

The Chantry Singers

THE GLORIES OF VENICE

Conductor: Peter Coulson

Organ: Mark Mawhinney

Worplesdon Parish Church

Saturday 4th December, 1993 at 8.30 p.m.

by kind permission of the Vicar *Rector*

PROGRAMME

Jubilate Deo	Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612)
Miserere mei, Deus	Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652)
Crucifixus	Antonio Lotti (1667-1740)
Ave maris stella	Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)
Ego flos campi	Claudio Monteverdi

Soprano: Jenny Hansell

Omnes gentes	Giovanni Gabrieli
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INTERVAL OF 20 MINUTES

Gloria	Claudio Monteverdi
Laudate Dominum	Claudio Monteverdi
Soprano: Jenny Hansell	
Beatus vir	Claudio Monteverdi
Magnificat	Claudio Monteverdi

The concert opens with the double-choir motet *Jubilare Deo omnis terra* which is typical of the characteristic style of pieces written for *coro spezzati* (spatially separated choirs). Giovanni Gabrieli was organist at the Basilica of St. Mark's, Venice from 1585, and his music made much use of antiphonal effects of voices which were obtainable there.

We depart from Venice briefly to visit the Sistine Chapel in Rome to enjoy the famous *Miserere* by Gregorio Allegri. He was a priest and tenor singer, and he served at the Chapel for the last part of his life. The *Miserere* was long kept as an exclusive possession of the Chapel. However it is said that Mozart, at the age of fourteen, secretly wrote out the work after hearing it at a service in the Chapel.

We return to Venice to hear the famous eight-part *Crucifixus* by Antonio Lotti. Lotti studied in Venice with Legranzi; he sang in St. Mark's choir in 1687, and was chief organist in 1704, and then maestro di capella in 1736.

The hymn *Ave maris stella* is from Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers*, and begins and ends with double-choir sonorities. The second and third verses are sung by each of the choirs in turn, with the plainsong now turned into triple time. An instrumental ritornello in dance rhythm separates the singing of the plainsong melody by three different soloists.

Ego flos campi is for solo soprano and continuo, and is from *Seconda raccolta de sacri canti* of 1624. The text is from the *Song of Songs* 2:1-3.

Omnes gentes is another example of the music written for *coro spezzati*, but this time Gabrieli uses four choirs, making a total of sixteen parts.

Claudio Monteverdi was a chorister in Cremona Cathedral, and a pupil of Ingegneri. He entered the service of the Duke of Mantua as a viol player and singer of madrigals. In 1612 he left Cremona, and in 1613

became the Master of Music of the Venetian Republic. He composed much sacred music for St. Mark's, which spread his fame throughout Europe. The second half of the programme is devoted entirely to the music from Monteverdi's *Selva morale e spirituale*, which was the first published collection of sacred music since his *1610 Vespers*, when he was employed at the court of Mantua. The dedication of this collection was signed in Venice on 1st May, 1641.

The seven-part *Gloria* uses solo voices and full choir effects, with rapid semiquaver movement in each part. There is a marked contrast between the *Gloria in excelsis* and the calm *Et in terra pax* with its sustained progression of chords.

The *Laudate Dominum*, for soprano solo, is a setting of Psalm 150. The piece involves some very florid passages to colour the words *laudate Dominum* and *Alleluia*.

The *Beatus vir* is a large-scale psalm setting for six voices and violins which was undoubtedly composed for use at St. Mark's Vespers. The first section employs a 'walking bass' and an imitative motif for the two violins. There is much use of word-painting: *in aeternum* and *non commovebitur* are set to long repeated notes, *irascetur* is set to quick and hasty diction, *fremet* has a semiquaver flourish, and *peribit* follows a falling line into silence.

Our concert closes with the great double-choir *Magnificat*, also from Monteverdi's music for Vespers. The various themes of the music are heard throughout the different voice parts in the two choirs, and there are contrasts between the smooth chromatic lines and the lively rhythmic motifs.

The Chantry Singers' next concert will take place on 5th March 1994 in Farnham Parish Church. The programme will consist of Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs* and Brahms' *German Requiem*.