



Thursday 21 October, 8pm
St Martin's Church

JOSQUIN & FAYRFAX 500

BREMF Consort of Voices

Deborah Roberts *director*

The music

Josquin des Prez c.1450/1455–1521

Gaude Virgo

Josquin des Prez

Tu solus qui facis mirabilia

Robert Fayrfax 1464–1521

Maria plena virtute

Josquin des Prez

Ut Phœbi radiis

Josquin des Prez

Agnus Dei from Missa L'homme arme sexti toni

Josquin des Prez

Praeter rerum seriem (preceded by chant)

short interval

Hieronymus Vinders fl. 1525–1526

O mors inevitabilis (elegy on the death of Josquin)

Nicholas Gombert c. 1490–c. 1556

Musae Jovis

Fayrfax

Benedicite what dremyd I this nyght

Fayrfax

Magnificat Regale

Two great legends of the Renaissance are commemorated this year, 500 years after their deaths in 1521: Josquin des Prez, the Franco-Flemish pan-European who lived and worked in several countries and whose reputation even then spanned the Continent, and Robert Fayrfax, who lived and worked his entire life in England, with only one reported visit to France when he accompanied Henry VIII's court to the Anglo-French 'summit' known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

In many ways their music could not be more different, with Josquin generally favouring a style at times verging on austere; much of it in four vocal parts, with clear word setting and an uncluttered texture despite some fiendish (for the musicians!) cross-rhythms. Fayrfax, on the other hand, was

writing for the very different tradition that was the English pre-Reformation. The English choir was set up in a very different way to most on the Continent, being based on five voice types with the boys' voices divided between the high trebles and the lower means. Moreover, English polyphony at this time was generally far from austere, forming a dense web of sound at once glorious and bewildering.

What they have in common, however, is a profound sensitivity to text and brilliant use of varying textures to enhance meaning. This is very apparent in Josquin's *Tu solus qui facis mirabilia*, in which he is able to combine the simplest hymn-like textures with a quote from a French love song and still produce a piece of the purest devotion. Equally, in *Maria plena virtute* Fayrfax uses some of the clearest textures to be found in English music of this period, telling the Passion story in a profoundly personal way. His quirky secular song *Benedicite what dremyd I this nyght* could have been written for our own times!

Both composers also enjoy playing with complexity both verbally and musically, Fayrfax with many passages of dazzling syncopation. The mythical text of Josquin's *Ut Phæbi radiis* is laced through with puns and word play on the old names for the notes of the major scale Ut re mi fa sol (mod: Doh ray mi etc), mirrored in the music with rising scale passages. His beautiful closing Agnus Dei from the *Missa L'homme arme sexti toni* is based on pairs of canons just one beat apart, mimicking the effect of echoes, while *Praeter rerum seriem* uses canons between pairs of altos and basses over phrases of plainchant that move from voice to voice. We will perform the chant before Josquin's piece.

This programme is completed with two moving tributes to Josquin's contribution and influence, both alluding to mythical beings. Sadly, no such elegies survive for his English counterpart but Fayrfax's legacy lives on, not only through his own music but through the influence he had on the later John Taverner and Thomas Tallis.

The performers

Since its founding in 2010 as a student/top amateur ensemble open to some of the most challenging music from the whole of the Renaissance, **BREMF Consort of Voices** has certainly risen to the challenge! The group can vary in size as it takes on music in up to 40 parts but it can also supply its own soloists, as it did in 2015 for its Festival concert featuring the Vespers of nun composer Chiara Margarita Cozzolani, broadcast on BBC Radio 3. As well as annual appearances at BREMF and performing in other local festivals and venues, the choir promotes a regular series of concerts in St Paul's Church, West Street.

Sopranos: Helen Dewhurst, Yvonne Eddy, Liz Kelly, Pam Mason, Zofia Reeves

Mezzo-sopranos & altos: Maria Birch, Janet Gascoine, Bibi Lees, Silvia Reseghetti, Natasha Stone, Liz Webb

Tenors: Nick Boston, Nicolas Chisholm, Dan Johnstone, Graeme Smith

Baritones & basses: John Gillies, Tony Jay, Reuben James, Maurice Shipsey

Deborah Roberts was born in Europe and graduated from Nottingham University with an MA in editing and interpreting renaissance and baroque music. She has remained fascinated by the discovery of new repertoire and performance styles ever since. As a long-term former member of The Tallis Scholars, Deborah performed with them in over 1,200 concerts in many weird and wonderful places around the world and in countless recordings of rare and beautiful renaissance music. She also sang with many other early music ensembles as a soloist and consort singer. She took up choral direction 20 years ago, and enjoys running courses in sacred polyphony and early opera. In 2002 she co-founded Brighton Early Music Festival with Clare Norburn and remains its artistic director.

Gaude, virgo mater Christi

Gaude, virgo mater Christi,
quae per aurem concepisti,
Gabriele nuntio.

Gaude, quia Deo plena
peperisti sine poena,
cum pudoris lilio.

Gaude, quia tui nati
quem dolebas mortem pati,
fulget resurrectio.

Gaude Christo ascendente,
et in coelum te vidente,
motu fertur proprio.

Gaude quae post ipsum scandis,
et est honor tibi grandis,
in caeli palatio.

Ubi fructus ventris tui,
nobis detur per te frui,
in perenni gaudio.
Alleluia.

Tu solus qui facis mirabilia

Tu solus qui facis mirabilia,
tu solus Creator, qui creasti nos,
tu solus Redemptor, qui redemisti nos
sanguine tuo pretiosissimo.

Ad te solum confugimus,
in te solum confidimus
nec alium adoramus,
Jesu Christe.

Ad te preces effundimus
exaudi quod supplicamus,
et concede quod petimus,
Rex benigne.

D'ung aultre amer,
nobis esset fallacia:
d'ung aultre amer,
magna esset stultitia et peccatum.

Audi nostra suspiria,
replenos tua gratia,
O rex regum,
ut ad tua servitia
sistamus cum laetitia
in aeternum.

Rejoice, virgin mother of Christ
who hast conceived by ear,
with Gabriel as messenger.

Rejoice, for full of God
thou gavest birth without pain,
with the lily of purity.

Rejoice, for the resurrection
of thy Son now shines,
whose death thou mourned,

Rejoice, as Christ ascends,
and, in thy sight, is carried
into heaven by his own strength.

Rejoice, thou who riseth after him
and to whom great honour is due
in the palace of heaven,

Where the fruit of thy womb
is granted us, through thee, to enjoy
in eternal rejoicing.
Alleluia.

You alone can do wonders,
you alone are the Creator, and created us;
you alone are the Redeemer, and redeemed us
with your most precious blood.

In you alone we find refuge,
in you alone we trust,
none other do we worship,
Jesus Christ.

To you we pour out our prayers,
Hear our supplication,
and grant us our request,
O King of kindness!

To love another
would be deceitful;
to love another
would be great madness and sin.

Hear our sighing,
fill us with your grace,
O King of kings!
so we may remain in your service
with joy
for ever.

Maria plena virtute

Maria plena virtute pietatis gratiae,
mater misericordiae, tu nos ab hoste protege.
Clementissima Maria, vitae per merita
compassionis tuae
pro nobis preces effunde, et de peccatis meis erue.
Sicut tuus Filius petiit pro crucifigentibus,
'Pater dimitte ignorantibus',
magna pietate pendens in latronibus,

dixit uni ex hominibus 'In Paradiso cum patribus
mecum eris hodie'.

Mater dolorosa plena lacrimosa
videns ruinosa Filium in cruce,
cum voce raucosa dixit speciosa

'Mulier clamorosa Filium tuum ecce.'
Vertens ad discipulum sic fuit mandatum
matrem fuisse per spatium et ipsam consolare;
et sicut decebat filium servum paratissimum
custodivit preceptum omnino servire.

Dixit Jesus dilectionis "Sitio salutem gentium".
Audi orationibus nostris tuae misericordiae, O Jesu.
Rex amabilis quid sustulisti pro nobis
per merita tuae passionis peto veniam a te.

Jesu, dicens clamasti,
"Deus meus, num quid me dereliquisti"
Per acetum quod gustasti ne derelinquas me.
'Consummatum.' dixisti.

O Jesu Fili Dei,
in hora exitus mei,
animam meam suscipe.
Tunc spiritum emisit,
et matrem gladius pertransivit:
aqua et sanguis exivit
ex delicato corpore:
Post ab Arimathia rogavit
et Jesum sepelivit,
et Nicodemus venit ferens mixturam myrrhae.
O dolorosa mater Christi,
quales poenas tu vidisti,
corde tenens habuisti fidem totius ecclesiae.

Ora pro me, regina coeli,
Filius tuum dicens;

'Fili, in hora mortis peccatis suis indulge.'
Amen.

Mary, full of virtue, pity and grace,
mother of mercy, protect us from the enemy.
Most gentle Mary, filled with life, pour out,
of your compassion,
prayers on our behalf, and release me from my sins,
just as your son prayed for those crucifying him,
'Father, forgive the ignorant.'
Hanging between two robbers, through his great
holiness
he said to one of the men, 'You will today be in
heaven with me and with your ancestors'.

The grieving mother, filled with tears,
destroyed by the sight of her son hanging on the cross,
said in a hoarse voice, pronouncing her feelings,

'Wailing woman, behold your son.'
Turning to his disciple, and she should console herself
that she had been a mother for a time,
and just as she was worthy of a son so ready to be a
servant; so he obeyed the instruction to be a servant
completely.

Jesus spoke of his wishes, "I thirst for the deliverance of
the nations." In your mercy, give ear to our prayers, O
Jesus. King most worthy of love, what you endured for
us through the grace of your suffering I ask let us come
to you.

Jesus, you called out, saying,
'My God, why have you deserted me?'
By the vinegar which you tasted, do not desert me.
'It is finished,' you said.

Jesus, Son of God,
in the hour of my death.
take up my soul
Then he gave up the ghost,
and the sword pierced his mother:
water and blood poured out
from his tender body.
Later, she asked for his body from Arimathea
and buried Jesus,
and Nicodemus came bearing a mixture of myrrh.
O grieving Mother of Christ,
what pain you saw.
You had the faith of the whole church,
keeping it in your heart.

Pray for me, Queen of Heaven,
saying to your son,

'Son, forgive your servant's sins in the hour of his death.'
Amen.

Ut Phœbi radiis

Ut Phœbi radiis soror obvia sidera luna,
ut reges Salomon sapientis nomine cunctos,
ut remi pontum quæren tum velleris aurum,
ut remi faber instar habens super aera pennas,
ut remi fas solvaces traducere merces,
ut re mi fas sola Petri currere prora,
sic super omne quod est regnas, o virgo Maria.

Latius in numerum canit id quoque cœlica turba,
lasso lege ferens æterna munera mundo,
la sol fa ta mina clara praelustris in umbra,
la sol fa mi ta na de Matre recentior ortus
la sol fa mi re ta quidem na non violata,
la sol fa mi re ut rore ta na Gedeon quo.
Rex, O Christe Jesu, nostri Deus, alte memento.

Like Phoebus' sister the moon with her light reigns over
the stars opposing her;
like Solomon, over all others for the title of wise king;
like the oars of those seeking the gold of the Fleece,
over the sea;
like the inventor of wings having the size of an oar,
over the air;
as it is right for oared ships to carry saleable goods;
as it is right that Peter's ship should run alone under oar,
so you, o Virgin Mary, rule over everything that there is.

Far and wide the heavenly throng sing this also in great
numbers,
as it brings eternal gifts to his world, tired from the Law,
(la sol fa) smooth and bright gifts, shining out in the
dark;
(la sol fa) more recently born of the Mother,
(la sol fa) she who remains indeed unblemished,
(la sol fa) like Gideon with the dew,
O king Jesus Christ, remember us on high, our God.

Acrostic poem on **Ut re mi fa so la**. Here the scale
degrees describe the mythological text, but also
symbolise the *scala celestis* (stairway to Heaven) by
both ascending and descending

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

Praeter rerum seriem

Praeter rerum seriem
parit deum hominem
virgo mater.
Nec vir tangit virginem
nec prolis originem
novit pater.

Beyond the order of things
the virgin mother gives birth to the man who is God.

Neither has man touched the virgin
nor is the father responsible for the origin of the child.

Virtus sancti spiritus
opus illud cœlitus
operatur.
Initus et exitus
partus tui penitus.
Quis scrutatur?

The power of the Holy Spirit
has carried out this heavenly work.

The beginning and the end of your pregnancy.

Who can begin to fathom it?

Dei providentia
quæ disponit omnia
tam suave
tua puerperia
transfer in mysteria.
Mater ave.

God's providence which disposes everything
so sweetly elevates your childbirth to a mystery.

Our Mother hail!

O mors inevitabilis

O mors inevitabilis, mors amara, mors crudelis,
Josquin des Prez dum necasti, illum nobis abstulisti
qui suam per harmoniam illustravit ecclesiam.
Propterea tu musice, dic, requiescat in pace.

Cantus firmus:

Requiem aeternam dona ei Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

O ineluctable death, bitter death, cruel death,
when you killed Josquin Desprez, you took from us
a man who, through his music, adorned the church.
And therefore, O musician, say: May he rest in peace.

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord,
and let light perpetual shine upon them.

Musæ Iovis

Musæ Iovis ter maximi
proles canora, plangite,
comas cypressus comprimat
Iosquinius ille ille occidit,
templorum decus,
et vestrum decus.

Ye Muses, melodious offspring
of thrice-greatest Jupiter, make lamentation.
The cypress draws in its leaves.
The famous Josquin, he is dead:
the glory of temples,
and your own glory.

Severa mors et improba
quæ templa dulcibus sonis
privas, et aulas principum,
malum tibi quod imprecer
tollenti bonos,
parcenti malis?

Grim and merciless Death,
who deprive the temples
and princely courts of sweet sounds,
what curse could I invoke upon you
who take away the good,
who spare the undeserving?

Apollo sed necem tibi
minatur, heus mors pessima,
instructus arcu et spiculis
Musasque ut addant commonet,
et laurum comis,
et aurum comis.

But Apollo, equipped with bow and arrow,
threatens you with destruction,
O you most vile Death,
and calls upon the Muses
to add both laurel
and gold to their hair.

Iosquinius (inquit) optimo
et maximo gratus Iovi,
triumphat inter cœlites
et dulce carmen concinit
templorum decus,
Musarum decus.

'Josquin,' he says, 'pleasing
to the best and greatest Jupiter,
exults among the heavenly beings
and sings a sweet song:
the glory of temples,
the glory of the Muses.'

Benedicite what dremyd I this nyght

Benedicite what dremyd I this nyght
methought the worlde was turnyd upsodowne
the son the moone hade lost ther force and lyght
the see also drowned both towre and towne.

Yett more mervell how that I hard the sownde
of onys voice saying bere in thy mynd
thy lady hath forgotten to be kynd.

Magnificat

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 ejus,
Et misericordia ejus 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 ejus in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,

sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper:
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

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 magnified me:
and holy is his Name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him:
throughout all generations.
He hath shewed 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 hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things:
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy hath holpen
his servant Israel:
As he promised to our forefathers,
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.

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