



# The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

Thursday 16 May 2019, 8.30pm  
St Pancras Parish Church

## **“Night Prayer: Compline Renewed”**

The Lacock Scholars  
Greg Skidmore

# Programme

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*Ben Rowarth*  
1992 –

## Night Prayer: Compline Renewed

- i. The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night
- ii. Before the ending of the day
- iii. Psalm 4: Hear me when I call
- iv. Psalm 91: Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High
- v. Psalm 134: Behold now, praise the Lord
- vi. Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit
- vii. Preserve us, O Lord, while waking
- viii. Lord, have mercy upon us

**Night Prayer: Compline Renewed** sets the service of compline as a through-flowing musical sequence. The music looks at the themes explored in the compline liturgy and the historical context behind the daily performance of this service, and attempts to present all of this in a new and engaging medium.

Compline was historically the final service of the day to be sung in monastic orders and is therefore mainly focussed around night, darkness and preservation. Its engagement with “night”, however, unearths something of a dichotomy: the focus is as much on night-time and darkness as on looking forward to morning and light. Night and day act as metaphors for death and rising to new life; there is also a practical request for deliverance through ‘the dangers of the night’ that we might live on to the next day. The constant back-and-forward “call and response” antiphonal technique that is used throughout the service structure reflects the need for reassurance, as those praying are about to enter into night with all its dangers. A gradual move away from working and worshipping as a collective, to each individual finding their own space and going to sleep – a state in which they are truly alone – is also reflected in the music.

This sense of dichotomy is reflected in the structure of tonight’s performance. The work’s tonality is created by two sets of keys that are contrasting but heard simultaneously throughout: one that, step by step, moves up one tone at a time, and one that moves down over the course of the piece. Each movement features crossing scales and chord progressions and constantly inverting themes. The music is influenced by plainsong, particularly near the beginning of the work; it features most strongly in the opening hymn and psalm settings. The work examines new techniques in positioning sound inside large spaces, reflecting the crossing musical and liturgical themes and also allowing the listener to hear both music and text from the perspective of different, moving individual singers as well as from an overall viewpoint.

# Liturgy of Compline

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- i. **The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night**  
and a perfect end.

*Priest:* Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil,  
as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:  
whom resist, steadfast in the faith.

*Priest:* But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Thanks be to God.

*Priest:* Our help is in the name of the Lord  
who hath made heaven and earth.

*Priest:* We confess to God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
through our own grievous fault.  
Wherefore we pray God to have mercy upon us.

*Priest:* Almighty God, have mercy upon us,  
forgive us all our sins and deliver us from all evil,  
confirm and strengthen us in all goodness,  
and bring us to life everlasting;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, make speed to save us: O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

Praise ye the Lord: The Lord's name be praised.

- ii. **Before the ending of the day,**  
Creator of the world, we pray  
That with thy wonted favour thou  
Wouldst be our guard and keeper now.

From all ill dreams defend our eyes,  
From nightly fears and fantasies;

Tread underfoot our ghostly foe,  
That no pollution we may know.

O Father, that we ask be done,  
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son;  
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,  
Doth live and reign eternally.

**iii. Psalm 4**

*Antiphon:* Have mercy upon me O Lord: and harken unto my prayer.

- 1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness:  
thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble;  
have mercy upon me, and hearken unto my prayer.
- 2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour:  
and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing?
- 3 Know this also, that the Lord hath chosen to himself the man that is godly:  
when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.
- 4 Stand in awe, and sin not:  
commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.
- 5 Offer the sacrifice of righteousness: and put your trust in the Lord.
- 6 There be many that say: Who will shew us any good?
- 7 Lord, lift thou up: the light of thy countenance upon us.
- 8 Thou hast put gladness in my heart:  
since the time that their corn, and wine, and oil increased.
- 9 I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest:  
for it is thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.

**iv. Psalm 91**

- 1 Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High:  
shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
- 2 I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my stronghold:  
my God, in him will I trust.
- 3 For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter:  
and from the noisome pestilence.
- 4 He shall defend thee under his wings,  
and thou shalt be safe under his feathers:  
his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
- 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night:  
nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 For the pestilence that walketh in darkness:  
nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday.  
7 A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand:  
but it shall not come nigh thee.  
8 Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold: and see the reward of the ungodly.  
9 For thou, Lord, art my hope: thou hast set thine house of defence very high.  
10 There shall no evil happen unto thee:  
neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.  
11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways.  
12 They shall bear thee in their hands:  
that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.  
13 Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder:  
the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.  
14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him:  
I will set him up, because he hath known my name.  
15 He shall call upon me, and I will hear him:  
yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him,  
and bring him to honour.  
16 With long life will I satisfy him: and shew him my salvation.

**v. Psalm 134**

1 Behold now, praise the Lord: all ye servants of the Lord;  
2 Ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord:  
even in the courts of the house of our God.  
3 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary: and praise the Lord.  
4 The Lord that made heaven and earth: give thee blessing out of Sion.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.

*Antiphon:* Have mercy upon me O Lord: and harken unto my prayer.

*Priest:* Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name;  
leave us not, O Lord our God.

**vi. Into thy hands, O Lord,**

I commend my spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.

For thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth. Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.

Keep me as the apple of an eye.  
Hide me under the shadow of thy wings.

**vii. Preserve us, O Lord, while waking,**  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ,  
and asleep we may rest in peace.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.  
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation;  
Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;  
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Preserve us, O Lord, while waking,  
and guard us while sleeping,  
that awake we may watch with Christ,  
and asleep we may rest in peace.

**viii. Lord, have mercy upon us.**  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive them that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Blessed art thou, Lord God of our fathers:  
to be praised and glorified above all for ever.

Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost:  
let us praise him and magnify him for ever.  
Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven:  
to be praised and glorified above all for ever.

The almighty and most merciful Lord guard us and give us his blessing.  
Amen.

Wilt thou not turn again and quicken us;  
that thy people may rejoice in thee?

O Lord, shew thy mercy upon us;  
and grant us thy salvation.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin;  
O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, hear our prayer;  
and let our cry come unto thee.

*Priest:* Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;  
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the  
love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

We will lay us down in peace and take our rest.  
For it is thou, Lord, only that makest us dwell in safety.

Abide with us, O Lord,  
for it is toward evening and the day is far spent.

As the watchmen look for the morning,  
so do we look for thee, O Christ.

*Priest:* The Lord be with you.

**All: And with thy spirit.**

*Priest:* Let us bless the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

*Priest:* The almighty and merciful Lord,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost,  
bless us and preserve us.

**All: Amen.**

# Biographies

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## The Lacock Scholars

Founded in 2014, The Lacock Scholars is the United Kingdom's premier amateur consort group. Originally formed of young participants on Lacock Courses, and still retaining a close association with these events, the group is dedicated to small-ensemble, a cappella singing of Renaissance polyphonic music and plainsong.

The Lacock Scholars has found a unique approach in their series of monthly concerts in London, exploring the relationship between concert performance and liturgical observance in partnership with one of London's hidden architectural gems, St Cuthbert's Church in Earl's Court. The ensemble seeks to create unified, holistic experiences for their audiences, free from applause and other interruptions, in which listeners are free to approach the music and architecture on their own terms. Branching out from this base in west London, the group now performs in this unique style throughout the capital and around the country, with highlights including performances at The Brighton Early Music Festival, The Music Room at Gray's Antiques as part of the new Baroque Voices series, The Cherubim Youth Music Festival, and performances at Gloucester and Hereford Cathedrals.

The group released a second recording, *In memoriam*, in the autumn of 2018, including Duarte Lobo's *Requiem* for six voices and motets by Josquin, Byrd, Weelkes, and others written as contemporary laments for the great composers of the Renaissance. It is available to stream on Spotify and can be purchased from the group's website, [www.lacockscholars.org](http://www.lacockscholars.org).

## Greg Skidmore

Born in Canada, Greg Skidmore arrived in England as an undergraduate at Royal Holloway College, University of London. After graduating with First Class Honours in Music, his post-graduate Choral Scholarship at Wells Cathedral led him to Lay Clerkships at Gloucester Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford. He now lives in London and pursues a varied career as a consort, choral, and solo oratorio singer alongside his burgeoning work as a conductor and workshop leader.

Solo engagements have included working with ballet dancer Carlos Acosta in his *A Classical Farewell* at the Royal Albert Hall; Stravinsky's *Canticum Sacrum* with The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in Symphony Hall, Birmingham; Handel's *Messiah* with The Irish Baroque Orchestra; Purcell's *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* with The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment; Purcell's *Fairy Queen* with The Gabrieli Consort at The Spitalfields Festival in London; Bach's *St. Matthew* and *St. John* Passions, *Mass in*



*B Minor*, and *Christmas Oratorio*, all with Ex Cathedra as part of a long and regular association with the group; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Monteverdi's 1610 *Vespers* at The Brighton Early Music Festival, and with I Fagiolini and the BBC Singers at the Barbican Centre's Milton Court Concert Hall; and Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach*, for baritone and string quartet, at the Southwell Music Festival and with Ensemble Perpetuo in London. His solo work has taken him to Washington National Cathedral in the United States; the Scuola Grande di San Rocco in Venice; deSingel in Antwerp; Laeishalle in Hamburg; Wells, Gloucester, York, and Hereford cathedrals in the UK; and the Queen Elizabeth Hall and St. John's Smith Square in London. His solo recording debut, released in 2011, was as Christus on Ex Cathedra's recording of the Lassus St. Matthew Passion and a recent Ex Cathedra CD release of Alec Roth's oratorio *A Time to Dance* features Greg in a role written for him.

Equally comfortable in choral and consort singing, he has appeared with The Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen, The Cardinal's Musick, I Fagiolini, Tenebrae, The Gabrieli Consort, Alamire, Contrapunctus, The Eric Whitacre Singers, EXAUDI, Collegium Vocale Ghent, Cappella Amsterdam, La Grand Chapelle (Madrid), and the Tafelmusik Baroque Chamber Choir (Toronto), among others. He can be heard on discs released by Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, Harmonia Mundi USA, and others, including Alamire's recent Gramophone Early Music Award winning disc, *The Spy's Choirbook*. In 2015, he featured in I Fagiolini's *Betrayal*, a fully staged, devised presentation of the madrigals and sacred music of Carlo Gesualdo. This year, I Fagiolini tour their recent recording project *Leonardo: Shaping the invisible* extensively in the UK and abroad.

While at Christ Church in Oxford, he began a course of doctoral research in Musicology at the University of Oxford and started his own men's voices consort, I Dedicati. More recently he was appointed Musical Director of The Lacock Scholars and gives a regular series of concerts with them, creating site-specific evenings that weave polyphonic music with plainsong and silence. Greg recently completed major coaching projects with students at the University of York and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and he has given workshops and masterclasses in the UK, France, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia in association with The Sixteen, I Fagiolini, and on his own. In 2015, he led his first week-long Lacock Course, and has joined Eamonn Dougan and Justin Doyle as Assistant Director of the Ludlow Summer School. He is increasingly engaged in Canada as a guest conductor, clinician, and record producer, founding The Canadian Renaissance Music Summer School in 2018. He has been published in *Early Music* and his writing has appeared in programmes and CD liner notes for The Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen, The Cardinal's Musick, The Gabrieli Consort, Tenebrae, and Ex Cathedra.

## Ben Rowarth

Winner of the NCEM Composers Award (2012) and Leeds International Film Festival Best Documentary Soundtrack (2013), Ben has received numerous commissions and international performances, including Merton College Oxford (2014), York Minster (2015) and The Tower of London (2017). Following commissions for extended orchestral works from the Edinburgh Incidental Orchestra and Durham University Symphony Orchestra, Ben has also composed two live soundtracks for plays receiving exceptional reviews. His extended ensemble work *The Turn* has received multiple repeat performances since its premiere in 2016; its first recording has just been awarded the BBC Music Magazine 'Choice Disc' for March 2018 in the Choral and Song category.

Ben has been commercially recorded by ORA, The Rodolfus Choir and The Fieri Consort. His work has also received regular broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 by performers including The Tallis Scholars. His most recent commission, *The short walk of a madman*, a thirty-minute piece for eight solo voices, was recorded earlier this year by The Fieri Consort. Ben is currently working on commissions from Ensemble XY and The Fulham Camerata, where he holds the position of Composer in Residence.

Ben began his musical life as a chorister at Hexham Abbey where he later went on to sing bass and became organ scholar in 2009. Following undergraduate and postgraduate music degrees at Durham and York Universities, Ben now performs regularly as a baritone soloist, recently playing the role of Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Polyphemus in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Plutone in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* with ensembles including Britten Sinfonia, The OAE, I Fagiolini and The BBC Singers.

Following his Organ Scholarship at Hexham Abbey Ben went on to become Interim Director of Music at University College, Durham in 2011. Having also spent time conducting University College Orchestra in Durham and guest conducting a number of choirs in the North East and around London, he now manages and conducts his own professional ensemble, Renaissance.

*More events this week at*

*The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music*

**Friday 17 May**

5.30pm      **“A Child’s Prayer”**: Rush Hour Recital  
St Pancras Parish Church, NW1 2BA

The Chamber Choir of University College London presents a beautiful programme of sacred works by James MacMillan to celebrate his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, including the rarely heard *Missa Brevis*, a work from his teenage years that was first performed and published only in 2007.

**Saturday 18 May**

7.30pm      **“Vast Ocean of Light”**: Gala Concert  
St Pancras Parish Church, NW1 2BA  
*This event is ticketed. Book online at [lfccm.com/tickets](http://lfccm.com/tickets)*

We celebrate Jonathan Dove’s 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with a programme of his recent choral works performed by The Epiphoni Consort. The programme takes its title from the motet *Vast Ocean of Light*, a rich and resplendent work that features Dove’s signature glistening organ writing. The composer introduces the programme with a pre-concert talk at 7pm.

**Sunday 19 May**

10.00am    Choral Eucharist  
6.00pm      Choral Evensong  
St Pancras Parish Church, NW1 2BA

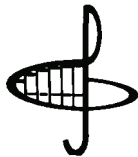
The closing events of the 2019 Festival, with music by Simon Brown, Daniel Knaggs, Richard Pantcheff, Kathryn Rose, Bruno Vlahek and Gail Randall at Choral Eucharist, and music by Nicholas O’Neill, Anthony Esland, Alison Willis, Alastair Borthwick and Justine Koontz at Choral Evensong.

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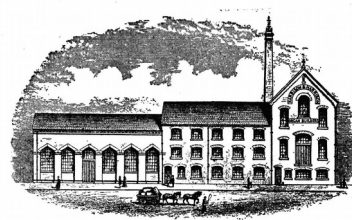
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The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music was founded in 2002 with the aim of showcasing contemporary liturgical music in both service and concert. Now in its eighteenth year, the LFCCM has grown to include more than 70 events, dozens of composers, hundreds of performers and thousands of audience members, both live and online.

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