

londinium

CITY VOICES

Brian Gordon
conductor

Victoria

Missa Ascendens Christus
Ascendens Christus (motet)



Tallis

The Lamentations of Jeremiah (Part I)
Motets

Byrd

Motets for Ascension (from Gradualia)

St Mary le Bow, Cheapside, London EC2V 6AU
Wednesday 31 May 2006

Londinium

Londinium was formed by Brian Gordon in 2005 with the intention of bringing together singers for whom musical and textual interpretation would be foremost in seeking to communicate the true emotion of the music. We perform in London's beautiful City churches primarily, although not exclusively, from renaissance and baroque *a capella* repertoire.

Londinium's next concert is at 7.30pm on **Tuesday 31 October 2006**, also at St Mary le Bow, will include Palestrina's *Missa Veni Sponsa Christi*, motets from Schütz's *Geistliche Chor-music* and motets by Mendelssohn including *Richte mich, Gott*. Further concerts are being planned for 2007 and we have recently been invited to perform in France at the St Etienne festival in 2007 and/or 2008.

We hope you will enjoy this evening's concert. If so, please do visit our website <http://www.londinium-voices.org.uk> to find out more about us, and join Friends of Londinium for free email notification of forthcoming concerts and activities. Singers who wish to audition are welcome and may also contact us through the website.

Brian Gordon

Brian Gordon studied singing and piano at the Royal Academy of Music where he specialised in the performance of baroque music, winning critical acclaim in the title role of Handel's *Solomon*. He made his operatic debut in Handel's *Tamerlano* (Batignano), subsequently singing the same role for the Welsh National Opera and the BBC. His London debut was in the ENO in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. He went on to sing with Opera Factory in Cavalli's *La Calisto* and with Opera Restor'd (the South Bank, Aldeburgh and Edinburgh Festivals). International engagements have included the Vienna Festival with Harnoncourt, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* with Berio and Arrigo's *Addio Garibaldi* for La Scala, Milan. Recordings include Handel's *Israel in Egypt* and Purcell's *Ode for St Cecilia's Day*, both with John Eliot Gardiner.

Having enjoyed a successful career as a singer, Brian Gordon now divides his time between conducting, choral training and teaching, and has an established reputation as a singing teacher and coach. He conducted Orlando Chamber Choir from 1995 to 2001, during which time they performed regularly at St John's Smith Square. International assignments have included work with the Berlin Hochschule and Singakademie, Neidersachsen (Germany), the Opera Theatre Company, Dublin and Casa da Musica, Portugal. In the Autumn he will conduct Cavalli's *L'Erismena* for English Touring Opera.

soprano

Chris Banks, Fiona Clark, Cathryn Fergie, Caroline Fitzgerald, Clare Lovett, Andra Patterson

alto

Alison Bomber, Philippa Gardner, Katherine Hodge, Jamie Patterson, Helen Statham, Frances Watson

tenor

Peter Di-Toro, Ivan Patterson, Luke Phillips

bass

Jaco Brand, Jeremy Crouch, Marcus Daniel, Charlie Hamilton

Programme

Thomas Tallis

O Nata Lux
Salvator Mundi
In Manus Tuas Domine

William Byrd

Viri Galilaei
Psallite Domino

Thomas Tallis

If Ye Love Me
Hear the Voice and Prayer

Lamentations of Jeremiah (Part I)

Interval

Tomás Luis de Victoria

Ascendens Christus
Missa Ascendens Christus

Please ensure that all watch alarms, pagers and mobile phones are switched off.

Our thanks to:

*The Church of St Mary le Bow, Cheapside (www.stmarylebow.co.uk)
Visitors are welcome to leave donations in the collection plates by the door.*

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Tonight's programme presents music by three outstanding composers of the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The works are strongly expressive of their personal belief as Roman Catholics, but Tallis and Byrd were profoundly influenced by the Reformation in England, whereas Victoria's music represents an evolution of the Catholic musical tradition which became integral to the Counter-Reformation in Spain.

Thomas Tallis (c.1505 - 1585) and *William Byrd* (1543 - 1623)

Tallis and Byrd both became Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal - Tallis in 1543, and Byrd a generation later, in 1570 - and from 1575 served jointly as its organists. As such they were at the heart of the development of English music and Byrd in particular became one of the greatest of English composers.

They were also both Roman Catholic, and Byrd was regularly accused of recusancy (ie refusing to attend Church of England services as required by law) from 1585 onwards. Byrd's patrons were the staunchly Catholic (though always true to the Crown) Petrie family. Nevertheless both Tallis and Byrd were in the favour of the Queen and Byrd was protected by powerful friends at Court, possibly Elizabeth herself, from paying the heavy fines imposed on recusants in the later Elizabethan period.

Elizabeth's private beliefs are a matter of conjecture, but an explanation surely lies in "the stubborn love of church choral music shown by that midwife of the Church of England, Elizabeth I" to which Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch refers in *Reformation: Europe's House Divided 1490 -1700*. Her choir in the Chapel Royal went on singing, and her composers went on producing music of superlative quality, ensuring by example the survival of the liturgy and music of the English cathedrals, alone among the European Protestant churches.

Having served under Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and finally Elizabeth I, Tallis had to adapt his music to religious change with each succeeding monarch. He was initially influenced by the sumptuous style which formed his early musical education, to which he reverted in Mary I's reign and did not wholly abandon thereafter. This may be discerned in the harmonic richness and a subtle use of cumulative repetition and imitation found in the Elizabethan *Lamentations of Jeremiah (Part I)* including the melismatic way in which the Hebrew prefatory letters "Aleph" and "Beth" are set. The *Lamentations* may be a poignant allusion to the plight of English Catholics, and the concluding plea "*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum*" ("Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God") is especially powerful.

Tallis and Byrd, however, both embraced the Reformation demand to avoid melisma (several notes to a syllable) in preference for, in Archbishop Cranmer's words, music "not full of notes, but as near as may be for every syllable a note so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly". In Cranmer's time composers were required to set religious texts in English rather than Latin, and Tallis' motets *If ye love me* and *Hear the Voice and Prayer* are simple, effective (and highly skilled) settings as desired by Cranmer.

Whether setting English or Latin, Tallis' music typically contains astonishing harmonies and is full of "false relations", resulting in some notable discords which give them a decidedly modern feel. *O Nata Lux*, a hymn for Lauds, Feast of the Transfiguration, from an anonymous tenth century text, is a particularly memorable example. With *Salvator Mundi* and *In Manus Tuas Domine*, it is representative of Tallis' Elizabethan settings of Latin texts, resulting from the freedom given by Elizabeth to set Latin texts for use in private devotion. They nevertheless have much the same deceptively simple style as the English settings.

When James I succeeded Elizabeth in 1603 the political climate briefly improved for Catholics, and although Byrd had cautiously published "Catholic" music previously this probably encouraged him openly to publish the two volume *Gradualia* (1605 and 1607). This is a renowned collection of motets setting Latin texts which formed the Propers at Mass in the Catholic rite, which may have been written for worship in the private chapel at the Petries' Ingatestone Hall. These include the two motets for Ascension performed this evening. It is a feature of the *Gradualia* motets, particularly those for Ascension, that the vocal ranges the singers must use are wide, even by today's standards, and there is a feeling generally of Byrd pushing at the musical boundaries; the pieces were forward looking in sound and style. In common with the rest of *Gradualia* an avoidance of melisma, ironically but undoubtedly in the style espoused by Cranmer, results in a very clear setting of the text, which is typically expressive, and includes frequent wordplay eg the effects around the word "plaudite" ("clap") in *Viri Galilaei*.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 - 1611)

Regarded as the greatest composer of Spain's "golden age", Victoria was a choirboy at Avila cathedral but from 1565 spent the next twenty years in Rome, succeeding Palestrina as Maestro di Capella of the Roman Seminary in 1571. Links with Spain remained strong and, having taken holy orders in 1575, Victoria returned in around 1587 as chaplain to the Dowager Empress María - in fact a remunerative and influential position acting as maestro to the choir of priests and boys attached to the Royal Convent for Barefoot Clarist Nuns. At the centre of the Court and musical establishment his position was not dissimilar to that of Tallis and Byrd, and he had no difficulty in expressing his Catholic beliefs. His works, although relatively few in number, are full of confidence and optimism; unusually, almost all were published in his lifetime, becoming central to the Counter-Reformation church in Spanish territories, including South America, where they were much performed and admired.

Victoria's compositions show the influence both of an earlier Spanish period and of contemporary Italian composers such as Palestrina, but are notable for a distinctive use of accidentals and subtle harmonic colouration. This gives rise to the passionate intensity for which his music is renowned, leading to comparisons with the great painter of the Counter-Reformation, El Greco. This intensity is to be found throughout the *Missa Ascendens Christus* to be sung this evening. It was published in Rome 1592 and, like all but one of Victoria's twenty masses, is a "parody mass" i.e. based on an earlier work, in this case the beautiful five-part motet *Ascendens Christus*, (published 1572), which will also be performed. The harmonic approach contrasts with the English style, but there is no excessive use of melisma and it is there to serve the text; there seems to be greater use of it in the earlier motet eg the sustained passages on the word "*hominibus*" ("mankind") where the text speaks of God giving gifts to mankind.

O Nata Lux

O nata lux de lumine
Jesu redemptor saeculi,
Dignare clemens supplicum laudes
preces que sumere.
Qui carne quondam contegi dignatus
es pro perditis,
Nos membra confer effici tui beati
corporis.

Salvator Mundi

Salvator mundi, salva nos,
qui per crucem et sanguinem
redemisti nos:
Auxiliare nobis, te deprecamur,
Deus noster.

In Manus Tuas Domine

In manus tuas Domine commendo
spiritum meum,
Redemisti me Domine
Deus veritatis

Viri Galilaei

Viri Galilaei quid admiramini,
aspicientes in coelum?
Alleluia: Quem admodum vidistis
eum, ascendentem in coelum,
Ita veniet.
Alleluia.

Omnes gentes plaudite manibus:
Jubilare Deo, in voce exultationis.
Gloria Patri et Filio, et Spiritui
Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,
et semper
Et in saeculo saeculorum. Amen.

Psallite Domino

Psallite Domino qui ascendit super
coelos coelorum ad Orientem.
Alleluia.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah

Incipit lamentatio Jeremiae
prophetae,

ALEPH

Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena
populo:
Facta est quasi vidua domina
gentium,
Princeps provinciarum facta
est sub tributo.

O Nata Lux

O living light of light,
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
Mercifully deem worthy and accept the
praises and prayers of your supplicants.
Thou who once deigned to be clothed in
flesh for the sake of the lost ones,
Grant us to be made members of your Holy
body.

Salvator Mundi

O Saviour of the World, save us
who by thy cross and precious blood has
redeemed us:
Help us, we humbly beseech thee,
Our God.

In Manus Tuas Domine

Into thy hands O Lord, I commend
my spirit,
You have redeemed me Lord
God of truth.

Viri Galilaei

Ye men of Galilee, why gaze ye wondering
up into heaven?
Alleluia: Just as you have seen him
ascending into heaven,
So shall he come again.
Alleluia.

O clap your hands, all ye people:
Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and
the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be
World without end. Amen.

Psallite Domino

Sing praise unto the Lord who hath gone up
into the sunrise above the heaven of heavens.
Alleluia.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah

Here beginneth the lamentations of
Jeremiah the prophet:

A

How doth the city sit solitary, that was
full of people!
How is she become as
a widow!
She that was great among the nations, and
princess among the provinces, how is she
become tributary!

BETH
Plorans ploravit in nocte,
Et lacrimae eius in maxillis eius:
Non est qui consolatur eam, ex
omnibus caris eius.
Omnes amici eius spreverunt
eam,
Et facti sunt ei inimici.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad
Dominum Deum tuum.

Ascendens Christus

Prima Pars

Ascendens Christus in altum.
Alleluia.
Captivam duxit captivitatem.
Alleluia.
Dedit dona hominibus.
Alleluia.

Secunda Pars

Ascendit Deus in jubilatione,
et Dominus in voce
tubae.
Alleluia.
Dedit dona hominibus.
Alleluia.

Missa Ascendens Christus

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
et in terra pax hominibus bonae
voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam
gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu
Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius
Patris,
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,
Tu solus Dominus,
Tu solus altissimus,
Jesu Christe,
Cum Sancto Spiritu,
In gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

B
She weepeth sore in the night,
And her tears are on her cheeks;
Among all who love her she hath none to
comfort her.
All her friends have dealt treacherously
with her,
They are become her enemies.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return unto the Lord
thy God.

Ascendens Christus

First part

Christ ascends on high.
Alleluia.
He hath led captivity captive.
Alleluia.
He has given gifts to all mankind.
Alleluia.

Second part

God has gone up to heaven with jubilation,
and the Lord with the sound of the
trumpet.
Alleluia.
He has given gifts to all mankind.
Alleluia.

Missa Ascendens Christus

Kyrie

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.

Gloria

Glory to God on high,
and on earth peace to men of good
will.
We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we adore
Thee; we glorify Thee.
We give Thee thanks for Thy great
glory,
O Lord God, Heavenly King,
God the Father Almighty.
O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten
Son.
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the
Father,
Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Who takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Who sittest at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.
For Thou alone art holy;
Thou alone art The Lord;
Thou alone art most high,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Ghost,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Credo

Credo in unum Deum,
Patrem omnipotentem , factorem
coeli et terrae,
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero,
Genitum, non factum,
consubstantialem Patri,
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines, et propter
nostram salutem,
descendit de coelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria virgine:
Et homo factus est
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub Pontio
Pilato passus, et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum scripturas.
Et ascendit in coelum:
Sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
judicare vivos et mortos:
Cuius regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum et
vivificantem:
Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul
adoratur et conglorificatur:
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam catholicam et
apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma in
remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum.
Et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.

Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria
tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei I

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei II

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi:
dona nobis pacem.

Credo

I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and
earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
The only-begotten Son of God.
Born of the Father before all ages.
God of God, Light of Light,
True God of true God.
Begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father,
through whom all things were made.
Who for us men, and for our
salvation,
came down from heaven.
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the
virgin Mary:
And was made man.
He was crucified also for us, suffered
under Pontius Pilate, and was buried.
And on the third day He rose again,
according to the Scriptures,
And ascended into Heaven.
He sits at the right hand of the Father,
Whence He will come again with glory
to judge both the living and the dead:
And of His kingdom there shall be no end.
I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and
Giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
Who together with the Father and the Son
is no less adored and glorified,
And who spoke by the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, Catholic and
Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the
remission of sins.
And I expect the resurrection of the dead.
And the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy
Lord God of Sabaoth.
Heaven and earth are full of your
glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei I

Lamb of God who takest away the sins of
the world: have mercy on us.

Agnus Dei II

Lamb of God who takest away the sins of
the world: give us thy peace.