



## **THE CHOIR OF HER MAJESTY'S CHAPEL ROYAL**

### **ST JAMES'S PALACE, LONDON, SW1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Choir of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal is the oldest continuous musical organisation in the world. It has existed since there have been Christian Kings in England, and its duties today are essentially the same as they have been for a thousand years and more: to sing the regular services in the Chapel of the Monarch's home, and to attend the Monarch at services and other events elsewhere as commanded. Almost all of the principal names in English music have been members of the Chapel Royal, including Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons, Purcell and Handel. The Chapel Royal Choir is based in the two Chapels at St. James's Palace. Services are sung in the Tudor Chapel Royal, decorated by Holbein in honour of Henry VIII's marriage to Anne of Cleves. Queen Mary I's heart is buried beneath the choir-stalls, and Charles I spent his last night in what is now the rehearsal room (later Purcell's bedroom) before receiving communion in the Chapel before his execution. Queen Victoria was married here, as was George V. Services are also held in The Queen's Chapel, built by Inigo Jones for the bride of Charles I, and in the Private Chapels of Kensington Palace and Buckingham Palace.

#### **THE CHAPEL ROYAL CHOIR**

The Chapel Royal Choir is made up of six Gentlemen-in-Ordinary, ten choristers, an Organist and Choirmaster and a Sub-Organist. The boys are traditionally known as the Children of the Chapel Royal, and wear the distinctive State uniform introduced at the Restoration in 1660. The boys attend City of London School, and receive a Choral Scholarship to the value of 30% of school fees from the time they become choristers until they reach the end of Fifth form.

Boys join the Choir as Probationers, becoming full choristers when one of the existing ten choristers leaves. Please note that the Choral Scholarship does not begin until the Probationer becomes a full Chorister.

Boys normally audition for the choir aged 7 or 8, although it is possible for older boys to be considered. A successful audition will be followed by an academic assessment by City of London School, normally when a boy is in Year 4 at his current school. Subject to success in these assessments, a conditional offer will be made to join Old Grammar (Year 6) for the year in

which they turn 10 years of age. To satisfy the conditions of the offer, boys must remain a member of the Choir and be successful in the School's 10+ selection process.

### **SERVICES**

Services are sung every Sunday morning except during August and September and the Sundays after Easter and after Christmas, and on a number of other occasions as required by the Church year. There are additional events such as Weddings and Funerals at the Chapel Royal, plus Carol Services, Concerts, Radio Broadcasts and State Occasions.

### **REHEARSALS**

Rehearsals are currently held twice each week during school term at the City of London School at the end of the school day 4.10 p.m. – 5.30 p.m., and once a week outside school term. Probationers attend rehearsals too.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information concerning the Chapel Royal Choral Scholarship and forthcoming auditions for the Chapel Royal Choir please contact:-

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In addition, Sunday Services at the Chapel Royal are open to all members of the public who are most welcome to attend. Sunday Service begins at 11.15 a.m.

For further details, see: [www.royal.gov.uk/output/page3253.asp](http://www.royal.gov.uk/output/page3253.asp)