

Scott Polar Research Institute  
University of Cambridge



Press release

**FOR RELEASE: 14 December 2011**

## **Conquering the Antarctic: The Scott Centenary Concert Tour**

*A century ago, Captain Scott and his team set out on an epic adventure...to be first to the South Pole.*

Leading UK orchestra, **City of London Sinfonia (CLS)** in collaboration with the **Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI)**, and as part of the Scott 100 Festival of Events, is embarking on an ambitious concert tour to commemorate the centenary of the British Antarctic Expedition, 1910-13.

This landmark concert tour retells the story of the ill-fated expedition through **Captain Robert Falcon Scott's** own inspirational words, moving film music and original photography by **Herbert Ponting** from the tour. Featuring excerpts from **Vaughan Williams'** film score *Scott of the Antarctic* interwoven with moving readings from Scott's diary and letters, as well as the iconic music of Vaughan Williams' Symphony No. 7, the concerts will include stunning projection of selected images, now digitally restored in high definition.

At the heart of the programme is a new work commissioned especially for the occasion by British composer **Cecilia McDowall**, called *Seventy Degrees Below Zero*. It is a cantata for solo voice and orchestra featuring leading British tenor Robert Murray, which sets music to words by poet **Seán Street** who uses as his inspiration, final entries in Scott's journals.

The tour visits Birmingham, Cambridge, Cardiff and Cheltenham before coming to London as part of Music Nation a Countdown Event for the London 2012 Festival.

**Full concert details overleaf**

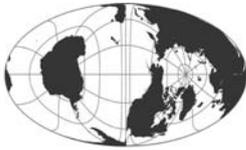


**THE CAMBRIDGE  
CORN EXCHANGE**



**St David's Hall  
Neuadd Dewi Sant**





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**Vaughan Williams** Excerpts from *Scott of the Antarctic* film score  
(with readings from Scott's diaries and letters)

**Cecilia McDowall** Cantata for orchestra and voices: *Seventy Degrees Below Zero*  
(world première)

**Vaughan Williams** Symphony No 7 (*Sinfonia Antartica*)  
(with original photographs taken during the Expedition)

City of London Sinfonia  
Stephen Layton *conductor*  
Robert Murray *tenor*  
Holst Singers/Bath Camerata Choir

**Venues:**

3 February 2012      Symphony Hall, Birmingham  
4 February 2012      Corn Exchange, Cambridge  
7 February 2012      St David's Hall, Cardiff  
8 February 2012      Town Hall, Cheltenham  
3 March 2012        Cadogan Hall, London

Tickets are available to purchase through the box offices of the individual venues.

*This tour is made possible through the generous support of Arts Council England, The Colwinston Trust, The RVW Trust and The Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust.*

*The performance on 3 March 2012 at Cadogan Hall, London forms part of Music Nation, a Countdown Event for the London 2012 Festival.*



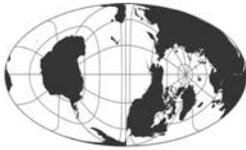
Supported by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



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### Scott of the Antarctic – background

In June 1910, Captain Robert Falcon Scott and his team of 64 men set out on their ship *Terra Nova* from London via Cardiff (where they stocked up on coal) to reach the Antarctic. The twin aims of the expedition were to achieve the South Pole for Britain and to undertake a comprehensive scientific survey of the continent. In the first year, huge quantities of scientific data were collected, vast areas were mapped and depots of food and fuel were laid in preparation for the journey to the Pole.

In January 1912, Scott, Wilson, Bowers, Oates and Evans attained the South Pole, only to find that the Norwegian Roald Amundsen had beaten them to their goal. Having achieved their aim, the Polar Party began the long march back to base. Evans died during the descent of the Beardmore Glacier. With supplies running low, Captain Oates walked out of the tent into a snowstorm, with the immortal words “I’m just going outside and may be some time”, sacrificing himself in the hope that his companions would have sufficient rations left to return home. Trapped by terrifying blizzard conditions only 11 nautical miles from the depot which represented safety, Scott and his remaining companions, Wilson and Bowers, are believed to have perished on 29 March 1912. Knowing that they were dying, the men wrote moving letters to their loved ones, which are now preserved in the Polar Museum at the Scott Polar Research Institute.

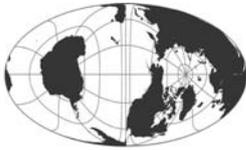
### City of London Sinfonia – Notes to editors

Firmly established as one of the UK's leading chamber orchestras, **City of London Sinfonia (CLS)** was founded in 1971 by the late **Richard Hickox** and celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. The Orchestra is led by [Stephen Layton](#) (Artistic Director & Principal Conductor) and [Michael Collins](#) (Principal Conductor)

CLS makes regular appearances at all the major London concert halls and venues, as well as St Paul's Cathedral and other venues in the City of London. It has been **resident orchestra** at the capital's popular [Opera Holland Park](#) since 2004 and holds a long-standing residency in **High Wycombe** (birthplace of Richard Hickox), as well as being a regular guest at major UK festivals.

CLS has made over 100 **recordings**, including a series of operas by Benjamin Britten on the Chandos label, and won a **Grammy Award** for Best Opera for its recording of *Peter Grimes*.

The Orchestra's [Meet the Music](#) education and outreach programme, founded in 1988, was one of the first established by a UK orchestra. CLS musicians spend approximately **100 days a year** making music with a wide range of groups, young and old, throughout the country, including a long standing residency at the world famous **Great Ormond Street Hospital**.



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CLS receives no regular, core support from Arts Council England. It raises all its income from fees, ticket sales, corporate sponsorship, grants and donations. This September sees the launch of the ***Shaping the Future campaign***, which aims to raise £1.8 million over the next three years.

### **Scott Polar Research Institute – Notes to editors**

The **Scott Polar Research Institute** at the **University of Cambridge** is home to unrivalled expertise and resources about the Arctic and Antarctic regions. The Institute's scholars are engaged in pioneering research in fields ranging from polar marine science to ice physics, and contribute to discussions on polar issues with scholars and policy-makers from around the world. The Institute also houses the world's most comprehensive polar library and archive.

The Institute's Library, Archives and Museum provide members of the general public - as well as scientists, government bodies, industry and polar inhabitants - with vital information on a range of polar topics, including climate change, management of natural resources and historic polar expeditions.

Founded in 1920 to honour the achievements of Captain R.F. Scott and his colleagues who died on their return from the South Pole in 1912, the Scott Polar Research Institute is dedicated to perpetuating the legacy of polar exploration and science through research, education and public outreach activities.