

SPEAKING  
IN MANY  
TONGUES

MUSIC OF  
ROBERT JONES • THOMAS  
TALLIS & ELLIOTT GYGER



BLUE  
HERON  
RENAISSANCE CHOIR

# BLUE HERON

Scott Metcalfe, *director*

*sopranos*    *tenors*  
Noël Bisson    Allen Combs  
Lydia Knutson    Aaron Sheehan  
Cheryl Ryder    Mark Sprinkle  
Carol Schlaikjer

*basses*  
*altos*    Glenn Billingsley  
Terence McKinney    Paul Guttry  
Martin Near    Sumner Thompson  
Daniela Tošić    Charles Turner

**Concert at Monadnock Music Festival tomorrow, July 31**  
Blue Heron sings much of this program (Jones, Tallis, and Sarum chant), plus a respond by Taverner and a set of English works by Tallis, tomorrow evening at 8 at the Peterborough Town House in Peterborough, New Hampshire, presented by Monadnock Music. For information contact Monadnock Music at 603 924-7610 or 800 868-9613, or visit [www.monadnockmusic.org](http://www.monadnockmusic.org).

#### Next season's dates

Blue Heron's 2004-05 season includes concerts on November 28 and April 16-17, with programs of 15th-century English and 16th-century Spanish sacred music and secular song. To be sure you receive notice of these concerts, sign up for our mailing list today, visit our website ([www.blueheronchoir.org](http://www.blueheronchoir.org)), or send us a note at [info@blueheronchoir.org](mailto:info@blueheronchoir.org).

#### How to contact Blue Heron:

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# SPEAKING IN MANY TONGUES

#### PROGRAM

I.  
Thomas Tallis (1505-85)  
*Loquebantur variis linguis*

II.  
Sarum chant  
Introit: *Benedicta sit sancta trinitas*  
Kyrie: *Deus creator omnium*

Robert Jones (first half of 16th century)  
*Missa Spes nostra*  
*Gloria*  
*Credo*

#### INTERMISSION

III.  
Elliott Gyger (b. 1968)  
*Trisagion 1521*  
*Kyrie Gloria tibi Trinitas*

IV.  
Jones: *Missa Spes nostra*  
*Sanctus*  
*Agnus dei*

Sarum chant  
*Ite missa est*



Friday, July 30, 2004, at 8 p.m. · First Church in Cambridge, Congregational

# NOTES

This evening's concert opens with Thomas Tallis's vivid evocation of the events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-3). In Tallis's work, the tenor, the sixth voice to enter, sings a slow-moving plainchant melody (a cantus firmus) whose inexorable progress is barely discernible amidst the clamor of six other voices which clash against each other rhythmically and melodically, creating abundant false relations. Tallis's *Loquebantur variis linguis* makes an apt introduction to a program which sets the dense polyphony of composers writing five centuries ago next to that of one writing today, with a sixteenth-century Mass based on a plainchant cantus firmus (in this case the chant *Spes nostra*, the antiphon to the fifth psalm at Matins on Trinity Sunday) next to a twentieth-century Kyrie based on a plainchant from the same ancient Sarum tradition (the English rather than the Roman or Gregorian repertoire). The three tongues of Elliott Gyger's trilingual *Trisagion* will have to stand for the multitude of tongues spoken by the apostles at Pentecost.

With this performance of the *Missa Spes nostra* by Robert Jones, Blue Heron pursues its exploration of music from the Peterhouse partbooks, a set of manuscripts copied around 1540 that contain an extensive repertoire of sacred polyphony from the years just prior to the Reformation in England. The partbooks may have been prepared by a scribe at Magdalen College, Oxford, for use at Canterbury Cathedral, which

was refounded in 1541 as a secular cathedral following its dissolution in 1540 as a monastic institution. The repertoire of the partbooks has long posed a challenge to those writing the musical history of England in the years just prior to the Reformation, for large-scale Marian antiphons and long festal masses written in an ornately melismatic style were supposedly rapidly falling out of use in the later years of Henry VIII's reign; and yet this is precisely the sort of music the Peterhouse scribe copied in great quantity. In this respect Jones's long and florid Mass is entirely typical.

The Peterhouse partbooks contain thirty-nine *unica* (works surviving in one unique source), as well as about a dozen other works whose concordant sources are incomplete. The tenor partbook and several pages of the treble book of the Peterhouse set are missing, with the consequence that virtually none of its contents is known today, except for those pieces that survive in other sources. For its performances of the Peterhouse repertoire, Blue Heron relies on the scholarship of the English musicologist Nick Sandon, who has devoted three decades to this material. Professor Sandon's dissertation is the standard work on the topic, and he is currently in the process of polishing his brilliant and idiomatic reconstructions of the incomplete Peterhouse music and publishing them in Antico Edition. Since our first concert in October 1999 we have sung his reconstructions of music by Aston, Taverner, Ludford, and Jones.

As for Robert Jones himself, virtually nothing is known about his life except that he was a singer in the Royal Household Chapel from at least summer 1520 until about 1534. The *Missa Spes nostra* and a Magnificat (which Blue Heron performed in January 2003) survive only in the

Peterhouse partbooks; these works, and the bass part of a three-voice song, are all that remain to us of the work of a highly skilled and inspired composer. Like the Magnificat, the Mass is full of supple melody and lustrous harmony. Drawing on the musical grammar and vocabulary Jones shared with his contemporaries like Tallis and Taverner, it is at the same time the unique creation of a mature composer with an unmistakably distinct individual voice, singing out to us from across a divide of more than four and a half centuries.

—Scott Metcalfe

*Trisagion 1521* (2003)

*Kyrie 'Gloria tibi Trinitas'* (1998)

The Trisagion and the Kyrie are the only two fragments of Greek text to have continued in regular use in the Western Church. The Kyrie is very familiar as the first section of the Ordinary of the (otherwise entirely Latin) Mass. The Trisagion (literally "thrice holy") is one of the most common prayers in the Orthodox liturgy, but survives in the West only in one specific context: as the refrain for the Reproaches on Good Friday. With such concise, formal texts, designed for ritual use, the challenges faced by a composer are not so much about expressive interpretation as about musical symbolism and structural elegance.

Both these settings were made for particular concert occasions. *Trisagion 1521* was first performed by Harvard's Ensemble 1521 as part of a Lenten chant program. I chose to expand the bilingual presentation traditional in the Reproaches to three languages – Greek, Latin and English – as well as writing for three voices (tenor, bari-

tone, bass) in order to mirror the text's threefold design. The piece starts by presenting a different musical idea for each language in turn, in a consistent three-part texture. In the second section the three ideas are presented as duets, and in the third section as single lines; the order of presentation varies, and there is increasing overlap between one idea and the next. A fourth voice (alto) enters for the final section, which acts as a tranquil coda. The three languages move from angular juxtaposition at the start of the piece to harmonious coexistence at the close.

*Kyrie 'Gloria tibi Trinitas'* was written for a concert by the Sydney Philharmonia Motet Choir, featuring John Taverner's Mass of the same name. As a Sarum rite Mass Ordinary setting, the Taverner work lacks a Kyrie. My work does not attempt any imitation of Taverner's style, but does use the same unusual vocal distribution – SATTB, with a "gymel" (two-part division) for one section in the sopranos – and is entirely based on the same chant. The most unconventional aspect of my Kyrie is that the usual three sections are not presented successively, but cumulatively. The first Kyrie is a rich six-part harmonization built around the chant in the alto register, carried in turn by tenors, altos, and sopranos. The altos and tenors then sing a reduced version of the same music, over which the divided sopranos sing the Christe to an ornamented version of the chant transposed up a fifth. Both of these layers continue as the second Kyrie is sung by the lower voices to a series of phrases in close canon, based on rhythmically energized fragments of the chant melody. The considerable textural and dynamic variety reflects the wide range of moods that may be read into the simple prayer for mercy.

—Elliott Gyger

# TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

**Loque- bantur variis linguis** Loquebantur variis linguis apostoli, alleluia, magnalia dei. Alleluia.  
**variis linguis** Repleti sunt omnes spiritu sancto, et ceperunt loqui magnalia dei. Alleluia.  
Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto. Alleluia.

*The apostles were speaking in many tongues, alleluia, of the great works of God. Alleluia. All were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak of the great works of God. Alleluia. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Alleluia.*  
*(respond for first Vespers at Pentecost)*

**Introit** Benedicte sit sancta trinitas atque indivisa unitas: confitebimur ei quia fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam. Benedicamus patrem et filium: cum sancto spiritu. Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto: sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in secula seculorum. Amen.

*Blessed be the Holy Trinity and undivided unity: we will give thanks to him, for he has shown us his mercy. Let us bless the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Kyrie Deus creator omnium tu theos ymon nostri pie eleyson.**  
**Deus creator** Tibi laudes conjubilantes regum rex Christe oramus te eleyson.  
Laus virtus pax et imperium cui est semper sine fine eleyson.

*O God creator of all things, thou our merciful God, have mercy. Singing your praises, O Christ, king of kings, we pray to thee, have mercy. Praise, power, peace, and dominion to him who is forever without end: have mercy.*

Christe rex unice patris almi nate coeterne eleyson.  
Qui perditum hominem salvasti de morte reddens vite eleyson.  
Ne pereant pascue oves tue Jesu pastor bone eleyson.

*O Christ, sole king, born coeternal with the kind father, have mercy. Thou who saved lost humanity, giving life for death, have mercy. Lest your pastured sheep should perish, have mercy.*

Consolator spiritus supplices ymas te exoramus eleyson.  
Virtus nostra domine atque salus nostra in eternum eleyson.  
Summe Deus et une vite dona nobis tribue misertus nostrique tu digneris eleyson.

*Consoler of suppliant spirits below, we beseech thee, have mercy. Our strength, O Lord, and our salvation in eternity, have mercy. Highest and only God, grant us life, the gift of compassion to those whom you favor: have mercy.*

**Gloria** Gloria in excelsis deo, et in terra pax hominibus bone voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.  
Domine deus, rex celestis, 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 sancto spiritu in gloria dei patris. Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all of good will. We praise you. We bless you. We adore you. We glorify you. We give thanks to you for your great glory.*

*Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God the Father, Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son, Lord God, lamb of God, Son of the Father, Who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Who takes away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Who sits at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are holy, you alone are the Lord, 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 celi et terre, visibilium omnium, et invisibilium. Et in unum dominum Jesum Christum, filium dei unigenitum. Et ex patre natum ante omnia secula. 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 celis. 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 celum: sedet ad dexteram patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria judicare vivos et mortuos: cujus regni non erit finis. 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 Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. Begotten, not made; of one being with the Father, through whom all things are made. For us and for our salvation he came down from Heaven. He was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified for our sake under Pontius Pilate, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again, in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge both the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end. Amen.*

# BIOGRAPHIES

<b>Trisagion</b>	Aghios o Theos, aghios iskhyros, aghios athanatos: eleison imas. Sanctus Deus, sanctus fortis, sanctus immortalis: miserere nobis. Holy God, holy mighty, holy immortal: have mercy on us.	<i>The Greek, Latin, and English texts (the Greek here transliterated) are the same.</i>
<b>Kyrie</b>	Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.	<i>Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.</i>
<b>Sanctus</b>	Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, dominus deus sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini. Osanna in excelsis.	<i>Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</i>
<b>Agnus Dei</b>	Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.	<i>Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you who take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.</i>
<b>Ite</b>	Ite missa est. Deo gratias.	<i>Go forth, it is finished. Thanks be to God.</i>

Baritone **Glenn Billingsley** has sung leading roles with the Chautauqua, Santa Fe, Lake George and New York City Opera companies, but his true love is ensemble music. He has toured the United States, South America and Europe with the Waverly Consort, and has been a member of New York's Ensemble for Early Music, the Clarion Concert Society, the Bach Aria Group, New York's Musica Sacra and numerous other choral organizations. Glenn helps his wife, soprano and voice teacher Monique Phinney, to support their two teenage children, Lisa and Ken, by working at MIT as Director of Arts Development.

Noël Bisson has sung as soloist and ensemble singer with many ensembles across the country and locally, most regularly with the Choir of the Church of the Advent and the Boston Camera-ta. She earned a doctorate in musicology from Harvard University, and her scholarly focus is English sacred music of the late fifteenth century. Noël and her family reside in Hamilton, New York, where she is Assistant Dean of the College at Colgate University.

A native of Idaho, **Allen Combs** has been an active part of the greater Boston musical community for the past twenty years. As a tenor and countertenor he has performed and recorded with early music ensembles such as Schola Cantorum, Capella Alamire and the Choir of the Church of the Advent. In addition to his work as a singer, Allen is the music director of the Andover Choral Society and the New England Dance Ensemble, and the vocal director of the Composers' Conference and Chamber Music Society at Wellesley College.

Bass-baritone **Paul Guttry** enjoys a varied career including opera, oratorio, and chamber music. This spring he appeared in the role of Noah in Britten's *Noye's Fludde* with the Boston Revels, and in September will appear as Publio in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* with Prism Opera. Paul

has sung with Sequentia and is a former member of Chanticleer and the New York Ensemble for Early Music. In Boston he has performed with Emmanuel Music, Handel & Haydn, the Boston Cecilia, Prism Opera, and Collage New Music.

**Elliott Gyger** was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1968, and studied composition with Ross Edwards and Peter Sculthorpe at the University of Sydney. In 2002 he completed a Ph.D. in Music at Harvard University, where he studied with Bernard Rands and Mario Davidovsky. He is currently Assistant Professor of Music at Harvard. In 2003 he was the recipient of the Walter Hinrichsen Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, as well as the inaugural Harvard-Walton Fellow.

Elliott's music has been performed by numerous choral and instrumental groups in Australia, including the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, as well as the Hilliard Ensemble, and American ensembles such as the New York New Music Ensemble and the Mendelssohn, Emerson, and Ying Quartets. Two CDs of Elliott's music are in preparation: one of sacred choral works, featuring Boston's Seraphim Singers, on the Arsis label; and one of instrumental music, on ABC Classics.

**Lydia Heather Knutson** has been singing professionally for more than half her life (yes, she is older than she looks). She has had the great good fortune of singing the world over with many gifted musicians, in many marvelous places. She currently lives in Cambridge where she leads a parallel life as a Doctor of Chiropractic and wishes she had a bigger back yard.

**Terence McKinney** came to Boston in 1993 to study voice at New England Conservatory, then the Longy School of Music. He has been singing with early music groups in the area since, including Capella Alamire, Schola Cantorum, and the Handel and Haydn Society.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our sincere thanks to those people who have so generously supported the efforts of Blue Heron Renaissance Choir. Many thanks to Emmanuel Church in Boston, Trinitarian-Congregational Church in Concord, and First Church in Cambridge, for providing us with rehearsal space. And thanks to WGBH, 89.7 FM in Boston, which is recording tonight's concert for future broadcast.

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A violinist and a conductor with a repertoire extending from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth, **Scott Metcalfe** is concertmaster of the Trinity Consort in Portland, Oregon, and a member of the ensemble La Luna. Besides Blue Heron, he also directs the Renaissance choir Convivium Musicum. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in the historical performance practice of music at Harvard University.

**Martin Near**, countertenor, has studied composition at New England Conservatory, and was trained at Saint Thomas Choir School in Manhattan. Mr. Near sings with the Choir of Church of the Advent, and is also active as a composer in Boston. He currently studies voice with Mark St. Laurent.

**Cheryl Ryder**, a co-founder of Blue Heron Renaissance Choir, is a long-time member of the Choir of the Church of the Advent and has edited a number of Renaissance motets used by that group. A music major at Wellesley, she is also a member of the American Chemical Society and took first place in Boston University's 2001 business plan competition for the proposed nanotechnology startup launched a few months later as Nantero, Inc.

**Carol Schlaikjer** spent most of her adult life in Europe. She studied early music at the Schola Cantorum in Basle, sang with various early music ensembles—most notably *Sequentia*—and raised a wonderful daughter, all while exporting used cars to Poland after the fall of the Iron Curtain. She is thrilled to be a member of Blue Heron and to work with such an amazing group of musicians.

**Aaron Sheehan**, tenor, is now enjoying his third season singing with Blue Heron. Other groups that he has appeared with include Theater of Voices, the Handel and Haydn Society, Fortune's Wheel, and Liber unUsualis. He also keeps an active teaching schedule with students

from Brown University and New England Conservatory's Extension School.

**Mark Sprinkle** has sung with a diverse list of ensembles and conductors, most recently appearing as a soloist with *Concerto Palatino* in Jordan Hall and in performances of Monteverdi's *1610 Vespers* in the Emerson Maještic Theater with Grant Llewellyn. He has appeared at the Bergen Music Festival in Norway and at the Monadnock, Vancouver, and Edinburgh Music Festivals, and was a fellow of the Britten-Pears Institute. He has sung with Blue Heron for the past four years.

Praised for his "consummate artistry" (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*), baritone **Sumner Thompson** is quickly becoming much sought after on the concert as well as the opera stage. Among the highlights of recent seasons were his Carnegie Hall debut in *Messiah* with the Masterwork Chorus, appearances in Britten's *Death in Venice* and Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims* with the Chicago Opera Theater, and performances in the title role of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* with Contemporary Opera Denmark. His upcoming engagements include *Messiah* with Apollo's Fire conducted by Richard Egarr, the role of Apollo in Opera Boston's production of *Alceste*, and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with the Masterwork Chorus.

Mezzo-soprano **Daniela Tošić**, a native of Yugoslavia, is a founding member of *Tapestry*, a female vocal ensemble, and the vocal and instrumental quintet *Hourglass*. She also performs regularly with *La Donna Musicale* and the ensemble *Balmus*. Ms Tošić has recorded for Telarc and MDG.

**Charles Turner** is a composer, singer, and software engineer who lives in Danvers, Massachusetts. He also sings with *Cantata Singers of Boston* and is a member of the *New Opera and Musical Theater Initiative*. Currently he is busy composing a chamber opera loosely based on the Noh play *Sotoba Komachi*.

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