

PRESS RELEASE  
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## The Sixteen announces its 2016-2017 season featuring the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater*

Highlights include:

- World premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater* at the Barbican
- The *Choral Pilgrimage* 2017 tour focuses on conflict and atonement
- The Sixteen's Wigmore Hall Residency explores the music of Buxtehude and Purcell
- 2016 Christmas programme takes its inspiration from The Three Kings
- Eight performances of Bach's *Magnificat* around the UK
- The Sixteen continue as Kings Place Artistic Associate including a concert exploring the Golden Age of Portugal
- International dates include Austria, Spain, Malta, Belgium and Holland
- The Sixteen continues its outreach work with projects including a Chorister Mentoring Scheme and a Choral Workshop Series for amateur singers across the country

### World premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater*

On **15 October** the Barbican presents a day that celebrates the choral music of Sir James MacMillan, a composer whose works are strongly influenced by his Scottish heritage and Catholic faith. The day culminates with the world premiere of MacMillan's *Stabat Mater* which was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation for **Harry Christophers** and **The Sixteen** and is performed by them together with **Britten Sinfonia**, in a continuation of the ensemble's close relationship with MacMillan.

The programme opens with MacMillan's moving *Miserere*, which the composer dedicated to its founder and conductor, Harry Christophers. This is set alongside Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and Tallis' *Why fum'th in fight*. Further performances take place in Saffron Walden on **16 October**, with a programme including Britten's *Prelude and Fugue*; Norwich on **18 October** and Manchester on **28 October**. The Sixteen is joined by the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** for the Scottish premiere of *Stabat Mater* in Edinburgh on **23 March** and Glasgow on 24 March. For both performances *Stabat Mater* is performed alongside MacMillan's *Tryst*, which is conducted by the composer.

*Stabat Mater* is a 13<sup>th</sup> century Catholic hymn to Mary and has been set to music by many composers over the last six centuries, from Palestrina in 1590 to Arvo Pärt in 1985 but perhaps surprisingly has received few new settings over the past 30 years. Harry Christophers believes that it is without doubt the most powerful poem of the liturgy.

The Sixteen has a long association with MacMillan and his new setting of *Stabat Mater* is the culmination of a collaboration between the composer, **John Studzinski** and his **Genesis Foundation** and The Sixteen, following on from Studzinski's personal request for MacMillan to compose a new

setting of the poem to provide a serious spiritual interpretation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Together they invited three young composers from different backgrounds and cultures to write new settings of the *Stabat Mater* text: **Alissa Firsova** with her intricate harmonic language drawing on her Russian Orthodoxy; **Tõnu Kõrvits** inspired by the scales and intonations from the folklore of the south-eastern region of his homeland Estonia; and **Matthew Martin** whose detailed composition harks back to previous traditions surrounding *Stabat Mater*. The works were performed and recorded for *Spirit, Strength & Sorrow: Settings of Stabat Mater* which was released on The Sixteen's label Coro last year and MacMillan now shares his own take on the Catholic hymn with the world premiere on 15 October.

### **Choral Pilgrimage 2017**

Choral Pilgrimage 2017 focuses on music by Palestrina and Poulenc to explore the themes of conflict and atonement. Palestrina's mass based around the famous *L'homme armé* melody was immensely popular in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and its warlike nature is still a relevant reminder of the savagery of conflict. *Un soir de neige*, composed by Poulenc in December 1944, reflects the bleak solitude of another winter of occupation in France but also evokes the inner feeling of peace associated with Christmas. The programme also includes Poulenc's *Salve Regina*, *Quatre motets pour un temps de penitence* and 'Agnus Dei' from *Mass in G* and Palestrina's 'Surge amica mea' and 'Surgam et circuibo civitatem' from *Songs of Songs*, *Parce mihi, Domine*, *Peccantem me quotidie* and *Salve Regina*. The performances are conducted by **Harry Christophers** and for selected performances by associate conductor **Eamonn Dougan**. Full dates can be found in the listings below.

### **Bach's Magnificat**

In February 2017 The Sixteen embarks on an 8 date tour of the UK with its own period instrument orchestra performing Bach's *Magnificat* with sopranos **Katy Hill**, **Alexandra Kidgell** and **Charlotte Mobbs**, alto **Daniel Collins**, tenors **Jeremy Budd** and **Mark Dobell** and bass **Eamonn Dougan**. Written in Leipzig for the 1723 Christmas Vespers, this was the first major liturgical composition on a Latin text by Bach, a musical setting the biblical canticle Magnificat. The splendour and jubilation of Bach's *Magnificat* anticipates the great choruses of his later work, *Mass in B minor*. The programme also features Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No 3* and a selection of Cantatas including *Singet dem Herrn*, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, *Sinfonia* from *Cantata BWV 156*, *Jesus bleibet meine Freude* and *Sinfonia* from part 2 of *Cantata BWV 75*. Dates include: Coventry on **2 February**, Derby on **3 February**, Peterborough on **4 February**, London on **8 February**, Bath on **18 February**, Chichester on **23 February**, Worcester on **24 February** and Rochester on **25 February**.

### **Residencies at Kings Place, Wigmore Hall and The Bridgewater Hall**

The Sixteen continue its residencies this season at Kings Place, the Wigmore Hall and The Bridgewater Hall.

### **Kings Place Artistic Associate**

On **16 October** The Sixteen explores the music of the Portuguese and Italian Golden Age with a dynamic programme of reflective and inspiring baroque music as part of *Baroque Unwrapped* at Kings Place. The performance features two settings of *Crucifixus*, one from Lotti and the other by Caldara, Rebelo's *Panis Angelicus*, Scarlatti's *Iste Confessor* and three works by Melgas: *Popule meus – Improperia*; *Lamentacao de Quinta Feira Santa* and *Salve Regina*. The concert culminates in a performance of Scarlatti's virtuosic setting of the *Stabat Mater*. Other concerts in the include two performances as part of The Choral Pilgrimage 2016 and The Choral Pilgrimage 2017 series.

### **Wigmore Hall 2016-17 Residency**

On **14 January** members of The Sixteen are joined by puppetry and physical theatre group, **Box Tale Soup**, for 'The Fairy Queen for Families', a new family adaptation of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Wigmore Hall. Two actors, two singers, a guitarist and a cast of handmade puppets tell the magical story with musical excerpts from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. On **20 February** The Sixteen perform Buxtehude's meditation on the Passion, *Membra Jesu Nostri*. Written in 1680, each of the seven cantatas contemplates parts of Jesus' body working from the feet upwards and is considered to be one of the first Lutheran oratorios. Alongside this, The Sixteen perform two short dances from Scheidt's *Ludi Musici*, composed in 1620 as light music intended for the Archbishop of Magdeburg. The final concert at Wigmore Hall this season is on **30 June** and features a smaller ensemble of singers and instrumentalists for a performance of songs and odes by Purcell from the reign of King Charles II.

### **Bridgewater Hall Associate Artists**

The Sixteen performs three concerts at The Bridgewater Hall as Associate Artists including two concerts on **28 October**: 'The Fairy Queen for Families' in the afternoon followed by James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater* in the evening. On **16 June** The Sixteen bring their Choral Pilgrimage 2017 programme to the hall.

### **Other highlights**

This season's Christmas programme focuses on The Three Kings, who have inspired composers throughout the years. The concerts, conducted by Harry Christophers, include Renaissance masterpieces, English Christmas classics and traditional favourites. Performances include: Uppingham on **3 December** (conducted by Eamonn Dougan); Cardiff on **4 December**; Nottingham on **8 December**; Oxford on **10 December**; London on **20 & 21 December** and Reading on **22 December**.

Other concerts this season include a performance of The Arundel Choirbook, one of three English choirbooks to have survived intact from the early Tudor Period, on **26 October** at Lambeth Palace Library. Introduced by **David Skinner**, the programme focuses on plainchant with performances of Sheppard's *Libera nos I and II*, *In manus tuas III* and *Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria*. Alongside this are performance of Mass movements from Ludford's *Missa Benedicta* and Fayrfax's *Missa Tecum principium*. On **15 November** The Sixteen perform Handel's *Acis & Galatea* with soloists **Grace Davidson** as Galatea, **Mark Dobell** as Damon, **Robert Murray** as Acis, **Simon Berridge** as Coridon and **Stuart Young** as Polyphemus. The performance echoes the opera's premiere in 1718 by using a small group of soloists and nine instrumentalists. On **13 May** at St Mary's Church, Painswick, The Sixteen present 'Poetry in Music', a programme exploring the intimate relationship between poetry and music with powerful a cappella settings of works by writers as varied as Edmund Spenser, Christopher Fry and W.H Auden.

### **Outreach work**

The Sixteen continues its work with choral music enthusiasts of all ages this season including four courses offered through the young artist programme Genesis Sixteen, funded by the Genesis Foundation, (**22-28 August** in Oxford, **28-30 October** in Manchester, **10-12 February** at Hampton Court Palace and **3-9 July** in London) and a Chorister Mentoring Scheme (**6 October** at Southwell Minster, **7 October** at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, **8 October** at Blackburn Cathedral, **2 February** at Coventry Cathedral, **3 February** at Derby Cathedral, **4 February** at Peterborough Cathedral, **23 February** at Chichester Cathedral, **24 February** at Worcester Cathedral, **25 February** at Rochester Cathedral, **26 May** at Truro Cathedral, **17 June** at Carlisle Cathedral, **21 June** at All Saint's Northampton). Genesis Sixteen perform a programme of Renaissance polyphony and British 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century composers at The Cumnock Tryst on **1 October** with Eamonn Dougan. A Choral

Workshop Series for amateur singers runs across the country this season with dates including: **10 September** in Tewkesbury; **17 September** in London; **8 October** in Blackburn; **5 November** in Belfast; **18 March** in Oxford; **27 May** in Truro and another date in London on **10 June**. Following performances at The Bridgewater Hall and Wigmore Hall, the new puppetry and theatre show *The Fairy Queen* is performed as part of the Voices of London Festival on **25 June** with further performances in spring 2017 at schools in Hull, Manchester and Rochester. Other school projects include an immersive Bach project for secondary schools in February 2017 and a Schools' Matinee Programme for primary schools in Croydon from April to June and in Peterborough from September to October.

### **International performances**

The Sixteen continues to expand its international programme this season with dates at some of Europe's major concert halls and festivals including performances of Handel's *Messiah* at the Bregenz Festspielhaus in November and in Madrid and Valencia in December. In January the vocal ensemble presents their programme *Poetry in Music* as part of the Valletta International Baroque Festival. They take their 2016 Choral Pilgrimage, *The Deer's Cry*, to Leuven in Belgium in April as well as performances of *Music from the Sistine Chapel*, to Barcelona, Salamanca and Madrid. The Sixteen is joined by the **Orchestra of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century** for three performances of Haydn's *Symphony No. 99* and Mozart's *Ave verum corpus* in Holland in May.

### **For further press information please contact**

Rebecca Driver Media Relations

web: [www.rdmr.co.uk](http://www.rdmr.co.uk)

email: [rebecca@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:rebecca@rdmr.co.uk) | [emily@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:emily@rdmr.co.uk) | [ruth@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:ruth@rdmr.co.uk)

tel: 020 7247 1894

### **Listings:**

#### **James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater***

**15 October 2016, 7.30pm, Barbican Hall, London**

**16 October 2016, 7.30pm, Saffron Hall**

**18 October 2016, 7.30pm, St Andrew's Hall, Norwich**

**28 October 2016, 7.30pm, The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester**

James MacMillan *Miserere*

Tallis *Why fum'th in fight*

Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*

Britten Prelude and Fugue (Saffron Hall only)

James MacMillan *Stabat Mater* (world premiere performances)

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers/Britten Sinfonia

#### **A Golden Age**

**16 October, 7.30pm, Kings Place, London**

Lotti *Crucifixus a8*

Melgas *Popule meus – Improperia*

Scarlatti *Iste Confessor*

Melgas *Lamentacao de Quinta Feira Santa*

Melgas *Salve Regina*

Rebelo *Panis Angelicus*

Caldara *Crucifixus a16*

Scarlatti *Stabat Mater a10*

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers

**The Fairy Queen for Families**

**28 October 2016, 2pm, The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester**

**14 January 2017, 11am, Wigmore Hall, London**

Excerpts from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* performed by members of The Sixteen and Box Tale Soup

**The Three Kings**

**3 December 2016, 7.30pm, Uppingham School Chapel, Uppingham**

**4 December 2016, 3pm, St David's Hall, Cardiff**

**8 December 2016, 7pm, Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham**

**10 December 2016, 7.45pm, St John the Evangelist, Oxford**

**20 & 21 December 2016, 7.30pm, Cadogan Hall, London**

**22 December 2016, 7.30pm, Concert Hall, Reading**

Traditional *I wonder as I wander*

Handel *Omnes de Saba*

JH Hopkins Jnr *We Three Kings*

Fricker *A Babe is born*

Traditional *This Endris Night*

Howells *Long, long ago*

Palestrina *Reges Tharsis*

Traditional *Wexford Carol*

Palestrina *Videntes stellam Magi*

Traditional *Children's Song of the Nativity*

Sheppard *Reges Tharsis*

Plainsong *Crudelis Herodes*

Lassus *Omnes de Saba*

Traditional *The First Nowell*

Warlock *Bethlehem Down*

Cornelius *The Three Kings*

Lassus *Videntes stellam Magi*

James Bassi *Quem pastores laudavere*

Plainsong *Tribus miraculis*

Anerio *Magnificat a8*

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers/Eamonn Dougan

**Bach's Magnificat**

**2 February 2017, 7.30pm, Coventry Cathedral**

**3 February 2017, 7.30pm, Derby Cathedral**

**4 February 2017, 7.30pm, Peterborough Cathedral**

**8 February 201, 7.30pm, Cadogan Hall, London**

**18 February 2017, 7.30pm, Bath Abbey**

**23 February 2017, 7.30pm, Chichester Cathedral**

**24 February 2017, 7.30pm, Worcester Cathedral**

**25 February 2017, 7.30pm, Rochester Cathedral**

Bach *Brandenburg Concerto No 3*

*Singet dem Herrn*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo Cantata BWV 191*

*Sinfonia from Cantata BWV 156*

*Jesus bleibet meine Freude* (Jesu, joy of man's desiring) from *Cantata BWV 147*

*Sinfonia* from part 2 of *Cantata BWV 75*

*Magnificat in D*

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers/Katy Hill/Alexandra Kidgell/Charlotte Mobbs/Daniel Collins/Jeremy Budd/Mark Dobell/Eamonn Dougan

**Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostr***

**20 February 2017, 7.30pm, Wigmore Hall**

Buxtehude *Membra Jesu Nostr*

Scheidt *Two dances* from *Ludi musici*

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers

**The Choral Pilgrimage 2017**

**16 March 2017, Cambridge**

**17 March 2017, Winchester**

**18 March 2017, Oxford**

**13 April 2017, Kings Place, London**

**10 May 2017, Greenwich, London**

**12 May 2017, Newbury**

**24 May 2017, Llandaff**

**25 May 2017, Exeter**

**26 May 2017, Truro**

**15 June 2017, Croydon**

**16 June 2017, Manchester**

**17 June 2017, Carlisle**

**21 June 2017, All Saints, Northampton**

**11 July 2017, York**

**12 July 2017, Lancaster**

**13 July 2017, Lichfield**

**6 September 2017, Spanish Place**

**8 September 2017, Wells**

**9 September 2017, Tewkesbury**

**19 September 2017, Rochester**

**21 September 2017, Southwell**

**22 September 2017, Liverpool**

**23 September 2017, Blackburn**

**30 September 2017, St Albans**

**19 October 2017, Sheffield**

**20 October 2017, Durham**

**21 October 2017, Edinburgh**

**26 October 2017, Hull**

**27 October 2017, Coventry**

**28 October 2017, Peterborough**

Poulenc *Salve Regina*

Palestrina '*Surge amica mea*' and '*Surgam et circuibo civitatem*' from *Song of Songs*

Palestrina *Parce mihi, Domine*

Poulenc *Quatre motets pour un temps de penitence*

Palestrina *Peccantem me quotidie*

Palestrina 'Kyrie', 'Gloria' and 'Credo' from *Missa L'Homme Armé*  
Poulenc *Un soir de neige*  
Palestrina *Salve Regina*  
Poulenc 'Agnus Dei' from *Mass in G*  
The Sixteen/Harry Christophers/Eamonn Dougan (for selected performances)

**James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater***

**23 March 2017, 7.30pm, Queen's Hall, Edinburgh**

**24 March 2017, 7.30pm, Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow**

James MacMillan *Tryst*

James MacMillan *Stabat Mater* (Scottish premiere performances)

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers/James MacMillan/Scottish Chamber Orchestra

**Purcell – Songs and Odes from the reign of King Charles II**

**30 June 2017, 7.30pm, Wigmore Hall**

Purcell *Hear my prayer, O Lord*

*O solitude, my sweetest choice*

*Lord, how long wilt thou be angry?*

*Plung'd in the confines of despair*

*Pavan a4 in G minor*

*Ode for St Cecilia Day 'Welcome to all the pleasures'*

*In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust*

*From silent shades and the Elysian groves*

*Of all the instruments that are*

*Welcome Song 1683 'From hardy climes'*

The Sixteen/Harry Christophers

**Notes to Editors**

**About The Sixteen**

The Sixteen is recognised as one of the world's greatest ensembles. Comprising both choir and period-instrument orchestra, The Sixteen strives to take beautiful and inspiring choral music, from the Renaissance and Baroque to the present day, to as wide and diverse an audience as possible. Its mission is both to preserve and champion the great choral heritage and to preserve and grow a future audience for it. The group's repertoire is drawn from the passions of Founder and Conductor Harry Christophers CBE.

At home in the UK The Sixteen are 'The Voices of Classic FM', Associate Artists of The Bridgewater Hall, Artistic Associates of Kings Place, and are resident at the Wigmore Hall. The group promotes the *Choral Pilgrimage*, an annual tour of the UK's finest cathedrals, which aims to bring music back to the buildings for which it was written. The Sixteen features in the highly successful BBC television series *Sacred Music*, presented by actor Simon Russell Beale – the latest hour-long programme entitled *Monteverdi in Mantua: The Genius of the Vespers* was aired in April 2015.

The Sixteen tours throughout Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas and has given regular performances at major concert halls and festivals worldwide with both its choir and period-instrument orchestra.

Since 2001 The Sixteen has been building its own record label, CORO, which has released 145 titles to date. Recent releases include *The Deer's Cry* featuring music by William Byrd and Arvo Pärt which

will accompany the *Choral Pilgrimage 2016*, Purcell's *The Indian Queen* and *Poetry in Music*, a programme that encapsulates the fascinating collaboration between poet and composer.

The Sixteen has a flourishing Education Department and continues to develop its work with choral music enthusiasts of all ages through: the young artist programme Genesis Sixteen; projects for primary and secondary school children; a Chorister Mentoring Scheme; and a Choral Workshop Series for amateur singers across the country. Genesis Sixteen was launched in 2011 as a new training programme for young singers, generously funded by the Genesis Foundation. Aimed at 18- to 23-year-olds, this is the UK's first fully funded choral programme for young singers designed specifically to bridge the gap from student to professional practitioner.

### **About Genesis Foundation**

Established by John Studzinski 15 years ago, the Genesis Foundation works in partnership with the leaders of prestigious UK arts organisations such as the Royal Court, The Sixteen, Welsh National Opera and the Young Vic. Its largest funding commitment is to programmes that support directors, playwrights and musicians in the early stages of their professional lives. In addition, it awards scholarships to exceptional student actors at LAMDA and commissions stimulating new works, from choral compositions to light installations. In 2015 the Genesis Foundation launched its first partnership outside the UK, funding residencies for playwrights at New York's Signature Theatre.