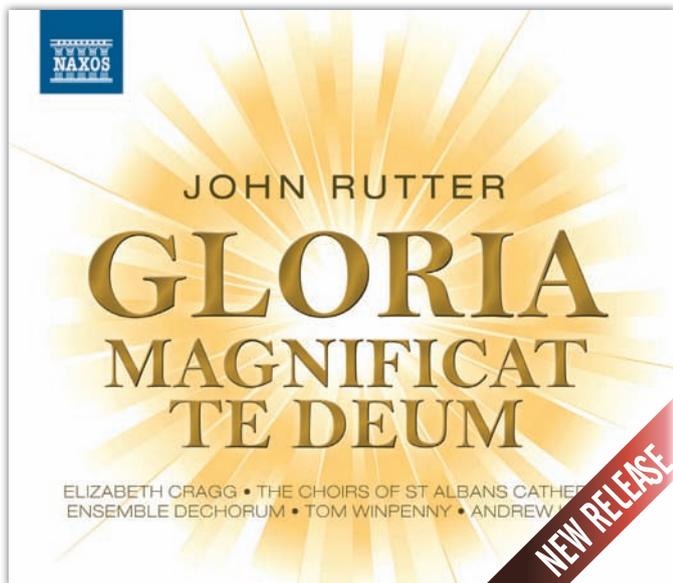
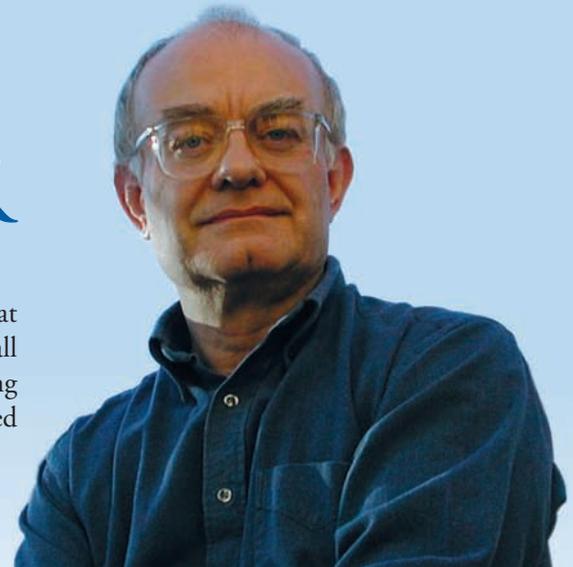


# JOHN RUTTER

"I'm excited by the cutting-edge, and by exploration, but I know, too, that that's not what I'm supposed to be writing. I think, if I've got - don't let's call it a mission, let's just say a place where I fit - I think it's above all to bring consolation, and perhaps healing : a process of which I'm deeply honoured and privileged to be part". - *John Rutter*



## RUTTER: Gloria • Magnificat • Te Deum

Elizabeth Cragg, Soprano  
 Choirs of St Albans Cathedral  
 Ensemble DeChorum • Andrew Lucas

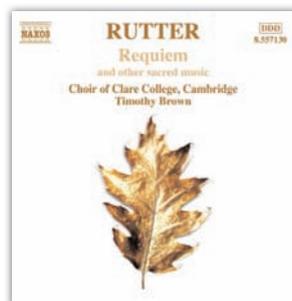
Acclaimed British composer John Rutter's *Gloria* was a milestone in his career and remains an evergreen favourite with choirs worldwide for its freshness, drama and sheer beauty. His joyous setting of the *Magnificat* was conceived, in the composer's words, as 'a bright Latin-flavoured fiesta' and is performed here in its version for choir, organ and chamber orchestra. This delightful choral album concludes with Rutter's setting of the *Te Deum*, one of the church's most ebullient hymns of praise to the Almighty.

Booklet notes in English  
 Catalogue Number: 8.572653  
 Total Playing Time: 64:40

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### Previous releases of works by John Rutter on Naxos:



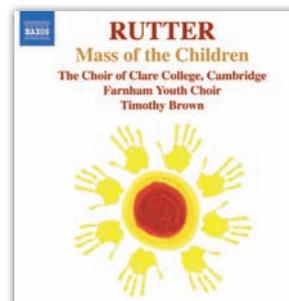
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"A lovely and worthwhile recording it is, in every respect".  
 - *American Record Guide*

"The Clare College Choir gives the kind of technically solid and interpretively meaningful performance that we would expect, considering the composer's hands-on involvement and well-known concern for accuracy, both musical and sonic".  
 - *Classics Today* *Artistic Quality* 10/10 *Sound Quality*

"This disc is lovely from start to finish and is enthusiastically recommended to choristers, organists, choir directors and, most of all, music lovers of all stripes." - *Amazon.com*



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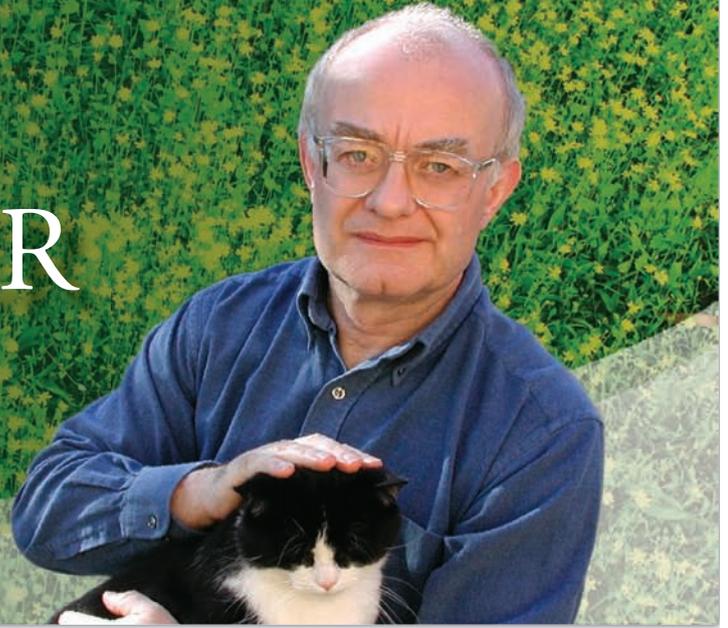
"The Wedding Canticle... is a gentle, lovely piece that has all the marks of Rutter's most beloved style--flowing, inviting melody and a natural rhythmic feel that ideally captures the sense and structure of the text".  
 - *Classics Today* *Artistic Quality* 9/9 *Sound Quality*

"This is a fine program... superb, and the performances are excellent."  
 - *Amazon.com*

"I count this cycle a significant discovery and it certainly throws a new light on John Rutter's music" - *MusicWeb International*

# JOHN RUTTER

*talks to Jeremy Siepmann*



In his native England, John Rutter is most famous for his Christmas carols. His prolific, and varied, output, however, reaches far beyond these. While by no means spurning the present, his music is audibly rooted in the past – often in the ancient past. Carols, after all, form the oldest vernacular choral literature in English music. ‘Back in the 15th century,’ Rutter points out, ‘all other sacred music was in Latin.’ Educated at Highgate School in London, where a close friend was fellow-pupil John Tavener, his formative teachers included Martindale Sidwell and Edward Chapman. But even then, he didn’t confine himself to the present. Apart from his teachers, I wondered, who influenced him most as a composer? Who were his principal role models?

‘Oh they were a very varied bunch. Bach was always been at the top of my tree because his music has such an absolutely perfect balance of head, heart and spirit. I loved *all* the usuals. Mozart, of course, and Beethoven – particularly when I realised how supremely well he did what’s most difficult in composition, that’s to say creating structure. In addition to the standards, I felt particularly drawn to several 20<sup>th</sup>-century composers, William Walton (who had a wonderful physical, heroic quality, tinged with melancholy), Benjamin Britten, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich ... and perhaps rather surprisingly, I found an early affinity with the great Broadway songwriters: Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter ... later Stephen Sondheim ... all of whom achieved a perfect blend of words and music. I’ve always loved words, and I wanted to write for voices from the beginning. Then, too, there’s the European operetta tradition which fed into all this, resulting in a particularly American fusion. In fact, American music generally has always spoken strongly to me. I’ve always loved Copland and Bernstein, for instance – you know, that very ‘up-front’, New York, ‘say it boldly’ school of composition. And I love the example of Gershwin, who transformed himself from a brilliant songwriter into a composer of real consequence.’

But it wasn’t just a question of repertoire. Rutter has spent almost more time in America than at home. How did that happen? ‘When my first compositions began to be published in the UK, it was by Oxford University Press, who had an office in New York as well. So everything was published both here *and* in America, where there’s a hugely thriving choral world. And when they found what I’d been writing, quite a few people thought ‘Well, why not give

this a try?’ What began as a trickle turned into a flow, and then a veritable torrent of invitations to go to America to guest conduct and to write for choirs. In Europe at that time, the kind of music I write was very much out of favour - that’s to say, music very much rooted in tonality, with now and again an actual tune! This was a bit of a sin in the 60s and 70s. You needed *permission* to write like that here! America, by contrast, provided a very friendly climate for eclectic music such as mine. I instinctively felt that away from the carpings of European critics, my music stood a better chance of getting a fair hearing. And this is what happened. I could really have emigrated to America - except that my family, my roots and my friends are still here, in England. I really don’t think I could live anywhere else.’

Having always been fascinated by the degree of passivity in creation, I put to Rutter an astonishing quote from Stravinsky, who wrote of *The Rite of Spring*: ‘I was guided by no system whatever when I composed *The Rite*. I heard, and I wrote what I heard. I am the vessel through which *The Rite* passed.’ Schumann too experienced something similar. Does this ring any bells for Rutter? ‘I wonder if any of us really know where our ideas come from. We like to think we’re in control of them but we’re really not. You can put in a 12-hour day working on a new piece; several days, even, may pass without anything useful coming to you; and then, for no apparent reason, you clock in to work and the first thing that comes into your head is the very idea you’ve been struggling to find. Usually we recognise a good idea when we get one, but the fact is that you can still go through all the motions, do all the right things, and get nothing but dross. The little nuggets of gold often come when you least expect them. I think all of us would agree, though, that you’re most likely to get good ideas if you observe some kind of routine. Like most composers, I think, I’m quite disciplined in that way. I keep pretty regular hours, sitting down at my desk at 10 in the morning, having dealt with the mail and all that, stopping for meal breaks and then packing up around midnight. If you repeat that regularly, pretty soon you find that those empty pages do fill up. But it never gets easier. Composition is a very mysterious process.’

From process, we turned next to results. I invited him to fill me in on the background to the three major works in Naxos’s forthcoming Rutter release. ‘The Gloria (1974) was the first of my works to be commissioned in America. Out of the blue, I received a letter

from a choral conductor in Omaha, Nebraska, right in the middle of the Great Plains. His name was Mel Olson, an excellent musician, who knew exactly how to brief a composer. In fact he was so specific in his requirements that the piece practically wrote itself. Among much else, he suggested a sacred work, equally suitable to both churches and concert halls, with a Latin text (making it instantly accessible to choirs all over the world). So I thought of the *Gloria* – just about the most famous little piece of Latin that there is. For my instrumental group (they hadn't the budget for a full orchestra) I chose a brass ensemble, supplemented by organ, timpani and percussion. And that was the beginning. The work is unapologetically eclectic. Listening to it now, as I very recently did in the new Naxos recording – a *very* exciting performance – I hear echoes of Stravinsky (second movement), William Walton, in his ceremonial mode, and Poulenc (in the finale). Underpinning the whole thing is something very important to me – namely Gregorian chant, which for me is the foundation of Western music. In fairly disguised form there's a chant running through the entire piece. And that's the steel frame, if you like, that holds it all together. If you wanted to analyse the score in any detail you'd find traces of it everywhere – and the first choral entry in the first movement presents the chant itself in fairly bold outline.

'The *Magnificat* dates from 1990. By that time I was regularly conducting concerts at New York's Carnegie Hall, which certainly deserves its fame. It's one of the world's great concert halls. 2800 seats, marvellous acoustics, and a tremendously festive atmosphere – one of those wonderful 'horseshoe' halls where the seats are curved around and the members of the audience can see one another. And if enjoyment starts in one part of the house, it'll catch. You feel really like part of one great family, which *doesn't* happen in modern concert halls like the Royal Festival Hall, where you sit in rows, like in an aircraft, and there's no interaction between the members of the audience. Carnegie Hall is an absolute jewel. I'd been conducting in this concert series for two years when the director of the series, Peter Tabori, said 'Well, how about writing something especially for us? I particularly wanted to write something celebratory and joyful since the last choral work I'd written had been the *Requiem* in 1985. So I decided on a setting of the *Magnificat*. I'd just come back from a brief vacation in Spain, and I decided that the model should be a Spanish Fiesta – a kind of celebration: a choral, outdoor *Magnificat*. As it happened, I wrote it quite quickly. The first performance was in May 1990, and I'm pleased to say that the work has been Fiesta-ing on ever since! It was originally for full symphony orchestra. For practical reasons, I thought it would be good to do an alternative, chamber orchestra version, suitable to smaller choirs. And I think in some ways it actually gains from being a little leaner and more economical. And of course I'm absolutely delighted that it's popped up in this new, very fine recording.

'The *Te Deum* was written for Canterbury Cathedral, in 1988, to celebrate the centenary of the Guild of Church Musicians. I thought, well this is a wonderful, iconic building, and it's been a tradition here at least since the time of Henry V to sing a *Te Deum* at times of rejoicing. The problem is; it's very difficult to set to music – because it's *long*. And if you're going to write a liturgical *Te Deum*, you don't want the service to drag on for hours, so you have to get an awful lot of text into quite a short time frame. I found myself reaching back in my mind to memories of the Coronation, when I was just a little lad, watching it on my parents' nine-inch black and white television, and somehow that whole aura of William Walton (and Westminster Abbey of course) resonated in my mind. So here's a work which belongs firmly in the tradition of English

ceremonial music. It doesn't break any fresh ground, but I felt this was not an occasion for the shock of the new. It was originally written with just organ accompaniment, but I later added the brass parts which are used in this present recording.'

Rutter has enjoyed twin careers, as both composer and conductor. Have they, I wondered, been mutually nourishing? 'Absolutely! I would recommend any composer to get out there and conduct. Because it's as good as ten composition lessons. You soon learn as a conductor what works and what doesn't work – in terms of acoustic balance, in terms of pacing and structure, in terms of how well you're writing for your forces. I've never been trained as a conductor, but I've done lots of it and I've never had any fear of it. I'm quite a sociable person, and composition is by nature solitary. After spending all those hours, days, and perhaps weeks by myself, the thing that I really live for is the moment when I get out there and conduct, and make music with colleagues, and have all the joys of a collaborative experience, which is something that composition just can't be. Conducting is easier, in a way. Because once you've conducted a concert or a recording, you can forget it. With the composition, while it's in progress, at least, it haunts you.'

Whatever critics may say of his output (the public has long since given its resounding verdict), Rutter is a man who takes music very seriously indeed. A man to whom it *matters* profoundly. Centrally. 'Music is unique among the arts because it communicates equally to head, heart, spirit and body. What matters most to me is that it should communicate on *all* these levels, though not, perhaps, simultaneously, or in the same concentration. Of course what all composers would like first on their tombstone is 'He wrote like an angel!' We'd all like to be admired for our technique and professionalism. In my case, what I'd like to have next is 'He touched people's hearts'. It's not me to build mighty cathedrals in sound. It's not my gift to be an explorer, opening the way to new sound worlds, new kinds of musical expression. I'm more of a magpie. I gather sounds in the air around me and in some sort of way make them my own. I think what I've probably been brought into the world to do is to cheer people up. And maybe to bring consolation. And healing. People have said that my *Requiem* does bring them consolation and so forth, and that's wonderful, but there's also a need for joy – which is always there, always waiting to be released into our midst. You know, somebody asked 'Can there be any rejoicing after Auschwitz?' Well, yes! There *has* to be! If only (but *not* only) because humanity has to be programmed to carry on. And there was a period in contemporary music when there was precious little joy to be found. Today, though, I think composers are rediscovering a kind of *joie de vivre*, and excitement – a real *communicativeness*. This is a great time to be writing music. That said, I don't just want a cosy world of music, where none of our assumptions are ever shaken up. The arts, after all, are here to challenge people. In my parallel life as a record producer, I get some of the greatest satisfaction from some of the most difficult contemporary works. Just last year I produced an album devoted to the choral works of Giles Swayne, which is by no means an easy listen. And more recently I've produced an album by the brilliant young American composer Nico Muhly. I'm *excited* by the cutting-edge, and by exploration, but I know, too, that that's not what I'm supposed to be writing. I think, if I've got – don't let's call it a mission, let's just say a place where I fit – I think it's above all to bring consolation, and perhaps healing ... a process of which I'm deeply honoured and privileged to be part.'

*Jeremy Siepmann is an internationally acclaimed writer, musician, teacher, broadcaster and editor.*



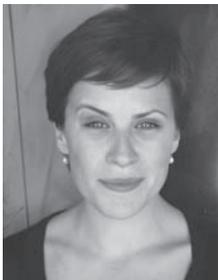
### John Rutter

John Rutter was born in London, England in 1945. He began composing while studying music at Clare College, Cambridge. While an undergraduate student, he also conducted and recorded his work for the first time. From 1975 to 1979 he was the Director of Music at his alma mater. He left to pursue his career as a composer with greater focus. He founded the Cambridge Singers, and today remains the conductor. The Cambridge Singers have recorded several of Rutter's works, including the majority of his sacred music and Christmas carols. He is also in high-demand as a guest conductor and lecturer throughout Europe and the Americas. He is best-known for his choral works, the most popular of which are Requiem (1985) and Magnificat (1990). He has also composed instrumental and orchestral works, opera and children's music.

In 1980, John Rutter was made an honorary Fellow of Westminster Choir College, Princeton. In 1988, he was made a Fellow of the Guild of Church Musicians. His contributions to church music were recognized by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1996, when the Archbishop awarded Rutter with a Lambeth Doctorate of Music.

### Ensemble DeChorum

Launched in 2010, Ensemble DeChorum is an instrumental ensemble whose primary function is to accompany the work of the DeChorum choir. Founded in 2003 by Jonathan Manners, the DeChorum choir has built a strong reputation performing at music festivals both at home and abroad, and has given world premières of works by composers including Richard Rodney Bennett, John Tavener and Gabriel Jackson. The choir perform an annual festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in aid of Cancer Research UK and have recorded a disc of Christmas Music entitled *What Sweeter Music*, also in aid of the charity.



### Elizabeth Cragg

Elizabeth Cragg studied at Royal Holloway College, and the Royal College of Music with assistance from the Countess of Munster Trust. She won the Muriel Kistner Prize and the Dorothy Silk Prize for Practical Singing. Her wide repertoire ranges from Purcell to the contemporary and recent engagements include Flower Maiden (*Parsifal*) and Frantik (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Clorinda (*Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*) for Netherlands Opera; Belinda (*Dido and Aeneas*) with the Akademie für Alte Musik, in Berlin and Brussels; The Swan in Jonathan Doves's Swanhunter (Opera North); First Niece (*Peter Grimes*) in the Salzburg Easter Festival and Berlin under Sir Simon Rattle; Fauno (*Ascanio in Alba*) for the Buxton Festival; Handel's *Orazio*, Bononcini's *Muzio Scevola* and Celia in Handel's *Silla* (which she has recorded with the London Handel Festival); Jano (*Jenůfa* (ENO); Zerbinetta (Garsington); and Ida (*Die Fledermaus*) at Glyndebourne.



### Tom Winpenny

Tom Winpenny took up the post of Assistant Master of the Music at St Albans Cathedral in 2008, where his duties include accompanying the daily choral services and directing the Abbey Girls Choir. Previously, he was Sub-Organist at St Paul's Cathedral, and during this time he played for many great state occasions. He has broadcast regularly on BBC Radio and been featured on American Public Media's *Pipedreams*. He began organ lessons under John Scott Whiteley while a chorister at York Minster, and continued as a Music Scholar at Eton College under Alastair Sampson. After holding the post of Organ Scholar at Worcester Cathedral and then St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, he was for three years Organ Scholar at King's College, Cambridge, where he accompanied the choir for services and concerts, including the world-famous Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. He has taken part in the first performance of works by Sir John Tavener, Judith Bingham, Francis Pott, Jonathan Dove and Francis Grier. He has studied with Thomas Trotter and Johannes Geffert, and won First Prize and the Audience Prize at the Miami International Organ Competition. As a recitalist, he has performed at venues throughout the United Kingdom and given recitals in the United States. His first solo organ recordings, made on the St Albans Cathedral organ include the first recordings of organ works by Judith Bingham.



### Andrew Lucas

Andrew Lucas has been Master of the Music of St Albans Cathedral and Music Director of St Albans Bach Choir since 1998 and was Artistic Director of the St Albans International Organ Festival from 1999 to 2007, directing four festivals. At the cathedral he is head of the music programme which includes four choirs and a parish orchestra. In this time he has conducted much of the larger-scale repertoire for choir and orchestra from all periods, but his principal musical activity is in preparing and directing the music for daily choral worship in the cathedral. Born in Wellington, Shropshire, in 1958, from 1976 he studied organ at the Royal College of Music in London, where his teachers included John Birch and Herbert Howells. After graduating from London University (BMus) he continued study with Peter Hurford, and with Piet Kee in Amsterdam. He worked for seventeen years at St Paul's Cathedral in London, the last eight years as the Assistant Director of Music until moving to St Albans. As a solo organist he has played concerts throughout Britain, Europe, Australia, Bermuda and the United States. In 1997 he spent three months as Acting Organist and Master of the Choristers at St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney, Australia.



### Choirs of St Albans Cathedral

The ancient Benedictine monastery at St Albans had a distinguished musical history before 1539, when the Abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII. When the Abbey church became a cathedral in 1877 a boys choir was again formed after 238 years but, like today, comprised local schoolboys who committed to sing services and attend rehearsal every day of the week, except one, during school term time. Unlike the ancient English cathedrals there is no residential choir school so the boys rehearse before and after normal school and sing the service of Choral Evensong on three weekdays, with three choral services on Saturday and Sunday. At weekend services, greater Feast days, concerts and tours the choir contains up to 24 boys and twelve adult Lay Clerks to make up the full Cathedral Choir. Under their current director, Andrew Lucas, the choir has toured Sweden and Rome, performed at the International Organ Festival in Haarlem, Netherlands and the Thomas à Becket Festival at Angers Cathedral, France, and undertook a very successful tour of the United States in October 2006. The choir also plays host to two other Cathedral Choirs in the biennial St Albans International Organ Festival's Three Choirs Concert. The choir has made many recordings over the last three decades, including in recent years discs of music by Stanford (Priory Records) Christmas Music and a disc of German Romantic Choral and Organ music (Lammus).