

Winter 2018 Magazine for Members and Friends of King's College, Cambridge

KING'S  
PARADE

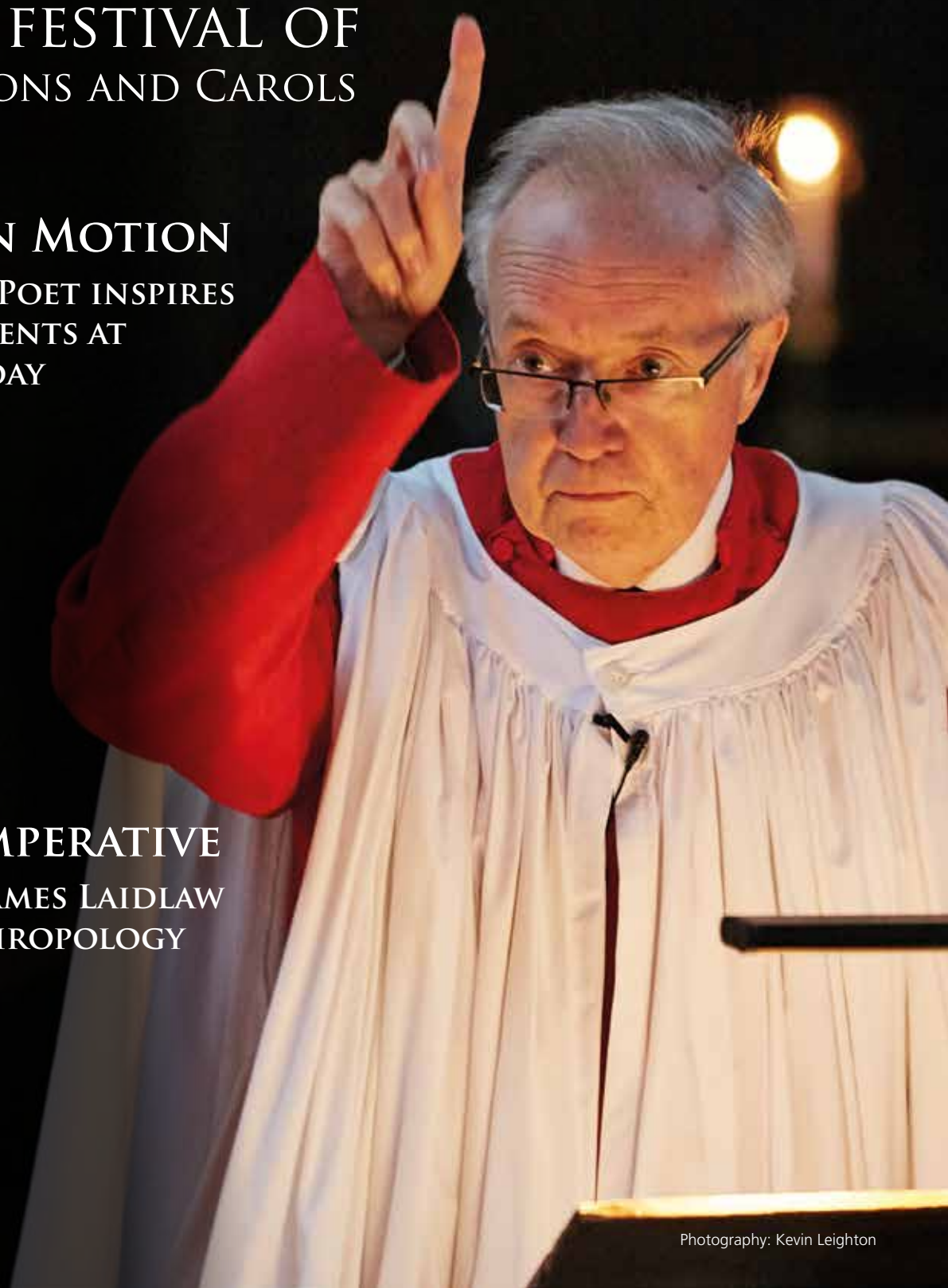
# 100 YEARS OF THE FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

## POETRY IN MOTION

GEORGE THE POET INSPIRES  
FUTURE STUDENTS AT  
KING'S BME DAY

## MORAL IMPERATIVE

PROFESSOR JAMES LAIDLAW  
ON THE ANTHROPOLOGY  
OF ETHICS



Photography: Kevin Leighton

# WELCOME FROM THE LAY DEAN, HENNING GROSSE RUSE-KHAN

*“What I particularly like about King’s is the way it gives people from a variety of educational backgrounds, including less privileged ones, an opportunity to succeed.”*



With its fancy dress, laid-back style and relatively affordable ticket prices, the King’s Affair has always been a refreshing antidote to the typical college May Ball. This year’s event was no exception. As Lay Dean, I had the privilege of working closely with the King’s Affair student committee to make the event happen – from the very early planning stages to being there on the night.

My job was to mediate between the committee’s (highly creative) vision for the event and what the College was able to provide to make that vision a reality. I was delighted to see the whole thing come together in a very enjoyable and magical evening of music, street food and glitter.

The King’s Affair is the biggest event on the students’ social calendar, but throughout the year I work with the students to help them make the most of King’s spaces for less elaborate events. From sports to political debates to film screenings and fun quizzes, these events provide a very important counterpoint to academic life, which is more competitive than ever. As high achievers, our students place a lot of expectations on themselves to perform – and such activities give them a chance to relieve some of that pressure.

The social side of King’s is also about broadening horizons. I’m very proud that at King’s we don’t try to turn students into narrow learning machines, but instead encourage them to pursue their own interests, whether that’s by taking part in a particular sport or participating in one of the many King’s or university societies.

This broadening of outlooks is also something that happens naturally and on a day-to-day basis at King’s, thanks to the diversity of our student body. What I particularly like about King’s is the way it gives people from a variety of educational backgrounds, including less privileged ones, an opportunity to succeed. Our postgraduate students are even more diverse, coming from all corners of the world.

When you’re thrown together in the same space with people from different backgrounds, religions and cultures – whether as room-mates or over breakfast, lunch and dinner – it exposes you to a wider range of perspectives, such that you don’t merely tolerate differences but value them. In a time of increasing nationalism, that’s a very important asset of which King’s deserves to be proud.

**KING’S COLLEGE**   
CAMBRIDGE

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# STATELESS EDUCATION

Mezna Qato's work on the education of refugee children takes a necessarily different approach to sources – and seeks to restore agency to refugees.



How do you write about stateless people? What kind of sources do you use to tell the story of those on the run? These are the kinds of questions Mezna Qato, King's JRF and Spencer Fellow at the US National Academy of Education, has had to grapple with in her work on the social history of refugee education.

"The records of the agencies tasked with supporting refugees tells a partial story," says Mezna. "For example, a police report about containing a protest will tell you only so much about how those protesters organised."

In a bid to tell a fuller story, much of Mezna's research has involved visiting people's cellars and attics, which is where the most revealing source material is to be found.

"When you're a refugee, you archive your own life, making determinations about what's important to take with you – documents, photos, trinkets. You put these things in plastic baggies and you tie them to your body. It's from this material that I've conjured a collective archive into being, trying to bring visibility to it."

Mezna is currently turning her PhD thesis into her first book, to be titled *Education in Exile*. The work focuses on the schooling of Palestinian children between 1948 and 1967. She regards the educational model for stateless people that was established at this time as one of "coercive buy-in". Forced to adopt the curriculum of their host country, Palestinian refugees were denied the ability to determine their own education.

This period saw the first experiments in how to educate stateless children, experiments that set the standard by which all refugees would subsequently be educated, from South Africa to South East Asia. With refugee crises intensifying in recent years, Mezna would like to use her research to influence policy.

"Too much NGO work is about supplementing flawed programmes rather than making something flawed

better," she says. "I want to remind agencies to listen to refugees, who are perfectly capable of thinking about their own educational structures and priorities."

Indeed, despite their lack of agency in relation to their own education, by the late 1960s Palestinian refugees were articulating an idea of emancipation that would influence revolutionary and anti-colonial movements all over the world.

"I'm not just interested in refugees as bodies in need of humanitarian care, but as agents of social and political change," she says. "So I set out to discover how it was that Palestinians were able to wrestle their own voices from the mercy of those who would articulate in their name."

One agent of change who fascinates Mezna was Antoine Izméry, the Haitian-born Palestinian and pro-democracy activist who was beloved in Haiti, but who, with his links to the underground networks, was not a model of the 'virtuous refugee'. Izméry will feature in a second book by Mezna, relating the history of Palestinians in Haiti, in which she will again examine statelessness from an unusual angle.

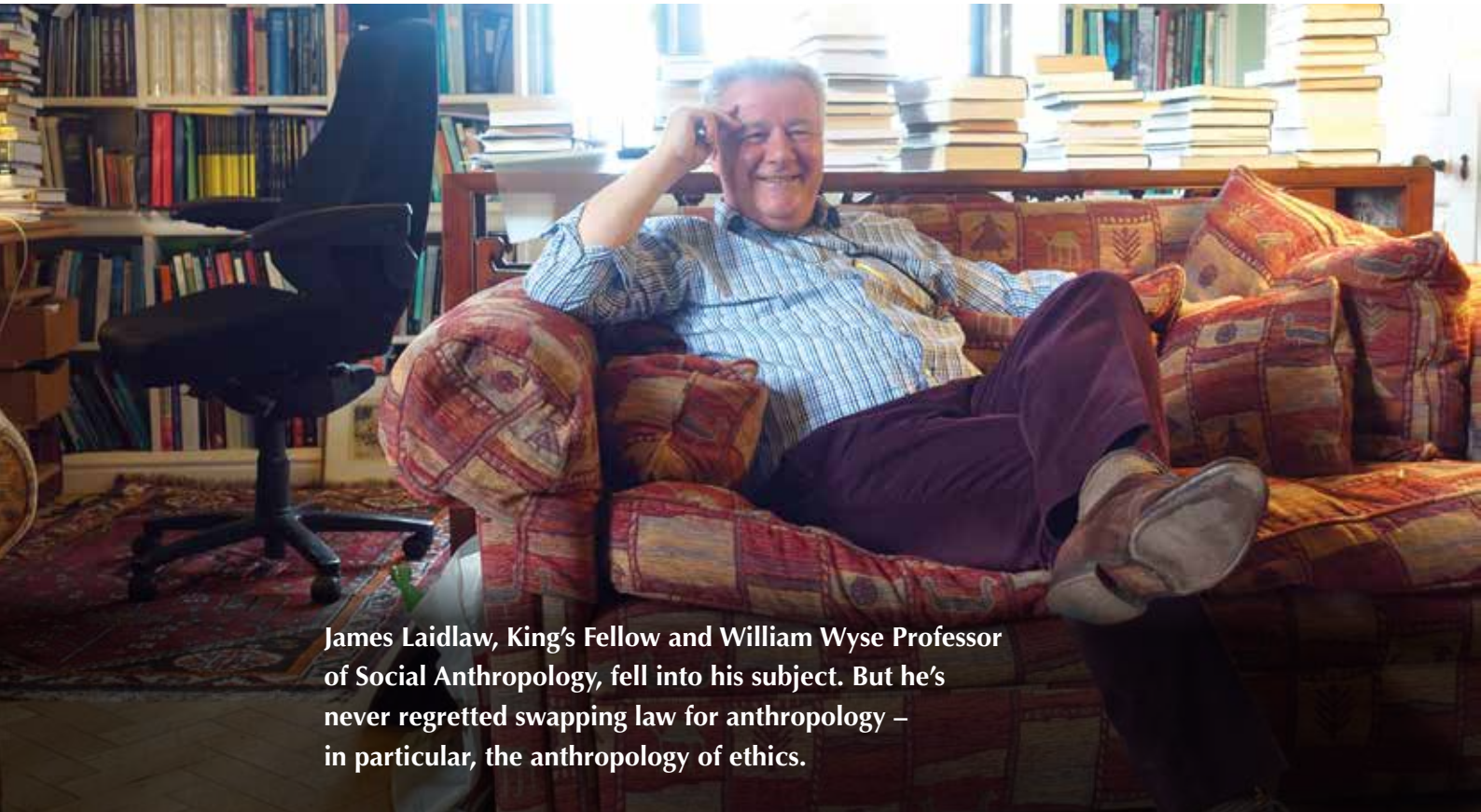
"The story of Palestinians in Haiti is about them becoming citizens of a new world, bringing a desire for change that is informed by their statelessness. Histories of Middle East refugees are often about their political and social work in their home countries rather than their contributions to the politics of change in their new countries. Izméry offers a useful prism for examining the tension that comes from being invested in where one arrives rather than where one departs from."

And with much UN material still under embargo and the 2010 earthquake increasing the Haitian diaspora, the project will, says Mezna, "be another labour of archival conjuring".

*"I'm not just interested in refugees as bodies in need of humanitarian care, but as agents of social and political change."*



# WHAT A GOOD



**James Laidlaw, King's Fellow and William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology, fell into his subject. But he's never regretted swapping law for anthropology – in particular, the anthropology of ethics.**

James Laidlaw never planned to be an anthropologist. The King's Fellow and William Wyse Professor of Social Anthropology had originally applied to study law at King's. As the first in his family to go to university, choosing a subject with a job at the end of it seemed like a safe bet.

It wasn't until his admissions interview with the King's lawyer Ken Polack that James discovered the College's policy of requiring lawyers to study something else in their first year. Perusing the university prospectus on the train back to his parents near Glasgow, James plumped for anthropology. By the middle of his first term, he was hooked.

"The change of atmosphere was very decisive," he says. "I was surrounded by people who were doing Classics or Philosophy or whatever, because that's what they were interested in doing, and I thought, well, I don't see why I shouldn't do the same."

Falling into anthropology was just the beginning of a career James considers as often characterised by chance rather than overt choice. "So much of my career has been happenstantial," he says.

For example, as an undergraduate James was supervised in alternate terms by the two inspiring teaching fellows in anthropology at the time: Stephen Hugh-Jones, who works on the Amazon, and the

Asianist Caroline Humphrey.

"The term when I was thinking about what I'd do for my final-year dissertation happened to be a Carrie term rather than a Stephen term, so I didn't go to Amazonia," he recalls. "It would have all been so different!"

Instead, James went to Jaipur in India, where he studied saint-worship at a temple for Jains, the followers of religious ascetics who renounce material possessions and follow a strict vegetarian diet. (The Buddha was said to have spent time among the Jains, fasting to the point of being skeletal and undergoing other bodily mortifications, before deciding this way of life wasn't for him.)

The project convinced James that a lot more work could be done on Jainism. What intrigued James most about Jains was that, despite their asceticism, they tend to be well-represented in the professions, trade, and commerce. Indigenous banking in India was largely a Jain enterprise and the particular community James studied in Jaipur controls the precious stone market there – many are brokers, traders and employers of craftsmen.

"There's an obvious set of questions that arise about how that very commercial, very materialistic lay following sits with the really strong emphasis on giving up all possessions," says James.

# LIFE LOOKS LIKE

"There's a series of classic debates about whether the Jains are a disconfirmation of – or are comparable to – Max Weber's famous thesis about the protestant ethic and capitalism."

James found himself fascinated by people's relationships with a religious tradition whose precepts they cannot, in any straightforward sense, follow.

"The Jains weren't being hypocritical, because support of the religious institutions was a hugely important part of community life," he says. "So I became interested in how people live with conflicting ethical values."

James's reflections on the apparent contradictions of Jain culture led to him being one of the leading voices in a major shift in his field: the development of an anthropology of ethics.

"Anthropologists have always been interested in the fact that there are different morals and rules in different societies," he says. "But there had never really developed a sustained intellectual engagement, including dialogue with moral philosophy, about what we learn about morality from the variation anthropologists have observed. And, going in the other direction, what anthropologists might learn from moral philosophers about how to understand what they see in different societies."

This anthropology of ethics is at the heart of a relatively new research project of which James is a director: the Max Planck Cambridge Centre for Ethics, Economy and Social Change. A five-year collaboration between Cambridge and two institutions in Germany, the project seeks to investigate the ethical dimensions of rapid economic change. For the project, a group of post-doctoral researchers is examining a range of subjects – from the gold market in Istanbul to the decision-making of venture capitalists in Europe, to the ways Vanuatu, an island group in the Pacific, has been transformed by a large influx of cash as a result of labour migration to New Zealand.

A concern with ethics also underpins James's recent research into the Foguangshan ('Buddha's Light Mountain'), a Buddhist movement based in Taiwan, which was started by a Chinese monk who fled communist China at the end of the civil war. The Foguangshan really took off in the 1980s, when Taiwan liberalised both economically and politically, leading to a growing, self-confident middle class. Today, it has temples in some 200 countries around the world.

Unlike the Buddhist tradition from which it developed, the Foguangshan takes a relaxed attitude to most aspects of modernity, including participation in a market economy, globalisation, and liberal personal ethics.

"I'm interested in what a good life looks like in that tradition," says James. "What the options of a good life are."

In particular, James has been investigating how the movement adapts traditional monastic practices for a lay following by hosting retreats that give ordinary people a brief experience of being a monk or nun.

Thoroughly to understand the practice, James has participated in such retreats himself, most recently last summer, with colleague and former King's student, Jonathan Mair, now at the University of Kent.

"It's a very intensive thing in which you have a crash course in how to be monastic – how to stand, walk, eat, wear the robes. It's focused on really everyday stuff like how to get on with people in very close proximity, in silence and with a very tight timetable. A lot of the value for participants hangs on the experience being difficult – they enforce the rules very strictly."

The exacting schedule and insistence on silence created challenges for James and Jonathan, because standard anthropological fieldwork largely consists of informal conversation with people, while participating in their activities. A lack of paper also meant they were able to take very few written notes beyond what could be scribbled on their timetables.

"As soon as we got out, we sat together for about five days, going through the schedule, jogging each other's memory and recording the conversation," he says. "Our field notes for the project were largely taken from that audio."

The experience gave the pair insights into why people sign up for the retreats. The most officially approved motivation is the 'planting of a seed' for another life, where the lay person can pursue a fully monastic existence, which family obligations prevent them from doing in this life.

But, he says, the Foguangshan are very relaxed with the fact that many people have other motivations: a cure for their cancer; earning merit to ensure a recently deceased parent has a good rebirth; or simply, "My wife's doing it and she doesn't want to leave me alone in the house."

While James's research has taken him to various far-flung locations – Mongolia and Bhutan as well as Jaipur and Taiwan – in term-time, he's returned to the same location every year since that first interview with Ken Polack.

"King's has been my home since I left home – and obviously very transformative," he says. "It's not clear how I'd have ended up as an anthropologist if I'd gone anywhere else."

"And, for me, one of the most important things about being here is that the supervision system is largely unchanged since I got here. Everything I've written has been shaped by teaching – both in the ideas students come back with and the feedback you get about what's interesting, what makes sense and what doesn't."

*"Everything I've written has been shaped by teaching – both in the ideas students come back with and the feedback you get about what's interesting."*

# KING'S HOSTS ITS FIRST-EVER BME OPEN DAY



**King's College's first-ever Open Day for Black and Minority Ethnic applicants sought to demystify Cambridge and give those from under-represented backgrounds the confidence to apply.**

In June, around 40 prospective students from around the UK attended King's College's first-ever Open Day for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) applicants. The day catered to those from some of the most under-represented backgrounds at the University of Cambridge and is likely to become an annual event at King's.

A large part of the day focused on giving students a glimpse into life at Cambridge as a member of the BME community. It was organised by the College's current BME officer, Tega Akati-Udi, and former KCSU president Nina Grossfurthner, with support from the King's Admissions Office. The decision to host the open day followed a unanimous vote in College Council.

Despite the high acceptance of state school students at King's, the ethnic diversity of students who apply remains a point of concern. The goal wasn't just to combat the numbers, but address their root causes, namely the lack of confidence and support that too often discourages BME students from even considering an institution like Cambridge as a viable place to foster their intellectual curiosity.

The event kicked off with an admissions talk from King's alumnus Qasim Alli, who now works in outreach at the University of Oxford. The session was followed by a Q&A with Admissions Tutors Bill Burgwinkle and Cesare Hall, who answered questions about personal statements and the somewhat arcane Supplementary Application Questionnaire.

The students then got the chance to speak with Fellows about their respective subjects and were later joined by current students who talked about their academic experience from an alternative perspective. Over lunch, the students were able to ask questions in a less formal setting, before taking a tour of the College with current undergraduates who showed them the Library, the Chapel, and student accommodation in Webb's and Bodley's Courts.

In the afternoon, spoken word performer George the Poet, a King's alumnus, met the students in Keynes Hall for an empowerment session. The day ended with a 'Demystifying Cambridge Q&A' in which a panel of current students answered questions on topics such as college preferences, the lack of diversity at Cambridge and concerns about belonging. Meanwhile, at an information session in the Chetwynd Room, parents and guardians of the visiting students were able to ask their questions about admissions and applications.

"The importance of King's hosting its first BME Open Day cannot be overstated," said Nina Grossfurthner. "As a College committed to rewarding the merits of academic excellence and one that prides itself on the welcoming and open community it fosters, the open day signified the sustained commitment of King's to its values. Above all it was a reflection of the hard work and commitment that BME students at King's have shown in paving the way for their successors."



# GEORGE THE POET

## ON HOW CAMBRIDGE SHAPED HIS WORLDVIEW

At the King's BME Open Day, George Mpanga (KC 2010) spoke about how his time at Cambridge changed the way he saw the community he'd come from.



In his session at the BME Open day, George the Poet talked about his time at King's as a period of 'incubation' that allowed him to approach the realities of inner-city life from a theory-based perspective – something that has since informed his social commentary on race, education and class.

"When I went to Cambridge I looked back at my community through binoculars and I could see it for what it is. That wouldn't have been possible if I'd stayed in the environment. I would have become either consumed by my anger or completely disconnected with the social set-up, with the social scene.

"Being here gave me the space to look at it objectively and apply some of the disciplines of sociology, of the humanities, of the social sciences to what I saw growing up. It gave me that language. And what I found is, when I went back to that environment, everyone understood. No one looked at me funny because I'd gone to Cambridge."

George recalled how the President of the African and Caribbean Society talked him into his first performance at Cambridge. "He was like, 'You have to contribute. What? You're just going to be here and you're not going to give yourself? You're not going to represent where you're from in this place?' And that pricked my conscience a little bit, so I agreed to do it."

George also expressed admiration for the visiting students – and confidence in their future, telling them, "It gives me hope to look into you guys' faces and know that you consciously brought yourself to this space, to know that you're thinking about your future and to anticipate your future. I'm looking forward to seeing you guys in ten years and you saying to me: 'Oh, remember that time in King's? I was there!' Because you will be someone, wherever you choose to go, you will be of consequence. I anticipate that; I look forward to that."

*"You will be someone, wherever you choose to go, you will be of consequence."*  
– George the Poet to visiting students at the BME Open Day

# FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS

**On Christmas Eve, millions of listeners around the world will, like millions before them, tune in to the live broadcast of the 100th Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College Chapel.**

Photography: Chris Radburn / PA

It's the much-loved soundtrack to last-minute Christmas preparations around the world, but this year's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be particularly special, marking, as it does, the centenary of the quintessential Christmas service that's become known and adopted around the globe.

First held on Christmas Eve 1918, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was introduced to King's by the then newly appointed Dean of the College, Eric Milner-White, who created it after his experiences as an army chaplain had convinced him the Church of England needed more imaginative worship.

However, the service didn't originate at King's – it had been devised in Truro in 1880 by Edward White Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, as a Christmas Eve service to be performed in the wooden shed which was serving as his temporary cathedral.

Ten years after that first service at Kings in 1918, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols expanded its influence beyond Cambridge with the first BBC broadcast of the event. It wasn't the first service to be broadcast from King's Chapel – that honour goes to an Evensong in 1926 – but it was the service that caught the imagination of a nation like none other before it.

So much so that the service has been broadcast nearly every year since that first transmission in 1928, including during the Second World War, when all the ancient stained glass had been removed from the Chapel as a precaution. The wartime broadcasts were intended as morale-boosters for the armed forces, reaching British troops in France, Belgium, Holland and Czechoslovakia – although the location of the recording could not be revealed over the airways for security reasons.

Indeed, since 1928, the only year the service hasn't been broadcast was 1930 – and the reason for the gap remains unclear. A BBC press release from 1958 attributed it to difficulties with the Chapel's acoustics, which had been overcome by the following year.

However, another theory ties the one-year interruption to the fact that, in 1930, Boris Ord had recently succeeded Arthur Mann – who had been in the position for 53 years – as King's Director of Music. Whether Ord himself deferred the broadcast while he settled into his new role, or whether others (such as the BBC or Milner-White, who was by this time the College Dean) considered him unready to take on the challenge of such a high-profile broadcast, is ambiguous.

Nevertheless, the hiatus was brief, and from the early 1930s, the service began to attract a global congregation when the BBC began broadcasting on the World Service. By 1938, it had spread to networks in America, Italy, France and Switzerland. Today, it is estimated that several millions of listeners worldwide tune in. One correspondent even wrote to the College to say he had heard the service in a tent on the foothills of Everest; another, in the desert.

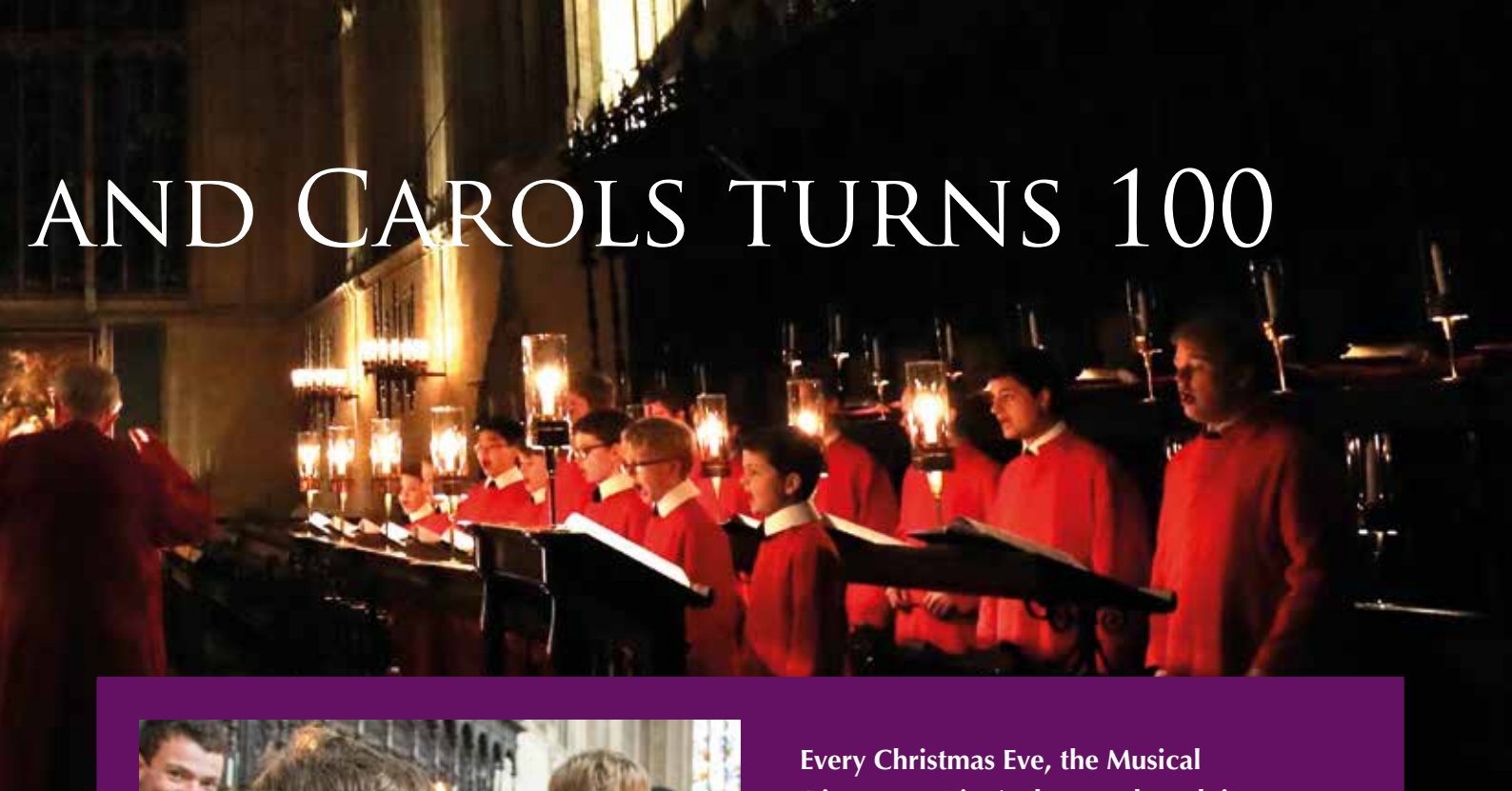
Other churches, too, have adapted the service for their own use. From time to time, the College receives copies of services held, for example, in the West Indies or the Far East, demonstrating how widely the tradition has spread.

But wherever the service is heard and however it is adapted, the main theme of the service is always, in the words of Milner-White, 'the development of the loving purposes of God seen through the windows and words of the Bible'.

**A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 on 24 December at 3pm, at 2pm on Radio 3 on Christmas Day, and at various times on the BBC World Service and US networks. To attend the service, please come to the College early on Christmas Eve morning, with some photographic identification. The College will begin distributing tickets at approximately 7am.**



# AND CAROLS TURNS 100



Every Christmas Eve, the Musical Director at King's chooses the soloist who will open the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols by singing the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*. It could be nerve-wracking moment, but, it seems, the young choristers have always taken performing for the world in their stride.

## “THE BROADCAST WAS JUST PART OF OUR JOB”

This year, Stephen Cleobury, King's Director of Music will, for the last time before his retirement next September, perform a ritual he's performed every year since his appointment in 1982: auditioning the soloist who will open the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols by singing the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City*.

At the end of the rehearsal on Christmas Eve, before the choristers head off to lunch, Stephen will, as in previous years, invite a handful of them to sing for him. After consulting with sound engineers from the BBC, Stephen will decide which one of the choristers will perform the opening solo. The name of the chosen chorister will be kept secret until right before the service begins – even from the chorister himself.

The last-minute appointment of the soloist is partly designed to minimise the chorister's nerves – although if previous candidates are anything to go by, King's choristers are pretty nonchalant about performing in front of the whole world. In his diary, a 13-year-old Patrick Magee, the senior chorister during that first broadcast in 1928 and

later Chaplain of King's, wrote: “Christmas Eve. Practice 10-12.45. Go out to dinner with Mum and Dad. Carol service broadcasted. Comes off well. I read a lesson and sing a solo in ‘Lullay’.”

Magee's fellow chorister David Briggs is similarly phlegmatic, telling *King's Parade*: “My recollection of the first broadcast of Nine Lessons and Carols in 1928 is, I'm afraid, rather dim. I am often asked if I ever sang the opening solo, and – though it is quite possible, as I was eventually head chorister – the truth is I don't remember, as the broadcast was just part of our job.”

The spine-tingling moment when a single child's voice emerges from the silence hasn't always been a feature of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. In fact, in that first service in 1918, *Once in Royal David's City* was actually the second carol to be sung. It was only a year later, when the Order of Service and sequence of the Lessons were revised, that the tradition of opening with *Once in Royal David's City* was set.

## ESTABLISHING A £2.5M ENDOWMENT FOR THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

*“As one of the longest-serving Directors of Music, the continuity of Stephen’s time at King’s is very unusual and very significant – it’s been a wonderful era of the Choir”*  
– Judith Weir (KC 1973)

To celebrate the 100th Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, and to mark the outstanding career of Stephen Cleobury upon his retirement next year, the College wishes to create a new endowment to support in perpetuity the position of the Director of Music at King’s College.

Since 1876 and the appointment of A. H. “Daddy” Mann as organist, there have been only five permanent organists or Directors of Music to lead the Choir and the musical life of the College. Each has left their mark on the style, repertoire and public perception of the Choir. Daniel Hyde takes up his responsibilities as Director in 2019, and will have the opportunity to develop further the musicianship and tone that the Choir is renowned for.

The Director of Music is now so integral to the popular image of King’s that it may be a surprise to learn that it is not a role supported by an endowment but rather funded from the general budget of the College. To bring continuity, it is increasingly important for distinct areas of College activity to be supported by restricted funds.

When first established, the Choir had lay clerks as professional singers, and 16 local boys as choristers, whose training was overseen by a clerk or chaplain, and whose welfare fell to the Bursar. The transformation to the present form of the Choir was overseen by Mann, during whose time Choral Scholars began to replace the lay clerks, and the Choir School was established to draw in boy singers from a wider pool.

Mann negotiated the first radio broadcast of the Choir in 1926, and the first recording followed in 1927. With the growth in popularity and number of Chapel services, there was also an increased sense that the musical training of the undergraduate Choral Scholars and boy choristers needed a more structured approach, and Boris Ord, already a Fellow, was appointed as the first Director of Music in 1929. Mann, while holding the position of organist for 53 years, was a Fellow for only the last eight years of his life, and for most of his tenure relied much on the support of the Dean and other Fellows.

The Director of Music today is by default a Fellow of the College, a professional musician and performer, an able administrator – and yet able to coach and motivate young boys and men to sing complex works, both ancient and modern, to the best of their ability. It is a highly visible role within the College, and within the choral and classical music world, with a dizzying schedule of Chapel services, recordings, concerts and tours. The success of the Choir is also instrumental in allowing the College to draw in friends and supporters from around the world.

We have set ourselves a target of £2.5 million to establish the endowment for the Director of Music, and we expect to gather support from around the world towards this goal. If you would like to learn more about how you can donate to this project please contact the Development Office.



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# IN THE STUDIO

WITH BENJAMIN SHEEN

The King's record label manager discusses the benefits of bringing recordings in-house.



Have you ever wondered how CDs are made? I don't mean this in a *How It Works* sense, and this isn't going to be a story of factories and pressing plants. No, this is not about microphones, musicians or post-production techniques, but the 'little' – sometimes overlooked – details that can sink a whole project if you're unlucky. These are aspects of making recordings that you may not have considered, but that King's, now with our own record label, has to take full responsibility for.

A good example might be the weather. Admittedly, King's hasn't technically taken responsibility for Cambridge weather in the last few years, but you might be surprised to hear just how much the weather can affect what we do.

Let me set the scene: it's mid-June 2017, and we're recording Vaughan Williams' beautiful *Dona nobis pacem* in the Chapel. There's the 24-piece orchestra, a 32-person choir, two world-class soloists, a conductor, a four-strong production team and two organists, all ready to perform in the three-hour session for which we've booked them.

Being June, it's raining. In fact, there's a thunderstorm. Flashes of light fill the Chapel spectacularly, rain hammers

the 20-metre windows, and thunder crashes around us every half minute. The choristers are delighted – the label manager is not.

Fortunately, there's a happy ending. Ultimately, soprano soloist Ailish Tynan manages to sing her quiet *Dona nobis pacem* refrains in the gaps between thunderclaps, and we capture some fantastic storm noises in surround-sound for a sound effect library somewhere – soon to appear in a cinema near you.

Fast-forward to our next recordings in June 2018. The sun is out, and there's not a cloud in sight. Great, right? No. Don't be so naïve! Now it's potentially too hot for the organ, which goes sharp in the heat, and the orchestra may not be able to play with it. A weekend is spent hoping that it will just about be okay, and that sweet-talking the orchestra and perhaps telling the organist to "play a bit less sharp" will work.

Thunder isn't the only noise we contend with. Planes, lawn mowers, drills, demonstrations on King's Parade, buskers, exuberant students, sirens – you name it. All of these sounds have to be avoided, since none of them tend to feature in much of the repertoire we do

(except, arguably, the students).

Because of this, recording at King's is a real team effort. The Gardens Department adjust their plans around our sessions – as do the Maintenance and Catering departments. The Porters try to keep everything calm and quiet in College. Lawns will go un-cut and noisy repairs will go unrepaired, all for the sake of making music.

We're even in contact with air traffic control, to reduce the number of private planes which, understandably, like to fly over Cambridge on a nice day.

The reality, though, is that an unforeseen (or overlooked) element of a project like this can be costly. The thought of 60+ professionals in the Chapel unable to work, with precious time ticking away because it happens to be the annual Cambridge Air Show, is a scary one.

Some of our albums we call 'live' because they're recordings of live concerts or services. But I like to think that all of our recordings are events – even the 'studio' ones – when musicians and producers joined together, despite everything, and made something wonderful. Think of that thunderstorm next time you listen to *Dona nobis pacem*.



# SPEAKING WELL FOR ALL SIDES

The idea for a BME Open Day was the brainchild of KCSU President Nina Grossfurthner. But, she says, the day would never have happened without the support of Fellows, the Admissions Office and her KCSU committee.

Photography: Georgina Baker



*“King’s gives you such a sense of ownership and capability. I love how easy it is to get stuck in.”*

Nina Grossfurthner achieved a great deal during her stint as the 2017-18 KCSU President. Initiating and helping to organise the College’s first ever BME Open Day (see pages 6-7) is an obvious highlight. Other achievements include helping to negotiate affordable rent rises for students and fostering closer links between students and Fellows.

If there’s a common thread between activities like these, it’s communication. Throughout her tenure, Nina says she saw herself not so much as a leader as a facilitator – someone who was there to encourage dialogue.

Take the rent rises, for example. They were, she says, a heated topic with tensions on both sides. Nina saw it as important that students got the support they needed and also that the College was transparent about how rent rises were calculated. Once the College was able to explain the rent formula, students got together in a working group to review it, which made it easier to explore possible longer-term solutions, such as rebranding or increasing bursaries.

Nina says of her role in the negotiations. “I felt a responsibility to speak well for both sides to avoid misunderstandings and confusion.”

Another example of keeping the lines of communication open between students and Fellows was a special ‘Meet the Fellows’ evening in the King’s Bar.

“Partly, students choose King’s because of particular academics whose work they appreciate, so many really enjoyed getting a chance to get to know their Tutors and Directors of Studies in a more casual setting.”

But perhaps her proudest achievement as KCSU President was persuading the Governing Body to get behind the idea of an annual BME Open Day at King’s. She first had the idea while acting as Access Officer in her first year.

“The University has university-wide days, but King’s is so iconic and I thought, ‘Why not do something here?’”

After researching similar events at other colleges, Nina began mapping out a case for such a day at King’s. She drafted a Council paper detailing the proposal and put it forward. The Fellows approved the idea in a unanimous vote.

“The support for the day was overwhelming,” says Nina. “It was so encouraging to see how excited the Fellows were about the idea. They wanted to do whatever they could to help.”

The College’s Admissions Office played a crucial role too, becoming heavily involved in the logistics of arranging the event – by contacting schools, for example. Nina says her fellow KCSU committee members and the wider King’s community were invaluable. The students rallied behind the idea, many travelling to King’s on the day to volunteer their help.

“My committee made my job as President easy,” she says. “It was never difficult to get stuff done – they’d take the initiative and go for it.” That gumption is one of the things Nina says she loves about King’s.

“From the moment I arrived, I noticed how proactive students are here, which isn’t true of every college,” she says. “It’s easy to feel overwhelmed by Cambridge, but King’s gives you such a sense of ownership and capability. I love how easy it is to get stuck in.”



# MY PHD: ANJALI MEHROTRA

Anjali Mehrotra is combining her expertise in structural engineering with her interest in art history – to find ways to protect ancient buildings from earthquake damage.

**L**ike many prospective Cambridge students, I based my decision to apply to King's mostly on having seen pictures of the Chapel.

I'd never been to Cambridge before, so when I was choosing a college, the only thing I had to go on was the pictures. As someone with a very soft spot for historical buildings, I thought it would be wonderful to live near these structures and see them everyday.

But perhaps, unlike most prospective students, my interest in the King's Chapel is professional as well as personal. I'm a structural engineer and my PhD is all about the effects of earthquakes on historic masonry structures, such as monuments and churches. But I've also always had a passion for art history – I feel it allows me to see layers of meaning in a building beyond simply viewing it from an engineer's perspective.

I was born and raised in Mumbai, but moved to Princeton in the US for my undergraduate studies. It was at Princeton that I first began to study ancient structures. The school is big on undergraduate research and, in my third year, I was involved in a project to reconstruct an ancient Roman bridge that had stood on the Danube. In my final year, I conducted a structural analysis of the dome of the Taj Mahal.

Here at Cambridge, I've been able to continue pursuing my combined interest in engineering and art history. I'm working under the supervision of Dr Matthew DeJong in the Structures group in the Engineering Department.

We're creating an analytical tool to better

understand the behaviour of ancient monuments during earthquakes. Currently, there are two ways to respond to the threat of seismic activity: use commercially available software to design the protections put in place, or follow oversimplified codes for building structures. The former approach tends to be very complex, time-consuming and expensive. The latter – used in Italy, for example – tends to be very conservative, leading to unnecessary retrofitting that can ruin the interior of a beautiful historic building.

With my PhD, I'm hoping to bridge that gap with a simplified CAD-interfaced model that can provide insight into structural stability based entirely on the geometry of a structure. The plan is to make the tool open-source, so that it can be used by architects and academics in developing countries.

A typical day for me involves running simulations, although now my PhD is coming to an end, I'm spending a lot of my time writing up. I'd like to stay in academia and I'm seeking funding to continue working with my supervisor as a post-doc.

I made the right choice coming to King's. When I saw those pictures of the Chapel four years ago, I was a bit worried Cambridge might be stuffy, but what I love about King's is it's so relaxed. The fact that we have a beautiful old dining hall without any of the pretension of high table and gowns really appeals to me, while the communist flag in the bar also caught me by surprise. King's for me represents the best of both worlds – a stunning old college with a very modern outlook.

*"My passion for art history allows me to see layers of meaning in a building beyond simply viewing it from an engineer's perspective."*



# MY KINGS: LAUREN MARSH

INTERVIEW: ALEX BUXTON  
PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK SAFFELL

When she was 16, Lauren Marsh decided that college wasn't for her. She's making a career in the catering industry and, two years ago, got the chance to join the catering team at King's. She loves being part of a 'big family' full of characters.



**My favourite place at King's is the Saltmarsh Rooms.** The rooms are so elegant and look out over the front lawn and down to the river. I also love the dining hall when it's all ready for a formal dinner with the candles lit. Luckily, I have the opportunity to supervise dinners in the Saltmarsh.

**Walking past Cambridge's famous buildings is one thing.** Working in one is quite different. There's a lot to learn about who's who and how things work. It's like being part of a big family. We have our moments, but we're all friends.

**I'm only 20 and I've already been working here for over two years.** I started as food service assistant and I'm working towards becoming a supervisor in the near future. The work is always varied and there are opportunities to learn and develop yourself.

**I was offered an interview at King's.** I had an informal interview with the head of the catering department and I was asked if I'd like to do a trial shift. I was nervous because I'd never worked in a large department before. The one thing that was noticed at my interview was my passion and my attitude to the industry.

**In my trial shift, I served at a dinner for more than 100 people.** It was being held by a top local company in the College. First, I helped to hand out canapés on the lawn and then to serve dinner in the dining hall. I'm keen to develop the skills I've gained and progress. Being young, there is still so much for me to learn, but I'm getting the support to grow at King's.

**I've made lifelong friends here.** I've never had such strong friendships. We spend time with each other outside work. In my free time, I'm building up a portfolio of photos of buildings and people. I'm also looking into training in beauty therapy, another of my interests. I'm happy that for formal halls I get to be creative and help with the decor.

**This job has helped me to grow myself.** I've gained in confidence. I meet all kinds of people, including high-profile people. Sometimes we have royalty and celebrities visiting King's and I help look after them.

**I'm massively into the artistry of food – how you can make things look amazing.** I'm curious and I want to learn new things. I actively ask the chefs about the food and techniques they use. I'm a real foodie at heart and I was delighted to be given the chance to train in the pastry section.

**The future's looking good.** Soon, I'm going with our head chef to visit other Cambridge colleges and venues to see what they are offering, so we can review what we're offering here at King's.

**It's kind of strange that the students at King's are the same age as me.** I thought they'd be pretentious and stuck-up – but they're not. They're a real mix of people working hard at their studies. King's is like a rainbow of vibrant colours and characters.



# NEW GRADUATE CAMPUS TO BE GREENER THAN EVER



Work has begun on expanding the graduate accommodation at Cranmer Road. The development will create a unified graduate campus with communal space and 59 new rooms.

The development will be the first student accommodation of its kind in the UK to receive a Passivhaus certification. The Passivhaus initiative is a voluntary standard for creating highly energy-efficient buildings that require very little fuel for heating and cooling.

The new accommodation will comprise two new buildings: a contemporary villa with red brick walls, clay roof tiles and stone windows; and a garden pavilion with glazed terracotta cladding and a sustainable 'green' roof. The new accommodation is scheduled to open in time for the start of next Michaelmas term.

Shane Alexander, the College's Clerk of Works, says the Cranmer project will act as a benchmark for the proposed redevelopment of the Croft Gardens site on Barton Road. The Croft Gardens development, which is currently at the planning permission stage, aims to create a new residential community, also built to Passivhaus standards, for graduates, Fellows and their families.



King's Provost Michael Proctor breaks the ground on new graduate accommodation at Cranmer Road

## SAVE THE DATE MEMBER AND FRIEND EVENTS

**1 Dec 2018**

1441 Foundation Dinner and Campaign Launch

**9 Mar 2019**

KCBC Lent Bumps Dinner

**16 Mar 2019**

Foundation Lunch

**13 Apr 2019**

20th, 25th & 30th Anniversary Reunion Dinner (for those who matriculated in 1999, 1994 & 1989)

**6 Jun 2019**

King's Golf Day

**15 Jun 2019**

May Bumps & KCBC Dinner

**15 Jun 2019**

Legacy Lunch

**22 Jun 2019**

10th Anniversary Reunion Lunch (2009)

**27-29 Sep 2019**

University of Cambridge Alumni Festival

**27 Sep 2019**

50th Anniversary Reunion Dinner (1969 or earlier)

**28 Sep 2019**

Members' Afternoon Tea

**28 Sep 2019**

35th, 40th & 45th Anniversary Reunion Dinner (1984, 1979 & 1974)

Coming from overseas and interested in attending an event that is not specific to your year or subject? You are always welcome, but please give us plenty of notice. More details about King's College events at [www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends)  
Contact the King's Development Office at: [events@kings.cam.ac.uk](mailto:events@kings.cam.ac.uk) or +44 (0)1223 331 313

## CONCERTS AT KING'S

**4 Dec 2018**

Christmas Sequence for Primary Schools – Chapel

Carol Service for Secondary Schools – Chapel

**7 Dec 2018**

BBC recording of Easter from King's

**9 Dec 2018**

BBC recording of Carols from King's

**11 Dec 2018**

Choir tour to the Netherlands. Concert in Amsterdam Concertgebouw

**13 Dec 2018**

Choir concert at the Royal Festival Hall with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Crouch End Festival Chorus

**17 Dec 2018**

Choir concert in Birmingham Symphony Hall

**24 Dec 2018**

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols – Chapel

**25 Dec 2018**

Sung Eucharist for Christmas Day – Chapel

**19 Jan 2019**

Chorister Auditions – King's College School

**13 Mar 2019**

Live broadcast of BBC Choral Evensong – Chapel

**18–20 Mar 2019**

Choral Scholarship Auditions

**26 Mar–2 Apr 2019**

Choir tour to the USA. Concerts in Minneapolis, Washington D.C. and New York

**15–21 Apr 2019**

Holy Week and Easter Festival

**4 May 2019**

Amicabilis Concordia – King's College Choir Evensong with the choirs of Eton, Winchester and New College, Oxford

**17 Jun 2019**

May Week Concert

**23 Jun 2019**

Singing On The River

**3 Jul 2019**

Live broadcast of BBC Choral Evensong to mark Stephen Cleobury's retirement

**4 Jul 2019**

Joint Evensong with St John's College Choir at King's

**16 Jul–8 Aug 2019**

Choir tour to Australia. Concerts to be given in Perth, Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane

## KING'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP PRIZE OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS

Do you have a promising idea for an invention or business? If so, you could win up to £20,000 to get your idea off the ground. Your idea may be either commercial or social entrepreneurial and may be completely new or in a partially developed form.

The annual King's Entrepreneurship Prize, supported by the Stuart Lyons Fund for Entrepreneurship, will again offer a top prize for the winner of £20,000, a second prize of £10,000 and a third prize of £5,000.

First round entrants who provide the best one-page business ideas will each receive £100, to enable them to submit supplementary information for further consideration. Finalists will then be selected and invited to prepare a full business plan to present in College at The Lyons Den, where they will have a chance of being awarded one of the top prizes.

The competition is open to all King's Members, and entrants may be either individuals or teams. The team leader of any group should, however, be a King's Member.

To enter the competition, visit [www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends/entrepreneurship](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends/entrepreneurship).

**The deadline for submissions is midday on 21 January 2019.**

Further events may be added throughout the year.

Please visit: [www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends) for full details.