

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees *director*

P R O G R A M M E

T H E S O N G O F S O N G S

Sunday 31 May 1992, 8.15 pm

Jesus College Chapel

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR
Owen Rees *director*

sopranos
Diana Baumann
Josie Dixon
Helen Garrison
Bernadette Nelson
Margaret Simper
Rachel Sutton
Sally Terris
Tanya Wicks

altos
Toby Gee
Simon Godsell
Martin Neill
Barbara Shepherd

tenors
James Gilchrist
Stephen Lawrence
Philip Mills
Tom Salmon

basses
James Durran
Frank Salmon
Gary Snapper
Paul Watson

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COMPACT DISC OF PORTUGUESE RENAISSANCE MUSIC

In October the Cambridge Taverner Choir will be making a recording of Portuguese Renaissance polyphony for release later in the 1992/93 season. If you would like to receive information about the recording, including an order form for obtaining copies by post, please complete the form on the inside back cover of tonight's programme. Details will be despatched during the course of next season.

P R O G R A M M E

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|------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Vidi speciosam | Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611) |
| 2 | Nigra sum | Jean Lhéritier (c.1480-after 1552) |
| 3 | Missa Surge propera
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Kyrie, Sanctus, Agnus Dei | Victoria |
| 4 | Tota pulchra es Maria | Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599) |
| 5 | Nigra sum | Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(1525/1526-1594) |
| INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES | | |
| 6 | Surge propera amica mea | Guerrero |
| 7 | Sicut lilium inter spinas | Sebastian de
Vivanco (c.1550-1622) |
| 8 | Nigra sum | Victoria |
| 9 | Veni, dilecte mi | Vivanco |

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P R O G R A M M E N O T E S

The collection of erotic Hebrew love poems known as the Song of Songs or the Song of Solomon, with their vivid descriptions of "the beloved" and their rich metaphors of the fruits of the earth, is perhaps the most extraordinary element of the Jewish Old Testament. Christian theology was able to accept these poems by imposing on them an allegorical interpretation according to which the two lovers represented Christ and His bride the Church: thus throughout the motet *Surge propera amica mea* by Francisco Guerrero the second soprano repeats the phrase "Veni sponsa Christi" ("Come, bride of Christ") as an ostinato. Besides this, the poetic language of the Song of Songs became thoroughly

interwoven with the medieval devotion to Mary, to produce texts such as *Tota pulchra es Maria* (heard tonight in a setting by Guerrero) and *Vidi speciosam* (a text sung at Matins on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, and set by Victoria for six voices). Similarly, the Song of Songs settings by the younger Spaniard, Sebastian de Vivanco, were designated "De Beatae Mariae" when published in 1610. In other contexts, however, and particularly in the form of translations and commentaries by the great Spanish writers of the sixteenth century (such as Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz), these poems could still attract controversy and the wrath of the church authorities.

Renaissance composers responded to the texts of the Song of Songs by producing some of their most striking music. Palestrina's *Nigra sum* (one of a collection of 29 Song of Songs motets by the composer first published in 1584) uses intense chromatic colouring in a fashion hardly characteristic of the composer. A comparable intensity pervades the setting of *Nigra sum* by Jean Lhéritier (a composer of French origin who worked in Rome and elsewhere in Italy), which Palestrina chose as the basis for one of his parody Masses. Palestrina's own Song of Songs motet *Surge propera* was the model for Victoria's *Missa Surge propera* of which we perform three sections tonight. Indeed, Victoria showed a predilection for motets on these texts when selecting works upon which to construct parody Masses.

The Song of Songs motets by Vivanco - a near-contemporary of Victoria, and a native of the same town, Avila - once again stand apart from his usual style. These remarkable two-choir works express the passion of their texts through dissonance (for the "thorns" in *Sicut lilium*), shifting harmonies, and bursts of tremendous rhythmic vitality (as at the first mention of the beloved - "amica mea" - in *Sicut lilium*). Owen Rees

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Vidi speciosam sicut columbam, ascendentem desuper rivos aquarum, cuius inaequabilis odor erat nimis in vestimentis eius; et sicut dies verni circumdabant eam flores rosarum et lilia convallium. Quae est ista, quae ascendit per desertum sicut

virgula fumi ex aromatibus myrrhae et thuris?

(I saw her, fair as a dove, rising above the rivers of waters, whose priceless savour hung heavy in her garments; and like the days of spring the flowers of roses and the lilies of the valley were about her. Who is she, who rises through the desert like a wand smoking with the aroma of myrrh and incense?)

Lhéritier/Victoria: *Nigra sum sed formosa, filiae Jerusalem: ideo dilexit me rex, et introduxit me in cubiculum suum, et dixit mihi: surge, amica mea, et veni: iam hiems transit, imber abiit et recessit. Flores apparuerunt in terra nostra; tempus putationis advenit.*

(I am black but comely, daughters of Jerusalem: therefore has the king loved me, and has brought me into his chamber, and has said to me: arise, my love, and come: the winter is now passed, the rain is over and gone. Flowers appear in our land: the time of pruning has come.)

Palestrina: *Nigra sum sed formosa, filiae Jerusalem, Sicut tabernacula Cedar, sicut pelles Salomonis. Nolite me considerare quod fusca sim, quia decoloravit me sol. Filii matris meae pugnauerunt contra me; Posuerunt me custodem in vineis.*

(I am black but comely, daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not askance that I am dark, for the sun hath tanned me. My mother's children have fought against me; they have made me keeper in the vineyards.)

Tota pulchra es Maria, et macula non est in te. Veni de Libano, sponsa mea, veni de Libano, veni, coronaberis. Vulnerasti cor meum, soror mea, sponsa; vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculo tuorum et in uno crine colli tui.

(Thou art all fair, Mary, and there is no spot in thee. Come from Lebanon, my spouse, come from Lebanon, come, thou wilt be crowned. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes and one hair of thy neck.)

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

1992/93 Season

Jesus College Chapel, 8.15 pm

Sunday 6 December

A Ceremony of Carols

Renaissance and modern settings of Old English Carols including Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*

Sunday 7 February

Cantiones Sacrae

Programme to include motets by Byrd and Parsons

Sunday 4 April

Polyphony from the New World

A reconstruction of a mass in Puebla Cathedral, Mexico, centring round Padilla's *Missa Ego Flos Campi*

Sunday 6 June

Monteverdi Vespers

Please note that these concerts are subject to confirmation.

The Choir's Yearcard, which contains fuller details of the forthcoming season's events, will be published in the autumn. If you are not already on our mailing list and would like to receive our publicity material, please complete the form below and hand it in at the desk at the entrance.

REQUEST FOR CONCERT PUBLICITY/CD RELEASE INFORMATION

Name: _____ Address: _____

Postcode: _____

I should like to receive the Cambridge Taverner Choir's concert publicity material.

I should like to receive information regarding the CTC's recording of Portuguese Renaissance polyphony.

Please tick as appropriate.

We should like to thank the Master, Fellows

and Chaplain of Jesus College for their

kind permission to sing in Chapel.

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Surge propeera amica mea, columba mea, formosa mea, et veni. Tam enim hiems transit; imber abijt et recessit. Flores apparuerunt in terra; tempus putationis advenit. Vox turturis audita est in terra nostra; Ficus protulit grossos suos; Vineae florentes dederunt odorem suum. Surge, amica mea, speciosa mea, et veni. [Soprano II:] Veni sponsa Christi.
(Rise up, hasten, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come. For now the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the time of pruning has come. The voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; the fig tree puts forth her green figs; the flowering vines give forth their fragrance. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come. [Soprano II:] Come, bride of Christ.)

Sicut liliun inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias. Sicut malus inter ligna silvarum, sic dilectus meus inter filios. Sub umbra illius quam desideraveram sedi: et fructus eius dulcis gutturi meo.
(As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.)

Veni, dilecte mi, egrediamur in agro, commoremur in villis. Mane surgamus ad vineas; videamus si floruit vinea, si flores fructus parturiunt, si florerunt mala punica; ibi dabo tibi ubera mea. Mandragorae dederunt odorem suam, in portis nostris omnia poma, nova et vetera, dilecte me, servavi tibi.
(Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourishes, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates put forth; there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give their fragrance, and at our gates are all manner of fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.)