

All Composers for Booklet (as they appear on Album)

We would like to take you on a discovery of newly written choral music: peaceful and inspiring.

John Rutter

World-renowned British choral composer and conductor John Rutter has a long-standing friendship with artistic director and founder of the World Choir for Peace, Nicol Matt. Since 2001, their past collaborations have resulted in many successful performances, Come and Sing concerts, workshops, radio and television appearances and more recently a World Premiere performance of his latest Christmas Carol 'Christ our Emmanuel'. We eagerly anticipate further collaborations between John Rutter and the World Choir for Peace.

John Rutter's life-affirming composition 'The Music's Always There With You' touches on a variety of emotions, instilling a positive message of reassurance and confirming that music plays a fundamental part in our healing – a fitting and wonderful way for the album to open.

Sir Karl Jenkins

One of the world's most performed living composers, and personal friend of Nicol Matt, Karl Jenkins has played a key role in the launch of the World Choir for Peace. We are thrilled that he has written a new arrangement of his 'Healing Light' for the choir, recorded with Sony Classical Artists: Lavinia Meijer, harp; Esther Abrami, violin; Tim Allhoff, piano and Gereon Theis, cello. During the coronavirus pandemic, the World Choir for Peace were very excited to be partnered with the Stay At Home Choir - a global musical community with 10,000 members who come together to interact with and perform alongside some of their favourite artists. Nicol Matt, assistant conductors Alexander Koller and André Cruz, plus other core World Choir for Peace members have worked alongside Karl Jenkins to offer the Stay at Home singers' rehearsals, webinars and vocal coaching to work toward the largest ever performance of Jenkins' 'The Armed Man'.

Elaine Hagenberg

The widely performed U.S. composer Elaine Hagenberg's beautiful setting for George Matheson's text 'O Love', is an emotionally charged piece for choir and piano accompaniment (Sony Classical Artist: Josefa Schmidt). The message goes straight to the heart, evoking a wealth of feelings - a tribute to the glory of love itself.

Ola Gjeilo

The much-celebrated Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo met Nicol Matt many years ago at a masterclass for conducting and composition. His radiant piece 'Serenity' (O Magnum Mysterium), set for 8 voices and violin accompaniment, is performed by Sony Classical Artist, Esther Abrami.

Maarja Nuut

We are delighted to add another world premiere recording specially commissioned for the album 'Threads'. This meditational work provides a feeling of complete restfulness. Estonian Sony Classical artist Maarja Nuut herself accompanies the voices on the violin with perfect calmness and sensitivity. Soloist Aleksandra Nygaard Djordjevic's deep mezzo tones complete this serene work.

David Reichelt

The beautiful adaption of Brahms' Hungarian Dance No. 1 composed for this album by award-winning composer and Sony Classical artist David Reichelt, 'Wandering Soul' is a poignant, a cappella composition on the coming together of two loving souls in a tangled hell. This is a perfect metaphor for the ethos of the World Choir for Peace. It was wonderful that the composer himself was present during the recording process at Tonstudio Tessmar in Hanover, allowing him to inspire us and shape his music. Lyrics are written by Jordan Prince.

Helen Ostafew

Helen Ostafew and Nicol Matt have worked together on numerous projects and, after hearing excerpts from her work 'Requiem for Humanity', Nicol asked her to create a piece for the choir. In her 'Ave Maria' she has captured the essence of inner peace in an exquisite interpretation of this reverential text. Helen, a British soprano, composer and pianist, plays a key part in the World Choir for Peace and we are delighted to feature her work in this album.

Daniel Elder

In 'Lullaby', award-winning U.S. composer Daniel Elder reveals the quintessence of the word. Lavinia Meijer's gentle harp playing, together with Elder's sumptuous choral melodies, lulls the listener into a dream-like state.

Jake Runestad

Grammy nominee and 'Choral Rockstar' Jake Runestad has created a truly beautiful and powerful composition 'Let My Love Be Heard'. It connects straight to the soul and the emotional message and music are open to many different interpretations.

Kim André Arnesen

Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen and Nicol Matt have a very close working partnership. In August 2020, they were due to collaborate for a project in South Africa which, sadly due to the coronavirus pandemic, has been postponed till 2021. In the light of Covid-19, Arnesen offered his composition 'I Hope', with words by Charles Anthony Silvestri, to the World Choir for Peace, Hannover Chamber Choir and string ensemble, who made recordings from their own homes to create a poignant virtual video. This message of hope has reached more than 3 million people across the world. His beautiful composition 'Eja Mater', featured on this album, is accompanied by harpist Lavinia Meijer and cellist Gereon Theis.

Dan Forrest

The text for 'Come To Me' is adapted from scripture and includes elegant choral moments that bring the words to life, creating a wonderful piece of consecration and dedication. U.S. composer Dan Forrest's lush choral writing, with engaging interplay between upper and lower voices, provides moments of true beauty. This work features tenor soloist Malcolm Cooper alongside the rich piano accompaniment of Josefa Schmidt and enhanced by cellist Gereon Theis.

Eriks Ešvalds

The award-winning Latvian composer Ēriks Ešvalds is one of the most sought-after composers today, with a busy commission schedule and performances of his music heard on every continent. 'The Earthly Rose' is an uplifting, colourful and beautiful piece of music. The combination of the soaring soprano lines and cluster chords together with Lavinia Meijer's sonorous harp playing makes for a perfect composition.

Ellis Ludwig-Leone

Ellis Ludwig-Leone is a U.S. composer and songwriter active in New York City. The Sony Classical Artist's commissioned work for this album 'To Look For Owls', imagines two voices (Helen Ostafew, soprano, and Teele Utt, alto), calling out under a quiet night sky. After a period of calling with no response, the cello awakens, answering the voices' inquiry with its own strange, animal-like sounds.

Volker Bertelmann (Hauschka)

'Fifteen Million Acres' was written specially for this album by Oscar-nominated composer, pianist and producer, Volker Bertelmann (Hauschka). The piece, which focuses on the devastating Australian bushfires of 2019, deals with mourning at a time of disaster. Together with harp, piano, cello and violin, this composition makes us realise the importance of nurturing our environment.

Eric Whitacre

In 2017, Nicol Matt invited Grammy award-winning composer Eric Whitacre to Riga to host the 'Eurovision Choir', a concept brought to life by Matt himself. Whitacre also conducted the massed choirs in a programme broadcast to 12 different countries. His 'The Seal Lullaby' connects us to nature, reminding us to respect and honour our planet by caring for all its creatures. Lavinia Meijer's gentle and sensitive harp playing perfectly complements the soaring choral lines of this composition.

Max Richter

German born UK composer Max Richter is considered to be one of the most prestigious contemporary composers on the music scene. Dream 1, Pt. 1, adapted for choir by Sony Classical for the World Choir for Peace, gently transports the listener to a place of utter bliss.

Hans Zimmer

This is the very first live voiced version of the multi award-winning Hans Zimmer's extremely emotional composition 'AURORA', which was adapted for our recording by Sony Classical. This haunting and powerful piece was written after the 2012 theatre shootings in Aurora and subsequently dedicated to those who lost their lives or were affected by the tragedy. Featuring soprano soloist Elizabeth Parsons.

Arvo Pärt

The Estonian Arvo Pärt is thought to be the most widely recorded composer of our time and we are thrilled to include his most recent composition for a cappella choir in this album. With text taken from scripture (John, Revelation 14:13) 'And I heard a Voice' (Ja ma kuulsin Hääle) this setting makes for a peaceful, thought-provoking and meditative work.

Fredrik Sixten

The well-known Swedish composer Fredrik Sixten wrote his 'Alleluia' back in 2014. We are privileged to make the very first album recording of this beautifully calming piece - an appropriate way to conclude our 'Peaceful Choir' album.