

In Celebration of the Winter Solstice

Patrick Swanson, Director
George Emlen, Music Director
Lynda Johnson, Production Manager
Sarah Higginbotham, Children's Director
Jeremy Barnett, Set Design
Len Schnabel, Lighting Design
Heidi Anne Hermiller, Costume Design
William Winn, Sound Design
Judy Erickson, Choreography

with
The Mellstock Band
David Coffin
Mary Casey
The Village Quire
The Casterbridge Children
The Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble
Pinewoods Morris Men
Richard Snee
Tim Sawyer
Bruce Randall
and
The Lord of the Dance

Infrared listening devices and large-print programs are available at the Sanders Theatre box office

Dear Friends,

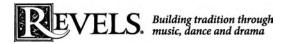
We are pleased you've joined us this evening as we return to Revels' English roots. The past season of ups and downs reminds us more than ever of how important it is to come together to celebrate old traditions and community with families and friends.

In a sense, you are a part of the village it takes to build our Revels. This year much of our energy was focused on partnerships and education. Our vibrant community collaborations enabled RiverSing to flourish and SummersDay Revels to expand. We are grateful to our media partners who helped us to bring you to The Christmas Revels.

Our Education Programs featuring workshops and residencies in schools, a lively touring company, and after-school and vacation programs are in demand. But there are other subtler, unexpected, educational bonuses. Each year we reap the benefits of having worked with so many children. We've watched them sing "There Was a Pig Went out to Dig" as children, become teenagers, head off to college, and return as adults to design our set, play the fiddle, teach morris and sword dancing in our after-school programs, be assistant stage and production managers, facilitate Revels retreats, mend costumes during the run of the show, load trucks in and out of the theater, and dance with Pinewoods Morris Men. And this year onstage, we have a grandparent and grandchild singing together —so, the tradition goes on.

As I sit in the audience with you, I am deeply gratified to see this new generation carrying on the traditions of old, and to witness their commitment to Revels. We thank you all for helping to make this possible.

Gayle Rich
Executive Director





INTRODUCTION



N celebration of our 38th annual production of The Christmas Revels, we welcome our overseas guests, The Mellstock Band, who take their name from the village so graphically described by Thomas Hardy in his groundbreaking novels about English country life in the midnineteenth century. Bringing with them a deep knowledge of and enthusiasm for west gallery music, as well as a variety of instruments (including the serpent which flew strapped into its own airline seat), our guests form the core singing group or "quire" in this Thomas Hardy inspired Revels. Some of the tunes and carols may seem familiar, but this is a rare opportunity to hear them as they might have sounded in an England all but disappeared now, sung in a style that drew no distinction between sacred and secular, and with a joy that is inspiring to a modern ear.

We have allowed characters from Hardy's novel *Under the Greenwood Tree* to set the tone for our story. We begin with a group of carolers on a snowy Christmas Eve in Wessex, their voices clear on the still night air. Soon, steam will power threshers and cotton mills, locomotives will link city to country, the old ways will be replaced. Even in this village there is talk of the new-fangled harmonium replacing the rustic instruments of the village quire.

Change is inevitable. Perhaps it is worth considering what is worth keeping from one generation to the next. That is the currency of tradition, and what we hope informs our activities at Revels. We hope that you enjoy them as much as we do. *Welcome Yule!*

PART I

A Wessex Overture

Composed by George Emlen, 2008.

CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

1. Remember Adam's Fall

In the opening pages of *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Thomas Hardy actually includes the verses of this "ancient and time-worn hymn" in order to create a specific dramatic moment. The music was included in the 1736 collection *Divine Recreations*.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND AND QUIRE

2. The Lass of Richmond Hill

A morris dance in the Fieldtown tradition. The collector Cecil Sharp's introduction to morris dancing was courtesy of a team dancing (out of season) in a light winter snow.

PINEWOODS MORRIS MEN

3. Somerset Wassail

Cecil Sharp collected this carol early in the twentieth century from the Drayton wassailers in Somerset, part of the region that Hardy called Wessex in his novels.

THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN
CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

4. Portugal New / O Come All Ye Faithful

This venerable carol is first heard in the rural, rough-hewn west gallery style of music-making that Hardy describes so vividly in novels, then in a more familiar arrangement by David Willcocks.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND
CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE
THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

ALL SING:

- [3] O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold him, born the king of angels; O come let us adore him (3x), Christ the Lord!
- [4] Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above. Glory to God in the highest. O come....

5. Clogging

A selection of steps from hornpipes, popular competition dances. Hornpipes were danced in many places, by sailors on shipboard, and in the mills of the North Country. The tune is "Click Go the Shears."

GILLIAN STEWART, DANCER ANDREA LARSON, FIDDLE

6. How Happy's the Man

A convivial drinking song found in the manuscripts of Thomas

Hardy, arranged by Dave Townsend and Charles Spicer.

DAVID COFFIN THE MELLSTOCK BAND THE VILLAGE MEN

7. The Triumph

The most popular longways country dance in nineteenth-century England. It is the first dance at Tranter Dewy's Christmas party in *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND THE VILLAGE DANCERS

8. Sans Day Carol

Traditional carol from Cornwall, unusual for its associating the Virgin Mary with the holly tree, a masculine symbol in folk mythology. Sans Day, or St. Day (the name of the village of origin in Cornwall), probably refers to the Breton Saint Dei.

THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE MELLSTOCK BAND

9. Lord Strange

This tune first appears in print in 1705, and variations of it are found in village musicians' compilations throughout England.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND

10. Arise and Hail the Joyful Day

A characteristic blend of voices and instruments in the west gallery style, this carol is mentioned in *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND
THE VILLAGE QUIRE

11. Songs and Games for Children

We've Been Awhile A-Wandering

A Yorkshire wassail song with many variants, including "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen."

There Was a Pig Went Out to Dig

An old agrarian mummers' carol linking the Christmas season to the cycle of planting and harvesting.

12. Lord of Misrule

An appointment related to the medieval Feast of Fools.

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

13. Boar's Head Carol

This carol has been sung at Queen's College, Oxford, since the seventeenth century, as the celebrated dish is borne into the dining hall.

DAVID COFFIN

THE VILLAGE QUIRE

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

ALL SING:

Caput apri defero, reddens laudes Domino.

("The boar's head I bring, giving praises to God")

14. Awake, Awake Ye Mortals All

A carol for women's voices found in the Hardy family manuscripts in Puddletown, where many of Hardy's kinfolk lived and made music.

THE VILLAGE WOMEN JAMES MAILHOT, BASS CLARINET

15. Portesham Feast Dance

A community dance at the Portesham Feast ("Poss'am Fez" in local dialect) in the West Dorset village of Portesham. The tune goes by many names, including "The Tune the Old Cow Died Of."

THE VILLAGE DANCERS
THE MELLSTOCK BAND

16. God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

This famous "luck-visit" tune is first given in a rollicking "street" version reminiscent of "We've Been Awhile A-Wandering," followed by a more modern version for the full company.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND
THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE OLD TOM BELLS
THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN
CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE



17. Tolling the Devil's Knell

A poem by Patrick Swanson. Many English churches ring their bells on Christmas Eve, and a few still toll "passing bells" to indicate the age and sex of a dead parishioner; but All Saint's, Dewsbury, is the only church left which still rings "The Devil's Knell." Beginning at about 10 p.m., the tenor bell sounds as many strokes as there are years since Christ's nativity, the last timed exactly to coincide with the first chime of midnight, when in folk tradition Satan died. Each year the devil bounces back and another stroke must be added to his knell. The custom's origin is unrecorded, but it certainly dates from well before 1828, when it was revived "after a lapse of some years."

18. The Lord of the Dance

Sydney Carter's modern lyrics to the Shaker Song "Simple Gifts" are here translated into dance using a compilation of traditional English morris dance steps by Carol Langstaff, Martin Graetz and Jonathan Morse.

DAVID COFFIN

THE VILLAGE QUIRE

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

PINEWOODS MORRIS MEN

CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

ALL SING AND DANCE:

Dance, then, wherever you may be; I am the lord of the dance, said he, And I'll lead you all wherever you may be, And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

INTERMISSION

PART II

19. Abbots Bromley Horn Dance

An ancient ritual for good luck in hunting the stag, still danced every year in the village of Abbots Bromley in England. Its four supernumerary characters link it with the mumming traditions of Christmas.

PINEWOODS MORRIS MEN DAVID COFFIN, RECORDER

20. God's Dear Son

From *Some Ancient Christmas Carols* (1822), compiled from Cornish manuscripts by the scientist and antiquarian Gilbert Davies, in the original two-part setting. The tune is a variant of the dance tune "Chestnut" or "Dove's Figary."

MARY CASEY
THE VILLAGE WOMEN

21. The Oxen

A poem by Thomas Hardy expressing nostalgia for the religious faith he has lost, and imagining the Christmas story as it might be experienced today.

22. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night ("Winchester")

This hymn text, a paraphrase of St. Luke's gospel account of the announcement of Jesus' birth, enjoys more musical settings than possibly any other, numbering in the hundreds. The tune dates from before 1600.

MARY CASEY, HARMONIUM
THE VILLAGE QUIRE

23. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night ("Lyngham")

Composed by Thomas Jarman and published around 1803, this tune is widely sung to this text. Instrumental interludes, or "symphonies," are characteristic of the west gallery music style.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND THE VILLAGE QUIRE

24. Children's Songs and Dances

Dame, Get Up and Bake your Pies

A song related to the venerable tune "Greensleeves."

The Holly and the Ivy

This commonly sung carol was collected in Gloucestershire by Cecil Sharp and published in 1911. The ancient pagan male-female symbols of holly and ivy retain their powerful presence in our current-day practice of decorating our homes with evergreens during the winter solstice season.

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

25. Arise and Hail the Sacred Day

A fine carol that typifies both the accompanied "church band" style

of west gallery music and the duet-style folk carol such as those sung by the Copper family in Sussex.

THE MELLSTOCK BAND THE VILLAGE QUIRE

26. Dorset Five-Hand Reel

An informal social dance done by working people in the pub rather than in a ballroom. The step and reel is one of the oldest British Isles dance formations. Tunes are "Dorchester Hornpipe" and "Speed the Plow."

THE VILLAGE DANCERS

27. Apple Tree Wassail

A Somerset variant of a carol that involves dipping lamb's wool in cider and hanging it on tree branches to bring good luck for the New Year.

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN
THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE MELLSTOCK BAND

28. Rounds

DAVID COFFIN
THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN
THE VILLAGE OUIRE

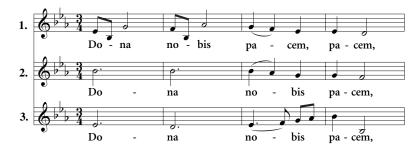
ALL SING

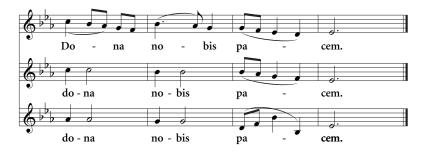
Alleluia Composed by William Boyce (1711-1779).





Dona Nobis Pacem "Give us peace."





29. The Play of St. George

"As aforetime acted by the Dorsetshire Christmas mummers based on the version in *The Return of the Native* and completed from other versions and local tradition by Thomas Hardy." This note appears on the title page of an edition privately printed by Mrs. Hardy in 1921.

Minus Dragon and Fool characters, this hero-combat play is typical of those performed throughout Wessex in the nineteenth century. Here the folk process has been furthered by the addition of some dialogue by Patrick Swanson and a sword dance from Ampleforth, but the lines remembered and recorded by Hardy remain, bringing an unusual poetic flavor to this old Dorset play.

TIM SAWYER, FATHER CHRISTMAS
BARRY REARDON, VALIANT SOLDIER
WALTER LOCKE, TURKISH KNIGHT
MAYHEW SEAVEY, SAINT GEORGE
RICHARD SNEE, DOCTOR
ART MUNISTERI, SARACEN
RENNI BOY, HOUSEKEEPER
MARY CASEY, FANCY

30. Sword Dance

A hilt and point longsword dance from the village of Ampleforth in Yorkshire.

31. Glad Tidings

A splendid west gallery carol, with "symphonies," from Hardy family manuscripts and tune books.

THE VILLAGE QUIRE
THE MELLSTOCK BAND

32. The Shortest Day

This poem, written for Revels in 1977 by Susan Cooper, is a traditional part of Christmas Revels performances throughout the country.

ALL SHOUT: Welcome Yule!

TIM SAWYER

33. Sussex Mummers' Carol

This traditional carol is sung as an ending to the folk play in Horsham, Sussex. In each of the ten American cities where Revels is produced annually, this carol is sung with the audience at the conclusion of each performance. The brass arrangement is by Brian Holmes, with descant and final verse harmonization by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

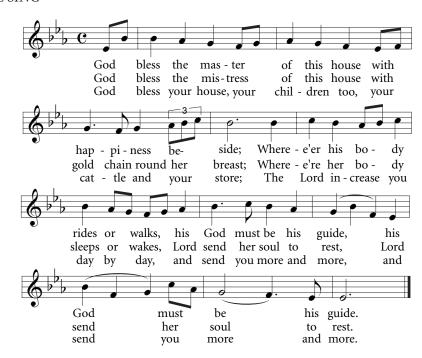
DAVID COFFIN

THE CASTERBRIDGE CHILDREN

THE VILLAGE QUIRE

CAMBRIDGE SYMPHONIC BRASS ENSEMBLE

ALL SING



The Players

The Mellstock Band

Dave Townsend, founder and director, concertina Tim Hill, early clarinet Phil Humphries, serpent Charles Spicer, oboe

Featured Artists

David Coffin, singer, songleader, concertina, recorder Mary Casey, singer, harmonium Richard Snee, actor Tim Sawyer, actor Bruce Randall, trombone

The Casterbridge Children

Ben Adams Andrew Cekala Eddie Cipullo Ceci Cipullo Alison Costello Margaret Entwistle Charlotte Holt Michaela Jai-Mei Kane Havden Latimer-Ireland Izzy Lazenby Sascha Morris Duncan Nobile Avery Sargent Veronica Sargent Lucy Sinclair August Williams

The Village Quire

Renni Boy, *Housekeeper*Walter Locke, *Reuben Dewey*Arthur Munisteri, *Michael Mail*Barry Reardon, *Leaf*Mayhew Seavey, *Dick Dewey*

Tom Arena, handbells Jennifer Beal, handbells Jim Beardsley Lynne Beasley, dancer Bronwyn Bird, dancer Jaime Bonney, dancer Laura Brewer Nat Coolidge, handbells Alexander Hall, dancer

Alexander Hall, dancer Peter Hamlin, dancer James Henderson, dancer

Ralph Hergert Sarah Higginbotham, *dancer*

Mindy Koyanis Andrea Larson, handbells, dancer

Jim Lawton, dancer Suzanne Long, dancer Joshua Mackay-Smith, dancer

James Mailhot Milva McDonald, *dancer* Ellen Pfeiffer

Bruce Randall Rosa Elena Rivera-Small Marcelo Rizzo Andrea Ross

Marianna Spera Victoria Thatcher

Sue Turner, handbells, dancer

Pinewoods Morris Men

Frank Attanasio
Jerry Callen
Adam Cole-Mullen
David Conant
Bill Cronin
Jan Elliott
David Fleischmann-Rose
Dan Groher
Peter Kruskal
Joe Kynoch
Dave Overbeck
Steve Roderick
Natty Smith
Shag Graetz
Tom Kruskal

Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble

Ken Pullig, trumpet Greg Hopkins, trumpet Richard Hudson, horn Philip Swanson, trombone Greg Fritze, tuba Sarah Tenney, timpani

Additional dancers: Sarah Hebert-Johnson Jeremy van Cleave

Production Staff

Production Manager: Lynda Johnson
Production Stage Manager: Marsha Smith
Stage Manager: Elizabeth Locke
Properties: Juliet Cocca
Stage Manager: Elizabeth Locke
Make-up: Hannah Woodbury
Children's Assistant: Jesse Beaton-Hellman
Children's Dressing Room Managers: Isabelle Holt, Erika Roderick,
Harper Mills, Jacob Kiely-Song
Assistant Stage Managers: Gillian Stewart, Jeremy Van Cleave
Technical Director: Andrew Hebert-Johnson
Master Carpenter: Andrew Barnett
Master Electrician / Light Board Operator: Alfred Carbello

Costume Production: Costume Works
Costume Manager: Lynne Jeffery
Wardrobe Supervisor: Seth Bodie
Carpenter: Ted Cocca

Props Day Coordinator and Production Volunteer Coordinator: Nancy Hanssen Production Assistants: Jesse Beaton-Hellman, Sarah Hebert-Johnson, Hannah Woodbury,

Nancy Hanssen, Susan Kemp, Elizabeth McCreless

Cast Party: Bruce Pratt

ASL Interpreters: Joan Wattman, Katy Burns
Revels Records Sales Coordinator: Jen Sur
Photography: Roger Ide

Videography: Michael Kolowich Advertising and Program Book Design: Sue Ladr

Program Notes: George Emlen, Dave Townsend, and Patrick Swanson

Program Printing: Fleming Printers

Volunteers

Jeff Adams, Tammy Adams, Gail Amsler, Sylvia Anderson, Tom Arena, Sue Barry, Jon Bartels, Pat Bartels, Chris Beasley, Lynne Beasley, John Blanchard, Lani Blanchard, Holly Cain, Jean Cain, Rebecca Cain, Ruth Canonico, Maureen Carey, Susan Cassidy, Michele Chapais, Michelle Cheyne, Jan Childs, Hilary Cipullo, Paula Clough, Ted Cocca, Harvey Cohen, Jennifer Costa, Margaret Costello, Joanne Crowell, Karen Daniels, Janice Darling, Christine Day, Ian Day, Beverly Deiter, Kathryn Denney, Elizabeth Desisto, Don Duncan, Susan Elberger, Norma Elkind, Patti Emerson, Erin Fair, Jean Farrington, Arthur Ferguson, Janice Fullman, Jeff Garland, Cathie Ghorbani, Mary Gilbert, Faith Girdler, Luisa Granitto, Connie Gresser, Jim Greaney, Sabrina Hamilton, Ruth Heespelink, Jud Hill, Elizabeth Howard, Lois Howry, Susan Hunziker, Susan Jaster, Rebecca Jenness, Louisa Jenness, Anne Kaufman, Glenn Ketterle, Linda Kilner Olivier, Ashley Kliefoth, Karen Kosko, Deborah Kruskal, Roy Kuphal, Matt Lamkin, Diana Lees, Carrie Lin, Nigel Little, Jackie Lucchesi, Barbara Mackay, Duncan Mackay, Maria Mannix, Susan Maycock, Christina Morris, Gael Motz, Rich Motz, Nickey Mullen, Laura, Luke and Tom Olivier, Lucia Petrulli, John Porter, Brad Putnam, Jessica Raine, Kristie Rampton, Lori Renn Parker, Christine Reynolds, John Rockwell, Michelle Roderick, Beate Rolf, Karen Russo, William Sano, Bob Sargent, Ann Schaffner, Linda Schneider, Karl Schults, Sibyl Senters, Katherine Shaw, Larry Shaw, Mary Shaw, Lilly Siu, Andrea Slavin, Charity Stafford, Ishmael Stefanov-Wagner, Thaddeus and Phyllis Stefanov-Wagner, Mervl Stowbridge, Phoebe Sullivan, David Titus, Elizabeth Titus, Susie Titus, Max Troizier-Cheyne, Clyde Tyndale, Sarah Vogele, Dan Watt, Eileen Wagner, Norma Wassel, Molly Watt, Deborah Winograd, Hannah Woodbury, Nell Wright, Lauren Yaffee. Thanks to everyone listed above, and to all those whose names came in too late to be listed here.

Thanks

Our homage to Thomas Hardy and the West Country this season would not have been possible without many generous and valuable friends. These include Dave Townsend, noted authority on west gallery music and founder of the Mellstock Band. Closer to home, Bruce Randall has perpetuated and cultivated west gallery music-making in the Boston area for many years. We are also grateful to David Gay, artistic director emeritus of Revels North, who pioneered a Thomas Hardy production in Hanover, N.H., more than a decade ago and who brought Hardy's adaptation of "The Play of St. George" to our attention. A very special thank you for housing the Mellstock Band to Janet Childs, the Beasley Family, and Renni Boy.



THE MISSION of Revels is to cultivate authentic cultural traditions and celebrate the cycle of the seasons — through staged performances of song, dance and drama, education programs, and opportunities for participation by all.

This year *The Christmas Revels* is also being presented in Tacoma, WA; Portland, OR; Oakland, CA; Santa Barbara, CA; Boulder, CO; Houston, TX; Hanover, NH; New York, NY; and Washington, DC.

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WEST GALLERY MUSIC

by Dave Townsend, Director, The Mellstock Band

HE SONGS AND TUNES of country church bands and choirs of eighteenth and nineteenth centuries form one of the great lost heritages of English music. Suppressed from the 1840's onwards, and neglected by more recent scholarship, it has unique vigor and excitement, as well as being accessible to singers and musicians of all abilities. This is "west gallery music" or "country psalmody," the vigorous harmony singing tradition which flourished in rural English parish churches from the early 1700's until the mid-nineteenth century. It was composed, adapted and taught by people of humble origins and little formal education, who produced music of extraordinary vitality and variety. It is rhythmic, full-voiced, and has a fascinating combination of wild harmonies and unorthodox counterpoint.

The choirs and their music are unforgettably portrayed by Thomas Hardy in *Under The Greenwood Tree* and other poems and stories, and some of the pieces in this Revels program come from the Hardy family's own collection of manuscript books, and from other Dorset sources.

These tunes and harmonies were brought to North America in the eighteenth century, setting off a new tradition of "fasola" or "shape-note" singing that flourished at first in New England but then survived in the Southern states throughout the nineteenth century, thanks in part to the legendary publication *The Sacred Harp* and other hymn collections. Back in England, the music survives in the caroling traditions of Northern England and the West Country. These traditions, with their direct links to the old west gallery choirs and singing masters, suggest a style far removed from both the art music of the time and our present choral tradition. American shape-note singers use a powerful, open-throated tone, plentiful individual ornamentation, and driving rhythm, matching the exuberance of street carol singers in present-day Cornwall and Yorkshire's pub carolers.

By the end of the eighteenth century it was usual to support each vocal line with an instrument, which might also play extra passages or "symphonies." Descriptions of the last of the Dorset church bands in 1895, and of the "Big Set" in 1930's Yorkshire, make it clear that the instrumentalists did not merely double the vocal parts (which are often all that survives), but improvised variations and independent supporting parts as well. Often the old bands also played for dancing, a fact that has informed the instrumental playing of The Mellstock Band in interpreting west gallery music.

THOMAS HARDY AND CHANGE

by Patrick Swanson, Revels Artistic Director

T FIRST BLUSH, Thomas Hardy seems an unlikely figure to associate with Revels. A deeply romantic and at times, melancholy writer whose novels move (some would say obsessively) from passionate impasse to doomed relationship, he is not an obvious recruit for a hankie-waver in "The Lord of the Dance." Moreover there is a gloomy leitmotif running through his work—the loss of the "old" ways of doing things. At the time of Hardy's writing, steam trains were opening up the cities to the country and allowing unprecedented numbers of people to travel great distances easily. Spinning Jennies and other mechanical wonders were revolutionizing the production of textiles, canals were dissecting the countryside and enabling the transport of coal and heavy machinery. In the fields haybines and threshing machines were doing the work of a legion of redundant laborers who were left, hats in hand, lamenting the passing of centuries-old agricultural traditions and practices. Part of the tragedy for Hardy was that these old English work traditions were interwoven with a wealth of cultural treasure — the stories, the dances, the music — to him, the stuff of life. And here is where Hardy-world and Revels-world begin to intersect.

Under the Greenwood Tree was Hardy's third novel; he describes it as "A Rural Painting of the Dutch School." Its arc begins on Christmas Eve in a Dorsetshire village and moves through all the seasons of the year, while in the background loom the changes that were transforming England at every level. What is so attractive about the novel for Revels (besides the calendar theme) is the extravagance of wonderful characters and the details of mid-nineteenth century country life that include direct references to carols, instrumentation, seasonal customs and even mummers' plays. Hardy himself wrote the mummers' play that we have adapted in this show, cobbling together his childhood memories of Saints, Saracens and Doctors as a bona fide practitioner of the folk process.

Central to the novel is the story of the village quire, a collection of characters of almost Dickensian proportions, concerned about their future in the face of the new-fangled "harmonium" which threatens to displace them from their traditional place in the west gallery of the village church. West gallery music, as it came to be known, was robust, energetic and joyful. A touch too joyful for many of the clergy who frowned on the secularization of church music and the addition of folk instruments like the concertina, fiddle and serpent. Most country churches could not afford an organ, so the quires had to be

tolerated until the invention of the portable organ which in time displaced the motley collection of instruments and characters that inhabited the back pews.

Revels, of course, as a dramatic form has its limitations. We have a limited ability to introduce characters to an audience, develop them, allow them time to have relationships, resolve dramatic issues and then contemplate upon the result. For this experience we strongly recommend the novel. What we can do is to allow the characters to climb out of the book and wander into Sanders Theatre where they will find us all ready to sing the old carols, to appreciate the "deep, rich note" of the serpent, to dance "The Triumph" and to savor the sub-Handelian instrumental flourishes that adorn their music and are known to the present-day in some Yorkshire and Derbyshire Christmas carol pub sings as "symphonies." For the rest, we hope that you enjoy our thumbnail sketch of Thomas Hardy's beloved Wessex and the sounds and sights that made it so dear to him. Perhaps if he was in the audience he might chuckle at one of the lines in his own mummers' play. In hard times, perhaps this is ambition enough.



AN ENDURING MAGIC

by George Emlen, Revels Music Director

THE HEART of Revels is the belief that singing has the power to transform and unite us. Many things have changed in my 25 years as Revels' music director, but this has not. A surge of electricity still runs through Sanders Theatre as the chorus fills the stage with a brilliant swirl of color, and all voices – ours and yours – are lifted together in celebration.

My initial assignment back in 1984 was to choose and train an excellent chorus for The Christmas Revels. But I knew from my own long experience in the Revels audience that the real goal would be something deeper and more elusive — not only a wonderful sound but a confidence, energy and spirit in the chorus that would radiate through the audience, suffusing everyone with enthusiasm and joy. Achieving this quality has been my mission for the past quarter-century.

At the same time it is amazing to think of how much has changed. I once composed, transcribed, arranged and edited music using pencil, music paper, telephone and cassette tape. Today I create, modify, upload and download music in audio and graphic formats unimaginable in 1984. In one afternoon, thanks to iTunes and YouTube, I can hear and see dozens of international renditions of the same traditional song.

Revels has expanded its national scope from four to ten cities and our own staff to more than a dozen. Instead of a couple of LP's, we now have a teeming catalogue of downloadable recordings (all downloadable), songbooks and choral arrangements. Revels is now a four-season production company, with salons and pub sings filling out the rest of the year. Our education program and touring company are ubiquitous.

Perhaps the most profound change is that we no longer have our founder John Langstaff in our midst. Jack was the dynamic, creative force behind every Revels production and the iconic figure who stepped forward to sing Lord of the Dance and lead the audience in song. He played another role on stage – quieter if just as powerful – moving gently through the cast with an infectious and playful energy, supercharging the atmosphere from within. Today his spirit guides us as we sail forth into the next generation of productions and projects.

When this year's cast steps out onto the stage and you join them in song, you will be sharing in the annual recreation of the vital magic that is Revels. Feel it reverberate through this venerable theater, and carry it with you into the winter night, into the days that follow, and deep into your lives. This is the gift of Revels that will never change.







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Revels gratefully acknowledges the many businesses, government agencies, foundations, and individuals who provide generous support for our programs. The following contributions were received between November 15, 2007 and November 15, 2008.

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Dec. 11, 2008, 7:30 pm: M. Katherine Metcalfe and Langdon Wheeler

Dec. 12, 2008, 7:30 pm: In memory of Joan Piersen Horstick

Dec. 13, 2008, 7:30 pm: Ellen, David and Susan Wilson

Dec. 20, 2008, 3:00 pm: In memory of Tim Taylor

Dec. 20, 2008, 7:30 pm: Shippen Page and Anne St. Goar

Dec. 21, 2008, 1:00 pm: Claire and Jack Nath Family Foundation

Dec. 21, 2008, 5:30 pm: Don and Susan Ware

Dec. 22, 2008, 7:30 pm: Clark and Susana Bernard

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REVELS JACKFISH FUND was launched in November 2006 to honor the educational vision of John Langstaff. We have received \$435,000 in pledges and gifts toward our goal of \$500,000 thanks to many generous donors.

Please consider joining us in honoring Jack's dedication to music education. Your contribution will benefit the many children whose lives have yet to be touched. Donations may be made online at www.revels.org or by check mailed to Revels, 80 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472.

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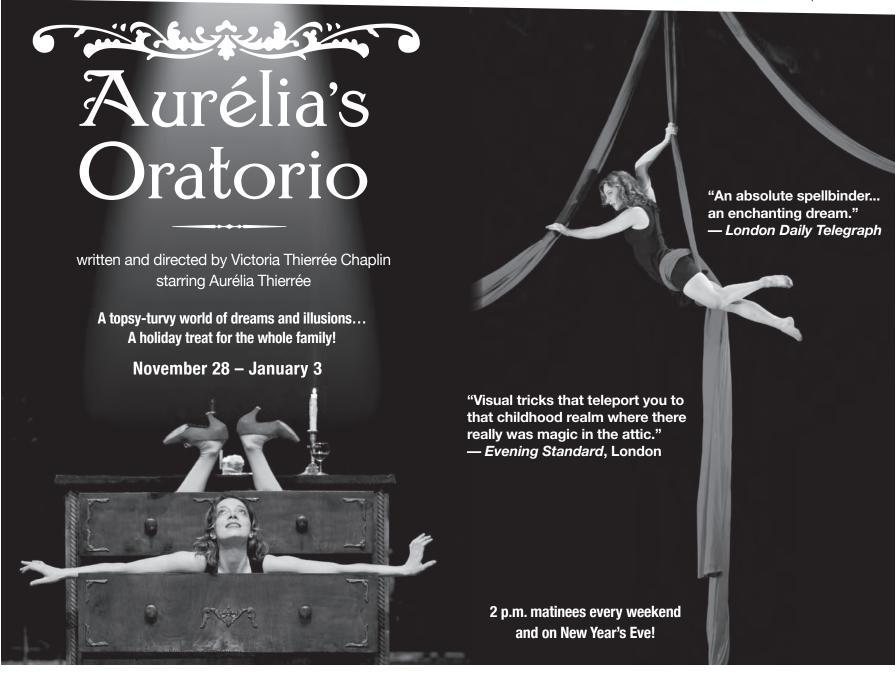
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Twelfth Night Celebration

Saturday, January 10, 2009 @ 2:00 PM 80 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA

"Put Christmas to bed" at a Revels family party marking the end of the season. Merrymaking includes:

- 12th Night Cake Ritual
- Hot Cider
- Sing Along
- Family Contra Dance
- Craftsmaking for Children
- Rapper Sword Dancers
- Mummers' Play
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Purchase tickets at www.revels.org. Or contact Michelle Roderick at mroderick@revels.org or 617-972-8300 x26

Revels Education:

Seasonal Workshops for Children

Revels Seasonal Workshops introduce children ages 7 -12 to traditional songs, dances, games and folk plays for every season. A wonderful opportunity for children to enter the world of Revels without the stress of auditions or the time commitment of productions.



"This program has been a big confidence booster for my daughter. And a lot of fun! *It's a great program that* I'll continue to recommend to friends." A WORKSHOP PARENT

Revels Spring Workshop Wednesdays, 4:00-5:30 рм February 4 – March 18, 2009 Performance at Revels Spring Sing, March 20 Tuition: \$125

Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Session 1: July 13-16, 2009 Session 2: July 20-23, 2009 Performance for family and friends at 2:00 pm on the last day of the session Tuition: \$300

No audition is necessary, but space is limited. Register: 617-972-8300 x26 or email shigginbotham@revels.org

Revels Spring Sing Friday, March 20, 2009

80 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA

Shake off the cold and drear of winter at Revels' family celebration of the vernal equinox. Surrounded by sprays of forsythia and early greens, we will welcome in the spring with our favorite Revels' songs and a couple of easy country dances for all. Midway we'll pause for a seasonal mummers' play performed by children from our Spring Workshop. We'll end with delicious refreshments.

Details at Revels' award-winning website: www.revels.org

RiverSing

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Banks of the Charles River at the Weeks Footbridge

Mark the passing of summer and the arrival of cooler days and nights at RiverSing, our celebration of the autumnal equinox. Thousands of singers join a massed choir, folk band and soloists with familiar songs of the season, as giant puppets sway to the music and saxophones call back and forth from boats on the river. Come early with family and friends for a picnic on the banks, or follow a boisterous procession from Harvard Square to kick off the event.

Details at Revels' award-winning website: www.revels.org

Revels Salon Series

Eclectic in content. Social in nature

3rd Friday of the month: 7:30 – 9:30 pm

Join us at the historic Commander's Mansion in Watertown for one or all of these stimulating interactive presentations featuring special friends of Revels. Enjoy a wine and cheese reception with delicious sweets courtesy of *Finale*.

January 16, 2009

Group Singing Traditions from Around the World

Discover the amazing variety of world ensemble singing with Revels music director George Emlen.

February 20, 2009

What they left behind: Exploring Boston's Past through Archeology

A conversation with Boston City Archeologist Ellen Berkland.

April 17, 2009

Circus! A Picturesque History: True Stories of High Adventures and Low Comedy An evening with founder of Circus Smirkus Rob Mermin.

Details at Revels' award-winning website: www.revels.org

REVELS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Revels Repertory Company

Taking Revels on the road...

AN AMERICAN JOURNEY

VOICES FROM THE MOUNTAIN

PREMIERE PERFORMANCES

February 7, 2009 (4:00 & 8:00 pm)

May 2, 2009 (7:30 pm)

Nashua Community Concert Association, Nashua, NH

Arts Council of Tamworth, Tamworth, NH

March 1, 2009 (2:00 pm)

May 8 (7:30)

National Heritage Museum

St. Andrew's Church,

Lexington, MA

Wellesley, MA May 16 (7:30)

March 5 (7:00 pm)

Winchester Unitarian Society,

Fitchburg Public Library, Fitchburg, MA

Winchester, MA

Revels Rep also presents special in-school performances that include children from sponsoring schools both on and off stage, with classroom visits, group singing, lesson plans and resource materials.

Details at Revels award winning website: www.revels.org







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Congratulations

to The Village Quire, David Coffin, The Casterbridge Children, The Mellstock Band. and all the actors, musicians and dancers.

with special thanks to Paddy Swanson and George Emlen,

for a memorable Christmas Revels 2008

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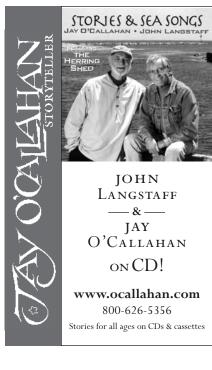
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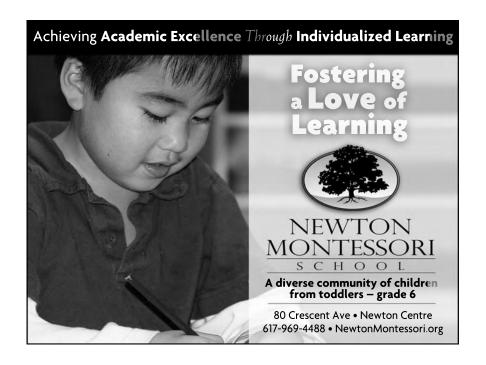
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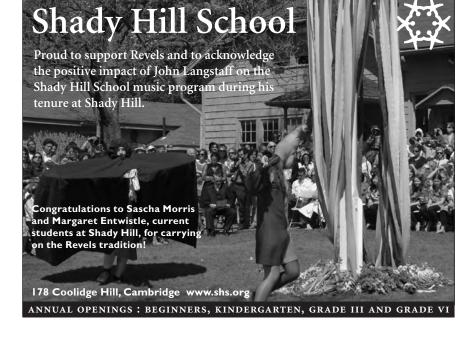












"Christmas Eve was a night of song...it warmed your heart, filled it, too, with a melody that would last forever."

~Bess Streeter Aldrich

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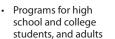
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10TH SEASON \$ 2008-09

Perotin / Josquin: Christmas in French-speaking lands, 1200 & 1500 Saturday, December 20, 2008, 8 pm

Come celebrate a Heron Holiday! Before intermission, Christmas motets by Josquin and his Franco-Flemish contemporaries, c. 1500; in the second half, the astonishing sounds of polyphony at Notre Dame de Paris, c. 1200.

Free pre-concert talk at 7:15 by Sean Gallagher (Harvard University)

Guillaume Du Fay, Savoy & the island of Cyprus

Friday, March 13, 2009, 8 pm

A program exploring connections between Du Fay, the court of Savoy, a musical manuscript from the French Cypriot court, and a 1434 wedding attended by Binchois and the Burgundian chapel—introduced by the world's leading scholar of Du Fay.

Free pre-concert talk at 7:15 by Alejandro Enrique Planchart (Professor Emeritus, University of California)

All concerts at First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden Street, Cambridge

Visit www.blueheronchoir.org to buy tickets · sign up for our mailing list get directions & find parking · and more! Or call (617) 960-7956.

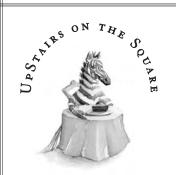


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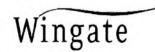
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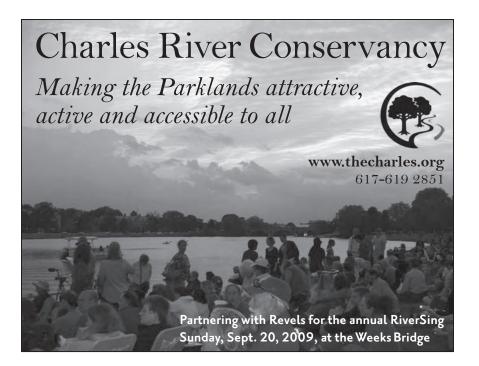


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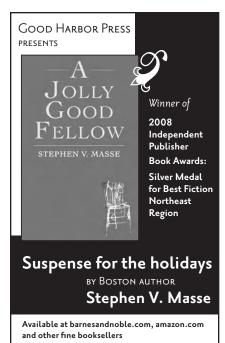
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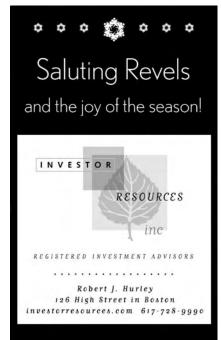


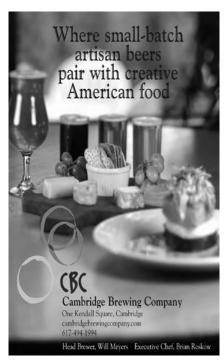
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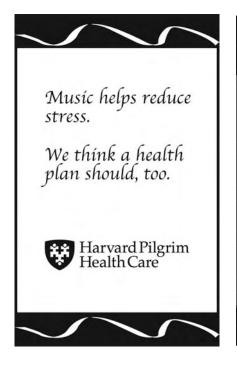
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An 18th Century Christmas

Corelli: Christmas Concerto Handel: Messiah Excerpts Also featuring Scarlatti and Carols Organ: Justin Blackwell, Soprano: Amanda Forsythe

Sat. Dec. 20, 8PM, Faneuil Hall, Boston Sun. Dec. 21, 3PM, Marsh Chapel, Boston University

Mozart and More

Mozart: Exultate Jubilate Finzi: Requiem da Camera Mozart: Coronation Mass Soprano: Courtney Kalbacker

Sat. March 21, 8PM, Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

Brahms and Wachner Brahms: Ein deutches Requiem Wachner: My Dark Eyed One... (World Premiere)

Sat. May 16, 8PM, Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

www.bbcboston.org for more information or call 617.648.3885





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Now in our tenth year, these monthly workshops are led by **Bruce Randall**, a performer in today's **Revels** and member of the *West Gallery Music Association*.

All singers and melody-instrument players are welcome.

For more information, please contact Bruce Randall at melismata@hotmail.com or go to our website at www.laymusic.org/wg.html

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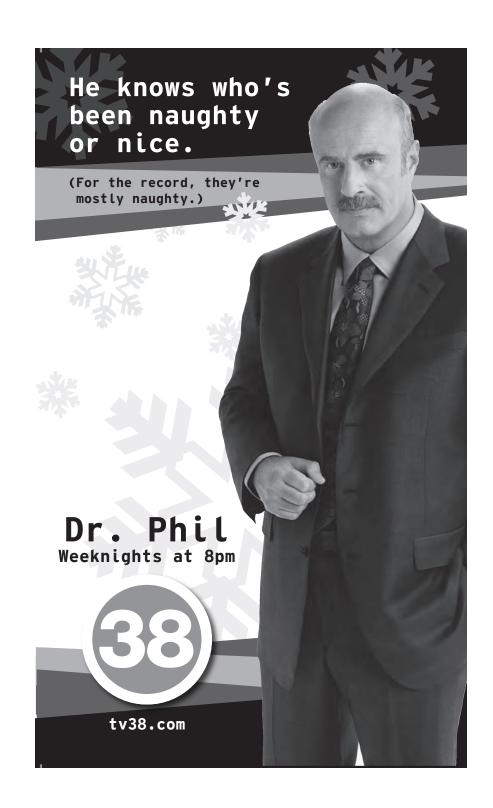


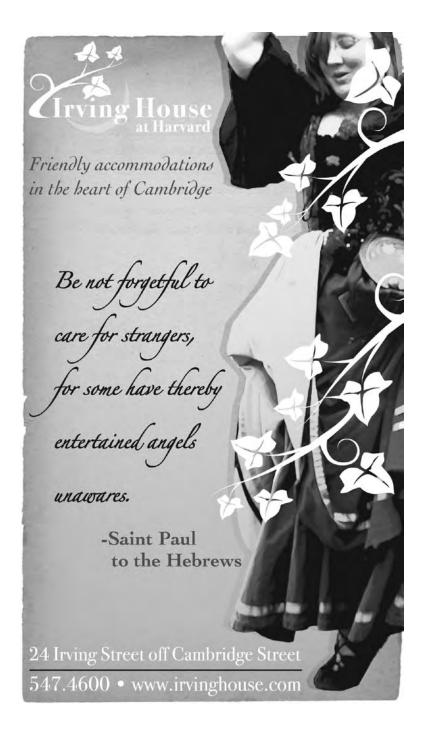
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PATRON INFORMATION

Sanders Theatre in Memorial Hall is operated by the Office for the Arts at Harvard. All inquiries

should be addressed to: Memorial Hall/Lowell Hall Complex

45 Quincy Street, Room 027, Cambridge, MA 02138-3003

Phone: 617.496.4595 Fax: 617.495.2420

Calendar of Events

Available at the Harvard Box Office web site: www.boxoffice.harvard.edu

Smoking

There is no smoking allowed in Memorial Hall.

Restrooms/Public Telephones

Located on the Lower Level.

Parking: THERE IS NO PARKING AT SANDERS THEATRE.

Free parking for Sanders Theatre events is available at the Broadway Garage, corner of Broadway and Felton Streets, from one hour pre-performance to one hour post-performance. For some student events, patrons will be asked to park at 38 Oxford Street.

Lost and Found

Call 617.496.4595 or visit the Administrative Offices, Memorial Hall room 027. Memorial Hall and Harvard University are not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Latecomers

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the management.

Photography and Recording

Use of cameras and audio and video recording equipment is prohibited. Film and tape will be confiscated.

Access for Patrons with Disabilities

Wheelchair accessible seating is available through the Harvard Box Office, telephone 617.496.2222 (TTY 617.495.1642), or in person. Sanders Theatre is equipped with Assistive Listening Devices, available at the Box Office one-half hour before performance time. For information about parking for disabled patrons, call Marie Trottier, *University Disability Coordinator*, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm at 617.495.1859 (TTY 617.495.4801) . Please call at least two business days in advance.

The Harvard Box Office

Ticketing for Sanders Theatre events and more. Phone: 617.496.2222 (TTY 617.495.1642)

Advance Sales: Holyoke Center Arcade, Harvard Square, 1350 Massachusetts Avenue

Open Tues.-Sun., 12 noon to 6 pm. Closed Mondays, some holidays, with limited summer hours.

Pre-Performance Sales: Sanders Theatre at Memorial Hall

Open performance days only, at 12 noon for matinees and 5 pm for evening performances.

Open until one-half hour after curtain.

Ushering

To inquire about ushering opportunities, contact the Production Office at 617.495.5595.

Memorial Hall/Lowell Hall Complex Staff

Director: Eric C. Engel

Assistant Director: Raymond C. Traietti

Program Manager: Ruth A. Polleys

Production Manager: Tina Bowen

Senior Production Associate: Jonathan Salz

Production Service Coordinator: Ilya Luvish

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