John Milton

Comus

a Masque (1634)

Concert performance of an abridged text, with music and images from the period

directed by Patrick Boyd

Thursday 17 February 2022

7.30 pm

Old Divinity School, St John’s College
Acknowledgements

Special thanks are due to the following:

Laurence Fischer and Reuben Thomas, for finding and adapting the music.

Graham Walker (Director of St John's Voices), for casting the two singers.

Paul Joannides, for suggesting appropriate images from 17th-century art.

Mark Harrison, who gave his customary indispensable help and advice on all the technical aspects of the visual display.

Gillian Jondorf, for proof-reading the text of the abridgements of Comus and L’Allegro, the slides for the PPT, and this Programme.

Janet Chow, for timely assistance with printing.

Sally Sheppard, for vigilant administration and trouble-shooting.

Tom Pearson, who oversaw the setting up of the stage and screen.

The Music

The songs and all the incidental music are taken from a publication relating to a performance of Comus in Christ's College to mark the tercentenary of Milton's birth in 1908. (The scores may be found, on line, in The Masque of Comus, (...) the original music by Henry Lawes (...), London, Novello & Co, 1908.

The pieces were selected and arranged from the works of Byrd, Jenkins, Henry Lawes and William Lawes by Sir Frederick Bridge, a pioneer in the rediscovery of English music from the Tudor and Stuart period.

The Illustrations

The paired images on the cover of this Programme are taken from Arthur Rackham's illustrations for Comus, 1921, and from a drawing by Inigo Jones – a costume design for a courtly Masque in the 1620s.

The most seductive of the portraits (projected to identify the characters in the play) were painted by Van Dyck.
THE PERFORMERS

READERS

Comus                                   Reuben Thomas
The Lady                                 Scarlett Clemmow
Elder Brother                           Patrick Boyde
Second Brother                          Kacper Rybiński
Attendant Spirit                        Adrian Poole
Sabrina                                 Tiffany Charnley

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MUSICIAN

Piano                                   Laurence Fischer

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SYNCHRONISER

Text and images                        Elena Violaris
Who’s Who

**Patrick Boyde** is Emeritus Professor of Italian. Since his retirement in 2002, he has adapted and directed more than twenty poetic dramas in French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Polish – and English.

**Tiffany Charnley** studied English at St John’s and graduated in 2018. She frequently performs on stage and has sung roles in operas by Bizet, Charpentier, Handel, Mozart, Purcell, and Schubert. She is an active member of the Cambridge University G&S Society and has taken leading roles in a number of major works from the G&S canon. Last week, she reprised her role as Gianetta in *The Gondoliers* at West Road Concert Hall.

**Scarlett Clemmow** is a Masters student, reading music at St John’s, where she completed her undergraduate degree in 2021. She has been singing since she was seven, and currently studies voice with Alison Wells, who is based at the Royal College of Music in London.

**Laurence Fischer** is a former chorister of St. John’s. After a degree in music and holding various choral positions, he has settled down as a piano technician in Cambridge. He has composed music for, and been répétiteur for, musicals and stage productions in English, Latin, and Ancient Greek.

**Adrian Poole** retired from his Chair of English Literature in 2015, but continues to read, write and teach the works of great authors from Sophocles to Henry James. This is not the first time he has played the truant from Trinity.

**Kacper Rybiński** is a first-year undergraduate, reading English at St John’s. He grew up and went to school in his native Poland, attending a very good Gymnasium in Łódź, offering Polish, Latin and English in his Abitur (and reaching the finals of the national Olympiad in all three). He hopes to make his career in the theatre.

**Reuben Thomas** was a chorister, volunteer, choral scholar and lay clerk in the Chapel choir between 1982 and 2003. Until recently, he was a lay clerk at Westminster Cathedral. He devotes his spare time to miscellaneous technomusico-literary pursuits.

**Elena Violaris** has recently completed her PhD in the Faculty of English on levels, games and ‘architectures of play’ in postmodern and contemporary literature. She is a supreme exponent of the art of synchronising actors and subtitles.