

# WIGMORE HALL

Monday 10 October 2022  
7.30pm

Jean Mouton (obit 1522) in memoriam

## The Brabant Ensemble

Helen Ashby soprano  
Kate Ashby soprano  
Eloise Irving soprano  
Emma Ashby alto  
Claire Eadington alto

Thomas Castle tenor  
Peter Davoren tenor  
Christopher O'Gorman tenor  
Toby Ward tenor  
Adrian Horsewood bass  
Graham Kirk bass  
Grantley McDonald bass  
Stephen Rice director

Jean Mouton (c.1459-1522)

Confitemini Domino

Kyrie from *Missa 'Faulte d'argent'*

Antoine Brumel (c.1450-1512)

Gloria from *Missa de beata virgine*

Antoine de Févin (c.1470-1511)

Sancta Trinitas

Jean Mouton

Qui ne regrettoit le gentil Févin

Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

Huc me sydereo

Jean Mouton

Ave Maria gemma virginum

Pierre Moulu (c.1484-1550)

Mater floreat

*Interval*

Jean Mouton

Quis dabit oculis?

Adrian Willaert (c.1490-1562)

Ave maris stella a5

Jean Mouton

Sanctus from *Missa 'Tu es Petrus'*

Claudin de Sermisy (c.1490-1562)

Si bona suscepimus

Jean Mouton

O salutaris hostia

Josquin des Prez

Alma redemptoris mater/Ave regina caelorum

Jean Mouton

Nesciens mater Virgo virum

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In the text of **Pierre Moulu's** 'musician motet', *Mater floreat*, the leading figures from French musical life in the 15th and early 16th centuries are playfully identified. Moulu begins by naming 11 composers of international fame, ranging from Guillaume Du Fay (1397-1474), through Antoine Busnoys (c.1430-92), Alexander Agricola (c.1457-1506), Pierre La Rue (c.1460-1518) and finally, 'bear[ing] the palm', Josquin des Prez. The piece's second section lists 13 singers who were active in Paris up to the mid-1510s, its presumed date of composition. Befitting his status as de facto royal composer-in-residence, Jean Mouton, 'with the golden fleece', is saved until the very end, where he gives glory to the King and Queen 'with strings and organ'. In this concert, the Brabant Ensemble follows Moulu's lead in juxtaposing works by Mouton with those of musicians mentioned in *Mater floreat*: Josquin, Antoine Brumel, and Antoine de Févin, as well as Moulu himself, and also two later composers, Claudin de Sermisy and Adrian Willaert, with whom Mouton was known to be personally acquainted.

It was not always obvious that **Mouton** would rise to such heights of royal favour. Born in the late 1450s, he initially plied his trade within a relatively short distance of his home diocese, Samer in the Pas-de-Calais, then at Amiens Cathedral where he was *maître des enfans* by 1500. But in 1501, for reasons unknown, he moved to a similar position in Grenoble, 400 miles away. He remained there only a year, however, leaving without permission, and is next seen in service to the Queen, Anne of Brittany. Mouton remained part of the royal establishment until his death on 30 October 1522, outliving both Anne and her husband Louis XII. The funerary motet for the Queen, *Quis dabit oculis?*, is one of his finest works, lent an unexpected poignancy for us at present.

Mouton's compositional output is heavily weighted towards sacred music, with 15 Mass settings, approximately 100 motets, nine Magnificats, and 25 *chansons*. The great majority is for four voices, but our opening motet, *Confitemini Domino*, adds two canonic parts to that texture. Later in the programme we perform two eight-part works: the miniature *Ave Maria gemma virginum*, in which four voices are derived canonically from the other four, at the interval of an octave; and his most famous piece, *Nesciens mater*, which is also a canon 8 ex 4 but at the fifth. Despite the technical complexity of all these motets, Mouton achieves great expressivity, especially in *Nesciens mater*. The tiny *O salutaris hostia*, by contrast, is expressive by its simplicity and perfect balance. Mouton's Mass music is represented by the *Kyrie* from *Missa 'Faulx d'argent'*, based on a *chanson* lamenting the lack of money - 'it is pain without equal' - and the *Sanctus* from his only five-voice Mass, 'Tu es Petrus'.

Perhaps the finest composer at the court other than Mouton himself was **Antoine de Févin** (c.1470-1511), whose brother Robert, also a composer, was another colleague. Despite his short lifespan, Antoine's

musical output is impressive, showing a sure command of sonority and texture. His best-known motet, *Sancta Trinitas*, circulated widely during his lifetime and for a considerable period afterwards, attracting the attention of the composer Arnold von Bruck (c.1500-54) who added two voices to Févin's four-voice original. We perform the six-voice version, followed by Mouton's brief *chanson* written in Févin's memory, which emphasizes the deceased's gracious character.

While **Antoine Brumel** (c.1460-1512) was not a member of the court, his presence at the cathedral of Notre-Dame in 1498-1500 as master of the choristers makes it highly likely that he knew Mouton. Brumel's style, though, is very different, and much more redolent of the late Middle Ages. His *Gloria* from the *Missa de beata Virgine* is closely based on plainchant, and includes six short tropes - words additional to the standard text, in this case in honour of the Blessed Virgin. The movement builds to a rousing climax, with a brisk triple-time 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' followed by a duetting and highly syncopated 'Amen'.

Mouton's influence on the younger generation is documented in the case of **Adrian Willaert**. Sent to the University of Paris to read law, Willaert studied composition with Mouton and thereafter forged a highly successful career in music, becoming *maestro di cappella* at St Mark's, Venice in 1527 and remaining there until his death 35 years later. Willaert's motet *Ave maris stella* takes the plainsong hymn, which celebrates the Blessed Virgin as Star of the Sea, as its melodic foundation to craft a polyphonic work ideally suited to the Most Serene Republic. His direct contemporary **Claudin de Sermisy** was also blessed with lengthy tenure in prestigious surroundings, serving the French crown for over 50 years, for the first 14 as Mouton's colleague. Although best known for his dominance of the Parisian *chanson* genre, Sermisy also wrote significant quantities of sacred music, of which the motet *Si bona suscepimus*, with text from the Book of Job, was the most widely circulated.

While **Josquin des Prez** is not known to have met Mouton - if Josquin was ever in French royal service it was under the previous king, Louis XI - his reputation and the fundamental significance of his compositional innovations makes him impossible to overlook in a programme such as this. We perform two contrasting works: the gentle *Ave regina caelorum/Alma redemptoris mater*, combining two Marian plainchant melodies with apparent effortlessness, and *Huc me sydereo*, which sets a harrowing Christological text by the renowned Humanist poet Maffeo Vegio (1407-58), in a deeply expressive style. Particularly noteworthy is the treatment of the words 'descendere iussit Olympo', around one minute into the piece, where Josquin writes a series of descending scales, each spanning one-and-a-half octaves.

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## Jean Mouton (c.1459-1522)

### Confitemini Domino

*Liturgical text*

Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus: quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius.

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus: exultemus, et laetemur in ea.

A Domino factum est istud: benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

*Cantus firmus:*

Per singulos dies benedicimus te: et laudamus nomen tuum in saeculum, et in saeculum saeculi.

### Proclaim the Lord

Proclaim the Lord for he is good: for his mercy is everlasting.

This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice, and be glad on it.

By the Lord was done this thing: blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

*Cantus firmus:*

Every single day we bless you: and we praise your name for ever, and for generations of generations.

### Kyrie from Missa 'Faulte d'argent'

*Liturgical text*

Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison.  
Kyrie eleison.

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

## Antoine Brumel (c.1450-1512)

### Gloria from Missa de beata virgine

*Liturgical text*

Gloria in excelsis Deo  
Et in terra pax hominibus  
bonae voluntatis.

Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.

Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens,

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu  
Christe.

Spiritus et alme orphanorum  
paraclite.

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris.

Primogenitus Mariae virginis  
matris.

Qui tollis peccata  
mundi, miserere  
nobis.

Glory be to God on high  
and on earth peace towards  
men of good will.

We praise you. We bless  
you.

We worship you. We  
glorify you.

We give thanks to you for  
your great glory.

Lord God, heavenly king,  
God the Father almighty,

Lord the only-begotten  
Son, Jesus Christ.

Spirit and loving advocate of  
the bereaved.

Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father.

Firstborn of the virgin  
Mary your mother.

You who take away the  
sins of the world, have  
mercy on us.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem  
nostram ad Mariae  
gloriam.

Qui sedes ad dexteram  
Patris, miserere  
nobis.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,  
Mariam sanctificans.

Tu solus Dominus, Mariam  
gubernans.

Tu solus altissimus,  
Mariam coronans, Jesu  
Christe.

Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria  
Dei Patris.  
Amen.

You who take away the  
sins of the world,  
receive our prayer to  
the glory of Mary.

You who sit at the right  
hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.

For you alone are holy,  
sanctifying Mary.

You alone are the Lord,  
ruling Mary.

You alone are most high,  
crowning Mary, Jesus  
Christ.

With the Holy Spirit, in the  
glory of God the Father.  
Amen

## Antoine de Févin (c.1470-1511)

### Sancta Trinitas

*Liturgical text*

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus,  
miserere nobis.

Te invocamus, te  
adoramus,

Te glorificamus, o beata  
Trinitas.

Sit nomen Domini  
benedictum

Ex hoc nunc et usque in  
saeculum.

### Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity, one God,  
have mercy on us.

We call upon you, we  
adore you,

we glorify you, O blessed  
Trinity.

Blessed be the name of  
the Lord

from henceforth and for  
ever.

## Jean Mouton

### Qui ne regrettoit le gentil Févin

*Anonymous*

Qui ne regrettoit  
Le gentil Févin  
Bien villain seroit:  
Tres habile estoit,  
Si doux et benign,  
Dont en nostre endroit  
Prions de cueur fin  
Qu'en paradis soit,  
Ou souvent pensoit  
Parvenir en fin.

### Whoever would not mourn Gentle Févin

Whoever would not mourn  
Gentle Févin  
would be a boor indeed:  
most skilled was he,  
gracious and benign,  
wherefore for our part  
let us pray from a fine heart  
that he be in paradise  
where he often thought  
to come at last.

## Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

### Huc me sydereo

*Maffeo Vegio, Liturgical text*

Huc me sydereo descendere  
iussit Olympo,

Hic me crudeli vulnere fixit  
amor.

Langueo nec quisquam  
nostro succurrit  
amori

Quem nequeunt durae  
frangere iura  
crucis.

Pungentem capiti Dominum  
gestare coronam

Fortis amor docuit verbera  
tanta pati.

Felle sitim magni  
regis satiavit  
amaro,

Pectus ut hauriret lancea  
fecit amor.

De me solus amor potuit  
perferre triumphum,

Ille pedes clavis fixit et ille  
manus.

Si cupis ergo animi mihi  
signa rependere  
grati,

Dilige pro tantis,  
sat mihi solus  
amor.

*Cantus firmus:*

Plangent eum quasi  
unigenitum quia innocens  
Dominus occisus est.

### Hither from

### starry Olympus

Hither from starry Olympus  
he ordered me,

here with a harsh wound  
he struck me, did love.

I am weary and there is no  
one who comes to  
support our love

which the laws of the hard  
cross are unable to  
subdue.

The Lord to wear a stabbing  
crown on his head

did strong love teach, to  
suffer such lashes.

With bitter vinegar he  
quenched the thirst of  
the great king,

his breast to be pierced with  
a spear did love make.

Over me was love alone  
able to win a victory,

he fastened my feet with  
nails, he my hands.

If you desire therefore to  
pay back signs of a  
grateful soul to me,

choose above all things  
the love which alone  
satisfies me.

*Cantus firmus:*

They lament for him as for  
an only son for the  
innocent Lord was killed.

## Jean Mouton

### Ave Maria gemma virginum

*Liturgical text*

Ave Maria, gemma  
virginum, mundi  
domina,

Caeli regina, Dominus tecum.

Audi, benigna, mater  
omnium:

Tu nos adiuva in mortis hora,  
apud Dominum.

### Hail Mary, jewel among women

Hail Mary, jewel among  
women, mistress of the  
world,

queen of heaven, the  
Lord be with you.

Hear, blessed one,  
mother of all:

be our helper at the hour of  
death, in the sight of God.

## Pierre Moulu (c.1484-1550)

### Mater floreat

*Anonymous*

Mater floreat;  
florescat

Modulata musicorum  
melodia.

Crescat celebris Du Fay  
cadentia.

Prosperetur preclarus Regis.

Busnoys, Baziron subtiles  
gloriantur.

Triumphet Alexander  
magnificus.

Congaudeat Obreth,  
Compere,

Eloy, Hayne, La Rue  
memorabiles.

Josquin incomparabilis  
Bravium accipiat.

Ruilet Delphicus de  
Longueval

Tanquam sol inter stellas.

Lourdault; Prioris amenus.

Nec absint decori fratres de  
Fevin,

Hilaire hilaris, Divitis felix,  
Brumel, Isaac, Nynot,

Mathurin Forestier, Bruhier  
facundi,

Mouton cum vellere  
aureo.

Date gloriam regi et  
regine

In cordis et organo.

### May the mother flourish

May the mother flourish;  
may the

formed melody of  
musicians flower.

May Du Fay's famous fall  
grow.

May eminent Regis prosper.

May subtle Busnois and  
Basiron glory.

May Alexander the great  
triumph.

May memorable Obrecht,  
Compère,

Eloy, Hayne, La Rue  
rejoice.

May incomparable Josquin  
receive the prize.

May Delphic de  
Longueval shine

like the sun among stars.

Lourdault; charming Prioris.

Let the fair brothers de  
Fevin not be absent,

merry Hilaire, happy Divitis,  
Brumel, Isaac, Nynot,

Mathurin Forestier,  
Bruhier, eloquent ones,

Mouton with the golden  
fleece.

Give honour to the king  
and queen

with strings and organ.

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## Interval

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## Jean Mouton

### Quis dabit oculis?

*Anonymous*

Quis dabit oculis nostris  
fontem lachrymarum?

Et plorabimus die ac  
nocte coram  
Domino?

Britannia, quid  
ploras? Musica, cur  
siles?

Francia, cur inducta lugubri  
veste moerore  
consumeris?

### Who will give to our eyes?

Who will give to our eyes  
a well of tears?

And are we to weep, day  
and night, before the  
Lord?

Brittany, why do you  
lament? Music, why are  
you silent?

France, why do you put on  
clothes of mourning, and  
waste away in sorrow?

Heu nobis Domine, defecit  
Anna, gaudium cordis  
nostri.  
Conversus est in luctum  
chorus noster; cecidit  
corona capitis nostri.

Woe to us, Lord, for Anne,  
the joy of our hearts, is  
gone.  
Our song is turned into  
mourning, and the crown  
has fallen from our heads.

Ergo ejulate pueri,  
plorare  
sacerdotes,  
Ululate senes, lugete  
cantores, plangite nobiles  
et dicite:  
Anna requiescat in pace.  
Amen.

Therefore, cry out in  
anguish, ye children;  
weep, ye priests;  
howl, ye old men; mourn,  
ye singers; lament, ye  
noblemen, and say:  
may Anne rest in peace.  
Amen.

## Adrian Willaert (c.1490-1562)

**Ave maris stella a5**  
*Anonymous*

**Hail, star of the sea**

Ave maris stella,  
Dei Mater alma,  
Atque semper Virgo,  
Felix caeli porta.

Hail, star of the sea,  
loving Mother of God,  
and also always a virgin,  
happy gate of heaven.

Sumens illud Ave  
Gabrielis ore,  
Funda nos in pace,  
Mutans Evae nomen.

Receiving that Ave  
from Gabriel's mouth  
confirm us in peace,  
reversing Eva's name.

Solve vincla reis,  
Profer lumen caecis,  
Mala nostra pelle,  
Bona cuncta posce.

Break the chains of sinners,  
bring light to the blind,  
drive away our evils,  
ask for all good.

## Jean Mouton

**Sanctus from Missa 'Tu es Petrus' (n/a)**  
*Liturgical text*

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

Holy, holy, holy  
Lord God of Sabaoth.  
Heaven and earth are full  
of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.

## Claudin de Sermisy (c.1490-1562)

**Si bona suscepimus**  
*Liturgical text*

**If we have received  
good things**

Si bona suscepimus  
de manu  
Domini,  
Mala autem quare non  
sustineamus?

If we have received good  
things from the hand of  
the Lord,  
now why cannot we bear  
bad things?

Dominus dedit, Dominus  
abstulit,  
Sicut Domino placuit, ita  
factum est:  
Sit nomen Domini  
benedictum.

The Lord has given, the  
Lord has taken away,  
as it pleased the Lord, so  
is it done:  
blessed be the name of  
the Lord.

Nudus egressus sum de  
utero matris meae,  
Et nudus revertar  
illuc.

Naked I came out from the  
womb of my mother,  
and naked shall I return  
there.

## Jean Mouton

**O salutaris hostia**  
*St Thomas Aquinas*

**O saving victim**

O salutaris hostia  
Quae caeli pandis  
ostium:  
Bella premunt hostilia,  
Da robur, fer auxilium.

O saving victim  
who opens the gate of  
heaven:  
oppressive war threatens,  
give strength, bring help.

## Josquin des Prez

**Alma redemptoris  
mater/Ave regina  
caelorum**  
*Liturgical text*

**Gracious mother of  
the redeemer/Hail,  
queen of heaven**

Alma redemptoris  
mater,  
Quae pervia caeli  
porta manes et stella  
maris:  
Succurre cadenti surgere qui  
curat populo.

Gracious mother of the  
redeemer,  
you who are the ever-  
open door of heaven  
and star of the sea:  
succour your people who  
fall and strive to rise again.

Ave regina caelorum,  
Ave domina angelorum:  
Salve radix sancta,  
Ex qua mundo lux est  
orta.

Hail, queen of heaven,  
hail, mistress of the angels:  
hail, holy root,  
from whom light for the  
world has arisen.

Tu quae genuisti, natura  
mirante,  
Tuum sanctum genitorem.  
Virgo prius ac posterius,  
Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud  
Ave,  
Peccatorum miserere.

You who gave birth, while  
nature marvelled,  
to your holy creator.  
A virgin before and after,  
who heard that 'Ave' from  
Gabriel's lips,  
have mercy on sinners.

Gaude gloriosa,  
Super omnes speciosa.  
Vale valde  
decora,  
Et pro nobis semper  
Christum exora.

Rejoice, glorious one,  
beautiful above all others.  
Farewell, most gracious  
one,  
and forever pray for us to  
Christ.

## Jean Mouton

Nesciens mater Virgo  
virum

*Liturgical text*

The virgin mother,  
knowing no man

Nesciens mater virgo  
virum,  
Peperit sine dolore  
salvatores saeculorum,  
Ipsam regem angelorum;  
Sola virgo lactabat, ubere  
de caelo  
pleno.

The virgin mother,  
knowing no man,  
gave birth without pangs  
to the saviour of world,  
the very king of angels;  
the virgin alone gave him  
suck with the milk of  
heaven.

*Texts and translations kindly provided by the artists. Translations of Qui ne regrettoit le gentil Févin and Willaert from cpdl.org. Moulé by David Fallows. Quis dabit oculis? from Tim Symons's edition on cpdl.org.*