



Thomas Tallis Society
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



POLYCHORAL MUSIC FROM RENAISSANCE ROME

Tonight's Programme

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Palestrina | Regina caeli à4 | Fray Bartolomé | Vestiva i colli |
| | Alma redemptoris à8 | Anerio | Stabat mater à12 |
| Pacelli | Gaudent in caelis à12 | Victoria | Ave Regina à5 |
| Cozzolani | Amate, o populi | Anerio | Salve Regina à4 |
| Victoria | Laetatus sum à12 | Pacelli | Beati estis à12 |
| Marenzio | Iniquos odio habui à8 | Merula | Ciaccona |
| | Super flumina Babylonis à12 | Pacelli | Christus resurgens à16 |

The concert will run without an interval. Drinks will be served in the church hall after the concert. Please join us there.

PROGRAMME NOTES

The Church of Rome has had a long and turbulent history, but by the end of the 15th century had achieved a degree of stability, wealth and prestige which enabled it, in addition to its pastoral role, to be at the forefront of patronage of the Arts (painting, music and architecture), as well as a political power of considerable influence. Polyphonic music was well established, alongside the ancient chants, as an essential part of the ritual observances of the Church; singers and composers were in ever greater demand throughout the supremacy of the Roman religion, and the churches and choir schools of what are now the Low Countries and France were a great source of these for the great Italian city states as well as the Vatican.

Within the music of the Italian renaissance, the figure of **Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina** towers above all others. It was he who composers studied and aspired to emulate, and we showcase the work of some of his protégés in this programme. Their compositions bear many of the hallmarks of their revered master.

Palestrina is of course very well known today, but this reputation is based in fact on only a small portion of his music, for comparatively little is still ever performed. His life and career spanned momentous years in the history of the Church, including the Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation. He also was the first native Italian to publish a volume of Masses in Rome, in 1554. They were dedicated to Julius II, who was formerly the Bishop of Palestrina (the town) before his election to the Papacy. It was he who appointed Palestrina as a singer in the Papal Choir, despite him being married. Palestrina played a significant role too, as indeed did Felice Anerio, through his association with S. Filippo Neri's Congregazione dell'Oratorio, in encouragement of informal devotions and observances.

From 1560 onwards Palestrina and his younger associates proceeded to rewrite much of the repertoire, with the revised texts of the Council of Trent, in a more transparent and text-orientated fashion. Ideally suited to the new needs of the revised Liturgy were pieces in double choir format, their declamatory style favouring intelligible projection of the text. Foremost in the composition of such music were the Spaniard Tomás Luis de Victoria, and Palestrina himself, as well as a host of younger composers, dominantly Italians, Romans such as the Nanino and Anerio brothers.

The elder Anerio brother, **Felice Anerio**, was born in 1560 and began his career in 1568 as a choirboy at S. Maria Maggiore and then moved from 1575 to 1579 to sing under Palestrina in the Cappella Giulia, the choir of the chapter of canons at St Peter's. He wrote the usual range of music for a composer of the time: madrigals both secular and sacred, music for the Liturgy, some of it issued in print. But the great achievement of his life was his appointment as official Papal composer, on 3rd April 1594, on the death of Palestrina, who had held the post since 1565. This triumph Anerio celebrated in the title of his 1596 book of Motets, declaring proudly in large bold print: "Felicii Anerii Capellae Apostolicae Compositoris", (Felice Anerio, composer of the Apostolic Chapel) and underneath in smaller lettering the actual contents: "Sacri hymni et cantica..."

In this publication, Anerio shows himself as a true master, at least the equal of any other of his Italian contemporaries, except perhaps the greatest of them all, Palestrina. Anerio's work demonstrates beautiful flowing polyphony mixed with more homophonic passages, rhythmic vitality, including shifts from duple to triple time and back, variation in density of scoring, all in accord with clear presentation of the text.

The 12 voice *Stabat Mater* is an example of the trend towards the use of massive vocal (and indeed, instrumental) forces towards the end of the century. This aptly reflected the triumphal spirit of the Counter Reformation in Rome at this time. Attributed to Felice Anerio in the sole source, a Roman set of twelve partbooks now incomplete, the *Stabat Mater* was published in 1874 by Haberl under Palestrina's name. The settings by Palestrina and Lassus for eight voices have long been appreciated, but Anerio's is perhaps the most ambitious and beautiful extant. It is striking in its unusual, and masterly, manipulation of harmonic rhythm to suggest triple time when the music is notated in duple, (for example, at the opening). True triple time is only used by the composer at the words *Inflammat*

et accensus... in die iudicia near the end. With its control of harmony, rhythm and texture, interest and forward impulse never flag despite the length of the text.

Asprilio Pacelli (1570-1623) trained as a chorister in the Cappella Giulia under Palestrina. He then worked for a number of confraternities with small choirs, before becoming prefect of music at the German College, in 1595. In 1602, he became chapel-master of the Cappella Giulia, one of the top musical positions in the city but he left that post in unknown circumstances in October that year to travel to Poland where he stayed until his death in 1623.

The transplanting of Italian music in the new style to Poland in the late 16th and early 17th centuries was one of the success stories of early modern musical transmission. Over one hundred Italian composers, singers and instrumentalists worked there during the five decades from the mid-1590s, effectively colonising the major music chapels in Kraków and Warsaw.

Pacelli was already highly experienced in both large-scale ceremonial and small-scale devotional music, with a solid base in Rome's *stile antico* but not afraid to experiment with more modern styles. Pacelli went to Kraków, from where he travelled with the chapel to Warsaw and Vilnius, where he probably spent the years 1610-1612, when the King was waging the Smolensk campaign, and then lived with Sigismund III's court in Warsaw, which from the 1610s replaced Kraków as the chief residence of the kings of Poland.

During that time, he exerted a profound influence over the style of the music written and performed at the King of Poland's court. Within the music preserved from his time in Poland are the three works that we perform tonight. The antiphon *Gaudent in caelis* is sung during feasts devoted to martyrs. The text of *Beati estis* is taken from the Gospel according to St Matthew, used in the Roman Catholic liturgy during feasts of the Apostles. Both are set by Pacelli for 12 voices divided into three choirs, accompanied by organ. Also set in polychoral fashion 16 voices divided into four choirs and organ is the Alleluia verse *Christus resurgens*.

In all these compositions, all choirs have a similar range and always the same set of voices: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Characteristic features here are the quick alternation of the choirs, the dominance of homo-rhythmic texture and in *Beati estis* and *Christus resurgens*, the relatively large proportion of passages sung by all the choirs simultaneously. *Gaudent in caelis* is striking for the use not just of whole choirs, but also of single voices from those choirs forming two-, or more frequently three-, part ensembles, set against tutti passages.

Luca Marenzio (c.1553-1599) is again an Italian composer who worked at the court of Sigismund III.

Sigismund III, raised in Protestant Sweden in the Roman Catholic religion of his mother, was among the monarchs who were strongly involved in the Counter Reformation. In 1594, when he set about reorganising his music ensemble, he decided to bring in Italian musicians, singularly esteemed at that time, in particular musicians associated with the music chapels of Rome and in 1595, following a recruitment drive in the Eternal City, more than twenty musicians made their way to the court of Sigismund III. Luca Marenzio arrived in December 1595. He remained in Poland for no more than two and a half years. By the autumn of 1598, he was back in Italy, and died soon afterwards, on 22 August 1599, in an epidemic, in Rome.

During his brief period of activity in Poland, Marenzio led the 'Italian' ensemble, which contained singers and instrumentalists who were mostly, although not exclusively, from Italy, including at least four other composers, besides the chapel-master himself. In the years 1596 and 1597, the musicians led by Marenzio played for the sessions of Parliament that were taking place in Warsaw and also performed in church solemnities attended, besides the court, baronage, nobility and townsfolk, by foreign guests. Marenzio wrote polychoral sacred works, which were particularly desired by the king, who considered, like many other monarchs of the day, that the rich sound of music performed by several choirs filling a church symbolised and enhanced his regal might. Marenzio's eight-part motet *Iniquos odio habui*, to words taken from Psalm 119: 113-117 was almost certainly written in Warsaw during his short stay.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (c.1548-1611) has become the most famed Spanish composer of the Renaissance, and ranks alongside Palestrina and Lassus as one of the greatest composers of the 16th century. He was a singer, organist, scholar, teacher, and a priest - but it was in composition that he made his most significant impact.

Victoria's maiden publication, a sumptuous volume containing thirty three motets, was printed in Venice in 1572. It contains just one eight-voice piece, a double-choir Ave Maria and it wasn't until 1583 that a twelve-voice setting of *Psalm 122, Laetatus sum*, the first Roman triple choir music was published. From the 1580s on, three choirs of musicians were becoming standard in Rome for Mass and Vespers on major feast days, and Victoria's music must have been widely heard, especially where he himself was involved in such services. These were exciting years for Roman sacred music. However the call of his beloved native land was always strong, and in the dedication (to Philip II) of his 1583 book of Masses, Victoria expressed a wish to return to a quiet life in Spain, to "...spend my time in contemplation of the divine, as befits a priest." So, in 1585 Philip II appointed him chaplain to his sister, the Dowager Empress Maria, at the Convento de las Descalzas Reales in Madrid.

Unusually, the Psalm opens with a triple time passage (perhaps reflecting the joyful opening words). In tonight's performance, the Psalm has instrumental doubling of the voices, in line with contemporary Spanish practice. The lowest choir is doubled by a cornett and three sackbuts; choir II, by organ and bass dulcian; and the highest choir is unaccompanied throughout.

Victoria died in 1611, after a life dedicated to God and Music. For his last words, those opening Psalm 122 would have been entirely apt: 'Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi, in domum Domini ibimus' - I was glad when they said unto me: Let us go up into the house of the Lord.

Fray Bartolomé de Selva y Salaverde (c.1595 - 1638) was a Spanish Baroque composer and virtuoso player of the dulcian, a predecessor to the modern bassoon. He was an Augustinian friar who was employed at the archducal court at Innsbruck from 1628 to 1630, and was the son, or possibly grandson, of Bartolome de Selma, luthier to the Spanish royal chapel. His compositions include the *Primo Libro de Canzoni, Canzoni Fantasie & Correnti*, and manuscript vocal works.

'*Vestiva i colli*' *basso e soprano* is from *Canzoni Fantasie et Correnti* (published in Venice, 1638).

Tarquinio Merula (1595 - 1665) was an Italian composer, organist, and violinist of the early Baroque era. Although mainly active in Cremona, stylistically he was a member of the Venetian school. He probably received early musical training in Cremona, where he was first employed as an organist. In 1616 he took a position as organist at the church of Santa Maria Incoronata in Lodi, where he remained until 1621, at which time he also went to Warsaw, Poland to work as an organist at the court of Sigismund III.

In 1626 he returned to Cremona, and in 1627 became *maestro di cappella* at the cathedral there, but he only remained for four years, moving to Bergamo to accept a similar position in 1631. Unfortunately Merula got into trouble with some of his students, and returned to Cremona, where he remained until 1635. During this period in his life he seems to have had numerous troubles with his employers, possibly of his own making: after fighting with the administrators at Cremona over a variety of issues, he returned to Bergamo, serving this time at a different church, but was disallowed from using any musicians from his former place of employment. In 1646 he went back to Cremona for the final time, serving as *maestro di cappella* at the Laudi della Madonna until his death in 1665.

Ciaccona for 2 recorders and basso continuo is from *Canzoni overo sonate concertate*, published in 1637.

Programme notes compiled from The Sixteen CDs (Martyn Imrie, Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska and Noel O'Regan)

EAMONN DOUGAN



Eamonn Dougan is an inspirational conductor and renowned vocal coach and baritone. He is Associate Conductor of The Sixteen, founding Director of Britten Sinfonia Voices, Music Director of the Thomas Tallis Society, and Chief Conductor for Jersey Chamber Orchestra and Ryedale Festival Opera.

Recent conducting debuts include Handel's *Semele* at Sibelius Summer Academy and Haydn's *Seven Last Words of our Saviour on the Cross* with the English National Opera. Forthcoming conducting engagements include performances as part of the Royal Academy of Music's Bach the European series, concerts with Chorwerk Ruhr, celebrating Byrd's 400th anniversary, a Christmas tour with Ars Nova, Copenhagen and Messiah with Chamber Choir Ireland and the Seville Baroque Orchestra. His third recording with De Profundis will be released in 2024.

Eamonn is vocal consultant for the ongoing Bach series at the Royal Academy of Music, where he also gives conducting masterclasses. He is a Visiting Professor to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, where he teaches ensemble singing and directs the Guildhall Consort. Eamonn read music at New College, Oxford, before continuing his vocal and conducting studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Eamonn Dougan is managed worldwide by Percius.

www.percius.co.uk.

EMMA WILKINS – SOPRANO



Emma Wilkins is a soprano based in South East London. She read Music at The University of Manchester, performing regularly across the North West of England whilst studying for her degree. Highlights included BBC Daily Service and Songs of Praise as well as many exciting world premieres.

In London, Emma has sung with choirs such as the Holst Singers (Stephen Layton) and New London Chamber Choir (Matthew Hamilton), as well as deputising for numerous churches including the professional quartet at Holy Trinity Prince Consort Road, Kensington.

With her teacher Jenny Miller, Emma enjoys preparing both choral and solo repertoire. Emma's freelance singing career incorporates choral singing, solo performances, live-streams and recordings.

Emma is hugely grateful to be Soprano Ambassador for the Thomas Tallis Society. She adores the breadth of repertoire covered by TTS and looks forward to more music making with this friendly community under such inspirational direction.

When Emma isn't singing, she is Senior Administrator for the South London Youth Orchestras and enjoys spending time with her husband and children.

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Cornett: Alex Duncan

Sackbutts: Alto - Sam Dawes
Tenor - Pau Hernandez Santamaria, George Meeks
Bass - Owain Davies

Dulcian: Liam Fleet

Recorders: Rebecca Miles, Ian Wilson

THOMAS TALLIS SOCIETY CHOIR

With around 60 auditioned voices TTS presents four or five concerts a year in the beautiful setting of St Alfege Church. Although many of the choir members live locally in Greenwich, TTS attracts musicians from all over London owing to the high standards it maintains. All singers are required to have very good sight-reading abilities as the choir works on a few concentrated rehearsals before each concert.

We are always keen to recruit new voices. If you are interested, please contact our membership secretary Kathryn Strachan strac157@ntlworld.com.

- Sopranos** Phoebe Clapham, Alana Clark, Julia Corfe-Press, Imogen Faris, Jan Hart, Claire Jones, Philippa Kent, Chloe Lam, Caroline Molloy, Rosemary Naylor, Jill Pollock, Naomi Quant, Bethan Rose, Kathryn Strachan, Anne Whyte, **Emma Wilkins**
- Altos** Christine Balls, Thomas Bridges, Joanna Clark, Miriam Crozier, Susan Dean, Sian Evans, Moira Fitzgerald, Sally Hughes, Emma Humphries, Emily John, Philippa John, Sonia Johnson, Katherine Pile, Alice Shelton, Ruthie Smith, Anna Townsend
- Tenors** David Abrahams, Justin Eeles, Andrew Green, Larry Howes, Nathan Killen, Andrew Lang, Chris Moody, Adam Oliver, Paul Renney
- Basses** Dermot Agnew, Kevin Brau, George Brooke-Smith, Richard Brooks, Cyril Cleary, Simon Gallie, Andrew Harper, Stephen Jackson, Daniel Jaffé, Will Kendal, Jonathan Louth, Tom Perry, Nigel Press, John Sutton

Bold denotes Choral Ambassadors.

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ThomasTallisSociety



And look out for updates on our website www.thomas-tallis-society.org.uk.

REMAINING 2024-25 SEASON DATES

Sunday 15 December conducted by Eamonn Dougan

Respighi - Lauda per la Nativita del Signore - with woodwind and piano

Christmas motets and carols

Saturday 8 March 2025 conducted by Eamonn Dougan

Howells - Requiem

with penitential motets by Lobo, Tallis, Byrd, Jonathan Dove and Kerensa Briggs

Sunday 6 July 2025 conducted by Eamonn Dougan

Taylor Scott Davis - Magnificat

Schubert - Magnificat

FRIENDS AND PATRONS

We are very grateful to our faithful group of Patrons and Friends that have been loyally supporting us for a number of years. Their generosity and support have really helped the Society to keep going. A reliable yearly income is a huge benefit in planning programmes and means we can budget more accurately.

We are very keen to increase the number of Patrons and Friends to help us go forward in a sustainable manner and we would love your support as either a Patron or Friend.

A Friend contributes £30 per year and this special relationship with the choir is recognised by:

- A newsletter with early notification of concerts
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party
- Recognition of support in TTS programmes.

As a Patron of the Society you receive additional benefits in recognition of an annual donation of £150:

- A complimentary top price ticket to all concerts
- Free concert programmes
- Separate interval or pre-concert complimentary drinks table
- Acknowledgment of support of the Society in the programme
- An invitation to the annual Friends and Patrons party.

Please consider whether you could support TTS by becoming a Patron or a Friend of the Society. Speak to Carole tonight or contact her at carolelowe@rocketmail.com.

We would like to recognise the important contribution of the following TTS Patrons:

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With thanks to the Churchwardens of St Alfege for their continued support.



Thomas Tallis Society Choir
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



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