

Jan 04

THE CHERWELL SINGERS

directed by Julia Craig-McFeely

with

Lynda Sayce, Lute

Renaissance Music from the Iberian Peninsula

**Duarte Lobo: *Missa Vox Clamantis*, *Missa Pro Defunctis*
Cristóbal Morales: *Emendemus in Melius* (Motet)**

**Lute music by Luys Milan, Francesco Canova da Milano,
Borrone, Narvaez, Valderrabano, Dalza and Spinacino**

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WITH
LYNDA SAYCE, LUTE

Duarte Lobo: *Missa Vox Clamantis*
Kyrie—Christe—Kyrie
Gloria

Lute Solo: Francesco Spinacino (*fl* 1507), *Bassadanza 'La Spagna'* (1507)

Credo

Lute Solo: Luys Milan (1500-1561), *Fantasia*. (1536)

Cristóbal Morales: *Emendemus in Melius* (Motet)

Lute Solo: Luys Milan, *Fantasia* (1536)

Duarte Lobo: *Missa Vox Clamantis*
Sanctus—Hosanna

Lute Solo: Enrriquez de Valderrabano (*fl* c.1550), '*Soneto*'

Benedictus—Hosanna

Lute Solo: Joanambrosio Dalza (1508), '*Calata alla spagnola*'

Agnus Dei

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INTERVAL
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Duarte Lobo: *Missa Pro Defunctis*
Introitus: Requiem aeternam; te decet hymnus
Kyrie—Christe—Kyrie

Lute Solo: Pietro Paolo Borrono (*fl* 1531-49), *Padoana e Saltarello 'La Desperata'* (published 1536)

Gradual: Requiem aeternam
Tractus: Absolve; Dies irae

Lute Solo: Luys de Narvaez (*fl* 1530-50), *Cancion del Emperador: 'Mille Regres'* (1538)

Offertorium: Domine Iesu Christe; Hostias; Quam Olim Abrahae

Lute Solo: Francesco da Milano (1497-1543), *Fantasia*

Sanctus, Benedictus

Lute Solo: Luys de Narvaez, *'Guardame las vacas'* (1538)

Agnus Dei

Lute Solo: (*communio*) Francesco da Milano, *Fantasia*

Lux Aeterna; Requiem aeternam
Responsorium pro Defunctis: Memento mei Deus; Kyrie;
Requeiscat in Pace

Duarte Lobo (1565-1646) was the most famous Portuguese composer of his time: one of the leading Portuguese exponents of the polyphonic style and noted for his expressive interpretation of texts. He is often confused with the Spaniard, Alonso Lobo, ten years his senior, a leading exponent of the polyphonic style in Spain. The two works sung here represent opposite ends of the spectrum of his style, though both were published in his second book of masses in 1639. The *Missa Vox Clamantis* is fairly conventional in form, using a 'head motif' to unify all the movements. However the melodic activity is far from conventional, opening with a dramatic octave leap, and progresses through the work with frequent unprepared dissonances which, though not jarring in any way, give an unusual flavour to the work.

The *Missa Pro Defunctis* is fairly well known thanks to its appearance on CD. It leans to a far more meditative atmosphere, abandoning polyphony often in favour of broad, lingering homophonic passages, where drama is deliberately avoided in favour of an almost total meditative peace.

The Spaniard Cristóbal Morales (1500-1553), although half a century older than Lobo, wrote in a style almost indistinguishable from his successors: he is considered the first major composer from the Iberian peninsula, and the most important figure in 16th-century Spanish sacred music. His works were still being performed long after his lifetime, and are not out of place mingled with those who would have grown up singing his music and familiar with his style. Liturgical *Cantus Firmus* motets were usually based on the chant of the main text. However, this motet uses a pseudo *cantus firmus* of a totally different text (*memento homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris*) repeated six times at two different pitches by the first tenors, not unlike the

inclusion in many contemporary European portraits of a skull or other *memento mori*. It is sung here in place of the liturgical Preface.

These masses were not written as concert pieces: the repetitive material of the 'head motif' would have served to unify movements separated by chanted Proper texts and other liturgical activity. In order to preserve this separation to some extent, since it provides a more comfortable experience for the listener, the sections of polyphony are separated by lute solos from Spanish composers contemporary with Morales and Lobo. The styles range from complex polyphony to lively and adventurous dance music. Narvaez's 'Guardame las Vacas' is a set of variations on a popular song 'herd my cows', though I prefer the unofficial (and inaccurate) translation of the title that this is an early warning against English tourists: 'watch out for the vacationers'. We are fortunate to have one of the country's most accomplished lutenists to join us for this concert. Lynda Sayce is internationally known as a soloist, consort and continuo lutenist. She specialises in repertoires that are often difficult to work with as they require special instruments, including 19th-century lute song (Wagner and Beethoven). The instrument she is using today is an early 6-course lute built by Ivo Magherini.

THE CHERWELL SINGERS

Sopranos - Claire Appleton, Sue Bignal*, Kipper Chipperfield,

Sarah Franks*, Lucy Goodwin, Louise Locock*,

Nathalie Rowell, Beatrix Stewart, Joanna Tucker*

Altos - Caroline Higginbottom, Julia Aston-Smith*

Helen Maidlow, Christine Saward*

Tenors - Philip Edean*, Christopher Palmer, Guy Peskett,

David Sutton, John Tucker*

Basses - Bruce Bradfield, Richard Coleridge*, Christopher Franks*,

Paul Lewis, Malcolm Pearce*

*soloists

The Cherwell Singers was founded 26 years ago by a group of singers who wished to perform the vocal chamber music repertory, and several of the original singers are still part of the choir. Our repertory covers sacred and secular music from the late Medieval period to 20th-century works (some written especially for the choir), and includes not only central compositions of the choral repertory but many lesser-known pieces. The choir accepts bookings for weddings, dinners and other events, formal and informal, and we welcome enquiries from prospective new members. The choir's CD *Reflections of Oxford*, an eclectic mix of English music from the 16th century to the present day, can be purchased at the back of the church after the concert. Our next concert, the Brahms *Requiem*, is on 8th May, with the Oxford Sinfonia.

Contact numbers

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