A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a woman's face, likely the Virgin Mary, wearing a white headscarf. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting her eyes and the texture of the fabric against a dark, textured background.

Colchester Chamber Choir
Director Roderick Earle

STABAT MATER

COLCHESTER CHAMBER CHOIR

Since our first concert in January 2010 we have performed over forty concerts to an ever-growing audience and now have over 200 pieces of music in our repertoire. This season we number thirty auditioned singers. We present varied programmes exploring the more challenging and less well-known repertoire, particularly from the pre-baroque period and 19th and 20th centuries. We have sung works by composers ranging from Gesualdo to Messiaen and in languages including Danish, Slovak and Czech. In November 2014 we performed the UK première of Emile Naoumoff's Concert Sacré in St Edmundsbury Cathedral and in September 2015 were invited to present two concerts at the Roman River Festival.

Roderick Earle was a boy chorister at Winchester Cathedral and following a choral scholarship at St. John's College, Cambridge and the Royal College of Music entered the singing profession as a soloist. He was a principal baritone with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden for 21 years, singing more than 60 roles with many of the greatest singers, conductors and directors of the era. He has sung in opera and concerts all over the world, in the USA, Argentina, Israel, Australia, New Zealand and the Far East as well as throughout Europe and the UK. He has made several recordings and videos from early to contemporary music. Roderick is also a singing professor at The Royal College of Music, London and teaches the choral scholars at Trinity College, Cambridge.

Peter Humphrey is the choir's rehearsal pianist.

Martyn Noble is sub-organist at the Chapel Royal of St. James Palace. He has given recitals all over the country, including York Minster, Liverpool Metropolitan and Canterbury Cathedrals and has played for several BBC recordings. He has also made two CDs with Liverpool Cathedral Choir for Priory Records.

Leo Poplewell: 'cello.

Joe Cowie: double bass.

Sopranos: Diana Childs, Liz Curry, Anita Filer, Susanna Fish, Lesley Gunfield, Jennifer Lloyd, Linda Pearsall, Leonie Russell, Hilary Sellers

Altos: Lehla Abbott, Patsy Cosgrove, Tessa Freebairn, Julia King, Meg Prolingheur, Lisa Roberts, Emma Scott-Smith, Mary Stamp, Tracey Walker, Eleanor Walters

Tenors: Martin Arnaud, Zachary Kleanthous, Andrew Marsden, Amrit Nasta, Daniel Ruiz Viejobueno

Basses: Dominic Blanchard, Simon Bowen, Samuel Carbonero, Jonathan Francis, Sean Moriarty, Stephen Smith

PROGRAMME

Crucifixus a 6	Antonio Lotti (1667 - 1740)
Tristis est anima mea Vinea mea electa Tenebrae factae sunt O vos omnes a 5	Carlo Gesualdo (1566 - 1613)
Canzona in G minor	Domenico Zipoli (1688 - 1726)
Stabat Mater a 8	Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525 - 1594)

INTERVAL

Crucifixus a 10	Antonio Lotti
Sonata K31	Domenico Scarlatti (1685 - 1757)
Miserere mei a 8	Leonardo Leo (1694 - 1744)

MUSIC FOR PASSIONTIDE

In tonight's concert we present some of the finest settings of passion music to come from Italy in the 17th century. Central to the programme is Palestrina's great double choir *Stabat Mater*, considered by many to be one of his finest works. The setting of Jacopone da Todi's rhyming verse poem eschews the more complex polyphony of the earlier period for a simpler syllabic setting as commended by the reforms of the Council of Trent. Our concert ends with Leo's equally significant *Miserere mei*, a work that starts where Palestrina leaves off but introduces elements of the new Baroque style. Lauded by both Verdi and Wagner it was popular in Italy throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, eclipsing Allegri's famous setting. Gesualdo's *Tenebrae Responsories* have moved from comparative obscurity to centre stage in the last 60 years with Stravinsky doing much to promote the composer's music. The *Tenebrae Responsories* from the end of his life represent the pinnacle of his musical achievement. Lotti's three short settings of the *Crucifixus* are probably his most significant and enduring compositions.

Antonio Lotti (1667-1740) was director of music at St. Mark's Venice. His three settings of the *Crucifixus* (in 6, 8 and 10 parts) are part of a tradition from the 18th century of setting just this central part of the Credo. Rather like the dramatic paintings of the crucifixion from the same period which broke with tradition, composers exploited the newly developed harmonic language to wonderful effect to illustrate the dramatic climax of the passion story – and none more so than Lotti. Agonising dissonances pile up and resolve in what seems to be an endless chain. Repeated notes perhaps describe the hammering of the nails.

Carlo Gesualdo (1566-1613) wrote a complete set of the *Tenebrae Responsories*, 27 motets in all. Perhaps these exquisite compositions were part of his penance for famously murdering his wife and her lover. In 2012 the choir sang the nine Holy Saturday reponsories. Tonight we will sing one from the Maundy Thursday set and two from the Good Friday set. The responsories were sung during the services of *Tenebrae* in Holy Week. Each responsory, with texts drawn from both the old and new testaments, was sung in 'response' to a short lesson, and candles were extinguished one by one leaving a single candle to represent Christ in his isolation surrounded by darkness and shadows (*tenebrae*). *Tristis est anima mea* tells of Christ's plea to the disciples to stay awake and to be with him in the Garden of Gethsemane. Christ's plea and the prophesied flight of the disciples are all graphically portrayed. *Vinea mea electa* is in the manner of one of the reproaches, asking why Barabbas is chosen rather than one who has protected and defended his beloved ones. *Tenebrae factus sunt* describes the moment of Christ's death when the sun became darkened and he cries out with a loud voice. The setting of *O vos omnes* in 5 parts is probably Gesualdo's best known sacred motet. Although a responsory setting it does not come from his great cycle, all of which are in 6 parts.

Domenico Zipoli (1688 - 1726) was born in Prato, Italy and studied in Bologna, Florence, Bologna, Naples (under Alessandro Scarlatti) and Rome before becoming organist of the Gesù, the Jesuit mother church in that city. In 1716 he went to Seville and joined the Jesuit order and then requested to join the missions in Paraguay. In 1717 he arrived in Buenos Aires and went on to Córdoba to complete his priestly training. He died of an unknown disease there in 1726, never reaching Paraguay. Always well known for his keyboard music, his church music has been widely performed in South America and is now being collected and published.

Giovanni Luigi da Palestrina (c. 1525 - 1594) is best known for his masses and motets written with a consummate genius for polyphony. Towards the end of his life he started to employ the polychoral style of his Venetian contemporaries and also to adopt a simpler more homophonic style. Ironically, this was urged by the reforms of the Council of Trent which actually removed the *Stabat Mater* from the passiontide liturgy except in the Vatican where it was sung on Palm Sunday. It only returned to the universal church in the 18th century, relegated appropriately to the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Palestrina's setting dates from about 1590 and was probably written for the Julian Chapel at the Vatican where Palestrina was music director. Two choirs address the text in dialogue and the music unfolds with great simplicity.

Domenico Scarlatti (1694 - 1757), son of Alessandro Scarlatti, was sent by his father to study in Venice before taking up the position of Maestro di Cappella at St. Peter's Rome. In 1719 he went to Lisbon where he taught Princess Maria Barbera and when she became Queen of Spain he followed her to Madrid. He is best known for his keyboard sonatas. Many of these were clearly written to be performed on the organ or harpsichord. The *Sonata K31* is a virtuosic piece in toccata style.

Leonardo Leo (1694 - 1744) was born in San Vito in the Kingdom of Naples and studied in Naples where he started to write both comic and serious operas. These were highly successful as was his church music. Described by Wagner as 'a mighty cathedral' when he heard it in Naples in 1880, Leo's *Miserere* was popular in Italy from its composition until the late 19th century. It was praised for its adherence to the styles of the late Renaissance as represented by Palestrina. In actual fact this is just the starting point. The early verses are set in this manner with an alternatim with plainsong and the plainsong melody is used as a cantus firmus, but as the work progresses the composition becomes freer abandoning the plainsong and introducing many baroque elements, such as a lively triple time section with solo lines and even a couple of presto sections. There is also much use of baroque concertato effects with groups of singers and choirs set in dramatic and dynamic contrast. Then, to round off the work, Leo returns to the early style for the mighty conclusion.

Crucifixus a 8 and a 10 Antonio Lotti

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,

sub Pontio Pilato:

passus et sepultus est.

For our sake he was crucified

under Pontius Pilate:

He suffered death and was buried.

from the Nicene Creed

from Tenebrae Reponsories for Maundy Thursday Carlo Gesualdo

2 Tristis est anima mea

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem:

sustinete hic et vigilate mecum.

Nunc videbitis turbam

quæ circumdabit me.

Vos fugam capietis,

et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.

Ecce appropinquat hora, et Filius hominis

tradetur in manus peccatorum.

Sorrowful is my soul even unto death.

Stay here, and watch with me.

Now you shall see the mob

that will surround me.

You shall take flight,

and I shall go to be sacrificed for you.

The time draws near, and the Son of Man

shall be delivered into the hands of sinners.



from *Tenebrae Reponsories for Good Friday*

3 *Vinea mea electa*

Vinea mea electa, ego te plantavi:
quomodo conversa es in amaritudinem,
ut me crucifigeres et Barabbam dimitteres.

Sepivi te,
et lapides elegi ex te,
et ædificavi turrim.

O vineyard, my chosen one. I planted you.
How is your sweetness turned into bitterness,
to crucify me and take Barabbas in my place?

I protected you;
I took the hard stones away from your path,
and built a tower in your defence.

5 *Tenebrae factae sunt*

Tenebrae factae sunt,
dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei:
et circa horam nonam
exclamavit Jesus voce magna:
Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti?
Et inclinato capite, emisit spiritum.

Exclamans Jesus voce magna ait:
Pater, in manus tuas
commendo spiritum meum.
Et inclinato capite, emisit spiritum.

Darkness fell
when the Jews crucified Jesus:
and about the ninth hour
Jesus cried with a loud voice:
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit

Jesus cried with a loud voice and said,
Father, into your hands
I commend my spirit.
And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

O vos omnes a 5

O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam,
attendite et videte
Si est dolor similis, sicut dolor meus.
Attendite et videte.

O all you who pass by on the road,
stay and see
if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.
Stay and behold.

Stabat Mater Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Stabat mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrimosa
Cum pendebat Filius.

Cujus animam gementem
Contristatam et dolentem
Pertransivit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti.

Quae morebat et dolebat
et tremebat cum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

Quis est homo qui non fleret
Christi Matrem si videret
In tanto supplicio?

Quis posset non contristari
Piam Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?

Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum.

Vidit suum dulcem natum
Morientem desolatum,
Dum emisit spiritum.

Eia Mater fons amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac ut tecum lugeam.

Fac ut ardeat cor meum,
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi complaceam.

Sancta Mater istud agas
Crucifixi fige plagas
Corde meo valide.

Tui nati vulnerati
Jam dignati pro me pati
Poenas mecum divide.

The mother stood sorrowing
by the cross, weeping
while her Son hung there;

Whose soul, lamenting,
sorrowing and grieving,
has been pierced by the sword.

O how sad and afflicted
was that blessed
Mother of her only-begotten Son.

Who wept and grieved
and trembled to behold
the torment of her glorious child.

What man would not weep
if he saw the Mother of Christ
in such torment?

Who could not be sorrowful
to behold the pious mother
grieving with her Son?

For the sins of His people
she saw Jesus in torment
and subjected to the whip.

She saw her sweet Son
dying, forsaken,
as He gave up the spirit.

Ah Mother, fount of love,
let me feel the force of grief,
that I may grieve with you.

Make my heart burn
with the love of Christ, the God,
that I may be pleasing to Him.

Holy Mother, bring this to pass,
transfix the wounds of Him who is crucified
firmly onto my heart.

Of your wounded Son,
who deigns to suffer for my sake,
let me share the pains.

Fac me tecum pie flere
Crucifixo condolere
Donec ego vixero.
Juxta crucem tecum stare
Et me tibi sociare
In planctu desidero.
Virgo, virginum praeclara
Mihi jam non sis amara
Fac me tecum plangere.
Fac ut portem Christi mortem
Passionis fac consortem
Et plagas recolare.
Fac me plagis vulnerari
Cruce fac inebriari
et cruore Filii.
Inflammatum et accensum
Per te Virgo sim defensum
In die judicii.
Fac me cruce custodiri
Morte Christi praemuniri
Conferi gratia
Quando corpus morietur
Fac ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria.

Make me truly weep with you,
grieving with Him who is crucified
so that I may live.

To stand by the cross with you,
to be freely joined with you
in lamentation, I desire.

Virgin of virgins, resplendent,
do not now be harsh towards me,
let me weep with you.

Let me carry Christ's death,
the destiny of his passion,
and meditate upon his wounds.

Let me suffer the wounds
of that cross, steeped
in love of your Son.

Fired and excited
by you, O Virgin, let me be defended
on the day of judgement.

Let me be shielded by the cross,
protected by Christ's death,
cherished by grace.

When my body dies,
let my soul be given
the glory of paradise.

Jacopone da Todi

Miserere mei Leonardo Leo

Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.
Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.

Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci: ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis,
et vincas cum judicaris.

Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti incerta: et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.

Asperges me hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.

Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exultabunt ossa humiliata.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele.

Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.

Ne projicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.

Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu principali confirma me.

Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur.

Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae: et exultabunt lingua mea justitiam
tuam.

Domine, labia mea aperies: et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem utique: holocaustis non delectaberis.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus: cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicias.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion: ut aedificentur muri Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis sacrificium justitiae, oblationes, et holocausta:
tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after your great goodness:
According to the multitude of your mercies do away my offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is always before me.

Against you only have I sinned, and done this evil in your sight:
that you may be justified in your saying, and clear when you are judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin has my mother conceived me.

But lo, you require truth within: and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

You will purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:
you will wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

You will make me hear of joy and gladness:
so that the bones which you have broken may rejoice.

Turn your face from my sins: and put away all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence: and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of your help again: and establish me with your free Spirit.

Then shall I teach your ways to the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto you.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, you who are the God of my health:
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.

You will open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth will show your praise.

For you desire no sacrifice, or I would I give it to you: but you delight not in burnt offerings.

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shall you be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness,
with burnt offerings and oblations: then shall they offer young calves upon your altar.

Psalm 51 (50)



COLCHESTER CHAMBER CHOIR

Director Roderick Earle

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Colchester Chamber Choir Choral Apprenticeships

We support the development of young singers for whom we are establishing a 'Choral Apprenticeship' scheme. About a quarter of our current members are full-time students, under the age of 25. We support them financially by either waiving or reducing the level of termly subscriptions and also offering travel bursaries, where appropriate.

In just four years we have already supported more than 15 young singers and as they move on to further and higher education, we are always keen to enrol more. Our apprentices have won music festivals, choral scholarships and places at prestigious universities, and proudly attest that the experience and confidence they have developed singing with the choir has contributed to their success.

Our young singers see this unique experience as very special as their testimonies illustrate.

Read more from our young singers at www.colchesterchamberchoir.org

Would you like to help or support us further? Any sponsorship can make a difference, helping us to sustain and develop our work.

To find out more contact Amrit Nasta on 01206 393293

or email info@colchesterchamberchoir.org

Leonie Russell

"Even though I have only been a part of the choir for a short while I can already feel myself maturing as a singer and I enjoy very much being able to sing in a group with such talented people. Everyone is very welcoming and although the rehearsals are hard work, time passes very quickly and you have a lot of fun. learning challenging music."



Zachary Kleanthous

"Singing with Colchester Chamber Choir has helped me to mature as both a singer and as an overall musician. The attention to detail in rehearsals means that we aren't just reading notes on a page – we're making music! Everyone has been so welcoming and it truly is a delight to be a part of something as great as this!"

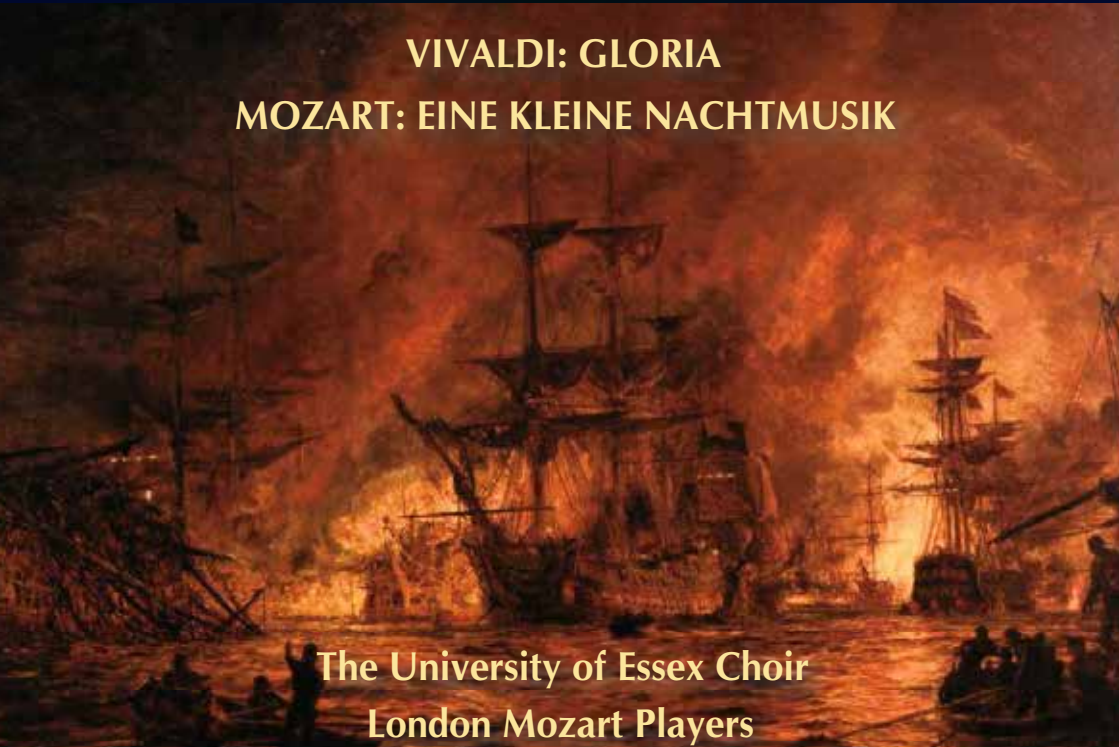


Haydn

NELSON MASS

VIVALDI: GLORIA

MOZART: EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK



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