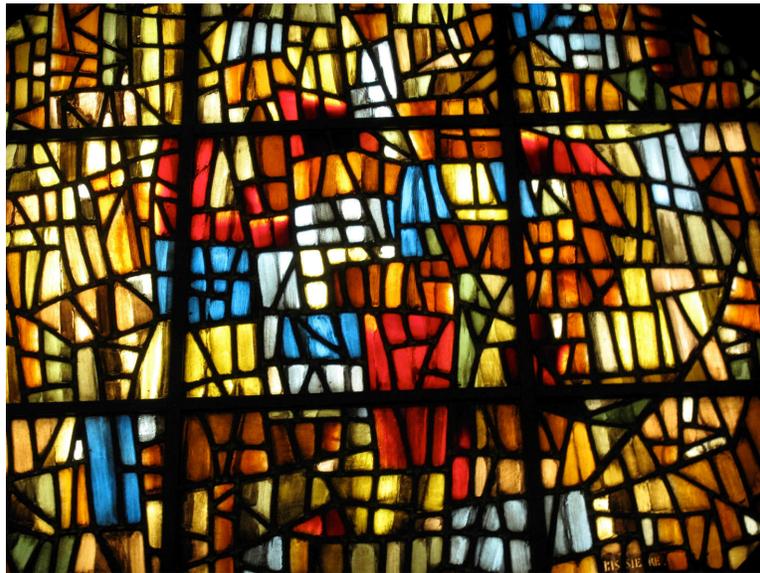


Whitehall Choir



CONDUCTOR Paul Spicer • ORGAN James Longford

Tallis to Whitacre



TALLIS O Nata Lux
BYRD Hæc Dies • Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (from the Great Service)
TOMKINS When David Heard WEELES Alleluia
GIBBONS O Clap Your Hands
TAVENER Mother of God • Awed by the Beauty
WHITACRE Nox Aurumque • Lux Aurumque
Music for organ by BYRD, PACHELBEL and PRÆTORIUS

Programme £2

Thursday, 24 November 2011, 7.30pm

Church of St Alban the Martyr, Brooke Street, Holborn, London EC1N 7RD

PROGRAMME

William Byrd	<i>Hæc Dies</i>
Eric Whitacre	<i>Lux Aurumque</i>
Thomas Tomkins	<i>When David Heard</i>
Michael Prætorius	<i>Two Variations on 'Nun lob mein Seel den Herren' (organ)</i>
William Byrd	<i>Magnificat</i>
Eric Whitacre	<i>Nox Aurumque</i>

INTERVAL

Thomas Weelkes	<i>Alleluia. I heard a voice</i>
John Tavener	<i>Mother of God</i>
Thomas Tallis	<i>O nata lux</i>
William Byrd	<i>Nunc dimittis</i>
John Tavener	<i>Awed by the beauty</i>
Johann Pachelbel	<i>Ciacona in D (organ)</i>
William Byrd	<i>Fantasia (organ)</i>
Orlando Gibbons	<i>O Clap your Hands</i>

The concert is expected to end at approximately 8.50pm.

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)



William Byrd was an English composer of the Renaissance. He wrote in many of the forms current in England at the time, including sacred and secular polyphony, keyboard and consort music. It appears from recent research that he was born in 1540 in London, and he was a pupil of Thomas Tallis. He also worked in collaboration with John Sheppard and William Mundy on one of his earliest compositions, a contribution to a joint setting of the psalm *In exitu Israel* composed for the procession to the font at the Paschal Vigil.

Byrd was organist and choirmaster of Lincoln Cathedral from March 1563 until 1572. On 14 September 1568 he married Julian Birley, and they had at least seven children.

The 1560s were also important formative years for Byrd the composer. He was composing Anglican church music, and when he left Lincoln continued to be paid at a reduced rate on condition that he would send the cathedral his compositions. By this time he had also taken serious strides with instrumental music.

Byrd seems to have continued to set Latin liturgical texts at Lincoln. Two large-scale psalm motets, *Ad Dominum cum tribularer* and *Domine quis habitabit*, date from this period. *De lamentatione* sets verses from the Lamentations of Jeremiah following the format of the Tenebræ lessons sung in the Catholic rite during the last three days of Holy Week.

In 1572 Byrd became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, a move that vastly increased his opportunities to make contacts at Court. Queen Elizabeth was a moderate Protestant who retained a fondness for elaborate ritual, besides being a music lover and keyboard player herself. Byrd's output of Anglican church music is small, but it stretches the limits of elaboration then regarded as acceptable by some reforming Protestants who regarded highly wrought music as a distraction from the Word of God.

In 1575 Byrd and Tallis received a 21-year patent for the printing of music and ruled music paper. Byrd's contribution to the *Cantiones quæ ab argumento sacræ vocantur* which followed this patent includes a *Laudate pueri* based on an instrumental fantasia. Also belonging to the more archaic stratum of motets is *Libera me Domine*, while *Miserere mihi* incorporates a four-in-two canon, and *Tribue Domine* was composed in a style which owes much to earlier Tudor settings. Byrd's contribution also includes compositions in a more forward-looking manner, such as *Emendemus in melius*, *O lux beata Trinitas*, *Domine secundum actum meum* and *Siderum rector*.

From the early 1570s onwards Byrd became increasingly involved with Catholicism. His wife Julian was first cited for recusancy at Harlington in Middlesex, in 1577, and Byrd himself appears in the recusancy lists from 1584. Following Pius V's Papal Bull of 1570, which absolved Elizabeth's subjects from allegiance to her and effectively made her an outlaw in the eyes of the Catholic Church, Catholicism became increasingly identified with sedition. With the influx of missionary priests trained on the continent relations between the authorities and the Catholic community took a turn for the worse, and Byrd's membership of the Chapel Royal was suspended for a time, restrictions were placed on his movements and his house was placed on the search list.

Thirty-seven of Byrd's motets were published in two sets of *Cantiones sacrae*, which appeared in 1589 and 1591. Together with two sets of English songs, these collections probably formed part of his campaign to re-establish himself in Court circles after the reverses of the 1580s.

In 1588 and 1589 Byrd also published two collections of English songs. The first, *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs of Sadness and Pietie* (1588), consists mainly of adapted consort songs, which Byrd had turned into vocal part-songs. Many are settings of metrical psalms, while others are dramatic elegies, intended to be performed in the boy-plays which were popular in Tudor London.

Byrd's 1588 collection reflects this tradition. The 'psalms' section sets texts drawn from Sternhold's psalter of 1549, while the 'sonnets and pastorals' section employs lighter, more rapid motion. Poetically, the set (together with other evidence) reflects Byrd's involvement with the literary circle surrounding Sir Philip Sidney, whose influence at Court was at its height in the early 1580s. The most popular item in the set was the Lullaby (*Lullay lullaby*) which blends the tradition of the dramatic lament with the cradle-songs found in some early boy-plays and medieval mystery plays. In 1602 Byrd's patron Edward Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester, predicted that 'in winter lullaby, an owld song of Mr Birde, wylbee more in request as I thinke'

The *Songs of Sundrie Natures* (1589) contain compositions in a wide variety of musical styles, and include psalm settings, work in a lighter vein, vocal part-songs, carols, and an anthem, *Christ rising again*.

In about 1594 Byrd moved with his family to Standon Massey in Essex. The main reason for the move was apparently the proximity of Byrd's patron Sir John Petre, a discreet Catholic under whose auspices clandestine Masses were celebrated; inevitably, this drew the unwelcome attention of spies and paid informers working for the Crown.

It was evidently at the behest of this circle of friends that Byrd now embarked on a cycle of liturgical music covering all the principal feasts of the Catholic Church calendar. The first stage comprised the three Mass settings (in four, three and five parts), published between 1592 and 1595, all of which hark back to earlier Tudor tradition while also containing features that reflect Continental influence and the liturgical practices of the foreign-trained incoming missionary priests.

The second stage in Byrd's programme of liturgical polyphony consists of the *Gradualia*, two cycles of motets, published in 1605 and 1607. Their appearance may reflect the hopes which the recusant community must have harboured for an easier life under James I. The 1605 set also contains a number of items which fall outside the liturgical scheme of the main body of the set. These include, *inter alia*, settings of Marian antiphons, Marian hymns, a version of the Litany, the Eucharistic hymn *Ave verum Corpus*, and the *Turbarum voces* from the St John Passion.

In stylistic terms the motets of the *Gradualia* form a sharp contrast to those of the *Cantiones sacrae* publications. The vast majority are shorter, and some of the more festive items, especially in the 1607 set, feature vivid madrigalesque word-painting.

Byrd's staunch Catholicism did not prevent him from continuing to contribute memorably to the repertory of Anglican church music. Byrd's small output of church anthems ranges in style from relatively sober early examples (*O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our queen* and *How long shall mine enemies*) to other evidently late works such as *Sing joyfully*.

Byrd's last collection of English songs, *Psalms, Songs and Sonnets*, published in 1611, broadly follows the pattern of his 1589 set, and included consort fantasias and English motets, such as *Praise our Lord, all ye Gentiles, This day Christ was born*, and *Have mercy upon me*. There are more carols and lighter three- and four-part songs.

Byrd remained in Standon Massey until his death on 4 July 1623, which was noted in the Chapel Royal Check Book in a unique entry describing him as "a Father of Musick".

Hæc Dies

A few of Byrd's motets, especially in the 1591 set of *Cantiones sacrae*, abandon traditional motet style and resort to vivid word-painting which reflects the growing popularity of the madrigal. This is especially noticeable in tonight's first piece, *Hæc Dies*. Thomas Morley's *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) supports the view that the madrigal had superseded the motet in the favour of Catholic patrons, a fact which may explain why Byrd largely abandoned the composition of non-liturgical motets after 1591.

Hæc dies quam fecit Dominus:
exultemus et lætemur in ea.
Alleluia.

*This is the day which the Lord hath made:
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Alleluia.*

after Psalm 117 (Latin Vulgate), verse 24

Eric Whitacre (born 1970)



Eric Whitacre, who was born in Reno, Nevada, on 2 January 1970, is an American composer of choral, wind-band and electronic music. He has also served as a guest conductor for ensembles throughout Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas.

An accomplished composer, conductor and lecturer, Eric Whitacre has quickly become one of the most popular and performed composers of his generation. The *Los Angeles Times* has praised his compositions as “works of unearthly beauty and imagination, (with) electric, chilling harmonies”; while a critic on the BBC comments that “what hits you straight between the eyes is the honesty, optimism and sheer belief that passes any pretension. This is music that can actually make you smile.”

Though he had received no formal training before the age of 18, Whitacre's first experiences singing in college choir changed his life, and he completed his first concert work, *Go, Lovely, Rose*, at the age of 21. He went on to the Juilliard School, earning his Master of Music degree and studying with the Pulitzer Prize- and Oscar-winning composer John Corigliano.

Many of Whitacre's works have entered the standard choral and symphonic repertoires and have become the subject of scholarly works and doctoral dissertations. His works *Water Night*, *Cloudburst*, *Sleep*, *Lux Aurumque* and *A Boy and a Girl* are among the most popular choral works of the last decade, and his *Ghost Train*, *Godzilla Eats Las Vegas*, and *October* have achieved equal success among players and audiences of symphonic wind-band music. Whitacre has received composition awards from the Barlow International Composition Competition, the American Choral Directors Association and the American Composers Forum and, in 2001, he became the youngest recipient of the Raymond C. Brock commission by the American Choral Directors Association.

As a conductor, Whitacre has appeared with many professional and educational ensembles throughout the world. In the last ten years he has conducted concerts of his choral and symphonic music in Japan, Australia, China, Singapore, South America and much of Europe, as well as dozens of American universities and colleges, where he regularly conducts seminars and lectures with young musicians. Over the past few years, these loyal fans and supporters have moved online, spreading his popularity to an ever-expanding worldwide audience. Upcoming commissions include works for the King's Singers with the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, the London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, and an oratorio – featuring full orchestra, choir, and soloists – celebrating the opening of the new Long Center for the Performing Arts in Austin, Texas.

His music has been featured on dozens of commercial and independent recordings. His first recording, *The Music of Eric Whitacre*, was hailed by *The American Record Guide* as one of the top ten classical albums of 1997. In 2006, a full collection of his *a cappella* music, *Cloudburst and Other Choral Works*, was released by Hyperion Records. The album quickly became an international bestseller, appearing in the top ten of both Billboard's and iTunes's Top Classical Albums charts. The collection earned a 2007 Grammy nomination for Best Choral Performance.

Most recently, Whitacre has received acclaim for *Paradise Lost: Shadows and Wings*, a musical that combines trance, ambient and techno electronica with choral, cinematic, and operatic traditions. Winner of the ASCAP Harold Arlen award, this musical also gained Whitacre the Richard Rodgers Award for most promising musical theatre composer. Following its sold-out run, the most recent production earned 10 nominations at the 2007 Los Angeles Stage Alliance Ovation Awards, including one for Best World Première Musical.

(Source – <http://www.last.fm/music/Eric+Whitacre/+wiki>)

Lux Aurumque

Charles Anthony Silvestri writes:

“This poem is a translation into Latin of a lovely and simple text by poet Edward Esch. Eric Whitacre shared the poem with me, and I was instantly struck by its simple beauty. He wanted to set it, but in Latin, and so I set to work rendering the poem into the kinds of sounds Eric likes to set. ...

“This work is one of the few Whitacre pieces performed in church settings, especially at Christmastime ... Its image of angels singing to the newborn babe evokes that silent night in the stable.”

Lux,
calida gravisque
pura velut aurum
et canunt angeli
molliter modo natum.

Light,
warm and heavy
as pure gold,
and the angels sing softly
to the newborn babe.

Latin translation ©2001 by Charles Anthony Silvestri (b.1965)

Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656)



Thomas Tomkins was an English composer of the late Tudor and early Stuart period. In addition to being one of the prominent members of the English madrigal school, he was a skilled composer of keyboard and consort music, and the last member of the English virginalist school.

Tomkins was born in St David's in Pembrokeshire in 1572. His father was a vicar choral of St David's Cathedral and organist there. Three of Thomas junior's half-brothers also became eminent musicians, but none quite attained the same degree of fame. By 1594, but possibly as early as 1586, the family had moved to Gloucester, where his father was employed as a minor canon at the cathedral. Thomas almost certainly studied under William Byrd for a time, for one of his songs bears the inscription: *To my ancient, and much revered Master, William Byrd*, and it may have been at this period of his career, since Byrd leased property at Longney, near Gloucester. Although documentary proof is lacking, it is also possible that Byrd was instrumental in finding young Thomas a place as chorister in the Chapel Royal. Tomkins was affiliated to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1607.

But already in 1596 Tomkins had been appointed organist and master of the choristers at Worcester Cathedral. The next year he married Alice Patrick, a widow nine years his senior, whose husband Nathaniel, who died in 1595, had been Tomkins' predecessor at Worcester. Thomas's only son, Nathaniel, was born in 1599 in Worcester, and spent the rest of his life there as a respected musician.

Tomkins was doubtless acquainted with Thomas Morley, also a pupil of Byrd's, for his signed copy of Morley's publication *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597) has been preserved, together with Thomas's many annotations; and in 1601 Morley included one of Tomkins' madrigals in his important collection *The Triumphs of Oriana*.

In 1612 Tomkins oversaw the construction in Worcester Cathedral of a magnificent new organ by Thomas Dallam, the foremost organ-builder of the day. He continued writing verse anthems, and his collection of 28 madrigals, the *Songs of 3, 4, 5 and 6 parts* was finally published in 1622 with a dedicatory poem by his half-brother John Tomkins (circa 1587-1638), now organist of King's College, Cambridge (later of St Paul's and of the Chapel Royal), with whom Thomas maintained an intimate and loving relationship.

Probably by about 1603 Thomas was appointed a Gentleman Extraordinary of the Chapel Royal. This was an honorary post, but in 1621 he became a Gentleman Ordinary and organist under his friend the senior organist, Orlando Gibbons. The duties connected with this post included regular journeys between Worcester and London, which Tomkins performed until about 1639.

On James I's death in 1625 Tomkins, with other Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, was required to attend to both the music for James's funeral and that for the coronation of Charles I. Tomkins composed most of the eight anthems sung at the latter ceremony.

In 1628 Tomkins was named 'Composer of [the King's] Music in ordinary' at an annual salary of £40, succeeding Alfonso Ferrabosco the younger, who died in March that year. But this prestigious post, the highest honour available to an English musician, was quickly revoked on the grounds that it had been promised to Ferrabosco's son. He continued, however, to perform his dual duties at Worcester and London until 1639.

Tomkins' wife Alice died in 1642, the year civil war broke out. Worcester was one of the first casualties: the Cathedral was desecrated, and Tomkins' organ badly damaged by the Parliamentarians. The following year Tomkins' house near the Cathedral suffered a direct hit by cannon shot, making it uninhabitable for a long period, and destroying most of his household goods and probably a number of his musical manuscripts. About this time Tomkins married his second wife Martha Browne, widow of a Worcester Cathedral lay clerk.

A siege in 1646 caused untold damage to the city. With the choir disbanded and the Cathedral closed, Tomkins turned to the composition of keyboard and consort music; in 1647, a belated *tombeau* or tribute to Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, and a further one to the memory of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, both beheaded in 1641, and both admired by Tomkins. Charles I was executed in 1649, and a few days later Tomkins, always a royalist, composed his superb *Sad Pavan: for these distracted times*. His second wife Martha died around 1653, and deprived of his living, Tomkins, now 81, was in serious financial difficulties. In 1654 his son Nathaniel married Isabella Folliott, a wealthy widow, and Thomas went to live with them in Martin Hussingtree, some four miles from Worcester. He expressed his gratitude by composing his *Galliard, The Lady Folliot's* in her honour. Two years later he died and was buried in the churchyard of Martin Hussingtree on 9 June 1656.

Tomkins wrote madrigals, keyboard music, consort music, anthems, and liturgical music. Stylistically he was extremely conservative, even anachronistic: he seems to have completely ignored the rising Baroque practice around him, with its Italian-inspired idioms, and he also avoided writing in most of the popular forms of the time, such as the lute song, or ayre. His polyphonic language was frankly that of the Renaissance. Some of his madrigals are extremely expressive, with text-painting and chromaticism worthy of Italian madrigalists such as Marenzio or Luzzaschi.

He was also a prolific composer of verse anthems, writing more of them than any other English composer of the 17th century except William Child. These pieces were highly regarded at the time, and are well-represented in contemporary manuscript collections. Fortunately for the survival of his music, his son Nathaniel edited most of it and published a huge collection of it (entitled *Musica Deo sacra et ecclesiae Anglicanae; or Music dedicated to the Honor and Service of God, and to the Use of Cathedral and other Churches of England*) in 1668, after his death; much of it would otherwise have been lost during the Civil War.

When David heard

The text conveys the intensely personal grief of royal father for rebel son, whose familial strife became a war between the nations of Judah and Israel. Each phrase of the lament is shared by five voices, almost unornamented but chromatically torn. The work unites the Renaissance polyphonic style with the stately English cadences of the King James Bible. Thomas Tomkins' anthem was composed in an England riven by the hostility among established church, Catholics, and Puritans that culminated in the Civil War, a war that ended Tomkins' musical life. The anthem appeared in 1622 in his collection of madrigals and sacred works, *Songs for 3,4,5, and 6 Voices*. The musicologist Denis Stevens points out that the "*Songs* are unique among the publications of the English madrigalists in that they are dedicated individually to the composer's family and friends...", beginning with "a song dedicated 'To my dear Father Mr. Thomas Tomkins' and ending with an anthem 'To my son Nathaniel Tomkins.'" Thomas senior was also a composer, church organist and choirmaster. Nathaniel Tomkins edited the collection *Musica Deo Sacra* as a memorial to his father's life's work.

With acknowledgements to Bruce L. Bush and Cantabile Chamber Chorale, New Jersey, USA

When David heard that Absolon was slain, he went up to his chamber over the gate, and wept: and thus he said, O my son Absolon! Would God I had died for thee, O Absolon, my son!

Adapted from II Samuel 18, verse 33

Michael Prætorius (1571-1621)



Michael Prætorius was a German composer, organist, and music theorist. He was one of the most versatile composers of his age, being particularly significant in the development of musical forms based on Protestant hymns, many of which reflect an effort to make better the relationship between Protestants and Catholics.

He was born Michael Schultze, the youngest son of a Lutheran pastor, in Creuzburg, Thuringia. After study at the University of Frankfurt (Oder) he served from 1587 as organist at the Marienkirche in Frankfurt. From 1592/3 he served at the court in Wolfenbüttel, in the employ of Henry Julius, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg.

The nine parts of his *Musæ Sionia* (1605–10) and the 1611 published collections of liturgical music (masses, hymns, magnificats) follow the German Protestant chorale style. With these, at the behest of a circle of orthodox Lutherans, he followed the Duchess Elizabeth, who ruled the duchy in the duke's absence.

When the duke died in 1613 and was succeeded by Frederick Ulrich, Prætorius remained in post. From 1613 he also worked at the court of John George I, Elector of Saxony at Dresden, where he was responsible for festive music. He was exposed to the latest Italian music, including the polychoral works of the Venetian School. His subsequent development of the form of the chorale concerto resulted directly from his familiarity with the music of such Venetians as Giovanni Gabrieli. The solo-voice, polychoral, and instrumental compositions Prætorius prepared for these events mark the high period of his artistic creativity. Until his death, Prætorius remained at the court in Dresden, where he was declared *Kapellmeister von Haus aus* and worked with Heinrich Schütz.

Michael Prætorius died on his birthday, 15 February 1621, and was buried in a vault beneath the organ of St. Mary's Church in Wolfenbüttel.

Prætorius was a prolific composer; his compositions show the influence of Italian composers and his younger contemporary Heinrich Schütz. His works include the nine volume *Musæ Sionia* (1605–10), a collection of more than one thousand chorale and song arrangements; many other works for the Lutheran church; and *Terpsichore* (1612), a compendium of more than 300 instrumental dances, which is both his most widely known work, and his sole surviving secular work.

Prætorius was the German writer of music best known to other 17th-century musicians. His original theoretical contributions were relatively few, but his record of contemporary musical practices is encyclopedic. His importance to scholars of the 17th century derives from his discussions of the normal use of instruments and voices in ensembles, the standard pitch of the time, and the state of modal, metrical, and fugal theory. His meticulous documentation of 17th-century practice was of inestimable value to the early-music revival of the 20th century.

Variations on 'Nun Lob mein Seel den Herren'

James Longford, *organ*

The verses of the six Latin hymns Prætorius set for the organ are used for Vespers in the Lutheran liturgy, performed *alternatim*. In each one, the entire melody appears in long note-values as a *cantus firmus*. Above each of these slow bass melodies floats elaborate counterpoint containing many imitations of the cantus. The broad palette of organ tone colour is magnificently exploited in these pieces, and Prætorius' advice to use different registrations on two or three manuals is fully justified. In the variations on *Nun lob' mein Seel' den Herren*, the embellished chorale tune is found in the treble. The structure is reminiscent of a madrigal rather than a motet, which is not the case with his setting of plainsong hymns. The three lower voices are written in the polyphonic style of contemporary airs or dances, and imitate the motifs of ornamentation and diminution used in the treble line. These two variations seem to indicate a dialogue of two choruses, although once again this is left to the discretion of the performer. Lastly, this piece should certainly be played *manualiter*, as neither the melody nor the rhythm of the bass voice is suited to a coherent pedal treatment.

(source: NetLab (<http://netlab.e2k.ru/releases/176/104249/>))

William Byrd

'Magnificat' from The Great Service

Byrd's four Anglican service settings range in style from the unpretentious Short Service to the magnificent so-called Great Service, from which the Choir is tonight singing the Evensong canticles *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*. The writing is on a massive scale, in antiphony, block homophony and contrapuntal sections with varying numbers of parts for added variety. The Great Service includes an organ part, and it must have been sung by the Chapel Royal Choir on major liturgical occasions in the early seventeenth century, though its limited circulation suggests that many other cathedral choirs must have found it beyond them. Nevertheless, the source material shows that it was sung in York Minster from c. 1618. This setting was in existence by 1606, and may date back as far as the 1590s.

The *Nunc Dimittis* follows in the second half of the concert.

MAGNIFICAT

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.
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 showed 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.

From The Book of Common Prayer (1662)

Eric Whitacre

Nox Aurumque

Charles Anthony Silvestri writes:

“*Nox Aurumque* was written for composer Eric Whitacre as a companion poem to *Lux Aurumque*. This piece was to be decidedly longer, and darker, and presented me with unique challenges.

“The task of the lyricist is to provide for the composer a text which, on the one hand, gives the composer the material he or she needs to complete the piece, according to unique specifications; while on the other hand, could stand alone as a poem in its own right. Writing the Latin text for *Nox Aurumque* was a singular challenge.

“First, Eric had already composed much of the musical material; several distinct melodic motifs were already formed and essential to the structure of the piece. Any text I composed had to fit within the parameters of that structure. Eric was very specific about the number of syllables in this line, the necessary word-painting in that line, etc.

“Second, Eric had strong ideas about the meaning of the text. He communicated impressionistic images of an angel, the emotions of that angel, and other evocative images, darker than usual for him. My text had to speak to those images in a meaningful way, consistent with Eric’s intentions for the piece. It has a distinctly different sound than earlier works, and I wanted my text to be darker, and as different.

“Third (and most challenging), the text had to flow effectively in Latin. The Latin had to communicate accurately the images Eric wished to evoke about this angel, all within the already-established framework of the piece. Latin affected the English, and English affected Latin, in a tug of war between meaning and grammar. It had to be singable, and employ the kind of vowels and consonants Eric likes to set. I humbly ask ... critics to ... see this poem for what it is – lyrics to a choral work, not a sequel to the *Æneid*.”

Aurum,
Infuscatum et obscurum,
Canens noctis,
Canens mortis,
Acquiescens canendo.

*Gold,
Tarnished and dark,
Singing of night,
Singing of death,
Singing itself to sleep...*

Et angelum somnit aurorarum et bellorum,
Sæculorum aurorum fundit lacrimas,
Lacrimas rerum bellorum.

*And an angel dreams of dawns, and of war.
She weeps tears of the golden times
Tears of the cost of war.*

O arma!
O lamina aurata!
Gestu graves nimium,
Graves nimium volatu.

*O Shield!
O gilded blade!
You are too heavy to carry
Too heavy for flight.*

Aurum, infuscatum et torpidum,
Suscita!
Dilabere ex armis in alam!
Volemus iterum,
Alte supra murum;
Angeli renascentes et exultantes ad alas
Aurorarum,

*Gold, tarnished and weary,
Awaken!
Melt from weapon into wing!
Let us soar again,
High above this wall;
Angels reborn and rejoicing with wings made
Of dawn,*

Aurorum,
Somnorum.

*Of gold,
Of dream.*

Aurum,
Canens alarum,
Canens umbrarum...

*Gold,
Singing of wings,
Singing of shadows...*

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I N T E R V A L

Thomas Weelkes (1576-1623)



Thomas Weelkes was an English composer and organist. He became organist of Winchester College in 1598, moving to Chichester Cathedral. His works are chiefly vocal, and include madrigals, anthems and services.

Weelkes was baptized in the little village church of Elsted in Sussex on 25 October 1576. It has been suggested that his father was John Weeke, rector of Elsted, although there is no documentary evidence of the relationship. In 1597 his first volume of madrigals was published, the preface noting that he was a very young man when they were written; this helps to fix the date of his birth to somewhere in the middle of the 1570s. Early in his life he was in service at the house of the courtier Edward Darcy. At the end of 1598, at the probable age of 22, Weelkes was appointed organist at Winchester College, where he remained for two or three years, receiving the salary of 13s 4d per quarter (£2 for three quarters). His remuneration included board and lodging.

During his Winchester period, Weelkes composed a further two volumes of madrigals (1598, 1600). He obtained his B. Mus. Degree from New College, Oxford in 1602, and moved to Chichester to take up the position of organist and *informator choristarum* (instructor of the choristers) at the Cathedral at some time between October 1601 and October 1602. The following year he married Elizabeth Sandham, from a wealthy local family. They had three children.

Weelkes' fourth and final volume of madrigals, published in 1608, carries a title page where he refers to himself as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal; however, records at the Chapel Royal itself do not mention him, so at most he could only have been a Gentleman Extraordinary – one of those who were asked to stand in until a permanent replacement was found.

Weelkes was later to find himself in trouble with the Chichester Cathedral authorities for his heavy drinking and immoderate behaviour. He had previously been fined for “urinating on the Dean from the organ loft during Evensong”. In 1609 he was charged with unauthorised absence, but no mention of drunken behaviour is made until 1613, and J Shepherd, a Weelkes scholar, has suggested caution in assuming that his decline began before this date. In 1616 he was reported to the Bishop for being “noted and famed for a comon drunckard and notorious swearer & blasphemmer”. The Dean and Chapter dismissed him for being drunk at the organ and using bad language during divine service. He was however reinstated and remained in the post until his death, although his behaviour did not improve; in 1619 Weelkes was again reported to the Bishop.

Weelkes died in London in 1623, in the house of a friend, Henry Drinkwater of St Bride's parish, almost certainly on 30 November, and was buried on 1 December at St Bride's, Fleet Street. His will, made the day before he died, left his estate to be shared between his three children, with a legacy left to Drinkwater for his meat, drink and lodging. He has a memorial stone in Chichester Cathedral.

Thomas Weelkes is best known for his vocal music, especially his madrigals and church music. Weelkes wrote more Anglican services than any other major composer of the time, mostly for evensong. Many of his anthems are verse anthems, which would have suited the small forces he was writing for at Chichester Cathedral.

Weelkes was friends with the madrigalist Thomas Morley, who died in 1602, when Weelkes was in his mid-twenties (Weelkes commemorated his death in a madrigal-form anthem titled *A Remembrance of my Friend Thomas Morley*, also known as 'Death hath Deprived Me'). His own madrigals are very chromatic and use varied organic counterpoint and unconventional rhythm in their construction.

Alleluia. I heard a voice

Whilst *Alleluia* is in only five parts, it makes considerable demands on the performers, for there seems never to be a moment of respite. In fact, there seem to be at least two traditions of performance for this piece, and sources in Durham Cathedral, where the music was often rendered more elaborate, show an intricacy of verse parts derived from the continuous texture, whereas the other suggested tradition, according to John Parkinson, would have been to perform the music full throughout. If a large choir of expert soloists might have sung a verse version, whereas Chichester's more modest forces might have sung full, there seems no reason why a middle way might not have provided for an alternating Decani and Cantoris version, combining with great effect for the full, homophonic sections. Tonight, however, the Choir sings the full version.

Adapted from sleeve notes by Andrew Parker (1992) for the Hyperion/Helios CD 'Anthems by Thomas Weelkes' (Winchester Cathedral Choir, dir. David Hill)

Alleluia. I heard a voice as of strong thunderings, saying, Alleluia. Salvation and glory and honour and power be unto the Lord our God and to the Lamb for ever more. Alleluia.

Adapted from Revelation 19, vv. 1, 6

John Tavener (born 1944)



Sir John Tavener is best known for such religious, minimal works as *The Whale*, and *Funeral Ikos*. He began as a prodigy; in 1968, at the age of 24, he was described by *The Guardian* as "the musical discovery of the year", while *The Times* said he was "among the very best creative talents of his generation". During his career he has become one of the best known and regarded composers of his generation. He was knighted in 2000 for his services to music.

John Tavener was born on 28 January 1944 in Wembley, London, and claims to be a direct descendant of the 16th-century composer John Taverner. He was educated at Highgate School and at the Royal Academy of Music, where his tutors included Sir Lennox Berkeley. He first came to prominence in 1968 with his dramatic cantata *The Whale*, based on the Old Testament story of Jonah. It was premiered at the London Sinfonietta's debut concert and later recorded by Apple Records. The following year he began teaching at Trinity College of Music, London. Other works released by Apple included his *Celtic Requiem*. In 1977, he joined the Russian Orthodox Church. Orthodox

theology and Orthodox liturgical traditions became a major influence on his work. He was particularly drawn to its mysticism, studying and setting to music the writings of Church Fathers such as St John Chrysostom.

One of Tavener's most popular and frequently performed works is his short unaccompanied four-part choral setting of William Blake's *The Lamb*. This simple, homophonic piece is usually performed as a Christmas carol. More important, however, were his explorations of Russian and Greek culture, as shown in *Akhmatova Requiem* and *Sixteen Haiku of Seferis*. Later prominent works include *The Akathist of Thanksgiving* (1987); *The Protecting Veil* (first performed at the 1989 Proms); and *Song for Athene* (1993), performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997. Following Diana's death he also composed and dedicated to her memory the piece *Eternity's Sunrise*, based on poetry by William Blake.

It has been reported, particularly in the British press, that Tavener left Orthodox Christianity to explore a number of other different religious traditions, including Hinduism and Islam, and became a follower of the mystic philosopher Frithjof Schuon. While he has in recent years incorporated elements of non-Western music into his compositions, Tavener remains an Orthodox Christian. In 2003 he composed the exceptionally large work *The Veil of the Temple* (which was premiered at the Temple Church, Fleet Street, London), based on texts from a number of religions. It is set for four choirs, several orchestras and soloists and lasts at least seven hours. The 2004 première of his piece *Prayer of the Heart*, written for and performed by Björk, was featured on CD and incorporated as the soundtrack to Jake Lever's installation *Centre + Circumference* (2008, Wallspace, All Hallows on the Wall, City of London).

While Tavener's early music was influenced by Igor Stravinsky, often invoking the sound world of the *Requiem Canticles* and *A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer*, his recent music is more sparse, uses wide registral space and is usually diatonically tonal. Some commentators see a similarity with the works of Arvo Pärt, from their common religious tradition to the technical details of phrase lengths, diatonicism and colouristic percussion effects, though the similarities between their outputs are quite superficial. Olivier Messiaen has also been suggested as a strong influence on his earlier work.

Two anthems from *The Veil of the Temple*: 'Mother of God, here I stand' and 'Awed by the beauty'

John Tavener wrote *The Veil of the Temple* for performance in the Temple Church in London in 2003. The whole work, which lasts seven hours or more, has been described as a majestic all-night journey from darkness into light created. From this epic work the composer later published a set of five anthems to draw upon some of the most memorable and touching moments.

Unlike the remaining three pieces in the collection, which have instrumental accompaniment, the breathtakingly simple *Mother of God, here I stand* and the quietly ecstatic *Awed by the Beauty* are written for a *cappella* chorus. Brief, slow and pianissimo throughout, *Mother of God* creates an atmosphere of devotional stillness which one reviewer likened to the contemplative music of Messiaen. *Awed by the Beauty*, which the Choir sings later in the programme, sets a Byzantine text filled with changing metres on quietly ecstatic and radiant harmonies.

Sources: publisher's note for the vocal score of the Five Anthems, a review by Marcus Hurley in Organists' Review (1 May 2011), and the Choral Newsletter from Spectrum Music (Spring 2009 issue)

Mother of God, here I stand

Mother of God, here I stand now praying,
Before this icon of your radiant brightness,
Not praying to be saved from a battlefield,
Not giving thanks, nor seeking forgiveness
For the sins of my soul, nor for all the souls.
Numb, joyless and desolate on earth,
But for her alone, whom I wholly give you.

Translated from the Russian of Mikhail Lermontov

Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)



The composer Thomas Tallis, who worked as a church musician in 16th-century Tudor England, occupies a primary place in anthologies of English church music, and is considered among the best of England's early composers. No contemporary portrait of Tallis survives: the earliest, painted by Gerard van der Gucht, dates from 150 years after his death, and there is no certainty that it is a likeness.

Little is known about Tallis's early life, but there seems to be agreement that he was born in the early 16th century, toward the close of the reign of Henry VII. His first known appointment to a musical position was as organist of Dover Priory in 1530-31, after which his career took him to London and then to the Augustinian abbey of Holy Cross at Waltham, where he remained until the abbey was dissolved in 1540.

After a posting at Canterbury Cathedral Tallis was sent to Court as Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1543, where he composed and performed for Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I; he remained in Elizabeth's service until his death in 1585. Throughout his time with those four monarchs as organist and composer, Tallis avoided the religious controversies that raged around him, though, like William Byrd, he stayed an "unreformed Roman Catholic". Among other important composers of the time, including Christopher Tye and Robert White, Tallis stood out. Ernest Walker observes, "He had more versatility of style than either, and his general handling of his material was more consistently easy and certain."

Tallis married around 1552; his wife, Joan, outlived him by four years. They apparently had no children. Late in his life he lived in Greenwich, possibly close to the royal palace: a local tradition holds that he lived in Stockwell Street.

Queen Mary granted Tallis a lease on a manor in Kent that provided a comfortable annual income. As we recalled in the note on William Byrd earlier in this programme, in 1575 Tallis and Byrd were together granted by Queen Elizabeth a patent for the printing of music and ruled music paper for

twenty-one years, one of a number of patents issued by the Crown for the printing of books on various subjects. They used this to produce, jointly, the *Cantiones quæ ab argumento sacræ vocantur*, consisting of thirty-four Latin motets dedicated to the Queen herself and accompanied by elaborate prefatory matter including poems in Latin elegiacs by the schoolmaster Richard Mulcaster and the young courtier Ferdinand Heybourne (or Richardson).

Like Byrd, Tallis composed during the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism, and his music often reflects this turmoil. His earliest surviving works, *Salve intemerata virgo*, *Ave rosa sine spinis* and *Ave Dei patris filia*, are devotional antiphons to the Virgin Mary, which were used outside the liturgy and were cultivated in England until the fall of Cardinal Wolsey. However, after Henry VIII's break with Roman Catholicism in 1534 texts became largely confined to the liturgy, and compositional style became less florid. Tallis's Mass for four voices is marked with tendencies toward a syllabic and chordal style and a diminished use of melisma. Tallis provides a rhythmic variety and differentiation of moods depending on the meaning of his texts.

Tallis was one of the first church musicians to write anthems set to English words during the short reign of Edward VI (1547–53), although Latin continued to be used. The Catholic Mary Tudor set about undoing the religious reforms of the preceding decades; the Roman Rite was restored and compositional style reverted to the elaborate writing prevalent early in the century. Two of Tallis's major works, *Gaude gloriosa Dei Mater* and the Christmas Mass *Puer natus est nobis*, are believed to be from this period. Only *Puer natus est nobis* can be accurately dated to 1554.

Elizabeth succeeded her half-sister Mary in 1558, and the Act of Settlement in the following year abolished the Roman liturgy and firmly established the Book of Common Prayer. Composers at court resumed writing English anthems, although the practice of setting Latin texts continued, growing more peripheral over time. The mood of the country at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign leant toward the puritan, which discouraged liturgical polyphony. Tallis wrote nine psalm chant tunes for four voices for Archbishop Parker's Psalter, published in 1567. One of the nine tunes, the 'Third Mode Melody', inspired the composition of the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1910. Tallis's better-known works from the Elizabethan years include his settings from the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* for the Holy Week services and the 40-part motet *Spem in alium* (written for eight five-voice choirs). Tallis is mostly remembered for his settings of office hymns and for *Spem in alium*. Partly because fewer of his works from previous periods have survived we often overlook his compositions for other monarchs, and several of Tallis's anthems written in Edward's reign, such as his *If ye love me*, ought to be considered on the same level as his Elizabethan works. In contrast, eleven of eighteen Latin-texted pieces by Tallis from Elizabeth's reign were published

Thomas Tallis died peacefully in his house in Greenwich in November 1585, and was buried in the chancel of St Alfege's Church in Greenwich. However, as the chancel was torn down in 1720, none of the memorials there remain. Byrd wrote the musical elegy *Ye Sacred Muses* on Tallis's death.

O Nata Lux

As a group, Tallis's Elizabethan Latin motets are based on a mixture of liturgical and non-liturgical texts. His setting of *O nata lux de lumine* uses the first two verses of the hymn for Lauds of the Transfiguration in the Sarum Breviary. Tallis's liturgical hymns all begin in triple time and he honours this tradition here. Despite its near-continuous homophony the work is a gem: phrase-lengths are cleverly varied, modulation is swift and well-planned, and the occasional inner-part motion is motivically cogent. Tallis indicates a repeat of the last line of music, a feature reminiscent of his English anthems set in ABB form.

O nata lux de lumine,
Jesu redemptor sæculi,
Dignare clemens supplicum
Laudes precesque sumere.

*O Light of light, by love inclined,
Jesu, Redeemer of mankind,
With loving-kindness deign to hear
From suppliant voices praise and prayer.*

Qui carne quondam contegi
Dignatus es pro perditis,
Nos membra confer effici
Tui beati corporis.

*Thou who to raise our souls from hell
Didst deign in fleshly form to dwell,
Vouchsafe us, when our race is run,
In thy fair Body to be one.*

English translation by Laurence Housman

William Byrd

'Nunc Dimittis' from The Great Service

NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared: before the face of all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be the glory of thy people Israel.
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.

From The Book of Common Prayer (1662)

John Tavener

Awed by the beauty

Awed by the beauty of thy virginity,
and the exceeding radiance of thy purity,
Gabriel called out to thee,
O Mary full of grace. Alleluia.

Byzantine text, translated by Mother Thekla

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)



Johann Pachelbel was a German Baroque composer, organist and teacher, who brought the south German organ tradition to its peak. Today, he is best known for the *Canon in D*. Other well-known works include the *Chaconne in F minor*, the *Toccatto in E minor* for organ, and the *Hexachordum Apollinis*, a set of keyboard variations.

Johann Pachelbel was born in 1653 in Nuremberg into a middle-class family, son of Johann (Hans) Pachelbel, and his second wife Anna (Anne) Maria Mair. He was baptized on September 1.

Pachelbel received his primary education in St. Lorenz Hauptschule and the *Auditorio Aegediano* in Nuremberg, then on 29 June 1669 became a student at the University of Altdorf, where he was also appointed organist of St. Lorenz church. However, financial difficulties forced Pachelbel to leave the university after less than a year, and he became a scholarship student, in 1670, at the *Gymnasium Poeticum* at Regensburg.

By 1673 Pachelbel was living in Vienna, where he became a deputy organist at Saint Stephen's Cathedral. He spent five years there, absorbing the music of Catholic composers from southern Germany and Italy.

In 1677, Pachelbel moved to Eisenach, where he found employment as court organist in the employ of Johann Georg I, Duke of Saxe-Eisenach. He met members of the Bach family in Eisenach. However, he spent only one year there. In 1678, Bernhard II, Duke of Saxe-Jena, Johann Georg's brother, died and during the period of mourning Pachelbel was left unemployed. The testimonial from Eberlin, the Kapellmeister, described Pachelbel as a 'perfect and rare virtuoso'. With this document, Pachelbel left Eisenach on May 18, 1678.

In June 1678, Pachelbel was employed as an organist in Erfurt. The Bach family was very well known in Erfurt, so Pachelbel's friendship with them continued here. Pachelbel became godfather to Johann Ambrosius Bach's daughter, Johanna Juditha, taught Johann Christoph Bach (1671–1721), Johann Sebastian's eldest brother, and lived in Johann Christian Bach's (1640–1682) house. He remained in Erfurt for 12 years and established his reputation as one of the leading German organ composers of the time during his stay.

Although Pachelbel was an outstandingly successful organist, composer, and teacher at Erfurt, he asked permission to leave, apparently seeking a better appointment, and was formally released on August 15, 1690, bearing a testimonial praising his diligence and fidelity.

After brief employment in Stuttgart Pachelbel's next job was in Gotha as the town organist, a post he occupied from November 1692. However, in April 1695 the organist of St. Sebaldus Church in Nuremberg, Georg Caspar Wecker, died, and the city authorities were so anxious to appoint Pachelbel to the position (he was by then a famous native son) that they officially invited him to assume it. He accepted, and arrived in Nuremberg in summer 1695. Pachelbel lived the rest of his life in Nuremberg and died there at the age of 52 on 3 March 1706.

Pachelbel's Chaconnes

Pachelbel's apparent affinity for variation form is evident from his organ works that explore the genre: chaconnes, chorale variations and several sets of arias with variations. The six chaconnes, together with Buxtehude's *ostinato* organ works, represent a shift from the older chaconne style: they completely abandon the dance idiom, introduce contrapuntal density, employ miscellaneous chorale improvisation techniques, and, most importantly, give the bass line much thematic significance for the development of the piece. Pachelbel's chaconnes are distinctly south German in style; the duple meter C major chaconne (possibly at early work) is reminiscent of Kerll's D minor passacaglia. The remaining five works are all in triple metre and display a wide variety of moods and techniques, concentrating on melodic content (as opposed to the emphasis on harmonic complexity and virtuosity in Buxtehude's chaconnes). The *ostinato* bass is not necessarily repeated unaltered throughout the piece and is sometimes subjected to minor alterations and ornamentation. The D major, D minor and F minor chaconnes are among Pachelbel's most well-known organ pieces.

Ciacona (Chaconne) in D James Longford, *organ*

William Byrd

Fantasia, from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book James Longford, *organ*

A note on the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book

The *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* is a primary source of keyboard music from the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods in England, i.e., the late Renaissance and very early Baroque. It takes its name from Viscount Fitzwilliam, who bequeathed this manuscript collection to Cambridge University in 1816. It is now deposited in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge.

Once called *Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book*, a title that has been abandoned because it has been determined that Queen Elizabeth I never owned it, this manuscript was given no title by its copyist. It was believed to be the manuscript collection of Francis Tregian the Younger, an amateur keyboard player of the very early 17th century who may have copied the entire collection while imprisoned between 1609 and 1619 in connection with his Catholic sympathies, although this has been disputed. Other scholars note that even if Tregian is the compiler, it is unlikely that he was imprisoned because of his family connections. Until *Parthenia* was printed in about 1612, there was no keyboard music published as such in England at this time, and like the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, most collections of keyboard music were compiled by performers: other examples include *Will Forster's Virginal Book*, *Clement Matchett's Virginal Book*, and *[William] Tisdale's Virginal Book*.

It includes music dating from approximately 1562 to 1612 by John Bull, William Byrd, Orlando Gibbons, Giles Farnaby, Martin Peerson, Peter Philips and Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, as well as many others. As with many keyboard manuscripts of the time, the pieces were not written for a specific instrument, and most sound happily on all contemporary keyboard instruments, including virginals, harpsichord, clavichord and chamber organ. Many of the pieces in the book are short, and many of them are character pieces with droll and memorable titles, including 'Put Up Thy Dagger, Jemy', 'The New Sa-Hoo', and 'Quodlings Delight' by Giles Farnaby; 'Nobody's Gigge', by Richard Farnaby; 'Pakington's Pownde' and 'The Irishe Dumpe' (anonymous); 'The Ghost' and 'The Earle of Oxford's Marche' by William Byrd; 'Worster Braules' by Thomas Tomkins; and the famous 'Lachrymæ Pavan' by John Dowland, as arranged by Giles Farnaby and by William Byrd.

In 1899, Breitkopf & Härtel published an edition in two volumes (the Maitland Squire edition) with only a basic critical commentary, which has been reprinted by Dover Publications and is available inexpensively. Note that this contains many errors, despite the revisions made in the second (Dover) edition. A microfilm facsimile of the manuscript is included in *The music collections of the Cambridge libraries* (Woodbridge, Conn.: Research Publications, 1991). *Editions Minkoff* has been preparing a facsimile of the manuscript for some years. Musica Britannica is preparing a volume dedicated to the 'Keyboard Music from Fitzwilliam Manuscripts'.

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)



Orlando Gibbons was an English composer, virginalist and organist of the late Tudor and early Jacobean periods. He was a leading composer in the England of his day. He was born in Cambridge and christened at Oxford the same year – thus appearing in Oxford church records.

Between 1596 and 1598 he sang in the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, where his brother Edward Gibbons (1568-1650), eldest of the four sons of William Gibbons, was master of the choristers. Orlando entered the university in 1598 and achieved the degree of Bachelor of Music in 1606. James I appointed him a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, where he served as an organist from at least 1615 until his death. In 1623 he became senior organist at the Chapel Royal, with Thomas Tomkins as junior organist. He also held positions as keyboard player in the privy chamber of the court of Prince Charles (later King Charles I), and organist at Westminster Abbey. He died at the age of 41 in Canterbury of apoplexy, and a monument to him was built in Canterbury Cathedral.

His wife Elizabeth died a little over a year later, in her mid-30s, leaving Orlando's eldest brother Edward to care for the children left orphans by this event. Of these children only the eldest son, Christopher Gibbons, went on to become a musician.

One of the most versatile English composers of his time, Gibbons wrote a quantity of keyboard works, around thirty fantasias for viols, a number of madrigals (the best-known being 'The Silver Swan'), and many popular verse anthems. His choral music is distinguished by his complete mastery of counterpoint, combined with his wonderful gift for melody. Perhaps his most well known verse anthem is *This is the record of John*, which sets an Advent text for solo countertenor or tenor, alternating with full chorus. The soloist is required to demonstrate considerable technical facility at points, and the work at once expresses the rhetorical force of the text, whilst never being demonstrative or bombastic. He also produced two major settings of Evensong, the Short Service and the Second Service. The former includes a beautifully expressive 'Nunc dimittis', while the latter is an extended composition, combining verse and full sections. Gibbons's full anthems include the expressive *O Lord, in thy wrath*, and the Ascension Day anthem *O clap your hands together* for eight voices, which the Choir is singing tonight. He contributed six pieces to the first printed collection of keyboard music in England, *Parthenia* (to which he was by far the youngest of the three contributors), published in about 1611.

O clap your hands

Gibbons became organist of Westminster Abbey in 1623. His *O clap your hands* dates from 1622 and formed the composer's DMus submission to Oxford University: written in eight parts, it is a dramatic and majestic setting of Psalm 47 and is one of the most impressive anthems of a composer noted for his Anglican church compositions.

From a programme note by Gilly French

O clap your hands together, all ye people; O sing unto God with the voice of melody.
For the Lord is high, and to be feared; he is the great King of all the earth.
He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.
He shall choose out an heritage for us, even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved.
God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.
O sing praises, sing praises unto our God: O sing praises unto the Lord our King.
For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with the understanding.
God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon his holy seat.
For God, which is highly exalted, doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield.
Glory be to the Father ...

from Psalm 47 (slightly adapted from the Coverdale translation)

Paul Spicer



Paul Spicer, musical director of the Whitehall Choir, began his musical training as a chorister at New College, Oxford. He studied with Herbert Howells and Richard Popplewell (organ) at the Royal College of Music in London, winning the top organ award (the Walford Davies Prize) in his final year. Paul is best known as a choral conductor, partly through the many CDs he made with the Finzi Singers for Chandos Records. He conducted Bach Choirs in Chester and Leicester before moving to conduct the Bach Choir in Birmingham in 1992. He taught at the Royal College of Music between 1995 and 2008, and now teaches choral conducting at the Birmingham Conservatoire, where he also directs both chamber choirs, and at Oxford University. Until July 2001 Paul Spicer was Artistic Director of the Lichfield International Arts Festival and the Abbotsholme Arts Society. He was Senior Producer for BBC Radio 3 in the Midlands until 1990, and today is in considerable demand as a composer and as a recording producer.

The first complete recording of Paul Spicer's large-scale *Easter Oratorio* was released in 2005 to critical acclaim, the work being recognised by Gramophone magazine as "the best of its kind to have appeared ... since Howells's *Hymnus Paradisi*". *The Deciduous Cross*, for choir and winds, based on poems by RS Thomas and premiered in 2003, was commissioned for Paul's tenth anniversary as conductor of the Birmingham Bach Choir, and was recorded by the Whitehall Choir. Robert Sharpe, when Director of Music at Truro Cathedral, recorded his complete works for organ. A recording of his shorter choral works was made by the choir of Selwyn College, Cambridge, in 2008.

Paul Spicer's biography of his composition teacher, Herbert Howells, was published in August 1998 and has been reprinted twice, and he has recently completed a full-scale biography and study of works of the composer Sir George Dyson. He has written articles for many periodicals and is a contributor to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Paul has recently completed a large-scale choral and orchestral work, an *Advent Oratorio*, to another libretto by the New Testament scholar Dr. Tom Wright, Bishop of Durham, who wrote the text for the *Easter Oratorio*. The first performance was in Lichfield Cathedral on 5 December 2009.

Paul Spicer is in great demand for his choral workshops, which take him all over the world. He runs an annual choral course/arts festival called the English Choral Experience at Abbey Dore, in Herefordshire, each July (www.englishchoralexperience.co.uk). He is a broadcaster, lecturer and popular speaker. Paul Spicer is a member of the Council of Lichfield Cathedral, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Honorary Research Fellow of Birmingham University, an Honorary Fellow of Birmingham Conservatoire, a Trustee of the Finzi Trust, Chairman of the Finzi Friends, Vice-President of the Herbert Howells Society, and Advisor to the Sir George Dyson Trust.

James Longford



James Longford studied piano and organ with John Blakely, Margaret Phillips and the late Nicholas Danby at the Royal College of Music, and with Paul Stubbings as organ scholar of St Martin-in-the-Fields. During his studies he was awarded the Tagore Gold Medal, an RCM Junior Fellowship and Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists.

As a collaborative pianist, his work with a variety of singers, instrumentalists and ensembles has taken James to many major UK venues, including the Barbican Hall, Wigmore Hall, Royal Opera, Royal Festival Hall, Purcell Room, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Westminster Abbey, St David's Hall Cardiff, Snape Maltings and the London Palladium; he has also performed abroad throughout Europe, the Middle East, the US and the Baltic States, and has broadcast on BBC Radio, most notably live from Wigmore Hall on Radio 3 with Ann Murray.

He enjoys a wide-ranging career as a freelance pianist and répétiteur, recently as music staff on English National Opera's acclaimed production of Handel's *Radamisto*, conducted by Laurence Cummings.

James is also the principal pianist for the Royal Opera's newly-established Youth Opera Company, and for Whitehall Choir, and has been the principal keyboard player of the groundbreaking orchestra Southbank Sinfonia since their inception almost ten years ago.

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The cover photograph for this programme is by Nan Denton.

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The Choir would like to thank Philip Pratley, the Concert Manager, and all tonight's volunteer helpers.



THE WHITEHALL CHOIR
PRESIDENT: Martin Donnelly CMG

Conductor: Paul Spicer **Accompanist:** James Longford

The Whitehall Choir achieves high-quality singing across a wide range of repertoire, and we are looking to recruit in all voices. Amongst our current members we count civil servants, lawyers, teachers, consultants, engineers and many others, with an age range of fifty years between youngest and oldest members. The choir meets every Tuesday evening near St James's Park tube station for a two-and-a-half hour rehearsal. We are conducted by Paul Spicer – a conductor, composer and academic of international repute – and perform four concerts a year in a range of venues across London. Besides Whitehall's stunning Banqueting House, our concert locations have included Holy Trinity Sloane Square, St John's, Smith Square, and tonight's setting, St Alban's Holborn, and our programmes, which are rich and varied, cater for a broad spectrum of musical tastes. Some details of forthcoming outings can be found in this programme.

We are proud to deliver high-quality concerts in such great venues, and the commitment is such that the choir sits well with the busy day-jobs that many of our members have, and provides a clear and friendly space in the middle of the week. We would love to hear from any singers who are interested in joining us. Short, informal auditions take place after a few weeks of singing with us on a trial basis.

For more information, please contact the Choir's Secretary, Liz Walton, at liz@thedrives.org.uk, or visit the Choir's website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk. (Charity no. 280478.)

<i>Sopranos</i>	<i>Altos</i>	<i>Tenors</i>	<i>Basses</i>
Rebecca Almond	Helen Audaer	James Chapman	James Gourlay
Ella Baron	Frances Bowen	Patrick Haighton	Laurence Grace
Joanna Bradley	Rose Chandler	Graham Hand	Richard Grafen
Gill Carruthers	Jacqueline Cheng	Ken Holmes	Mark Graver
Hilary Davies	Miranda Douce	Benjamin Nicholls	Martin Humphreys
Laura Dittmann	Samantha Foley	Philip Pratley	Daniel Lambauer
Ruth Eastman	Polly Fortune	Alastair Tolley	Simon Lawson
Jacky Erwtman	Alice Hill	Daniel Tomkins	William Longland
Maya Freedman	Paula Nobes		Clarence Moore
Eleanor Gill	Jean Orr		Brendan O'Keefe
Kate Goulden	Penny Prior		Malcolm Todd
Fiona Graph	Jean Robinson		Ian Williamson
Kate Hand	Susan Rudy		
Katherine Herzberg	Liz Walton		
Joanna Mullin	Lis Warren		
Rachel Nixon	Alison Williams		
Lucilla Poston			
Jean Quinn			
Lesley Raymond			
Janet Winstanley			

WHITEHALL CHOIR COMMITTEE 2011-12

JONATHAN WILLIAMS, Chairman; LIZ WALTON, Hon. Secretary;
PATRICK HAIGHTON, Hon. Treasurer;
RUTH EASTMAN, MARTIN HUMPHREYS and RACHEL NIXON, Publicity Managers;
KATHERINE HERZBERG and PENNY PRIOR, Business Managers;
ROSE CHANDLER and LAURENCE GRACE, Librarians;
KATE GOULDEN, Soprano rep.; ALISON WILLIAMS, Alto rep.; BEN NICHOLLS, Tenor rep.;
MALCOLM TODD, Bass rep.; DAVID RAWLINS, BIS Liaison; RICHARD GRAFEN, Webmaster

PATRONS AND FRIENDS OF WHITEHALL CHOIR

Friends and Patrons of the Choir are a vital part of our future. They help fund not only our regular concerts but also additional activities such as workshops, sing-through days, and tours. For an up-front payment at the start of the season, Friends receive one top-price ticket for all Whitehall Choir-promoted concerts, plus 10% discount on any further tickets they require. Also included is advance notification of all concerts/events and a free programme – perfect for regular concert attenders, who will save overall on the whole season. For further details about how to become a Patron or Friend, please see the ‘Support Us’ page of the website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.

Patrons and Friends: Mr John Purkiss; Captain B. V. Woodford CBE, RN; and others who wish to remain anonymous

Friends: Miss Elsie Broadbent; Mrs E. Gotto; Mrs Gillian Holmes; Ms Frances Morris-Jones; Mr Paul Roach; Ms Christine Robson; Mr John Warren; and others who wish to remain anonymous

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS
Tuesday, 13 December 2011
Christmas music, with carols and readings
St Stephen’s, Rochester Row, London SW1

Friday, 9 March 2012
Mozart Requiem
St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, WC2

Friday, 23 March 2012
Handel Israel in Egypt
St John’s, Smith Square, London SW1

Tuesday 26 June 2012
Rossini Petite Messe solennelle
St Peter’s, Eaton Square, London SW1



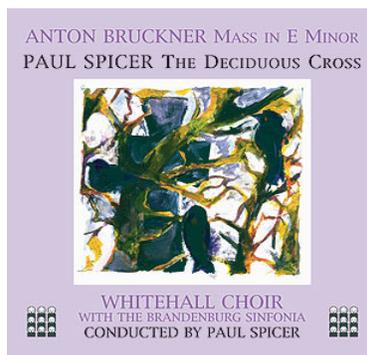
To stay up to date with the Choir’s latest news, why not follow us on Facebook? Just search for ‘Whitehall Choir’ and click ‘Become a Fan’.

If you’re ordering anything from Amazon.co.uk, why not do so via the Choir’s website www.whitehallchoir.org.uk by clicking on the Amazon link? For every sale, a contribution goes to Choir funds.

WANT TO JOIN OUR DATABASE?

If you want to be kept informed of Whitehall Choir performances and initiatives by e-mail please sign up for e-alerts via our website, www.whitehallchoir.org.uk

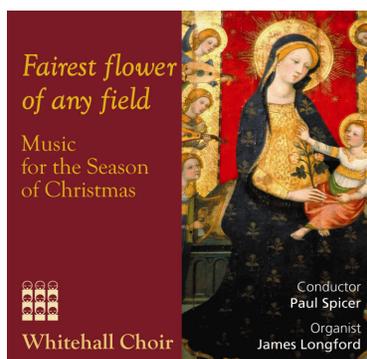
During 2007 the Whitehall Choir produced a CD featuring the first recorded performance of Paul Spicer's *The Deciduous Cross*. On it the Choir also recorded Bruckner's Mass in E minor.



"...instrumental writing which is assured, inventive and colourful...a performance which is committed and compelling..." Organists' Review, October 2007

"...Definitely recommended!" Bruckner Journal, November 2007

In 2009 the Choir recorded its second CD, a selection of music for the season of Christmas, here at St Alban's Church. The CD, 'Fairest flower of any field', is recommended as a best buy in *Gramophone's* 2009 Christmas edition, while the December 2009 edition of *Classical Music* magazine highlights *"...[the Choir's] fine balance and floating lines ensuring this is a satisfying selection"*.



Both CDs are on sale at this evening's concert, or they may be purchased on eBay or via the Choir's website: www.whitehallchoir.org.uk.