

# Media Vita

Jacobus Clemens non Papa (1510-1555)	Plainchant	<i>Heu mihi, Domine a4</i>
		<i>Emendemus in melius</i>
Giaches de Wert (1535-1596)	Plainchant	<i>Ascendente Jesu in naviculum a6</i>
		<i>Tribularer, si nescirem</i>
Pedro de Escobar (1465-1535)	Plainchant	<i>Clamabat autem mulier Cananea a4</i>
		<i>Exaudi nos</i>
Anonymous (Antwerp 1554)	Plainchant	<i>O bone Jesu a4</i>
		<i>Peccata mea, Domine</i>
Christopher Tye (1505-1572)		<i>Peccavimus cum patribus nostris a7</i>

Interval of about 12 minutes

	Plainchant	<i>Paradisi portas</i>
John Sheppard (1515-1558)	Plainchant	<i>Media vita in morte sumus a6</i>
		<i>Circumdederunt me</i>
Anonymous (Antwerp 1553)	Plainchant	<i>Agnus Christus a4</i>
		<i>Caligaverunt</i>
Josquin Desprez (1455-1521)		<i>Stabat mater a5</i>
John Sheppard		<i>Libera nos, salva nos a7</i>

## *The Art of Music*

directed by Mick Swithinbank

22 March 2015

Église St-Jean

Luxembourg-Grund



## *Some notes on the programme*

*In planning any concert programme, one of the first pleasures to be anticipated by the performers is the enjoyment of discovering works which are new to them. Hard on the heels of this comes the pleasure of sharing the works with the audience. The music may be rarely performed; it may in some cases never even have been performed at all in modern times. The reservoir of little-known Renaissance music is truly vast, so that it is given to few people to experience more than a small fraction of it, while its quality also tends to be remarkably high.*

*To take an extreme case of obscurity, two of the works in today's programme (Agnus Christus and O bone Iesu) have not to our knowledge been published for nearly half a millennium: they have been specially edited from 16th century sources for this performance. The text of Agnus Christus is particularly interesting, as well as poignant, yet it seems likely that this setting of it is the only one that has ever existed.*

*Of course, it is not always necessary for the performers to choose music which is new to them. Some of the greatest works have inevitably become well-known, at least to aficionados of the period concerned. Such fame is surely enjoyed by the four works in today's programme composed by Sheppard, Tye and Josquin. All of them have been regularly*

*performed and recorded.*

*Of the three, Tye is now the least known. He left relatively few works, and some, like Peccavimus – probably his masterpiece – are of such length that, ironically, the context in which they are least likely to be heard nowadays is precisely that for which they were intended: Christian worship. Tye divides the music into sections for various contrasting voice combinations, reserving the full choir for grand climaxes.*

*Sheppard's Media vita, if performed strictly as instructed, including all the prescribed repeats, is longer still, typically running for about 25 minutes. The fact that it incorporates a plainsong setting of the canticle 'Nunc dimittis' makes relatively little difference to this, so although we are abridging the work considerably, we shall include it. The same composer's Libera nos, salva nos is a complete contrast in terms of duration. The brief text was supposed to be sung daily, or even twice daily, in the chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford, although Sheppard's setting for seven voices must have been reserved for the most special occasions. Scores of Sheppard's music have only been publicly available since the 1970s, but as soon as they were, the composer's status as one of the foremost figures in Tudor music was very quickly appreciated. His use of*

*harmony, revelling in frequent dissonance, is quite individual.*

*Josquin's very tender setting of the medieval sequence Stabat mater, which takes as its theme Mary's suffering at the Crucifixion, is based on a cantus firmus (pre-existing melody), namely that of a song by Binchois, 'Comme femme desconfortée' (Like a woman in distress), appropriate to the image of Mary at the foot of the cross. This melody, however, is concealed in the middle of the musical texture in long notes, keeping a low profile.*

*Clemens non Papa was one of the few Flemish composers of his time who did not make a career in Italy, but instead remained at home, although his talents would surely have guaranteed him success. Penitence seems to have particularly appealed to him, Heu mihi, Domine being one of many fine examples of motets by him in this mode. De Wert was one of his compatriots who did make the move to Italy. There he played a part in developing the madrigal – a secular form, of course – but he also composed sacred music, sometimes bringing to it a pictorial approach more typical of the madrigal, as will be apparent from Ascendente Iesu. The text is full of dramatic contrasts, which are reflected in the musical setting. The word-painting is carried so far that even the first word – which strictly speaking merely refers to getting into a boat – is depicted very*

*literally by a phrase striding upwards through an octave. However, rhythm and longer or shorter note values are the main means used to illustrate the stormy sea buffeting the boat and, at the end of the story, the miraculous calm, while before the calm arrives, the roaring wind is depicted by rapid scales falling a whole octave. In between times, the panicked appeal to Jesus by the disciples is more reminiscent of a fanfare on brass instruments: they are determined to be heard.*

*Another miraculous incident from the life of Jesus is described in Clamabat autem. This is an understated little gem of a piece by a Portuguese composer, who, like Tye but on a much smaller scale, skilfully deploys different voice combinations while making sparing use of the full choir, which in his case runs to only four voices, so that he has to rely mainly on duets and trios. The mood ranges from the placidity of the neutral narration ('he said to her...') to considerable vehemence in some of the dialogue, although without resorting to such extreme musical means as the much later De Wert.*

*We are grateful to Intermedii member Chris Vigar for agreeing to join us for part of this programme, enabling us to sing some works for which we would otherwise lack the requisite vocal resources.*

—MS

Merci d'éteindre votre GSM  
totalement et de ne pas applaudir  
entre les morceaux.

Please switch off your mobile phone  
completely and do not applaud between  
pieces. Thank you.

### **Heu mihi, Domine a4**

*Heu mihi Domine,  
quia peccavi nimis in vita mea.  
Quid faciam miser?  
Ubi fugiam nisi ad te Deus meus?  
Anima mea turbata est valde,  
sed tu Domine succurre mihi  
dum veneris in novissimo die.*

*Jacobus Clemens non Papa (1510-1555)  
Penitential*

Alas, Lord,  
I have sinned greatly during my life.  
What should I, poor wretch, do?  
Where do I find refuge, if not with you, my  
God? My soul is greatly troubled,  
but you, O Lord, please help me, when you  
come back on the very last day.

### **Emendemus in melius**

*Emendemus in melius  
quae ignoranter peccavimus;  
ne subito praeoccupati die mortis,  
quaeramus spatium poenitentiae,  
et invenire non possimus.  
Attende, Domine, et miserere;  
quia peccavimus tibi.*

*Plainchant  
Responsory for the first Sunday in Lent*

Let us change for the better the things  
in which through ignorance we have  
sinned; lest, suddenly caught out by the  
day of our death, we seek a space for  
penitence, and are unable to find it.  
Listen, O Lord, and have mercy:  
for we have sinned against you.

### **Ascendente Jesu in naviculam a6**

*Ascendente Jesu in naviculam,  
secuti sunt eum discipuli eius  
et ecce motus magnus factus est in mari  
ita ut navicula operiretur fluctibus.  
Ipse vero dormiebat;  
et accesserunt ad eum discipuli eius  
et suscitaverunt eum dicentes:  
Domine, salva nos, perimus.  
Et dicit eis Iesus:  
Quid timidi estis modicae fidei.  
Tunc surgens imperavit ventis et mari  
et facta est tranquillitas magna.*

*Giaches de Wert (1535-1596)  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
Matthew 8:23-26*

Jesus climbed into the boat  
and his disciples followed him.  
Suddenly a great storm blew up on the  
lake, so that the waves swept over the boat.  
But Jesus himself was asleep.  
His disciples went and found him  
and woke him up, saying:  
'Lord, save us! We're going to die!'  
And Jesus said to them,  
'Why are you so afraid, of such little faith?'  
Then he stood, commanded the winds and  
the waves, and there was complete calm.

## **Tribularer, si nescirem**

*Tribularer, si nescirem  
misericordias tuas, Domine.*

*Tu dixisti:*

*Nolo mortem peccatoris:  
sed ut magis convertatur  
et vivat.*

*Qui Cananeam et publicanum  
vocasti ad poenitentiam  
Et Petrum lacrimantem suscepisti,  
misericors Deus.*

*Plainchant*

*Responsory for the second Sunday in Lent*

I would be troubled, were I ignorant  
of your compassion, O Lord.

You have said:

I do not want sinners to die:  
but that they turn from wickedness  
and live.

You who called the Canaanite woman and  
the publican to repentance,  
and bore up the weeping Peter,  
you are a merciful God.

## **Clamabat autem mulier Cananea a4**

*Pedro de Escobar (1465-1535)*

*Second Sunday in Lent*

*Matthew 15*

*Clamabat autem mulier Cananea  
ad Dominum Jesum, dicens:  
Domine Jesu Christe, fili David, adiuva me;  
filia mea male a demonio vexatur.*

*Respondens ei Dominus dixit:*

*Non sum missus nisi ad oves  
quae perierunt domus Israel.*

*At illa venit et adoravit eum dicens:*

*Domine, adiuva me.*

*Respondens Jesus ait illi:*

*Mulier, magna est fides tua,  
fiat tibi sicut vis.*

A woman from Canaan called out  
to the Lord Jesus, saying:

Lord Jesus Christ, son of David, help me;  
my daughter is badly troubled by a demon.

And he answering, said:

I was sent only to the sheep  
of the House of Israel that are lost.

But she came up and worshipped him, saying:  
Lord, help me.

Jesus answering, said to her:

Woman, great is your faith:  
may it be done for you as you wish.

## **Exaudi nos Domine**

*Exaudi nos Domine,  
qui exaudisti Ionam de ventre ceti;  
exaudi nos clamantes,  
qui exaudisti David  
jacentem in cilicio,  
clamantem et dicentem:  
Parce, parce,  
et defende plasmatum,  
Deus noster.*

*Plainchant*

*Antiphon for the second Sunday in Lent*

Hear us, O Lord,  
for you heard Jonas in the whale's belly;  
hear us crying out to you,  
for you heard David  
when he lay on the ground in a hair shirt,  
crying out and saying:  
Forgive, forgive,  
and defend the creature you have made,  
O Lord our God.

## **O bone Iesu a4**

*O bone Iesu, salvator mundi,  
miserere nobis.  
Cognoscimus quia peccavimus;  
veniam petimus quam non meremur.  
Vita nostra in dolore suspirat  
et in opere se non emendat.  
Si expectas non corrigimur;  
si vindicas non duramus.  
Ergo bone Iesu, salvator mundi,  
miserere nobis.*

*Anonymous (published Antwerp, 1554)  
Devotional*

Gentle Jesus, saviour of the world,  
have mercy on us.  
We know that we have sinned;  
we beg for a forgiveness we do not deserve.  
Our life is one of pain and sighing,  
yet we do not mend our ways.  
If you wait for us, we do not act aright;  
if you are vengeful, we cannot endure it.  
Therefore, gentle Jesus, saviour of the world,  
have mercy on us.

## **Peccata mea**

*Peccata mea Domine  
sicut sagittae infixae sunt in me;  
sed antequam vulnera generent in me,  
sana me Domine  
medicamento paenitentiae, Deus.*

*Plainchant  
Antiphon for the third Sunday in Lent*

My sins, O Lord,  
are like arrows embedded in my body;  
but before they wound me,  
heal me O Lord,  
with the balm of penitence, O God.

## **Peccavimus a7**

*Peccavimus cum patribus nostris,  
iniuste egimus, iniquitatem fecimus.  
Tuæ tamen clementiæ spe animati  
ad te supplices confugimus,  
benignissime Jesu.*

*Christopher Tye (1505-1572)  
Penitential*

We have sinned like our fathers,  
we have acted unjustly and done wrong.  
But encouraged by the hope of your mercy  
we hasten to you in supplication,  
most kind Jesus.

*Qui ut omnia potes ita  
omnibus te invocantibus vere præsto es.  
Respice itaque in nos infelices peccatores,  
bonitas immensa.*

Who, just as you can do all things,  
so to all who pray to you you are truly close.  
Look kindly on us unhappy sinners,  
O great goodness.

*Respice in nos ingratisimos miseros,  
salus et misericordia publica;  
nam despecti ad omnipotentem venimus,  
vulnerati ad medicum currimus,  
deprecantes ut  
non secundum peccata nostra facias  
neque secundum iniquitates nostras*

Look upon us ungrateful wretches,  
O mercy and loving-kindness,  
for we come downcast and in pain into  
your almighty presence; wounded,  
we run to you for aid, begging  
that you will not treat us  
according to our sins, nor seek

*retribuas nobis.  
Quin potius misericordiæ tuæ antiquæ  
memor pristinam clementiam serva,  
ac mansuetudini adhibe incrementum  
qui tam longanimiter suspendisti  
ultionis gladium,  
ablue innumeratam criminum,  
qui delectaris multitudine misericordiæ.*

*Ingere cordibus nostris  
tui sanctissimum amorem,  
peccati odium  
ac cælestis patriæ ardens desiderium,  
quod magis ac magis crescere faciat  
tua omnipotens bonitas.  
Amen.*

retribution from us for our wickedness.  
But rather remembering your long-  
standing compassion, continue your  
former mercy and increase your gentleness  
as for so long you have restrained  
the sword of vengeance;  
wash away our innumerable sins  
as you delight in being merciful.

Fill our hearts  
with most holy love for you,  
a hatred of sin and a burning desire  
for the heavenly kingdom:  
may that desire grow more and more  
through your all-powerful goodness.  
Amen.

*Interval of about 12 minutes*

### **Paradisi portas**

*Paradisi portas aperuit  
nobis jejunii tempus:  
suscipiamus illud,  
orantes et deprecantes,  
ut in die Resurrectionis  
cum Domino gloriemur.*

### *Plainchant*

*Responsory for the fourth Sunday in Lent*

The time of fasting has opened  
to us the gates of Paradise:  
let us undertake it,  
with prayer and supplication,  
so that on the day of Resurrection  
we may glory with the Lord.

## **Media vita a6**

*Media vita in morte sumus.  
Quem quaerimus adiutorem  
nisi te, Domine?  
Qui pro peccatis nostris juste irascaris,  
Sancte Deus, Sancte fortis.*

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,  
secundum verbum tuum in pace:  
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum  
Quod parasti  
ante faciem omnium populorum:  
Lumen ad revelationem gentium,  
et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.*

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

*Sancte fortis.*

## **Circumdederunt me**

*Circumdederunt me viri mendaces;  
sine causa flagellis ceciderunt me:  
Sed tu Domine defensor,  
vindica me.*

## **Agnus Christus a4**

*Agnus Christus in cruce  
immolatur pro omnibus,  
non ei adhesit Petrus  
qui dicebat pro te moriar,  
reliquit eum Thomas  
qui clamabat dicens  
omnes cum eo moriar  
et nullus ex illis,  
sed hic solus moritur.*

*John Sheppard (1515-1558)  
Third and fourth Sundays in Lent*

In the midst of life, death surrounds us.  
Whom can we look to as our helper,  
if not you, O Lord?  
For our sins you will rightly be angry,  
O holy God, holy and mighty.

Now you let your servant go, O Lord,  
according to your word, in peace:  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared  
before the face of all people:  
to be a light to enlighten the nations,  
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be always, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

O God, holy and mighty.

*Plainchant  
Responsory for Passion Sunday*

I was surrounded by deceitful men;  
they beat me without cause.  
But you, my Lord and defender,  
avenge me.

*Anonymous (published Antwerp, 1553)  
Passiontide*

Christ the lamb was sacrificed  
on the cross for all people.  
Peter did not stay with him,  
though he had said he would die for him.  
Thomas abandoned him,  
though he had exclaimed that  
all would die with him.  
And not one of them,  
but he alone died.

*Hic solus dolores nostros tulit  
et languores hic solus portavit.  
Venite et videte coeli Rex Christus  
quare pependit in cruce;  
solus hic dolores nostros tulit.*

He alone has borne our griefs  
and he alone has carried our sorrows.  
Come and see how Christ,  
the King of Heaven, hangs on the cross.  
He alone has borne our sorrows.

### **Caligaverunt**

*Caligaverunt oculi mei a fletu meo:  
quia elongatus est a me,  
qui consolabatur me:  
Videte, omnes populi,  
si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.  
O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam,  
attendite, et videte  
si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.*

*Plainchant  
Responsory for Good Friday*

My eyes are darkened by my tears:  
for he is far from me  
that comforted me.  
See, all you people,  
if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.  
O all you that pass by,  
behold and see  
if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.

### **Stabat mater a5**

*Stabat Mater dolorosa  
Iuxta crucem lacrimosa  
Dum pendebat Filius  
Cuius animam gementem  
Contristatam et dolentem  
Pertransiit gladius.*

*Josquin Desprez (1455-1521)  
Good Friday*

His mother stood there sorrowing  
by the cross, weeping  
while her son hung there;  
her soul, lamenting,  
sorrowing and grieving,  
was pierced by a sword.

*O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater unigeniti!  
Quae maerebat et dolebat,  
et tremebat dum videbat  
Nati poenas incliti.*

O how sad and afflicted  
was that blessed mother  
of her only-begotten son,  
who wept and grieved  
and trembled to behold  
the torment of her famous child.

*Quis est homo qui non fleret,  
Christi Matrem si videret  
In tanto supplicio?  
Quis non posset contristari,  
Piam matrem contemplari  
Dolentem cum Filio?*

What man would not weep  
if he saw the mother of Christ  
in such torment?  
Who could not be sorrowful  
to behold the pious mother  
grieving with her son?

*Pro peccatis suae gentis  
Iesum vidit in tormentis  
Et flagellis subditum.  
Vidit suum dulcem natum  
Morientem desolatum  
Dum emisit spiritum.*

For the sins of his people,  
she saw Jesus in torment  
and being whipped.  
She saw her sweet son  
dying, abandoned,  
as he gave up his spirit.

*Eya Mater, fons amoris  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.  
Fac, ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum Deum  
Ut sibi complaceam.*

Ah mother, fount of love,  
let me feel the force of grief,  
that I may sorrow with you.  
Make my heart burn  
with the love of Christ the God,  
that I may be pleasing to him.

*Virgo virginum praeclara,  
Mihi jam non sis amara  
Fac me tecum plangere.  
Fac, ut portem Christi mortem  
Passionis ejus sortem,  
Et plagas recolere.*

Virgin of virgins, resplendent,  
do not now be harsh towards me,  
let me weep with you.  
Let me carry Christ's death,  
the destiny of His passion,  
and meditate upon His wounds.

*Fac me plagis vulnerari,  
Cruce hac inebriari,  
Ob amorem Filii.  
Inflammatum et accensum  
Per te Virgo sim defensum  
In die iudicii.*

Let me suffer the wounds  
of that cross, steeped in love  
of your son.  
Fired and excited by you,  
O virgin, let me be defended  
on the day of judgment.

*Fac me cruce custodiri  
Morte Christi praemuniri  
Confoveri gratia  
Quando corpus morietur,  
Fac, ut animae donetur  
Paradisi gloria. Amen.*

Let me be shielded by the cross,  
protected by Christ's death,  
cherished by grace.  
When my body dies,  
let my soul be given  
the glory of paradise. Amen.

**Libera nos, salva nos a7**

*John Sheppard  
Daily observance*

*Libera nos, salva nos, justifica nos,  
O beata Trinitas.*

Free us, save us, forgive us,  
O blessed Trinity.

*Our programme in the autumn, on 27 September in Soleuvre and on 11 October here at St John's Church in the Grund, will include settings of texts about St Peter, and a miscellany of the church's seasons, with a piece for each month from March to November.*

*The named composers will include Byrd, Lassus, Ferrabosco the Elder, Marenzio, Guerrero, Pionnier, Aliseda, Hildegard, Dufay, Josquin and Benedictus Ducis; the anonymous compositions will include one of the Codex Calixtinus pieces and the medieval English piece Edi beo thu.*

# *The Art of Music*

*directed by Mick Swithinbank*

*Jennifer Schofield & Magdalena Mateńko, soprano*

*Marita Thomas & Nigel Heavey, alto*

*Mick Swithinbank, tenor*

*Alan Carlisle, baritone*

*& Edward Seymour, bass*

*with Chris Vigar, bass*

- *The Art of Music vocal ensemble was founded in Luxembourg in 1993. It takes its name from an anonymous Scottish treatise written in the late 16th century. Its aim is to revive unjustly neglected music from that and earlier times.*
- *See also our website: [www.aom.sarumlux.net](http://www.aom.sarumlux.net).*