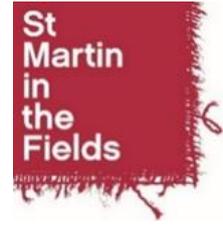




Ministry of
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Eight centuries of exquisite music with UK's finest choirs as annual festival of Polish sacred music returns



8 – 11 November 2022 | St Martin-in-the-Fields, London

Joy & Devotion, the annual festival of Polish sacred music, returns to St Martin-in-the-Fields this autumn following its launch by the **Adam Mickiewicz Institute** in 2021.

With eight centuries of exquisite sacred music performed by some of the finest UK choral ensembles – **Polyphony**, **The Gesualdo Six** and **Rodolfus Choir** – the series includes three richly programmed concerts in the glorious acoustic of St Martin-in-the-Fields. It is part of the Institute's mission to share the abundance of Polish culture with international audiences.

This year the festival includes the world premiere of an extraordinary new setting of the Latin Mass by Marek Raczyński, a rising star of the Polish choral scene on the international stage, as well as more than twenty UK premieres. Of these there are two moving motets to Mary, Mother of God, by the late Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, known to many worldwide for his *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*. Another notable premiere is Festival Artistic Director Paweł Łukaszewski's centenary tribute to St John Paul II, *Missa Sancti Papæ Ioannis Pauli Secundi Magni*.

Joy & Devotion 2022 opens on 8 November with **Stephen Layton** conducting **Polyphony**, a choir he founded in 1986 and now widely regarded as one of the best small professional choirs in the world. The concert celebrates the legacy of St John Paul II who helped to secure the peaceful collapse of the Soviet Union and thus the liberation of Poland. In doing so, he inspired his native Polish composers to write some of the most communicative choral pieces of the 20th century. Wojciech Kilar's *Agnus Dei* commences the evening: an affecting wall of sound and prayer for peace, composed in 2000. Paweł Łukaszewski's papal tribute, written to mark the

centenary of St John Paul II's birth in 2020, will receive its UK premiere. The evening concludes with Marian Borkowski's powerful *Libera me*. Organist **Rupert Jeffcoat** takes on Moryto's *Veni creator* and Przybylski's *Kölner Fanfare*.

The Gesualdo Six led by **Owain Park** make a welcome return to the Festival and St Martin's for a concert themed around the Virgin Mary on 10 November. For many Polish Catholics, Mary is revered as the eternal Queen of Poland, and as such has inspired the warmest of musical tributes across the centuries. The centrepiece of this concert is the world premiere of a brand-new mass in her honour, commissioned specially from composer Marek Raczyński, one of the most prominent members of Poland's thriving contemporary music scene. The new work weaves its way through a programme that includes the UK premiere of two of Górecki's songs from 1986 in praise of the Blessed Virgin, Baroque composer Bartłomiej Pękiel's striking *Ave Maria* (c.1661-9) and Aleksandra Chmielewska's *Salutatio angelica* (2015), interspersed with solo organ works by Marian Sawa and Michał Schaeffer, for which Rupert Jeffcoat returns.

This year's Festival concludes with an evening of ancient and modern music performed by the young singers of **Rodolfus Choir** under the direction of **Ralph Allwood** [11 Nov]. *Bogurodzica*, medieval Poland's great hymn to the Virgin Mary, will feature in their programme alongside music by Marian Sawa (1937-2005) including a chorale prelude for organ, *Adoro te devote*, performed by Rupert Jeffcoat.

This concert will also see the premiere of dynamic young composer Jan Krutul's *Missa brevis* and 17th-century motets by Grzegorz Gerwazy Gorczycki, one of Poland's greatest Baroque composers. Cellist **Leo Popplewell** will perform in Roxanna Panufnik's *All shall be well* (2009); Panufnik is a British composer of Polish heritage. **Rodolfus Choir**, praised for its beautiful and memorable performances, boasts some of the finest young choristers in the country and promises to give eloquent interpretations of these Polish masterpieces.

Barbara Schabowska, Director of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, said:

"Poland's deep Christian foundation has inspired composers to create music of great beauty and emotional power through the centuries and composers today are continuing to create music of great truth, goodness and peace. I'm particularly proud this year to present great music of the past with the best modern Sacred music and I hope that audiences will come and explore this glorious music with us."

Paweł Łukaszewski, Artistic Director, said:

"I am delighted to direct 'Joy & Devotion' Festival for a second time, and share the many glories of Polish sacred music, both old and new, with British audiences. We look forward to hearing these excellent British choirs perform these great works of Polish of choral music in such a fine setting, and we are proud to have commissioned some brand new music for the occasion."

-ENDS-

For more information or to arrange interviews / press tickets, please contact Premier:

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Notes to Editors

Listings

Paweł Łukaszewski Artistic Director

Tuesday 8 November 19:30, St Martin-in-the-Fields

Polyphony: Music for a Polish Pope

Wojciech Kilar *Agnus Dei*

Michał Ziółkowski *Ave maris Stella*

Marcin Łukaszewski *Pie Jesu*

Stanisław Moryto *Veni creator* [organ solo]

Miłosz Bembinow *Veni Sancte Spiritus*

Marian Borkowski *Regina caeli*

Dariusz Przybylski *Kölner Fanfare* [organ solo]

Paweł Łukaszewski *Missa Sancti Papae Ioannis Pauli Secundi Magni*

Marian Borkowski *Libera me*

Polyphony

Stephen Layton conductor

Rupert Jeffcoat organ

Thursday 10 November 19:30, St Martin-in-the-Fields

Gaude Mater Polonia – Polish Music for the Virgin Mary

Górecki *Veni, O mater terrae* [UK premiere]

Górecki *O, mater semper alma* [UK premiere]

Raczyński *Mass*

Gorczycki *Tota pulchra es Maria*

Marian Sawa *Salve Regina*

Marian Sawa *'Te Deum' – Silesian Fantasy* [organ solo]

Marian Sawa *Regina caeli*

Aleksandra Chmielewska *Salutatio Angelica*

Bartłomiej Pękiel *Ave Maria*

Michał Schaeffer *Lumiere de Laube* [organ solo]

Stanisław Moryto *Preces pro Polonia*

Wincenty z Kielczy *Gaude Mater Polonia*

The Gesualdo Six

Owain Park conductor

Rupert Jeffcoat organ

Friday 11 November 19:30, St Martin-in-the-Fields

Rodolfus Choir: Masters of Polish Polyphony

Anon. *Bogurodzica*

Marian Sawa *Chorale Prelude 'Adoro te devote'* [organ solo]

Grzegorz Gorczycki *O Rex Gloriam*

Grzegorz Gorczycki *Sepulto Domino*

Mikołaj Zieleński *Beata es Virgo Maria*

Mikołaj z Krakowa (Nicolaus Cracoviensis) *Salve* [organ solo]
Mikołaj Zieleński *O gloriosa Domina*
Mikołaj Zieleński *Benedicamus Deum Coeli*
Tabulatura Jana z Lublina *Rex* [organ solo]
Roxanna Panufnik *All shall be well*
Marian Sawa *Popule meus*
Jan Krutul *Ave verum corpus*
Jan Krutul *Missa brevis*
Mikołaj z Krakowa (Nicolaus Cracoviensis) *Ave Jerarchia* [organ solo]
Stanisław Moryto *Three Psalms*

Rodolfus Choir

Ralph Allwood conductor

Rupert Jeffcoat organ

Leo Poplewell cello

Biographies

[Adam Mickiewicz Institute](#)

The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is a national cultural institute whose mission is to build and communicate the cultural dimension of the Poland brand through active participation in international cultural exchange. The Institute has carried out cultural projects in 70 countries on six continents, including in the United Kingdom, France, Russia, Israel, Germany, Turkey, the United States, Canada, Australia, Morocco, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, China, Japan, and Korea. Within the framework of its activities to date, the Institute has developed 38 strategic programmes seen by 60 million viewers. The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is governed by the Ministry of Culture, National Heritage and Sport.

[Polyphony](#)

Polyphony was formed by Stephen Layton in 1986 for a concert in King's College Chapel, Cambridge. Since then the choir has performed and recorded regularly to great critical acclaim throughout the world. Recent reviews declare Polyphony 'one of the best small choirs now before the public' (Telegraph) and 'possibly the best small professional chorus in the world' (Encore Magazine, USA). In a new poll by Gramophone Magazine they were named as one of the world's leading choirs 'Stephen Layton's choir have become renowned for both their sound and versatility – whether in early music, or contemporary works such as those of Eric Whitacre, they embody the remarkable tradition of British choral excellence at its finest.'

For more than a decade Polyphony has given annual sell-out performances of Bach's St John Passion and Handel's Messiah at St John's Smith Square. These have become notable events in London's music calendar and have been broadcast by BBC Radio 3 and the EBU. According to the Evening Standard 'no one but no one performs Handel's Messiah better every year than the choir Polyphony', and the Times rate it 'amongst the finest John Passions ... ever heard'.

[The Gesualdo Six](#)

The Gesualdo Six is an award-winning British vocal ensemble comprising some of the UK's finest consort singers, directed by Owain Park. Praised for their imaginative programming and impeccable blend, the ensemble formed in 2014 for a performance of Gesualdo's *Tenebrae*

Responsories in Cambridge and has gone on to perform at numerous major festivals across the UK, Europe, North America and Australia. Notable highlights include a concert as part of the distinguished Deutschlandradio Debut Series, a Wigmore Hall debut and tour of the USA in 2021, and collaborations with the Brodsky Quartet, London Mozart Players, Luxmuralis, William Barton and Matilda Lloyd.

The ensemble integrates educational work into its activities, regularly holding workshops for young musicians and composers. The Gesualdo Six has curated two Composition Competitions, with the 2019 edition attracting entries from over three hundred composers around the world. The group have recently commissioned new works from Joanna Ward, Kerensa Briggs, Deborah Pritchard, Joanna Marsh, Shruthi Rajasekar and Richard Barnard alongside *coronasolfege for 6* by Héloïse Werner.

Rodolfus Choir

With a sound hailed as ‘unspeakably beautiful’ by Gramophone, the Rodolfus Choir has established itself firmly over a period of thirty years as one of the leading young choirs in the United Kingdom; during which time they have developed a lasting reputation for their commitment to the very highest level of musicality. Comprising some of the finest young singers in the country, its members are all alumni of the famous Eton Choral Courses. Conducted by their founder Ralph Allwood, the fresh and vibrant sound of the choir is a reflection of their profound sensitivity to dynamic contrast, blend and phrasing. The group have become renowned for their imaginative programming, their innovative and exciting performances, as well as for their extensive array of prestigious recordings.

Rupert Jeffcoat

Rupert hails from Scotland, attending the same schools as Sean Connery, Steven Osborne and Robbie Coltrane. Taking up the organ age 17, he became a Scholar at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, gained his FRCO less than three years later, and he also regularly accompanied the choirs of King’s and St John’s Colleges. After short spells in Surrey, Yorkshire and Birmingham, he was appointed Music Director of Coventry Cathedral aged 26, leading their choirs on tours to Russia, Japan and South Africa.

Rupert studied with Glenn Gould’s organ teacher, Peter Hurford, has recorded with Emma Kirkby, broadcast with the BBC Singers and regularly worked with Ex Cathedra, the Dunedin Consort and many other groups. He holds a doctorate in Musical Composition, with his Third Service being performed on every continent (except Antarctica). He spent 5 years renovating the worship life of Diocese of Brisbane (the size of the UK), and since 2011 has supported the music ministry of St Luke’s Chelsea.