

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Director: Owen Rees

MUSIC OF THE SPANISH GOLDEN AGE



Works by Guerrero, Morales, Victoria

ST BEES PRIORY

(near Whitehaven, Cumbria)

Wednesday 5 August 1992, 7.30p.m.

PROGRAMME

Music of the Spanish Golden Age

Programme

Nigra sum, sed formosa	Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)
Ave vera caro Christi Sancta Maria, istud agas	Francisco de Peñalosa (c.1470-1528) Peñalosa
Tiento de 1 ^o tono (Owen Rees - organ)	Antonio de Cabezón (1510-1566)
O crux ave spes unica Agnus Dei I and II from Missa L'homme armé Agnus Dei III, from Missa L'homme armé	Cristóbal de Morales (c.1500-1553) Morales Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599)

INTERVAL OF 5 MINUTES

Tota pulchra es Maria Sancta Maria, succurre miseris Alma redemptoris mater Maria Magdalene	Guerrero Guerrero Guerrero Guerrero
Tiento y discurso de segundo tono (Owen Rees - organ)	Francisco Correa de Arauxo (c.1576- 1654)
Ave Regina cælorum Surge propera amica mea Regina cæli lætare	Guerrero Guerrero Guerrero

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CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees director



MUSIC OF THE SPANISH GOLDEN AGE: CONCERT IN ST BEES PRIORY WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 1992, 7.30 p.m.

The Cambridge Taverner Choir is a semi-professional ensemble of eighteen young singers specialising in the performance of renaissance polyphony. The choir is dedicated to the uncovering of lesser-known masterworks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, concentrating particularly on the music of Spain, Portugal, and England: many of the works performed have been newly discovered and transcribed by the group's director, Owen Rees. In 1991 the choir undertook a highly successful tour of Portugal, and broadcast on Radio 3 (this broadcast being featured on Radio 4's *Pick of the Week* and *Pick of the Year*).

The forthcoming concert by the Cambridge Taverner Choir in the beautiful setting of **St Bees Priory** (near Whitehaven on the Cumbrian coast) features music from the 'Golden Age' of Spanish music, an appropriate theme in 1992 - the fifth centenary of Columbus's voyage to the New World, which marked the beginning of the economically and culturally richest period in Spain's history. We perform works by the four greatest Spanish composers of sacred polyphony - Peñalosa, Morales, Guerrero, and Victoria - as well as by the two finest composers for organ - Cabezón and Arauxo. The concert will include the first performances in modern times of part of Guerrero's newly discovered Mass *L'homme armé*.

Owen Rees was educated at Leeds Grammar School and at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he held an organ scholarship. His doctoral research involved work on Portuguese music of the renaissance period. In addition to the Cambridge Taverner Choir, he conducts the Oxford-based ensemble *A Capella Portuguesa*. He is currently a Lecturer in Music at the University of Surrey.

Admission to the concert will be by programme available at the door (£3; concessions £2). To reserve a ticket, please ring 0946 820392 (evenings). For further details about the Cambridge Taverner Choir please contact Diana Baumann (choir administrator) on 0703 650641, or Owen Rees (director) on 0483 300800 ext.3051.

Columbus' voyage to the New World - of which 1992 is the fifth centenary - was a crucial event in the forging of Spain's overseas empire, an empire which brought immense wealth to the mother-country. This new prosperity was most evident in the great port city of Seville in southern Spain, which acted as the channel for trade with the New World. Partly as a result, Seville's influence upon the colonies was considerable: many of the newly-founded cathedrals in Latin America adopted the liturgical rite of Seville Cathedral, which had been rebuilt on a vast scale in the fifteenth century, and with which many of the finest composers of the Spanish Renaissance were associated. Tonight's concert presents music by the most prominent of these musicians, and by other famous masters of the period such as the court organist Antonio de Cabezón and Tomás Luis de Victoria. The music of all these men was well-known not only throughout Spain and Portugal but also in the New World.

The earliest of these composers, Francisco de Peñalosa, spent most of his career at the court of King Ferdinand of Aragon, during whose reign (with Queen Isabelle of Castille) the kingdoms of modern Spain were united and the last Moorish strongholds (notably Granada) reconquered. After a period as a singer in the papal chapel in Rome, Peñalosa returned to Seville, where he held a number of benefices at the cathedral, and there spent the last years of his life. The devotional music written for the Spanish court chapels is well represented by the two motets performed tonight - although the four-voice writing is very simple, it presents the text in an intensely affective way. In *Ave vera caro Christi* the word 'Salve' summons from the composer a quotation of the opening of the famous *Salve Regina* chant, a reference heard also at the opening of Cabezón's *Tiento de 1^o tono* for organ.

Cristóbal de Morales was a native of Seville, although, like Peñalosa, he lived for many years in Rome as a singer in the papal chapel. Upon his return to Spain in 1545, he taught the young Francisco Guerrero (also a native of Seville), who was to become the finest Spanish composer of the generation before Victoria. Guerrero's debt to his teacher can be heard in their respective Mass settings based on the famous *L'Homme armé* melody. Guerrero's work, which frequently refers to Morales's Mass, has only recently been re-discovered, and tonight the *Agnus Dei* receives its first performance in modern times.

Guerrero's reputation within the Spanish dominions surpassed that of any other renaissance composer: indeed, his music continued to be performed regularly in the New World as late as the eighteenth century. The greatest part of his long life was spent in the service of Seville Cathedral. In this concert we present six of his finest motet settings of texts dedicated to Mary. These range in style from simple four-voice works (*Sancta Maria, Alma redemptoris mater*, and *Ave Regina cælorum*) to such richly-scored and dramatic pieces as *Surge propera* (a setting of words from the

Song of Songs) and the eight-voice *Regina caeli laetare*. Guerrero's ability to reflect and heighten the drama of a text is seen clearly in the Eastertide motet *Maria Magdalene*, where the words of the angel announcing the resurrection ('Jesus of Nazareth whom ye seek, the crucified, has risen') call forth a wonderfully expansive climax.

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The **Cambridge Taverner Choir** is a semi-professional ensemble specialising in the performance of renaissance polyphony. The choir, which has just completed its sixth annual series of concerts in Cambridge, is dedicated to the uncovering of lesser-known masterworks of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, concentrating particularly on the music of Spain, Portugal, and England: many of the works performed by the group have been newly discovered and transcribed by the director, Owen Rees. In 1991 the choir undertook a highly successful tour of Portugal, and broadcast on Radio 3 (this broadcast being featured on Radio 4's *Pick of the Week* and *Pick of the Year*). A first CD recording is planned for October 1992.

Owen Rees was educated at Leeds Grammar School and at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, where he held an organ scholarship. His doctoral research involved work on Portuguese music of the renaissance period. In addition to the Cambridge Taverner Choir, he conducts the Oxford-based ensemble *A Capella Portuguesa* (which is co-directed by Bernadette Nelson). He is currently a Lecturer in Music at the University of Surrey.

For further details about the Cambridge Taverner Choir please complete the enclosed slip, or contact:

Diana Baumann (administrator) - 0703 650641

Gary Snapper (secretary) - 0223 840168

Owen Rees (director) - 0483 300800 ext.3051.

Sopranos

Diana Baumann, Helen Garrison, Bernadette Nelson, Margaret Simper, Rachel Sutton, Sally Terris, Tanya Wicks

Altos

Tim Dallosso, Simon Godsill, Martin Neill, David Trendell

Tenors

Alastair Harper, Tom Salmon, David Stanley, Matthew Woolhouse

Basses

James Durran, Alan Seaton, Frank Salmon, Paul Watson