

CONTACT:  
Christina Kellogg 510.643.6714  
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu  
Joe Yang 510.642.9121  
scyang@calperfs.berkeley.edu

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**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS ENGLAND'S GRAND MASTERS OF  
RENAISSANCE POLYPHONY THE TALLIS SCHOLARS  
SATURDAY, MARCH 28 AT 8:00 P.M.  
AT FIRST CONGREGATION CHURCH IN BERKELEY**

**BERKELEY, February 23, 2009**—The ten crystalline voices of **The Tallis Scholars**, led by founding director **Peter Phillips**, bring glorious Renaissance polyphony to Cal Performances **Saturday, March 28 at 8:00 p.m.** at First Congregational Church. Dubbed “the rock stars of Renaissance choral music” (*The New York Times*), this unrivaled ensemble is among the busiest in the world, with over 50 award-winning recordings on its own Gimell Records label and regular tours throughout Europe, North America, South America and the Far East. With Phillips at the helm, the ensemble creates “an amalgam of erudite musicology [and]... consummate showman[ship]” (*The New York Times*). The Tallis Scholars will sing a special repertoire of music for double choir that includes works by **Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Peter Philips, Orlande de Lassus, Orlando Gibbons, Dominique Phinot, Alonso Lobo, Jean Mouton** and **Hieronymus Praetorius**.

**PROGRAM**

The program explores the music of the double choir, which is different from the eight-voice polyphony typically performed by The Tallis Scholars. In this predominantly homophonic style, the voices in each choir move together to create two blocks of sound, rather than in a counterpoint of eight distinct parts. Double-choir music was an important and essential development that establishes a connection between Renaissance polyphony and Baroque music.

The opening piece, Palestrina's *Surge, illuminare*, blends polyphony with distinct moments of homophony. Two motets by Philips (no relation to the ensemble's director), “Ecce vicit Leo” and “Ave Jesu Christe,” exhibit the composer's deep admiration for the Roman masters, among them Palestrina. Lassus's five-movement work *Missa Bell' Amfitrit' altera* provides an example of the antiphonal style, which the Venetians called *cori spezzati*. The

conception of blocks of sound deployed in contrast with one another like those in Lassus's piece would form the basis upon which the Baroque sound world would rest.

Following intermission, the ensemble returns with Gibbons's "O Clap your hands," which offers a double-choir style different from that of Lassus's, in which the eight voices are unified in polychoral homophony. Phinot's Lamentations, hailed as the very first experiment in divided choir writing in Renaissance music, gradually blends the horizontal and vertical writing styles and was well known in its time by many, including Palestrina and Lassus. The two works by Alonso Lobos and Jean Mouton form a pair, though the two composers lived a full century apart: "Ave Maria" by Lobos displays a mastery of elaborate counterpoint, for which Mouton was known a hundred years prior and which can be heard in his masterpiece, "Nasciens mater." The program concludes with Magnificat IV, the fourth of a volume of nine written by Praetorius, whose distinct double-choir style forms the last piece in the gradually forming Baroque puzzle.

### **THE TALLIS SCHOLARS**

Since its founding in 1973, **The Tallis Scholars** have been a leading exponent of Renaissance sacred music through both recordings and concert performances. The ensemble's renowned pure, clear sound—the results of meticulous work on tuning and blend—is ideal for presentation of Renaissance polyphonic repertoire because it permits every detail of each individual vocal part to be heard.

Now performing approximately 70 concerts per year, The Tallis Scholars have given over 1,500 concerts worldwide. They have performed to sold-out houses many times at Cal Performances. Recent festival appearances have included the Salzburg Festival, the Milan Cathedral Festival, the BBC Proms in London, and the Mostly Mozart, Ravinia and Tanglewood festivals in the United States. In 1994, they sang in the Sistine Chapel to mark completion of the restoration of Michelangelo's frescoes, an event that was televised around the globe. In addition to presenting Renaissance music, The Tallis Scholars have premiered and commissioned works by contemporary composers, including John Tavener, Robin Walker and Errollyn Wallen, and have appeared with such pop musicians as Sting and Paul McCartney.

The group has released more than 50 recordings on its own label Gimell Records, including a 1987 recording of Josquin's *Missa La sol fa re mi* and *Missa Pange lingua* which is the only recording of early music to receive the *Gramophone* Record of the Year award. Other prizes for the Tallis Scholars' recordings include two *Diapason d'Or de l'Année* awards from the French magazine *Diapason*, two *Gramophone* Early Music Awards and a People's Choice award presented jointly by Classic FM and *Gramophone*. The Tallis Scholars have also produced several DVDs, including *Playing Elizabeth's Tune* released in 2003 in collaboration with the BBC, focusing on the life and works of Elizabeth I's favorite composer, William Byrd.

In addition to its demanding performance and recording schedule, The Tallis Scholars and director Peter Phillips annually present three weeklong summer schools—one each in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia—at which talented amateur musicians can learn from and sing with members of the group.

### **PETER PHILLIPS**

**Peter Phillips** has dedicated his life's work to the research and performance of Renaissance polyphony. He won a scholarship to Oxford in 1972 and promptly began experimenting with small groups and performing rare works of the Renaissance repertoire. In addition to founding The Tallis Scholars in 1973 and leading them ever since, Phillips has worked with the Collegium Vocale of Ghent, the Vox Vocal Ensemble of New York, Musix of Budapest, and the BBC Singers, with whom he has broadcast live on BBC Radio Three, among other groups.

Phillips is also a highly regarded writer and academic, having authored two books: *English Sacred Music 1549–1649*, a scholarly work, and *What We Really Do*, an account of touring with The Tallis Scholars. He also writes a regular music column in *The Spectator*, a weekly newsmagazine in the UK, and is owner and publisher of *The Musical Times*, the oldest continuously published music journal in the world.

Phillips was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the Minister of Culture of France in 2005. Through Phillips's work, Renaissance music has come to be accepted

as part of the mainstream classical repertoire.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for **The Tallis Scholars** on **Saturday, March 28** at **8:00 p.m.** at **First Congregational Church** are priced at \$52.00. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net).

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline, two hours prior to a performance only.

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**CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:  
CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Saturday, March 28 at 8:00 p.m.**

**First Congregational Church  
2345 Channing Way, Berkeley**

*Music Before 1850*

**The Tallis Scholars**  
Peter Phillips, director

**Program:**

*Music for Double Choir*  
Palestrina/*Surge, illuminare* (part 1 only)  
Philips/"Ecce vicit Leo;" "Ave Jesu Christe"  
Lassus/*Missa Bel 'Amfrit' altera*  
Gibbons/"O Clap your hands"  
Phinot/Lamentations  
Lobo/"Ave Maria"  
Mouton/"Nesciens mater"  
Praetorius/Magnificat IV

**Tickets: \$52.00**, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net); and at the door.

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