

Cantores Salicium

In Memoriam



Sunday 14th November 2021 at 3.30pm

Priory Church Bolton Abbey

Programme

Covid safety: we ask concert-goers please to wear masks on arrival and departure. Some distanced seating will be available.



Registered Charity No. 1194200

Programme

Please note there is no interval. There will be a brief pause which will include one minute's silence.

William Byrd (1540-1623)	<i>Ego sum panis vivus</i>
Alfred Camus (1913 - 1960)	from 'The Plague' - read by Phil Robinson
Henry Purcell (1659-1695)	Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts
James MacMillan (b.1959)	O Radiant Dawn
Shoreditch Schoolchildren	Letters from Lockdown
	Read by Leonie Pearce
Tomas Luis de Victoria (c.1548–1611)	<i>Introitus and Kyrie</i> (Requiem a 4)
Pause - silence	
Georg Frideric Handel (1685-1759)	<i>Ombra Mai fu</i> (from <i>Serse</i>) Baritone soloist Richard Williams <i>De torrente</i> (from <i>Dixit Dominus</i>) Soprano soloists: Jo Wulf, Charlotte Treglown
Sebastian Faulkes (b.1953)	from 'Birdsong' read by Gail Jones
Thomas Tallis (c.1505-1585)	<i>In ieiunio et fletu</i>
Tomas Luis de Victoria	<i>Ecce quomodo moritur iustus</i>
Wilfred Owen (1893-1918)	<i>Dulce et decorum est</i> & <i>Anthem for Doomed Youth</i> Read by Phil Simnett
Giovanni Anerio (c1567-1630)	<i>Communio: Lux aeterna</i> & <i>Kyrie in Absoltio</i> (<i>Missa Pro Defunctorum</i>)
Edward Thomas (1978-1917)	<i>In Memoriam</i> (Easter, 1915) Lights out Read by David Pearce
William Byrd	<i>Justorum Animae</i>

Texts and translations

Byrd - *Ego sum panis vivus*

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. Alleluia.

The Plague

Purcell - Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts shut not thy merciful ear unto our prayer; but spare us Lord most holy, O God most mighty; most mighty and most merciful saviour, thou most worthy judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from Thee. Amen

MacMillan - O Radiant Dawn, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice come shine on those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death. Isaiah had prophesied, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwell in the land of gloom a light has shone". Amen

A Letter from Lockdown

Victoria – Introitus and Kyrie Give them eternal rest, O Lord and let the light perpetual shine upon them. A hymn O God, becometh thee in Sion; and a vow shall be paid to thee in Jerusalem. O hear my prayer, all flesh shall come to thee. Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

Silent pause

Handel – recitative: Frondi tenere and aria: Ombra mai fu

Tender and beautiful fronds of my beloved plane tree, let fate smile upon you. May thunder, lightning, and storms never disturb your dear peace, nor may you be profaned by strong winds. Never was a shade of any plant dearer and more lovely, or more sweet.

Handel - De torrente He shall drink from the brook along the way: therefore shall he lift up his head.

Birdsong

Tallis - In ieiunio et fletu With fasting and weeping let the priests pray, saying: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people; and give not thine heritage to destruction. Let the priests weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people.

Victoria - Ecce quomodo moritur iustus

Behold how the just one dies and no one feels it in their hearts; and just men are taken away, and no one ponders it; from the face of iniquity is the just one taken, and his memory shall be in peace. Like as a lamb before the shearer he was silent and opened not his mouth. From anguish and judgement was he taken.

Owen - Dulce et decorum est and Anthem for doomed Youth

Anerio - Lux aeterna (from Missa Pro defunctorum) and Kyrie in Absolutio

May the light eternal shine upon them, Lord, with thy saints in eternity, because thou art merciful. Grant them eternal rest, Lord who art merciful, and may light eternal shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

Thomas - In Memoriam and Lights out

Byrd – Justorum animae The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death shall not touch them; through the eyes of the unwise they seemed to die; but they are in peace.

Composers and authors

William Byrd's Latin church music comprises some of the finest C16-early C17 polyphony. He remained a staunch Catholic and in the latter part of his career moved to Essex, where it appears he devoted much time to writing masses and motets for the secret Catholic services which took place in private chapels of recusant families.

Alfred Camus was a writer and philosopher who had wide-ranging views, in particular about fairness and justice. His allegorical novel, **The Plague**, was published in 1947 and tells of disease ravaging a town in Algiers. Although much-read over the years, sales of the novel soared during the early days of the recent Covid-19 pandemic. The main character, Dr Rieux, puzzled by a sudden death, consults his colleague, Dr Castel. Despite the doctors' warnings, the authorities, reluctant to admit to the reality, use upbeat utterances about the deadly disease that is sweeping the town.

Henry Purcell was born into a musical family in London and in 1664 he became a chorister at the Chapel Royal. Purcell's innovative composing began when he was eleven, possibly earlier, and whilst he knew and incorporated contemporary French and Italian music he soon developed his own distinctive English style.

‘Thou knowest Lord the secrets of our hearts’ formed part of the music for the funeral of Queen Mary in 1695.

Scottish composer **James MacMillan** was born in Ayrshire and studied at Edinburgh and Durham universities. From 1986 – 88 he was a lecturer in music in Manchester but then returned to Scotland where he focused on composing and on music education. His music has not only deeply spiritual dimensions and often a political context but is also influenced by Scottish traditional music which can be heard in many of his works. When the Scottish Parliament was re-formed after nearly 300 years he wrote a fanfare for the opening. MacMillan is married and has two daughters and a son. His granddaughter, Sara Maria, died from Dandy-Walker syndrome and he said of her short life, "We have been blessed and transformed through knowing and loving Sara, and being known and loved in return by her."

Letters from Lockdown was a writing project undertaken during the first lockdown of pandemic by children at Shoreditch Mulberry Academy in London. The words give a picture of how some children felt about the pandemic and demonstrate their astute insights on how things might change as a result, their fears, hopes and, often, their optimism. The one that we include here is from a pupil in year seven. These writings are freely available online.

Tomas Luis de Victoria was a priest and organist as well as being the most significant composer of Renaissance Spain. Whilst working in Rome he may have studied with Palestrina. Shortly before he returned to Spain in 1585 at the request of Philip II, Victoria wrote his exceptional Tenebrae Responsories. ‘Ecce quomodo moritur iustus’ is written for Saturday in Holy week. Victoria wrote no secular music at all and his compositions have been described as the most spiritual works of any composer. His Requiem for four voices is less ambitious than his final published work, the six-part Officium Defunctorum, but some of the writing in the earlier gives a strong foretaste of his later style.

In 1706 **Handel** was invited to go to Rome where, because opera was banned in the Papal States, he focused ostensibly on sacred music, although he also wrote secular works for private performance. His ‘*Dixit Dominus*’ is from this period and unlike Handel’s later choral works the style is distinctly instrumental. The duet ‘*De Torrente in via bibet*’ not only stands alone in the work but is arguably one of his most poignant pieces of vocal writing.

Written around thirty years later in London another of Handel’s most moving pieces, *Ombra mai fu*, is the opening aria of his opera *Serse*. Preceded by a dramatic recitative, it is one of his best-known and most loved works, often referred to as his ‘Largo’, despite that fact that the score is marked *Larghetto*.

Sebastian Faulkes' Birdsong is one of a trilogy of novels about the first world war. With its dramatic and often alarming detail it is perhaps the most vivid of the three books, giving exceptional insights into the realities of war. The passage included here is where a group of soldiers watches in horror as a fierce and destructive battle rages.

In 1543 **Thomas Tallis** entered the service of Henry VIII as a gentleman of the Chapel Royal, which was by then Protestant. He managed to avoid controversy and to adapt his musical style to suit the monarch and despite his Catholicism he was revered by Elizabeth I who granted him, with William Byrd, the monopoly of printing of music and of manuscript paper. He continued to write in secret for the catholic liturgy. His 'In ieiunio et fletu' is considered by many scholars and musicians to be one of his most dramatic and moving works.

Wilfred Owen composed nearly all his poems between August 1917 and September 1918. It is some of the most poignant war poetry and reflects his experience in the trenches. Having suffered severe shell-shock, he spent some time in Craiglockhart hospital where he was treated by William Rivers, a pioneer of talking therapy. Owen also met and was influenced by Siegfried Sassoon with whom he became friends. Despite protestation from Sassoon, he returned to the front line in July 1918 and at the age of 25 was killed in action in November, one week before the Armistice.

Like Victoria, **Giovanni Anerio** was an ordained priest, though ordained much later in his life. He was born and lived in Rome apart from a brief spell in Poland, from where he died whilst returning to Rome. His Missa Pro defunctis was written ten years before his death. and is noteworthy for its use of solo voices, but ends with a gentle four-part Kyrie eleison.

Born in London of Welsh parents, **Edward Thomas** was known not only for erudite literary criticism, but also for his writing on rural England. As well as having an exceptional gift for writing he is said to have had an understanding of the disconnection, alienation, and unsettledness experienced by some sections of society. Like Camus, his writing did not fit into any particular category or school. Present day writer, Mathew Bevis wrote, "Thomas wrote some of the finest criticism of his generation, and that work was preparation for the poetry, not merely an avoidance of it", and gave an example of Thomas' critical prose, that "...John Clare's words were 'alive' because they were 'still half-wild and imperfectly domesticated'." Only in this century has Thomas' poetry been given the attention it deserves, and as with Wilfred Owen, it was all written in a short time, from 1914-1917. Thomas was killed in the Battle of Arras in April 1917 shortly before his poetry was published.

Cantores Salicium – our name. We are often asked what the name of the choir means and why we chose it. The literal meaning of Cantores salicium is ‘Singers of the willows’, which very loosely can be interpreted as ‘Willowwarblers’. The willowwarbler is Lindy’s favourite small bird, whose melodious song, heard in April each year, is a welcome herald of spring. Its Latin name, ‘Phylloscopus trochilus’, was definitely too obscure for the name of a choir, so we went for the more colloquial wording, if indeed any Latin can be colloquial.

Lindy Williams was a foundation scholar at the Royal College of Music studying piano, cello and chamber music. She was also awarded a Leverhulme Scholarship in her final year. She moved to Yorkshire from London in 1984 and frequently played harpsichord in local concerts before changing direction to take a BSc in physiology followed by a PhD from Nottingham University. In 2003 Lindy joined a local choral society and in 2007 was asked by some of the members to form and direct an informal singing group. The original aim was to sing *a capella* works (in particular sacred Renaissance music) purely for pleasure but as numbers grew it became clear that performances would be possible. Beginning with a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, events became more frequent and included regular concerts in the Craven district. The group became known as Cantores Salicium. Discovering the repertoire and seeking possibilities for a small choir is both a delight and a challenge and Lindy acknowledges with much gratitude the guidance and inspiration she has received from Darren Everhart, Nick O’Neill, Simon Over, Sally Dunkley and many others. Lindy lives in Long Preston with her husband Danny Powell. Her daughter is jazz pianist Kate Williams.

Cantores Salicium would like to thank Leonie and David Pearce and Martin Lay for joining us in today’s concert.

We also express our thanks to Paul and Val Middleton, Tricia Robinson and Margaret Cody for help with the arrangements and with publicity.

Last but not least, the choir owes a large debt of gratitude to Danny Powell for organising the music library, the seating and setting everything up not only today but for all our rehearsals.



President: Nicholas O'Neill
Director: Lindy Williams
Accompanist: Timothy Raymond

Sopranos	Jane Hurst, Elizabeth Judson, Charlotte Treglown, Nicky Verity, Jo Wulf, (Louise Brown)
Altos	Cath Currier, Alison Evans, Gail Jones, Jessica Mahler, Anna Wood, (Jan Alston)
Tenors	Kenn Green, Phil Robinson, Chris Weston, Martin Lay (Guest)
Basses	Danny Powell, Phil Simnett, Richard Williams
Readers	David Pearce, Leonie Pearce (Guests)

Sunday, April 10th 2022 afternoon Concert in Bolton Priory
May 14th 2022 evening concert organised by **Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust**
Handel Messiah Bolton Priory

Please visit our website to find details of our events.

Website: www.cantores-salicium.org.uk



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