was inspired by a visit by the composer to Santa Fe in New Mexico, and the influence of the culture and rhythms of Spain on the city are reflected in the work. The Suite was composed for Gwennllian Llyr's former harp teacher and inspiration, Caryl Thomas.

KARL JENKINS *Adiemus*

Karl Jenkins (b. 1944) is one of Wales' most famous and prolific contemporary composers. In January 2014 his 70th birthday was celebrated with a concert of his music at Carnegie Hall. *Adiemus*, the first movement from *Songs of Sanctuary*, is his most well-known composition. It became familiar as the theme

to the Delta Airlines television commercial in 1994. There are no lyrics as such; instead the vocalists sing syllables and words invented by the composer, and it is intended that the vocal sounds should be akin to those heard in ethnic or world music. Tonight's performance is a new arrangement for choir and harp.

PAUL MEALOR *Wherever You Are*

This song was commissioned by English Choirmaster and broadcaster Gareth Malone for the fourth series of the BBC2 program *The Choir*. It was first performed by the Military Wives Choir under the direction of Gareth Malone as part of the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance at

the Royal Albert Hall in November 2011. The song reached No. 1 on the United Kingdom's Christmas Singles Chart in the same year. The lyrics are a love poem, based on correspondence between the wives and their partners serving with the armed forces in Afghanistan.

PAUL MEALOR *Salvator Mundi: Greater Love*

Salvator Mundi: Greater Love was commissioned by the Swansea Festival of Music and the Arts and premiered by Côrddydd at St. Mary's Church, in Swansea on October 9, 2011. It combines two sacred texts—the Latin prayer, *Salvator mundi* ("Saviour of the World") and verses from the Gospel of St. John (15:12 and 15:13). The Latin texts are

sung by the soloists, as the choir sings the text from St. John in English. At the close of the piece, the music evaporates into shimmering waves, as if 'speaking in tongues', over which the solo soprano sings a final lament on the words of Christ sung in Welsh, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

PAUL MEALOR *Ubi Caritas*

This motet by Paul Mealar is a revised setting of his 2010 piece *Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal*, commissioned to be sung at the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in

April 2011. The words *Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est...* ("Where charity and love are, God is there"), derive from a Christian prayer dating from the sixth century.

PAUL MEALOR/GRAHAME DAVIES *Gweddi Gymreig* ("A Welsh Prayer")

Commissioned by Holywell Music and the North Wales International Music Festival as a gift to celebrate the 65th birthday of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. The bilingual Welsh and English words were written especially for this anthem by Grahame Davies—one of Wales' most outstanding contemporary

poets. The piece was premiered by the Aberdeen University Chamber Choir with harpists Hannah Stone and Catrin Finch, conducted by the composer in September 2013 at St. Asaph's Cathedral as part of the North Wales International Music Festival. This performance will be its United States premiere.

DAVID WATKINS *Passacaglia*

Although born and educated in England, David Watkins (b.1938) has lived in Wales for a number of years and is very much aware of his Welsh heritage. Since winning first prize in an International American Competition with his composition *Petite Suite* for

harp, he has written many pieces for the harp and other instruments. *Passacaglia* was composed in 2005 to remember all those who suffered pain, bereavement, and whose lives and dreams were shattered by the Iraq War and the Asian tsunami.

TRADITIONAL *Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn* ("Watching the White Wheat")

John Thomas (1826–1913) was a Welsh composer and harpist. He composed many pieces for the harp, and his arrangement of *Bugeilio'r Gwenith Gwyn* is still very popular today. This 18th-century love song describes

the tragic love affair between Ann, the daughter of a wealthy farming family and Wil, a farm laborer. After being forced into a marriage with the son of the local squire, Ann died of a broken heart.

MORRIS EDDIE EVANS/W. RHYS NICHOLAS *Pantfyedwen* (Welsh hymn)

This is a favorite hymn sung by Welsh congregations. In 1967 the poet and chapel minister W. Rhys Nicholas (1914–96) won first prize for the hymn lyrics at Eisteddfod Pantfyedwen, and the following year Morris Eddie Evans (1890–1984) won at the same Eisteddfod in a competition to compose music for the words. The hymn became known as

Pantfyedwen. Both poet and composer are well respected in their fields, but this marriage of words and melody is by far their most famous work. This arrangement of the hymn for *Côrddydd* by Jeff Howard was commissioned as a wedding gift to the choir's musical director, Sioned James, and was first performed at her wedding service in August 2010.

RHYS JONES/LESLIE HARRIS *O Gymru* ("O, Wales")

This is one of the most well-known songs by the prolific Welsh composer Rhys Jones (b. 1927), from Flintshire. It has been sung many times by soloists, vocal ensembles, and choirs. The poet Leslie Harris from Rhyl wrote the words for many of Rhys Jones' most famous

songs. The words for this song are patriotic, and are a declaration of the Welsh people's passion and love for their country. This arrangement by Jeff Howard was commissioned by Côrddydd, and was premiered at the closing concert for the National Eisteddfod in 2010.

PAUL MEALOR *Stabat Mater*

The *Stabat Mater* was composed by Paul Mealor in 2009, using the well-known words of a Catholic hymn from the 13th century. The hymn conveys the suffering of the Virgin Mary at the Cross. It is set in four movements here, each part seamlessly woven into the next:

- I. *Stabat mater dolorosa* ("The mournful mother stood weeping at the cross")
- II. *Eia mater, fons amoris* ("O thou

mother, fount of love")

III. *Virgo virginum praeclara* ("Virgin of all virgins blest")

IV. *Christe, cum sit hinc exire* ("Christ when thou shalt call me hence")

The work was acclaimed by music critics and audiences alike. "The *Stabat Mater* is movingly serene and beautiful..." wrote Ivan March, in the January 2010 edition of *Gramophone*.

THE Artists

CÔRDYDD



Côrddydd was founded in 2000 in Wales' capital city, Cardiff (in Welsh—Caerdydd), by a group of friends who enjoyed music and wanted to socialize through the medium of the Welsh

language. Over the years, the choir has grown from strength to strength by ensuring success in competitions and concerts working alongside many world-renowned conductors and composers.

Last year, Côrddydd welcomed the American composer Morten Lauridsen to Wales as part of his 70th birthday celebrations. It was a privilege for the choir to work with him and Paul Mealar, in two concerts at St. David's Cathedral and Llandaff Cathedral—the perfect locations for his spiritual and magical *Lux Aeterna* and *Nocturnes*. This special union with Lauridsen came about thanks to the Welsh composer, Paul Mealar, who worked with Côrddydd in 2011 at the Swansea Festival of Music and the Arts. The choir made such an impression, that he contacted his friend Lauridsen to persuade him to come to Wales to work with Côrddydd. It is therefore wonderful for the choir to be able to repay the favor and have the honor of working with Paul Mealar in New York and performing his work.

The choir has twice performed under the baton of the American choral composer Eric Whitacre. In 2010 Whitacre came to Wales for the first time to perform at Hoddinott Hall in the Wales Millenium Centre with Côrddydd, and he returned a year later to conduct the choir at St. David's Hall, in Cardiff. A *Western Mail* critic wrote, "It feels like Whitacre's contemporary a capella pieces were actually written for these singers. Their note-perfect delivery, particularly during his more gentle works like *Seal Lullaby*, made the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end."

The choir has recorded two CDs. With John Rutter's blessing, the choir made a recording of his *Requiem* in 2007, for

the first time in Welsh, with the wonderful voice of Elin Manahan Thomas. In 2010 the choir was chosen to perform on Bryn Terfel's Christmas CD and also performed with him for a television Christmas special on S4C (Welsh television channel).

Côrddydd has won the Choir of the Festival award at the National Eisteddfod more than any other choir, four times in all—in Cardiff in 2008, Wrexham in 2011, The Vale of Glamorgan in 2012, and Denbigh in 2013. The choir has also won the competition for mixed choirs of up to 45 voices eight times. In 2003 Côrddydd won BBC Radio Cymru's Choir of Wales competition, and in 2009 came top of the mixed choir category in S4C's Choir of Wales competition.

The choir has travelled to Hong Kong and Barbados, and in 2004 Côrddydd toured with the Welsh Baroque Orchestra to perform Handel's *Messiah*. In 2005 the choir was fortunate enough to sing Verdi's *Requiem* with the BBC Orchestra, and Brahms' *Requiem* alongside the Swansea Bach Choir. The choir has recorded radio sessions for Sunday Half Hour on Radio 2 as has appeared on television and radio many times.

Côrddydd is recognized as one of Wales' most eminent mixed choirs—according to Paul Mealar, "This without a doubt is the best choir in Wales." The choir's aim is to keep developing its vocal quality and providing its members with the widest possible range of opportunities, as well as giving audiences memorable experiences.

PAUL MEALOR



Paul Meador has been described as, “the most important composer to have emerged in Welsh choral music since William Mathias” (the *New York Times*, 2001) and his sacred motets, songs, and cycles have been performed, broadcast, and recorded by artists in the United Kingdom, United States, and much further afield. He became the first classical composer to hold both the classical and pop chart No. 1’s at the same time in December 2011 with *Wherever You Are*, his piece for The Military Wives Choir and Gareth Malone.

Mr. Meador was catapulted to international attention when 2.5 billion people (the largest audience in broadcasting

history) heard his Motet *Ubi caritas* performed by the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Her Majesty’s Chapel Royal, conducted by James O’Donnell at the Royal Wedding Ceremony of His Royal Highness Prince William and Catherine Middleton (now TRH The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge) at Westminster Abbey, in April 2011.

Born in St. Asaph, North Wales, United Kingdom, in 1975, Mr. Meador studied composition from an early age with William Mathias and John Pickard, and later at the University of York with Nicola LeFanu (1994–2002) and in Copenhagen with Hans Abrahamsen (1998–99). Since 2003 he has taught at the University of Aberdeen, where he is currently reader in composition, and has held visiting professorships in composition at institutions in Scandinavia and the United States.

In July 2011 Mr. Meador signed with Decca Records and signed a publishing contract with Novello & Co. His first album for Decca, *A Tender Light*, a collection of sacred anthems recorded by Tenebrae and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, spent six weeks at No. 1 on the specialist classical charts. He is currently preparing his second album for Decca.

GWENLLIAN LLYR



Welsh harpist Gwenllian Llyr is quickly gaining international recognition for her energetic and charismatic performances. As well as a number of Eisteddfod prizes including the Nansi Richards Scholarship, Ms. Llyr has gained national and international awards. In 2010 she claimed the First Prize at the United Kingdom Camac Harp Competition, and was awarded seventh place at the USA International Harp Competition.

Ms. Llyr took part in the celebration of actor Richard Burton's life, performing at the publication of his diaries in New York and at the unveiling of his star on Hollywood's Walk of Fame. She has also been privileged to perform with renowned artists such as jazz legend Al Jarreau, actor Matthew Rhys, and international opera singer Bryn Terfel, with whom she performed for The Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace.

She recently graduated with a master's of music degree from The Juilliard School in New York, where she studied under Nancy Allen. During her time there, she was awarded the William Schuman prize for outstanding achievement and leadership in music. She now lives in London where she is working at the Royal Academy of Music and pursuing a career as a professional harpist.

HUW ALUN FOULKES

Huw Alun Foulkes has been involved with choral singing and conducting for several years. As a former member of Ysgol Glanaethwy, he competed at local, national, and international levels, and has also won as a soloist at the national level. In 2009 he was a member of Côr Ysgol Gerdd Ceredigion and reached the Choir of the World competition at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod. Mr. Foulkes was offered an opportunity to be a musical director during his first year at Cardiff University and for seven years, he conducted Côr Aelwyd y Waun Ddyfal. He led them to several first prizes at the Urdd Eisteddfod, the National Eisteddfod, and the Cerdd Dant Festival. Last year, they were named the best youth choir in Wales by winning their category in the Choir of Wales competition. At last year's National Eisteddfod, Mr. Foulkes



conducted three choirs—Côr Aelwyd y Waun Ddyfal, Côrddydd, and Côr y Mochyn Du. He earned a master's degree in Welsh and a postgraduate diploma in broadcast journalism at Cardiff University before starting his career as a broadcast journalist for BBC Wales.

STEFFAN JONES

Originally from Cardiff, Steffan Jones is an experienced soloist and chorister, as well as a conductor. He was a choral scholar in the Choir of Worcester College Chapel, Oxford, before moving to London to study voice at the Royal College of Music. Recent solo performances include Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd* (Welsh National Youth Opera); Dewi in *The Journey* (Welsh National Opera MAX); Handel's *Messiah*; Fauré's *Requiem* at St. Martin-in-the-Fields (Vivamus) and Bernstein's *Mass*



at the 2012 BBC Proms. In 2011 he won the Under 25 Solo at the National Urdd Eisteddfod and as a result competed in the Bryn Terfel Scholarship on S4C. He also won the Classical Male Singer section in BBC Radio Cymru's Cyfle Cothi. He was invited to perform with the

IEUAN JONES



Originally from Anglesey, Ieuan Jones moved to Cardiff to study music at the

SIONED JAMES

Côrddydd's musical director is Sioned James who graduated from Cardiff University with first class honors in 1997. Ms. James is the founding conductor of Côrddydd and is responsible for developing the choir's diverse repertoire. She has also provided the choir with the vision and ambition to work with world famous musicians, composers, and conductors. She won the award for the best conductor in 2009 in S4C's *Côr Cymru*.

Ms. James has had an active interest in choral music since an early age, having sung with numerous choirs, including the National Youth Choir of Wales and the Swansea Bach Choir. She was fortunate to have been a pupil of conductors John Hugh Thomas and Islwyn Evans, and it was Islwyn Evans who gave her the

Three Welsh Tenors at the Wales Millennium Centre. During his time in London, he co-founded a Welsh-speaking society for young people, *Aelwyd yr Urdd*. Mr. Jones was the *Aelwyd* choir's first conductor, and the girls' choir winner at the Urdd Eisteddfod in 2012.

University of Cardiff, where he received an honors degree. During his studies, he became an organ scholar at Dewi Sant Church and is now musical director and choirmaster there. He's had many successes at The Urdd Eisteddfod and the National Eisteddfod over the years, and is now a busy accompanist for soloists, *Côr Aelwyd y Waun Ddyfal* and *Côr y Mochyn Du*. As well as being one of Côrddydd's accompanists, Mr. Jones has been a member of the tenor section for three years. His other musical interests include playing the ukulele, and entertaining audiences with his talents as a yodeller.

opportunity to conduct choirs such as *Ysgol Gerdd Ceredigion* from age 16. Ms. James now enjoys a varied career in the world of music and as an agent. She collaborated with Charlie Skarbek on the Rugby World Cup CD and she was featured on the BBC network programme *Can't Sing Singers* in which she coached twelve non-singers on a musical journey. She has worked as the choral coordinator for three seasons of *Con Passionate*, an S4C drama, based on a fictional choir, as well as two seasons of BBC's *Coalhouse*. More recently she worked with Decca Records on S4C's *Llais i Gymru* ("Voice for Wales").

Ms. James is unable to join us at the concert due to illness—we wish her a speedy and full recovery.

CÔRDYDD

Sioned James, *Musical Director*

Huw Alun Foulkes, *Conductor*

Steffan Jones, *Conductor*

Ieuan Jones, *Accompanist*

Soprano

Ffion Hywel

Rhian Jardine

Rhian Jones

Nia Wyn Jones

Elliw Mai

Angharad Roche

Lucy Ronchetti

Eleri Selwood

Nia Tudur

Eleri Hopcyn

Williams

Alto

Elin Dimmick

Nia Edwards

Llio Ellis

Luned Jones

Ffion Lanchbury

Elain Llwyd

Elin Maher

Awen Penri

Betsan Powys

Meinir Ricards

Tenor

Arwel Davies

Huw Alun Foulkes

Ieuan Jones

Richard Lewis

Owen Saer

Conal Sayers

Bass

Emyr Davies

Myrddin Edwards

Tom Guy

Dylan Hammond

Steffan Jones

Rhodri Jones

Stuart Munro

Llŷr Roberts

Steffan Watkins

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Mari Fflur, *Treasurer*, Côrdydd

Sioned James, *Founder*, Côrdydd

Côrdydd Organizing Committee

Salem Chapel, Cardiff

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