



DIRECTOR'S SERIES

Motet Mania

For All Lovers of
Choral Music

Sunday, October 27, 2024
National Presbyterian Church
4101 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC

WASHINGTON BACH CONSORT

Dana Marsh, Artistic Director

PROGRAM

Motet Mania

Dame, de qui toute ma joie vient	Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300–1377)
Ecclesiae militantis	Guillaume Du Fay (c.1397–1474)
Nesciens Mater	Walter Lambe (c.1450–1504)
Mater Christi sanctissima	John Taverner (c.1490–1545)
Aspice Domine	Vicente Lusitano (c.1520–c.1561)
Reges Tharsis	John Sheppard (c.1515–1558)
Why fum'th in sight	Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585)
Ego flos campi	Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c.1510–c.1555)
Ecce quomodo moritur justus	Carlo Gesualdo (1566–1613)
I was glad	Henry Purcell (1659–1695)
Intermission	
Ich will schweigen	Johann Hermann Schein (1586–1630)
Der Gerechte	Johann Christoph Bach (1642–1703)
Richte mich, Gott	Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)
Wo ist ein so herrlich Volk?	Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Os justi	Anton Bruckner (1824–1896)
There is an old belief	Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848–1918)
Vinea mea electa	Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)
Panis angelicus	Pierre Villette (1926–1998)
The Song of Deborah	Adolphus Hailstork (1941–)
Given sound	Trevor Weston (1967–)
A Hymn to the Mother of God	John Tavener (1944–2013)

Dana Marsh, *Conductor & Artistic Director*

Shannon & Jim Davis, underwriters

*Kindly withhold applause to the end of each couplet, or set
of works, as printed above*

*Kindly silence all electronic devices during the performance.
Audio, video, or photographic recording is strictly prohibited.*



MUSICIANS

Dana Marsh, *Conductor*

Soprano

Lev DePaolo
Chelsea Helm
Katelyn Grace Jackson
Elijah McCormack
Carolyn Wise

Tenor

Blake Beckemeyer
Andrew Brown
David Evans
Matthew Loyal Smith
Gregório Taniguchi

Alto/Countertenor

Kristen Dubenion-Smith
Derek Greten-Harrison
Sylvia Leith
Clifton Massey
Caroline Nielson

Bass

Mark Duer
Ian Pomerantz
Gilbert Spencer
Ross Tamaccio
Jason Widney

Organ

Adam Pearl

Rehearsal Pianist

Eddie Rothmel

MEET DANA MARSH



Dana Marsh is Artistic Director of the Washington Bach Consort. His musical training began as a boy chorister at St. Thomas Choir School in New York and at Salisbury Cathedral in England. He earned his undergraduate degree in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music, with later master's and doctoral degrees in historical musicology from the University of Oxford. Commended as "an energetic and persuasive conductor" (*Los Angeles Times*), and as "a superb choral conductor, energetic and precise" (*The Washington Post*), Marsh has enjoyed fruitful collaborations with the London Mozart Players, *Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal*, the *Lamèque International Baroque Music Festival*, *Cappella Romana*, the choirs of St. Thomas Fifth Avenue and Trinity Wall Street with Trinity Baroque and New York Baroque Incorporated, *Magnificat* (UK), *Musica Angelica* Baroque Orchestra, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, among others. While living, studying, and working in the UK (1999–2010), he founded the British ensemble *Musica Humana Oxford* (2001–2008), which toured the US to enthusiastic praise: "pleasing to the ear and satisfying to the soul" (*LA Times*). As a vocal soloist and consort singer in the

US and the UK for 16 years (1992–2008), he received critical acclaim: "Marsh gave object lessons in vocal ornamentation as a graceful countertenor" (*LA Times*), with further plaudits as "a powerful and expressive countertenor" (*New York Times*). He undertook Bach aria study with the Dutch bass-baritone Max van Egmond in Amsterdam, and has performed with the American Bach Soloists, Concert Royal, New York Collegium (under Gustav Leonhardt), Seattle Baroque Orchestra, *A Cappella Portuguesa*, and the Brabant Ensemble. While pursuing doctoral research in the UK, Marsh sang for seven years as soloist and regular member of the Choir of New College Oxford, involved in some 25 concert tours, recording 15 discs with New College Choir, one of which won the 2008 *Gramophone* Award for Early Music. Dana Marsh is Professor of Music and Director of the Historical Performance Institute at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. Previously, he taught early music history at both Oxford and Cambridge universities, additionally publishing original research and review articles through the scholarly presses of both institutions. Marsh is general editor of the Indiana University Press book series, *Historical Performance*, as well as an annual academic journal under the same name. He has written research and review articles for *Early Music* (OUP), *Early Music History*, and the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (CUP). He served as Assistant Director of Music and Director of Chapel Music at Girton College Cambridge, and more recently was Canon Organist and Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis. He has recorded in various capacities for Acis, Sony, Universal, Avie, Decca, Erato, Koch International Classics, Signum, and Public Radio International.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Dame, de qui toute ma joie vient

Dame, de qui toute ma joie vient
Je ne vous puis trop amer et chierir
N'assés loer, si come il apartient
Servir, doubter, honorer n'obeïr.
Car le gracious espoï,
Douce dame, que j'ay de vous vëoir,
Me fait cent fois plus de bien et de joie
Qu'en cent mille ans desservir ne porroie.
Dame, de qui toute ma joie vient

Lady, source of all my joy,
I can never love or cherish you too much,
Or praise you as much as you deserve,
Or serve, respect, honor, and obey you.
For the gracious hope,
Sweet lady, I have of seeing you,
Gives me a hundred times more joy and boon
Than I could deserve in a hundred thousand years.

— *Anonymous text*

Ecclesiæ militantis

Cantus 1

Ecclesiæ militantis Roma sedes triumphantis Patris sursum
sidera Carmen cleri resonantis Laudem pontifici dantis
Promat voce libera.

Gabrielem quem vocavit, dum paternum crimen lavit,
baptismatis sumptio, eugenium revocavit, bonum genus
quod notavit, Pontificis lectio.

Quod consulta concio—o quam sancta ratio—sic
deliberavit, ut sola devotio regnet in palatio quod deus
beavit.

Certe deus voluit et in hoc complacuit venetorum proli; sed
demon indoluit, quod peccatum defuit tantae rerum moli.

Dulcis pater populi, qui dulcorem poculi, crapulam
perhorres, pone lento consuli rem gregis pauperculi, ne
nescius erres.

Pater hærens filio spiritus confinio det prece sollemni
gaudium Eugenio, perfecto dominio, in vita perenni. Amen.

Cantus 2

Sanctorum arbitrio clericorum proprio code meditantis,
aequum genus atrio accedit ludibrio umbrae petulanti,
Nam torpens inertia, longa quaerens otia, nescivit
Eugenium; sed iuris peritia cum tota iustitia sunt eius
ingenium.

Hinc est testimonium: pacem quaerit omnium, exosus
piaculi; et trinum dominium daemonis et carnum pompaan
vincit saeculi.

Quam color ipse poli dic scutum quod attuli tibi, pater
optime, sacrum dat, quod oculi tui instar speculit cernunt
nitidissime.

Eia tu, pulcherrime, quaerimur, tenerrime, moram longi
tempporis. Ducimur asperrime nescio quo ferrime ad
fulmentum corporis.

Una tibi trinitas vera deus unitas det caeli fulgorem, quem
linea bonitas, argentea castitas, secernit in morem. Amen.

Countertenor

Bella canunt gentes, quaerimur, pater optime, tempus:
expediet multos, si cupis, una dies. Nummus et hora fluunt
magnumque iter orbis agendum nec suus in toto noscitur
orbe deus. Amen.

Let Rome, seat of the Church Militant of the Father who
triumphs above the stars, bring forth with free voice a song
of the clergy praising the Pope.

Him whom the taking up in baptism called Gabriel when it
washed away ancestral sin, papal election renamed Eugenius,
which marked his good race.

Which the well advised assembly—O what holy reasoning—
has so determined: that devotion alone may reign in the
palace that God blessed.

Certainly God willed it, and in this gave pleasure to the
Venetian stock; but the devil was grieved that sin was absent
from an affair of such great moment.

Sweet father of the people, who abhor the sweetness of the
cup, namely drunkenness, entrust to a cautious counselor
the business of your poor little flock, lest you go astray in
ignorance.

Let the Father ever cleaving to the Son in the neighborhood
of the Spirit give by our solemn prayer joy to Eugenius, when
his reign is over, in eternal life! Amen.

By the holy clerks' own judgment that meditates in their
hearts, the just race approaches the hall, an object of
mockery for the wanton shade. For sluggish idleness, seeking
prolonged rest, did not know Eugenius; but skill in the law
and all-round justice are his nature.

The proof is this: that he seeks peace for all, hating sin; and
his triple dominion defeats the pomp of the devil, the flesh,
and the world.

Say: As is the very color of the heaven, is the shield that I
have brought you; it makes a sacred object that your eyes see
most brightly, like a mirror.

Hail, most beauteous one, we bewail, most tender one,
the delay of a long time; we are led most harshly we know
not whither, most cruelly, to the support of the body.

God, the One Trinity, the True Unity, grant you the blaze of
heaven, whom linen goodness and silver chastity regularly
distinguish. Amen.

The nations sing of wars; we complain, O best of fathers, of
our time. One day will dispatch many if you so desire. Money
and time are pouring away, and the great journey must be
made over the earth, but nowhere in the whole world is God
known. Amen.

Tenor 1

Gabriel.

Gabriel.

Tenor 2

Ecce nomen Domini.

That is the name of the Lord.

— *Anonymous non-biblical prose & liturgical plainchant*

Nesciens Mater

Nesciens mater virgo virum
peperit sine dolore
salvatorem sæculorum.
Ipsam regem angelorum
sola virgo lactabat,
ubere de cælo pleno.

Knowing no man, the Virgin mother
bore, without pain,
the Saviour of the world.
Him, the king of angels,
only the Virgin suckled,
breasts filled by heaven.

— *Votive Marian Antiphon for Christmastide*

Mater Christi sanctissima

Mater Christi sanctissima, virgo sacrata Maria,
tuis orationibus benignum redde Filium,
unica spes nostra Maria;
nam precibus nitentes tuis rogare audemus Filium.
Ergo, Fili, decus Patris, Jesu,
fons fecundissime a quo vivæ
fluunt aquæ rigantes fida pectora,
O Jesu, vitalis cibus te pure manducantibus,
salutari potu et cibo pavisti nostra corpora.
Tua pasce animam gratia;
tibi consecratos Spiritu tuo fove munere.
Quin et nostras, Jesu bone, mentes illustra gratia,
et nos pie fac vivere ut dulci ambrosia
tuo vescamur in palatio.
Amen.

Most holy mother of Christ, blessed Virgin Mary, by your
prayers move your Son to kindness, Mary, our only hope; for
relying on your prayers we dare to beseech your Son.
And so, O Son Jesus, glory of the Father, most
abundant spring from which living waters flow
refreshing faithful hearts, O Jesus, food of
life for those who chastely feed on you, you have nourished
our bodies with food and drink that brings salvation. With
your grace feed the soul; and fill with the Holy Spirit the
bodies of those
whom you have fed. Even more, good Jesus,
illuminate our minds with grace, and make us
live so religiously that we may feed upon sweet
ambrosia in your palace.
Amen.

— *Votive Antiphon to Jesus*

Aspice Domine

Aspice, Domine, quia facta est desolata civitas plena divitiis.
Sedet in tristitia, domina gentium.
Non est qui consoletur eam, nisi tu, Deus noster.

Behold, O Lord, how the city full of riches is become desolate.
She sits in mourning, the mistress of the nations.
There is none to comfort her save only thou, our God.

— *Antiphon for the Feast of the Prophets*

Reges Tharsis

Reges Tharsis et insulæ munera offerent.
Reges Arabum et Saba dona Domino Deo adducent.
Et adorabunt eum omnes reges, omnes gentes servient ei.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.

The kings of Tarshis and the islands will offer tribute.
The kings of Arabia and Saba will bring gifts to the Lord God.
And all kings will adore him, all people serve him.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

— *Psalms 71:10–11*

Why fum'th in sight

Why fum'th in sight, the Gentiles spite, in fury raging stout?
Why tak'th in hand the people fond, vain things to bring about?
The kings arise, the lords devise, in counsels me thereto.
Against the Lord with false accord, against his Christ they go.
Let us they say, break down their ray, of all their bonds and cords.
We will renounce, that they pronounce, their lores as stately lords.
But God of might, in heav'n so bright, shall laugh them all to scorn.
The Lord on high, shall them defy, they shall be once forlorn.
Then shall his ire, speak all in fire, to them again therefore.
He shall with threat, their malice beat, in his displeasure sore.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS (*continued*)

Yet I am set, a king so great, on Sion hill full fast:
Though me they kill, yet will that hill, my law and word outcast.
To God on high, in Trinity, in unity again:
Reign, pow'r, and praise, as due always, to him be giv'n.
Amen.

— *Psalm 2*

Ego flos campi

Egos flos campi et lilium convallium.
Sicut lilium inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias.
Sicut malus inter ligna silvarum,
sic dilectus meus inter filios.
Sub umbra illius quem desideraveram sedi,
et fructus ejus dulcis gutturi meo.
Introduxit me Rex in cellam vinariam ordinavit in me
charitatem.
Fuclite me floribus, stipate me malis
quia amore languo.
Hortus conclusus soror mea sponsa,
hortus conclusus fons signatus.
Fons hortorum puteus aquarum viventium quæ fluunt
impetu de Libano.

I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley.
As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.
As the apple tree among the trees of the woods,
so is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner
over me was love.
Stay with me flagons, comfort me with apples:
because I am sick of love.
A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse;
a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters,
and streams from Lebanon.

— *Song of Songs 2:15 & 4:12, 15*

Ecce quomodo moritur justus

Ecce quomodo moritur justus
et nemo percipit corde.
Viri justi tolluntur
et nemo considerat.
A facie iniquitatis sublatus est justus
et erit in pace memoria eius:
Tamquam agnus coram tondente se obmutuit,
et non aperuit os suum:
de angustia, et de judicio sublatus est.
Et erit in pace memoria ejus.

Behold how the righteous man dies
And no one understands.
Righteous men are taken away
And no one considers:
The righteous man has been taken away from present iniquity
And his memory shall be in peace.
As a sheep before her shearers is dumb,
so he opened not his mouth:
he was taken from prison and from judgment.
And his memory shall be in peace.

— *6th Responsory for Holy Saturday*

I was glad

I was glad when they said unto me:
We will go into the house of the Lord.
For thither the tribes go up,
ev'n the tribes of the Lord:
to testify unto Israel,
and to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.
For there is the seat of judgement:
even the seat of the house of David.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls:
and plenteousness within thy palaces.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and it ever shall be:
world without end.
Amen.

— *Psalm 121*

Ich will schweigen

Ich will schweigen und meinen Mund nicht auf tun.
 Herr, du wirst's wohl machen.
 Wende deine Plage von mir,
 Denn ich bin verschmacht' von der Strafe deiner Hand.
 Wenn du einen züchtigst um der Sünde willen,
 so wird seine Schöne verzehret wie von Motten.
 Ach wie gar nichts sind doch alle Menschen.
 Sela.

I am mute; I do not open my mouth,
 For it is you, Lord, who have done it.
 Remove your stroke from me,
 I am spent by the hostility of your hand.
 When you discipline a man with rebukes for sin,
 You consume like a moth what is dear to him; surely all
 mankind is a mere breath.
 Selah.

— *Psalm 39*

Der Gerechte

Der Gerechte kömmt um,
 und niemand ist der es zu Herzen nehme;
 und heilige Leute werden aufgerafft,
 und niemand achtet drauf.
 Denn die Gerechten werden weggerafft vor dem Unglück;
 und die richtig vor sich gewandelt haben
 kommen zum Frieden
 und ruhen in ihren Kammern.

The righteous perishes,
 and no man lays it to heart;
 and merciful men are taken away,
 none considering
 that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come;
 And those who walk in their uprightness
 enter into peace
 and rest in their beds.

— *Isaiah 57:1-2*

Richte mich, Gott

Richte mich, Gott, und führe meine Sache
 wider das unheilige Volk
 und errette mich von den falschen und bösen Leuten.
 Denn du bist der Gott meiner Stärke;
 Warum verstößest du mich?
 Warum lässest du mich so traurig geh'n,
 wenn mein Feind mich drängt?
 Sende dein Licht und deine Wahrheit,
 daß sie mich leiten
 zu deinem heiligen Berge,
 und zu deiner Wohnung.
 Daß ich hineingehe zum Altar Gottes,
 zu dem Gott, der meine Freude und Wonne ist,
 und dir, Gott, auf der Harfe danke, mein Gott.
 Was betrübst du dich, meine Seele,
 und bist so unruhig in mir?
 Harre auf Gott! Denn ich werde ihm noch danken,
 daß er meines Angesichts Hülfe,
 und mein Gott ist.

Do me justice, O God, and fight my fight
 against a faithless people;
 from the deceitful and impious man rescue me.
 For you, o God, are my strength.
 Why do you keep me so far away?
 Why must I go about in mourning,
 With the enemy oppressing me?
 Send forth your light and your fidelity;
 they shall lead me on
 And bring me to your holy mountain,
 to your dwelling place.
 Then will I go in to the altar of God,
 the God of my gladness and joy;
 Then will I give you thanks upon the harp, my God.
 Why are you so downcast, o my soul?
 And why do you sigh within me?
 Hope in God! Then I will again give him thanks,
 In the presence of my savior
 and my God.

— *Psalm 43*

Os justi

Os justi meditabitur sapientiam,
 Et lingua ejus loquetur iudicium.
 Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius:
 Et non supplantabuntur gressus ejus.
 Alleluia.

The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
 And his tongue speaks what is just,
 The law of his God is in his heart:
 And his feet do not falter.
 Alleluia.

— *Psalm 36:30-31*

There is an old belief

There is an old belief,
 That on some solemn shore,
 Beyond the sphere of grief
 Dear friends shall meet once more.
 Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin

TEXT & TRANSLATION (*continued*)

And Fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.
That creed I fain would keep
That hope I'll ne'er forgo,
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so.

— *John Gibson Lockhart*

Vinea mea electa

Vinea mea electa, ego te plantavi:
quomodo conversa es in amaritudinem,
ut me crucifigeres et Barrabam dimitteres.
Sepivi te et lapides elegi ex te
et ædificavi turrim.

Vine that I have loved as my own, I it was who planted thee,
chose thee and planted thee;
Why is all thy sweetness turned into gall and bitterness?
Why wouldst thou crucify Me and take Barrabas in my place?
I fenced thee sound, I took the hard stones away,
Took them from thy path and built a tower in thy defense.

— *Responsories for the Holy Week*

Panis angelicus

Panis angelicus fit panis hominum,
Dat panis cælicus figuris terminum:
O res mirabilis: manducat Dominum
Pauper, servus et humilis.
Te trina Deitas unaque poscimus,
Sic nos tu visita, sicut te colimus:
Per tuas semitas duc nos quo tendimus,
Ad lucem quam inhabitas.
Amen.

The food of angels becomes food for man;
The types commanded by the laws of old
Have lived and pass'd away. With Christ began
The mighty miracle our eyes behold.
O strange effect of love, when God descends
To give to sinful man his flesh, his blood!
Eternal Triune, O fulfill their ends!
Give us immortal light with Thee, our God.
Amen.

— *Feast of Corpus Christi*

The Song of Deborah

Bless ye the Lord
Hear O ye kings;
Give ear all ye princes.
I, even I will sing unto the Lord.
Speak ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.
Awake, utter a song: Arise.
Amen.

— *Judges 5:2–3, 10, 12*

Given Sound

speak low

Don't scream your words to heaven's clouds
It's men who raise voices
Over a din of faces brushed into canvas wall
A woman soft whispers
undertone to ears distracted by silence

— *Egyptian Compass by Pauline Kaldas*

A Hymn to the Mother of God

In You, O Woman full of Grace, the angelic choirs,
and the human race all creation rejoices.
O sanctified Temple, mystical Paradise, and glory of Virgins.
All praise be to You.

— *Greek Orthodox votive hymn*

PROGRAM NOTES *by Dana Marsh*

What is a Motet?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word “Motet” borrows etymologically from Old French (c.1200): “Mot,” meaning “word,” joined with the suffix “-et,” meaning “little.” The term moved quickly into adjacent pan-European languages such as ecclesiastical Latin (*motetus*—13th cent.), Italian (*motteto*—early 14th cent.), as well as Old Occitan, Catalan, Spanish, and Portuguese (15th cent.). The earliest surviving literary use of “Motet” in English emerged via John Wycliffe’s *English Bible* of 1382.

To define the word in a way that can apply to all musical eras represented in today’s performance isn’t really possible. Historians have done their best to define it relative to a given musical period, or by way of geography, but all tidy specificity ends there. Over the long view, what we can say is that the Motet is a genre that was first derived from plainchant-based idioms that became the building blocks of polyphonic style and form, both sacred and secular. Importantly, the more literal meaning of the term perhaps could signify the beginnings of a layer of music history that would inextricably connect musical values with those of poetry and literature—so much so that, by the early-Baroque period, most issues of performance practice focused predominantly on that highly sought-after synergy between text and music.

Music theorists could be annoyingly vague when describing the genre. In his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Musicke* (1597), the English composer Thomas Morley defined the term as “properlie a song made for the church, either vpon some hymne or Antheme, or such like.” For the purposes of this afternoon’s performance, then, our working definition for “motet” covers pieces that are not a “Mass” or a “Canticle” (or a cantata, opera, or oratorio, for that matter). Of those works to be heard today with texts bearing specific liturgical labels (such as a polyphonic responsory)—these were often later redeployed either para-liturgically or as free-standing ritual motets in various denominational milieus. Motet is hardly the only musical term to undergo semantic slippage over time. Even the ubiquitous word, “tenor,” originally signifying polyphonic function rather than vocal range—the voice that “held” (*tenere*) the chant melody in polyphony—itself shifted in meaning over time in a way that requires little or no explanation today.

The formal design of our program begins with Medieval motets that spring from music’s ancient status among the seven liberal arts as a science, developing gradually over time to incorporate structural features—such as, imitative counterpoint, musical “text painting,” a deliberate use of dissonance to stretch the sensibilities of the listener, growing complexities of expressive harmony—all the way through the many attributes we have come to recognize in motets of the 19th century to the present day. Naturally, it would be impossible to include an exhaustive list of motet styles and features from all periods in one concert experience, but this program will surely take us on a musical and historical odyssey, offering some of the most enthralling sonic vistas that the choral arts have to offer.

Probably the most influential composer of the 14th century was **Guillaume de Machaut** (c.1300–1377), and although his example heard today is technically balladic in matters of music and text, the chief sound characteristics of the work do not veer off the tracks of contemporaneous motet style. In centuries marked by bold advances in architecture, engineering, the building of Gothic cathedrals, the invention of the clock, the use of a personal “smart” device called an astrolabe, we can understand something of the rationale behind the tight polyphonic structure of “*Dame, de qui toute ma joie,*” which, like many texts of its time, focuses on themes of courtly or unrequited love.

Guillaume Du Fay (c.1397–1474) gives us perhaps the most sophisticated example of what historians have called the “isorhythmic” motet. Characteristic of the genre, there are no fewer than five different texts running simultaneously. The late Alajandro Planchart proposed a date of March 1432 for its composition, to honor the first anniversary of the coronation of Pope Eugenius IV. In this case, Du Fay unusually combines not one, but two different isorhythmic tenor chants as cornerstones of the work. This procedure was perhaps the most challenging for the late-medieval composer—almost mathematical in its formulaic, rhythmic, and melodic construction, yet adorned with dazzling, lively counterpoint, suggesting aural fireworks that must have made an indelible impression on contemporary listeners.

Meanwhile, in England, the lesser-known **Walter Lambe** (c.1450–1504), having moved up through the educational ranks of Eton College and Trinity College Arundel, established his musical life in and around the royal foundation of St. George’s Chapel Windsor. He belonged to a coterie of English composers that developed a ritual polyphonic style unique in Europe at the time. It provided inspiration for later music created by composers such as Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585) and William Byrd (c.1540–1623). Lambe’s music is founded on Medieval principles of composition, but grafted on to

that foundation are imitative Renaissance techniques adorning the polyphony.

John Taverner (c.1490–1545) developed further the work of the Eton composers of Lambe's generation and is perhaps the most important English composer between the great John Dunstaple (c.1390–1453) and Thomas Tallis. "*Mater Christi sanctissima*," despite the implied invocation in its title, is a votive antiphon to Jesus, composed in the 1520s when Taverner was the chief musician at Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's new flagship establishment of humanist learning, Cardinal College Oxford (today, Christ Church Cathedral). This 5-voice work evinces musical architecture of a sort that leaves the Medieval period behind, with points of imitation more frequently generating the polyphonic structure. Nonetheless, we still hear (especially in fully scored sections) the sound world so characteristic of the Eton composers. The final *Amen*, for example, offers a sonorous flowering of vocal writing that is arrestingly impressive.

The motets of the Portuguese Renaissance composer, **Vicente Lusitano** (c.1520–c.1561), have only recently been restored to their rightful place alongside polyphony of better-remembered 16th-century composers on the Iberian peninsula. Lusitano's mother was almost certainly of African descent, and therefore he is thought to be the first published Black composer. He printed a collection of 23 motets titled *Liber primus epigramatum* (1551), on which Pope Julius III conferred a copyright for ten years throughout the Christian west. Lusitano was also a leading music theorist of his generation, having written the treatise, *Tratado de canto de organo* (1555). His motets are supremely crafted—one of them modeled on the 5-voice "*Inviolata*" by the famous Josquin des Prez, a piece which Lusitano recast in 8 voices, deploying the same canonic techniques. His "*Aspice Domine*" exhibits no less structural prowess, as well as a penchant for spiky dissonances.

John Sheppard (c.1515–1558) was one of the most important English composers of sacred polyphony during the Tudor period. A conspicuous feature of his music is its use of a dissonance known as "cross-relation," and his examples were arguably the boldest of the period. Above all, his shaping of vocal sonorities was among the most accomplished of the 16th century, achieved with distinctive brilliance and flair. Sheppard was *Informator Choristarum* at Magdalen College Oxford in the early 1540s, and later a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal under (perhaps Henry VIII) Edward VI and Mary I, falling victim to plague only weeks before the coronation of Elizabeth I. Because his Latin polyphony became virtually obsolete under the latter monarch's Protestant reign, his output became sidelined into obscurity and thus has been outshone historically by the likes of Tallis, Tye, Mundy, Parsons, Whyte, and Byrd.

Thomas Tallis (c.1505–1585) is perhaps the most important English composer of the 16th century and undeniably the most industrious and adaptable. He survived all the political intrigues and dramatic reversals of the religious Reformations that convulsed the English church for most of his lifetime. While a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal from 1542, he served (and survived) under four monarchs espousing strongly opposed religious politics and beliefs. The metrical psalm setting to be heard today is perhaps recognized by our audience not first in its historical context, but from Ralph Vaughan Williams's 1910 orchestral *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. Working under Archbishop Matthew Parker, Tallis devised psalm settings that followed the defining musical dictum of the 16th-century Reformations: to compose music in such a way that every listener can hear clearly and comprehend the text.

Of the three works that conclude the first half of our program, the first shows us the Franco-Flemish tradition of the 16th-century. **Jacobus Clemens non Papa** (c.1510–c.1555) composed 232 motets among many other works and was a supremely fluent contrapuntalist, as heard in the colorful 7-voice setting from the *Song of Songs*, "*Ego flos campi*." We then undergo something of a jarring stylistic shift to encounter the music of **Carlo Gesualdo** (1566–1613). His rare, unconventional chromaticism and deliberate use of dissonance are well known among musicians, but perhaps less so by audiences. "*Ecce quomodo moritur justus*," a responsory for the Office of *Tenebræ* during Holy Week, immerses us straightaway into Gesualdo's highly idiosyncratic musical world. Something of a dark cloud hangs over him to the present day: Gesualdo is notorious for, among other things, having killed both his first wife and her aristocratic lover while reportedly catching them "in the act ..."

Henry Purcell's (1659–1695) celebratory setting of Psalm 122, "I was glad when they said unto me," was composed for the coronation of King James II in 1685. The work thus situates us well within the Baroque period, where we experience the most obvious partnership between words and music. Purcell is justly remembered for his uncanny shaping of music to the demands of virtually any text. A child prodigy, he secured the three most highly coveted musical posts in the land by the age of 18: Leader of the King's Royal Violins (modeled on the French Court), Organist at Westminster Abbey, and Organist of the Chapel Royal.

Beginning the second half of the program, our odyssey continues further into the Baroque; first with music by one of

J.S. Bach's predecessors at the Thomasschule in Leipzig, **Johann Hermann Schein** (1586–1630). "*Ich will schweigen*" provides one of that composer's many examples of the 17th-century German motet at its finest, which from Schein's pen rivals those of his most celebrated contemporary, Heinrich Schütz (you can hear a program focused entirely on Schütz's motets at our Chamber Series concerts on March 7/8, 2025).

As the eminent Bach scholar Christoph Wolff has opined, **Johann Christoph Bach** (1642–1703) was probably the most important member of the early Bach family. An elder cousin to J.S. Bach and father-in-law of Georg Philipp Telemann, Johann Christoph Bach composed motets that his younger cousin would later perform at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig; and, no less, J.S.'s son C.P.E. Bach would continue to program the older Bach's motets in Hamburg. Of a relatively small surviving collection of the composer's works, the motet "*Der Gerechte*" has attracted interest from scholars and performers alike for its harmonic originality as one of his most intimately expressive works.

At the head of the modern J.S. Bach revival stands **Felix Mendelssohn** (1809–1847), so it should come as no surprise that he would undertake assured forays into the motet form. The psalm-motet, "*Richte mich, Gott*," displays a highly sensitive grasp of vocal sonority with Mendelssohn proving himself to be a composer fully at home in the genre. From the opening contrasts between declamatory phrases in unison and fuller textures—with interpolated antiphony between high and low voices—we are treated to a winsome harmonic vocabulary that stands securely alongside the likes of nearly any 19th-century motet.

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) showed avid interest in earlier musics, particularly the polychoral works of Heinrich Schütz, upon whose examples he modeled several of his own. "*Wo ist ein so herrlich Volk*" is a motet of uncommon beauty, as is the popular "*Os justi*" that follows, composed by Brahms's direct contemporary, **Anton Bruckner** (1824–1896). Both motets evince such expressive power that they could each stand on their own as music without words in this milieu—even as what one might call vocal tone poems. **Charles Hubert Hastings Parry** (1848–1918) wrote a collection of six *Songs of Farewell*, which for their own part adopt a similar aesthetic in text setting to the previous two examples. "*There is an old belief*" offers perhaps the more adventurous harmonic palette and stands no less securely in its musical language.

Motets by **Francis Poulenc** (1899–1963) and **Pierre Villette** (1926–1998) bring us into the 20th century with a decidedly French twist. Poulenc's motets are admired by modern choral singers and aficionados, his Christmas and *Tenebrae* examples are especially popular. "*Vinea mea electa*" creates an entirely distinctive and unique sound world, saturated with charm and passion. Although Poulenc's choral writing occasionally poses challenges in voice leading, the overall ensemble effect is everywhere enchanting. In recent decades, Pierre Villette's motets have undergone a revival in choral circles, particularly since his "*Hymne à la Vierge*" made recurring appearances in the *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* at King's College Cambridge, broadcast in over 60 countries worldwide. Villette's *œuvre* is characterized by an atmospheric use of close harmony that often incorporates "bluesy" chord progressions, as Maurice Ravel of the previous generation sought and found a great deal of inspiration from Jazz. Villette's motet, "*Panis angelicus*," highlights numerous such instances in a delightfully refreshing style.

The three works closing this program include two examples by living composers: **Adolphus Hailstork** (b.1941) and **Trevor Weston** (b.1967). Hailstork took his undergraduate degree in music at Howard University and then studied under Nadia Boulanger in France. His "*Song of Deborah*" was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for its national conference in Dallas in 1994. It is a beautiful, mellifluous, quasi-impressionistic work that is again colorfully evocative in the manner of what one might call a choral tone poem. Trevor Weston is a brilliant award-winning composer recently honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters. "*Given Sound*" sets us on a bracing adventure in rhythm and sound, driven by pulsating *ostinatos* articulated via Pauline Kaldas's poetic text—an exciting generative synthesis that animates a supreme modern example of the genre. Many in our audience will recall Trevor Weston's "*A New Song*," commissioned by the Washington Bach Consort in 2020, that culminated in the recent album, *Myths Contested*, available through Acis Productions.

Sir John Tavener (1944–2013) composed choral works deeply inspired by his personal spirituality as a convert to the Greek Orthodox Church. "*A Hymn to the Mother of God*" embodies in musical terms an important principle of the Greek liturgy, in which the ritual itself aims to follow and mirror the eternal praises of heaven. This vision is described through echoings between divided choirs; the first choir represents the worship of heaven, the second imitates the first in praises ritually emulated by the church on earth. This repeating pattern provides many striking juxtapositions of harmony that create an ethereal and mystical poignance.

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Ich habe Genug, BWV 82

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan, Johann Pachelbel

Monday, November 4 & Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn, BWV 23

Organ Preludes TBA

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats, BWV 42

O Mensch, beweine deine Sünde gross, BWV 622

Fugue in G Minor, BWV 578

Monday, March 31 & Tuesday, April 1, 2025

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