

# The Cantilena Singers

Daniel Spreadbury – Director

## *Celebrate!*



**Saturday 22 July 2023**

St. Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck

# Programme

Nights of music Come, sleep	Charles Wood (1866–1926)
Music, when soft voices die	C. Hubert Parry (1848–1918)
As torrents in summer	Edward Elgar (1857–1934)
The blue bird	Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924)
Lay a garland	Robert Pearsall (1795–1856)
Selection from <i>Five Flower Songs</i> To daffodils • The Succession of the Four Sweet Months • The Evening Primrose	Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)
<i>Six songs to poems by Christina Rossetti</i> May • A summer wish • Echo • A birthday • Remember • An end	Roderick Elmer



**INTERVAL** *during which refreshments will be served.*



Selection from <i>Seven Part-songs to poems by Robert Bridges</i> I praise the tender flower • My spirit sang all day • Clear and gentle stream	Gerald Finzi (1901–1956)
Selection from <i>Five Childhood Lyrics</i> The owl and the pussycat • Sing a song of sixpence	John Rutter (b. 1940)
Selection from <i>Five Traditional Songs</i> The girl I left behind me • O waly, waly • Golden slumbers • Dashing away with the smoothing iron	John Rutter
Danny Boy (Londonderry Air)	Trad., arr. Peter Knight, ad. Philip Lawson
The oak and the ash	Trad., arr. Gordon Langford (1930–2017)
She moved through the fair	Trad., arr. Ben Finn (b. 1968)
The wild mountain thyme	Trad., arr. John Ross
It was a lover and his lass	John Rutter

# About tonight's programme

Attempting to craft a programme that can sum up forty years of music-making in and around Swaffham Bulbeck is a fool's errand: over the course of those four decades, there have been half a dozen directors and no doubt a few hundred different singers who have met weekly for an evening of singing and fellowship. My own tenure, which by now spans over half of the choir's history, has included more than 60 concerts and more than 350 different works large and small, from masses to musical theatre numbers, from plainsong to part songs, and everything in between.

With our forthcoming final concert of the year in December, we will commemorate another important milestone, the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd, with a concert of seasonal sacred music for Advent and Christmas. Tonight, though, we present an evening of secular music in English, and almost exclusively by English composers (or Irish transplants who spent most of their lives in England!), focused on part songs and folk songs.

We begin with Charles Wood's setting of Thomas Moore's poem celebrating *Nights of music*, and wind our way through favourite part songs from contemporaries including Wood's mentors Stanford and Parry, and their great friend Elgar. Their rich lyricism stands in contrast to the energetic rhythms and counterpoint of Britten's mid-century *Five Flower Songs*, before the first half concludes with Roderick Elmer's Rossetti songs, which Cantilena first performed in 2004.

Once we move beyond the sublime selection of Robert Bridges part songs from one of our most frequently programmed composers, Gerald Finzi, the second half of the programme leans more on folk song arrangements, with a sprinkling of Shakespeare, nonsense verse and nursery rhymes thrown into the mix.

We will be augmented by alumni from the choir in attendance at tonight's concert for *The wild mountain thyme*, one of the first arrangements that I brought to the choir after taking over as director, and we are delighted to have Cantilena's founding director, Roger Bond, here with us this evening.

Happy birthday, Cantilena. Here's to forty years of fellowship and fine singing – and many happy returns still to come.

*Daniel Spreadbury, Director*

# The Cantilena Singers

## *Soprano*

Amanda Bouskill

Hilary Burton

Alison McRobb

Jude Short

Cath Stubbs

Caille Sugarman-Banaszak

## *Tenor*

Steven Aronson

Sam Spreadbury

## *Alto*

Kate Clark

Miriam Craddock

Evelyn Payne

Judy Rowland

## *Bass*

Mike Gait

Owen Johnson

Stephen Linden

Tim Rowland

The Cantilena Singers is a well-established chamber choir that performs regularly in Cambridge and the surrounding villages. 2023 is the choir's 40th anniversary, having been founded in 1983, and the choir remains committed to promoting the joy of choral singing.

We are always looking for new members. If you would like to join us, please get in touch.



**Daniel Spreadbury** read for a degree in music at University College, Oxford, where he studied singing with Alastair Thompson, founder member of the King's Singers, and sang with and directed a variety of college and chapel choirs around the city. Daniel has been the director of Cantilena since 2001.



The Cantilena Singers' next concert in December 2023 will commemorate the 400th anniversary of the death of William Byrd and conclude our special year of 40th birthday celebrations.

More details will be forthcoming at [www.cantilenasingers.org.uk/next-concert](http://www.cantilenasingers.org.uk/next-concert)