

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 7 February 2025
7.30pm

Vox Luminis

Katerina Blížková cantus
Hannah Ely cantus
Carine Tinney cantus
Zsuzsi Tóth cantus
Caroline Weynants cantus
Liga Zirina cantus
Jan Christoph Kullmann altus
Vojtech Semerád altus
Raffaele Giordani tenor
Jacob Lawrence tenor
João Moreira tenor
Lionel Meunier bassus
Sebastian Myrus bassus
Jacek Kurzydło violin I
Jorlen Vega violin II
Lies Wyers lirone
James Munro violone
Sarah Ridy harp
Simon Linné lute
Elina Albach organ

Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674)

Abraham et Isaac

Vanitas Vanitatum I

Jonas

Interval

Vanitas Vanitatum II

Jephte (1648)

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Note that the running order of this concert has slightly changed since these programme notes were written.

The Jesuits of the German College in Rome held **Giacomo Carissimi** in such esteem (1605–1674) that, on his death, they obtained a brief from the pope forbidding his scores to be taken out of the college buildings. Unfortunately, a century later this backfired: in 1773, the Jesuits were disbanded and most of the college documents were sold for scrap paper. If any of Carissimi's autograph scores survived this, they perished in the French occupation of Rome in 1808. Aside from reminding us not to be jealous hoarders, the lack of autographs gives musicologists lots of scope for debating dates of composition and even authenticity. 'Jephte', unusually, can be both accurately attributed and roughly dated, for it was published in 1650. Perhaps Carissimi's best known oratorio, it tells the story of Jephtha's rash promise to sacrifice the first living being he encountered following a military victory: his daughter, rushing out to greet her father.

The oratorio was a product of what we call the Counter Reformation, and was promoted by the Jesuits. With biblical stories as its subjects, the oratorio combined moral and spiritual succour with entertainment — a sort of dramatised sermon. It borrowed its music from the growing opera tradition: Carissimi's debt to Monteverdi *et al.* can clearly be heard. Opera used a combination of recitative ('as spoken'), solo songs and choruses, allowing for narrative, drama and commentary, three important components of rhetoric. Carissimi's oratorios set a benchmark for that genre, influencing the dramatic music of Charpentier, Purcell and Handel (who borrowed Jephtha's last chorus for his own Samson); one baroque theorist called Carissimi the 'musical orator'.

'Jephte' starts off with confidence: the Israelites defeat the Ammonites in 'plain' keys (requiring few sharps or flats). The Ammonites bewail their fate in a brief spell of chromaticism, but the Israelites' rejoicing (led by Jephtha's daughter) return to the former plain keys. This is shattered by Jephtha's awful realisation: his cry, 'Heu mihi! Filia mea', destabilises the tonality, interjecting discord and chromaticism: he cannot return to a plain key. His daughter bears his burden better, succumbing to chromaticism only in her final recitative.

A similar chromaticism shows Abraham's distress at his child's sacrifice. The innocent G major of Isaac's question of the whereabouts of the sacrificial victim is met in G minor with a description of Abraham, which includes plenty of crunchy accidentals. Abraham himself can hardly bear to explain to Isaac, and his words are interrupted with rests. Carissimi heightens the drama with a *melisma* (many notes to one word or syllable) for Abraham tying his son up ('alligavit'), before brilliantly interrupting his action with the arrival of an angel. Father and son erupt into a joyful triple-time dance. The angel congratulates Abraham for his obedience and the chorus end the oratorio, praising God in duple and triple-time merriment.

'Vanitas vanitatum' exists in two parts: the first for two sopranos and the second for five voices. Because of the problem with autographs, the second in particular cannot be ascribed with total confidence to Carissimi, but it has all his hallmarks of dramatic and fluent writing: if not by him, it was by someone of his 'school'. Both works take their names from their refrain, the famous phrase from Ecclesiastes, 'vanity of vanities; all is vanity'. The first, called a 'motet' rather than an 'oratorio' in its earliest manuscript (we should not be too rigorous in our categorisation), refers to two biblical passages: Luke's description of a rich man and Nebuchadnezzar and his gold statue from Daniel. The word-painting is rich. In the first verse, Carissimi puffs up the rich man's singular wealth with a *melisma* on 'ei', and emphasises hell with *melisma* on 'inferno', the rich man's destination. The 'sound' of the flute and harp are given similar treatment in the second verse, and Carissimi sets up the vanity of the statue by extending the musical passages on 'gold', 'weighty engine' and by repeating the phrase 'in mud, in dust, in shadows, in nothing'.

The second 'Vanitas vanitatum', subtitled *Contemptus mundi* ('Contempt for the World'), is taken mainly from Ecclesiastes, but its final section places us firmly in the Classical Renaissance, with references to Greece and Rome. The *Contemptus mundi* theme was popular in contemporary culture, manifesting itself in all sorts of different media, such as Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and the Dutch still life, with its dying flowers and skulls. Carissimi's oratorio is full of dramatic word-play, with *melismas* on, for example, 'cantores'/'cantatrices', and clever writing for voices and instruments, such as the phrases thrown between the sopranos in their duet 'Hinc, mortales'.

The story of Jonah and the whale lends itself to word-play, and Carissimi does not disappoint us. Its scoring of double choir and strings makes for a varied soundscape and fast-paced drama. The chorus describing the tempest, whipped up by God because Jonah has disobeyed him, is superb: winds buffet us from three directions with two-part choir and strings, and choral stereophony engulfs us in the storm. This chorus immediately leads into the panicked cry of a semi-chorus of sailors. The double chorus returns to narrate another dramatic moment, when the sailors throw Jonah into the sea, and the storm disappears. The bass uses an octave-and-a-half to describe the whale swallowing Jonah, a lovely piece of word-painting; Jonah's subsequent monologue (from inside the whale) is a masterclass in rhetorical writing - semiquavers for 'tempestat' and 'infremuerunt', downward sweeps for 'abyssus' and 'miserere'. The double chorus returns for the finale, becoming the Ninevites pleading forgiveness; their heartfelt plaint gives way to optimism for a new relationship with God, and we can hear in this chorus why Carissimi held such influence over younger generations of Baroque composers.

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Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674)

Abraham et Isaac

Liturgical text

Historicus (Tenor)

Tentavit Deus Abraham,
vocavit, et dixit ad
eum;

Deus (Bassus)

Abraham! Abraham!
Tolle filium tuum
unigenitum Isaac quem
diligis, et vade in terram
Visionis super unum
montium quem
monstravero,
tibi, et ibi illum
offeres in
holocaustum.

Historicus (Tenor)

Abraham ergo de nocte
consurgens, parato ligno,
sumpto gladio et igne et
strato apparatu, pergit ad
locum quem illi
Deus praeceperat,
cum unigenito Isaac
filio suo. Cumque
illuc accessisset, tulit
ligna holocausti et
imposuit super Isaac
filium suum, qui
ferens ignem et
gladium dicebat
patri suo:

Isaac (Cantus)

Pater mi, ecce ignis,
ecce ligna,
ecce gladius et
apparatus;
ubi est holocausti
victima?

Historicus (Tenor)

Tunc obruit dolor
patris viscera,
fremuit sanguis, horruit
natura, et ingemiscens
pater ait:

Abraham et Isaac (Quintus, Cantus)

Fili mi, heu, fili mi!
Pater mi, pater mi,
quid suspiras?
Pater mi, ubi est
holocausti
victima?

Abraham and Isaac

Narrator

And God did tempt
Abraham, called unto
him, and said:

God

Abraham! Abraham! Take
now thine only son
Isaac, whom thou
lovest, and get thee
into the land of the
Vision, and offer him
there for a burnt
offering upon one of
the mountains which I
will tell thee of.

Narrator

And Abraham rose up in
the night, and clave the
wood, and took a knife,
the fire and all manner
of things, and went with
Isaac unto the place of
which God had told
him. There he took the
wood of the burnt
offering, and laid it
upon his son; and Isaac
took the fire in his hand,
and a knife, and spake
unto his father, and
said:

Isaac

My father, behold the fire
and the wood, and the
knife, and all manner of
things; but where is the
lamb for a burnt
offering?

Narrator

Then the father's heart
was oppressed by
sorrow, his blood
quivered, and he
sighed, and said:

Abraham and Isaac

My son, alas, my son! My
father, my father, why
sighest thou? My
father, where is the
lamb for a burnt
offering?

Abraham

Providebit Dominus
holocausti victimam.

Historicus

Cumque Abraham
aedificasset altare, ligna
composuit, et alligavit
filium Isaac unigenitum,
arripuit gladium, extendit
manum ad immolandum
illum. Tunc ecce Angelus
Domini de coelo clamans,
qui dixit
Abraham:

Angelus

Ne extendas manum tuam
super Isaac, neque illi
quidquam facias, cognovi
enim quod times
Deum et non pepercisti
unigenito filio tuo
propter me.

Abraham et Isaac

O felix nuntium, o dulce
gaudium! Procul ignis,
procul dolor! Procul
ferrum, procul mors!
Vivit pater, vivit
infans!

Historicus

Vocavit et iterum Angelus
Domini de coelo
Abraham, et
dixit ei:

Angelus

Quia fuisti mihi oboediens et
non pepercisti unigenito
filio tuo propter me,
benedicam tibi, et
tuum semen
multiplicabo sicut
stellas coeli, et sicut
arenam quae est in litore
maris, et in semine tuo
benedicentur omnes
populi, omnes
gentes, omnes
generationes.

Historicus (Soli et Chorus)

Omnes populi laudate
Deum, omnes gentes,
omnes generationes, et
adorate Dominum.

Abraham

God will provide it
himself.

Narrator

And Abraham built an
altar, and laid the wood
in order, and bound
Isaac his only son, and
took the knife, and
stretched his hand to
slay his son. And, lo, the
angel of the Lord called
unto him out of heaven,
and said:

Angel

Lay not thine hand upon
the lad, neither do thou
any thing unto him: for
now I know that thou
fearest God, seeing
thou hast not withheld
thine only son from me.

Abraham and Isaac

O happy tidings, O sweet
joy! Away with fire,
away with sorrow! Away
with the iron, away with
death! The father liveth,
and the son liveth.

Narrator

And the angel of God
called unto Abraham
out of heaven the
second time, and said:

Angel

Because thou hast
obeyed me, and hast
not withheld thine only
son, I will bless thee,
and I will multiply thy
seed as the stars of the
heaven, and as the
sand which is upon the
sea shore: and in thy
seed shall all the
peoples, the nations,
and the generations be
blessed.

Narrator (Soloists and Chorus)

All ye peoples, all ye
nations, and all ye
generations, praise and
worship the lord.

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

Abraham

Qui misit Angelum suum de
coelo et eripuit
Isaac dilectum de
igne. He that sent his Angel
from heaven, and
delivered my beloved
Isaac from the fire.

Angelus

De gladio. Angel
From the knife.

Deus

De morte. God
From death.

Abraham, Angelus et Deus

Et de manu patris
sui. Abraham, Angel and
God
And from his father's
hand.

Historicus (Soli et Chorus)

Omnes populi laudate
Deum, omnes gentes,
omnes generationes, et
adorate Dominum. Narrator (Soloists and
Chorus)
All ye peoples, all ye
nations, and all ye
generations, praise and
worship the lord.

Vanitas Vanitatum I

Cantus I et II

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia
vanitas. Vanity of vanities: all is
vanity.

Cantus I

Erat dives in civitate,
epulabatur quotidie,
induebatur purpura,
accingebatur bysso.
Mille servi pendebant
ab eo. Dicebat
huic: "Vade", et ibat;
alteri "Facito", et
faciebat. Oh, quanta
bona, oh quantae
deliciae. Prae
multitudine
divitiarum non
erat ei similis in
universo. Misera
gloria, aegra superbia
quae ictu oculi firma
non est. Stulte dives iam
non dives, iam te ego dum
discerno et sepultum in
inferno. There was in the city a
rich man; he feasted
every day, and was
clothed in purple and
fine linen. And he had a
thousand servants; he
now said unto one:
"Go", and he went; and
then unto another: "Do
this", and he did it. O
how many good things,
o how many delights;
none in the world was
like him in his great
wealth. O miserable
glory, o sick pride, no
more stable than the
flickering of an eye-lid.
O foolish rich man, rich
no more, I see thee
buried in hell.

Cantus I et II

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia
vanitas. Vanity of vanities: all is
vanity.

Cantus II

Erat rex assiriorum
potentissimus qui
erectam statuam
auream immensae
magnitudinis. Ad
sonum cytharae et
fistulae iussit illam
populis adorari: "Venite,
accurrite, volate gentes
et voce submissa
et fonte humiliatis
dicite laudes, spargite
preces ad imaginem
formidandam. Sed
ecce ibi subito,
scisso demonte
lapide statua nobilis
in mille partibus
dissolvit se. Dicite,
ubi nunc aurum
ubi nunc machina
tam magni ponderis
fundata stat?
In luto, in pulvere,
in umbra, in nihilo. There was a most mighty
king of the Assyrians;
he made an image of
gold of immeasurable
size, and commanded
that, at the sound of the
harp and the flute, all
the people should
worship it: "Come,
make speed, fly, ye
peoples, and with soft
voices and humble
brows, praise the
terrible image, and pray
unto it". But, behold,
suddenly a rock was
cut out of the mountain,
and brake the image
into a thousand pieces.
Say: "Where is now the
gold, where is the
weighty engine
grounded? In the mud,
in the dust, in the
shadows, into nothing".

Cantus I et II

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia
vanitas. Nostra spes,
amor divine, sine fine
accede nos; et dum in
tenebris vitae mortalis,
in poenis, in malis
agitati vacillamus
solum te corde
quaeramus. Vanity of vanities: all is
vanity. O our hope, o
divine love, inflame us
for ever; and while we
stagger in the darkness
of mortal life, in
torments and in
afflictions, our hearts
seek only thee.

Jonas

Liturgical text

Historicus (Cantus)

Cum repleta esset Ninive
iniquitate, vox
peccatorum ejus
clamavit de terra ad
Dominum, qui locutus est
ad Jonam prophetam de
caelo, dicens: Because Nineveh was full
of iniquity, the voice of
its sinners cried out
from the earth unto the
Lord, who from heaven
spake unto the prophet
Jonah, saying:

Deus (Bassus)

'Surge, surge, Jona, surge et
vade in Ninivem civitatem
grandem et praedica in ea,
quia malitia ejus ascendit
coram me.' Arise, Jonah, go to
Nineveh, that great city,
and cry unto it, for their
wickedness is come up
before me.

Historicus (Cantus)

Audivit Jonas vocem
Domini, et timuit
timore magno et
descendit in navim
euntem in Tharsim,
ut fugeret et eriperet
se a facie
Domini.

Jonah heard the voice of
the Lord, and his fear
was great; and he went
down into a ship going
to Tarshish to flee, and
to remove himself from
the presence of the
Lord.

Historicus (Altus)

Et cum processisset in mare,
excitavit Dominus
procellam vehementem in
spiritu tempestatis.

But while he was sailing,
the Lord sent out a
great wind, and there
was a mighty tempest.

Historicus (Chorus)

Et proeliabantur venti,
et Notus et Auster
et Africus fremuerunt
contra navim,
nubes et nimbi,
fluctus et turbines,
grandines et fulgura,
tonitrus et fulmina
impetu horribili
ceciderunt super mare,
et facta est tempestas
magna in mari, et
terruit nautas
clamantes
ad deos suos et
dicentes:

And the winds waged
war: Notus and Auster
and Africus raged
against the ship; clouds
and nimbuses, billows
and whirlwinds, hail and
lightnings, thunders
and thunderbolts raged
against the ship with
horrible force, and fell
upon the sea, and there
was a mighty tempest
in the sea. And the
mariners were afraid,
and every man cried
unto his god, saying:

**Nautae (Altus, Tenor,
Bassus)**

'Dii magni! Dii fortes! Dii
caeli! Dii maris!
misericordes et potentes,
de angustiis et periculis in
misericordia ac potentia
liberate nos. Dicite
tempestati, imperate
ventis, praecipite
procellis, ut sileant
et quiescant et
adjuvate nos et salvi
erimus.'

Highest gods, mighty
gods, gods of heaven,
gods of the sea! Ye
merciful and powerful,
by your mercy and
power deliver us from
anguish and danger.
Address the storm,
command the winds,
that they fall silent and
set at rest; help us, and
we shall be safe.

Historicus (Cantus)

Jonas autem in interioribus
navis in maestitia cordis
sui dormiebat sopore gravi
et excitavit eum
gubernator navis et dixit ei:

But jonah, inside the ship,
shrouded in sadness,
was fast asleep; so the
shipmaster awoke him,
and said:

Gubernator (Altus)

'Quid tu sopore deprimeris?
Surge, surge! invoca deum
tuum, si forte recogitet
Deus de nobis et non
pereamus.'

What meanest thou, o
sleeper? arise, call
upon thy God, if so be
that God will think upon
us, that we perish not.

Nautae (Tenor, Bassus)

'Venite, venite, mittamus
sortem super nos, ut
sciamus, quare hoc malum
sit nobis.'

Come, and let us cast
lots, that we may know
wherefore this evil is
upon us.

Historicus (Cantus)

Miserunt ergo sortem, et
ecce: sors cecidit super
Jonam. Dixerunt ergo ei viri
navis:

So they cast lots, and the
lot fell upon Jonah.
Then said the mariners
unto him:

**Nautae (Altus, Tenor,
Bassus)**

'Indica nobis, cujus
causa malum istud
sit. Quod est opus
tuum? quae est terra
tua? quod est iter
tuum? vel ex quo populo
es tu?'

Tell us for whose cause
this evil is upon us.
What is thine
occupation? What is
thy country? Whither
goest thou? And of
what people art thou?

Jonas (Tenor)

'Hebraeus ego sum
et Dominum
deum caeli timeo,
qui fecit mare et
aridam.'

I am an Hebrew, and I fear
the Lord, the God of
heaven, which hath
made the sea and the
dry land.

**Nautae (Cantus, Altus,
Tenor)**

'Quid faciemus
tibi et cessabit
tempestas
ista, quae nobis
interitum minatur.'

What shall we do unto
thee, that the tempest
waging destruction
upon us may come to
an end?

Jonas (Tenor)

'Tollite me et mittite in mare!
et cessabit tempestas ista.
Scio enim ego,
quod propter me
tempestas haec
grandis est super
vos.'

Take me up, and cast me
forth into the sea; so
shall the tempest come
to an end: for I know
that for my sake this
great tempest is upon
you.

Historicus (Chorus)

Tulerunt nautae
Jonam et miserunt
in mare: et stetit
mare a furore
suo.

The mariners took up
Jonah, and cast him
forth into the sea: and
the sea ceased from
her raging.

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

Historicus (Bassus)

Et praeparavit Dominus
cetum grandem, ut
deglutiret Jonam, qui de
ventre ceti oravit ad
Deum suum
et dixit:

And the Lord prepared a
great whale to swallow
up Jonah, who prayed
unto the Lord his God
out of the fish's belly,
and said:

Jonas (Tenor)

'Justus es, Domine, et
rectum iudicium tuum,
potens es et voluntati tuae
non est qui possit
resistere. Projecisti me in
profundum maris et fluctus
tui super me transierunt.
Justus es, Domine, et
rectum iudicium tuum, sed
cum iratus fueris,
misericordiae
recordaberis. Placare,
Domine, ignosce,
Domine, et miserere.
Abiectus sum a
conspectu oculorum
tuorum, accensus est furor
tuus et contra me
tempestas orta est et
infremuerunt venti et
fluctus intumuerunt
vallavit me abyssus et
cetus deglutivit me.
Num quid in aeternum
projecisti servum
tuum? Placare,
Domine, ignosce,
Domine, et miserere.
Angustiata est in
me anima mea et in
afflictione multa
recordatus sum
tui, Domine, Deus
meus. Bonus est
obedire mandatis
tuis et a facie tua
non declinare. Ecce
ego: mitte me, et
obediam tibi. Audi
verba mea et exaudi
me in angustiis
confitentem nomine
tuo. Placare,
Domine, ignosce,
Domine, et
miserere.'

Righteous art thou, o
Lord, and upright are
thy judgments; mighty
art thou, and there is
none that could resist
thy will. Thou hadst
cast me into the deep
of the sea, and thy
waves passed over me.
Righteous art thou, o
Lord, and upright are
thy judgments: but in
wrath, remember
mercy. Be appeased, o
Lord, forgive, o Lord,
and have mercy. I am
cast out of thy sight,
thine anger is hot, and a
tempest was raised
against me; the winds
raged, and the waves
roared, the depth
closed me round about,
and the whale
swallowed me. Hast
thou cast off thy
servant for ever? Be
appeased, o Lord,
forgive, o Lord, and
have mercy. My soul is
anguished, and in my
afflictions I
remembered thee, o
Lord my God. It is good
to obey thy
commandments, and
stray not from thy side.
Here am I: send me,
and I will obey thee.
Hear my words, and
hearken unto me in my
distress, and I shall
praise thy name. Be
appeased, o Lord,
forgive, o Lord, and
have mercy.

Historicus (Altus, Tenor, Bassus)

Et imperavit Dominus pisci,
et evomuit Jonam, qui
praedicavit in Ninive juxta
verbum Domini.

And the Lord spake unto
the fish, and it vomited
out Jonah, who
preached unto Nineveh
according to the word
of the Lord.

Historicus (Cantus)

Et crediderunt Ninivitae;
revertentes a via sua mala
et agentes paenitentiam
dixerunt:

So the people of Nineveh
believed, turned from
their evil way and
repented, and said:

Soli et Chorus

'Peccavimus, Domine,
peccavimus, et in viis tuis
non ambulavimus, sed
convertere, Domine, et
convertemur, illumina
vultum tuum super nos et
salvi erimus.

We have sinned, o Lord,
and we have walked not
in thy ways; but return,
o Lord, and we shall
return; make thy face
shine upon us, and we
shall be safe.

Interval

Giacomo Carissimi (1605-1674)

Vanitas Vanitatum II

Tenor

Proposui in mente
mea quaerere
et investigare sapientes
de omnibus quae sunt
super terram. Vidi
omnia quae fiunt
sub sole, et
contemplatus
sum quaecumque magis
expetunt filii hominum,
et ecce universa vanitas
et afflictio spiritus.
Vanitas vanitatum
et omnia vanitas.

My mind is made up; I
shall seek and wisely
examine all things on
the earth. I have seen
all that happens
beneath the sun, and I
have considered each
thing more than the
common man can
aspire to. The result is
merely universal vanity
and torment of the
mind. Vanity of vanities,
all is vanity!

Chorus

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia
vanitas

Vanity of vanities, all is
vanity!

Cantus I

Cogitavi transferre animum ad sapientiam, dedi cor meum ut scirem prudentiam atque doctrinam ut stultitiam evitarem et viderem quod esset utilis filiis hominum numero dierum vitae suae, et cognovi quod in his quoque esset labor et afflictio spiritus. Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

My mind I have devoted to wisdom, and urged my heart to know measure and science, in order to avoid foolishness, and observe what is useful for humans in the everyday course of their lives. And I noted that there too there was pain and torment of mind. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Chorus

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Altus

Dixi in corde meo. Vadam, et afluam deliciis, et fruar bonis. Magnificavi opera mea, aedificavi mihi domos, plantavi vineas, hortos et pomaria, et extruxi piscinas aquarum ad irrigandas silvas lingnorum germinantium. Et vidi quod essent omnia vanitas et afflictio spiritus. Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

I said within myself: I shall go and have my fill of delights and will enjoy good things. I have made magnificent works, I have built myself a building, I have planted vines, gardens and orchards; I have excavated reservoirs of water to irrigate the forests of young plants. And I noted that there too there was pain and torment of mind. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Chorus

Omnia vanitas, vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Bassus

Coacervavi mihi argentum et aurum et substantias regum et provinciarum, possedi quoque et ancillas, multam que familiam habui, armenta quoque et magnos ovium greges comparavi, et supergressus sum opibus omnes qui fuerunt ante me. Et vidi quod hoc quoque esset vanitas et afflictio spiritus. Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

I have stored up for myself silver and gold and the resources of kings and provinces. I possess also servants and a complete domestic staff; I have bought cattle and great flocks of sheep; And I exceed in opulence all my predecessors. And I noticed that all that too was vanity and torment of mind. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Chorus

Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Cantus II

Feci mihi cantores et cantatrices, et delicias filiorum hominum, nec prohibui cor meum quin omni voluptate frueretur, et oblectaret se in his quae praeparaveram. Cumque me convertissem ad omnia quae feceram, vidi in omnibus vanitatem et afflictionem spiritus, et nihil permanere sub sole. Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

I have purchased singers, both male and female, and all that delights humans; I have not refused my heart whatever would let it taste of voluptuousness and take pleasure in what I had prepared for it. But when I turned towards all I had done, I noted that there too there was pain and torment of mind and that nothing could last under the sun. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Chorus

Omnia vanitas, Vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!

Cantus I et II

Hinc, mortales, ediscite quod vana mundi gaudia, inanes labores, fugaces honores, mendaces favores omnia vanitas et umbra sunt.

From all that, mortals, learn that the world's joy is vain, work valueless, honour fleeting, favour deceitful: all that is vanity and shadowplay.

Altus, tenor et bassus

Sceptra, coronae, purpurae, pompae, triumpho, laureae, decora, ornatus, gloriae, Et lusus, et deliciae, et fastus, et divitiae: omnia vanitas et umbra sunt.

Sceptres, crowns, imperial garments, processions, laurels, solemnities, decoration, glorification, no less that amusements, voluptuousness, and pomp and wealth: all that is vanity and shadowplay.

Chorus

Omnia vanitas et umbra sunt.

All is vanity and shadowplay.

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

Cantus I

Ubi sunt praeclari
reges qui dederunt
orbi leges,
ubi gentium
ductores, civitatum
conditores? Where have they gone,
those illustrious kings
who gave the earth
their laws, where are
the leaders of men, the
rulers of cities?

Chorus

Pulvis sunt et cineres. They are dust and ashes.

Tenor

Ubi septem
sapientes, et
scientias adolentes,
ubi retores discordes,
ubi artifices
experti? Where have they gone,
the Seven Sages, the
worshippers of science,
where are the debating
orators, Where are the
skilful artists?

Chorus

Pulvis sunt et cineres. They are dust and ashes.

Altus

Ubi fortes sunt
gigantes, tanto
robore praestantes,
ubi invicti
bellatores,
barbarorum
domitores? Where have they gone,
the fearsome giants
who made show of their
strength? Where are
the unconquered
warriors, the tamers of
barbarians?

Chorus

Pulvis sunt et cineres. They are dust and ashes.

Cantus II

Ubi heroum
inclita proles,
ubi vastae
urbium moles,
ubi Athenae,
ubi Carthago,
veterisque Thebae
imago? Where has it gone, the
illustrious progeny of
the heroes? Where are
the huge conurbations?
Where is Athens?
Where is Carthage?
And the ghost of
ancient Thebes?

Chorus

Solum nomen super est Only their names survive.

Bassus

Ubi dictatorum
gloriae, ubi
consulum victoriae,
ubi laurae
triumphales, ubi
decus immortale
Romanorum
honorium? Where have they gone,
the ceremonies to
honour the dictators?
The victories of the
Consuls? The laurels of
triumph? The immortal
prestige of Roman
honours?

Chorus

Solum nomen super
est. Heu, nos
miseros. Sicut
aquae dilabimur et
sicut folium quod
vento rapitur, deficimus,
eripimur. Votis decipimur,
tempore fallimur,
morte deludimur ;
Quae nos anxii quaerimus,
quae solliciti petimus,
Omnia vanitas et
umbra sunt. Vanitas
vanitatum et omnia
vanitas. Only their names survive.
Ah! Woe are we! We
liquefy as water, and
like leaves blown away
by the wind, we grow
weak, we are tossed far
away. We are tricked of
our desires, betrayed
by time, snared by
death. All that we seek
in anxiety, all that we
plead for, all that is
vanity and shadowplay.
Vanity of vanities, all is
vanity.

Jephte (1648)

Liturgical text

Historicus (Altus solo)

Cum vocasset in
proelium filios Israel
rex filiorum Ammon
et verbis Jephte
acquiescere nolisset,
factus est super
Jephte Spiritus Domini
et progressus ad
filios Ammon votum
vovit Domino
dicens:

Jephthah

When the king of the
children of Ammon
made war against the
children of Israel, and
disregarded Jephthah's
message, the Spirit of
the Lord came upon
Jephthah and he went
on to the children of
Ammon, and made a
vow to the Lord, saying:

Jephte (Tenor solo)

Si tradiderit Dominus
filios Ammon in manus
meas, quicumque
primus de domo
mea occurrerit
mihi, offeram illum
Domino in
holocaustum.

"If You will indeed give
the sons of Ammon into
my hand, then whoever
comes first out of the
doors of my house to
meet me, I will offer him
to the Lord as a
complete sacrifice."

Chorus à 6

Transivit ergo Jephte ad
filios Ammon, ut in
spiritu forti et virtute
Domini pugnaret contra
eos.

So Jephthah crossed over
to the sons of Ammon
with the spirit, strength,
and valor of the Lord to
fight against them.

Historicus à 2 (Cantus I et II)

Et clangebant tubae et
personabant tympana et
proelium commissum
est adversus
Ammon.

And the trumpets
sounded, and the
drums resounded, and
battle against Ammon
ensued.

Arioso (Bassus solo)

Fugite, cedite impii,
perite gentes,
occumbite in gladio.

Flee and give way,
godless ones; perish,
foreigners! Fall before

Dominus exercituum
in proelium surrexit et
pugnat contra
vos.

our swords, for the Lord
of Hosts has raised up
an army, and fights
against you.

Chorus à 6

Fugite, cedite,
impii, corruite,
et in furore gladii
dissipamini.

Flee, give way, godless
ones! Fall down! And
with our raging swords,
be scattered!

Historicus (Cantus solo)

Et percussit Jephthe
viginti civitates
Ammon plaga magna
nimis.

And Jephthah struck
twenty cities of Ammon
with a very great
slaughter.

Historicus à 3 (Cantus I et II, Altus)

Et ululantes filii
Ammon facti
sunt coram
filiis Israel
humiliati.

And the children of
Ammon howled, and
were brought low
before the children of
Israel.

Historicus (Bassus solo)

Cum autem victor Jephthe
in domum suam
revertetur, occurrens
ei unigenita
filia sua cum
tympanis et choris
praecinebat:

When Jephthah came
victorious to his house,
behold, his only child, a
daughter, was coming
out to meet him with
tambourines and with
dancing. She sang:

Filia (Cantus solo)

Incipite in tympanis et
psallite in cymbalis.
Hymnum cantemus
Domino et modulemur
canticum. Laudemus
regem coelitum, laudemus
belli principem, qui
filiorum Israel victorem
ducem redidit.

"Strike the timbrels and
sound the cymbals! Let
us sing a hymn and play
a song to the Lord, let
us praise the King of
Heaven, let us praise
the prince of war, who
has led the children of
Israel back to victory!"

Duet (Cantus I et II)

Hymnum cantemus Domino
et modulemur canticum,
qui dedit nobis gloriam et
Israel victoriam.

Let us sing a hymn and
play a song to the Lord,
who gave glory to us
and victory to Israel!

Filia

Cantate mecum Domino,
cantate omnes populi,
laudate belli principem, qui
dedit nobis gloriam et
Israel victoriam.

Let us all sing to the Lord,
let us praise the prince
of war, who gave glory
to us and victory to
Israel!

Chorus à 6

Cantemus omnes Domino,
laudemus belli principem,

Let us sing and praise the
Lord of Hosts who has

qui dedit nobis gloriam et
Israel victoriam.

brought us glory and to
Israel, the victory.

Historicus (Altus solo)

Cum vidisset Jephthe, qui
votum Domino voverat,
filiam suam venientem in
occursum, prae
dolore et lachrimis
scidit vestimenta sua
et ait:

When Jephthah, who had
sworn his oath to the
Lord, saw his daughter
coming to meet him,
with anguish and tears
he tore his clothes and
said:

Jephthe

Heu mihi! Filia mea,
heu decepisti me,
filia unigenita, et tu
pariter, heu filia mea,
decepta es.

"Woe is me! Alas, my
daughter, you have
undone me, my only
daughter, and you,
likewise, my
unfortunate daughter,
are undone."

Filia

Cur ergo te, pater,
decipi, et cur ergo
ego filia tua
unigenita decepta
sum?

"How, then, are you
undone, father, and
how am I, your only-
born daughter,
undone?"

Jephthe

Aperui os meum ad
Dominum ut
quicumque primus
de domo mea
occurrerit mihi,
offeram illum
Domino in
holocaustum.
Heu mihi! Filia mea,
heu decepisti
me, filia unigenita,
ettu pariter,
heu filia mea,
decepta
es.

"I have opened my mouth
to the Lord that
whoever comes first
out of the doors of my
house to meet me, I will
offer him to the Lord as
a complete sacrifice.
Woe is me! Alas, my
daughter, you have
undone me, my only
daughter, and you,
likewise, my
unfortunate daughter,
are undone."

Filia

Pater mi, si vovisti votum
Domino, reversus victor ab
hostibus, ecce ego filia tua
unigenita, offer me
in holocaustum
victoriae tuae, hoc
solum pater mi
praesta filiae
tuae unigenitae
antequam
moriar.

"My father, if you have
made an oath to the
Lord, and returned
victorious from your
enemies, behold! I, your
only daughter offer
myself as a sacrifice to
your victory, but, my
father, fulfill one wish to
your only daughter
before I die."

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

Jephte

Quid poterit animam tuam,
quid poterit te,
moritura filia,
consolari?

"But what can I do,
doomed daughter, to
comfort you and your
soul?"

Filia

Dimitte me, ut duobus
mensibus circumeam
montes, et cum
sodalibus meis
plangam virginitatem
meam.

"Send me away, that for
two months I may
wander in the
mountains, and with my
companions bewail my
virginity."

Jephte

Vade, filia mia unigenita,
et plange
virginitatem tuam.

"Go, my only daughter, go
and bewail your
virginity."

Historicus à 4

Abit ergo in
montes filia Jephte
et plorabat
cum sodalibus
virginitatem suam,
dicens:

Then Jephthah's
daughter went away to
the mountains, and
bewailed her virginity
with her companions,
saying:

Filia

Plorate colles,
dolete montes et
in afflictione
cordis mei
ululate!

Mourn, you hills, grieve,
you mountains, and
howl in the affliction of
my heart!

Echo

Ululate!

Howl!

Filia

Ecce moriar virgo et
non potero morte
mea meis filiis
consolari, ingemiscite
silvae, fontes
et flumina, in
interitu virginis
lachrimate!

Behold! I will die a virgin,
and shall not in my
death find consolation
in my children. Then
groan, woods,
fountains, and rivers,
weep for the
destruction of a virgin!

Echo

Lachrimate!

Weep!

Filia

Heu me dolentem in
laetitia populi, in
victoria Israel
et gloria patris
mei, ego sine filiis
virgo, ego filia
unigenita moriar
et non vivam.
Exhorrescite

Woe to me! I grieve
amidst the rejoicing of
the people, amidst the
victory of Israel and the
glory of my father, I, a
childless virgin, I, an
only daughter, must die
and no longer live. Then
tremble, you rocks, be

rupes, obstupescite
colles. Valles et cavernae
in sonitu horribili
resonate!

astounded, you hills,
vales, and caves,
resonate with horrible
sound!

Echo

Resonate!

Resound!

Filia

Plorate filii Israel,
plorate virginitatem
meam et Jephte
filiam unigenitam in
carmine dolore
lamentamini.

Weep, you children of
Israel, bewail my
hapless virginity, and
for Jephthah's only
daughter, lament with
songs of anguish.

Chorus à 6

Plorate filii Israel, plorate
omnes virgines
et filiam
Jephte
unigenitam in carmine
doloris lamentamini.

Weep, you children of
Israel, weep, all you
virgins, and for
Jephthah's only
daughter, lament with
songs of anguish.