

*The Chantry Singers*

**JOHN TAVERNER**

(c.1490-1545)

**Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas**

Conductor: Peter Coulson

Saturday 2nd December, 1995

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford

## Programme

Introit:

Ave Maria Robert Parsons (d. 1570)

Kyrie le Roy John Taverner (c.1490-1545)

Gloria tibi Trinitas Antiphon

MISSA GLORIA TIBI TRINITAS John Taverner

Soloists: Soprano I: Claire Rennison  
Soprano II: Sylvia Coghill  
Alto: Jane George  
Tenor I: Robert Watson  
Tenor II: Kevin Jacko  
Baritone: Jonathan Williams  
Bass: Nigel Edwards

GLORIA

Gradual Anthem:

Dum transisset sabbatum (1) John Taverner

CREDO

**Interval of 20 minutes**

Offertory Motet:

Sacerdotes Domini William Byrd (c.1542-1623)

SANCTUS

Communion Motet:

O sacrum convivium Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

AGNUS DEI

Organ Interludes played by Mark Mawhinney

**The audience is asked to refrain from applauding until the very end of the programme.**

The concert this evening commemorates the 450th anniversary of the death of John Taverner. The programme is structured in the form of a mass, the main setting of the text being Taverner's *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas*.

John Taverner was a chorister at the Collegiate Church in Tattershall, near Lincoln, before becoming choirmaster there in 1524. He went on to be organist of Cardinal College (now Christchurch), Oxford in 1525, where he stayed until 1530.

The *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas* is the most outstanding example of Taverner's festal music, and shows his greatness as one of the polyphonic masters of sixteenth century English music. One can hear the exuberant influence of the late fifteenth century Eton Choirbook composers, such as John Browne, and also the more controlled polyphonic style, which was later to be heard in the music of Thomas Tallis.

The name of the mass comes from the cantus firmus on which the work is based. The *Gloria tibi Trinitas* is the first of four Vespers Psalms to be sung for Trinity Sunday. The mass is scored for treble and mean, two countertenors, tenor, and bass; in modern terms, we would describe this as soprano, alto, two tenors, baritone and bass. It is unusual to hear the cantus firmus in solo as well as full sections, and placed in the mean (the alto part) rather than in the usual tenor. Taverner probably wanted the well-known plainsong antiphon (which tonight shall be sung before the *Gloria*) to be heard clearly by the more musical clerics of Cardinal College. The mass omits some of the text of the *Credo*: 'et in Spiritum Sanctum' to 'in remissionem peccatorum.' The reason for this seems to have been a purely artistic one; by reducing the length of the *Credo* text, the four movements are about the same length.

The Latin pronunciation of Taverner's day was very different from its modern Italianate equivalent - this being the pronunciation we are used to hearing in sung masses today. The performance this evening takes account of this fact, and the pronunciation ignores any Italian influence.

The first item you hear tonight is the setting of *Ave Maria* by Robert Parsons. It is regarded as one of the treasures of English church music with its highly expressive polyphony, and concluding with an incredibly sublime *Amen*.

There were three types of daily Mass celebrations at Cardinal College: the Mass of the day, the 'Morrow' Mass, and the Votive Mass of the Virgin, or 'Lady Mass'. The *Kyrie le Roy* was probably written for the last of these types, when it was sung by a small group of singers, normally in the Lady Chapel.

Taverner's first setting of the text *Dum transisset sabbatum* is one of his best known works. It is an Easter respond, with the cantus firmus heard in the baritone. The respond is set to polyphony, with the opening two words and verses sung to plainsong.

William Byrd's *Sacerdotes Domini* is from his *Gradualia, Book I*, which was a collection of 63 of his motets published in 1605. This setting was written for the Festival of Corpus Christi, and shows Byrd to be equal to his French and Italian contemporaries as a contrapuntist.

Thomas Tallis taught Byrd, and was organist jointly with him at the Chapel Royal. They published a collection of motets, *Cantiones sacrae*, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I, in 1575. *O sacrum convivium*, which comes from this collection, was written as the Vespers Antiphon for the feast of Corpus Christi. The motet is scored for five voices, with two alto parts, and demonstrates Tallis' great contrapuntal ingenuity.

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### Ave Maria

Ave maria, gratia plena,  
Dominus tecum, benedicta tu,  
in mulieribus, et benedictus  
fructus ventris tui. Amen.

Hail Mary, thou that are highly  
favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed  
art thou among women and blessed be  
the fruit of thy womb. Amen.

### Kyrie

Kyrie, eleison.  
Christe, eleison.  
Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy.

### Antiphon

Gloria tibi Trinitas,  
Equalis una Deitas,  
Et ante omnia secula,  
Et nunc, et in perpetuum.

Glory be to thee, O Trinity,  
One equal Godhead  
As it was in the beginning,  
Is now, and ever shall be.

## **Gloria**

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gracias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus rex celestis Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe. Domine Deus Agnus Dei Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory be to God on high. And in earth peace to men of good will. We praise thee. We bless thee. We worship thee. We glorify thee. We give thanks to thee for thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord the only begotten Son, Jesu Christ. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, thou only art the Most High, Jesu Christ, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## **Dum transisset sabbatum**

Dum transisset sabbatum Maria Magdalena et Maria Jacobi et Salome emerunt aromata ut venientes Jesum, Alleluia.

Et valde mane una sabbatorum veniunt ad monumentum orto iam sole.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices to go and anoint Jesus. Alleluia.

And at dawn on the first day of the week they came to the tomb just as the sun was rising.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

## **Credo**

**Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, Factorem celi et terre, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum Filium Dei unigenitum. Et ex Patre natum ante omnia secula. Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de celis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine. Et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas. Et ascendit in celum, sedet ad dexteram patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos. Cujus regni non erit finis. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi seculi. Amen.**

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God. God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven. And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day he rose again according to the scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **Sacerdotes Domini**

**Sacerdotes Domini incensum et panes offerunt Deo et ideo sancti erunt Deo suo et non polluent nomen eius. Alleluia.**

**Then did priests make offering of incense and loaves of finest wheat to God, and therefore shall they be holy to their Lord God and shall not defile his most holy name. Alleluia.**

## **Sanctus**

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Osanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

## **O sacrum convivium**

O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur, recolitur memoria passionis eius, mens impletur gratia, et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.

O sacred feast in which the body of Christ is consumed, the memory of his passion is brought to mind, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of the glory to come is given to us.

## **Agnus Dei**

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

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The choir would like to thank Timothy Symons for the use of his edition of the *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas*, and Adrian Mumford for the loan of his Nigel Church organ.

The next *Chantry Singers'* concert will be on Saturday 16th March, 1996 at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford. The programme will include Gounod's *St. Cecilia Mass*.

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*Cantus Firmus Music wishes the Chantry Singers  
every success with their performance of Taverner's  
Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas*

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