

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees - *director*

J. S. BACH – THE MOTETS

Concert II

John Butt - *guest conductor*

with

Paul Nicholson - *organ*

Melanie Woodcock – *baroque cello*

Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge

Sunday 14th March 1999

8.15 pm

PROGRAMME

Lobet den Herrn Johann Sebastian Bach

Suite for unaccompanied cello in G, BWV 1007 J.S. Bach

Prelude; Allemande; Courante; Sarabande; Minuet I; Minuet II; Gigue

Lobe den Herren Heinrich Schütz

INTERVAL

Deutches Magnificat Heinrich Schütz

Passacaglia for solo organ Georg Muffat

Jesu, meine Freude J. S. Bach

The Cambridge Taverner Choir

Guest Conductor - John Butt

Sopranos - Diana Baumann, Julia Caddick, Andrea Cockerton, Josie Dixon, Helen Garrison, Rachel Godsill, Bryony Lang, Sally Terris

Altos - Ally Barrett, Rachael Beale, Simon Godsill, Linda Gower

Tenors - David Allinson, Paul Baumann, Finlay Lockie,
Tom Salmon, David Thomson

Basses - Sam Barrett, James Durran, Frank Salmon, Joss Sanders,
Gary Snapper, Paul Watson

Organ - Paul Nicholson

Baroque Cello – Melanie Woodcock

The Cambridge Taverner Choir performs in Jesus College Chapel
by kind permission of the Master and Fellows of the College.

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden
Und preiset ihn, alle Völker.
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit
Waltet über uns in Ewigkeit.
Alleluja!
(Psalm 117)

Lobe den Herren, meine seele

Lobe den Herren, meine seele, und vergiß
nicht, was er dir Guts getan hat.
Der dir alle deine Sünde vergibet und
heilet alle deine Gebrechen. Der dein
Leben vom verderben erlöset, der dich
krönet mit Gnad und Barmherzigkeit.
(Psalm 103)

Deutsches Magnificat

Meine Seele erhebt den Herren, und mein
Geist freuet sich Gottes, meines
Heilandes.
Denn er hat die Neidrigkeit seiner Magd
angesehen; siehe, von nun an werden
mich selig preisen alle Kindeskind.
Denn er hat grosse Ding an mir getan, der
mächtig ist und des Name heilig ist.
Er übet Gewalt mit seinem Arm und
zerstreuet die hoffärtig sind in ihres
herzens Sinn.
Er stösset die Gewaltigen vom Stuhl und
erhöret die Niedrigen.

Die Hungerigen füllet er mit Gütern und
lässet die Reichen leer.
Er denket der Barmherkeit und hilft
seinem Deiner Israel auf wei er geredt hat
unsern Vätern, Abraham und seinem
Samen ewiglich.
Ehre sei dem Vater, und dem Sohn, und
auch dem Heiligen Geiste; wie es war im
Anfang, jetzt und immerdar, und von
Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit, Amen.

Jesu, meine Freude

Choral

Jesu, meine Freude,
Meines Herzens Weide,
Jesu, meine Zier;
Ach, wie lang, ach, lange,
Ist dem Herzen bange,
Und verlangt nach dir!

Praise the Lord, all ye heathen

Praise the Lord, all ye heathen
And praise him all ye people
For his grace and truth
Reign over us evermore
Alleluia!

Praise the Lord, my Soul

Praise the Lord, my Soul, and forget not
all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine
iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases,
who redeemeth thy life from destruction,
who crowneth thee with lovingkindness
and tender mercy.

German 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; behold, from henceforth all
generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me,
and holy is his name.
He hath shown 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 sent the rich 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.

Jesu my joy

Chorale

Jesu my joy,
Delight of my heart,
Jesu my inspiration;
O how much longer
Must my heart be in anguish
And long for thee!

Gottes Lamm, mein Bräutigam,
Ausser dir soll mir auf Erden
Nichts sonst lieber werden.

Motette

Est ist nun nichts verdammliches an
denen, die in Christo Jesu sind,
Die nicht nach dem Fleische wandeln,
sondern nach dem Geist.
(Romans 8:1)

Choral

Unter deinem Schirmen
Bin ich vor den Stürmen
Aller Feinde frei.
Lass den Satan wüthen,
Lass den Feind erbittern,
Mir steht Jesus bei!
Ob es itzt gleich kracht und blitzt,
Ob gleich Sünd und Hölle schrecken;
Jesus will mich decken.

Trio

Denn das gesetz des Geistes, der
da lebendig machet in Christo Jesu,
hat mich frei gemacht von dem
Gesetz der Sünder und des Todes.
(Romans 8:2)

Choralvariation

Trotz dem alten Drachen,
Trotz des Todes Rachen,
Trotz der Furcht dazu!
Tobe, Welt, und springe,
Ich steh hier und singe
In gar sicherer Ruh.
Gottes Macht hält mich in Acht,
Erd und Abgrund muss verstummen,
Ob sie noch so brummen.

Fuge

Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich,
sondern geistlich, so anders Gottes Geist
in euch wohnt. Wer aber Christi
Geist nicht hat, der ist nicht sein.
(Romans 8:9)

Choral

Weg mit allen Schätzen,
Du bist mein Ergötzen,
Jesu, meine Lust!
Weg, ihr eitlen Ehren,
Ich mag euch nicht hören,
Bleibt mir unbewusst!
Elend, Not, Kreuz,
Schmach und Tod
Soll mich, ob ich viel muss leiden.
Nicht von Jesu scheiden.

Lamb of God, my chosen one,
Nothing on this earth can so win our
devotion.

Motet

There is therefore now no condemnation
to them that are in Jesus Christ, who walk
not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.

Chorale

Under thy protection
From the raging of the enemy
I am ever free.
Though Satan finds me
And evil shall oppress me
Jesus is at my side!
Through life's storms and strife,
From sin and hell,
Jesus will protect me.

Trio

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ,
Jesus hath made me free from the law of
sin and death

Chorale Variation

I spurn the evil one,
The jaws of death
And all my fears,
Though the world may rage and roar
I stand here and sing
In such secure peace!
God's might protects me:
Earth and hell are mute,
Their turmoil silenced.

Fugue

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the
spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell
in you. Now if any man have not the
Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Chorale

Hence all earthly splendour
Thou art my treasure,
Jesu, my delight!
Hence fleeting pleasures,
I do not hear your voice,
Leave me unmolested!
Distress, need, the cross,
insult and death
I will gladly suffer
So long as Jesus does not desert me.

Bach's Motets: 'Lobet den Herrn' and 'Jesu, meine Freude'

"Motet...is a notated musical composition, heavily adorned with fugue and imitation, based on a biblical text and purely for singing without instruments (apart from the thorough bass). However, the vocal parts can also be filled out and strengthened with all kind of instruments."

J.G.Walther's definition (in his *Musicalisches Lexicon* of 1732) of the motet of Bach's era is significant both for its clarity and its vagueness: motets are works based on biblical texts (and, incidentally, chorales) without the madrigalian elements of cantatas and their concomitant musical forms of recitative and da capo arias; all the musical lines are sung, either unaccompanied or doubled by various instruments. No details are given of the purpose of the form and few references are made to the musical devices employed. Indeed a variety of works belong to the genre of motet: both those written in the tradition of Renaissance polyphony, performed every week in the Lutheran liturgy and the staple diet of the lesser choirs under Bach's jurisdiction, and those written for special occasions.

Bach's compositions in the second category are the only works of their kind; all elements of their style and form can be traced in various compositional traditions, but as occasional works, employing all the talented singers at Bach's disposal they are unique and unsurpassed. Most seem connected with funerals for important figures in Leipzig, although some material may come from earlier stages in Bach's career.

It is impossible to isolate a single stylistic hallmark for Bach's motets. The exclusively vocal part-writing demands complete and satisfactory textual underlay in every voice, so no parts can be merely supportive or decorative. Chorales are an important structural influence, particularly in *Jesu, meine Freude*, based as it is on a single chorale. Bach inherits much of the declamatory vocal style from the age of Theile and Buxtehude (e.g. "Trotz dem alten Drachen"). Many elements not normally associated with purely choral music are also present: aria-style in "Denn das Gesetz des Geistes" and "So aber Christus in euch ist" and much writing that is virtually instrumental in texture. Indeed the interchange between vocal and instrumental idioms is particularly well demonstrated by "Gute Nacht" which is virtually a reworking of (or perhaps the model for) the Largo from the violin sonata in G, BWV 1021.

Symmetry is an important principle in several of Bach's works, such as some of the early cantatas and the Credo from the Mass in B Minor. However, there is no clearer example in Bach's entire oeuvre than *Jesu, meine Freude*, where the central axis falls on the fugue "Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich" making the central point that one overcomes death through turning from the earthly to the spiritual.

'Lobet den Herrn' is something of the black sheep among Bach's motets: surviving in no sources that can be remotely associated with J.S. Bach, many have questioned its position among the authentic works. It is certainly atypical in presenting only four vocal parts: moreover, it cannot be performed without organ accompaniment since the vocal bass part does not provide the complete bass line necessary to support the upper parts. There are no choral verses and no firm division into individual movements (although the final 'hallelujah' does stand somewhat apart by introducing triple time). A recent discovery of a late 18th century manuscript which ascribes the work to 'Signor Bach' perhaps makes the authenticity of 'Lobet den Herrn' more secure than it might otherwise have been. Certainly it is not impossible that the work may come from Bach's immediate family or student circle, but no-one has yet come up with a more plausible composer than Sebastian himself. Apart from the general skill of its workmanship and its incredible density of notes it contains several turns of phrase that seem to relate it to the 'true' Bach motets.

Schütz: Lobe den Herren and Deutsches Magnificat

'Lobe den Herren' comes from the very outset of Schütz's compositional career, his Opus 2, the *Psalmen Davids* of 1619. As the composer himself notes in his preface, these polychoral psalms settings owe their stylistic foundation to Schütz's teacher Giovanni Gabrieli. While much of the harmony and melodic gesture is virtually indistinguishable from this older Italian school, Schütz's insight into the rhetorical potential of the German language already places him in the forefront of German composers. This setting of Psalm 103 is one of the two pieces labelled 'konzert' or Concerto. This means that, in addition, to the antiphonal sections there are sections for the 'favourite' singers who perform individually and in combination. The term also signifies a more modern, expressive style for these 'concerted' sections, something which brings sacred

music much closer to the recitational style of early opera and monody. In this setting the older, polychoral, style is used to frame the concerted sections, functioning as a dance-like ritornello.

Its old-fashioned connotations notwithstanding, Schütz never entirely abandoned the polychoral idiom. Indeed he returned to it for what was virtually his last work, the German Magnificat of 1671 which, according to one of the sources, he designated his 'swan song'. In returning to the idiom of his second opus, Schütz clearly saw a virtue in maintaining some consistency of style. The remarkable chronological gap between these two pieces also epitomises an aspect of the seventeenth century that makes it so difficult to understand today: the stylistic stasis coupled with remarkable innovations, experiments and changes in the use and composition of music, the lack of a discernable thread of stylistic development within a century of revolutions and restorations. If the Magnificat shows an advance on the early psalm settings it is in influx of expressive 'concerto' elements into the actual textures of polychoral writing, a refinement of detail and a sumptuousness of textual expression which always just avoids the excessive.

**Forthcoming concerts by the Cambridge Taverner Choir
in Jesus College Chapel**

Sunday 2 May at 8.15pm

**J S Bach: The Motets
Concert III**

Fürchte dich nicht; Singet dem Herrn

J C Bach: Fürchte dich nicht

Schütz: Singet dem Herrn

with

John Butt - guest conductor

Sunday 11 July at 8.15pm

Tierra de María Santísima

Music in honour of Mary, from the Golden Age of Seville

Works by Peñalosa, Alonso Lobo, Victoria and

Guerrero (marking the 400th anniversary of his death)

Owen Rees - director

Tickets £8 (concessions £6) from

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01223 357851

(tickets for the July concert will be on sale from the beginning of May)