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## **THE CHOIR OF NEW COLLEGE OXFORD**

### **Robert Quinney, Director**

**New College Choir** is one of the world's most celebrated vocal ensembles. It was founded in 1379 as part of the "New" College of St Mary the Virgin in Oxford established by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor of England. Remarkably little about the choir has changed since the fourteenth century; the sixteen choristers are still educated at New College School, and, together with the Academical and Lay Clerks, sing daily services in the college chapel during University term. The size and make-up of New College Choir in the 1380s became the prototype for similar collegiate and cathedral foundations, setting a pattern that continues to this day in many parts of the world.

A visit to Oxford is, for many, incomplete without experiencing Evensong at New College; those not able to join us in person may hear selected services via our webcasts. The "office" of Evensong is at the heart of the choir's work. The timeless recitation of the psalms, and the canticles Magnificat and Nunc dimittis, connects our tradition with the pre-Reformation monastic office – but it also allows for innovation, in the selection of anthems and the commissioning of new works. In recent years several leading composers have written for the choir, including Ryan Wigglesworth, Matthew Martin, Alexander L'Estrange, Rhian Samuel, and Toby Young. The singing of a service on every day except Wednesday imposes a demanding schedule on the choir; the choristers are rehearsed every lunchtime, in the middle of their school day, and are joined by the clerks for another rehearsal immediately before the service. All members of the choir combine their duties at New College with other commitments: for the choristers, school; for the academical clerks, their undergraduate degrees (which at the present time include Music, Modern Languages, Classics and PPE); for the lay

clerks, a variety of professional musical endeavours; and for the Organist, teaching, lecturing and examining in the college and Faculty of Music.

Outside University term, New College Choir is often to be heard in concert, in Oxford and around the world. Over the last few years we have toured to France, Germany, Switzerland and the USA; most recently, the choir has in two successive years been invited to the Vatican, joining with the Sistine Chapel Choir in concerts, and at the Pontifical Mass on the Solemnity of SS Peter and Paul. In 2018 concerts are planned in California and the Far East.

In addition to its live performances, the choir has an extensive and distinguished discography. Under its previous director, Professor Edward Higginbottom, it made over ninety recordings for labels including Decca, Erato, Hyperion, Avie, Naxos and CRD. In 2009 New College Choir founded its own label, Novum; its latest releases, under Robert Quinney, are a critically acclaimed recording of Symphony Anthems by John Blow, and discs of Christmas Carols and English Anthems, old and new. Details of all recordings, concerts, services and other events, together with information about the choir, its members and director, may be found at [www.newcollegechoir.com](http://www.newcollegechoir.com).

## **ROBERT QUINNEY**

Robert Quinney is Organist and Tutorial Fellow in Music at New College, Oxford, and an Associate Professor at the University Faculty of Music. His work comprises the daily direction and training of New College's world famous choir; teaching and supervision of college students; and lecturing and examining at the Faculty. He moved with his family to

Oxford in September 2014, after sixteen months as Director of Music at Peterborough Cathedral.

Robert Quinney was Organ Scholar of King's College, Cambridge, and subsequently a postgraduate student under John Butt. Since embarking on a full-time performing career in 2000 he has maintained a keen interest in academic music, with a particular research interest in J. S. Bach. This has combined with his performing work in a series of Bach recordings on the *Coro* label, of which *Gramophone* wrote "Quinney's Bach gets to the heart of the music with refreshing clarity and a communication born of genuine understanding."

Before moving to Peterborough in April 2013, Robert Quinney was for nine years Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey, following four years as Assistant Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral. He accompanied those famous choirs in daily choral liturgies and on many recordings, international tours and broadcasts on radio and television. In April 2011 he played for the Marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, to an estimated television audience of two billion worldwide; the following year he was featured in the BBC2 documentary *Westminster Abbey*.

In addition to his Bach series, Robert Quinney has made critically acclaimed solo recordings of music by Elgar, Wagner, Brahms and Dupré, and appears as accompanist on a wide variety of choral CDs, principally with the choirs of Westminster Abbey and Westminster Cathedral and The Sixteen. His recordings with New College Choir are available on the choir's in-house label, *Novum*.

*August 2016*

**TIMOTHY WAKERELL**  
**Organist**

Timothy Wakerell has held the post of Assistant Organist at New College, Oxford since September 2014 where he accompanies the renowned Chapel Choir in services, broadcasts and concerts. Prior to this he was Sub-Organist of St Paul's Cathedral between 2008 and 2014, and his duties included accompanying the world-famous choir and assisting with the training of choristers. In addition he also played for many important national services which were broadcast live on television such as the Funeral of Baroness Thatcher and the Diamond Jubilee Service. He was also frequently continuo player for Handel *Messiah* and J. S. Bach *St John Passion*. Timothy performed with the Choir of St Paul's Cathedral in a four-part documentary entitled *David Starkey's Music & Monarchy* which was broadcast on BBC Television. He also gave a performance of *Carnival of the Animals* by Saint-Saëns as part of the Lord Mayor's Show day celebrations.

Timothy studied organ at the Royal College of Music, London with Margaret Phillips and David Graham, graduating with distinction in both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. He won all the major prizes for organ performance and also held scholarships supported by a Ruth Dyson and Edgar Cook award and a John Lewis partnership award. In 2011 Timothy won Second Prize at the Carl Nielsen International Organ Competition in Odense, Denmark. He has continued his studies with Dame Gillian Weir and Terence Charlston.

As a solo recitalist Timothy has performed throughout the UK, as well as in Germany, Switzerland and Sweden. He regularly performed in the annual Celebrity Recital Series at St Paul's Cathedral, and other recent venues have included Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral and St Albans Cathedral.