

# WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 26 October 2021 7.30pm

## La Nuova Musica

**Joanne Lunn** soprano\*  
**Julia Doyle** soprano\*  
**Joseph Wicks** high tenor  
**Nick Todd** high tenor  
**Alessandro Fisher** tenor\*  
**Ben Johnson** tenor\*  
**Ben Vonberg-Clark** tenor  
**James Arthur** baritone  
**Christopher Webb** bass-baritone  
**William Gaunt** bass

**Thomas Gould** violin  
**Andrej Kapor** violin  
**Rachel Byrt** viola  
**Gavin Kibble** bass violin  
**Jacob Garside** viola da gamba  
**Judith Evans** double bass  
**Siobhan Armstrong** harp

**Eligio Quinteiro** theorbo  
**Sergio Bucheli** theorbo  
**Conor Hastings** cornetto  
**Helen Roberts** cornetto  
**Martyn Sanderson** tenor trombone  
**Sue Addison** tenor trombone  
**Adrian France** bass trombone  
**David Bates** harpsichord  
**Joseph McHardy** organ

\*soloists

**Claudio Monteverdi** (1567-1643)

Vespro della Beata Vergine SV206 (c.1610)

### Welcome back to Wigmore Hall

We are grateful to our Friends and donors for their generosity as we rebuild a full series of concerts in 2021/22 and reinforce our efforts to reach audiences everywhere through our broadcasts. To help us present inspirational concerts and support our community of artists, please make a donation by visiting our website:

[Wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate](https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate). Every gift is making a difference. Thank you.

*Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management.*

*In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.*

*Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141.*

*Wigmore Hall is equipped with a 'Loop' to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.*



*Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.*

**The Wigmore Hall Trust** Registered Charity No. 1024838  
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • [Wigmore-hall.org.uk](https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk) • John Gilhooly Director

**Wigmore Hall Royal Patron** HRH The Duke of Kent, KG

**Honorary Patrons** Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**



'To perform it is to court disaster. To write about it is to alienate some of one's best friends. Even to avoid joining in the controversy is to find oneself accused of (i) cowardice, or (ii) snobbishness, or (iii) sitting on the fence, or (iv) all three...'

What single piece of music could possibly prompt the kind of divisive rage and passion described here by musicologist Denis Arnold? The answer is **Monteverdi's *Vespers*** – a 'musicological Lorelei' that has confounded scholars and provoked performers for over 400 years.

We know the *Vespers* was first printed in Venice in 1610 – a facsimile of that score is readily available. But despite an unusually direct paper-trail, the work remains mysterious, a source of questions to which any performance must supply an answer. When was it composed? For what purpose and occasion? Was it ever performed and, if so, where and in what form? Finally – and most significantly – is it, in fact, a unified work at all?

To start the process of untangling these is to travel not to Venice – the city that was home to Monteverdi's triumphant final decades, whose image is emblazoned on so many recordings – but to Mantua's Gonzaga Court. The ambitious young musician who had described himself as 'fortunate' to enter the Duke's service in 1591 was scarcely recognisable as the man creating '...an a cappella Mass for six voices...together with psalms for Vespers of the Madonna' in 1608.

Aged just 43, Monteverdi was a broken man. The death of his wife in 1607 had left him alone, 'seriously ill' from overwork and the Mantuan climate, struggling to feed, clothe and educate his two young sons. Pleas for dismissal were ignored, and Monteverdi was forced to continue in the Duke's demanding service.

It seems an unlikely time for the composition of a large-scale sacred work. Some argue that it was created for the magnificent festivities surrounding the marriage of the Duke's son to Margherita of Savoy in May 1608. Others have argued for the *Vespers* as a musical portfolio to advertise the composer's skill to the visiting Pope Paul V (the work's dedicatee) in hopes of a Vatican job. That both theories persist speaks to the ambiguity of a work that seems designed to serve many functions – at once a compendium and a single liturgical work, an advertisement and a functional collection of sacred music.

*Vespers* – the daily Catholic evening service – follows a set form. Five psalms (each preceded by an antiphon), a hymn and a Magnificat are the key elements, sung to anything from plainchant to the most elaborate of polyphony on feast days.

Monteverdi sets each of these (twice, in the case of the Magnificat), but also includes additional elements. Four motets, or 'sacred concertos', are perhaps intended to replace the traditional

antiphons between each psalm, with an instrumental sonata supplying the final preface.

One interesting detail of the *Vespers* is its emphasis – on the title-page, no less – on the work's historical elements. The psalms and Magnificat settings may have been composed separately over time, but all are united by their structure. Each takes plainchant as its basis, treating it as a *cantus firmus* – a slow-moving central melody – around which Monteverdi weaves intricate strands of counterpoint in both instruments and voices.

The effect is strikingly varied from piece to piece, but retains the same spirit of collision: music at the threshold of ancient and modern, tradition and innovation. This is a composer who wishes to be admired for his invention, but also his respect and understanding of musical history. Add to this the sheer potential opulence of the settings – scored for up to 10 vocal parts, with cornettos and sackbuts as well as organ and strings – and you have a showcase well suited not only to the splendour of the Vatican, but perhaps even more so to the gilded galleries of St Mark's Basilica in Venice.

Like that building, whose vast scale eclipses all at first glance, the details of Monteverdi's *Vespers* can easily get lost in sheer sonic scale. But once ears adjust, there's much to notice. Has the supplication 'O Lord, make haste to help me' ever sounded more arresting than it does here in music adapted from the opening toccata of Monteverdi's opera *L'Orfeo*, fizzing instrumental ritornelli breaking up the solid blocks of chant, cornetto and violin soaring high above?

The next musical peak arrives in the motet *Nigra sum*. The sensual *Song of Solomon* text is set for solo voice and accompaniment, exploiting all the expressive freedom of the new operatic style. In contrast, psalm-setting *Nisi Dominus* is thickly scored for two five-voice choirs who pass verses back and forth, imitation intensifying towards an emotional and rhythmic climax.

The *Sonata sopra 'Sancta Maria'* puts instrumental virtuosity in the spotlight, weaving a shifting texture over continuo in a set of variations on three motifs. In and out of this drift soprano voices singing the short phrases of a plainchant litany to the Virgin.

Finally, the Magnificat: a fusion of old and new more audacious and extended than any we've heard so far. A plainchant *cantus firmus* runs through each of the movements, its slow-moving notes a harmonic core for a kaleidoscope of mood and invention that takes us from the penitential gloom of the lower-voiced 'Et misericordia', through a shadowy vision of the Holy Spirit in the echoing 'et Spiritui Sancto' to arrive at the blazing final dance of an Amen – music truly, as Monteverdi himself described it, '...suited to the chapels or chamber of princes'.

## Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

### Vespro della Beata Vergine SV206 (c.1610)

#### Deus, in adiutorium meum intende

Deus, in adiutorium meum intende:	Make haste, O God, to deliver me:
Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.	make haste, O Lord, to help me.
Gloria Patri et Filio	Glory be to the Father and to the Son
Et Spiritui Sancto.	and to the Holy Spirit.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	without end. Amen.
Alleluja.	Allelujah.

#### Dixit Dominus

Dixit Dominus Domino meo:	The Lord said to my Lord,
Sede a dextris meis: donec ponam inimicos tuos	sit at my right hand, until I make thine enemies
Scabellum pedum tuorum.	thy footstool.
Virgam virtutis tuæ emittet Dominus ex Sion:	The Lord shall send out the rod of thy strength from
Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.	Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
Tecum principium in die virtutis tuæ	At thy beginning in thy day of glory
In splendoribus sanctorum:	in the splendour of the holy places,
Ex utero ante luciferum genui te.	before the first light I begat thee.
Juravit Dominus, et non pœnitebit eum:	The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent:
Tu es sacerdos in æternum Secundum ordinem Melchisedech.	thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.
Dominus a dextris tuis Confregit in die iræ suæ reges.	The Lord at thy right hand shall destroy kings in the day of his wrath.
Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas:	He shall judge among the nations, fill them with the dead, and smash heads in many lands.
Conquassabit capita in terra multorum.	
De torrente in via bibet:	He shall drink of the brook in the way:
Propterea exaltabit caput.	thus shall he raise his head.
Gloria Patri et Filio	Glory be to the Father and to the Son
Et Spiritui Sancto.	and to the Holy Spirit.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	without end. Amen.

#### Nigra sum

Nigra sum sed formosa filia Jerusalem.	I am a black but comely daughter of Jerusalem.
Ideo dilexit me rex	Therefore the king hath delighted in me
Et introduxit in cubiculum suum et dixit mihi:	and brought me to his chamber and said to me:
Surge, amica mea, et veni.	Arise, my love, and come.
Jam hiems transiit, imber abiit, et recessit.	For the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone;
Flores apparuerunt in terra nostra,	Flowers have appeared in our land,
Tempus putationis advenit.	the time of pruning is at hand.

#### Laudate pueri Dominum

Laudate, pueri, Dominum:	Praise the Lord, ye servants:
Laudate nomen Domini.	praise the name of the Lord.
Sit nomen Domini benedictum,	Blessed be the name of the Lord,
Ex hoc nunc, et usque in sæculum.	from this time forth for evermore.
A solis ortu usque ad occasum,	From the rising to the setting of the sun,
Laudabile nomen Domini.	the Lord's name be praised.
Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus,	The Lord is high above all nations,
Et super cœlos gloria ejus.	and his glory above the heavens.
Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster, qui in altis habitat,	Who is like the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high,
Et humilia respicit in cœlo et in terra?	Yet respecteth humbly what is in heaven and earth?
Suscitans a terra inopem,	He raiseth the simple from the dust,
Et de stercore erigens pauperem:	and lifteth the poor from the mire.
Ut collocet eum cum principibus,	That he may set him with princes,
Cum principibus populi sui.	even the princes of his people.
Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo,	Who maketh the barren woman to keep house,
Matrem filiorum lætantem.	a joyful mother of children.
Gloria Patri et Filio	Glory be to the Father and to the Son
Et Spiritui Sancto.	and to the Holy Spirit.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	without end. Amen.

#### Pulchra es

Pulchra es, amica mea, Suavis et decora filia Jerusalem.	Thou art beautiful, my love, a sweet and comely daughter of Jerusalem.
--	--

Pulchra es, amica mea, suavis  
et decora sicut  
Jerusalem, terribilis ut  
castrorum acies ordinata.  
Averte oculos tuos a me,  
Quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Thou art beautiful, my love,  
sweet and comely as  
Jerusalem, terrible as an army  
arrayed for battle.  
Turn thine eyes from me,  
for they make me flee away.

## Laetatus sum

Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta  
sunt mihi:  
In domum Domini  
ibimus.  
Stantes erant pedes nostri, in  
atriis tuis, Jerusalem.  
Jerusalem, quæ ædificatur ut  
civitas:  
Cujus participatio ejus in idipsum.  
Illuc enim ascenderunt tribus,  
Tribus Domini testimonium  
Isræl  
Ad confitendum nomini  
Domini.  
Quia illic sederunt sedes in  
judicio,  
Sedes super domum David.  
Rogate quæ ad pacem sunt  
Jerusalem:  
Et abundantia diligentibus te.  
Fiat pax in virtute tua:  
Et abundantia in turribus tuis.  
Propter fratres meos, et  
proximos meos,  
Loquebar pacem de te:  
Propter domum Domini Dei  
nostri,  
Quæsivi bona tibi.  
Gloria Patri et  
Filio  
Et Spiritui Sancto.  
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,  
et semper,  
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

I was glad when they said to  
me:  
we will go into the house of the  
Lord.  
Our feet shall stand in thy gates,  
O Jerusalem.  
Jerusalem, that is built as a  
city  
that is at one with itself.  
For thither the tribes go up,  
the tribes of the Lord, to the  
testimony of Isræl,  
to give thanks to the name of  
the Lord.  
For there are the seats of  
judgement,  
the thrones of the house of David.  
Pray for the peace of  
Jerusalem:  
they shall prosper that love thee.  
Peace be within thy walls,  
and plenty within thy palaces.  
For my brethren, and my  
companions,  
I will seek peace for thee.  
For the house of the Lord our  
God,  
I will seek to do thee good.  
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,  
without end. Amen.

## Duo Seraphim

Duo Seraphim clamabant alter  
ad alterum:  
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Plena est omnis terra gloria  
ejus.  
Tres sunt, qui testimonium dant  
in cælo:

Two seraphim cried to one  
another:  
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God  
of Sabaoth.  
The whole earth is full of his  
glory.  
There are three who bear  
witness in heaven:

Pater, Verbum et Spiritus  
Sanctus:  
Et hi tres unum sunt.  
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Plena est omnis terra gloria  
ejus.

the Father, the Word, and the  
Holy Spirit:  
and these three are one.  
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God  
of Sabaoth.  
The whole earth is full of his  
glory.

## Nisi Dominus

Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum,  
In vanum laboraverunt qui  
ædificant eum.  
Nisi Dominus custodierit  
civitatem,  
Frustra vigilat qui custodit  
eam.  
Vanum est vobis ante lucem  
surgere:  
Surgite postquam sederitis,  
Qui manducatis panem  
doloris.  
Cum dederit dilectis suis  
somnum:  
Ecce, hæreditas Domini  
filii:  
Merces, fructus ventris.  
Sicut sagittæ in manu  
potentis:  
Ita filii  
excussorum.  
Beatus vir qui implevit  
desiderium suum ex ipsis:  
Non confundetur cum  
loquetur  
Inimicis suis in porta.  
Gloria Patri et  
Filio  
Et Spiritui Sancto.  
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,  
et semper,  
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Unless the Lord build the house,  
they labour in vain who build  
it.  
Except the Lord keep the  
city,  
he watcheth in vain who  
keepeth it.  
It is vain for you to rise before  
dawn:  
rise later,  
ye who have eaten the bread of  
sorrows;  
When he will give sleep to his  
chosen.  
Lo, children are an heritage of  
the Lord;  
a reward, the fruit of the womb.  
As arrows in the hands of the  
mighty,  
thus are the children of  
outcasts.  
Blessed is the man whose  
quiver is full of them:  
they shall not be ashamed when  
they confront  
their enemies in the way.  
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,  
without end. Amen.

## Audi coelum verba mea

Audi, cœlum, audi verba mea  
plena  
Desiderio et perfusa gaudio.  
*Audïo*  
Dic, quæso, mihi: Quæ est ista  
Quæ consurgens ut aurora  
rutilat,  
Ut benedicam? *Dicam*  
Dic nam ista pulchra ut  
luna,

Hear, O heaven, hear my words  
full  
of longing and pervaded by joy. /  
*hear*  
Tell me, I pray, who is she  
that shines like the dawn in her  
rising,  
that I might bless her? *I will tell*  
Tell me, for she, beauteous as  
the moon,

Electa ut sol, replet  
 lætitia  
 Terras, cœlos, maria. *Maria*  
 Maria virgo illa dulcis prædicta  
 de  
 Propheta Ezekiel, porta  
 orientalis? *Talis*  
 Illa sacra et felix porta  
 per  
 Quam mors fuit expulsa  
 Introducta autem vita? *Ita*  
 Quæ semper tutum est  
 medium  
 Inter homines et Deum  
 Pro culpæ remedium?  
*Medium*  
 Omnes hanc ergo sequamur qua  
 cum  
 Gratia mereamur vitam  
 æternam.  
 Consequamur. *Sequamur*  
 Præstet nobis Deus, Pater hoc  
 et Filius  
 Et Mater cujus nomen  
 invocamus dulce  
 Miseris solamen.  
*Amen*  
 Benedicta es, virgo Maria,  
 In sæculorum sæcula.

radiant as the sun, fills with joy  
 the earth,  
 heavens and seas. *Mary*  
 Mary, that sweet virgin foretold  
 by the prophet  
 Ezekiel, the gateway to the  
 East? *Even she*  
 That sacred and happy portal  
 through  
 which death was driven out  
 and life brought in? *Even so*  
 She who is always a sure  
 intermediary  
 between men and God,  
 the cure for our sins? *The*  
*Mediator*  
 Let us all therefore follow her  
 through  
 whose grace we may be granted  
 eternal life.  
 Let us go with her. *Let us follow*  
 May God help us, God the  
 Father, and the Son,  
 and the Mother on whose sweet  
 name we call  
 as a comfort to the wretched.  
*Amen*  
 Thou art blessed, virgin Mary,  
 for ever and ever.

## Lauda Jerusalem

Lauda, Jerusalem, Dominum:  
 Lauda Deum tuum, Sion.  
 Quoniam confortavit seras  
 portarum tuarum:  
 Benedixit filiis tuis in  
 te.  
 Qui posuit fines tuos pacem:  
 Et adipe frumenti satiat  
 te.  
 Qui emittit eloquium suum  
 terræ:  
 Velociter currit sermo ejus.  
 Qui dat nivem sicut lanam:  
 Nebulam sicut cinerem  
 spargit.  
 Mittit crystallum suam sicut  
 buccellas:  
 Ante faciem frigoris ejus quis  
 sustinebit?  
 Emittet verbum suum, et  
 liquefaciet ea:  
 Flabit spiritus ejus, et fluent  
 aquæ.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem;  
 praise thy God, O Zion.  
 For he hath strengthened the  
 bars of thy gates;  
 he hath blessed thy children  
 within thee.  
 He maketh peace in thy borders,  
 and filleth thee with the finest  
 wheat.  
 He sendeth his commandment  
 to the earth;  
 his word runneth swiftly.  
 He giveth snow like wool;  
 he scattereth hoar frost like  
 ashes.  
 He casteth forth his ice like  
 morsels;  
 before his cold who can  
 stand?  
 He sendeth out his word, and  
 melteth them;  
 his spirit blows, and the waters  
 flow.

Qui nunciate verbum suum  
 Jacob:  
 Justitias et judicia sua  
 Israël.  
 Non fecit taliter omni  
 nationi:  
 Et judicia sua non manifestavit  
 eis.  
 Gloria Patri et  
 Filio  
 Et Spiritui Sancto.  
 Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,  
 et semper,  
 Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

He sheweth his word unto  
 Jacob,  
 his statutes and judgements to  
 Israël.  
 He hath not dealt so with any  
 nation;  
 and his judgments he hath not  
 made manifest.  
 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,  
 without end. Amen.

## Sonata sopra 'Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis'

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

Holy Mary, pray for us.

## Ave maris stella

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

Hail, star of the sea,  
 bountiful mother of God  
 and ever Virgin,  
 happy gate of heaven.

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

Taking that Ave  
 from the mouth of Gabriel,  
 preserve us in peace,  
 giving Eve a new name.

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

Loose the chains of the bound,  
 bring light to the blind,  
 drive out our ills,  
 invoke all things good.

Monstra te esse matrem,  
 Sumat per te preces,  
 Qui pro nobis natus,  
 Tulit esse tuus.

Show thyself to be a mother,  
 may he who was born for us  
 receive our prayers through  
 thee.

Virgo singularis,  
 Inter omnes mitis,  
 Nos culpæ solutos,  
 Mites fac et castos.

Singular virgin,  
 more gentle than all,  
 absolve us from sin and  
 make us gentle and pure.

Vitam præsta puram,  
 lter para tutum,  
 Ut videntes Jesum  
 Semper collætémur.

Grant us a pure life,  
 prepare a safe way,  
 that in seeing Jesus  
 we may rejoice for ever.

Sit laus Deo Patri,  
 Summo Christo decus,  
 Spiritui Sancto  
 Trinus honor unus. Amen.

Praise be to God the Father,  
 glory to Christ on high,  
 and with the Holy Spirit  
 one triple honour. Amen.

## Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum:	My soul doth magnify the Lord,
Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.	and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour.
Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ:	For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden:
Ecce enim ex hoc	for behold from henceforth
Beatam me dicent omnes generationes.	all generations shall call me blessed.
Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:	For he that is mighty hath done great things to me,
Et sanctum nomen ejus.	and holy is his name.
Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies	And his mercy is on them that fear him
Timentibus eum.	from generation to generation.
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:	He hath shewed strength with his arm;
Dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.	he hath scattered the proud of heart.
Deposuit potentes de sede,	He hath put down the mighty from their seat,
Et exaltavit humiles.	and hath exalted the lowly.
Esurientes implevit bonis:	He hath filled the hungry with good things,
Et divites dimisit inanes.	and the rich he hath sent empty away.
Suscepit Israël puerum suum,	He hath sustained Israël his servant,
Recordatus misericordiæ suæ.	remembering his mercy.
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,	As he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham et semini ejus in sæcula.	Abraham and his seed for ever.
Gloria Patri et Filio	Glory be to the Father and to the Son
Et Spiritui Sancto.	and to the Holy Spirit.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,	As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.	without end. Amen.