

# **CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR**

*Owen Rees - director*

**Rogier**

**&**

**King Philip II of Spain**

*Little St Mary's Church, Cambridge*

**Sunday 1 February 2004**

**7.45 pm**

## PROGRAMME

Missa Ego sum qui sum Kyrie Gloria	Philippe Rogier (c. 1561–1596)
Da pacem	Rogier
Missa Ego sum qui sum Credo	Rogier
Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui	Alonso Lobo (1555–1617)
Missa Ego sum qui sum Agnus Dei	Rogier
Quasi stella matutina	Fernando de las Infantas (1534–c. 1610)

INTERVAL of 10 minutes

Lamentations (First Lesson of Matins, Holy Saturday)	Lobo
Mortuus est Philippus Rex	Ambrosio Cotes (c. 1550–1603)
Tristis est anima mea	Lobo
Versa est in luctum	Lobo

### **The Cambridge Taverner Choir**

Director: Owen Rees

*Sopranos* – Diana Baumann, Andrea Blakesley, Josie Dixon,  
Helen Garrison, Rachel Godsill, Hester Higton, Katharine Medlow

*Altos* – Simon Godsill, Eleanor Harries, Rachel Howells, Helen Zimmer

*Tenors* – Paul Baumann, Nick Marston, Tom Salmon, Edwin Simpson, David Thomson

*Basses* – James Durran, Frank Salmon, Gary Snapper, Paul Watson



The Cambridge Taverner Choir is a member of the National Federation of Music Societies  
Our thanks to the Vicar and PCC of Little Saint Mary's for their kind permission to use the church.

**The chapel of the Kings of Spain** in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was one of Europe's great musical institutions, and an important point of contact between Spanish and Northern musical cultures. Under King Philip II (1527–1598; reigned from 1556) the chapel continued to be led by Northern musicians, reflecting its partially Burgundian/Flemish roots. Among these musicians was Philippe Rogier. Born in Arras, he was recruited in 1572 to be a choirboy in the Spanish royal chapel, and became its choirmaster from 1586 until his death in 1596. Rogier dedicated a book of motets to the King in 1595, and a book of his Masses (including the *Missa Ego sum qui sum*) appeared posthumously in 1598, the year of the King's own death.

In this concert we present music by Rogier and by three of his Spanish contemporaries: Alonso Lobo, Fernando de las Infantas, and Ambrosio Cotes. Most of Rogier's music has been lost, but what does survive deserves to be better known. A fine example is the six-voice *Missa Ego sum qui sum* which is the principal work in the first half of the concert. The Mass, composed on a lavish scale, is based upon a motet by one of the most famous composers associated with the chapel under Philip's father the Emperor Charles V: Nicolas Gombert. Characterised by luxuriant counterpoint and rich scoring, the Mass also reveals Rogier's command of pacing and drama: a grand extended sequential passage marks the ends of movements (and the central quartet of the *Credo*), but Rogier builds this into an extraordinarily extended edifice at the conclusions of both the *Credo* and the *Agnus Dei*. In the *Agnus* he also intensifies the plea for forgiveness and peace by introducing harsh clashes between voices which contrast starkly with the more conventionally controlled counterpoint of the rest of the Mass. Rogier's six-voice motet *Da pacem Domine* is a brief but majestic setting of a prayer for 'peace in our day', topical given Philip's constant struggle to maintain his kingdoms in a turbulent Europe and beyond.

Philip, his wife Anne of Austria (married Philip 1570; died 1580), and the royal princes, are mentioned specifically in the text of *Quasi stella matutina*, composed between 1570 and 1576, which calls upon Saint Jerome to intercede for the royal family. It was to the Jeronymite order that Charles V and Philip II entrusted their great monastery (also library, seminary, and royal palace) of San Lorenzo del Escorial ('El Escorial'), north of Madrid, completed during Philip's reign, and where the King (and therefore his chapel) spent much of his time. The composer of *Quasi stella matutina*, Don Fernando de las Infantas, was born and educated in Córdoba, but spent most of his life in Rome. He dedicated several collection of music to his patron Philip, and wrote to the King in 1577 to protest at the proposed revision of the Gregorian plainchant instigated by Pope Gregory XIII (a revision entrusted in part to Palestrina); in response Philip prevailed upon the Pope to delay the revision. Infantas's motet is old-fashioned but impressively festal, with triple time for the concluding repeated 'melos læti canimus'.

The death of King Philip in 1598 is marked in two extraordinary motets which we sing in the second half of the concert: the seven-voice *Mortuus est Philippus Rex* by Ambrosio Cotes (who at that point was *maestro de capilla* of Valencia Cathedral), and *Versa est in luctum*, the most famous work of Alonso Lobo (*maestro de capilla* of Spain's primatial church, Toledo Cathedral, where the royal chapel occasionally performed). This latter piece was one of seven motets by Lobo published in Madrid in 1602. Another of these works is the Marian *Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui*, the calm opening of which is followed by lively declamation for the words 'therefore rejoicing we shall go into thy temple'. The text of the piece suggests that it is directly connected with Toledo Cathedral, where Lobo worked, and specifically with the legend of St Ildephonsus (Archbishop of Toledo, d. 667), to whom the Virgin Mary was supposed to have appeared in person.

Lobo's music continued to be copied and sung in both Spain and Portugal into the eighteenth century. Two fine examples which we perform here are items for Holy Week: the responsory *Tristis est anima mea*, and a monumental set of **Lamentations** for Holy

*maestro* following his time at Toledo). The work alternates melismatic settings of the Hebrew letters ('Heth', 'Teth', and 'Jod') based on the Toledo chant tone for the Lamentations, with the text from Jeremiah.

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**Owen Rees** began his academic and conducting career as Organ Scholar at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, studying with Peter le Huray and Iain Fenlon. After a period as College Lecturer in Music at St Peter's College and St Edmund Hall, Oxford, he joined the Music Department at the University of Surrey. In 1997 he returned to Oxford, where he is Fellow in Music and Organist at the Queen's College, Lecturer at Somerville College, and Lecturer in the Faculty of Music. His published studies include work on musical sources and repertoires from Coimbra, and on the music of, for example, Francisco Guerrero and William Byrd. His work as a scholar has consistently informed his work as a performer. He has conducted at festivals in the UK, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, and the Netherlands. Choirs under his direction have released CD recordings on the Herald, Hyperion, and Unicorn Kanchana labels, to consistently high critical acclaim.

### *The Choir*

The Cambridge Taverner Choir is one of Britain's leading early music chamber choirs. Like The Tallis Scholars and The Sixteen, the choir emerged from the Oxford and Cambridge choral tradition and has built a reputation for powerful and expressive performances of Renaissance polyphony. Since reaching the shortlist for the Gramophone Early Music Award in 1994, the choir has received acclaim for its concerts and recordings of Renaissance choral music. In 2002, the choir performed at the York Early Music Festival and released its fourth CD, *Music from Renaissance Portugal Vol.2* which was voted one of the top ten CDs of 2002 by the Daily Telegraph. In March 2003 it appeared at the Oslo Church Music Festival to critical acclaim. In addition to appearances throughout Britain and abroad, the choir regularly performs to enthusiastic audiences in the beautiful church of Little St Mary's, Cambridge.

## **NEXT CONCERT**

### **Victoria & the Empress Maria**

#### *Victoria Requiem*

**Sunday 28 March 2004, 7.45 pm: Little St Mary's Church**

If you would like to receive further information about concerts and are not currently on the choir's mailing list, please speak to someone at the desk at the back of the church. If you would like to receive notification of future events by e-mail (even if you are currently on the mailing list), please fill in the sheet at the desk.

The choir's CD recordings *Music from Renaissance Portugal II* (including Duarte Lobo's two-choir *Missa Cantate Domino*) and *The Song the Virgine Soong* (Christmas Music from Tudor England) are on sale at the back of church, price £13.