WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 13 September 2026
7.30pm

Monteverdi: Vespro di San Giovanni Battista

il Pomo d'Oro
- Angelo Calvo violin
- Archimede Pietro De Martini violin
- Vanni Moretto violone
- Franco Pavan theorbo
- Arianna Radaelli organ

il Pomo d'Oro Choir
- Francesca Cassinari soprano
- Alena Ivanova Dantcheva soprano
- Elena Carzaniga alto
- Raffaele Giordani tenor
- Giuseppe Maletto director, tenor
- Roberto Rilievi tenor
- Matteo Bellotto bass
- Gabriele Lombardi bass

Gregorian Chant	Versiculus et responsorium : Deus in adjutorium
Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)	From *Selva morale e spirituale* (pub. 1641) Dixit Dominus (Secondo) SV264 Confitebor tibi Domine (Secondo) SV266
Dario Castello (1602-1631)	Sonata Quarta à due Soprani from *Sonate concertate in stil moderno, libro secondo* (pub. 1629)
Claudio Monteverdi	Beatus vir (Primo) SV268 from *Selva morale e spirituale*
	Pause
	Laudate pueri Dominum (Secondo) SV271 from *Selva morale e spirituale*
Francesco Turini (c.1589-1656)	Sonata a doi violini from *Madrigali, Libro 1* (pub. 1621)
Claudio Monteverdi	From *Selva morale e spirituale* Laudate Dominum omnes gentes (Primo) SV272 Salve Regina (Secondo) SV284 Magnificat (Primo) SV281

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'It is contraries which deeply affect our mind,' wrote Monteverdi in the Preface to Book VIII of his madrigals. It's an idea that underpins the composer's long career – a belief in the dynamic creative tension that exists between opposing forces, whether emotions, styles, textures or even genres. We hear it in the duelling choirs of his choral music, the tragicomic worlds of his operas, and in madrigals caught constantly between chromatic tension and resolution, ecstasy and despair.

Such contraries were at their most lively in Monteverdi's later years. Dismissed from the Gonzaga court in Mantua in 1612, his move to Venice the following year marked the start of two very different chapters in his musical life. The madrigals and the commercial operas *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* took him to the heart of a secular world of spectacle and sex, while his position as *maestro di capella* at St Mark's found him in a contrastingly chaste environment, composing Masses, motets and psalms for the Doge's chapel. While professionally and socially separate, musically it's possible to see the dialogue between the two: the newly rhetorical energy that animates the sacred music drawing from the drama of the stage.

Published in 1641, the *Selva morale e spirituale* is to Monteverdi's sacred music what Book VIII of his madrigals is to his secular. Both are retrospective compilations, drawing several decades of compositions into an anthology of startling stylistic range and variety. Literally translated, the title means 'Sacred Wood' and it's this idea – a musical forest with trees of many types and shades – that captures the generous multiplicity that is the work's essence.

The largest sacred collection since the 1610 Vespers, the *Selva morale* would also be the last the now 74-year-old composer would create – a final epitaph to a lifetime's work. Divided into two sections, it comprises some 40 works: motets, spiritual madrigals, *canzonette morale*, psalms, hymns, solo songs and a Mass. Unlike the 1610 Vespers, which offers only a single liturgical sequence of movements, many of the *Selva morale*'s texts are set multiple times, their changing styles and forces reflecting the evolution of Italian musical fashion and technique through the early 17th Century. Tonight's programme loosely follows the sequence of a Venetian Vespers, without attempting to reconstruct an exact liturgical ritual.

The pillars of the collection are the texts used in daily liturgy at St Mark's. Each Vespers service called for five different psalms, and it's no coincidence that these are some of the most frequently-set texts in the collection. We hear a full set tonight, opening with the large-scale *Dixit Dominus (Secondo)*. Eight voices, divided into two four-part choirs, fragment further into fluid solo ensembles, a dynamic force alert to every expressive possibility. The unbroken chain of imitation passing from voice to voice at 'Et sacerdos in aeternum' creates a vivid sense of eternity, while enemies ('inimicorum tuorum') surround the faithful with warlike fanfares.

A more intimate *Confitebor tibi* exploits the contrast between solo voices (soprano, tenor, bass), whose chant-adjacent melodies provide the architecture around which two violins weave intricate ornamentation and commentary. The same technique is scaled-up markedly in the *Laudate Dominum*, where violin embellishment surrounds five solo voices, supplemented by the weight of a ripieno choir (or instrumental ensemble) as well as the lilting *Laudate pueri*, whose two self-contained sections are treated as building-blocks – alternated and gradually evolved as the work progresses.

Most dynamic of all is the exuberant *Beatus vir (Primo)* – typical of the 'stile concertato' that Monteverdi refined from the work of Adrian Willaert and the Gabrielis, intended to transform the acoustic challenge of Venetian churches, with their wide-spaced galleries, into a virtue. A simple ABA structure is so energetic, so athletic in its working-out, that the underlying structural mechanics are all but hidden from the ear. The motet closes with an extended 'Gloria', its sudden solemnity almost an afterthought following so much joy.

The scope of the *Selva Morale* takes us from the intimacy of chamber music and single voices to grand festal splendour. It doesn't get much grander or more expansive than the large-scale first *Magnificat* setting, a work that shares its generous forces with the *Dixit Dominus (Secondo)*: the framing panels of tonight's performance. Written in the old-fashioned Venetian *concertato* style, the *Magnificat* passes its lively melodies between different vocal and instrumental groups; you can hear the galleried interior of St Mark's Venice in every echoing exchange. The vivid *Magnificat* text is gilded in music responsive to its shifting moods, whether the insistent rhythmic ferocity of the 'Fecit potentiam' or the tremulous chromaticism of the sinners who fear the Lord ('et misericordia').

The antiphon *Salve Regina*, most often used at the end of Compline, is one of the loveliest Marian texts, and its popularity is reflected in the *Selva morale*'s multiple settings. The second of these uses its two solo voices in close imitation and even canon to create a shared musical prayer. Where the third setting places its emphasis on mercy and redemption, this duet is a more brooding, anxious affair, whose fragmented sighs, insistent repetitions ('Ad te') and episodic structure do not fully relax into the certainty of salvation until the very end and the final extended and ecstatic invocation, 'O dulcis Virgo Maria.'

Two instrumental works supplement Monteverdi's sung-liturgy in tonight's programme. A generation younger than Monteverdi, both **Dario Castello** (1602-31, part of a Venetian family of musicians) and **Francesco Turini** (c.1589-1656, born in Prague and employed at the court of Emperor Rudolf II) sit at the cusp of Renaissance consort music and the Baroque trio sonata. Both their sonatas are notably fluid works, blending imitative counterpoint, fluid passages of quasi-recitative and dances into an expressive whole.

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Gregorian Chant

Versiculus et responsorium: Deus in adjutorium

Deus, in adjutorium meum intende.	O Lord, make speed to save me:
Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.	O Lord, make haste to help me.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto,	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper	as it was in the beginning, is now
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen. Alleluia.	and ever shall be: world without end. Amen. Alleluia.

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Dixit Dominus (Secondo) SV264 (pub. 1641)

Biblical text

Dixit Dominus Domino meo:	The Lord said unto my Lord:
Sede a dextris meis,	sit thou on my right hand,
Donec ponam inimicos tuos	Until I make thine enemies
Scabellum pedum tuorum.	thy footstool.
Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion:	The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion:
Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.	be thou ruler, even in the midst among thine enemies.
Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae	In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee
In splendoribus sanctorum:	free-will offerings with an holy worship:
Ex utero ante luciferum genui te.	the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.
Juravit Dominus et non poenitebit eum.	The Lord sware and will not repent.
Tu es sacerdos in aeternum	Thou art a priest for ever
Secundum ordinem Melchisedech.	after the order of Melchisedech.
Dominus a dextris tuis,	The Lord upon thy right hand shall wound
Confregit in die irae suae reges.	even kings in the day of his wrath.
Judicabit in nationibus,	He shall judge among the heathen;
Implebit ruinas:	he shall fill the plains with the dead bodies:
Conquassabit capita in terra multorum.	and smite in sunder the heads over divers countries.
De torrente in via bibet:	He shall drink of the brook in the way:
Propterea exaltabit caput.	therefore shall he lift up his head.
Gloria Patri et Filio,	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
Et Spiritui Sancto:	and to the Holy Ghost:
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper,	as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	world without end. Amen.

Please do not turn the page until the work and its accompaniment have ended.

Confitebor tibi Domine (Secondo) SV266
(pub. 1641)

Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo, in consilio justorum, et congregatione.	I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; in the council of the just, and in the congregation.
Magna opera Domini: exquisita in omnes voluntates ejus.	Great are the works of the Lord: sought out according to all his wills.
Confessio et magnificentia opus ejus, et justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.	His work is praise and magnificence: and his justice continueth for ever and ever.
Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, misericors et miserator Dominus.	He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord:
Escam dedit timentibus se; memor erit in saeculum testamenti sui.	He hath given food to them that fear him. He will be mindful for ever of his covenant:
Virtutem operum suorum annuntiabit populo suo, ut det illis haereditatem gentium.	He will shew forth to his people the power of his works. That he may give them the inheritance of the Gentiles:
Opera manuum ejus veritas et judicium.	the works of his hands are truth and judgment.
Fidelia omnia mandata ejus, confirmata in saeculum saeculi, facta in veritate et aequitate.	All his commandments are faithful: confirmed for ever and ever, made in truth and equity.
Redemptionem misit populo suo; mandavit in aeternum testamentum suum.	He hath sent redemption to his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever.
Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus.	Holy and terrible is his name:
Initium sapientiae timor Domini; intellectus bonus omnibus facientibus eum: laudatio ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.	The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. A good understanding to all that do it: his praise continueth for ever and ever.
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Dario Castello (1602-1631)

Sonata Quarta à due Soprani from *Sonate concertate in stil moderno, libro secondo*
(pub. 1629)

Claudio Monteverdi

Beatus vir (Primo) SV268 (pub. 1641)
Liturgical text

Blessed is the man

Beatus vir qui timet Dominum:	Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord:
In mandatis eius volet nimis.	he hath great delight in his commandments.
Potens in terra erit semen eius:	His seed shall be mighty upon earth:
Generatio rectorum benedicetur.	the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.
Gloria et divitiae in domo eius:	Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house:
Et iustitia eius manet in saeculum saeculi.	and his righteousness endureth for ever.
Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis:	Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness:
Misericors, et miserator, et iustus.	he is merciful, loving and righteous.
Iucundus homo qui miseretur et commodat,	A good man is merciful, and lendeth,
Disponet sermones suos in iudicio:	and will guide his words with discretion:
Guia in aeternum non commovebitur.	for he shall never be moved.
In memoria aeterna erit iustus:	The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.
Ab auditione mala non timebit.	He will not be afraid of any evil tidings.
Paratum cor eius, sperare in Domino.	For his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.
Confirmatum est cor eius: non commovebitur	His heart is established: and will not shrink
Donec despiciat inimicos suos.	until he sees his desire upon his enemies.
Dispersit, dedit pauperibus:	He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor:
Justitia eius manet in saeculum saeculi:	and his righteousness remaineth for ever;
Cornu eius exaltabitur in gloria.	his horn shall be exalted with honour.
Peccator videbit et irascetur,	The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him:
Dentibus suis fremet et tabescet;	he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away;
Desiderium peccatorum peribit.	the desire of the ungodly shall perish.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, Et Spiritui Sancto: Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	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.

Pause

Laudate pueri Dominum (Secondo) SV271 (pub. 1641)

Praise the Lord, you servants

Laudate, pueri, Dominum; laudate nomen Domini.	Praise the Lord, you servants; praise the Name of the Lord.
Sit nomen Domini benedictum ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.	Blessed be the Name of the Lord: from this time forth for evermore.
A solis ortu usque ad occasum laudabile nomen Domini.	From the rising of the sun until its setting the Lord's Name is praised.
Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus, et super caelos gloria eius.	The Lord is high above all nations: and his glory above the heavens.
Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster, qui in altis habitat,	Who is like the Lord our God, who lives on high,
Et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra?	and yet humbles himself to look on heaven and earth?
Suscitans a terra inopem, et de stercore erigens pauperem:	He raises the needy from the dust, and lifts the poor out of the mire;
Ut collocet eum cum principibus, cum principibus populi sui.	that he may set him with the princes: even with the princes of his people.
Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo, matrem filiorum laetantem.	He makes the barren woman to keep house: and to be a joyful mother of children.
Gloria Patri, gloria et Filio, gloria et Sancto:	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Francesco Turini (c.1589-1656)

Sonata a doi violini from *Madrigali, Libro 1* (pub. 1621)

Claudio Monteverdi

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes (Primo) SV272 (pub. 1641)

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes; laudate eum, omnes populi.	O praise the Lord, all ye heathens: praise him, all ye nations.
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus,	For his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us:
Et veritas Domini manet in aeternum.	and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise the Lord.
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:	Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,	as it was in the beginning, is now,
Et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.	and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Salve Regina (Secondo) SV284 (pub. 1641)

Liturgical text

Salve Regina, Mater Misericordiae,	Hail, O Queen, Mother of mercy,
Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, Salve!	our life, our sweetness and hope, hail!
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae,	To thee we cry, the banished children of Eve,
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes,	to thee we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping
In hac lacrimarum valle.	in this vale of tears.
Eja ergo, Advocata nostra,	Thou therefore, our advocate,
Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte	turn thine eyes of mercy towards us,
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,	and show us Jesus, blessed fruit of thy womb,
Nobis, post hoc exilium, ostende,	after this our exile.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.	O kind, O merciful, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Please do not turn the page until the work and its accompaniment have ended.

Magnificat (Primo)

SV281 (pub. 1641)

Liturgical text

Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum,
Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Quia respexit humilitatem
Ancillae suae, ecce enim ex hoc beatam
Me dicent omnes generationes.

For he hath regarded the lowliness
of his handmaiden: for, behold,
from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

Quia fecit mihi magna, qui potens est:
Et sanctum nomen eius.

For he that is mighty hath done great things to me:
and holy is his name.

Et misericordia eius, a progenie in progenies
Timentibus eum.

And his mercy is from generation unto generation,
unto them that fear him.

Fecit potentiam in bracchio suo;
Dispersit superbos, mente cordis sui.

He hath showed strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Deposuit potentes de sede
Et exaltavit humiles.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and exalted the humble.

Esurientes implevit bonis:
Et divites dimisit inanes.

He hath filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

Suscepit Israel puerum suum,
Recordatus misericordiae suae,

He hath received Israel, his servant,
being mindful of his mercy.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

As he spoke to our forefathers,
to Abraham and his seed for ever.

Gloria Patri, et Filio,
Et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

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.