

THE SACRED FLAME

European Sacred Music of the Renaissance and Baroque Era



The Cambridge Singers ❖ La Nuova Musica
directed by **John Rutter**

Collegium
RECORDS

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European Sacred Music of the Renaissance and Baroque Era



Rutter Photo: Alex MacNaughton, 2007

THE THEME OF THIS ALBUM is the marvellous wealth of sacred music which was created in continental Europe out of the ferment of the age of Reformation. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Church—whether Catholic or Protestant—was the most significant patron of music, able to command the services of the leading composers of the age, who probably saw themselves as keepers of a sacred flame, adorning with their music the worship of a Church they served with singular dedication.

The Reformation affected not only the northern European countries which embraced it. Catholic southern Europe, in the spirit of what became known as the Counter-Reformation, saw a revival of religious fervour in the mid-sixteenth century, which resulted in an extraordinary flowering of sacred music by such composers as Palestrina, Victoria and Lassus; their music remains a pinnacle of the high Renaissance.

Italy had been the cradle of the Renaissance, and around 1600 it also saw the birth of the more lavish, extravagant and secularised spirit of the baroque. A generation of composers led by Monteverdi no longer confined the main focus of their work to church music in a recognised sacred style, as had Palestrina and Victoria, but cultivated secular forms, notably the exciting new genre, opera. This was the *stile nuovo* which Monteverdi introduced into his church music, refreshing what had by then become the hidebound tradition of the *stile antico* with a strong dash of the music of the opera house and even the streets: *Beatus vir* brings the music of the itinerant fiddlers and florid solo singers of Venice into the hallowed setting of the basilica of S. Marco, to signal a new revival in sacred music which set the agenda for the next two centuries. Sacred and secular became intertwined, making possible such music as the Buxtehude *Magnificat*, which musically is no different from a pastoral cantata, or Schütz's Psalm 100, which is catchy and rhythmic enough to have been played as a tavern dance.

Some composers of the time are strongly identified with the centres where they were active: Palestrina in Rome, Monteverdi in Venice, Lassus in Munich, Schütz in Dresden, Bach in Leipzig. Others such as Josquin (widely revered as the father of Renaissance sacred music) led more peripatetic lives or settled far from their birthplace, as did Victoria who was born in Ávila but worked for most of his career in Rome. Yet even the most widely separated composers in the European continent were, to a surprising degree, aware of each other's work and animated by a single unifying spirit in writing for the Church during a turbulent but exceptionally fruitful period in its musical history.

JOHN RUTTER

THE SACRED FLAME

European Sacred Music of the Renaissance and Baroque Era

The Cambridge Singers

La Nuova Musica (artistic director: David Bates)

directed by John Rutter

Total playing time: 78' 26"

Note: Words credits are given at the end of each text.

- [1] **Jubilate Deo** (5' 05") Giovanni Gabrieli (1557–1612)
- [2] **Beatus vir** (8' 30") Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643)
Soloists: Amy Haworth, Amy Moore (*sopranos*)
Ben Breakwell, Thomas Hobbs (*tenors*)
James Holliday (*bass*)
- [3] **Christe, adoramus te** (2' 58") Claudio Monteverdi
- [4] **Cantate Domino** (1' 51") Claudio Monteverdi
- [5] ***Sicut cervus** (3' 11") G. P. da Palestrina (1525–94)
- [6] ***Exsultate Deo** (2' 09") G. P. da Palestrina
- [7] ***Christus factus est** (2' 04") Felice Anerio (*c.*1560–1614)
- [8] ***O vos omnes** (3' 33") Carlo Gesualdo (*c.*1561–1613)
- [9] ***Timor et tremor** (3' 30") Orlande de Lassus (1532–94)
- [10] ***Ave verum Corpus** (4' 09") Orlande de Lassus
- [11] **Laudate Dominum** (2' 49") J. P. Sweelinck (1562–1612)
- [12] **Magnificat** (8' 00") Dieterich Buxtehude (1637–1707)
Soloists: Grace Davidson, Katy Hill (*sopranos*)
Melanie Marshall (*alto*) Ben Breakwell (*tenor*)
James Holliday, Gabriel Crouch (*basses*)

- [13] ***Jesu, dulcis memoria** (1' 51") T. L. de Victoria (1548–1611)
- [14] ***O vos omnes** (3' 14") T. L. de Victoria
- [15] ***Crux fidelis** (2' 31") John IV, King of Portugal (1604–56)
- [16] ***Ave Maria** (6' 02") Josquin Desprez (*c.*1440–1521)
- [17] ***Dixit Maria** (2' 15") H. L. Hassler (*c.*1564–1612)
- [18] **Psalm 100** (4' 20") Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672)
- [19] **Selig sind die Toten** (4' 07") Heinrich Schütz
- [20] **O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht** (4' 50") J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

*sung by the Cambridge Singers unaccompanied

All the music heard on this recording is published in the Oxford University Press choral anthology *European Sacred Music*, edited by John Rutter. The historical notes (© Oxford University Press) are based on the notes in this volume by kind permission of the publisher.

The Cambridge Singers

Sopranos: Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Grace Davidson, Amy Haworth, Rebecca Hickey, Alison Hill, Katy Hill, Louise Kateck, Amy Moore, Amy Wood

Altos: Emma Ashby, Ruth Clegg, Ruth Gibbins, Eleanor Harries, Carris Jones, Melanie Marshall, Martha McLorinan

Tenors: Daniel Auchincloss, Ben Breakwell, Ronan Busfield, Thomas Hobbs, Benedict Hymas, Nicholas Todd

Basses: Richard Bannan, Neil Bellingham, Gabriel Crouch, William Dawes, James Holliday, Oliver Hunt, Matthew O'Donovan, Reuben Thomas

La Nuova Musica

Hannah Tibell, George Crawford (*violins*), Emma Alter, Alexandria Lawrence (*violas*), Graham Walker (*cello*), Jan Robert Zahourek (*violone*), Joel Raymond, Sarah Humphreys (*oboes and recorders*), Mark Williams (*organ*)

Chamber organ provided and tuned by Keith McGowan

1 **Jubilate Deo** (Giovanni Gabrieli, 1557–1612)
(SSAATTBB, with instruments doubling)

Like his uncle Andrea, Giovanni Gabrieli's last and most important post was as organist of S. Marco in his native city of Venice. Prior to this, he held a court post in Munich. Once appointed to S. Marco in 1585, he composed prolifically for the lavish vocal and instrumental resources available to him there, generally dividing his forces into *cori spezzati*, multiple choirs spaced apart; many of his motets were written for the great festivals of church and state for which Venice was renowned. Following the death of Doge Grimani in 1605, there were cutbacks in the musical establishment at S. Marco, and *Jubilate Deo*, written in a fairly simple chanson- and madrigal-influenced style for single choir, would seem to belong to this post-1605 period. It did not appear in print until shortly after Gabrieli's death, in three separate collections published in Germany (where the composer's reputation was honoured more than in Italy). Although untypical of Gabrieli in the sense that it is not polychoral, *Jubilate Deo* is one of his most attractive and often-performed works. Its text is compiled mainly from the psalms, in the manner of a litany. Gabrieli made two other settings of the same text, which suggests that it was associated with a regular Venetian festival such as the Feast of the Ascension. The climax of this ceremony involved the Doge casting a ring into the sea as a symbol of Venice's union with it; this would explain the inclusion of the line 'Deus Israel conjugat vos' (taken from a nuptial blessing in the Vulgate version of the Book of Tobit).

Jubilate Deo omnis terra, quia sic benedicetur homo qui timet Dominum.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra.
Deus Israel conjugat vos et ipse sit vobiscum.
Mittat vobis auxilium de sancto, et de Sion tueatur vos.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra.
Benedicat vobis Dominus ex Sion, qui fecit caelum et terram.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra.
Servite Domino in laetitia.

(from Psalms 100, 128, Tobit 7, Psalms 20, 134)

*(O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands, for thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.
O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands.
May the God of Israel unite you and himself be with you.*

*May he send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Sion.
O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands.
The Lord that made heaven and earth give thee blessing out of Sion.
O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands,
Serve the Lord with gladness.)*

2 **Beatus vir** (Claudio Monteverdi, 1567–1643)
(SSATTB, with instruments)

Monteverdi wrote church music throughout his long career, first while he was employed at the court of Mantua, then during his years as *maestro di cappella* at S. Marco in Venice, but much of it is hard to date because it was published in two large collections—the celebrated *Vespers* (1610) and the *Selva morale e spirituale* (1641)—which gathered together compositions written over a period of years. *Beatus vir*, a favourite among Monteverdi's sacred pieces, was published in the *Selva morale*. It calls for only modest instrumental forces, just two violins and basso continuo with three *ad libitum* instruments doubling voice parts. The origins of this Vesper psalm setting lie in a canzonetta, *Chiome d'oro*, published in Monteverdi's Seventh Book of Madrigals in 1619, a light-hearted secular duet with two violin parts and ostinato bass similar to *Beatus vir*, though shorter and less ambitiously worked-out structurally. Like so many other composers before and since, Monteverdi did not hesitate to introduce secular material into his sacred music; the catchy tunefulness of *Beatus vir* must have set even the sternest ecclesiastical toes tapping.

Beatus vir qui timet Dominum: in mandatis ejus volet nimis.
Potens in terra erit semen ejus: generatio rectorum benedicetur.
Gloria et divitiae in domo ejus: et justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.
Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis: misericors, et miserator, et justus.
Jucundus homo qui miseretur et commodat: disponet sermones suos in judicio.
Quia in aeternum non commovebitur.
In memoria aeterna erit justus: ab auditione mala non timebit.
Paratum cor ejus sperare in Domino.
Confirmatum est cor ejus: non commovebitur donec despiciat inimicos suos.
Dispersit, dedit pauperibus: justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi, cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria.
Peccator videbit, et irascetur, dentibus suis fremet et tabescet: desiderium peccatorum peribit.
Beatus vir qui timet Dominum.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(Psalm 112)

*(Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he hath great delight in his commandments.
His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.
Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness: he is merciful, loving, and righteous.
A good man is merciful, and lendeth: and will guide his words with discretion.
For he shall never be moved: and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.
He will not be afraid of any evil tidings: for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.
His heart is established, and will not shrink: until he see his desire upon his enemies.
He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor: and his righteousness remaineth for ever; his horn
shall be exalted with honour.
The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him: he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away;
the desire of the ungodly shall perish.
Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord.*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)*

[3] Christe, adoramus te (Claudio Monteverdi)
(SSATB, with continuo)

This devotional motet was published in 1620 in a collection issued by Monteverdi's former pupil from Mantua days, Bianchi. The collection comprised 31 motets: 24 by Bianchi himself, one by Losio, and six by Monteverdi, whose contributions may well have been recently written for the great Venetian religious festivals. The motet is headed 'Nella elevatione di N.[ostro] Signore', meaning it is to be sung at the elevation of the host during mass. The text is proper to the feasts of the Holy Cross (3 May and 14 September), especially important occasions in the Venetian calendar after 1617: in that year a relic of what was held to be the Holy Cross was found by workmen excavating in S. Marco.

Christe, adoramus te, et benedicimus tibi, quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum.
Domine, miserere nobis.

(Antiphon at Feasts of the Holy Cross)

(Christ, we worship and bless thee, because by thy holy Cross thou hast redeemed the world. O Lord, have mercy upon us.)

[4] Cantate Domino (Claudio Monteverdi)
(SSATTB, with continuo)

Also from Bianchi's 1620 collection, the brightly festive *Cantate Domino* may have been intended for one of the two feasts of the Holy Cross, though the text, being a compilation, could not strictly be proper to any church occasion.

Cantate Domino canticum novum: cantate et benedicite nomini ejus.
Quia mirabilia fecit.
Cantate et exultate et psallite.
Psallite in cithara et voce psalmi:
Quia mirabilia fecit.

(from Psalms 96 and 98)

*(Sing unto the Lord a new song, sing and praise his Name: for he hath done marvellous things.
Sing, rejoice, and give thanks.
Praise him with the lute and the voice of singing: for he hath done marvellous things.)*

[5] Sicut cervus (G. P. da Palestrina, 1525–94)
(SATB unaccompanied)

Palestrina's life and work centred around Rome. He was born in the nearby town of Palestrina, from which he took his name, trained as a choirboy in the Roman church of S. Maria Maggiore, appointed to prominent positions in the Roman musical establishment, and brought to international fame by his numerous publications, issued in the first instance from Rome. In 1551 he was appointed *maestro* of the Cappella Giulia, the choir of St Peter's Basilica, and in 1555 he sang for a few months in the Sistine choir until the introduction of a celibacy rule by the new pope led to his dismissal as a married man.

Periods of directorship at the church of St John Lateran, where Lassus had preceded him (1555–60) and at his old church of S. Maria Maggiore (1561–6) were followed by a return in 1571 to the Cappella Giulia, where he remained till his death. His stream of publications began with a successful book of madrigals in 1555; by the time of his death there were seven books of masses, six of motets, and sundry other volumes of liturgical music and madrigals.

Sicut cervus has always been one of the most familiar of Palestrina's motets, frequently reprinted and anthologized since the nineteenth century, and justly held up as a model of Renaissance imitative polyphony, in this case expressive of serene but fervent spiritual yearning. Its psalm text was appropriately appointed as the first part of the Tract at the blessing of the font on Holy Saturday.

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum: ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.

(Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks: so longeth my soul after thee, O God.)

(Psalm 41, v.1)

[6] Exsultate Deo (G. P. da Palestrina)

(SAATB unaccompanied)

Among Palestrina's 375 or so motets, *Exsultate Deo* has always been a favourite. With its joyous tunefulness and vivid word-painting depicting musical instruments, it refutes the inaccurate myth of Palestrina as a cold, bloodless master of abstract polyphony, a myth due in part to the reverence surrounding him even in his lifetime and to the use of his music ever since as a model in the teaching of counterpoint, an unfortunate fate indeed for a composer whose music, at its best, leaps off the page and demands the excitement of performance.

Exsultate Deo, adjutori nostro: jubilate Deo Jacob.

Sumite psalmum et date tympanum: psalterium jucundum cum cithara.

Buccinate in Neomenia tuba: insigni die solemnitatis vestrae.

(Psalm 81, vv. 1-3)

(Sing we merrily unto God our strength: make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.

Take the psalm, bring hither the tabret: the merry harp with the lute.

Blow up the trumpet in the new-moon: even in the time appointed, and upon our solemn feast-day.)

[7] Christus factus est (Felice Anerio, c.1560–1614)

(SATB unaccompanied)

Like his younger brother Giovanni, Felice Anerio was a composer and priest whose sacred music follows closely in the tradition of Palestrina. Born in Rome, he sang as a boy in the choir of S. Maria Maggiore, and then in the papal Cappella Giulia under Palestrina. On the death of the latter in 1594 he was appointed composer to the papal choir, for which he wrote masses, motets, and other polyphonic music. *Christus factus est*, perhaps his best-known piece, does not appear in any of the volumes of his work published in his lifetime; the earliest extant source dates from 1840, and all others derive from it. The chromatic harmonic touches may have been added by the nineteenth-century editor; if not, it shows an influence of early baroque madrigal style not found in Palestrina.

Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis. Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum, et dedit illi nomen, quod est super omne nomen.

(Gradual for Maundy Thursday: Philippians 2, vv. 8-9)

(Christ became obedient for us unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name.)

[8] O vos omnes (Carlo Gesualdo, c.1561–1613)

(SATTB unaccompanied)

Gesualdo is remembered as much for the single sensational act of murdering his adulterous wife and her lover as he is for his music. Otherwise, his life as Prince of Venosa was that of an Italian noble amateur of music, similar to those who were writing the first operas in Florence at about the same time. His preferred form was the madrigal, of which he published six books, but he also left two books of *Cantiones sacrae* and a volume of music for Holy Week. His madrigals are noted for their eccentric and adventurous chromaticism, which is found to a lesser extent in his sacred music also. *O vos omnes* (a text he later set for six voices in his Holy Week volume of 1611) was published in his first book of *Cantiones sacrae* in 1603. The poignant text, popular with composers of the Counter-Reformation period, is set to music of eloquence and dramatic power, cast in the same responsorial form used by Victoria.

O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus.
(*Responsory at Matins for Holy Saturday: Lamentations 1, v. 12*)

(*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.*)

[9] **Timor et tremor** (Orlande de Lassus, 1532–94)
(SAATTB unaccompanied)

The sacred music of Lassus is often held up alongside that of Palestrina as one of the twin peaks of the late sixteenth century. Although this is not unjust, the backgrounds and careers of the two composers differed, and this was reflected in their music. Whereas Palestrina spent all his life in or near Rome and devoted himself predominantly to sacred music, Lassus was a cosmopolitan who travelled widely and wrote vocal music in every genre, sacred and secular. Born in Mons (now in Belgium) he was a choirboy in the service of Ferrante Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, whose retinue he accompanied to Italy. His first important adult post was as choirmaster at the church of St John Lateran in Rome (1553–5). After various travels, in 1556 he joined the court of Albrecht V of Bavaria in Munich, first as a singer, later as *maestro di cappella*. He remained there for the rest of his life—though continuing to visit other musical centres—composing prolifically, and enjoying widespread fame. After his death, his two sons published much of his music (some of which had already appeared in his lifetime) in a massive collection, the *Magnum Opus Musicum*. *Timor et tremor*, one of the most celebrated of his motets, first appeared in 1564, in a collection published in Nuremberg. Its text was compiled from the psalms, possibly by Lassus himself; this was a not uncommon Renaissance practice (as in the Gabrieli *Jubilate Deo*), enabling the composer to make a particular expressive, religious, or sometimes political point. In this case, Lassus portrays in vividly madrigalian fashion the contrast between human fear and uncertainty, and the firm trust that may be placed in God.

Timor et tremor venerunt super me, et caligo cecidit super me.
Miserere mei Domine, miserere, quoniam in te confidit anima mea.
Exaudi Deus deprecationem meam, quia refugium meum es tu, et adiutor fortis.
Domine invocavi te, non confundar.

(*from Psalms 55, 57, 61, 71 and 31*)

(*Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.
Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee. Hear my crying, O
God: give ear unto my prayer, for thou art my house of defence, and my castle. Let me not be
confounded, O Lord, for I have called upon thee.*)

[10] **Ave verum Corpus** (Orlande de Lassus)
(SSATTB unaccompanied)

Lassus's treatment of this familiar Eucharistic text is serene and elegiac, with imaginative use of the six-voiced texture to create expressive interplay between high and low voices, and restrained word-painting at the words 'unda fluxit sanguine'. The motet—which would assuredly enjoy wider renown were it not for Byrd's and Mozart's settings of the same text—was first published in a 1582 collection issued in Munich, and reprinted in the posthumous collection of 1604.

Ave verum Corpus, natum
de Maria Virgine:
Vere passum, immolatum
in cruce pro homine:
Cujus latus perforatum
unda fluxit sanguine.
Esto nobis praegustatum.
in mortis examine.
O dulcis, O pie,
O Jesu, Fili Mariae:
Miserere mei. Amen.

(*14th-century Eucharistic hymn of unknown
authorship*)

(*All hail, true Body,
of the blessed Virgin born,
Which in anguish to redeem us did'st
suffer upon the Cross;
From whose side,
when pierced by spear,
there came forth water and blood:
Be to us at our last hour the source of consolation.
O loving, O holy,
O Jesu, thou Son of Mary,
Have mercy on me. Amen.*)

[11] **Laudate Dominum** (J. P. Sweelinck, 1562–1612)
(SSATB, with continuo)

Born in the Netherlands, Sweelinck spent his whole working life in Amsterdam, where he became organist of the Oude Kerk and a renowned teacher. As a composer, he wrote keyboard music, madrigals, and chansons, but his *magnum opus* was a four-volume collection of polyphonic settings of all 150 Psalms in the French translation of Marot and De Bèze, a work spanning his entire creative life. He published only one volume of Latin motets, the five-voiced *Cantiones sacrae* of 1619: the Netherlands then being officially Calvinist, these thirty-seven pieces (including the famous *Hodie Christus natus est*) would have been intended for private rather than liturgical use, at least in

Sweelinck's own country. The sparkling *Laudate Dominum* indeed calls for the lightness and agility associated with secular rather than liturgical music-making. The *basso continuo*, although not independent from the vocal bass, indicates that accompaniment was expected.

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes: laudate eum omnes populi.
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus:
et veritas Domini manet in aeternum.

(*Psalm 117*)

*(O praise the Lord our God, all ye heathen: praise him, all ye nations.
For his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.)*

[12] Magnificat (Dieterich Buxtehude, 1637–1707) (SSATB, with SSATB soli and instruments)

This charming little work, a favourite in Germany though less well known elsewhere, survives only in a single, manuscript source: a set of parts and a score from the extensive collection of Gustav Düben, who was *Kapellmeister* at the German church in Stockholm from 1663 till his death in 1690. Düben knew Buxtehude (who lived in Lübeck), and over 100 Buxtehude pieces are in his collection; but the *Magnificat* cannot be shown to be one of them. The manuscript did not originally bear the name of any composer, although Buxtehude's name has been added in square brackets on the title page by a later hand. The basis of the attribution appears to be solely that Bruno Grusnick, the editor of the first modern edition (Bärenreiter, 1931), believed that the music bore all the marks of Buxtehude's style. A more recent scholar, Martin Geck, pointed out the obvious: the *Magnificat* does not actually resemble any known work by Buxtehude. Its lilting triple-time melodies with frequent hemiolas, its simple diatonic harmony with much use of thirds, and its clear sectional structure, are all features of the Franco-Italian middle baroque *bel canto* style of Carissimi and Lully which was widely imitated, but not by Buxtehude. The authorship of the *Magnificat* remains in doubt, but there is no doubt of its delightful melodic appeal and endearing simplicity. The scoring is for two violins, two violas, cello, bass, and continuo.

Magnificat anima mea Dominum: et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.
Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes.
Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.
(*Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Luke 1, vv. 46–55*)

*(My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his hand-maiden.
For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.
He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed, for ever.*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)*

[13] Jesu, dulcis memoria (T. L. de Victoria, 1548–1611) (SATB unaccompanied)

Victoria has long been regarded as the greatest Spanish Renaissance composer, despite being both less prolific and less versatile than many of his contemporaries: virtually his entire output, all of it Latin church music, is contained in only eleven volumes, all published in his lifetime. He began his musical life as a choirboy at Ávila Cathedral, then moved to Rome to study at the Jesuit Collegio Germanico; he may have received tuition from Palestrina. He was made director of music at the Collegio in 1573, and was ordained priest in 1575. In 1576 he joined St Philip Neri's community, later taking

chaplains at two Roman churches. Despite growing European fame from his compositions, he wanted to return to a quieter life in his native Spain, and in 1587 he accepted Philip II's offer to become chaplain to his sister, the Dowager Empress Maria, who lived in retirement at the convent of Descalzas Reales in Madrid. Victoria remained at the convent, first as choirmaster and later as organist, until his death. *Jesu, dulcis memoria*, essentially a polyphonic hymn setting, is found under Victoria's name in two nineteenth-century collections, Alfieri's *Raccolta di mottetti* of 1840 (also the source of Anerio's *Christus factus est*), and the Prince of Moscow's collection of 1843–5 (from which the John of Portugal *Crux fidelis* comes). There is no earlier extant source, and on stylistic grounds it appears very unlikely that Victoria can have written the piece, exquisite as it is: it belongs rather to Monteverdi's generation, or later. Pedrell included it in the complete edition of Victoria, his version being the basis of most later editions.

Jesu, dulcis memoria,
Dans vera cordi gaudia:
Sed super mel et omnia,
Ejus dulcis praesentia.

(Office hymn for the Feast of the Holy Name,
12th cent.)

(Jesu!— the very thought is sweet!
In that dear name all heart-joys meet;
But sweeter than the honey far
The glimpses of his presence are.)

[14] **O vos omnes** (T. L. de Victoria)

(SATB unaccompanied)

Victoria set this poignant Holy Week text twice, first as an individual motet (published in 1572), and then as the fourteenth of eighteen Tenebrae Responsories which formed part of his monumental *Officium Hebdomadae Sanctae* [Office of Holy Week] published in 1585. The present setting, considered the finer of the two, is the second one. As set by Victoria, it was the fifth Responsory at Matins (the first part of Tenebrae) for Holy Saturday, actually observed on Good Friday evening; the text recurs later in the Office as an antiphon. The correct pitch of Victoria's setting is a matter of doubt. It is notated a fifth higher than performed here, and the part-books designate it 'quattuor vocibus paribus' [for four equal voices]. Some scholars believe that this high notated pitch was dictated by modal convention, and that all the Tenebrae Responsories should be sung at a lower pitch by male voices AATB. The present pitch, suitable for SATB, represents a compromise.

O vos omnes qui transit per viam, attendite, et videte si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.
Attendite, universi populi, et videte dolorem meum, si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.

(Responsory at Matins for Holy Saturday: Lamentations 1, v. 12)

(Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.
Behold, all ye people, and see my sorrow, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.)

[15] **Crux fidelis** (John IV, King of Portugal, 1604–56)

(SATB unaccompanied)

This favourite polyphonic setting of the eighth stanza of the hymn *Pange lingua* was first published in an eleven-volume collection of 'musique ancienne' issued in Paris in 1843–5, where it is given a date of 1615 and ascribed to John IV, King of Portugal. He was indeed a composer, but as he was born in 1604, the date, at least, is unlikely. All but this and one other of his compositions were said to have been destroyed with the royal library in the Lisbon earthquake and fire of 1755, so there is scant basis for stylistic comparison, but it must be seriously doubted whether *Crux fidelis* was written in the seventeenth century at all. Its chromaticism extends to notes and chords far-fetched for all except an experimenter of Gesualdo-like boldness: eleven dominant seventh chords (to use an anachronistic term) occur in the piece's thirty-one bars. The effect is more like the consciously 'churchy' sacred music of Liszt than the work of a younger contemporary of Monteverdi. This is not to question the excellence of *Crux fidelis* (which, within its brief span, is a deeply expressive piece) but rather to open up the issue of its true origin.

Crux fidelis, inter omnes,
Arbor una nobilis:
Nulla silva talem profert,
Fronde, flore, germine:
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,
Dulce pondus sustinet. Amen.

(attributed to Venantius Fortunatus, 6th cent.)

(Faithful Cross, above all other,
One and only noble tree,
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron,
Sweetest weight is hung on thee. Amen.)

[16] **Ave Maria** (Josquin Desprez, c.1440–1521)

(SATB unaccompanied)

Josquin has always been regarded as the greatest composer of his generation, the fullest embodiment of the ideals of the Renaissance and one of the most impressive and prolific exponents of both sacred and secular vocal music. Believed to have been born in north-eastern France, his first documented appearance is as a member of Milan Cathedral choir (from 1459), followed by a period in the service of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza in Rome and in the choir of the papal chapel there. He developed

associations with French courts and with the Italian court of Ferrara, the latter coming to an end in 1504 when the court was dissolved due to the threat of plague. Josquin returned to north-eastern France, spending his remaining years as a canon of the cathedral of Notre Dame in Condé, his compositions known and revered throughout Europe. Of his 100 or so surviving motets, *Ave Maria*, probably written shortly before 1500, is one of the loveliest and most celebrated. As early as 1502 it was chosen by the Venetian publisher Petrucci to open his first collection of motets, and it is extant in at least ten other sixteenth-century sources. Distinctive features of Josquin's style are in evidence, including the use of contrasting pairs of voices, canon, and paraphrased Gregorian chant (the pre-Tridentine sequence *Ave Maria*), though this appears only at the opening as a kind of prelude to the main part of the motet, which is a free setting of a five-versed poem starting with the words 'Ave cujus conceptio'. The verses deal in turn with the five Marian feasts (Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption) and at the end the prayer 'O Mater Dei, memento mei' is added. The poem is found in a number of French and Belgian books of hours and was used as a votive antiphon.

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum, Virgo serena.

*Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you, fair virgin.*

Ave cujus conceptio,
Solemni plena gaudio,
Caelestia, terrestria,
Nova replet laetitia.

*Hail to you whose conception,
full of holy joy,
fills heaven and earth
with new rejoicing.*

Ave, cujus nativitas
Nostra fuit solemnitas,
Ut lucifer lux oriens
Verum solem praevieniens.

*Hail to you whose birth we celebrated,
like the day-star rising,
foretelling the true Sun.*

Ave pia humilitas,
Sine viro fecunditas,
Cujus annunciatio
Nostra fuit salvatio.

*Hail, holy and humble one,
fruitful without a man,
you whose annunciation
was our salvation.*

Ave vera virginitas,
Immaculata castitas,
Cujus purificatio

*Hail, true virginity,
spotless chastity,
whose purification cleansed us also.*

Nostra fuit purgatio.

Ave, praeclara omnibus
Angelicis virtutibus,
Cujus fuit assumptio
Nostra glorificatio.

*Hail to you who excel in all the angelic virtues,
you whose assumption glorified us also.*

O Mater Dei,
Memento mei. Amen.

*O Mother of God,
remember me. Amen.*

*(Author unknown: votive antiphon
to the Virgin Mary)*

[17] Dixit Maria (H. L. Hassler, c.1564–1612)
(SATB unaccompanied)

One of three musical brothers born in Nuremberg, Hassler studied under Andrea Gabrieli in Venice before returning to Germany where, in 1586, he was appointed chamber organist to the wealthy Fugger family in Augsburg. He published his first collection of sacred music, dedicated to his patron Octavian II Fugger, in 1591; it was evidently successful, with a new edition appearing in Nuremberg in 1597. Hassler seems to have had a restless and entrepreneurial streak, moving to new posts in Nuremberg in 1601 and Dresden in 1608, while being involved in instrument making and music publishing. Much of his music is popular in style: *Dixit Maria* (from the 1591 collection) is written in the secular style of a canzona or chanson rather than a motet, with a typical ABB structure, an attractive melody starting with the characteristic long–short–short canzona rhythm, and simple, clear counterpoint. The piece is designated for the Feast of the Annunciation.

Dixit Maria ad angelum: Ecce ancilla Domini,
fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.
(Luke 1, v. 38)

*(Mary said to the angel, Behold the handmaid of
the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.)*

[18] Palm 100 (Heinrich Schütz, 1585–1672)
(double choir SATB: SATB, with continuo)

Schütz's position as the first German-speaking composer of international repute, and the greatest of his century, is not disputed, but his legacy of some 500 works is only now becoming widely known

outside Germany. Born in the little town of Köstritz, not far from Leipzig, he studied first at Kassel and then with Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice, a fruitful period which came to an end with Gabrieli's death in 1612. He returned to Kassel, but his talents were spotted by the Elector of Saxony, who secured his services for the Dresden court in 1617. With the exception of brief interludes serving temporarily at courts in Hildesheim and in Denmark, Schütz spent the rest of his long life in or around Dresden, in charge of music at court through the difficult period of the Thirty Years' War but maintaining a prolific output of published collections of his work, the majority of it sacred music for Lutheran use. *Psalm 100* (which also exists in an earlier version for three choirs) comes from his first collection, the *Psalmen Davids* of 1619, in which the influence of Venetian polychoral writing is successfully blended with a more square-cut German style of text setting.

Jauchzet dem Herren, alle Welt, dienet dem Herren mit Freuden, kommt vor sein Angesicht mit Frohlocken.

Erkennet, dass der Herre Gott ist, er hat uns gemacht, und nicht wir selbst, zu seinem Volk und zu Schafen seiner Weide.

Gehet zu seinen Toren ein mit Danken, zu seinen Vorhöfen mit Loben, danket ihm, lobet seinen Namen.

Denn der Herr ist freundlich, und seine Gnade währet ewig, und seine Wahrheit für und für.

Ehre sei dem Vater und dem Sohn, und auch dem heil'gen Geiste,
Wie es war im Anfang, jetzt und immerdar und von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit. Amen.

(*Psalm 100*)

(O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)*

[19] Selig sind die Toten (Heinrich Schütz)

(SSATTB, with continuo)

This dignified and consolatory motet, one of the relatively few by Schütz to be widely known and appreciated, was first published in the *Geistliche Chormusik* of 1648, an important collection of 29 of the composer's motets. They represent a turning away from the Venetian extravagance of Schütz's earlier work, with more emphasis on traditional imitative polyphony, which the composer's preface to the volume recommends as a discipline for budding composers. *Selig sind die Toten* is indeed just as imitative in style as any Renaissance motet, though the strong expressive contrasts between the slow-moving sections and the more active treatment of the words 'und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach' belong clearly to the Baroque era. Schütz discusses the issue of instrumental accompaniment in his preface, stating that the basso continuo has been included because it is considered desirable, not out of necessity. Hence, he sanctions performance either with organ continuo or (unusually for the seventeenth century) *a cappella*.

Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herren sterben, von nun an. Ja, der Geist spricht: Sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit, und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

(*Revelation 14, v. 13*)

(Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.)

[20] O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht (J. S. Bach, 1685–1750)

(SATB, with instruments)

This lovely motet is all too often overlooked in Bach's sacred output. Despite being recognisably a motet (as that term was understood in eighteenth-century Protestant Germany) and being explicitly described by Bach on its title page as 'motetto', it was mistakenly included among his cantatas in the old Bach-Gesellschaft edition, presumably because of its independent instrumental accompaniment. As a result it lay hidden among the 200 or so real cantatas until the Neue Bach Ausgabe put matters right by placing it in their volume of motets. Even now, it is generally omitted from recordings and publications of Bach's other six motets, for which reason alone it is worth including here. Bach wrote it in 1736 or 1737 for a funeral service in Leipzig. The accompaniment was originally scored for an outdoor group comprising two *litui* (curved trumpets used at funerals), a cornetto, and three trombones, which

suggests processional performance. Only one stanza of the hymn text is given in Bach's manuscript, but Behm's hymn (subtitled 'for the dying') has fourteen more, enough to accommodate even the longest procession. Ten years later Bach rescored it for indoor use: the *litui* were retained, woodwind doubled the voice parts *ad libitum*, and the cornetto and trombone parts were reassigned to strings and continuo. The chorale melody upon which the motet is based comes from a Leipzig hymnal of 1625, *As hymnodus sacer*. Mendelssohn later used this melody in his oratorio *St Paul*; his version, with an altered last line, is the one usually found in modern hymnals, under the name *Breslau*.

O Jesu Christ, meus Lebens Licht,
Mein Hort, mein Trost, mein Zuversicht,
Auf Erden bin ich nur ein Gast,
Und drückt mich sehr der Sünden Last.
(Martin Behm, 1557–1622)

*(Lord Jesu Christ, my life and light,
My strength, my stay, my day-star bright,
On earth I have no home or rest,
By all my grievous sin oppressed.)*

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Made in Great Britain

Recording produced and engineered by
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(oil on panel) by Hans Memling (c.1433–94)

courtesy: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, Belgium/
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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

Total playing time: 78' 26"

- [1] **Jubilate Deo** (5' 05") Giovanni Gabrieli
- [2] **Beatus vir** (8' 30") Claudio Monteverdi
Soloists: Amy Haworth, Amy Moore (*sopranos*)
Ben Breakwell, Thomas Hobbs (*tenors*)
James Holliday (*bass*)
- [3] **Christe, adoramus te** (2' 58") Claudio Monteverdi
- [4] **Cantate Domino** (1' 51") Claudio Monteverdi
- [5] **Sicut cervus** (3' 11") G. P. da Palestrina
- [6] **Exsultate Deo** (2' 09") G. P. da Palestrina
- [7] **Christus factus est** (2' 04") Felice Anerio
- [8] **O vos omnes** (3' 33") Carlo Gesualdo
- [9] **Timor et tremor** (3' 30") Orlande de Lassus
- [10] **Ave verum Corpus** (4' 09") Orlande de Lassus
- [11] **Laudate Dominum** (2' 49") J. P. Sweelinck
- [12] **Magnificat** (8' 00") Dieterich Buxtehude
Soloists: Grace Davidson, Katy Hill (*sopranos*)
Melanie Marshall (*alto*) Ben Breakwell (*tenor*)
James Holliday, Gabriel Crouch (*basses*)
- [13] **Jesu, dulcis memoria** (1' 51") T. L. de Victoria
- [14] **O vos omnes** (3' 14") T. L. de Victoria
- [15] **Crux fidelis** (2' 31") John IV, King of Portugal
- [16] **Ave Maria** (6' 02") Josquin Desprez
- [17] **Dixit Maria** (2' 15") H. L. Hassler
- [18] **Psalm 100** (4' 20") Heinrich Schütz
- [19] **Selig sind die Toten** (4' 07") Heinrich Schütz
- [20] **O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht** (4' 50")
J. S. Bach