

CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

Owen Rees *director*

1997-8

CHORAL MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE in Jesus College Chapel

'Sheer musicianship' *Gramophone*
'An absolute revelation' *Early Music*

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CHORAL MUSIC OF THE RENAISSANCE

Concerts in Jesus College Chapel 1997-8

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Sunday October 26th, 8.15pm

Works by Josquin Desprez

Josquin Desprez was the most important composer of the early Renaissance, and the most influential musician of the first half of the sixteenth century, his works widely known and much published both during his lifetime and for decades after his death. The expressiveness of his music caused Martin Luther to declare: "Josquin is master of the notes which must express what he wishes, while other composers must do what the notes dictate." This concert presents examples of the three major genres to which he contributed - masses, motets, and chansons - including sections of the *Missa Pange lingua* and *Missa L'homme armée sexti toni*, and the great Marian motets *Benedicta es coelorum regina* and *Inviolata integra et casta es Maria*.

Sunday, December 7th, 8.15pm

Advent and Christmas music from England, Spain and the German lands

An extraordinary variety of music was associated with the seasons of Advent and Christmas in the Renaissance and Baroque. This concert gives some idea of that variety, from plainchant to carols and Latin motets, including works from England, Spain and the German lands. As well as boisterous villancicos from Spain, such as Guerrero's *Niño Dios* and the famous *Riu, riu, chiu*, we perform grander and more meditative pieces such as Victoria's *O magnum mysterium* and the beautiful *Jesu mercy how may this be* by Browne.



Sunday, February 22nd, 8.15pm

Music from Lisbon and Coimbra, including Lobo's 8-voice *Requiem*

The Cambridge Taverner Choir returns to the music of the Golden Age of Portugal, performing music from its acclaimed first recording, which was shortlisted for the Gramophone Early Music Award. The centrepiece of this concert - Duarte Lobo's eight-voice *Missa pro defunctis* - has come to be acknowledged as one of the greatest works of the Iberian Renaissance. The mass is here presented within an imaginative sequence of motets and other pieces from Portugal's ancient university city, Coimbra, by such composers as Pedro de Cristo and Aires Fernandez.

This concert will also be performed in St George's, Hanover Square, London, on Thursday February 19th at 7pm; tickets (£7) at the door.



Sunday, April 19th, 8.15pm

**Anthems and motets by Purcell and Blow
*Cambridge Taverner Choir and Consort***

Purcell and Blow were central figures in London's musical life during the late seventeenth century. Both were organists of the Chapel Royal, and Blow both preceded and succeeded Purcell as organist of Westminster Abbey. Their anthems range from 'full anthems,' such as Purcell's plaintive *Remember not Lord our offences*, to grand 'symphony anthems' with strings, such as Purcell's *Rejoice in the Lord alway*, performed in this concert. We also perform examples of the extraordinary Latin motets by both composers, including Blow's *Gloria Patri, qui creavit nos*, and the moving lament *Mourn for thy servant*, which ends Blow's *Venus and Adonis*.

Sunday, June 21st, 8.15pm

Polychoral works by Tallis, Victoria, Palestrina, Duarte Lobo, Gombert and Guerrero

The most extraordinary musical work of the Tudor age is Tallis's 40-voice motet *Spem in alium*, which Tallis wrote for eight choirs of five voices each, making spectacular use of polychoral effects. This concert additionally presents some of the other great polychoral works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including Victoria's famous setting of *Salve regina* for two choirs and Palestrina's setting of the same text for three choirs. We also include a recently transcribed 8-voice Mass by Duarte Lobo, and Gombert's powerful lament *Lugebat David Absalon*



Tickets are available from the Corn Exchange Box Office, Wheeler Street, Cambridge, 01223 357851. All seats are unreserved. We strongly recommend that you book in advance. Tickets are often available on the door, but you are advised to phone the box office on the Saturday afternoon before the concert to check.

Prices £7 (£5 concessions). There is also a number of seats behind the screen (with no view, but good sound), prices £3 (£2). Discounts are available if you buy tickets for three or more concerts at the same time: 3 concerts £18 (£12 concessions), 4 concerts £24 (£16), 5 concerts £30 (£20).

"Sheer musicianship" *Gramophone*
"An absolute revelation" *Early Music*

Since its first performance in 1986, the Cambridge Taverner Choir, under the direction of its founder, Owen Rees, has established itself as one of the few specialist Renaissance choirs outside London. As well as regular concert series and festival appearances in Cambridge, it has performed in many parts of the U.K., and undertaken highly successful tours of Portugal in 1991 and Switzerland and Italy in 1996; it has also broadcast on Radio 3, and has been featured on Radio 4. The choir has released three recordings; all have been acclaimed by the critics, and *Music from Renaissance Portugal* was shortlisted for the *Gramophone* Early Music Award in 1994.

The choir, whose members are ex-choral scholars of Cambridge University, specialises in the performance of sacred polyphony in illuminating thematic, liturgical and physical contexts, aiming to recreate the grandeur and excitement of the European Renaissance, especially the Tudor age in England and the Iberian "Golden Age". The choir also performs baroque and contemporary works. The 1995/6 season celebrated the music of John Taverner on the 450th anniversary of his death, and included a prestigious commission from the contemporary composer, John Tavener, while last year's concerts explored the music of five great European cities at the turn of the seventeenth century.

"The very highest standards of ensemble and intonation" *Gramophone*
"Remarkable tightness and nuance of gesture" *Early Music*
"Perfect tuning and phrasing ... a vibrant glow" *Classic CD*

Enquiries about the choir should be made to the Administrator, Helen Garrison, 29 Denton House, Bingham Court, Halton Road, Islington, London, N1 2AE. To join our free mailing list, please write to the Secretary, 82 Gwydir Street, Cambridge CB1 2LL.

**The Cambridge Taverner Choir performs in Jesus College Chapel by kind permission
of the Master, Dean and Fellows of the College.**

CD RECORDINGS BY THE CAMBRIDGE TAVERNER CHOIR

**Polyphony from the Royal Monastery of Santa Cruz, Coimbra
Including Lobo's 8-voice Requiem and works by
de Cristo, Fernandez and Carreira**

CD (Herald HAVPCD 155) or cassette (HAVPC 155), available from music shops or direct from the choir.

**Nominated for the *Gramophone* Early Music Award 1994
Selected for Critics' Choice and Editor's Choice in *Gramophone*
" ... performances that will be hard to surpass ... " *Early Music*
"Highly recommended *****" *Classic CD***

**"If you have yet to savour early Portuguese music, now is the time, and this is the disc"
*Choir & Organ***

**Laments for Renaissance Kings, Composers
and Courtiers
including works by
Josquin, Gombert, Ramsey, Weelkes,
Tomkins, Byrd, Lobo and Victoria**

CD (Herald HAVPCD 187)

Available from music shops or direct from the choir.

**Music by Byrd, Tallis, Sheppard, Browne, and
Pygott**

CD (Past Times PT6491) or cassette (PT6490)

Available from branches of Past Times
or direct from the choir.