



The London Festival of Contemporary Church Music

Gala Concert
Saturday 13 May 2017, 7.30pm
St George's Bloomsbury

"Mors et Resurrexit" Four Meditations on the Life of Christ

The Sarum Consort
Kin Collective

Programme

Tonight's programme is structured as a set of reflections on four statements on the life of Christ taken from the Nicene Creed. The first reflection focuses on Christ's emergence and teaching; the second, crucifixion; the third, his Resurrection; and finally his Ascension. This powerful journey is vividly depicted through music by contemporary British, European and American composers, including the premiere performance of a new work composed especially for this year's Festival by Peter Foggitt. Selected works are interpreted and accompanied by dance ensemble Kin Collective.

I. Et homo factus est

James MacMillan
1959 –

O Radiant Dawn
Strathclyde Motets set 2, no. 4

Klaus Miehling
1963 –

Nunc Dimittis
Vier Lateinische Hymnen, Op. 263, no. 1
Premiere performance

Zoltán Kodály
1882 – 1967

Jesus und die Krämer

II. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis

Trond Kverno
1945 –

The Faucon hath borne my Make away

James MacMillan
1959 –

Videns Dominus
Strathclyde Motets set 1, no. 7

Howard Skempton
1947 –

And there was war in Heaven

Rudolph Mauersberger
1889 – 1971

Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst

INTERVAL

III. Et resurrexit

<i>Grace-Evangeline Mason</i> 1994 –	The Lord Is <i>Premiere performance</i>
<i>Gaetano Lorandi</i> 1960 –	De fructu operum tuorum <i>UK premiere performance</i>
<i>Douglas Pew</i> 1980 –	I know that my Redeemer Liveth <i>UK premiere performance</i>
<i>Herbert Howells</i> 1892 – 1983	Even Such is Time

IV. Et ascendit in cælum

<i>Howard Skempton</i> 1947 –	Song's Eternity
<i>Blake Henson</i> 1983 –	My Flight to Heaven
<i>Peter Foggitt</i> 1984 –	... ond us giefte scealde <i>Premiere performance</i>

Notes

Just a few blocks south of the famous Frauenkirche, in Dresden's old market square, stands the impressive Lutheran high church of the city: the Church of the Holy Cross, the Kreuzkirche. There's been a church on that site since at least 1388; established first as a Catholic church, of course, converting to Protestantism later in the 16th century. From at least 1540, and perhaps even earlier, there's been a choir of men and boys based at the church; the boys, both trebles and older teenagers with lower voices, form the renowned Kreuzchoir. It's often compared to the Vienna Boys Choir, and holds similar cultural influence across southern Germany – perhaps even more so, given the seven-century history of the church and five hundred year history of the choir. Today, there are about 150 boys and young men who sing in the Kreuzchoir.

On 13 February 1945, Allied forces began heavy bombing of Dresden. The selection of a civilian target – the heavily populated city centre – may have been influenced by Britain's experience of the Coventry Blitz in 1940, when loss of city infrastructure had longer-lasting effects on citizens and morale than attacks on military targets. The bombing of Dresden resulted in 25,000 direct casualties and the almost complete destruction of the city centre. The Kreuzkirche was completely destroyed; the Kreuzchoir decimated.

Faced with the destruction of his city, his church, and the deaths of many of his young choir, the director of music, Rudolph Mauersberger, composed one of the bleakest,

starkest liturgical works of the 20th century: **Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst**, a brief selection of sentences from the Lamentation of Jeremiah, depicting the sacking of Jerusalem in 587 AD. Martin Luther wrote in 1538 that “the riches of music are so excellent and so precious that words fail me whenever I attempt to discuss and describe them ... next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world”, but Mauersberger’s use of music’s power to persuade, to convey, and to transform is as far from Luther’s ideals as one can get. Here, music’s goal is not to praise, not to extol, not to rejoice. Here, music communicates bitterness, the breaking of the soul, and loss beyond human understanding in a way that words alone cannot express.

Where speech seems insufficient – at times when we encounter the profound, the mysterious, or those things beyond human experience – then art, and music especially, often rises to replace speech. This is naturally true in religion, where we constantly are presented with mysteries, metaphors and symbols that transcend description and even human understanding. The works in tonight’s programme examine music’s power to represent symbolism: in the words of scripture, the journey from death to resurrection, and the perfection of eternity that is central to the religious conceptualisation of the divine.

In the first reflection, we hear the progression from darkness to light: the “radiant dawn” of the nativity, and the “lumen ad revelationem gentium” (the light of revelation to the gentiles) of the infant Christ’s presentation in the temple of Jerusalem, set to music by **James MacMillan** and **Klaus Miehling**. Jesus returns to the temple decades later, only to find it swarming with traders and money-lenders; his expression of rage, powerfully depicted in *Jesus und die Krämer* by the Hungarian composer **Zoltán Kodály**, is a potent reminder of his humanity. His divinity is on display in *Videns Dominus* by **James MacMillan**: here, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, the final of his sequence of miracles that also prefigures his own resurrection.

The ancient text of Finnish composer **Trond Kverno**’s little carol *The Faucon hath borne my Make away* is bittersweet in its use of Old English imagery of Satan (the Faucon), Hell (an orchard brown), a bleeding Knight (Jesus) and the grieving Virgin Mary (a may [maid] who “weepeth both night and day”). **Howard Skempton**’s minimalist *And there was war in Heaven* is a contemporary examination of the medieval technique of hocket, where the syllables of words are distributed across different voices in sequence, resulting in an objective, almost abstract, representation of the battle of the Archangel Michael against Satan (no longer a mere Faucon – here, a Dragon).

Calm, serenity and a profound sense of confidence and trust are all hallmarks of the three works by English composer **Grace-Evangeline Mason**, Italian composer **Gaetano Lorandi**, and American composer **Douglas Pew**; trust wavers briefly for a moment as we consider our innate mortality in **Herbert Howells**’ setting of *Even such is Time*, a text attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh on the night before his execution; but confidence and hope ultimately prevail in spectacular fashion. The mysteries of eternity and the sweep of the infinite are characteristics of both *Song’s Eternity* by **Howard Skempton** and *My Flight to Heaven* by the American composer **Blake Henson**.

...ond us giefe scealde (“... and gave gifts to us”), for mixed choir, was commissioned by the Festival for tonight’s performance. The text is taken from the Old English work – attributed to the shepherd-turned-epic-poet Cynewulf – Christ II, and describes various

gifts of the Spirit. These are not, however, the standard-issue gifts as listed in 1 Corinthians, but rather a more eclectic list of accomplishments which, by God's grace, people are enabled to perform. Composer **Peter Foggitt** writes:

"I have translated the original text (for bringing which to my attention, I must thank Eleanor Parker), but have retained the characteristic layout of this poetry: that is to say, with the caesura. The argument is sustained and multi-clausal, though each line is divided into two extremely short sections, for example:

He honoured us then,	he who made the world,
God's spirit-Son;	and gave gifts to us ...

"This layout influences the construction of the musical elements of the piece. Soloists and chorus answer one another; short motifs are developed into more involved phrases; a single chord is spun out over bars, over pages. The opening solo outlines, moving downwards, a minor chord with an added sixth, which is later manipulated, made major, and transformed into an upwards arpeggio. The choral material with which the tenors and basses answer that first solo is itself developed and modified throughout the work (whose duration is a little over seven minutes). Interpolated with these larger-scale elements is a series of verses for two principal soloists and a variety of smaller roles taken from within the choir, only latterly involving the full ensemble – ten verses in total, each describing a gift of the Spirit; the music in each one of these is a development of a previous verse's material."

If music combined with words creates deeper connections to mysteries and symbols than just speech alone, then music and movement can go even further. The human body moved by music is an expression of the emotion latent in musical performance; tonight, selected works in the programme are interpreted by Kin Collective. Sonya Cullingford, Chihiro Kawasaki and Alistair Goldsmith worked collaboratively to create this movement language, using themes integral to the narrative of the Easter story: sacrifice, friendship, betrayal and trust, conflict and resolution, and the inherent humanity of this remarkable story that is simultaneously both human and divine.

Translations

Nunc Dimittis

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine:
secundum verbum tuum, in pace.
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum:
quod parasti omnium populorum.

*Now let your servant depart, Lord:
according to your word, in peace.
For I have seen with my own eyes your salvation:
which you have prepared before all peoples.*

Lumen ad revelationem gentium:
et gloriam plebis Israel.

*A light of revelation to the gentiles:
and the glory of your people Israel.*

Jesus und die Krämer
Jesus and the Traders

Da die Ostern nahten,
zog Jesus hinauf gen des heil'gen Tempels
Stadt Jerusalem.

Und fand des Tempels Hof
mit Rind, und Schaf,
und Taubenhändlern voll;
und Geldwechsler spreizten
sich weit und breit.

Er griff eine Geißel auf
und fort jagt' er alle vom Tempelhof.
Trieb die Ochsen fort,
trieb die Schafe fort aus dem Tempel.
Schon drängt sich alles Vieh angstvoll
und hastig zum Tor hinaus.
Wie da rennt und rummelt
alles Rind und Schaf!
Wie die Menge wirbelt!
Mensch und Vieh in Haufen
drängt sich durcheinander
wild zum Tor hinaus!

Und der Geldwechsler Münzen
schüttet' er aus,
und stieß ihre Geldbank zürnend um.

Und zu all jenen Taubenhändlern sprach er:
"Schafft mir doch all das von dannen!
Nicht sollt ihr entweihen
meines Vaters Haus durch Schächerei!"

Und zu jenen sprach er:
"Steht's nicht geschrieben:
'Dies mein Haus ist Stätte des Gebetes,
allem Volk zuteil.'
Ihr jedoch, was macht ihr daraus?
Gottlos' Mördergrube!"

Dies vernehmend Schriftgelehrten
und Hohenpriester
suchten sie ihn dem Tod zu weih'n,
denn Angst faßte sie alle.
Dieweil alles Menge kam,
alles Volk Jesum nur anhing,
und folgte ihm nach.

*As Easter was approaching,
Jesus went up to the holy temple
in the city of Jerusalem.*

*And he found the temple court
full of cattle, and sheep,
and pigeon-handlers;
and money-changers
spread far and wide.*

*He picked up a scourge
and chased them from the temple court.
He drove the oxen out,
he drove the sheep out of the temple.
Already all the cattle are anxiously
moving towards the gate.
How they run and scatter,
all the cattle and sheep!
How the crowd swarms about!
Men and cattle together
are crowded wildly
out of the gates!*

*And the money-changers' coins
are scattered all about,
and he pushes over the money-banks angrily.*

*And to all those pigeon-handlers he said:
"Get all this away from here!
Do not desecrate
my Father's house with your trading!"*

*And he said to them:
"Is it not written:
'My house is a place of prayer,
for all the people.'
But you, what have you made it?
A godless pit of thieves!"*

*Then the scribes
and the chief priest
sought a way to put him to death,
for fear had overtaken them all.
Meanwhile, all the crowds came,
all the people gathered around Jesus,
and they followed him.*

Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst

Wie liegt die Stadt so wüst,
die voll Volks war.
Alle ihre Tore stehen öde.
Wie liegen die Steine des Heiligtums
vorn auf allen Gassen zerstreut.
Er hat ein Feuer aus der Höhe in meine
Gebeine gesandt und es lassen walten.

Ist das die Stadt, von der man sagt,
sie sei die allerschönste,
der sich das ganze Land freuet?

Sie hätte nicht gedacht,
daß es ihr zuletzt so gehen würde;
sie ist ja zu greulich heruntergestoßen
und hat dazu niemand, der sie tröstet.

Darum ist unser Herz betrübt
und unsere Augen sind finster geworden:
Warum willst du unser so gar vergessen
und uns lebenslang so gar verlassen!

Bringe uns, Herr, wieder zu dir,
daß wir wieder heimkommen!
Erneue unsre Tage wie vor alters.
Herr, siehe an mein Elend!

De fructu operum tuorum

De fructu operum tuorum, Domine,
satiabitur terra:
ut educas panem de terra,
et vinum laetificet cor hominis:
ut exhilaret faciem in oleo,
et panis cor hominis confirmet.

Videns Dominus

Videns Dominus flentes sorores Lazari
ad monumentum,
lacrimatus est coram Judaeis, et clamabat:
"Lazare, veni foras!"

Et prodiit ligatis manibus et pedibus,
qui fuerat quatruiduanus mortuus.

*How desolate is the city,
that was once full of people.
All her gateways are desolate.
The stones of her holy temples
are scattered in the streets.
He has sent a fire from heaven into my bones,
and it has prevailed.*

*Is this the city, of which it was said,
she is the most beautiful,
the joy of the whole earth?*

*She did not think
this would be her future;
she is reduced to hideousness
and there is no-one to comfort her.*

*Because of this our hearts have become faint
and our eyes have grown dim:
Why have you utterly forgotten us
and why have you forsaken us for so long?*

*Bring us, Lord, back to you,
that we may return to you!
Renew our days as of old.
O Lord, look upon my affliction!*

*The fruits of your works, Lord,
satisfy the earth:
as you bring forth bread from the earth,
and wine to gladden the hearts of men:
and oil to lighten his face,
and bread to strengthen the hearts of men.*

*When the Lord saw the sisters of Lazarus
in tears at his tomb,
he wept in the presence of the Jews, and cried:
"Lazarus, come out!"*

*And he came out, his hands and feet bound,
he who had been dead for four days.*

Biographies

The Sarum Consort

Soprano Rosemary Galton Eleanor Gregory Rebecca Lea
Alto Hannah Cooke Abigail Gostick Katie Schofield
Tenor Josh Cooter Matthew Howard Stefan Kennedy
Bass Simon Gallear David Le Prevost Greg Skidmore

Director Alastair Carey

Soloists in "... ond us giefe scealde"

Soprano Rebecca Lea
Baritone Greg Skidmore

Described as "the jewel in the crown of Salisbury music", The Sarum Consort has been presenting innovative and compelling programmes ever since its first performance in 1992. Under the leadership of founder Andrew Mackay and current director Alastair Carey, the group has established a reputation for excellence in both early music and in contemporary vocal performance, receiving critical acclaim for its recordings on the Naxos label and its live performances in Salisbury and Wiltshire.

Alastair Carey has been involved in choral performance since the age of six. He has performed, recorded and broadcast throughout the United Kingdom and Europe, appearing as a vocal performer with ensembles such as The Gabrieli Consort, The Oxford Camerata and The Brabant Ensemble in performances ranging from the BBC Proms to the Leipzig Bach Festival. As a conductor, Alastair has directed concerts in Asia, Australasia, Europe and throughout the United Kingdom, including award-winning performances at competitions in the European Grand Prix in Spain and the World Choir Games in South Korea. He was appointed director of The Sarum Consort in 2014.

Kin Collective

Sonya Cullingford Chihiro Kawasaki Alistair Goldsmith

Innovative contemporary dance ensemble Kin Collective is a group of movers and makers who specialise in the unification of different art forms, people and world views, crossing genres and divisions.

Douglas Pew

American composer Douglas Pew is noted for his ability to strike at the root of the emotional world through his music “with a showman’s touch and a poet’s soul” (Jake Heggie). His music has been heralded as “real genius ... pure magic” (DC Metro Theater Arts), “stunning” (Washington Times) and “sensual, other-worldly, expressive and showcasing a rich harmonic pallet, sure to connect with audiences, while saying something fresh, profound and meaningful” (The Pianist’s Craft, Vol. 2).

Grace-Evangeline Mason

Grace-Evangeline Mason currently studies composition at the Royal Northern College of Music. She won the BBC’s Young Composer of the Year award in 2013 and has subsequently had her music played as part of the BBC Proms and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. In 2014, she was a composer in residence for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Her music has been performed by members of Manchester Camerata, BBC Symphony Orchestra, The BBC Singers, Trio Atem and the Aurora Orchestra among others in venues across the UK. Recent commissions include a one-act chamber opera entitled “The Yellow Wallpaper” which was performed at the English National Opera in London.

Gaetano Lorandi

Italian composer Gaetano Lorandi studied organ, composition and electronic music at Padua Conservatory. His works range from orchestra music to chamber and choir music; they have been performed throughout Italy and abroad to critical acclaim, and to prizes in composition competitions in Europe and Russia. His works are published by Chiola Music Press (Pescara), Edizioni Carrara (Bergamo), Bèrben Edizioni Musicali (Ancona) and Peters (New York). He an active performer and a jury member at the International Choir Festival in Florence.

Peter Foggitt

Peter Foggitt is a keyboardist, conductor and composer, currently the Radcliffe Scholar (Doctoral) at Durham University. He made his Radio 3 concerto debut at 21, and is the laureate of several competitions for solo and collaborative piano, including the MBF Kathleen Ferrier Award. Peter founded the award-winning vocal ensemble Cries of London, with whom he has performed at venues across the UK; he also works in sacred music (at Holy Trinity Sloane Square) and in opera, most recently as Assistant Conductor at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. His music has been commissioned, performed and broadcast by choirs, instrumentalists, and opera companies, and is published by Stainer & Bell, Shorter House, and Novello. Peter also enjoys a international reputation for his work as an improviser on both piano and organ, in which capacity he will appear at the St Albans International Organ Improvisation Competition later this year.