

Sacred Music for Good Friday

Funeral Sentences for Queen Mary Henry Purcell 1659-1695

When David Heard Thomas Weelkes 1576-1623

De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae Alfonso Ferrabosco "the Elder" 1543-1588

The Tudor Consort 9pm, Good Friday 14 April 2006, Wellington Cathedral of St Paul



he season of Lent, and the week leading up to Good Friday in particular, has inspired some of sacred music's finest composition. This meditation through music presents a selection of the Renaissance's most moving music for Lent by that period's finest composers.

We look forward to your applause but ask that you reserve this for the end of the performance.

Miserere Nostri, Domine **Thomas Tallis 1505?-1585**

This miniature motet shows English composer Thomas Tallis at his most abstract. The two treble parts sing in perfect canon while the five lower voices sing two different musical themes in lesser canon at a variety of different speeds and pitches. The piece maintains a wonderful stillness, beauty and optimism despite the underlying intricacies of its construction. It is thought to be a single fragment of a much larger piece that has since been lost.

Miserere nostri, Domine.
Have mercy on us, Lord.

De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae: III **Alfonso Ferrabosco "the Elder" 1543-1588**

England-based Italian composer Alfonso Ferrabosco was one of many Renaissance composers to set verses from the Old Testament Book of Lamentations. The Lamentations immediately follow the Book of Jeremiah and so are commonly called the Lamentations of Jeremiah, although the five poems that make up the Lamentations were probably written by a number of different authors. The poems were inspired by and concern the siege and fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC. Certain verses, if interpreted in a certain way, seem to foretell the Passion and eventual Crucifixion of Christ.

In the Catholic liturgy, the five poems that make up the Lamentations are split across three services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday; these three sections are called Vigils, and each Vigil is further split into three Lectiae ("lessons"). In the Renaissance, one Lectio would be sung after each of the three readings at Matins. The result was an ornate and dramatic musical sequence that would extend across the three holiest days directly prior to Easter.

The original poetry consistently personifies Jerusalem as a female character: a weeping widow, a bereft mother, a lost lover. The Hebrew letters that served to number the verses in the original poems were left intact when the poetry was translated into Latin; these initial Hebrew letters became an opportunity for the Renaissance composers to construct elaborate introductions to each verse.

Ferrabosco wrote three Lamentations that cover the key emotional moments across the first Vigil. In this third movement he was evidently working with the text from memory, for he misattributes the numbers of the verses and omits a line of text. In Ferrabosco's time at the Court of Queen Elizabeth, boys did not sing the Lamentations during Holy Week; by tradition, the Lectiae were sung only by the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal.

cantus Christopher Warwick
altus Alastair Carey, Hamish Elliot
quintus Peter Dyne, Richard Taylor
tenor Brian Hesketh, Matthew Painter
bassus Jeremy Bennett, Timothy Hurd, David Treacher
profundus Simon Baskerville, Robert Easting

Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae.

Here begins the Lamentation of Jeremiah the Prophet.

LAMED. Peccatum peccavit Jerusalem, propterea instabilis...

VERSE TWELVE [actually verse 8]. Jerusalem has sinned grievously, she is made unstable because of this: all who have glorified her have spurned her because they see her disgrace: then she groaned and turned away.

SAMECH. Justus est Dominus, quia os eius ad iracundiam...

VERSE FIFTEEN [actually 18]. Just is the Lord, for it is I who provoked him to wrath. Hear me, I beg all you people, and see my sorrow. Virgines meae et juvenes mei abierunt in captivitatem.

My maids and youths [the Jewish people] have fled into captivity.

DALETH. Vide, Domine, quoniam tribulor: conturbatus est...

VERSE FOUR [actually 20]. See, Lord, how I am in tribulation: my bowels have been disturbed, [my heart has been subverted within me,] for I am filled with bitterness.

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Jerusalem, convert back to the Lord your God.

Miserere Nostri, Domine **Thomas Tallis**

Funeral Sentences for Queen Mary **Henry Purcell 1659-1695**

English composer Henry Purcell was active as composer to the court of Charles II, as organist at Westminster Abbey, and as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. The earliest version of his Funeral Sentences dates from about 1672 and was probably written on the death of one of his tutors, either Henry Cooke or Pelham Humfrey. Later in life Purcell substantially reworked the piece; the final version sung at the funeral of Queen Mary in 1695 was probably the third revision. The music was performed twice that year, once at the Queen's funeral in March and eight months later at Purcell's own after his sudden death from pneumonia at age 37. It has been sung at every royal funeral at the Abbey since 1695, most recently in 2002 at the Funeral of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

treble Jane McKinlay
countertenor Christopher Warwick
tenor Alastair Carey
bass David Treacher
continuo organ Maxwell Kenworthy

Miserere Nostri, Domine Thomas Tallis

Then David Mourned Thomas Tomkins 1572-1656

After the publication of the King James Bible in England in 1611 it became common for the King to be complimented on his wisdom and intellect by way of comparison with the Old Testament characters David and Solomon. So it was natural that English composers should turn to the life of David to compose laments on the death of James's son, Prince Henry, in November 1612. More than a dozen English settings of *When David Heard* date from this time, and several settings of David's earlier lament from the First Book of Samuel, *Then David Mourned*.

According to the Book of Samuel, King Saul tried to kill David after having become afraid of David's power and influence in Israel. David was protected by Saul's son Jonathan and the two men became very close friends. This first lament, composed by Chapel Royal musician Thomas Tomkins, occurs after the death of both Saul and Jonathan in the battle between Israel and the Philistines.

When David Heard Thomas Weelkes 1576-1623

Both Tomkins and his contemporary Thomas Weelkes – and as many as a dozen other English composers besides – made settings of the second lament, *When David Heard*. This lament comes from the end of the Second Book of Samuel. After the deaths of Saul and Jonathan David was anointed King of Israel. But while David was a great warrior and leader, his family life was troubled. His many sons and daughters quarrelled incessantly over who would eventually succeed David. Chief among the squabblers were David's eldest son Amnon and younger son Absalom. After eventually killing Amnon, Absalom was driven from Jerusalem. He decided to depose his father from the throne by triggering a civil war. He played politics and gained the favour of the people, then moved to the city of Hebron and declared himself King there, thus dividing Israel into two camps: those who followed David and those who followed Absalom.

It ultimately came to war. David's armies were victorious, but Absalom was killed while fleeing the battle (against David's explicit instructions that Absalom not be harmed). The text of the lament set by Weelkes comes immediately upon David receiving the news by messenger of Absalom's death. As in the Tomkins lament, the imagery in Weelkes' setting reflects that of early 17th century England mourning the loss of its Prince.

Lugebat David Absalom anon. attrib. Josquin des Prez 1450?-1521

Aside from its relevance to the death of Prince Henry in England, the *When David Heard* lament also has a broader liturgical symbolism that makes it appropriate for use in Holy Week: the symbolism of a father mourning the death of his son. *Lugebat*

David Absalom is a setting of the lament in Latin for eight voices. It is in two quite distinct parts and was probably originally composed as two separate motets that were later stitched together. The first motet is thought to be by Josquin des Prez's student Nicolas Gombert; the piece bears a striking resemblance to another also by Gombert. The second motet is in quite a different style and is similar in both mood and modality to other motets by Josquin. Tonight we sing the second motet. David, having just received news that Absalom is dead, retreats to his private chamber to grieve over his lost son.

Porro Rex operuit caput suum et clamabat voce magna:
"O fili mi Absalom."

*Then the King covered his head and cried in a loud voice:
"O my son Absalom."*

Civitas Sancti Tui William Byrd 1540?-1623

William Byrd was a staunch Catholic who, despite his prominent musical position in Elizabeth's Anglican court, continued to compose polyphonic Latin works for the underground Catholic Church in England throughout his working life. His Latin output culminated in the publication of his *Gradualia*, a complete setting of polyphonic motets and antiphons for the Catholic liturgical year split across two volumes published in 1605 and 1607. A monumental undertaking, it is an opus every bit the artistic equal of Palestrina's prolific output in Rome. This motet comes from the second volume of the *Gradualia* and shows the composer at his most expressive and emotional. The imagery is similar to that in the Book of Lamentations.

Civitas sancti tui facta est deserta: Sion deserta facta est.
Jerusalem desolata est.

*Your holy city is made a desert: Sion [Jerusalem] is made a desert.
Jerusalem is desolate.*

Miserere Nostri, Domine Thomas Tallis

Tristis est Anima Mea Francis Poulenc 1899-1963

The sudden loss of a close friend instils a grave and profound knowledge of one's own mortality. So it was for French composer Francis Poulenc. He immediately turned to the composition of sacred choral music after losing a close colleague in an automobile accident in 1936.

Tristis est Anima Mea is one of four motets for Lent composed by Poulenc in 1938. The dramatic range of expression used in this motet is especially intense, ranging from the visceral imagery of the disciples fleeing to Christ's quiet contemplation and acceptance of his own destiny. The text comes from Christ's dialogue with his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane immediately before his betrayal by Judas.

soprano Madeleine Pierard

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem: sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum, nunc videbitis turbam, quae circumdabit me.

My soul is anguished even unto death: stay here and watch with me, soon you shall see a horde of men surround me.

Vos fugam capietis, et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.
You shall flee away, and I shall sacrifice myself for you.
Ecce, appropinquat hora et filius hominis tradetur in manus peccatorum.
Behold, the hour approaches and the son of man shall be delivered into the hands of sinners.

Veni, Creator Spiritus **Richard Marlow 1939-**

This motet for choir, plainsong choruses and soprano solo was written for Richard Marlow's choir at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1984. The ancient Catholic hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, in both its Latin and English forms, serves as the basis of the work. Although more commonly associated today with the season of Pentecost, at the time the hymn was written (probably by the 8th century theologian Rabanus Maurus) the text was intended for recitation on any solemn occasion, including the consecration of buildings, the appointment of a Pope or Bishop, or a solemn feast day. The full choir slowly sings words from the first verse of the text in Latin while the plainsong choruses chant the verses of the English text in a variety of ever more complex phrases and rhythms.

soprano Madeleine Pierard

Veni, Creator Spiritus mentes tuorum visita;
Imple superna gratia quae tu creasti pectora.
Come, creator spirit and call upon our souls;
Fill with heavenly goodwill the hearts of those you have created.

Umbra Mortis **James Gardner 1962-**

In this motet for two soli and eleven part chorus, written specially for *The Tudor Consort* in 2005 by Auckland composer James Gardner, Satan and God joust with each other over the fate of Job while the defenceless man undergoes immense suffering at the hands of Satan and curses the day of his birth. The motet is startlingly contemporary yet makes frequent use of the Medieval and Renaissance technique of hocket where a single word of text is shared between several voices syllable by syllable.

God Madeleine Pierard
Satan Christopher Warwick
Choreography Jacqueline Coats

Chorus: Quadam autem die cum venissent filii Dei ut adsisterent coram Domino adfuit inter eos etiam Satan.
One day the sons of God [the angels] came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them.

God [to Satan]: Unde venis?
"Where have you come from?"
Satan: Circuivi terram et perambulavi eam.
"From roaming about the earth, and going back and forward across it."
God: Numquid considerasti servum meum Job? Quod non sit ei similes in terra; homo simplex et rectus et timens Deum ac recedens a malo.
"Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."
Satan: Numquid frustra timet Job Deum?
"Does Job fear God for nothing?"

Chorus: Nonne tu vallasti eum ac domum eius? Possessio illius crevit in terra.

"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? His flocks and herds are spread across the land."

Satan: Sed extende paululum manum tuam et tange cuncta quae possidet nisi in facie tua benedixerit tibi.

"But stretch out your hand and take away everything that he [Job] has and he will surely curse you to your face."

God: Ecce, universamque habet in manu tua, sunt tantum in eum ne extendas manum tuam.

"Behold, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger."

Chorus: Egressusque est Satan a facie Domini.

Then Satan left God's presence.

Chorus: Factum est autem cum quadam die venissent filii Dei et starent Dei venisset quoque Satan inter eos.

On another day the sons of God [the angels] came to present themselves before God and Satan also came with them.

Satan: Circuivi terram et perambulavi eam.

"[I have come] from roaming about the earth, and going back and forward across it."

God: Numquid considerasti servum meum Job? Quod non sit ei similes in terra; homo simplex et rectus et timens Deum ac recedens a malo et adhuc retinens innocentiam tu autem commovistime adversus eum ut adrectus et timens Deum adfligerem illum frustra.

"Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil and he still retains his integrity even though you incited me against him to ruin him and his fear of God without any reason."

Job curses the day he was born [chorus]: Eum caligo, ortum surgentis aurorae, mortum umbra tenebrosam, eius expectet lumina –

"[May] blackness [overwhelm] it", "[may it wait for] the rising of dawn [in vain]", "The darkness of the shadow of death [claim my birthday]", "[May it] wait for the light [in vain] –"

Satan: Pellam pro pelle: et cuncta quae habet homo dabit pro anima sua. Alioquin mitte manum tuam et tange os eius et carnem et tunc videbis.

"Skin for skin: a man will give all he has to spare his own life. Stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and then we will see [Job curse God]."

God: Ecce, in manu tua est verumtamen animam illius serva.

"Behold, he is in your hands but you must spare his life."

Chorus: Post haec aperurit Job os suum et maledixit diei suo et locutus est:

After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth and said:

Chorus: Pereat dies.

"[May my birth] day be destroyed [perish]."

Chorus: Non requirat eum Deus desuper et non inlustret lumine, obtenebrentur stellae caligine eius expectet lucem et non videat nec ortum surgentis aurorae antequam vadam et non revertar ad terram miseriae et tenebrarum ubi umbra mortis et sempiternus horror inhabitans.

"May God above not care about it [the day of my birth], and may no light shine on it, may the stars become dark, may it [the day of my birth] wait for [day] light in vain and not see the first rays of dawn before I go to the place of no return, to the land of misery and deepest night and the shadow of death and dwell in everlasting horror."

Miserere Nostri, Domine **Thomas Tallis**

Agnus Dei
Missa Simile est Regnum Coelorum
Tomas Luis de Victoria 1548?-1611

Scholar, mystic, priest, singer, organist and composer: Spanish musician Tomas Luis de Victoria can well lay claim to the title of finest composer of the Renaissance. His music is infused with characteristically optimistic mood, even in his masses and motets for Holy Week. This Agnus Dei is from the mass *Simile est Regnum Coelorum* for four voices but breaks out into an eight-part Agnus Dei where two groups of four equal voices sing to each other in perfect canon, using the same technique as heard in Tallis's *Miserere Nostris, Domine*.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: grant us your peace.

Miserere Nostris, Domine
Thomas Tallis

The musical scores for "Veni, Creator Spiritus"
by Richard Marlow used in this performance
were donated by Mr N. Kershaw.

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