

WIGMORE HALL

Sunday 13 September 2026
7.30pm

Monteverdi: Vespro di San Giovanni Battista

il Pomo d'Oro

Angelo Calvo violin
Valentina Mattiussi violin
Vanni Moretto double bass
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

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Versiculus et responsorium : Deus in adjutorium

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 Gabriellis, 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 adiutorium

Deus, in adiutorium 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: Sede a dextris meis,	The Lord said unto my Lord: sit thou on my right hand,
Donec ponam inimicos tuos Scabellum pedum tuorum.	Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.
Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion: Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.	The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler, even in the midst among thine enemies.

Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae In splendoribus sanctorum: Ex utero ante luciferum genui te.	In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee free-will offerings with an holy worship: the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.
Juravit Dominus et non poenitebit eum. Tu es sacerdos in aeternum Secundum ordinem Melchisedech.	The Lord sware and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.
Dominus a dextris tuis, Confregit in die irae suae reges.	The Lord upon thy right hand shall wound even kings in the day of his wrath.
Judicabit in nationibus, Implebit ruinas:	He shall judge among the heathen; 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: Propterea exaltabit caput.	He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up his head.
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.

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

Laudate, pueri,
Dominum; laudate nomen
Domini.
Sit nomen Domini
benedictum ex hoc nunc et
usque in saeculum.
A solis ortu usque ad
occasum laudabile nomen
Domini.
Excelsus super omnes
gentes Dominus, et super
caelos gloria eius.
Quis sicut Dominus Deus
noster, qui in altis habitat,
Et humilia respicit in
caelo et in
terra?
Suscitans a terra inopem, et
de stercore erigens
pauperem:
Ut colloceat eum cum
principibus, cum
principibus populi sui.
Qui habitare facit
sterilem in domo,
matrem filiorum
laetantem.
Gloria Patri,
gloria et Filio,
gloria et Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio et
nunc et semper in saecula
saeculorum. Amen.

Praise the Lord, you servants

Praise the Lord, you
servants; praise the
Name of the Lord.
Blessed be the Name of
the Lord: from this time
forth for evermore.
From the rising of the sun
until its setting the
Lord's Name is praised.
The Lord is high above all
nations: and his glory
above the heavens.
Who is like the Lord our
God, who lives on high,
and yet humbles himself
to look on heaven and
earth?
He raises the needy from
the dust, and lifts the
poor out of the mire;
that he may set him with the
princes: even with the
princes of his people.
He makes the barren
woman to keep house:
and to be a joyful
mother of children.
Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to
the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning
is now and ever shall
be. Amen.

Claudio Monteverdi

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

Laudate Dominum, omnes
gentes; laudate eum,
omnes populi.
Quoniam confirmata est
super nos misericordia
ejus,
Et veritas Domini
manet in
aeternum.
Gloria Patri,
et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio, et
nunc,
Et semper, et in saecula
saeculorum. Amen.

O praise the Lord, all ye
heathens: 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.
Praise the Lord.
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.

Salve Regina (Secondo) SV284 (pub. 1641) *Liturgical text*

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.
Eja 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, O Queen, Mother of
mercy,
our life, our sweetness
and hope, hail!
To thee we cry, the
banished children of Eve,
to thee we send up our
sighs, mourning and
weeping
in this vale of tears.
Thou therefore, our
advocate,
turn thine eyes of mercy
towards us,
and show us Jesus, blessed
fruit of thy womb,
after this our
exile.
O kind, O merciful, O
sweet Virgin Mary.

Francesco Turini (c.1589-1656)

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

Magnificat (Primo)

SV281 (pub. 1641)

Liturgical text

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

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

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

Et misericordia eius,
a progenie in
progenies
Timentibus eum.

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

Deposuit potentes de
sede
Et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit
bonis:
Et divites dimisit
inanes.

Suscepit Israel puerum
suum,
Recordatus misericordiae
suae,

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

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

Magnificat

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
done great things to me:
and holy is his name.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.