

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees *director*

CONCORDIA

Mark Levy *director*

In nomine Domini



Sunday 21 April 1996
Jesus College Chapel, Cambridge
8.15 p.m.

PROGRAMME

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Sanctus (<i>Missa Gloria tibi trinitas</i>)	John Taverner (<i>d.1545</i>)
<i>In nomine</i>	Taverner
<i>In nomine</i>	John Mundy (<i>c.1555–1630</i>)
<i>Quemadmodum</i>	Taverner?
<i>In nomine</i>	Christopher Tye (<i>c. 1505–?1572</i>)
<i>In nomine "Howld fast"</i>	Tye
<i>Dum transisset Sabbatum</i>	Taverner
<i>Dum transisset Sabbatum</i> (instrumental)	Tye
<i>Dum transisset Sabbatum</i>	John Sheppard (<i>c.1513–1559</i>)

INTERVAL of 20 minutes

Sanctus (Mass for Five Voices)	William Byrd (1542/3–1623)
<i>In nomine</i>	Byrd
<i>Browning</i>	Byrd
<i>Salve regina</i>	Byrd
<i>See, see, the Word is incarnate</i>	Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625)
<i>In nomine</i>	Gibbons
<i>There is nothing in the World</i> (First Performance)	Rachel Stott (b. 1968)
<i>Prayer to the Holy Trinity</i> (First Performance)	John Tavener (b. 1944)

We are most grateful to the Master, Dean of Chapel, and Fellows of Jesus College, for their kind permission to perform in the chapel.

Concordia

Mark Levy, Joanna Levine, Catherine Finnis,
Jonathan Manson, Emilia Benjamin
viol consort

The Cambridge Taverner Choir

director Owen Rees

<i>sopranos</i>	<i>altos</i>	<i>tenors</i>	<i>basses</i>
Diana Baumann	Toby Gee	Paul Baumann	James Durran
Josie Dixon	Simon Godsill	Finlay Lockie	Frank Salmon
Helen Garrison	Martin Neill	Philip Mills	Gary Snapper
Rachel Godsill	Nicholas Perkins	Edwin Simpson	Paul Watson
Caroline Preston Bell	Rupert Preston Bell	David Thompson	
Margaret Simper			
Sally Terris			
Tanya Wicks			

CONCORDIA was founded by its director Mark Levy in 1992, bringing together Britain's leading young viol players into a consort which has rapidly gained an enviable reputation for refinement and virtuosity. Concordia's programmes centre on the consort repertoire of the Elizabethan and Jacobean golden age, but the group frequently works with singers such as Lorna Anderson and Catherine Bott, as well as with lute and keyboard. In 1993 Concordia won an Arts Council award for work on 17th-century English music, and since then the ensemble has appeared at over a dozen of the major British music festivals, as well as at London's Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room. Concordia has made two programmes for BBC Radio 3's *Music Restored*, and has been featured on Radio 4's *Kaleidoscope*. Recent concerts abroad have included return visits to Germany, Poland and Israel, and later this year Concordia will tour Ireland for the first time. The group's recordings include an acclaimed premiere disc of music by William Byrd which was selected as one of *BBC Music Magazine's* best discs of 1994, while 1996 releases on the METRONOME, ASV and CHANDOS labels will range from *Music for the Princes of the Renaissance* to *Cry!*, an album of meditative music from the English golden age.

Rachel Stott won the W.H. Smith Young Composers Award when she was 14, and since then has had works performed at the Brighton Festival, in the Park Lane Group Purcell Room series in London, and in Germany, Switzerland, Japan and Colombia. A viola player as well as a composer, she has a particular interest in the instruments and music of earlier eras, and has written for harpsichord, lute, recorder, viols and baroque strings, often employing the compositional techniques of the medieval, renaissance and baroque masters. She is currently working on an opera, based on a historical novel for children, about an elephant called Rachel!

John Tavener, born in London on 28 January 1944, showed his musical talents at an early age, and by the time he entered Highgate School he was already an extremely proficient pianist and organist. He proceeded to the Royal Academy of Music where he won several major prizes for composition. Among his teachers were Sir Lennox Berkeley and David Lumsdaine. In 1965 his dramatic cantata *The Whale*, given in the debut concert of the London Sinfonietta, took its London audience by storm. Since that time Tavener has continued to show an originality of concept and an intensely personal idiom making his a voice quite separate from those of his contemporaries.

The first recordings of his work were issued by Apple, the label made famous by the Beatles. Over the years the contemplative side of his nature has led him in more spiritual directions and his commitment to the Russian Orthodox Church, which he joined in 1977, is now evident in all his work. Recent major works include *The Akathist of Thanksgiving* which was given a standing ovation in a packed Westminster Abbey at its premiere in 1988; *The Protecting Veil* (1989) for solo cello and strings, the first performance of which was rapturously received by both Prom audience and Radio 3 listeners; and in 1990 another triumph in the shape of a large-scale choral and orchestral work, *Resurrection*, and an opera, *Mary of Egypt*, written for the 1992 Aldeburgh Festival. Tavener's 50th birthday year in 1994 was marked by a major BBC festival; performances of *The Protecting Veil* in the USA, Canada, Greece, Sweden and Japan; and commissions for the Bournemouth Symphony

Orchestra's centenary celebrations (*Theophany*), the 1994 Proms (*The Apocalypse*), the Monteverdi Choir's 30th anniversary (*The World is Burning*), and a work for violist Yuri Bashmet and the London Symphony Chorus (*The Myrrh-Bearer*). John Tavener's music is increasingly widely recorded. CDs are now available from BMG, Chandos, Collins Classics, EMI/Apple, Gimell Records, Hyperion, Nimbus, Sony/Arc of Light, Tring and Virgin Classics. The Virgin Classics CD of *The Protecting Veil* with cellist Steven Isserlis entered the 'Music Week' Top 40 Classical Chart at no. 9 on 4 April 1992 and remained at no. 1 in the HMV Classical Chart for several months. It received a 1992 Gramophone Award for 'Best Contemporary Recording' and the German Schallplattenkritik Prize, and was shortlisted for the 1993 'Brit Awards' by the UK recording industry and for the 1993 US Grammy Awards; it was also the only classical recording shortlisted for the inaugural Mercury Music Prize.

Combined with his reflective spirit, John Tavener has an engaging humour which is never far from the surface. This is captured by director Geoffrey Haydon in his touching documentary on Tavener 'Glimpses of Paradise', which was screened for the first time on BBC Television in November 1992 and subsequently at the BBC's Tavener Festival in January 1994. Geoffrey Haydon's book 'Glimpses of Paradise' was published by Gollancz, Autumn 1995.

John Tavener is married to Maryanna Schaefer, with whom he has two children.

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The music of John Taverner (d. 1545) was copied by connoisseurs and provided inspiration for composers long after his death and after the disappearance of the Catholic liturgy and institutions for which it was written. One purpose of tonight's concert is to explore some of these influences, the most famous example of which was the tradition of writing textless pieces with the title *In nomine*. The concert ends with two specially-commissioned works which in different ways pay homage to Taverner in this the 450th year after his death.

The starting-point for the tradition of *In nomines* was the setting of the words 'In nomine Domini' from the Benedictus of Taverner's Mass *Gloria tibi trinitas*. This four-voice passage—which includes a complete statement (in the next to highest voice) of the 'Gloria tibi trinitas' plainchant melody which gives the Mass its name—itself survived as a separate textless piece, played tonight by viol consort immediately after the vocal original from which it is extracted. Subsequent composers retained the plainchant statement in writing their own textless *In nomines*, and some settings make other melodic references to Taverner's original. Judging by the number of surviving works (more than twenty), the most prolific composer of *In nomines* was Christopher Tye, some of whose settings include virtuosic effects and feature colourful titles such as 'Howld fast'. The tradition of *In nomine* composition continued throughout the reign of Elizabeth and into the Jacobean age—apparently becoming something of a testing-ground of a composer's skill—and we even have examples from Purcell. The Elizabethan age is represented tonight by one of the seven surviving *In nomines* (all of them apparently early works) by William Byrd, and the Jacobean period by one of the four such works by Orlando Gibbons.

Another work by Taverner preserved without text—*Quemadmodum*—has often been presumed to be an instrumental piece. 'Quemadmodum' is the first word of Psalm 42 ('Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum': 'Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks'), and as long ago as 1925 H. B. Collins suggested that the work should be texted to words from the psalm. A recording of such a reconstruction (by Hugh Keyte) appeared in 1989, in which the first two verses of the psalm are fitted to Taverner's music. The text can certainly be fitted to the notes, although not without problems (particularly in the bass); the resulting work is rather unusual, since the usual practice of English composers at this period was to set complete psalms rather than fragments such as this. The other issue which surrounds the piece is that of authorship: although the attribution to Taverner seems never to have been questioned, and although the wide variety of styles and techniques seen within Taverner's output should make one cautious in challenging such attributions, this densely-imitative piece perhaps suggests other composers more than Taverner.

As this piece demonstrates, the boundaries between vocal and instrumental music at this period are sometimes less clear than we might imagine. The *In nomine* tradition reveals the same thing, since there is evidence that such works were sometimes sung (apparently to solfa syllables). Another group of works based on a plainchant cantus firmus—*Dum transisset Sabbatum*—contains both vocal settings and four settings by Tye which are apparently instrumental. *Dum transisset Sabbatum* is a responsory (that is, a chant following a lesson) from Matins on Easter Day. Taverner's settings (of which we sing the most famous tonight) take those parts of this chant which would have been sung by the whole choir, lay the chant

out in equal notes (a similar technique to that seen in the *In nomine*, although using shorter note-values), and surround it with a rich polyphonic texture. Taverner is sometimes credited with the creation of this genre, the 'choral responsory'; whether or not he did so, his settings do seem to have been among the first works of this type, the most prolific composers of which were John Sheppard (one of whose settings of *Dum transisset Sabbatum* we perform here) and Thomas Tallis. We even have such responsories (some certainly composed after the liturgical context for such pieces had disappeared at the Reformation) by Byrd.

Scholars have seen the direct influence of Taverner upon two of Byrd's Masses (those for four and five voices). One possible quotation of Taverner in the Five-Voice Mass (noted by David Josephson) occurs where we might expect it, at the words 'In nomine' of the Benedictus, where the topmost voice sings the opening line of the corresponding voice in Taverner's work. That this is not merely a chance correspondence is made more likely by the fact (noticed by Philip Brett) that the opening melodic gesture of the whole Sanctus in the top voice is the same in Taverner's and Byrd's Masses.

There is no such direct link between Byrd's setting of Marian antiphon *Salve regina* (published in 1591) and Taverner. Rather, we have included it as an example of how Byrd—even in his mature works—sometimes chose to employ the techniques of his predecessors writing before the Reformation. The inspiration for this compositional choice in the present case was presumably simply the fact that he was setting a Marian text: the Marian devotion played a crucial role in pre-Reformation worship, and this was naturally reflected in the texts set to polyphony. Byrd is hence forging a connection between his piece and the great pre-Reformation tradition of composing Marian antiphons: his musical reference to the past is in the first section of the piece, where he adopts the standard structuring device of Taverner's generation, beginning with an extended and relatively florid trio section before the dramatic entry of all the voices (here at 'ad te clamamus'). One might compare the Benedictus of Taverner's Mass *Gloria tibi trinitas*, which begins with a trio and the famous 'in nomine' quartet, before the whole choir enters at 'Osanna'.

The love of rich counterpoint and of textural contrast seen in the works of Taverner and his English contemporaries survived even into the seventeenth century, and remains in that distinctively English genre, the verse anthem, in which sections for solo voices accompanied by organ or viol consort alternate with the full chorus. One of the supreme examples of the genre is Orlando Gibbons's *See, see, the Word is incarnate*. The piece tells the story of Jesus's incarnation, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension in the most dramatic fashion, exploiting the contrast between soloists and chorus to achieve much of that drama.

Rachel's Stott's specially commissioned work, receiving its first performance tonight, is based upon the *In nomine* theme. The composer writes about the work as follows:

The full title of this piece is 'There is nothing in the world half so much worth doing as simply messing about with notes', which admirers of Kenneth Grahame will recognize as a slightly inaccurate quotation from *The Wind in the Willows*. It is however peculiarly appropriate to a piece in which compositional procedure ('messing about with notes' in friendlier language) is almost an end in itself. Thus the 'In nomine' theme is played in inversion, retrograde and retrograde inversion, in rhythmic augmentation and diminution and even in intervallic augmentation and diminution involving the use of quarter-tones in the first treble part. These transformations, together with the original, form almost the whole substance of the piece, the essence of which is the sheer fascination of the creative process.

The concert ends with the first performance of John Tavener's *Prayer to the Holy Trinity*, commissioned by the Cambridge Taverner Choir, and headed by the composer: 'eternal memory—John Tavener (c. 1495–1545): "being but a Musitian"'. The composer writes thus about the piece:

This prayer is the foundation of Orthodox faith in the Holy Trinity. In setting it to music, I have tried to capture something of the deep compunction and repentance which lie at the heart of Orthodoxy. Each person of the Trinity is represented by a different tone in the Byzantine "ochtoechos". The semichorus should be placed at a considerable distance from the main choir. It is like the "heartbeat" of repentance.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit is deemed to come from both the Father and the Son, but this is regarded as a heresy by the Orthodox: we believe that the Spirit proceeds only from the Father. For this reason counterpoint is forbidden in Orthodox church music, as it is considered a symbol of dualism, and I have reflected this in my setting. The Roman Catholic John Tavener (c. 1495–1545) was imprisoned for heresy, but later reprieved "being but a musitian".

Texts and Translations

Sanctus and Benedictus from the Mass

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Quemadmodum

Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te Deus. Sitivit anima mea ad Deum fontem vivum. Quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei?

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, the living source. When shall I come and appear before the face of God?

Dum transisset Sabbatum

Dum transisset Sabbatum Maria Magdalene et Maria Jacobi et Salome emerunt aromata, ut venientes ungerent Jesum. Alleluia. Et valde mane una sabbatorum veniunt ad monumentum, orto iam sole. Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary of Magdala, Mary the mother of James and Salome brought spices with which to go and anoint Jesus. Alleluia. And very early in the morning and on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb as the sun was rising. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae: Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus, exules filii Evae. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes, in hac lacrimarum valle. Eia ergo, Advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos, ad nos converte. Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende. O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

Hail, Queen of pity, our life, our sweetness and our hope. We, exiled children of Eve, cry out to thee. To thee we sigh, lamenting and weeping in this vale of tears. Therefore, O our advocate, turn thy merciful eyes upon us; And after this exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus: O gracious, O good, O sweet Virgin Mary.

See, see the Word is incarnate

See, see the Word is incarnate; God is made man in the womb of a Virgin. Shepherds rejoice, wise men adore and angels sing: Glory be to God on high, peace on earth, goodwill towards men. The law is cancelled, Jews and Gentiles all converted by the preaching of glad tidings of salvation. The blind have sight and the cripples have their motion; diseases cured, the dead are raised, and miracles are wrought. Let us welcome such a guest, with Hosanna. The Paschal Lamb is offered, Christ Jesus made a sacrifice for sin. The earth quakes, darkened, the powers of hell are shaken: and lo, He is risen up in victory. Sing Alleluia. See, oh see the fresh wounds, the goring blood, the pricks of thorns, the print of nail; and in the sight of multitudes, a glorious ascension. Where now He sits on

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