Cal Performances Presents

Saturday, March 28, 2009, 8pm
First Congregational Church

The Tallis Scholars
Peter Phillips, director

PROGRAM

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525–1594) Surge, illuminare (part 1)

Peter Philips (c.1560–1628) Ecce vicit Leo

Philips Ave Jesu Christe

Orlande de Lassus (c.1532–1594) Missa Bel’ Amfrit’ altera

INTERMISSION

Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625) O clap your hands

Dominique Phinot (c.1510–c.1556) Lamentations

Alonso Lobo (c.1555–1617) Ave Maria

Jean Mouton (c.1459–1522) Nesciens Mater

Hieronymus Praetorius (1560–1629) Magnificat IV

In North America, The Tallis Scholars are managed by International Arts Foundation, Inc., 121 West 27th Street, Suite 703, New York, New York 10001-6262, info@internationalartsfoundation.org.

Please visit The Tallis Scholars’ newly designed website at www.gimell.com.
For additional information, please visit thetallisscholars.co.uk.

Cal Performances’ 2008–2009 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.
After traveling for five years, he settled first in Antwerp and then in Brussels in the chapel of the Duke of Alva. Lassus's Missa Bel' Amfitrit' altera was published in 1650, just three years before Philips's motets. The similarity ends there, however. This mass was published posthumously and represents the work of a previous generation. In fact, Lassus was just seven years younger than Palestrina. Lassus spent some of his youth in Rome, but in 1536, aged just 24, he was invited to join the chapel of Albrecht V of Bavaria in Munich where he remained until his death. In contrast to the Palestrina and Philips motets on tonight's program, this mass contains much more fluid, equal, eight-voice counterpoint. The Venetian homophonic and declamatory rhythmic style and slower harmonic movement, typified in the works of the Gabriels, with which Lassus was familiar, can be seen in the second Kyrie, in many passages in the Credo, and at the "Pleni sunt caeli" and "Hosanna" in the Sanctus. However, the peculiar setting of "Et unam sanctam catholicam" in the Credo, with the "Pleni sunt caeli" and "Hosanna" in the Sanctus. However, the peculiar

Another stylistic device not often employed by Palestrina was to mix and match voices to create choirs of varying texture, not always sticking to the two choirs set out in the score. This occurs at "Qui tollis peccata mundi" and "Cum sancto spiritu" in the Gloria and, strikingly, at "Et in Spiritum Sanctum" in the Credo, where a high-voice choir is contrasted with low voices immediately following with "qui ex Patre Filioque procedit." While the manipulation of vocal texture and timbre is a feature of all vocal music written in the Renaissance, the conception of these blocks of sound deployed in contrast with one another would form the basis upon which the Baroque sound world would test.

Tonight's concert rightly closes with a piece by Hieronymus Praetorius. Praetorius, a direct contemporary of Peter Philips, wrote an enormous quantity of double-choir music, most including the more modern approaches heard in tonight's concert. This Magnificat setting comes from a volume of nine published first in 1602 but again in 1622 with, importantly, the addition of a bassus continuus part. Here is the last piece in the gradually forming Baroque puzzle. Instrumentation aside, to experience Praetorius's distinctive double-choir style, one need only listen for the striking gesture at the words "dispersit superbos." Praetorius's use of this technique, foreshadowed in Lassus's Missa Bell' Amfirit'a altera, represents probably the most extreme form of this rapid repetition and wild rhythm contrast. Another unique passage occurs at the text, "implevit bonis," where the Choir 1 mand in again a mixture of varying textural devices, but the ingenuity with which the horizontal and vertical writing styles are blended gradually increases over the course of each section and of the entire work, the final "Jerusalem" section bringing the two together fully.

The next two works on tonight's program form a pair. This said, Alonso Lobo and Jean Mouton never met, as Lobo was born more than a century after Mouton. Mouton is the earliest composer whose music appears on tonight's program, a contemporary of Josquin des Prez. As with many of these earlier composers, Mouton was a master of elaborate counterpoint, especially canon technique. Nowhere is this more obvious than in Nosce Ratio Mater. Alonso Lobo, a century later, would, return to precisely this technique in his Ave Maria. Both works consist of four strict canons at the fifth, four voices repeating what the other four just sang a fifth higher. This music is less an exercise in arranging blocks of sound and more a stunning display of canonic virtuosity. Mouton's work is a masterpiece. His ability to create such an inviting sonority, maintain it for what seems like vast expanses of time, and slowly increase the intensity of the music through first subtle variations in texture and then exploring the upper extremities of vocal ranges is absolutely astounding given the contrapuntal demands of these four simultaneous canons. Lobo's work is no less astonishing, but here he manages to pay homage to the predominant double-choir style of his time, as the first few phrases are homophonic and alternate between choirs. Lobo is also, impressively, able to incorporate passages of plainsong cantus firmus material and, crucially, some of the more exotic sonorities characteristic of late 16th-century Spanish style.

Orlando Gibbons shows us a more sophisticated, later example of double-choir writing. In O Clap your hands, probably written around 1620, Gibbons explores virtually every possibility afforded him by both eight-voice counterpoint and poly-choral homophony. He does this, however, with such ease, variation, logic, and flourish that it is no wonder this has become one of his most popular pieces. It is conventional wisdom that this piece was written to obtain a doctorate at Oxford University and therefore leans more toward the contrapuntal than the homophonic, but in passages like "O sing praises" and "For God which is highly exalted," the old technique of choruses echoing one another is used to great effect.

Dominique Phinot is not a name with which many listeners might be familiar. Not much is known of his life: it appears he spent time in Urbino and Lyon but details are scarce. Phinot was born near the end of the first decade of the 16th century and therefore represents yet another, earlier generation of composers. However, a small collection of his music, of which this Lamentations setting was a member, was very famous in its day and known by many, including Palestrina and Lassus. This work contains again a mixture of varying textural devices, but the ingenuity with which the horizontal and vertical writing styles are blended gradually increases over the course of each section and of the entire work, the final "Jerusalem" section bringing the two together fully.
Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam, Domine

te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te. Gratias

Gloria


Kyrie

majestatis tuae gloria.

praesentem in aliena forma, sic te mereamur videre in

Panis angelorum, te rogamus, ut sicut hic te videmus

Jesu, lumen coeli, praetium mundi, gaudium nostrum.

salus, hostia sacra, verbum caro, fons pietatis. Ave

Ave Jesu Christe

Hail, Jesus Christ, word of the Father, son of a virgin, savior of the world, holy sacrifice, precious word, fountain of piety. Hail Jesus, light of heaven, most valued on earth, our joy. Bread of angels, we ask thee, that just as we see thee present here in a different shape, so we may be able to see thee in the glory of thy majesty.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre filioque procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas.


Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Benedictus

Benedictus is he that cometh in name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnae Dei

Agnae Dei tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnae Dei

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Orlando Gibbons: O clap your hands

O clap your hands together, all ye people: O sing unto God with the voice of melody. For the Lord is high, and to be feared: he is the great King of all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet. He shall choose out an heritage for us, even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved. God is gone up with a merry noise: and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.

O sing praises, sing praises unto our God: O sing praises, sing praises unto the Lord our King. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon his holy seat. For God, which is highly exalted, doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Dominique Phinot

Incipit oratio Jeremiae prophetae.

Recordare Domine quid acciderit nobis: intuere, et re-
spice opprobium nostrum. Haereditas nostra versa est ad
alienos: domus nostrae ad extraneos. Pupilli facti sumus
absque patre, matres nostrae quasi viduae. Aquam nos-
tram pecunia bibimus: ligna nostra pretio comparavi-
mus. Cervicibus nostris minabamur, lassis non dabatur
requies. Aegypto dedimus manum et Assyriis, ut satu-
raremur pane. Patres nostri peccaverunt, et non sunt: et
nos iniquitates eorum portavimus. Servi dominati sunt
nostris: non fuit qui redimeret de manu eorum.

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Ave Maria

Ave Maria, gratia plena: Dominus tecum, Benedicta tu
in mulieribus, et benedictus fuctus ventris tuis, Jesu.

Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
Nunc et in hora mortis nostrae, Amen.

Jean Mouton

Nesciens mater virgo virum peperit sine dolore.

Salvatorem saeculorum ipsum regem angelorum, Sola
virgo lactabat ubere de caelo pleno.

Hieronymus Praetorius

Magnificat anima mea Dominum Et exultavit spiritus
meus in Deo salutari meo. Quia respetit humilitatem
ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et
sanctum nomen eius. Et misericordia eius a progenie in
progenies timentibus eum. Fecit potentiam in bracchio
suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui. Deposuit po-
tentes de sede et exaltavit humiles. Esurientes implevit
bonis et divites dimisit inanes, Suscepit Israel puermum
suum recordatus misericordiae suae, Sicut locutus est ad
patres nostros, Abraham et semiini eius in saecula.

Magnificat IV

My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath
rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded: the
lowliness of his handmaiden. For behold, from hence-
forth: all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is
mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name. And
his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all gen-
erations. He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath
scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath
exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hun-
gry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty
away. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant
Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and
his seed, forever. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end. Amen.

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be, world without end. Amen.
The Tallis Scholars were founded in 1973 by their director, Peter Phillips. Through their recordings and concert performances, they have established themselves as the leading exponents of Renaissance sacred music throughout the world. Peter Phillips has worked with the ensemble to create, through good tuning and blending, the purity and clarity of sound which he feels best serve the Renaissance repertoire, allowing every detail of the musical lines to be heard. It is the resulting beauty of sound for which The Tallis Scholars have become so widely renowned.

The Tallis Scholars perform in both sacred and secular venues, giving around 70 concerts each year across the globe. Their 2008–2009 season includes two U.S. tours, a visit to Mexico, a return tour of Japan, and appearances at festivals and venues across the U.K. and Europe in addition to their own Choral Series at Cadogan Hall. In July 2009, The Tallis Scholars will team up with the National Centre for Early Music and the BBC in a nationwide competition, designed to encourage young people to write for unaccompanied voices. The winning entry will be part of the concert which will open the 2009 York Festival, alongside Taverner’s spectacular Missa Corona spinea.

The Tallis Scholars’ career highlights include a tour of China in 1999, featuring two concerts in Beijing, and the privilege of performing in the Sistine Chapel in April 1994 to mark the final stage of the complete restoration of the Michelangelo frescoes. This was broadcast simultaneously on Italian and Japanese television and is now available on DVD. The ensemble have commissioned many contemporary composers during their history; in 1998 the Scholars celebrated their 25th anniversary with a special concert in London’s National Gallery, set up by Peter Phillips and Steve Smith in 1981 solely to record the Scholars. In February 1994, Peter Phillips and The Tallis Scholars performed on the 400th anniversary of the death of Palestrina in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, where Palestrina had trained as a choirboy and later worked as Maestro di Cappella. The concerts were recorded by Gimell and are available on both CD and DVD.

Recordings by The Tallis Scholars have attracted many awards throughout the world. In 1987, their recording of Josquin’s Missa La folla re mi and Missa Pange lingua received Gramophone’s Record of the Year award, still the only recording of early music ever to win this coveted award. In 1989, the French magazine Diapason gave two of its coveted Diapason d’Or de l’Année awards for recordings of a mass and motets by Lassus and of Josquin’s two masses based on the chanson L’Homme armé. Their recording of Palestrina’s Missa Assumpta est Maria and Missa Sicula licium was awarded Gramophone’s Early Music Award in 1991: they received the 1994 Early Music Award for their recording of music by Cipriano de Rore; and the same distinction again in 2005 for their disc of music by John Browne, which was also nominated for a Grammy Award. Their most recent disc, featuring the music of Josquin, received exceptional reviews and was awarded a further Diapason d’Or. These accolades are continuing evidence of the exceptionally high standard maintained by The Tallis Scholars and of their dedication to one of the great repertoires in Western classical music.

Peter Phillips has made an impressive if unusual reputation for himself in dedicating his life’s work to the research and performance of Renaissance polyphony. Having won a scholarship to Oxford in 1972, Mr. Phillips studied Renaissance music with David Wulstan and Denis Arnold, and gained experience in conducting small vocal ensembles, already experimenting with the rarer parts of the repertoire. He founded The Tallis Scholars in 1973, with whom he has now appeared in over 1,500 concerts and made over 50 discs, encouraging interest in polyphony all over the world. As a result of his work, through concerts, recordings, magazine awards, publishing editions of the music and writing articles, Renaissance music has come to be accepted for the first time as part of the mainstream classical repertoire.

Apart from The Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips continues to work with other specialist ensembles. Among others, he has appeared with the Collegium Vocale of Ghent, broadcasting live on French radio from the Saintes festival; the Tudor Choir of Seattle; and Musix of Budapest. Mr. Phillips also works extensively with the BBC Singers, with whom he gave a Promenade concert, in collaboration with The Tallis Scholars, from the Royal Albert Hall in July 2007, which was broadcast live and attended by more than 5,000 people. He gives numerous master classes and choral workshops every year around the world and is also Artistic Director of the Tallis Scholars Summer School—U.K. and U.S.-based choral courses dedicated to exploring the heritage of Renaissance choral music and developing a performance style appropriate to it as pioneered by The Tallis Scholars. January 2007 marked the first Summer School in Sydney, Australia. Mr. Phillips has recently been appointed Director of Music at Merton College, Oxford, where he established a new Choral Foundation in 2008.

In addition to conducting, Mr. Phillips is well known as a writer. For many years, he has contributed a regular music column (as well as one on cricket) to The Spectator. In 1995, he became owner and publisher of The Musical Times, the oldest continuously published music journal in the world. His first book, English Sacred Music, 1549–1649, was published by Gimell in 1991, and his second, What We Really Do, an unblinking account of what touring is like, alongside insights about the make-up and performance of polyphony, was published in 2003.

Mr. Phillips has made numerous television and radio broadcasts. Besides those featuring The Tallis Scholars (which include live broadcasts from the 2001, 2003 and 2007 Proms, the Aldeburgh Festival, the Bath Festival and the Cheltenham Festival), he has appeared several times on the BBC’s Music Weekly and on the BBC World Service, on Kaleidoscope (BBC Radio 4), on Today (BBC Radio 4), National Public Radio in the United States and on German, French and Canadian radio. In 2002, The Tallis Scholars made a special television documentary for the BBC about the life and times of William Byrd.

In 2005, Peter Phillips was made a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture. A decoration intended to honor or individuals who have contributed to the understanding of French culture in the world. In 2006, his song-cycle for contralto, Four Rondos by Charles d’Orleans, was premiered at the Guggenheim Museum in New York to critical acclaim.

Sightlines

The Tallis Scholars: Music for Double Choir

Saturday, March 28, 2009, 7–7:30pm, First Congregational Church

Pre-performance talk by Artistic Director Peter Phillips and musicologist Paul M. Ellison, San Francisco State University.

These Sightlines events are free to all ticket holders.