Saturday, March 26, 2011, 8pm  
First Congregational Church

The Tallis Scholars  
Peter Phillips, director

The Victoria Project: Victoria’s Influence

PROGRAM

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611) O Magnum Mysterium (1572)
Victoria Missa O Magnum Mysterium (1592)
  Kyrie
  Gloria
  Credo
  Sanctus
  Benedictus
  Agnus Dei

Sebastián de Vivanco (c.1551–1622) Magnificat Octavi Toni

INTERMISSION

Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla (1548–1611) Lamentations
Victoria Lamentations for Holy Thursday (1585)

Alonso Lobo (1555–1617) Versa est in luctum (c.1602)
Francisco Guerrero (1528–1599) Usquequo, Domine (1566)
Guerrero Regina cæli lætare (1584)

This concert is presented in honor of Early Music America’s 25th anniversary.

Cal Performances’ 2010–2011 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.
**Victoria’s Influence**

**Writing in the preface** to his Liber Vesperarum of 1584, Francisco Guerrero explained his life’s work: “...not to caress the ears of pious persons with my songs, but on the contrary to excite their souls to devout contemplation of the sacred mysteries.” It is this refusal to caress, to soften the unyielding edges either of harmony or liturgy, that has come to characterise the music of the Spanish Golden Age. Fostered in the distinctive craftsmanship of Morales and later Guerrero, this tradition of spiritual intensity reached its craggy peak in the music of Tomás Luis de Victoria.

Tonight’s program places Victoria—whose 400th anniversary we celebrate this year—in context. We explore not only the work of his contemporaries, forebears and followers, but also the musical range of Victoria himself, moving from the extrovert energy of his Missa O Magnum Mysterium to the charged restraint of the Lamentations for Holy Week.

Working dually as priest and composer, Victoria (1548–1611) reached his professional maturity in the shadow of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Under reforming monarch Philip II, Spain embraced the edicts of the Counter Reformation. Under reforming monastic, even if on closer inspection the imitative sections are treated as a single group. With the exception of a short verse section, “Et misericordia eius,” the full eight-voice texture is sustained over one another, drawing the ear into the seemingly endless cycles of harmonic movement. Suspensions push and pull, ebbing at last to a gloriously redemptive close on a major chord.

Victoria’s own Lamentations (of which we hear only the first set tonight, composed for the first Nocturn at Matins on Maundy Thursday) see the composer at his most distilled. Barely polyphonic in many parts, the impact of these epics-in-miniature is both cumulative—developed through the three sets of three Lamentations performed on consecutive days during Holy Week—and daringly raw. With the music’s polyphonic skin flayed almost entirely away, Victoria exposes the emotional musculature of the text, at its most charged in the refrain, “Jerusalem, convertere,” with which each movement ends. Expanding his forces in each of these sections, Victoria uses the additional voice to add emphasis and weight. Far from a contrapuntal release, the result is an intensifying of almost unbearable poignancy.

Composed for the funeral of Philip II in 1598, Lobo’s (1555–1617) motet Versa est in lucum sets an unusual text from Job, “My harp is turned to mourning”—a text later used by Victoria to equally striking effect. Possibly intended for performance at the elevation of the Host, the evocative imagery and rapt simplicity of the work have placed it among the greatest of its period, music worthy of a composer hailed by Victoria as an equal. Waves of entries roll over one another, drawing the ear into the seemingly endless cycles of harmonic movement. Suspensions push and pull, ebbing at last to a gloriously redemptive close on a major chord.

Surpassing Victoria in reputation during his lifetime, the other Guerrero (1528–1599) was revered above all as a technician. Capable of supreme polyphonic feats, his personal faith informed a style whose smooth-surfaced elegance frames an awkward and intense spiritual sincerity. Tonight we hear two contrasting works: a joyful Eastertide anthem and a penitential motet, charged with restrained emotion.

Scored once again for six voices, Guerrero’s setting of Psalm 13—Usquequo, Domine—is sombre in tone. Whereas many of the composer’s penitential motets are coloured with vivid chromaticism, the tonality of Usquequo, Domine is barely disturbed. The long melodic lines and unhurried pace heighten the motet’s emotional scope, framing with changelessness the question stressed so poignantly in the many rising intervals, the question that roots the work in human grief: “How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me?”

The bright Regina cali setting separates its eight voices into double choir, but rather than alternating exchanges between the two, Guerrero instead treats his voices as part of a single textural continuum, phasing parts in and out of freely shifting ensembles. The counterpoint is deceptively dense, its lyrical imitation belying the tightly structured treatment the plainchant melody receives. Only at “ora pro nobis” do the pealing rising scales and motor rhythms give way to a moment of contemplation, as just four upper voices beg with fragile urgency for the Virgin’s intercession.

*Alexandra Coghlan*
O magnum mysterium
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in præsepio.
O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt
portare Dominum Jesum Chistum.
Alleluia!

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

Glory to God in high the highest,
and in earth peace, goodwill towards men.
We praise you. We bless you.
We worship you. We glorify you.
We give you thanks for Your great glory.
Lord God, Heavenly king,
Almighty God the Father,
Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
You take away the sins of the world;
have mercy on us;
You take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
You sit at the right hand of the Father;
have mercy on us.
For you alone are holy,
You along are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the Glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas; et ascen-
dit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris; et iterum ven-
turus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos; cuius
regnis non erit finis.

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

Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam
Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem
peccatorum. Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum,
et vitam venturi seculi.
Amen.

Kyrie

Gloria
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedictimus te.
Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

Benedictus
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

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

Sebastián de Vivanco
Magnificat Octavi Toni

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.
Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ:
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum
nomens eius.
Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenie timentibus
eum.
Fecit potentiam in brachio su: dispersit superbos
mente cordis sui.

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 henceforth: 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
generations.
He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scat-
tered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
Deposuit potentem sede; et exaltavit humiles.
Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanis.
Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in sacula.
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum.

Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia.
Regina cæli lætare, alleluia,
Respice, et exaudi me Domine Deus meus.
Usquequo exaltabitur inimicus meus super me?
Usquequo avertis faciem tuam a me?
Usquequo, Domine, oblivisceris me in finem?
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Usquequo, Domine, obliveriscis me in finem?
Usquequo avertis faciem tuam a me?
Quamdiu ponam consilia in anima mea, dolorem in corde meo per diem?
Usquequo exaltabur inimicus meus super me?
Respie, etcaudi me Domine Deus meus.

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Respie, etcaudi me Domine Deus meus.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn to the Lord your God.

Lamentation 2
Vau: Et egressus est a filia Sion omnis decor eius:
facti sunt principes eius velut arietes non invententes
pascua:
et abierunt absque fortitudine ante faciem subsequentis.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Lamentation 3
Iod: Manus suam misit hostis ad omnia desiderabilia
eius:
quia vidit Gentes ingressas sanctuarium suum,
de quibus præceperas ne intrarent in ecclesiam tuam.
Caph: Omnis populus eius gemens, et quarens panem:
dererunt prætiosa quæque pro cibo ad refocillandam
animan.
Vide, Domine, et considera, quoniam facta sum villis!
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, turn to the Lord your God.

Versa est in luctum
Versa est in luctum cithara mea,
et organum meum in vocem flentium.

Francisco Guerrero
Usquequo, Domine

Usquequo, Domine, obliveriscis me in finem?
Usquequo avertis faciem tuam a me?
Quamdiu ponam consilia in anima mea, dolorem in corde meo per diem?
Usquequo exaltabur inimicus meus super me?
Respie, etcaudi me Domine Deus meus.

How long, O Lord, will you disregard me, forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?
Consider and hear me, O Lord, my God.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

Lamentation 1
Incipit lamentatio Jeremia prophetae
Aleph: Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo:
Facta est quasi vidua Domina gentium.
Principes provinciarum facta est sub tributo.
Beth: Plorans ploravit in nocte et lacrimæ eius in maxillis eius.

Incipit lamentatio Jeremia prophetae
Aleph: How desolate lies the city that was once full of people:
The Queen of nations has become a widow:
The ruler of provinces is now subject to others:
Beth: By night she weeps in sorrow and tears run down her cheeks.

Here begins the lamentation of the prophet Jeremiah:
The Queen of nations has become a widow:
The ruler of provinces is now subject to others:
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Lamentations
Victoria
Lamentations for Holy Thursday

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Beth: Plorans ploravit in nocte et lacrimæ eius in maxillis eius.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry 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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Amen.
Sunday, March 27, 2011, 3pm
First Congregational Church

The Tallis Scholars
Peter Phillips, director

The Victoria Project: Victoria’s Greatest Hits

PROGRAM

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548–1611)

Dum complerentur (1572)

Quem vidistis, pastores? (1572)

Nigra sum (1576)

Four Responsories for Tenebrae (1585)

Animam meam dilectam
Tradiderunt me
Jesum tradidit impius
Caligaverunt oculi mei

Surrexit pastor bonus (1572)

INTERMISSION

Victoria Requiem (1605)

Taedet animam meam
Introitus
Kyrie
Graduale
Offertorium
Sanctus et Benedictus
Agnus Dei
Communio
Funeral Motet
Respontory

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Victoria’s Greatest Hits

Today’s program reflects the breadth of a composer capable of the generous beauty of a Marian antiphon and the energy of a Pentecostal motet, yet who is at his most potent in the stripped-back music of penitence—the astonishing Requiem and music for Holy Week of Tomás Luis de Victoria.

With the exception of Tallis’s Loquebantur varis linguè, few Pentecostal motets achieve the sense of ecstatic urgency of Victoria’s Dum completerunt. “And suddenly they heard a great sound from heaven, alleluia, like a hurricane in its fury,” Mirroring the liturgical form of the Responsory in his musical setting, Victoria structures his motet in two sections, each punctuated with an “alleluia” refrain. The counterpoint is unusually conventional: each section opens with staggered points of imitation, giving a sense of organic growth that culminates each time in an alleluia. These alleluias develop from the almost homophonic first statement to the pealing scalic chatter of the final one, a vivid aural rendering of the flickering fire of the Holy Spirit and the clamor of the disciples speaking in tongues.

Another Responsory, this time for Christmas, Quem vidistis, pastores? dramatizes the traditional dialogue between the Shepherds and questioners who ask them to tell of Christ’s nativity. Dividing his forces for dramatic effect into two choirs (one of upper, the other of lower voices), Victoria plays them off each other, using their antiphonal exchanges to mirror the textual dialogue. We open with a question, but rather than allow Choir I to utter it alone, Victoria brings in Choir II, dovetailing their counterpoint into that of Choir I and creating a sense of eagerness that grows through the piece, culminating in the insistently repeated demand: “dicite.”

Rich in sensuous imagery and description, the Song of Songs inspired some of the finest Marian music of the Renaissance. The antiphon text Nigra sum sed formosa was among the most popular, with evocative settings by Palestrina and Monteverdi, among others. In contrast to the rapt intensity Palestrina creates, Victoria here uses his six-part texture to unusually light effect, pairing and grouping the voices with madrigalian attention to the text. Particularly striking are the series of rising scalar entries (led by the second soprano) at the words “Surgere amica mea,” a vivid piece of word-painting that reflects the joyous urgency of the words.

Although sharing its ssatb forces with Nigra sum, EASTERTIDE motet Surrerexit pastor bonus is an altogether weightier affair. Busy with imitative counterpoint, the dense texture is only leavened by Victoria’s skilled manipulation of his polyphony. At times the work almost feels polychoral, especially in the opening entries that set upper voices against lower, which places greater emphasis on the rare moments of homophony. The sudden stillness and sustained chords of “mori dignatus est” (‘vouchsafed to die’) give emotive pause to the motet’s forward-moving energy—recovered in time to celebrate in an animated alleluia.

With their gradual progression from light into darkness and the noisy clamor of the strepitus at the close, the three Tenebrae services of Holy Week are some of the most atmospheric of the liturgical year. Celebrated usually on the evenings before Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, these services each follow the same pattern. Combining the offices of Matins and Lauds, the opening Matins is divided into three Nocturns, each including three Lessons and three Responsories.

Tonight we hear four Responsories from the Second and Third Nocturns for Good Friday. Following the structure common to all 18 Responsories, each piece frames a central section for a reduced number of solo voices (c) within four-part music, giving the shape ABCAB. This is further extended with repeats in the third of each set (as you hear in Caligaverunt oculi mei) to create an ABCAB structure.

Distinguished by their exquisite simplicity, the Responsories represent Victoria at his most angular, serving his text with the very sharpest musical tools at his disposal. Adversaries and spiritual hardships permeate these bleak writings; the shouts of the enemy “Congregamini et properate” from Animam meam dilectam, the strength of the adversary in Tradiderunt me (vividly rendered in a rare passage of extended melisma) and the painful chromatic ironies of Caligaverunt oculi mei in which “he that consoled me is far away,” all emerge in minutely etched detail, uncluttered by complex counterpoint or adornment.

Composed at the turn of the new century, at the very end of Victoria’s life, it is hard not to see the Requiem a 6 as an elegy for Spain’s Golden Age. The Dowager Empress Maria, Philip II’s sister and Victoria’s patroness, died in 1603, prompting the composer’s second Requiem setting. In addition to the standard liturgical movements, the work unusually includes an introductory lesson from the Matins of the Dead, Tadet animam meam (“My soul is weary of my life”) as well as a funeral motet, Versa est in luctum.

Much of the Requiem’s distinctive character comes from its six-part texture, sustained throughout by the word-painting that Victoria reaches his greatest heights in the freely composed Tadet animam meam in which “he that consoled me is far away,” all emerge in minutely etched detail, uncluttered by complex counterpoint or adornment.

That this is the work of a priest is everywhere evident. The second iteration of the Kyrie—some of the Requiem’s simplest music texturally—glows with intensity, a plea for mercy whose desperate sincerity cannot but move. Yet it is arguably in the freely composed Versa est in luctum that Victoria reaches his greatest heights in the artistry of grief. The harmony searches restlessly after resolution, building to a desperate climax at “nihil enim sunt” (“for my days are nothing”), a prescient thought for a composer whose last published work this would prove to be.

Alexandra Coglan
When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place saying alleluia. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, alleluia, like a hurricane in its fury, and it filled the whole house. Alleluia.

When therefore the disciples were gathered together secretly for fear of the Jews, a sound from heaven came upon them, alleluia, like a hurricane in its fury, and it filled the whole house, alleluia.

Speak, what have you seen? Tell us of the birth of Christ. The newborn have we seen and a chorus of angels praising God. Alleluia.


I am black but comely, O daughter of Jerusalem: therefore the king has chosen me, and brought me into his chambers and said to me: rise up, my beloved one, and come away. For now the winter is past, the rains are over and gone in our land the flowers bloom and the time for pruning has arrived.

Four Responsories for Tenebrae

Anima mea dilectam

The life that I held dear I delivered into the hands of the unrighteous, and my inheritance has become for me like a lion in the forest. My enemy spoke out against me: “Come, gather together and hasten to devour him.” They placed me in a wasteland of desolation, and all the earth mourned for me. For there was no one who would acknowledge or give me help.

Quia non est inventus qui me agnosceret, et facet bene. Animam meam dilectam tradidi in manus iniquorum, et facta est mihi hereditas mea, sicut leon in silva: dedit contra me voces adversarius meus. Congregaminis, et prope ad devorandum illum: posuerunt me in deserto solitudinis, et luxit super me omnis terrae: Quia non est inventus qui me agnosceret, et facet bene.


Nigra sum

I am weary at heart of my life; I will speak out at my own risk and express the bitterness in my soul. I shall say to God: do not condemn me, but show me why you judge me this way. Shall it seem a good thing to you to cheapen me and oppress me, a man of your own making, and to support the schemes of the wicked? Are your eyes like human eyes? Do even you see only as men do? Is your life like the life of men, and do your
humana sunt tempora, ut quæras iniquitatem meam, et peccatum meum scruteres! Et scias quia nihil impium facerim, cum sit nemo qui de manu tua possit eruere.

Introitus

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

Graduale
Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. In memoria æterna, erit justus: ab auditione mala non timebit.

Offertorium
Domine, Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriz, libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de pœnis inferni, et de profundo lacu. Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum: sed signifer sanctus Michael repræsentet eas in lucem sanctam: quam olim Abrahæ promisisti et semini eius.

Sanctus et Benedictus

Agnus Dei
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona eis requiem, dona eis requiem sempiternam.

Communio

Funeral Motet
Vera est in luctum cithara mea et organum meum in vocem flentium. Parce mihi Domine, nihil enim sunt dies mei.

Responsory
Libera me, Domine, de morte æterna, in die illa tremendæ: quando cæli movendi sunt et terra: dum veneris judicare sæculum per ignem. Tremens factus sum ego, et tmeo, dum discutio venerit, atque ventura ira. Quando cæli movendi sunt et terra. Dies illa, dies iræ, calamitatis et misericordiae, dies magna et amara valde. Dum veneris judicare sæculum per ignem. Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine: et lux perpetua luceat eis. Libera me...

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

Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting death on that fearful day when the heavens and earth shall be moved and thou shalt come to judge the world by fire. I am seized with trembling, I am sore afraid for the day of judgement and for the wrath to come. That day, a day of wrath and calamity and woe, a great day and bitter indeed, when thou shalt come to judge the world by fire. Grant them eternal rest, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them. Deliver me, O Lord...

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

My harp is tuned to mourning and my organ into the voice of those that weep. Spare me, O Lord, for my days are nothing.
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. Mr. Phillips has worked with the ensemble to create, through good tuning and blend, 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. In 2011, the group will tour the United States twice and appear at festivals and venues across the UK and Europe, including in their own Choral Series at Cadogan Hall. The group will also be returning to Japan, and future plans include a return visit to Australia. The Tallis Scholars have performed with the National Centre for Early Music and the BBC in a biannual nationwide composition competition, designed to encourage young people to write for unaccompanied voices. The winning entries get performed by the Tallis Scholars in a concert recorded and broadcast by BBC Radio 3.

The Tallis Scholars’ career highlights have included a tour of China in 1999, including 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, broadcast simultaneously on Italian and Japanese television. The group has commissioned many contemporary composers during its history: In 1998, the Tallis Scholars celebrated their 25th anniversary with a special concert in London’s National Gallery, premiering a Sir John Tavener work written for the group and narrated by Sting. A further performance was given with Sir Paul McCartney in New York in 2000. The Tallis Scholars are broadcast regularly on radio (including performances from the BBC Proms in both 2007 and 2008) and have also been featured on the acclaimed ITV program The South Bank Show.

Much of the Tallis Scholars’ reputation for their pioneering work has come from their association with Gimell Records, founded by Mr. Phillips and Steve Smith in 1980 solely to record the group. In February 1994, Mr. 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 choir boy 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 sol fa re mi and Missa Pange lingua received Gramophone’s Record of the Year award, the first recording of early music ever to win this coveted award. In 1989, the French magazine Diapason gave two of its critical Diapason d’Or de l’Année awards for the recordings of a Mass and motets by Lassus and for Josquin’s two Masses based on the chanson L’Homme armé. Their recording of Palestrina’s Missa Assumpta est Maria and Missa Sicut lilium 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 Grammy-nominated. Released on the 30th anniversary of Gimell Records in March 2010, the Tallis Scholars’ recording of Victoria’s Lamentations of Jeremiah received critical acclaim, and to further celebrate the anniversary, the group released three four-CD box sets of The Best of the Tallis Scholars, one for each decade. The ongoing project to record Josquin’s complete cycle of Masses; when completed, will run to nine discs.

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. For more information, please visit the Tallis Scholars at www.tallis Scholars.co.uk or www.gimell.com.

The Tallis Scholars

Director Peter Phillips
Soprano Janet Coxwell
Amy Haworth
Cecilia Osmond
Amy Wood
Alto Patrick Craig
Caroline Trevor
Tenor Mark Dobell
Christopher Watson
Bass Donald Greig
Rob Macdonald

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. He founded the Tallis Scholars in 1973, with whom he has now appeared in over 1,600 concerts and made over 50 discs, encouraging interest in polyphony all over the world.

Apart from the Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips continues to work with other specialist ensembles, including Collegium Vocale of Ghent, the VoxVocal Ensemble of New York and Musix of Budapest. He has made numerous television and radio appearances, on BBC Radio 4 and the World Service, as well as on German, French, Canadian and North American radio. 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 over 5,000 people.

In addition to leading numerous master classes and choral workshops every year, Mr. Phillips is Artistic Director of the Tallis Scholars Summer Schools: annual choral courses, based in Oakham (UK), Seattle (United States) and Sydney (Australia), dedicated to exploring the heritage of Renaissance choral music and developing an appropriate performance style. Mr. Phillips has recently been appointed Reed Rubin Director of Music at Merton College, Oxford, where the new choral foundation he helped to establish began singing services in October 2008.

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 individuals who have contributed to the understanding of French culture in the world.

In 1998, the Tallis Scholars celebrated their 25th anniversary with a special concert in London’s National Gallery, premiering a Sir John Tavener work written for the group and narrated by Sting. A further performance was given with Sir Paul McCartney in New York in 2000. The Tallis Scholars are broadcast regularly on radio (including performances from the BBC Proms in both 2007 and 2008) and have also been featured on the acclaimed ITV program The South Bank Show.

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