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Saturday 30th March 1996 at 8pm
All Saints Church, Marlow

Canon
Choir

Conductor : Murray Hipkin
Organist : Stephen Harris

J.S. Bach 1685-1750

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden

This event for which *Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden* was written remains unknown. This motet is the only one to have a separate continuo part, although Bach probably intended to have a continuo accompaniment in the others. It is the most direct of the motets, being a tautly constructed work in a lively contrapuntal style. The first three sections share common time and follow on without a break. A richly harmonised choral passage separates the opening *allegro* double fugue from another buoyant, imitative movement, and a joyous "Alleluja" fugue in triple metre concludes the work.

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden,
und preiset ihn, alle Volker!
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit

wallet uber uns in Ewigkeit
Alleluja.

*Praise the Lord, all nations,
and praise him, all people.
For his merciful kindness
is great towards us
and the truth of the Lord endures for ever
Alleluia.*

Psalm 117

Gerald Finzi 1901-1956

Lo, The Fall, Final Sacrifice (1946)

To the Rev. Walter Hussey and the Organist and Choir of The Church of St. Matthew, Northampton, for the Occasion of the 33rd Anniversary of the Consecration of the Church, 21.9.46.

Tenor David Hazeldine
Bass Keri Dexter

This is the first of two works in this evening's concert which owe their origins to the Parish Church of St. Matthew, Northampton. Since the 1940's, St. Matthew's has played a leading role in the artistic life of the Church of England, in commissioning many choral works for its annual Patronal Festival, by such composers as Leighton, Lennox Berkeley, Dyson, and Howells.

A music critic of *The Times* once described Finzi's *Lo, The Fall, Final Sacrifice* as "a miniature *Gerontias*". The composer treats the Richard Crashaw/St. Thomas Aquinas text in the most sympathetic fashion imaginable- the poetry's deep pondering of the true significance of Christ's sacrifice being dramatically complemented by the music's vivid colouring, to create a work of the greatest beauty.

Lo, the full, final, Sacrifice
On which all figures fix't their eyes,
The ransomed Isaac, and his ram;
The Manna, and the Paschal Lamb.

Jesus Master, just and true!
Our food, and faithful Shepherd too!

O let that love which thus makes thee
Mix with our low Mortality,
Lift our lean Souls, and set us up
Convictors of thine own full cup,
Coheirs of Saints. That so all may

Drink the same wine; and the
same Way.

Nor change the Pasture, but the Place
To feed of Thee in thine own Face.

O dear Memorial of that Death
Which lives still, and allows us breath!
Rich, Royal food! Bountiful Bread!
Whose use denies us to the dead!

Live ever bread of loves, and be
My life, my soul, my sure self to me.

Help Lord, my Faith, my Hope
increase;

And fill my portion in thy peace.
Give love for life; nor let my days
Grow, but in new powers to thy name
and praise.

Rise, Royal Sion! rise and sing
Thy soul's kind shepherd,

thy heart's King.
Stretch all thy powers; call if you can
Harps of heaven to hands of man.
This sovereign subject sits above
The best ambition of thy love.

Lo the bread of Life, this day's
Triumphant Text provokes thy praise.
The living and life-giving bread,
To the great twelve distributed
When Life, himself, at point to die
Of love, was his own Legacy.

O soft self-wounding Pelican!
Whose breast weeps Balm
for wounded man.
All this way bend thy benign flood
To'a bleeding Heart that gasps
for blood.

That blood, whose least drops
sovereign be
To wash my worlds of sins from me.

Come love! Come Lord! and that
long day
For which I languish, come away.
When this dry soul those eyes
shall see,

And drink the unscald source of thee.
When Glory's sun faith's shades
shall chase,
And for thy veil give me thy Face.

(Lo, the full, final Sacrifice
On which all figures fix't their eyes.)

Amen

From Richard Crashaw's versions of
the Hymns of St. Thomas Aquinas:
Adoro Te and Laudis Sion Scholorem

Svedsen
Romance

Violin James Underwood

Benjamin Britten 1913-1976
***Festival Cantata: Rejoice In the Lamb* (1943)**

For the Rev. Walter Hussey and the choir of St. Matthew's Church, Northampton, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the consecration of their church, September 21st 1943.

Treble **Timothy Salisbury**
Counter-Tenor **Matthew Orton**
Tenor **David Hazeldine**
Bass **Keri Dexter**

Britten's "Festival Cantata" was first performed at the end of the Solemn Eucharist on St. Matthew's Day in September 1943 (fanfares composed for the occasion by Michael Tippett were played at the beginning and end of the service by members of the band of The Northamptonshire Regiment!). Later that month Britten returned to conduct the church choir in a broadcast performance of the work, for the first in a series of radio programmes on the subject of "Church Music of Today".

Rejoice in the Lamb is a setting in ten sections for soloists, choir and organ of extracts from a lengthy work by the 18th-century poet Christopher Smart, *Jubilate Agno*. Smart, as Hussey puts it, was "deeply religious, but of a strange and unbalanced mind", and his extraordinary poem, "chaotic in form but containing many flashes of genius", was written while he was in an asylum. Its main theme is the "worship of God, by all created beings and things, each in its own way". References to many Old Testament characters are followed by vivid portraits by the boy treble and counter-tenor soloists of Smart's cat Jeoffry, who "worships in his way", and of the mouse, who displays "great personal valour", the tenor tells how "the flowers are great blessings", and the bass reflects on how God can even be found in the simple letters of the alphabet: "For H is a spirit and therefore he is God / For K is king..... / L is love / M is musick...". There follows a paean for the individual qualities of musical instruments, before the music fades away with the gentle "Hallelujah" heard earlier in this moving work.

Rejoice in God O ye Tongues, give the glory to the Lord, and the Lamb,
Nations, and languages, and every Creature, in which is the breath of Life,
Let man and beast appear before him, and magnify his name together.

Let Nimrod, the mighty hunter, bind a Leopard to the altar, and consecrate his spear to the Lord.
Let Ishmael dedicate a Tyger, and give praise for the liberty in which the Lord has let him at large.
Let Ishmael appear with an Ass, and bless the Lord his people and his creatures for a reward eternal.
Let Daniel come forth with a Lion, and praise God with all his might through faith in Christ Jesus.
Let Ishmael minister with a Chamois, and bless the name of Him, that doeth both the naked.
Let Jaktum with the Snyr bless God in the dance.
Let David bless with the Bear - The beginning of victory to the Lord - to the Lord the perfection of
excellence.

Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the
heavenly harp in sweetnesses magnificent and mighty.

For I will consider my Cat Jeoffry,
For he is the servant of the Living God, duly and daily serving him.

For at the first glance of the glory of God in the East he worships in his way
For this is done by wreathing his body seven times round with elegant quickness
For he knows that God is his Saviour.

For God has blessed him in the variety of his movements.
For there is nothing sweeter than his peace when at rest.
For I am possessed of a cat, surpassing in beauty, from whom I take occasion to bless Almighty God

For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour.
For - this is a true case - Cat takes female mouse - male mouse will not depart, but stands threatening
and daring.
.....If you will let her go, I will engage you, as prodigious a creature as you are.
For the Mouse is a creature of great personal valour.
For the Mouse is of an hospitable disposition.

For the flowers are great blessings
For the flowers have their angels even the words of God's Creation.
For the flower glorifies God and the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For flowers are peculiarly the poetry of Christ!

For I am under the same accusation with my Saviour -
For they said, he is besides himself.
For the officers of the peace are at variance with me, and the watchman smiles me with his staff
For Silly fellow! Silly fellow! is against me and belongeth neither to me nor to my family.
For I am in twelve HARDSHIPS, but he that was born of a virgin shall deliver me out of all.
For H is a spirit and therefore he is God
For K is king and therefore he is God
For L is love and therefore he is God.
For M is musick and therefore he is God.

For the instruments are by their rhimes
For the Shawm rhimes are lawn fawn moon boon and the like
For the harp rhimes are sing ring string and the like.
For the cymbal rhimes are bell well toll soul and the like.
For the flute rhimes are tooth youth suit mute and the like.
For the Bassoon rhimes are pass class and the like.
For the dulcimer rhimes are grace place beat heat and the like.
For the Clarinet rhimes are clean seen and the like.
For the trumpet rhimes are sound bound soar more and the like.
For the TRUMPET of God is a blessed intelligence and so are all the instruments in HEAVEN.
For GOD the father Almighty plays upon the HARP of stupendous magnitude and melody.
For at that time malignity ceases and the devils themselves are at peace.
For this time is perceptible to man by a remarkable stillness and serenity of soul

Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable, and from the echo of the
heavenly harp in sweetness magnificent and mighty.

from Christopher Smart. *Jubilate Agno*

INTERVAL

Frank Bridge

Adagio

Organ **Stephen Harris**

Gabriel Faure 1845-1924

Requiem (1888-1893)

Soprano **Phillipa Stork**
Bartone **Keri Dexter**
Violin **James Underwood**

Once the musical gifts of Faure were discovered, he was sent, at the age of nine, to the Ecole Niedermeyer in Paris - Niedermeyer himself, in fact, had been so impressed by the child that he waived all fees. (It is highly probable that, had the young Faure been trained at the Paris Conservatoire - where, later, he taught and, still later, became Director - his musical style would have been differently conditioned.) The Ecole Niedermeyer was primarily geared to the training of church musicians, so that the young Faure was brought up on the musical modes; moreover, the harmony textbook used at the school was far less conventional than that of the Conservatoire, so that the archaic flavour of some of Faure's best-loved works - including the *Requiem* - owes much to his early musical training.

Faure began work on his *Requiem* in 1887, almost certainly in memory of his father and mother, who died in 1885 and 1887, respectively. The first version was first performed at the Madeleine church in Paris in 1888 - without the *Offertoire* and *Libera me* (the latter, originally for baritone and organ, in fact dates from 1877). These movements were inserted into a second version first heard in 1893, while the third version, with full orchestra (the one with which we are most familiar today) received its first performance in 1900 at the Trocadero Palace during the Paris World Exhibition. The work was performed at the composer's own funeral service in 1924, but reached London only in 1936.

Unlike the Requiems of Berlioz and Verdi, Faure's does not underline the terrors of the Day of Judgement by a violent setting of the Sequence for the Dead (the *Dies irae*). Instead he concentrates on the idea of eternal rest: the "*Requiem aeternam*" which begins and ends the work. According to his pupil Nadia Boulanger, who conducted the first English performances: "No external effect detracts from its sober and somewhat severe expression of grief; no disquiet or agitation disturbs its profound meditation, no doubt tarnishes its unassailable faith, its quiet confidence, its tender and peaceful expectation."

Murray Hipkin *Conductor*

Murray Hipkin studied at the University of York, the Guildhall School of Music and the National Opera Studio. In 1983 he joined English National Opera as coach and répétiteur, working on many productions including *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*, the award-winning *Billy Budd* and the UK premiere of *Akhmatov*. He has worked with Opera Factory, London Sinfonietta, the London Symphony Orchestra, Opera de Lyon and La Monnaie (Brussels). Recordings include solo piano in *Street Scene* with Scottish Opera, and synthesizer in *The Ice Break* for Virgin Classics. He was Musical Director of Opera Brava until October 1994, and he rejoined English National Opera in April 1995, playing the on-stage piano in Kurt Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. He is currently working on *Tosca*, *Orfeo* and Henzel's *The Prince of Homburg*.

Stephen Harris *Organ*

Stephen Harris was born in Gloucester and studied at the Purcell School of Music, Royal College of Music and the National Opera Studio. He joined the music staff of Scottish Opera in 1989, and in 1991 was appointed Chorus Master. He was also Assistant Organist at Paisley Abbey, playing for many BBC broadcasts as well as making a CD with the choir.

Recordings with Scottish Opera include *Regina* (Blizstein). Stephen joined English National Opera in 1993 as Assistant Chorus Master and became Chorus Master in 1994. He is also Music Director of Camberrwell Pocket Opera.

Murray Hipkin and Stephen Harris appear by permission of English National Opera.

James Underwood *Violinist*

James Underwood is in his second year at the Royal College of Music, where he is following a Bachelor of Music course, and studying with Dr. Felix Andreyevsky. A former pupil of John Hampden School, James had appeared as a soloist with various amateur and professional orchestras in concertos by Mozart, Bach and Bruch. He has performed *Winter* from the *Four Seasons* at Hampton Court Palace, and has appeared in Norway and Holland.

Keri Dexter *Baritone*

Keri Dexter read Music at Clare College, Cambridge where he was an organ scholar. He appeared with the chapel choir on broadcasts and recordings as both singer and organist and toured extensively in Europe and the USA. He is currently studying for a Master's Degree in Music at Reading University.

Matthew Orton *Counter-Tenor*

Matthew Orton began singing at the age of seven in Chelmsford Cathedral Choir, where he became Head Chorister in 1989. He is currently in his first year at Clare College, Cambridge, where he is studying Engineering. He is also a Choral Exhibitor with the choir, with whom he has recently toured Italy and Germany, and taken part in recordings for EMI and Dutch Television.

Philippa Stark *Soprano*

Philippa Stark is a pupil at Newnands School, Maidenhead, and has for three years been a member of the Berkshire Youth Choir. She has been offered a place at Nottingham University, where she hopes to study Psychology.

Timothy Salisbury *Treble*

Timothy Salisbury is a Year 7 pupil at Reading Grammar School, and has been a member of the Berkshire Boys Choir for the past two years.

Cantorium Choir

Cantorium Choir was founded in 1981, and since then has made well over 70 appearances in the Thames Valley area and further afield. From a modest 14 singers it has grown to the present maximum size of approximately 30. In general, soloists for each concert are selected from the ranks of the choir itself.

In the past 15 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 specially written for it. The choir usually makes three or four appearances through the year in the concert hall and also in cathedrals, singing services. In addition to concert commitments the choir has appeared on film and television and has been involved in various recordings.

In 1994 the choir welcomed Murray Hipkin as its new principal conductor.

Acknowledgements

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Cookham

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Future Concert Dates

Saturday 6th July 1996

St. John the Baptist Church, Cookham Dean

A concert of part songs and light "summer" music.

Saturday 19th October 1996

Holy Trinity Church, Cookham : In aid of Amnesty International

Programme to include : Gounod - *St. Cecilia Mass*

Rutter - *Gloria*
Bernstein - *Chichester Psalms*

Sunday 15th December 1996

Carols at Cookham Dean

Afternoon and evening performances. Organist : **Wayne Marshall**

Choir Vacancies

Cantorium Choir has occasional vacancies for singers in all parts. If you are interested please contact Valerie Snapes (01753 866479) or Murray Hipkin (01628 34399), to arrange an audition.

Mailing List

Members of the choir's mailing list are sent, free of charge, advance details of all Cantorium Choir's concerts, together with a priority booking form. If you would like to be added to the list, please telephone Valerie Snapes on (01753 866479).