

Vaughan Williams's Christmas Cantata *Hodie* (This Day) is a brilliant mosaic of musical styles set to poetry from the most diverse sources. Texts by Milton, Hardy, and George Herbert reflecting various Christmas experiences are bound together by a narration of the Gospel Nativity story sung in unison by a boys' choir. With its gripping blend of mysticism, heavenly glory and human hope, *Hodie* flows with a vitality and inventiveness that belie a work written in Vaughan Williams's old age. The *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, which incorporates a number of traditional English carols, is notable for the *obbligato* cello part and for the varied treatment of the choir, which provide an atmospheric choral-orchestral texture.

Ralph
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
(1872–1958)

1	Fantasia on Christmas Carols	^{3, 4}	11:42	10	Pastoral: The shepherds sing	³	3:04
	Hodie (This Day)		59:17	11	Narration: But Mary kept all these things	⁵	0:34
2	Prologue: Nowell! Nowell!	⁴	3:56	12	Lullaby: Sweet was the song the Virgin sang	^{1, 4}	2:32
3	Narration: Now is the birth of Jesus Christ	^{2, 5}	4:54	13	Hymn: Bright portals of the sky	²	3:55
4	Song: It was the winter wild	^{1, 4}	4:46	14	Narration: Now when Jesus was born	^{4, 5}	3:00
5	Narration: And it came to pass in those days	⁵	1:55	15	The March of the Three Kings: From kingdoms of wisdom	^{1, 2, 3, 4}	7:33
6	Choral: The blessed son of God	⁴	2:25	16	Choral: No sad thought his soul affright	⁴	2:18
7	Narration: And there were in the same country	^{1, 2, 4, 5}	7:06	17	Epilogue: In the beginning was the Word	^{1, 2, 3, 4}	6:49
8	Song: The Oxen	³	3:20				
9	Narration: And the shepherds returned	^{4, 5}	1:12				

Janice Watson, Soprano ¹ • Peter Hoare, Tenor ² • Stephen Gadd, Baritone ³
 Guildford Choral Society ⁴ • St Catherine's School Middle Chamber Choir ⁵
 Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Leader: Clio Gould)
 Hilary Davan Wetton

Recorded at Cadogan Hall, London, UK, from 13th to 14th January, 2007
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Playing Time
71:00



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