

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR
Owen Rees, director

BEL CANTO
Richard Egarr, director

P R O G R A M M E

Jesus College Chapel
Sunday 2 June 1991 8.30 pm

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Next season will begin in 1992.

If you would like to receive details of the concerts,
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Tonight's concert takes place
by kind permission of
the Master, Chaplain
and Fellows of Jesus College.

P R O G R A M M E

THOMAS TALLIS (c1505-1585)

1 Missa *Salve intemerata virgo*

Gloria
Credo
Sanctus
Agnus Dei

2 Spem in alium

* * * * *

INTERVAL
OF 10 MINUTES

* * * * *

3 Videte miraculum

4 Miserere nostri

5 Gaude gloriosa Dei mater

PROGRAMME NOTES

Tallis's Mass *Salve intemerata virgo* is a parody of his own votive antiphon of that title. Both the antiphon and the motet date from the earlier part of the composer's career, being preserved in a set of partbooks belonging to Peterhouse, Cambridge, and copied towards the end of Henry VIII's reign. In common with other festal works by English composers of the period, the structure of these pieces is articulated by alternating passages for two or three voices (such as the head-motive which opens each section of the Mass) and others for the full choir. Further contrast is achieved by changes within each movement from the initial triple metre to duple (and, in the *Credo*, back to triple). As is common in English Masses written before the Reformation, the text of the *Credo* is substantially abbreviated. The work retains much of the grandeur and floridity which had set English music apart from its continental equivalent since the later fifteenth century.

The same characteristics are apparent in the greatest of Tallis's surviving votive antiphons (and one of the greatest of the age) - *Gaude gloriosa Dei mater*. This piece may have been written as late as the reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558), when the Queen's attempts to restore the pre-Reformation church may well have encouraged the composers of her chapel royal to undertake an equivalent musical restoration. Whatever its date, the piece is entirely English in style, the dense imitation between voices serving mainly to increase the richness of the full textures.

A substantial proportion of Tallis's surviving Latin output consists of music for the Office - hymns and responsories. *Videte miraculum* is one of his finest works in the latter category. Like all such pieces, it is constructed on the basis of the plainchant, which alternates with the polyphony and continues as an inner part during the polyphonic sections. The piece is unusual in its rhetorical potency, from the suspensions of the opening to the repeated setting of 'stans onerata'.

The text of *Spem in alium* is another responsory, although in this case the piece is non-liturgical and does not refer to chant. The most recent hypotheses concerning the origins of this remarkable forty-voice work suggest that it may have been written in an attempt to better Alessandro Striggio's *Ecce beatam lucem* (which is for the same number of parts), and that its first triumphant performance may have taken place not in a church but in the long gallery of Arundel House, the London residence of Henry Fitzalan, 12th Earl of Arundel. If this story is indeed correct, Tallis's piece probably dates from the period 1567-1569. Tallis groups the eight five-voice choirs for which the work is scored into four groups of two, between which material is passed in the antiphonal sections of the piece. Such sections alternate with the imitative expositions in which each voice enters in turn (as at the opening) and the full sections such as the two powerful statements of the word 'respice', each preceded by silence.

Programme Notes by Owen Rees

TEXTS

SPEM IN ALIUM

Spem in alium nunquam habui praeter in te, Deus Israel, qui irasceris, et propitius eris, et omnia peccata hominum in tribulatione dimittis. Domine Deus, Creator coeli et terrae, respice humilitatem nostram.

I have never put my hope in any other but in you, God of Israel, who will be angry and yet becomes again gracious, and who forgives all the sins of suffering man. Lord God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, look upon our lowliness.

VIDETE MIRACULUM

Videte miraculum matris Domini: concepit virgo virilis ignara consortii, stans onerata nobili onere Maria; et matrem se laetam cognosci, quae se nescit uxorem. Haec speciosum forma prae filiis hominum castis concepit visceribus, et benedicta in aeternum Deum nobis protulit et hominem. Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.

Behold the miracle of the mother of the Lord: a virgin has conceived though she knows not a man; Mary, who stands laden with her noble burden; knowing not that she is a wife, she rejoices to be a mother. She has conceived in her chaste womb one who is beautiful beyond the sons of men, and, blessed for ever, she has brought forth God and man for us. Glory be to the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

PORTUGUESE TOUR

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Leiria, Figueira da Foz, Almada, Esteril
and Coimbra

GAUDE GLORIOSA

Gaude gloriosa Dei mater, Virgo Maria vere honorificanda, quae a Domino in gloria super coelos exaltata adeptae es thronum.

Gaude Virgo Maria, cui angelicae turmae dulces in coelis resonant laudes; iam enim laetaris visione Regis cui omnia serviunt.

Gaude con civis in coelis sanctorum, quae Christum in utero illaesa portasti; igitur Dei Mater digne appellaris. Gaude flos florum speciosissima, virgo iuris, forma morum, fessi cura, pes labentis, mundi lux, et peccatorum refugium.

Gaude Virgo Maria, quam dignam laude celebrat ecclesia, quae Christi doctrinis illustrata te Matrem glorificat.

Gaude Virgo Maria, quae corpore et anima ad summum provecta es palacium: et, ut auxiliatrix et interventrix pro nobis miserimis peccatoribus, supplicamus.

Gaude Maria intercessorum adiutrix et damnandorum salvatrix celebranda.

Gaude sancta Virgo Maria, cuius prole omnes salvamur a perpetuis inferorum suppliciis et a potestate diabolica liberati.

Gaude Virgo Maria, Christe benedicta mater, vena misericordiae et gratiae: cui supplicamus ut nobis pie clamantibus attendas, itaque tuo in nomine mereamur adesse caelorum regnum. Amen.

Rejoice, O glorious Mother of God, Virgin Mary most worthy of honour; who, raised in glory by the Lord above the heavens, hast gained Thy throne.

Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, whose sweet praises the angelic host sings out in the heavens; for now Thou joyest in the sight of that King to whom all things give service.

Rejoice, Thou fellow Citizen with the saints on high; who barest without any hurt the Christ in Thy womb; wherefore most justly art Thou called the Mother of God. Rejoice, Flower most beautiful of all flowers; firm rod of the Law, pattern of virtues, succour of the weary, foothold to those who fall, light to the world and to sinners, refuge.

Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, whose worthy praise the church celebrates; enlightened by the teaching of Christ, she glorifies Thee as His Mother.

Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, who, body and soul, hast been borne up to the highest courts of heaven; to Thee we make our petition, Thou Strength and Advocate for us wretched sinners.

Rejoice, O Mary, Help of those who pray; Thou art the means of salvation to all the damned, most highly to be praised.

Rejoice, O holy Virgin Mary; by Thy offspring we are all saved from the everlasting punishments of hell, and have been freed from the power of the devil.

Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, Blessed Mother of Christ, channel of mercy and grace; give ear, we beseech Thee, to our dutiful cry, so that we may deserve, in Thy name, to come to the Kingdom of heaven. Amen.

BEL CANTO and CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

The two choirs singing in tonight's concert both consist mainly of ex-Cambridge choral scholars; some members are now professional singers, others have taken up other professions but remain enthusiastic amateurs.

Bel Canto (founded in 1987) performs mainly in London churches (St Martin-in-the-Fields, St John's, Smith Square, St James', Piccadilly, etc) and has specialised in thematic concerts combining music from the sixteenth century to the present day. Amongst the highlights of its activities has been a period of work with John Tavener at Dartington after the choir performed the London debut of his *Ikou of Light* in 1988.

Richard Egarr *director*

Rachel Crowther *manager*

Gary Ansdell, Tess Barber, Rachel Crowther, Andrew Gant, Paul Gordon, Ben Gumpert, Rosemary Hattrell, Bill Lee, Nicky Lee-Browne, Patrick Lee-Browne, Richard Plemming, Barbara Shepherd, Benjamin Thompson, Nancy-Jane Thompson, Suzanna Watson, Kathy Willis

The Cambridge Taverner Choir (founded in 1986) has performed regularly in Jesus College Chapel, and specialises in Renaissance polyphony, often performing liturgical reconstructions. The choir has appeared in the Cambridge Festival, and this summer will sing in a number of festivals in Portugal, culminating in a recording for BBC Radio 3 to be broadcast on Sunday 15 September.

Owen Rees *director*

Gary Snapper *secretary*

Diana Baumann *administrator*

Diana Baumann, Paul Baumann, Timothy Cronin, Josie Dixon, James Durran, Helen Garrison, James Gilchrist, Simon Godsill, James Huw Jeffries, Philip Mills, Andrew Neck, Caroline Preston Bell, Rupert Preston Bell, Frank Salmon, Tom Salmon, Margaret Simper, Gary Snapper, Rachel Sutton, Sally Terris, David Thomson, Michael Thomson

RICHARD EGARR

Richard Egarr was educated at Chetham's School, Manchester, Clare College, Cambridge, and the Guildhall School of Music, London. Whilst at Cambridge, he regularly performed as conductor and organist, but it is as a harpsichordist that he has since made his name, in "The Cambridge Musick" and "London Baroque", and with numerous other baroque groups. He has also performed as soloist and accompanist throughout Europe.

OWEN REES

Owen Rees was educated at Chetham's School, Manchester, and St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he was organ scholar. He is now Director of Studies in Music at St Peter's College, Oxford, and is currently researching the music of sixteenth century Portugal, particularly the music of Santa Cruz, Coimbra, which he has recently transcribed, and which the Cambridge Taverner Choir will sing for the first time in modern times in Portugal this year.

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