

Early Music

40 Years of Renaissance Polyphony

The Tallis Scholars

Saturday, April 5, 8:00 p.m.
Church of St. Mary the Virgin



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Peter Phillips, *director*

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Praeter rerum seriem Josquin Desprez (c.1450 - 1521)

Missa Praeter rerum seriem Cipriano de Rore (1515- 1565)

INTERMISSION

Two Sonnets for Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (2014) Michael Nyman (b. 1944)
world premiere, Miller Theatre commission

Jesu salvator seculi John Sheppard (1515 - 1558)

Our Father Sheppard

If ye love me Thomas Tallis (c. 1505 - 1585)

Hear the voice and prayer Tallis

Salve intemerata Tallis



This program runs approximately one hour and forty-five minutes, including intermission.

The commissioning of Michael Nyman's new work is made possible, in part,
by the generous support of Mary Sharp Cronson.

About the Program

The contrapuntal complexity of Josquin's *Praeter rerum seriem* and the simple directness of Tallis's *If ye love me* or *Hear the voice and prayer* belong to two very different musical worlds. The first half of tonight's concert explores Catholicism at its musical height. With the reforms of the Council of Trent still to come, composers across Europe revelled in increasingly intricate textures, recreating the artifice and intellectual play of Mannerist architecture in their musical structures – none more successfully than Josquin Desprez. After the interval we cross the Channel for music that tells the contrasting story of the English Reformation, of a new simplicity demanding “to each syllable a plain and simple note,” one charged with unspoken religious conflict and faith.

Revered as the greatest composer of his day, Josquin's unique polyphonic invention is showcased nowhere more vividly than in his Christmas motet *Praeter rerum seriem*. Probably dating from the end of his career, the work takes a joyous plainchant melody (with rhyming and strongly rhythmic text) and dissolves it down to its essence. The clue to this extraordinary two-part work is its text. Brooding on the mystery of the incarnation, the poet grasps after understanding, giving Josquin his cue. Just like the poet, he too “confronts us with a mystery” – this time a musical one that conceals the original melody in cantus firmus quotations so temporally distorted that they become unrecognisable. As the work progresses these become quicker and clearer, finally coalescing into familiarity as we reach the close and the rejoicing of its triple-time section, “By God's grace, which orders all things so smoothly...”.

Though often creating textural clarity through the antiphonal grouping of three upper and three lower voices, Josquin's motet is unusually dense in construction. Imitation is tightly woven, nearing true canon at times, and creates a musical canvas as huge and abstract as its subject matter. It's as though word-painting would be too literal, too trivial an approach to such subject matter.

Just as the plainchant melody forms the starting point for Josquin's motet, so the motet in turn forms the basis for Cipriano de Rore's Parody Mass, the *Missa Praeter rerum seriem*. The cycle of influence between the two great Franco-Flemish composers is a fascinating one; de Rore was to succeed Josquin at the Este court in Ferrara, and his

Mass feels both like a homage to his influential elder, and an extension and development of his innovative tradition.

Each movement of the Mass emerges from the opening of Josquin's motet. But as with the original, the cantus firmus material is slowed so dramatically as to lose much of its identity. De Rore's seven voices are often deployed as a unit, throwing into relief the verse sections for reduced forces. The Benedictus, for example, becomes a glowing miniature for upper voices – a lighter, less substantial partner to the long lines and thick, sustained harmonies of the Sanctus, surely one of de Rore's loveliest passages. Although best-known now as a composer of madrigals, what is striking here is the composer's rhetorical restraint. There are no cheap effects or brash colours to mar the unfolding polyphonic purity of a work that reaches its solemn climax in a magisterial Agnus Dei, gilded by its two echoing treble lines.

Michael Nyman's new piece developed out of a performance of four of Bach's Preludes from Book 1 where he slowed down, cut, or looped the material in order to draw out interior melodies and rhythms. He was looking for a context to "write" rather than just "play" these Preludes when his friend, the Mexican artist Lorena Camarena Osorno, asked him to write a short piece of music to accompany her film about the baroque poet Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Accordingly, Nyman took one of Sor Juana's sonnets, "Este que ves, engaño colorido," and set it with his "version" of the Bach D major Prelude as accompaniment. For the Tallis Scholars Nyman made an arrangement of this song where two women's voices-with-text are accompanied by a transcription of the Prelude by voices-without-texts. A second song, a setting of another Sor Juana sonnet - "Mueran contigo Laura, pues modiste" - jumps between the F minor Prelude from Book 2 and the A major from Book 1 with which it shares harmonic, rhythmic and melodic musical material. Nyman intends to make the Sor Juana sonnets into a 10-song cycle, all as "decorations" of Bach Preludes.

A Compline hymn for "low Sunday" – the first Sunday after Easter, *Jesu salvator seculi* exists in two directly comparable settings from the Tudor period by Tallis and John Sheppard. We hear only the latter tonight, but both are *alternatim* treatments, alternating verses of plainchant with polyphony that weaves itself around the familiar hymn-melody (heard throughout in the upper voices as a cantus firmus). Although perhaps less texturally varied than Tallis's setting, and certainly less embellished melodically,

Sheppard's five-voice setting, which probably dates from Edward VI's reign, is distinguished by its harmonic colouring. A master of chromaticism, Sheppard deploys his palette carefully, crafting a sense of growth and climax through his polyphonic variations, ending in a celebratory dance in the triple-time Gloria.

Another product of Edward's reign, John Sheppard's setting of The Lord's Prayer makes use of the five-part forces so characteristic of English composers during this period. It's a distribution that allows for richness without obscuring the text in too much textural weight. Modal harmonies add interest and colour to a treatment whose translucent imitation and pulsing, dotted rhythms establish a single mood of affirmation and spiritual security.

With a career spanning the reigns of Henry VIII to Elizabeth I, it is through Tallis's music that we can trace most clearly the changing liturgical and stylistic conventions of the Tudor Monarchs. Both dating from Edward's reign, the two four-part anthems *If ye love me* and *Hear the voice and prayer* are exquisite miniatures and persuasive advocates for Anglicanism's new simplicity.

What counterpoint there is is carefully handled to foreground text. After a largely homophonic A section for *If ye love me*, Tallis creates a rocking, imitative web of sound at "e'en the spirit of truth" that grows out of a sequence of dovetailed entries at the start of the B section that rise up through the voices with expansive beauty. Also structured in ABB form, *Hear the voice and prayer* reserves imitative gestures to articulate the beginnings of section. The text comes from Solomon's dedication of the Temple, and would have had particular resonance for the consecration of new English Church.

Votive antiphon *Salve intemerata* is the largest-scale motet in today's concert, and the earliest of the English compositions – not only in date but also style. The tradition of composing votive antiphons to the Virgin was abandoned in England under the Reformation, but to the young Tallis these works represented not only a spiritual gesture but also a technical challenge, encompassing some of the grandest works of his predecessors. *Salve intemerata* lacks the immediate melodic appeal of much Tallis, but surrender to the long contrapuntal lines and musical abstraction (the long text lacks much narrative or descriptive focus) and there's much beauty to be found in this grandly spacious homage to an earlier age.

-Notes by Alexandra Coghlan, with additional information from Michael Nyman



Texts and Translations

Praeter rerum seriem

Praeter rerum seriem parit Deum hominem Virgo mater. Nec vir tangit virignem, nec prolis originem novit pater.

Virtus sancti spiritus opus illud coelitus operatur. Initus et exitus partus tui penitus quis scrutatur? Dei providentia quae disponit omnia tam suave: tua puerperia transfer in mysteria, Mater ave.

Missa Praeter rerum seriem

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te; benedicimus te; adoramus te; glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam, Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis; qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram; qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus; tu solus Dominus; tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe, cum

Beyond the order of this world, the Virgin Mother bore God in human form. Still a virgin, she was untouched by man, nor did the father know the child's origin.

That work was achieved from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit. Who can fathom the profundity of your labour's beginning and its end? God's providence, which has ordered everything to such perfection. Guide your children into the mysteries, Mother, hail!

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, goodwill towards men. We praise thee; we bless thee; we worship thee; we glorify thee. We give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father almighty.

O Lord the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us; thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art Holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy



Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo; Lumen de Lumine; Deum verum de Deo vero; genitum, non factum; consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt.

Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis, et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto, ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato; passus et sepultus est.

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum Scripturas; et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris; et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos; cuius regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre Filioque procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per prophetas;

Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptismum in remissionem peccatorum. Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus

Ghost, art Most High in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds. God of God; Light of Light; very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made.

Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.



Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria
tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he that cometh in name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona
nobis pacem.

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.
O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of
the world, have mercy on us.
O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of
the world, grant us thy peace.

Procura des mentir by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Este, que ves, engaño colorido,
que del arte ostentando los primores,
con falsos silogismos de colores
es cauteloso engaño del sentido;

This, that you see, this colored treachery,
which, by displaying all the charms of art,
with those false syllogisms of its hues
deceptively subverts the sense of sight;

éste, en quien la lisonja ha pretendido
excusar de los años los horrores,
y venciendo del tiempo los rigores,
triunfar de la vejez y del olvido,

this, in which false praise has vainly sought
to shun the horrors of the passing years,
and conquering of time the cruelty,
to overcome age and oblivion's might,

es un vano artificio del cuidado,
es una flor al viento delicada,
es un resguardo inútil para el hado;

is a vain artifice cautiously wrought,
is a fragile bloom caught by the wind,
is, to ward off fate, pure uselessness;

es una necia diligencia errada,
es un afán caduco y, bien mirado,
es cadáver, es polvo, es sombra, es nada.

is a foolish effort that's gone wrong,
is a weakened zeal, and, rightly seen,
is corpse, is dust, is gloom, is nothingness.

En la muerte de la marquesa de Mancera by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Mueran contigo, Laura, pues moriste,
los afectos que en vano te desean,
los ojos a quien privas de que vean
hermosa luz que a un tiempo concediste.

Let them die with you, Laura, now you are
dead, these longings that go out to you in
vain, these eyes on whom you once be-
stowed a lovely light never to gleam again.

Muera mi lira infausta en que influiste
ecos, que lamentables te vocean,
y hasta estos rasgos mal formados sean
lágrimas negras de mi pluma triste.

Muévase a compasión la misma muerte
que, precisa, no pudo perdonarte;
y lamente el amor su amarga suerte,

pues si antes, ambicioso de gozarte,
deseó tener ojos para verte,
ya le sirvieran sólo de llorarte.

Jesu salvator seculi

Jesu Salvator seculi,
redemptis ope subveni
et pia Dei genitrix
salutem posce miseris.

Coetus omnes angelici
patriarcharum cunei
ac prophetarum merita
nobis precentor veniam.

Baptista Christi praevisus
et claviger aetherius
cum ceteris apostolis
nos solvant nexu criminis.

Chorus sacratus martyrum
confessio sacerdotum
et virginalis castitas
nos a peccatis abluant.

Clericorum suffragia
omnes quae cives celici
annuant votis supplicum
et vitae poscant praemium.

Let this unfortunate lyre that echoes still
to sound you woke, perish calling your
name, and may these clumsy scribblings
represent black tears my pen has shed to
ease its pain.

Let Death himself feel pity, and regret
that, bound by his own law, he could not
spare you, and love lament the bitter
circumstance

that if one, in his desire for pleasure,
he wished for eyes that they might feast
on you, now weeping is all those eyes
could ever do.

Jesus, saviour of a world redeemed,
come to man's aid with your power,
and, holy mother of God,
seek salvation for the wretched.

May the whole company of angels,
the regiments of patriarchs,
and the battalions of prophets
beseech succour for us.

May the one who came before, he who
baptised Christ, and the carrier of the key
to heaven together with the rest of the
apostles release us from the yoke of guilt.

May the blessed company of martyrs,
the confession of priests,
the chastity of the virgin,
absolve us from our sins.

May the approved clerics and all the citi-
zens of heaven look with kindness upon
the prayers of the humble and ask that
they be given their life's reward.

Laus honor virtus gloria
Deo Patri et Filio
Sancto simul Paracleto
in sempiterna secula. Amen.

Praise, honour, virtue, and glory be
to God the Father, to the Son,
and to the Blessed Paraclete,
throughout all ages. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen.

If ye love me

If ye love me,
keep my commandments,
and I will pray the Father,
and he shall give you another comforter,
that he may abide with you for ever,
even the spirit of truth.

Hear the voice and prayer

Hear the voice and prayer of thy servants,
that they make before thee this day.
That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day,
ever toward this place of which thou hast said,
“My name shall be there.”
And when thou hearest have mercy on them.

Salve intemerata

Salve intemerata Virgo Maria Filii Dei
genitrix praeceteris electa virginibus quae
ex utero tuae matris Annae mulieris sanc-
tissimae sic a Spiritu Sancto tum sanctifi-
cata tum illuminata fuisti munitaque tan-
topere Dei omnipotentis gratia, ut usque

Hail, unsullied Virgin Mary, Mother of
the Son of God, elect among all virgins
because of the womb of thy mother Anna.
Most holy of women, thus by the Holy
Spirit were thou then sanctified and il-
luminated and filled with the grace of the



ad conceptum filii tui Domini nostri Jesu Christi et dum eum conciperes ac usque ad partum, et dum eum pareres semperque post partum virgo omnium quae natae sunt castissima incorruptissima et immaculatissima et corpore et animo tota vita permanseris.

Tu nimirum universas alias longe superasti virgines sincera mentis impollutae conscientia quotquot vel adhuc fuerunt ad ipso mundi primordio vel unquam futurae sunt usque in finem mundi. Per haec nos praecellentissima gratiae caelestis Domina tibi, virgo et Mater Maria praeter ceteris omnibus mulieribus et virginibus a Deo singulariter infusa.

Te precamur, quae miseris, mortalibus misericors patrona es, ut pro peccatis nostris nobis condonandis intercedere digneris apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem eiusque filium Jesum Christum, secundum divinitatem quidem ex Patre ante omnia saecula gentium, secundum humanitatem autem ex te natum atque apud Spiritum Sanctum, ut peccatorum nostrorum maculis tua abstergis intercessionem. Tecum Sancta Virgo, semper congaudere teque in regno caelorum, sine fine laudare mereamur. Amen.

omnipotent God so that thou didst bear thy son our Lord Jesus Christ; and while he was conceived, and while he was born and thereafter, thou, from whom all have been born, remainedst most chaste, incorrupt, and immaculate virgin through all thy life both in body and in mind.

In truth thou hast surpassed all virgins forever, through the knowledge of your pure mind, among all who have ever been from the beginning of the world and who shall be until the end of the world. For this most excellent heavenly gift was given to thee alone, O Virgin and Mother Mary, alone among all women and virgins infused with the grace of God.

We therefore do pray to thee who art merciful guardian of us mortals, worthily to intercede with God the Father almighty and his Son Jesus Christ, for our sins by which we are condemned, according to the holiness which is from the Father begotten before all worlds, according to the humanity into which he was born of thee by the Holy Spirit; and by thy spotlessness to cleanse us of our sins through intercession; that with thee, Holy Virgin, shall we rejoice always in the kingdom of heaven, and be worthy to praise thee without end. Amen.

About the Artists

Amy Haworth, *soprano*

Emma Walshe, *soprano*

Amy Wood, *soprano*

Emily Atkinson, *soprano*

Caroline Trevor, *alto*

Patrick Craig, *alto*

Chris Watson, *tenor*

Benedict Hymas, *tenor*

Rob Macdonald, *bass*

Timothy Whiteley, *bass*

The Tallis Scholars were founded by Peter Phillips in 1973. They perform in both sacred and secular venues. Previous locations include the Sistine Chapel to mark the final stage of the complete restoration of the Michelangelo frescoes; Ferrara, Italy (at the invitation of Claudio Abbado); and London for a unique 25th Anniversary concert in London's National Gallery. Other UK venues include Symphony Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Wigmore Hall, London's South Bank Centre, and the Royal Albert Hall. They have also toured in Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, France, the United States, Japan, China, Australia, and Singapore. Festival appearances include the Salzburg Festival, Bath Festival, Milan Cathedral Festival, and at the BBC Proms in London. Much of The Tallis Scholars's reputation for pioneering work has come from their associa-

tion with Gimell Records, set up by Peter Phillips and Steve Smith in 1981 solely to record them.

Peter Phillips has made an impressive if unusual reputation for himself in dedicating his life's work to the research and performance of Renaissance polyphony. Having won a scholarship to Oxford in 1972, Phillips studied Renaissance music and founded the Tallis Scholars in 1973, with whom he has now appeared in almost 2000 concerts and made nearly 60 discs, encouraging interest in polyphony all over the world. Phillips continues to work with other specialist ensembles, currently appearing regularly with the Choeur de Chambre de Namur, Intrada of Moscow, Musica Reservata of Barcelona, and the Tudor Choir of Seattle. He has made numerous television and radio appearances, and works extensively with the BBC Singers, with whom he gave a Promenade concert, in collaboration with the Tallis Scholars, from the Royal Albert Hall in July 2007. He is Artistic Director of the Tallis Scholars Summer Schools, leads numerous masterclasses, and was recently appointed a Reed Rubin Director of Music at Merton College, Oxford. In 2005 Phillips was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*.

About Miller Theatre

Miller Theatre at Columbia University is the leading presenter of new music in New York City and one of the most vital forces nationwide for innovative programming. In partnership with Columbia University School of the Arts, Miller is dedicated to producing and presenting unique events, with a focus on contemporary and early music, jazz, opera, and multimedia performances. Founded in 1988, Miller has helped launch the careers of myriad composers and ensembles over the past 25 years, serving as an incubator for emerging artists and a champion of those not yet well known in the United States. A three-time recipient of the ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming, Miller Theatre continues to meet the high expectations set forth by its founders—to present innovative programs, support the development of new work, and connect creative artists with adventurous audiences.

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Rand Steiger and Rebecca Jo Plant
Peter Strauss
Jim Strawhorn

as of March 1, 2014



Upcoming Events

Thursday, April 10, 8:00 p.m.

COMPOSER PORTRAITS

Liza Lim

International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE)

Karina Canellakis, *conductor*

Thursday, April 17, 8:00 p.m.

BACH, REVISITED

Tower + Bach

Curtis 20/21

Tuesday, May 6, 6:00 p.m.

POP-UP CONCERTS

Juilliard415

Thursday, May 15, 8:00 p.m.

BACH, REVISITED

Reich + Bach

Ensemble Signal

Brad Lubman, *conductor*

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