

PRESS RELEASE

## The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) marks the centenary of Charles Villiers Stanford's death with a series of special events

Charles Villiers Stanford, one of the great choral composers of the late 19th/early 20th century, died on 29 March 1924. As executors of the Stanford estate, the RSCM publishes a vast range of Stanford's music, available from [RSCM Music Direct](#). To mark the centenary of Stanford's death, the RSCM is planning a number of special events.



### STANFORD SINGING BREAK 12-14 July, Queens' College, Cambridge

An exclusive singing weekend in Stanford's honour, to be held 12-14 July at Queens' College Cambridge, where he was organ scholar. This is a unique opportunity to sing some of Stanford's best known (and lesser known) works in glorious Cambridge surroundings, including Trinity College Chapel (where Stanford was organist) and Great St Mary's Church. This course will particularly focus on the wonderful inheritance of Anglican Choral music, with RSCM Director Hugh Morris as conductor.

The RSCM holds a number of Stanford manuscripts, and there will be an exclusive session for members of the course to view them, along with an informative lecture on the life and works of the composer given by Stanford expert **Jeremy Dibble** (University of Durham) on the Saturday evening. On the Friday evening there will be a special, illustrated organ recital featuring Stanford organ works, given by **Anthony Gritten**.



There will also be meals to share social time together, as well as time to explore the delights of Cambridge in summer.

The course is suitable for experienced, adult (18+) choral singers working at or above RSCM Silver Award level or equivalent (which expects a reasonable level of music reading and independence as a singer); and places may be limited in some voice parts to ensure a balanced choir. Interactive learning resources will be available through the RSCM Choral Coach app, and a full set of music in a commemorative presentation folder will be available to all participants.

Full details/booking <https://www.rscmshop.com/features/stanford-singing-break>

### Illustrated organ recital by Anthon Gritten, Queens' College chapel, Friday 12 July, 7.30pm

This illustrated recital will span Stanford's entire compositional life, from an early work of c.1875 through to his final works of the 1920s. At the centre of the recital is one of his large-scale masterpieces for organ, the Sonata no. 4 in C minor 'Celtica' op. 153, written at the end of the First World War. In addition to complete performances of these five pieces, the event will discuss aspects of Stanford's compositional language, including his use of hymn tunes, the impact of his Irish heritage, the shape of his sonata thinking, and the influence of other composers on his music.

### Lecture with Jeremy Dibble, Queens' College, Saturday 13 July, 7.30pm

Charles Villiers Stanford is justifiably renowned for his brilliantly original church music, but he is perhaps less well known for the extraordinary range of other work he composed across his highly creative life. This lecture will explore some of that repertoire, including extracts from his operas, symphonies, choral works, songs and partsongs, to offer a fresh appreciation of his unrivalled composition for the Anglican liturgy.

## NOTES FOR EDITORS

### Jeremy Dibble

Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music, Emeritus Professor of Music at Durham University and a specialist on British and Irish music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jeremy Dibble is the author of monographs on Parry (1992), Stanford (2002), Stainer (2007), Esposito (2010), Hamilton Harty (2013), and *The Music of Frederick Delius: Style, Form and Ethos* (2021). The musical editor of the *Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology* (2013) and the joint editor (with Julian Horton) of *British Musical Criticism and Intellectual Thought 1850-1950* (2018), he has recently published a revised and expanded edition of his book *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician*. He has also

contributed chapters on Sterndale Bennett, Elgar, Frank Bridge and Vaughan Williams as well as the British symphonic poem to various publications. Although he has devoted much time to music in nineteenth-century Britain and Ireland, he is now working more in the twentieth century which includes studies of music by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Thomas Pitfield and William Alwyn. He has also spent much time over the last 30 years working with commercial recording companies in the capacity of consultant and editor. He is currently President of the Stanford Society and an Honorary President of the Association of English Speakers and Singers.

### **Anthony Gritten**

Anthony Gritten is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, and studied with Harry Gabb, David Sanger, and Anne Page. He gave the first complete performance of Daniel Roth's magnum opus, *Livre d'Orgue pour le Magnificat*, and has performed four times in St. Sulpice, Paris, including a recital as part of Roth's 70th birthday celebrations. He has also commissioned and performed various works, including premiere performances of Richard Francis' four-movement symphony on themes by Lefébure-Wély, Laurence Caldecote's Variations on Victimae Paschali Laudes, and David Loxley-Blount's Toccata at St Denio. Other projects have included anniversary performances of the complete works of Tunder, Buxtehude (a 6½ hour recital), Homilius (2½ hours), Brahms, and Mendelssohn, and an ongoing series resurrecting forgotten French organ music from the early 20th century.

Anthony was an organ scholar and research student at Cambridge University, writing a doctorate on Stravinsky. He has worked at the University of East Anglia, the Royal Northern College of Music, Middlesex University, and the Academy, where he is currently Head of Undergraduate Programmes. His publications include two books on *Music and Gesture*, essays on the musics of Balakirev, Cage, Debussy, Delius, Goehr, Holloway, Roth, and Stravinsky, and numerous articles on issues in Performance Studies and Artistic Research.

### **The Royal School of Church Music**

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is the Salisbury-based, national, independent charity enabling the flourishing of church music. As the central 'home' of church music, RSCM provides relevant education, training and resources to its membership, the wider church, and beyond. It is committed to encouraging the best of music in worship, and to advocating music as a tool for growth of the church.

The RSCM supports thousands of Affiliated churches across the UK and worldwide through its international partners. In addition, it also supports many schools and Individual members, and its work is sustained by thousands of Friends, Regular Givers and other donors.

The RSCM is an open, life-long learning organisation, offering face-to-face and distance education and training through its programmes, published resources, courses and activities.

Founded by Sir Sydney Nicholson in 1927, the RSCM's original emphases were English and choral. Now, in a diverse international context, the RSCM's work is far broader and more diverse, and aims to make all its work ecumenical in purpose, nature and content.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was RSCM'S Royal Patron from 1952 until her death in 2022, and its president is The Most Revd and Rt Hon The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. The organisation celebrates its centenary in 2027.

[www.rscm.org.uk](http://www.rscm.org.uk)



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