



# Jonathan Dove

## *The Three Kings*

Dorothy L.Sayers' poem *The Three Kings* was suggested to me as a carol text by Stephen Cleobury. Sayers achieves a surprising emotional power and mystery by portraying the youngest king, the nearest to childhood, as the saddest, bringing a gift of myrrh which anticipates Christ's passion and death; it is the oldest king, nearest to the grave, who brings golden toys. I have tried to catch this surprise in the music: the first two verses are simple and ballad like, while the third verse suddenly opens up like a treasure chest of twinkling gold.

(Jonathan Dove)

'Jonathan Dove's setting of The Three Kings is a beautifully crafted miniature which subtly combines the simplicity expected of a carol with originality of expression, in an idiom which will be greatly appreciated by singers.'

Stephen Cleobury, Director of Music, King's College Cambridge.

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