



## 3. koncert

*Sorø Klosterkirke*

*Onsdag den 10. juli kl.*

*20.00*

*Programintro kl. 19.45*

### *Program:*

*Musik af Byrd, Bairstow,  
Boyd, Gibbons, Arensky,  
Estrada, Schumann,  
McCombe og Bach*

### *Varighed:*

*Ca. 1½ time med pause.*

*Entré 75 kr.*

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## *Australian Chamber Choir*

### *Korkoncert*

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An original program featuring music from diverse geographical locations and cultures Touring to Denmark, Poland and Germany after premiere concerts in Castlemaine and Melbourne.

In a feat unmatched by any other Australian choir or classical ensemble, The Australian Chamber Choir has, in its first five years, given 48 concerts in three tours of Germany, Denmark, Poland and France and numerous performances in Australia.

For their 2013 European tour, The Bridge of Dreams program forms a symbolic conduit between disparate cultures, indigenous and western, the old world and the new world, and between the music of three continents and six centuries.

The program takes its name from Anne Boyd's 1975 work, *As I crossed a Bridge of Dreams*, which was inspired by the depth of sadness expressed in Medieval Japanese court music. Director, Douglas Lawrence

explains: "All the pieces in the program form "bridges" between the composers' dreams and the audience. Most compositions are dreamed before they are written. Composers, perhaps more than most (except poets!) dream the whole time. A dream is something that takes you out of yourself and wonderful music can transport people to such a place. I see the whole program as – if you will – a dream sequence!" The bridge of dreams takes us from modern day Australia to Renaissance England:

William Byrd was old enough to have incurred the hottest blasts of English religious controversy. Born amid the modified Catholicism of Henry VIII's reign (which expunged papal supremacy alone, retaining intact all other Catholic teachings), he was later a subject of the openly Protestant Edward VI, the no less openly anti-Protestant Mary I, and the compromising Anglicans Elizabeth I and James I. Privately Byrd held fast to the Roman rite. The six-voice *O Salutaris Hostia*, one of Byrd's several dozen Latin motets, was never published in his lifetime (unlike a four-voice setting which he produced of the same text, and which he released in 1605). A setting of words by St Thomas Aquinas – words to which composers from Palestrina to Liszt have turned – it testifies to Byrd's enthusiasm for passing dissonances, these arising

from the sheer strictness of the canon which he maintains among the parts. The ending, complete with plagal cadence, is as unexpected as it is serene.

In the Four Songs for Double Choir Op. 141, Schumann deals with the theme of longing for a better world. These were written at a particularly difficult time in his life when he was striving to understand himself and his relationship with those around him.

It is the “depth of sadness” in the works of Schumann that provides a bridge with Carr Boyd’s composition. She creates textures that are “a musical conception of the Australian outback landscape”. By synthesizing elements of Asian music with European compositional techniques, Boyd produces something uniquely Australian.

The centerpiece of the program is the first performance of a new work *Lexicon of Dreams*, by internationally recognized Melbourne composer, Christine McCombe. She explains: “in some ways *Lexicon of Dreams* is a contemporary re-imagining of the indigenous concept of ‘songlines’ or ‘dreaming tracks’ – the work reflects on journeys made in dreams, of looking down from above on a particular path or landscape. The forest, the wide river, the ocean and the limitless blue sky of the text reflect a very Australian sensibility.”

In *Awit ni Solomon* (1990), composer Robin Estrada (born 1970, Philippines), using extended vocal techniques conjures up the sounds of the Philippine jungle.

The contemporary Australian and Filipino works on the program are set in context against European choral masterworks by William Byrd (c.1620), Edward Bairstow (1874-1946), Robert Schumann (1849), Anton Arensky (1861-1906) and Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

The Australian Chamber choir was founded by its current director, Douglas Lawrence in 2007. In July that year, the choir undertook a 20-concert tour of Europe to great acclaim: “There are days when something of heaven seems to touch the earth. Thank you for giving us just one of those such days” (Stefen Wegener, Presenter, Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche Series, Berlin, July 14, 2007) “The Australian Chamber Choir inspired the audience with the finest choral music” (Ostfriesischer Kurier, July 19, 2007). Shortly after its return to Melbourne, Clive O’Connell described the choir’s inaugural Australian performance in *The Age*: “choral work of the top rank, as lucidly articulated as you could desire, the bustling interweaving of eight lines coming across in this revealing acoustic with impressive purpose and intonational fidelity” (*The Age*, November 22, 2007).



This meteoric rise to international success was largely due to the 24 years Douglas Lawrence worked as director of the Choir of Ormond College, University of Melbourne. In 1984, when Lawrence founded the Ormond College choir, it was the only university choir giving regular weekly performances. This choir provided a training ground for elite choral singers, and its talented young graduates went on to become the backbone of choirs such as Ensemble Gombert, Gloriana and several church choirs. Lawrence also provided a training ground for young conductors and emerging Australian composers, many of whom were given the opportunity to revise their work before repeat performances, both in Australia and throughout Europe. Lawrence undertook 11 international concert tours with the Ormond College choir and established a list of European engagements unmatched by any other Australian ensemble.

The Australian Chamber Choir draws upon the large pool of elite singers trained during Lawrence's Ormond College years and is open to talented singers of all backgrounds. The performance of new Australian compositions in Europe and Australia has become a hallmark of the Australian Chamber Choir. In its short life the choir has already given 48 performances in Germany, Poland and Denmark, bringing attention and critical acclaim to the music of Australian composers: "The modern works; Lamentations (Hodgson) and 'O Magnum Mysterium' (Kristof) ... all portrayed a highly-effective sonic magic" (General Anzeiger, Bonn, July 11, 2009) "Thanks to the expressiveness of the singing, Brenton Broadstock's 'I had a dream' became a most beautiful experience" (Berlingste Tidende, Copenhagen, July 23, 2007).

In addition to the concerts mentioned above, the ACC has produced a CD and made several ABC classic FM recordings.

The choir has a special interest in the unaccompanied motets of JS Bach. "Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf" was described as "Bach vocal interpretation of high quality, with a bouncy energy and unwavering unanimity of pitch" in a review entitled "Sacred and Spine-Chilling" (Clive O'Connell, the Age, August 24, 2010). As part of a European tour in July 2011, the ACC gave a concert in St Thomaskirche, Leipzig, where Bach was director of music for 27 years. One of Bach's six motets was performed alongside Australian works by Philip Nunn and Ronald Nagorcka.



### **Douglas Lawrence**

After completing a Masters Degree in performance at Melbourne University Douglas spent two years with Anton Heiller in the Concert Class at the Vienna Academy and during that time began a concert career which has since taken him throughout most of the Western World. His first important concert was in 1972 on the world's oldest playable organ in Sion Switzerland. That instrument was built about 1420. Douglas has given concerts there on six subsequent occasions. He performs each year internationally earning the enthusiastic praise of critics. He has given something over 2,000 concerts as organist, harpsichordist or conductor and released a small pile of recordings. 2001 saw five new compact discs; the Bamboo Organ of Manila; two of

the new organ in the Scots' Church; two with The Choir of Ormond College and one featuring the Choir of the Scots' Church with organist Robin Batterham.

Amongst several inaugurals Lawrence played the first concert on the organ of the Sydney Opera House and Melba Hall at Melbourne University; and gave the first solo recital on the organ in the Melbourne Concert Hall. In March 2000 Scots' Church in Melbourne inaugurated a new 68 stop organ from the famous Austrian builder Rieger. This instrument, designed by Douglas Lawrence is regarded by many eminent European, American and Australasian organists as the finest organ to ever come to Australia.

The international press has also given the highest praise to Lawrence for his work with the Choir of Ormond College. The choir has toured abroad every two years since 1985. Lawrence founded the Choir in 1982.

In Melbourne, Douglas Lawrence is Director of Music to the Scots Church. He founded and directs the Australian Baroque Ensemble and the Australian Chamber Choir. He teaches organ for the Faculty of Music at Melbourne University and the Australian Catholic University. He was a sessional lecturer to the United Faculty of Theology. In 1992 he was awarded an Order of Australia for services to music.

Douglas Lawrence has appeared as soloist for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation series, youth concerts, Contemporary series and as soloist with the orchestras on television and radio. He gives duo concerts with harpsichordist Elizabeth Anderson.

Douglas Lawrence is much sought after as a judge in organ playing and choral competitions and his opinion is highly regarded in the field of organ design for churches and concert halls.

As organist or conductor Douglas Lawrence has given something over 70 first performances. This activity continues unabated with new works scheduled for premiering each year.

Program:

### **BRIDGE OF DREAMS**

#### **William Byrd 1540 - 1623**

O sing joyfully

#### **Edward Bairstow 1874 - 1946**

i I sat down under his shadow

ii Let all mortal flesh keep silence

#### **Anne Boyd born in Sydney, 1946**

As I crossed a bridge of dreams (1975)

#### **Orlando Gibbons 1583 - 1623**

From the Second Service: Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

**Anton Arensky 1861 - 1906**

Otche Nash (Our Father)

**Robin Estrada 1970**

Awit ni Solomon (*Song of Solomon*) (1995)

Interval (5 min)

**Robert Schumann:**

An die Sterne (aus: Vier Doppelchörige Gesänge Op 141)

**Christine McCombe born 1965** (more information  
at <http://www.auschoir.org/aboutus/christine-mccombe/>)

Lexicon of Dreams (Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Choir, 2013)

**Johann Sebastian Bach 1685 - 1750**

Motett for 8-voiced Double Choir *Fürchte dich nicht, ich bin bei dir* BWV 228