

WIGMORE HALL

Monday 12 May 2025
7.00pm

Stile Antico 20th Anniversary Gala Concert

Stile Antico

Helen Ashby soprano
Kate Ashby soprano
Rebecca Hickey soprano
Emma Ashby alto
Cara Curran alto
Rosie Parker alto

Andrew Griffiths tenor
Jonathan Hanley tenor
Benedict Hymas tenor
James Arthur bass
Nathan Harrison bass
Gareth Thomas bass

Hannah French presenter

PART ONE

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c.1510-1555)

Sebastián de Vivanco (c.1551-1622)

Anon

Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656)

Vigilate (pub. 1589)

Ego flos campi (pub. 1555)

Veni dilecte mi (pub. 1610)

Sicut lilium inter spinas (pub. 1543)

O Sacrum convivium (pub. 1575)

O praise the Lord (1668)

Interval

PART TWO

Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

Cristóbal de Morales (c.1500-1553)

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b.1980)

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525-1594)

Salve regina (1545)

Mille regretz

Agnus Dei from *Missa 'Mille regretz'* (c.1538)

O magnum mysterium (1592)

A Gift of Heaven (2024)

Exultate Deo (1584)

Interval

PART THREE

Giaches de Wert (1535-1596)

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

William Byrd

Huw Watkins (b.1976)

John Sheppard (c.1515-1558)

Gaudete in Domino (pub. 1581)

O clap your hands (pub. 1768)

Retire my soul (pub. 1611)

The Phoenix and the Turtle (2014)

Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria (1575)

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Tonight's concert is something a little different. To celebrate 20 years as a professional ensemble, we open a treasure chest of musical delights, showcasing some of our favourite music. These motets, madrigals and anthems are just a small selection of the vast repertoire we have enjoyed getting to know through two decades of touring and recording together.

In putting together this programme, we have sought to reflect the breadth of repertoire we have explored over 20 years. We have been fortunate to record nearly everything we perform this evening – either on Harmonia Mundi or, more recently, on Decca. For tonight's programme, we have grouped pieces together in small sets, so that each piece complements and reflects the others. Over the last two decades, Stile Antico has given over 600 concerts around the world, and we have performed some of the pieces we sing tonight many, many times over the years, but there is always something new to discover in each of these wonderful works, and our collaborative process means that we constantly challenge each other to keep them fresh and consider them from new perspectives. No doubt many of you will have attended concerts given by the group before. Perhaps you have heard multiple performances from us of works such as Clemens non Papa's serenely beautiful *Ego flos campi* (quite possibly our most performed piece!) or Josquin's muscular *Salve Regina*. If that is the case, we hope that like us, you also discover something new to appreciate in this wonderful music.

Tonight's repertoire is wide-ranging and varied. Some pieces are firm group favourites from the earliest days of Stile Antico: works like Byrd's *Vigilate* – a masterpiece of virtuosic writing, which features on our second disc; or Sebastian de Vivanco's lively and flirtatious *Veni dilecte mi*, performed in the first ever concert the group gave, as well as at the Young Artists Competition at the York Early Music Festival back in 2005, which kick-started the group's professional career. Other works featured tonight are newer to us – none more so, of course, than the wonderful new piece written for us this year by Cheryl Frances-Hoad: *A Gift of Heaven*.

As the years have gone by, many things have changed. Foremost among the changes, of course, is the line-up of singers. We are delighted that so many former Stile Antico members will be joining us tonight to celebrate together. But many things about Stile Antico have stayed the same – our working style of rehearsing and performing collaboratively (unique for a group of our size); our focus on 16th- and early 17th-century repertoire; and our commitment to sharing the music we love with as wide an audience as possible.

It is a real honour for us to be able to share this celebration with you all, especially in this unique venue which, more than anywhere else, feels like 'home'. We hope you enjoy tonight's concert; here's to the next 20 years, and beyond!

Kate, Helen, Becky, Emma, Cara, Rosie, Andrew,
Jonathan, Ben, James, Nathan, Gareth

We are lucky to have had the support of many people in the industry through the last two decades, and we are delighted that three of them have agreed to write a few words below:

From the moment that Stile Antico won the Friends Prize in the 2005 York Early Music International Young Artists Competition, we knew we were in for an amazing journey. A vocal group so polished and confident in the complex sound world of the Renaissance, always willing to push themselves to explore new repertory and with such a refreshing approach to the practicalities of working together as an ensemble. 20 years on Stile Antico has a remarkably successful international career and show no signs of slowing down – thank goodness! Congratulations to all and here's to the next 20!

Delma Tomlin MBE
Director, National Centre for Early Music

There has probably never been such an abundance of talented consort singers as now, and never so many excellent ensembles. And yet, 20 years on, none surpasses Stile Antico for lifting spirits, expressing mood and providing beauty. What is the magic ingredient? Perhaps it is their evident joy in singing, and the intensity with which they engage with each other in the absence of a director. It helps that they are also lovely people, which matters to people like me, a concert organiser, but audiences also pick up on such things. Somehow these features are – magically – transmitted into their recordings.

Martin Randall
Founder of Martin Randall Travel

Stile Antico have been one of the joys of my life ever since they were founded. The singers truly love, understand, and bring to radiant life the glorious music that they sing, much of it not widely known. They are ambassadors, advocates, explorers, and passionate devotees whose pilgrimage through centuries of musical treasure has lasted an extraordinary 20 years and is set to continue for another 20 or more. As I listen to their performances of Byrd, Palestrina, Victoria and many others, I seem to hear the music reverberating in the vaults of heaven.

Sir John Rutter
Composer and conductor

PART ONE

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)

Vigilate (pub. 1589) <i>Liturgical text</i>	Watch ye
Vigilate, nescitis enim quando dominus domus veniat, Sero, an media nocte, an gallicantu, an mane. Vigilate ergo, ne cum venerit repente, inveniatur vos dormientes. Quod autem dico vobis, omnibus dico: vigilate.	Watch ye therefore for you know not when the lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: Watch therefore, lest coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch.

Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c.1510-1555)

Ego flos campi (pub. 1555) <i>Liturgical text</i>	I am a flower of the field
Ego flos campi, et lilium convallium. Sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias. Fons hortorum et puteus aquarum viventium, Quae fluunt impetu de Libano.	I am a flower of the field and a lily of the valley. As a lily among the thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters. A garden fountain and a well of living water, flowing streams from Lebanon.

Sebastián de Vivanco (c.1551-1622)

Veni dilecte mi (pub. 1610) <i>Liturgical text</i>	Come, my beloved
Veni, dilecte mi, egrediamur in agro, Commoremur in villis. Mane surgamus ad vineas. Videamus si floruit vineae, Si flores fructus parturiunt, Si floruerunt mala punica: Ibi dabo tibi ubera mea.	Come, my beloved, let us go out into the field, let us lodge in the villages. Let us arise early and go into the vineyards. Let us see if the vines have flourished, if the flowers have put forth their fruit, if the pomegranate is in bloom; there I will give you my breasts.

Mandragorae dederunt odorem suum, In portis nostris omnia poma Nova et vetera, dilecte mi, Servavi tibi.	The mandrakes give forth their fragrance, and at our gates are all manner of fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved.
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Anon

Sicut lilium inter spinas (pub. 1543) <i>Liturgical text</i>	Like a lily among thorns
Sicut lilium inter spinas, Sic amica mea inter filia.	Like a lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)

O Sacrum convivium (pub. 1575) <i>St Thomas Aquinas</i>	O sacred feast
O sacrum convivium, In quo Christus sumitur Recolitur memoria passionis eius. Mens impletur gratia Et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.	O sacred banquet, wherein Christ is received, the memory of his passion is renewed. The soul is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

Thomas Tomkins (1572-1656)

O praise the Lord (1668) <i>Liturgical text</i>
O Praise the Lord, all ye heathen, praise him, all ye nations: for his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever and ever. Praise ye the Lord, O praise ye the Lord our God.

Interval

PART TWO

Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

Salve regina (1545) <i>Liturgical text</i>	Hail, Holy Queen
Salve Regina, Mater Misericordiae, Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, Salve! Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae, Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes, In hac lacrimarum valle. Eia ergo, Advocata nostra, Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, Nobis, post hoc exilium, ostende, O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.	Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, Hail our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Mille regretz <i>?Jean Lemaire de Belges</i>	A thousand regrets
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Mille regretz de vous abandonner Et d'eslonger vostre fache amoureuse, J'ay si grand dueil et paine douloureuse, Qu'on me verra brief mes jours definer.	A thousand regrets at leaving you and being parted from your loving face, I have such great sadness and painful sorrow that it seems to me my days will shortly come to an end.
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Cristóbal de Morales (c.1500-1553)

Agnus Dei from Missa ‘Mille regretz’ (c.1538) <i>Liturgical text</i>	
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.	Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

O magnum mysterium (1592) <i>Responsory for Christmas</i>	O great mystery
O magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent	O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see

Dominum natum iacentem in praesepio. O beata Virgo, cuius viscera meruerunt portare Dominum Jesum Christum. Alleluia!	the new-born Lord lying in a manger! O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia!
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Cheryl Frances-Hoad (b.1980)

A Gift of Heaven (2024)
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, trans. Lewis Lockwood

To Philip of Austria, Catholic and Invincible King:
Since the pleasure afforded by the art of music is a gift of heaven greater than all human teachings, and since it is particularly valued by the Holy Scripture, so it appears that this art can be properly exercised upon divine subjects. I, therefore, who have been engaged in this art for many years, not wholly unsuccessfully, have considered it my task to bend all my knowledge and industry to that which is the most divine of all things – that is, to adorn the Mass in a new manner..

[Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te.]

Accept, then, most mighty and God-fearing king, these labors as testimony of my perpetual loyalty toward your Majesty, magnanimous and noble king. Farewell, ornament and bulwark of all who bear the name of Christians.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(c.1525-1594)

Exultate Deo (1584) <i>Liturgical text</i>	Sing we merrily unto God
Exultate Deo, adjutori nostro, jubilate Deo Jacob. Sumite psalmum et date tympanum, psalterium jucundum cum cithara. Buccinate in neomenia tuba, insigni die solemnitatis vestrae.	Sing we merrily unto God our strength. Make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take the psalm, bring hither the tabret, the merry harp with the lute. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, even in the time appointed, and upon our solemn feast-day.

Interval

PART THREE

Giaches de Wert (1535-1596)

Gaudete in Domino Rejoice in the Lord

(pub. 1581)

Liturgical text

Gaudete in Domino semper, Rejoice in the Lord always;
iterum dico, Gaudete. again I say, Rejoice.

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

O clap your hands (pub. 1768)

Liturgical text

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 unto our God:
O sing praises, sing praises unto our king.
For God is the king of all the earth:
Sing ye praises with the 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.

William Byrd

Retire my soul (pub. 1611)

Anonymous

Retire my soul, consider thine estate,
And justly sum thy lavish sin's account.
Time's dear expense, and costly pleasures rate,
How follies grow, how vanities amount.
Write all these down, in pale Death's reckoning tables,
Thy days will seem but dreams, thy hopes but fables.

Huw Watkins (b.1976)

The Phoenix and the Turtle (2014)

William Shakespeare

Let the bird of loudest lay,
On the sole Arabian tree,
Herald sad and trumpet be,
To whose sound chaste wings obey.

But thou, shrieking harbinger,
Foul pre-currer of the fiend,
Augur of the fever's end,
To this troop come thou not near?

From this session interdict
Every fowl of tyrant wing,
Save the eagle, feather'd King:
Keep the obsequy so strict.

Let the priest in surplice white,
That defunctive music can,
Be the death-divining swan,
Lest the requiem lack his right.

And thou, treble-dated crow,
That thy sable gender mak'st
With the breath thou giv'st and tak'st,
'Mongst our mourners shalt thou go.

Here the anthem doth commence:
Love and constancy is dead;
Phoenix and the turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence.

So they lov'd, as love in twain
Had the essence but in one;
Two distincts, division none:
Number there in love was slain.

Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance, and no space was seen
'Twixt the turtle and his queen;
But in them it were a wonder

So between them love did shine,
That the turtle saw his right
Flaming in the phoenix' sight:
Either was the other's mine.

Property was thus appall'd,
That the self was not the same;
Single nature's double name
Neither two nor one was call'd.

Reason, in itself confounded,
Saw division grow together;
To themselves yet either neither,
Simple were so well compounded,

*Song continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly
as possible.*

That it cried, 'How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one!
Love hath reason, reason none
If what parts can so remain.'

Whereupon it made this threne
To the phoenix and the dove,
Co-supremes and stars of love,
As chorus to their tragic scene.

Threnos

Beauty, truth and rarity,
Grace in all simplicity,
Here enclos'd in cinders lie.

Death is now the phoenix' nest;
And the turtle's loyal breast
To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:
'Twas not their infirmity,
It was married chastity.

Truth may seem, but cannot be:
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she;
Truth and beauty buried be.

To this urn let those repair
That are either true or fair;
For these dead birds sigh a prayer.

John Sheppard (c.1515-1558)

Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria (1575)

*Responsory and prose for
second vespers at
Candlemas*

Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria
virgo,
Cunctas haereses sola
interemisti,
Quae Gabrielis Archangeli
dictis credidisti:
Dum virgo Deum et
hominem genuisti
Et post partum virgo
inviolata permansisti.

Gabrielem Archangelum
scimus divinitus te esse
affatum
Uterum tuum de Spiritu
Sancto credimus
impregnatum:
Erubescat Judaeus infelix,
qui dicit Christum ex

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice virgin Mary

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice
virgin Mary,
you alone banished all
heresies,
who believed the words of
the archangel Gabriel.
While still a virgin, you bore
both God and man
and after birth remained
an inviolate virgin.

We know that the archangel
Gabriel addressed you
with divine prophecy,
and we believe that your
womb was impregnated
by the Holy Spirit.
Let the wretched Jew
blush who says that

Joseph semine esse
natum.

Dum virgo Deum et
hominem genuisti
et post partum virgo
inviolata intergra
et casta es
Maria

Quae es effecta fulgida coeli
porta
O Mater alma Christi
carissima
Suscipe laudum pia
preconia
Nosta ut pura pectora sint et
corpora
Quae nunc flagitant
devota voxque et
corda
Tu da per precata
dulcissima
Nobis perpetua frui
vita
O benigna quae sola
inviolata permansisti

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui
Sancto.

Christ was born of the
seed of Joseph.

While still a virgin, you bore
both God and man
and after birth, you are an
inviolat virgin,
uncorrupted and
chaste, Mary.

You who was made the
shining door of heaven,
O loving, dearest mother
of Christ,
receive the pious prayers
of our praises,
that our hearts and
bodies may be pure,
which things devoted
voices and hearts now
demand.
Grant to us through sweet-
sounding prayers
that we may enjoy
perpetual life.
O kind lady who alone
remained inviolate.

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