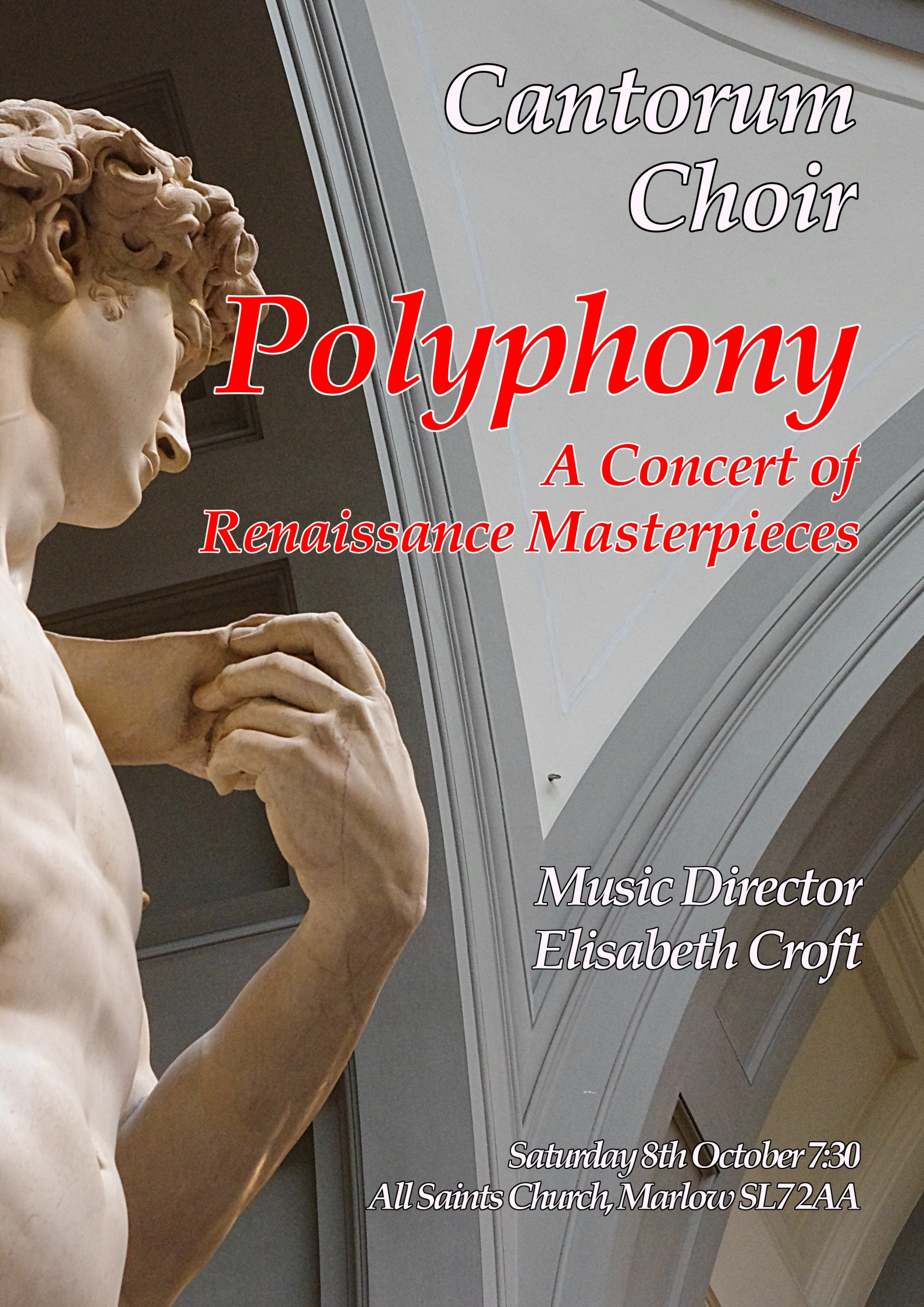
Cantorum
Choir
Polyphony
A Concert of
Renaissance Masterpieces
Music Director
Elisabeth Croft
Saturday 8th October 7:30
All Saints Church, Marlow SL7 2AA

CANTORUM CHOIR

Patron

Ralph Allwood MBE

Sponsor

Aspen Worldwide

Cantorum Choir is a dedicated and talented choir of approximately thirty voices, based in Cookham, Berkshire. Under the directorship of Elisabeth Croft, the ensemble continues to earn itself a reputation as one of the leading chamber choirs in the area. Cantorum boasts a wide-ranging repertoire and performs professional-quality concerts throughout the year. Two years ago, in the **Choir of the Year 2014** competition, Cantorum was placed 5th nationally in the Adult Choir category. This Spring, we entered the regional auditions in St Albans for **Choir of the Year 2016**. We are very proud to share the judge's response: 'That was absolutely sensational!'

Soprano
Amanda Copsey, Louise Evans
Kirsty Janusz, Jenny Knight
Julia Millard, Hilary Monaghan
Louise Smyth, Joy Strzelecki
Deborah Templing, Philippa Wallace

Alto
Celia Armstrong, Jill Burton
Sarah Evans, Angela Plant
Elspeth Scott, Chiu Sung
Lorna Sykes, Gill Tucker

Tenor
Anthony Dowlatshahi, Philip Martineau
Malcolm Stork, John Timewell

Bass
Derek Beaven, John Buck
Arthur Creswell, Gordon Donkin
David Hazeldine, Ed Millard
Paul Seddon

Elisabeth Croft (née Toye)—Music Director

Elisabeth was born and raised in Cardiff. She graduated with a music degree from the University of Birmingham and then went on to gain an entrance award to study singing at the Royal Academy of Music, from where she graduated with distinction in 2004. After a number of years working as a professional singer, she became a full time vocal coach and choral trainer. For ten years, she worked for Berkshire Maestros; she founded several new choirs and was the director of Berkshire Young Voices from 2013 to 2016. She is currently Principal Director of Cantorum Choir and Thames Valley Chorus and is Head of Singing at Bradfield College. In 2017 she will direct the National Youth Training Choir of Wales.

Sam Brown—Lutenist

Praised for his holistic musical approach, **Sam Brown** graduated from the Royal College of Music in 2015, having trained under Jakob Lindberg. This year he has studied with Lorenzo Micheli in Lugano. Sam has performed internationally as a guitarist and lutenist, and his performances have become much loved for their imagination and brilliance. He plays a Michael Lowe lute formerly owned by Antony Rooley.

Cantorum Choir respectfully dedicates this concert to the memory
of
Thomas Adam Johnstone
who passed away on 30th August 2016, aged 27

Polyphony
A Concert of Renaissance Masterpieces

Jubilate Deo — Giovanni Gabrieli (1557—1612)

Jubilate Deo omnis terra, quia sic benedicetur homo qui timet Dominum.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra. Deus Israel conjungat vos et ipse sit vobiscum.
Mittat vobis auxilium de sancto, et de Sion tueatur vos.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra. Benedicat vobis Dominus ex Sion, qui fecit caelum et terram.
Jubilate Deo omnis terra. Servite Domino in laetitia.

Sing joyfully to God every land, for so shall the man who fears the Lord be blessed.
Rejoice in God every land. May the God of Israel unite you and himself be with you.
May he send you help from the holy place, and out of Sion may he defend you.
Rejoice in God every land. May the Lord who made heaven & earth bless you from Sion.
Raise a joyful sound to God every land. Serve the Lord in happiness.
Psalms 100, 128, 20, 134 & Tobit 7

Ave Maria — Josquin des Prez (*c*. 1440—1521)

Ave Maria, gratia plena,	*Hail Mary, full of grace,*
Dominus tecum, Virgo serena.	*The Lord is with you, serene Virgin.*
Ave cujus conceptio,	*Hail to you, whose conception*
Solemni plena gaudio,	*Was full of solemn rejoicing*
Caelestia terrestria,	*And fills heaven and earth*
Nova replet laetitia.	*With new happiness.*
Ave cujus nativitas	*Hail to you, whose birth*
Nostra fuit solemnitas	*Has been our solemn celebration*
Ut lucifer lux oriens	*As the morning star's rising light*
Verum solem praeveniens.	*Comes before the true sun.*
Ave pia humilitas	*Hail worshipful humility*
Sine viro fecunditas	*Fertility without the sin of man*
Cujus annunciatio	*Whose annunciation*
Nostra fuit salvatio.	*Has been our salvation.*
Ave vera virginitas	*Hail true virginity,*
Immaculata castitas	*Immaculate chastity,*
Cujus purificatio	*Whose purification*
Nostra fuit purgatio.	*Has been our cleansing.*
Ave praeclara omnibus	*Hail to you who are most glorious among all*
Angelicis virtutibus	*The angelic virtues*
Cujus fuit assumptio	*Whose assumption has been*
Nostra glorificatio.	*Our glorification.*
O Mater Dei	*O Mother of God,*
Memento mei. Amen	*Remember me. Amen*

Source unknown

Instrumental recital — Sam Brown *Lute*

Ricercare	Vincenzo Capirola (1474 — *after* 1548)
Her Leaves be Greene	John Danyel (1564 — *c.*1626)
Fantasia	John Dowland (1563 — 1626)

English Madrigals

Sing we and chant it	Thomas Morley (1558—1603)
The Silver Swan	Orlando Gibbons (1583—1625)
All creatures now	John Bennet (*c*. 1575—*after* 1614)
Ah, dear heart	Orlando Gibbons
Fair Phyllis I saw	John Farmer (*c*. 1565—*c*. 1605)
Fyer, Fyer!	Thomas Morley

Interval

There is a toilet in the vestibule at the entrance to the church.

The management of The George & Dragon (turn right as you go out of the church) has also very kindly agreed that our audience may use their facilities during the interval.

Exsultate Deo — Giovanni Palestrina (1525—1594)

Exsultate Deo, adjutori nostro: jubilate Deo Jacob.
Sumite psalmum et date tympanum: psalterium jucundum cum cithara.
Buccinate in Neomenia tuba, insigni die solemnitatis vestrae.

Sing for joy to God our helper: shout joyfully to the God of Jacob.
Raise a song and bring forth the percussion, the glad harp in tune with the lute.
Sound the ram's horn in the new moon on the appointed day of your festival.
Psalm 81

Sicut Cervus — Giovanni Palestrina

Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.

As the stag desires the springs of the waters, so my soul desires thee, O God.
Psalm 42

Programme continued overleaf...

Mass for Five Voices — William Byrd (*c.*1543—1623)

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison.
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Gloria

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, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus altissimus Jesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu, in gloria Dei Patris, Amen.

Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you. We thank you on account of your great glory, Lord God, King of the heavens, God the Father almighty. Lord Jesus Christ your only son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father: who bears the sins of the world, pity us, accept our prayer. You who sit at the right hand of God the Father, pity us, since only you are holy, only you are the Lord, only you are the most high Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father, Amen.

Credo

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. Lumen de lumine, 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, judicare 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 baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum. Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of everything visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Father and born from the Father before all ages, the light of light, from the true God, begotten not created, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things were made. Who for us and for our salvation descended from the heavens and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit out of the Virgin Mary: and was made man. He was crucified for us, having suffered under Pontius Pilate and was buried. And he rose again from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures. And he ascended into heaven: he sits at the right hand of the Father and shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead: and to his reign there shall be no end. And [I believe] in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who is adored and glorified at the same time with the Father and the Son and who was foretold by the Prophets. And [I believe] in one holy catholic and apostolic church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins and I await the resurrection of the dead and the life of the coming age. Amen.

Sanctus

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the Highest.

Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.
Lamb of God, who bears the sins of the world, have pity on us. Give us peace.

All choral singing is, in a sense, polyphony—the word is simply Greek for 'many voices'. What do we mean, then, when we refer to a particular style of music from the Renaissance, or 'Early Modern' period, as Polyphony with a capital 'P'?

The convention becomes clear if we first imagine a community of monks chanting the Latin Bible in unison. If some still had unbroken voices, the opportunity arose for them to sing the text on different notes at the same time, so as to blend along with the original line. There, at a stroke, we had 'Polyphony'. The lower singers, who were obliged to hold the chant, were then called 'Tenors' (from the Latin *tenere*, meaning 'to hold'), while the higher voices sang a 'Contra-Tenor' against them. Then younger boys could be added as 'Triples' or 'Trebles' (the third voice); and the men could be subdivided again to provide 'Basses'.

A tradition of choral singing like this was established in churches all over Europe, and we think of the great age of Polyphony as lasting from about 1200 — 1600 AD. Naturally, the number of voices singing different lines at one and the same time was always open to experiment. The Gabrieli piece we are performing tonight is for eight voices; while Byrd's teacher, Thomas Tallis, famously composed *Spem in Alium* (1570) for forty vocal lines. But, as another Englishman, the poet and musician Thomas Campion, wrote in his treatise on composition, 'The parts of Musicke are but foure, howsoever some skilfull Musitions have composed songs of twenty, thirty, and even forty parts: for be the parts never so many, they are but one of these foure in nature.' Campion goes on to suggest that the four basic voices represent the four elements, Earth (Bass), Water (Tenor), Air (Meane, Counter-Tenor, Altus or Alto) and Fire (Treble, Superius or Soprano).

We can also see that the consonance of such voices might approach, in a Renaissance world view, the 'music of the spheres': the mathematically perfect harmony of the transparent globes holding planets and stars around the earth and moved in orbit by the angels. Polyphony, rising in soaring cathedral arches, is designed to sound quite literally like heaven heard from earth.

Perhaps the defining technical feature of the age is the use of 'melisma' (singing a syllable of the text across more than one note), a device shown exquisitely in Josquin's *Ave Maria*, where many of the significant words are stretched out over long melodic runs. By this means, Josquin robs a springy little Latin rhyme of its natural beat and turns it into an almost timeless meditation on the Blessed Virgin. In the hands of such a master, the emphasis is always on the horizontal blending of the individual vocal lines, and this is exactly how Polyphony functions. Instead of the 'vertical' agreement of rhythmic pulse or chord structure with which we have been generally more familiar since the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Renaissance style tends to arrive at its harmonic 'closes' by means of 'suspension'—resolving the chord only through delay and often filling in the time lapse with melisma. This can create some truly spellbinding effects.

Two late-Renaissance Italian composers figure gloriously in our programme. Palestrina worked for the Pope in Rome; while Gabrieli was principal organist at St Mark's in Venice. Both were internationally acknowledged. Palestrina's motets are models of restrained perfection: in *Sicut Cervus*, for example, the hunted stag's longing for water is smoothed out through beautiful extended melismata on the words *aquarum*, *desiderat* and *Deus*. Gabrieli's *Jubilate Deo a 8* is more experimental: two four-voice choirs sing 'against' each other and yet are 'married' together—as in the specially chosen word *conjungat*. The effect creates joyful rhythmic patterns rather like waves breaking, and the work may actually have been written for Venice's celebrated yearly marriage to the sea.

Tonight's concert also features six madrigals, typically secular rather than religious. Madrigals are, of course, polyphonic, but the fashion for them in England occurred late in the Tudor period, and the decline in the use of melisma illustrates a shift in both courtly and popular taste. We do still find echoes of a 'sacred' sound in, say, Gibbons' *The Silver Swan*, but very often these madrigals have a more down-to-earth or light-hearted character. Indeed, the Polyphonic age was drawing to its close throughout Europe, and, with the advent of the seventeenth century, we find Monteverdi in Italy suddenly doing astonishing things with church music: introducing dances, turning melisma into ornament and placing choral singers alongside 'concerted' instrumentalists of all kinds. As a result, music was never quite 'Polyphony' again (although Schoenberg in the early twentieth century applied its principles somewhat ruthlessly to his 'Twelve-Tone' method).

We close our celebration with William Byrd's great *Mass for Five Voices,* composed in the early 1590s for use in the private chapels of recusant Catholic families. Roman Catholicism, for a thousand years the *only* form of English Christianity, was effectively outlawed following the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558. Even *saying* the Catholic mass remained illegal for the next two and a half centuries. And so while Morley and his more compliant fellows were celebrating Elizabeth (or possibly Anne of Denmark) in the madrigal collection *The Triumphs of Oriana* (1601), Byrd was actually risking his life to preserve what had been destroyed through the Dissolution of the Monasteries. His Catholic Mass is therefore like a stained glass window on to a lost world. It is exemplary Polyphony: a contemplation of bliss to be heard almost in secret...

Future Cantorum Concerts:

Date: Saturday 10th December 2016
Event: Christmas Concert
Venue: Holy Trinity Church, Cookham SL6 9SP

Date: Saturday 11th February 2017
Event: Valentines Dinner Concert
Venue: The Odney Club, Cookham SL6 9SR

Date: Saturday 24th June 2017
Event: Summer Concert
Venue: Holy Trinity Church, Cookham SL6 9SP

Grateful thanks are due to:

- **Adrienne Black and Robert Jones (Pianists and Rehearsal Deputies)**
- **The Stationery Depot, Cookham Rise Parade**
- **All others who have helped in the production of this concert**

And thanks to you, our audience, for your continued support!

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