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# CANTORIUM

## Choir

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St Nicholas Church Taplow  
Saturday April 24th 1993  
Guest Conductor : Benedict Gunner

## CANTORUM CHOIR

The Cantorum Choir was founded in 1981 and since then has made well over 50 appearances in the Thames Valley area and further afield. From a modest 14 singers it has grown to its present size of 30, but will not, according to its conductor Jonathan Miall, get any larger.

In the past 10 years the choir has accumulated a broad repertoire ranging from Palestrina, Monteverdi and the Baroque composers through the 18th and 19th centuries to contemporary works, some of which have been written especially for it. Apart from the ever popular carol concert the choir usually makes three or four appearances during the year, both in the concert hall and also in cathedrals, singing services. In addition to concert commitments the choir has appeared on film and television, and recently cut a promotional record for the new musical "Wuthering Heights".

The choir is now entering its second decade and it hopes to continue to produce interesting and lively programmes and also to invite guest conductors to share its musical experiences. Tonight's conductor, Benedict Gunner, is Musical Director of The Royal Free Singers and conducts Schola Tamesis of London. He began his career as Musical Director at The Princess Margaret Royal Free School, Windsor. He has sung with many choirs, notably the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, with whom he travelled and recorded extensively. He now runs an agency which specialises in promoting international concerts and concert tours.

There are occasional vacancies in Cantorum Choir and if you are interested please do contact Jonathan Miall or one of the choir members to arrange an informal audition.

Cantorum Choir is grateful to the Reverend Alan Dibden for the use of St Nicholas Church for this occasion.

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# Cantorum Choir

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Beatus Vir

Claudio Monteverdi  
(1567 - 1643)

This setting of Psalm 111 in the Vulgate was also published in the 1640 collection "Selva Spirituale e Morale". It is scored for strings and is written in the "stile concertato" developed by Giovanni Gabrieli, which blends and contrasts the solo, choral and instrumental groups. It would have been sung at Sunday Vespers. (Soloists - *Soprano* : Jill Goode, Valerie Snapes, *Tenor* : David Hazeldine, Malcolm Stork, *Bass* : Jeremy Andrews)

Concerto Grosso

Arcangelo Corelli  
(1653 - 1713)

Adagio - Allegro - Adagio - Vivace - Allegro - Allegro

This concerto grosso is one of 12 by Corelli and is amongst the earliest created in the concerto grosso form. It radiates a vibrant lyricism and crisp dignity of style that sets it clearly apart from works by most earlier composers, who strove primarily for virtuoso brilliance and whimsy. These concerti grossi won him celebrity in his lifetime and a fervent admiration from musicians, critics and audiences that has never declined through the centuries.

Awake, Awake My Lyre

John Blow  
(1649 - 1708)

This work was a commission for the Oxford University Art degree ceremony in 1678, although not actually performed until 1679. It is written in the style of an ode and opens with an instrumental movement, followed by a sequence of solos, chorus and instrumental interludes.  
(Soloists - *Soprano* : Susan Piggott, *Tenor* : Eugene Ginty)

Hear my Prayer, O Lord  
SSAATTB

Henry Purcell  
(1659 - 1695)

This full anthem was discovered in an album written in Purcell's own hand and dated 1682. It is a fragment of an intended larger work; blank pages were left for its completion. Great concentration and intensity are apparent from the very opening, not only in the emotional expression of the text but in the contrapuntal intricacy of the music: Purcell handles eight-part writing with consummate skill. "Hear my prayer, O Lord and let my crying come unto thee."

## INTERVAL

Dixit Dominus  
(Psalm 110)

Handel  
(1685 - 1759)

Dixit Dominus - Virgam virtutis tuae - Tecum principium - Juravit dominus - Tu es sacerdos - Dominus a dextris confregit - De torrente in via - Gloria Patri.

In 1706 Handel left his native Hamburg for Italy and it was during his three year stay there that he first met really accomplished singing. In the Italian style, the vocal writing of "Dixit Dominus" makes no concessions to amateur technique. For sheer brilliance, and use of every possible expressive resource (note especially the extraordinary hammer-blows of 'conquassabit' - "he shall smite in sunder the heads over divers countries"), Handel never wrote choral music to match this youthful masterpiece. (Soloists - *Soprano* : Valerie Snapes, Helen Baker, Susan Piggott, *Contralto* : Vivienne Mitchell, Eleanor Griffiths, *Tenor* : Eugene Ginty, *Bass* : Jeremy Andrews)

CANTORUM CHOIR

*Important for the programme*

Soprano

Catherine Arnold  
Victoria Piggott  
Jennifer Snapes

Bridget Bentley  
Susan Piggott  
Marianne Stork

Helen Baker  
Valerie Snapes  
Jill Goode

Contralto

Penny Bysshe  
Vivienne Mitchell

Shirley Kay  
Lorna Sykes

Eleanor Griffiths  
Lynda Frampton

Tenor

Malcolm Stork  
Niall Blair

David Hazeldine  
Duncan Bruce

Nick Rowell  
Eugene Ginty

Bass

Nigel Stork  
Don Kennedy  
~~John Kennedy~~

Arthur Giorgi  
Nick Wait  
Brian Graves

Christopher Rasey  
Giles Garnett  
Jeremy Andrews

ORCHESTRA

Violin

Patrick Cornford (Leader)  
Judith Connert  
Kirsten Klingels

Klan Matthews

Bill Davies  
Paul Wood

*x 2 more brass for the wedding  
when possible*

Robert Pusey

Ian Petty

Cello

Dennis Vigay

Alan Dalziel

Harpichord

Ian Watson

Rehearsal Accompanist

Gordon Collins

Cantorum Choir is indebted to the following sponsors  
for their support of tonight's performance.

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