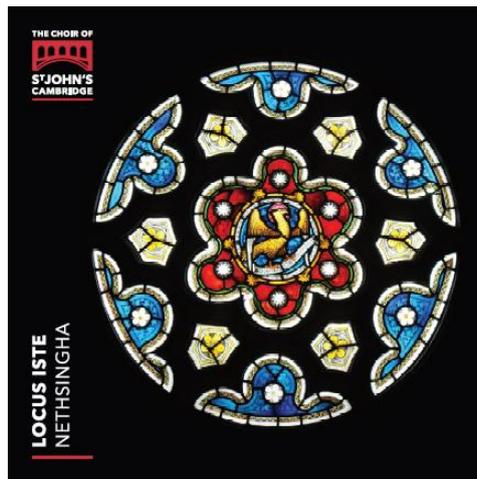




Choir of St John's College, Cambridge, release 100th recording to mark the 150th anniversary of the completion of the St John's College Chapel



**The Choir of St John's, Cambridge release *Locus Iste* on 26th April 2019, showcasing choral classics from the past 150 years, and two new commissions
Signum Records | 26 April 2019 | SIGCD567**

The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge is set to release their latest album, *Locus Iste*, on 26 April this year, marking their 100th recording release as well as the 150th anniversary of the completion of St John's College Chapel. The title track is Bruckner's *Locus Iste* with its opening line 'This place was made by God' offering a fitting sentiment having been written the same year the building was completed (1869).

The remaining tracks have been carefully selected by Andrew Nethsingha, Director of Music, to mark each of the ten-year periods since the consecration of the Chapel, showcasing some of the most exciting and moving pieces of their respective eras. Two of the pieces included on the disc were commissioned especially by the Choir of St John's, including Giles Swayne's *Adam lay ibounden*, which was first performed by the choir in their 2009 Advent service, continuing to uphold the Choir's already significant range of contemporary repertoire and reputation for bold commissioning.

The CD illustrates both historic and modern life at the College and Chapel, including an anthem by former St John's director, Christopher Robinson (Director of Music from 1991 to 2003). The second commissioned piece on the disc is Alex Woolf's motet, *O vos omnes*. Woolf won the BBC Composer of the Year in 2012, graduating from St John's just a few years later with a Double First in Music. The cello solo of Swayne's piece also will be played by current St John's College student Laura Van Der

Heijden, who won the BBC Young Musician of the Year Competition in 2012. She is currently performing at world-class venues all over the world, whilst completing her Bachelor of Music degree.

Designed by great Gothic Revival architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, The Chapel of St John's College was first consecrated on 12 May 1869. Its construction was intended to reflect the College's royal status as a foundation of Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VII. The now-famous tower of St John's, standing at 163 feet tall, is still a dominant feature of the Cambridge skyline, visible from the moment one enters Cambridgeshire from the south. It would be hard to conceive of the College without the great Victorian Chapel that is by now so closely connected with its traditions.

Scott's architecture has had a profound influence on the sound and character of the choir.

Andrew Nethsinga, Director of Music, said: *"We are excited to be releasing the choir's 100th album, 60 years after the Choir's first LP for the Argo label. This new recording celebrates 150 years since the consecration of the College Chapel and contains 15 contrasting pieces across that 150 year period."*

The disc will be available from 26 April 2019.

www.sjcchoir.co.uk

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Notes to Editors

Track listings

- [1] **Fair is the heaven** William Harris (1883-1973)
- [2] **Sing my soul, His wondrous love** Ned Rorem (b. 1923)
- [3] **God is gone up** Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)
- [4] **Hymn to the Virgin** Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
- [5] **Iustorum animae** Charles V. Stanford (1852-1924)
- [6] **The Lamb** John Tavener (1944-2013)
- [7] **Seek him that maketh the seven stars** Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)
- [8] **Salve Regina** Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
- [9] **Jesu, grant me this, I pray** Christopher Robinson (b. 1936)
- [10] **O vos omnes** Alex Woolf (b. 1995)
- [11] **Jubilate in C** Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)
- [12] **Locus Iste** Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)
- [13] **Adam lay ibounden** Giles Swayne (b. 1946)
- [14] **Cherubic Hymn** Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
- [15] **Blest pair of sirens** Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

The Choir of St John's College Cambridge

The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge is one of the finest collegiate choirs in the world – known and loved by millions from its broadcasts, concert tours and 100 recordings. Founded in the 1670s, the Choir is known for its rich, warm and distinctive sound, its expressive interpretations and its ability to sing in a variety of styles. Alongside this discipline, the Choir is particularly proud of its happy, relaxed and mutually supportive atmosphere. The Choir is directed by Andrew Nethsingha following in a long line of eminent Directors of Music, recently Dr George Guest, Dr Christopher

Robinson and Dr David Hill. Their first release on their imprint with Signum Classics, *Deo*, won the Choral Award at the BBC Music Magazine Awards 2017.

Andrew Nethsingha

Performing in North America, South Africa, the Far East, and throughout Europe, Andrew Nethsingha has been Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge since 2007. He has helped to set up a new recording label, 'St John's Cambridge,' in conjunction with Signum. His first disc on the new label, *DEO* (music by Jonathan Harvey), was a 2017 BBC Music Magazine Award winner.

Andrew Nethsingha was a chorister at Exeter Cathedral, under his father's direction. He later studied at the Royal College of Music, where he won seven prizes, and at St John's College, Cambridge. He held Organ Scholarships under Christopher Robinson at St George's Windsor, and George Guest at St John's, before becoming Assistant Organist at Wells Cathedral. He was subsequently Director of Music at Truro and Gloucester Cathedrals, and Artistic Director of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival.