



Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, volume 2
Nicholas Ludford *Missa Regnum mundi*
Richard Pygott *Salve regina*

Blue Heron
Scott Metcalfe

A Mass for Saint Margaret

Nicholas Ludford (c1490-1557) • Missa Regnum mundi

Sarum plainchant • Proper for the Feast of St Margaret

Richard Pygott (c1485-1549) • Salve regina

1 Introit: Me expectaverunt peccatores (0:00) *RULERS PG UT*

2 Kyrie XII (Conditor) (0:00)

3 Gloria / Missa Regnum mundi (0:00)
Nicholas Ludford

4 Gradual: Specie tua (0:00) *SOLOISTS PD SW*

5 Alleluya: Veni electa mea (0:00) *SOLOISTS PG ST*

6 Credo / Missa Regnum mundi (0:00)
Ludford

7 Offertory: Offerentur regi virgines (0:00)

8 Sanctus / Missa Regnum mundi (0:00)
Ludford

9 Agnus Dei / Missa Regnum mundi (0:00)
Ludford

10 Communion: Feci iudicium (0:00)

11 Ite missa est (0:00) *DEACON OM*

12 Votive antiphon: Salve regina (0:00)
Richard Pygott *SOLOISTS JM MB ST PG*

Total time: (00:00)

Blue Heron

treble Julia Steinbok, Teresa Wakim, Shari Wilson

mean Jennifer Ashe (Pygott), Pamela Dellal, Martin Near

contratenor Owen McIntosh, Jason McStoots

tenor Michael Barrett, Sumner Thompson

bass Paul Guttry, Ulysses Thomas, Peter Walker

Scott Metcalfe *director*

Missa Regnum mundi and *Salve regina* edited and completed by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition RCM135 and RCM 104). *Kyrie* and *Ite* edited by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition LCM1). Used with permission from Antico Edition (www.anticoedition.co.uk). Other Sarum chant edited by Scott Metcalfe from *Graduale ad usum Sarisburiensis* (Paris, 1532).

Recorded September 18–21, September 26–27 & October 8, 2011
at the Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

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Producer: Eric Milnes

Editing: Eric Milnes & Joel Gordon

Cover photo: Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*), Barro Colorado Island, Panama (Getty Images)

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A MASS FOR SAINT MARGARET

Many cyclical settings of the Mass are based upon a pre-existent melody, often a piece of plainchant; the melody may be carried by the tenor of the polyphonic composition as a cantus firmus. But why did composers choose any one cantus firmus in particular? As Andrew Kirkman puts it, "To build a Mass setting around a borrowed melody is to unlock the potential of that melody for symbolic and emblematic significance. With its presence in each section of the Ordinary, it weaves a continuous metaphorical thread through the entire musical setting, and hence through the ritual enactment of which it is part."¹ A chant proper to the feast of a saint, for instance, would provide a suitable cantus firmus for a Mass to be sung on that feast day. The quotation might also be intended to attract the intercessory power of its divine honoree. But in the case of Nicholas Ludford's *Missa Regnum mundi*, the cantus firmus ("Regnum mundi et omnem ornatum seculi contempsi") is the ninth responsory at Matins from the Common of Virgin Martyrs—that is, the liturgy prescribed for the feasts of all those saints who are virgin martyrs but who do not have their own special set of texts—which seems unpromising. Why compose such a splendid Mass for such an apparently generic purpose?

In fact, the Use of Salisbury, the liturgical calendar that governed medieval English

Christianity, includes just two feasts of virgin martyrs celebrated with nine lessons at Matins whose responsories and other texts were drawn from the Common rather than from the saint's own individual Office and Proper. These are St Margaret of Antioch and the Welsh saint Winifred. Of the two, Margaret was by far the more popular. Venerated as the protector of women in childbirth, she was commonly depicted emerging from or standing astride a dragon, in an allusion to the most colorful incident from her legend. More than 250 churches in England are dedicated to her, the most notable of which is St Margaret's, Westminster, which lies immediately adjacent to Westminster Abbey and is today the parish church of the Houses of Parliament. St Margaret's was Nicholas Ludford's parish church from the early 1520s until his death, and he was buried there on August 9, 1557. Ludford was not employed at St Margaret's—he spent most of his career at St Stephen's Chapel, a collegiate church attached to the royal palace of Westminster—but he seems to have been an active parishioner, including serving as warden. In 1533/4 St Margaret's churchwardens bought a book of polyphonic music from him for 20 shillings. It thus seems most likely that Ludford originally composed the *Missa Regnum mundi* for a festal mass at St Margaret's on her feast day, July 20; perhaps it was included in the book of music that Ludford sold to the church.

And so deynly appered in hir sight,
Where as she lay bounden in prisoun,
In the lykenesse of a felle dragoun
The olde serpent, whiche called is Sathan,
And hastily to assayle hir he began.

With open mouthe, the virgyne to devour,
First of alle, he swolwed in hir hede,
And she devoutly, hirself to socoure,
Gan crosse hirself, in hir mortal drede;
And by grace, anon or she toke hede,
The horrible beste, in relees of hir payne,
Brast assondre and partyd was on tweyne.

John Lydgate, *The Lyfe of Seynt Margarete* (c. 1426), ed. Sherry L. Reames, *Middle English Legends of Women Saints* (Kalamazoo, MI, 2003), lines 283–94. *Felle*: fierce, *anon*: before, *brast*: burst; *on tweyne*: in two.



St. Margaret of Antioch. Illuminated manuscript ca. 1440.

The *Missa Regnum mundi* and the Peterhouse partbooks

Once composed, a polyphonic Mass might make its way in the world for uses independent of its original purpose, so a Mass whose cantus firmus referred to St Margaret might be sung on other occasions. If this were not so, Ludford's Mass would certainly not have survived until today, for the only source we have of the piece is one unrelated to St Margaret's, Westminster, or indeed to any other church that might have celebrated her feast with such grandeur. How precisely, we do not know, but by 1539 the work had arrived at Magdalen College, Oxford, where it was copied by the professional singer and music scribe Thomas Bull into a large collection of Masses, Magnificats, and votive antiphons that he would bring with him in 1540 when he joined the choir of Canterbury Cathedral. Bull's work is manifestly that of a professional copyist hired to assemble, in considerable haste, a great quantity of music intended to be sung in church services, rather than for study or for presentation to a noble as a gift. Since the chapel at Magdalen College was dedicated to Mary Magdalene and Canterbury lacked a chapel honoring St Margaret, it is unlikely that either institution would have had any use for a Mass that could only be sung for her feast, so they must rather have regarded the work as useful on other occasions as well.

Why did Bull copy so much music so quickly? He appears to have been acting on commission. The monastic foundation at Canterbury was dissolved by Henry VIII in April 1540, just one of nearly a dozen great monastic cathedrals dissolved in 1539-41, mostly to be refounded in short order as secular institutions subject not to an abbot (a member of a religious order), but to a bishop and thus to the king as head of the Church of England. Since many of the refounded cathedrals aspired to considerably more pomp and circumstance than their monastic predecessors, which typically did not attempt ambitious polyphony, they sought to hire a large choir of professional singers as well as recruit choirboys for training. Bull appears among twelve vicars-choral on a list of the staff of the newly-refounded Canterbury Cathedral. The first of the twelve is Thomas Tallis; there are also ten "queresters" (choristers, "quire" being the normal sixteenth-century spelling of the word) and their master. The new choral establishment would also require an entirely new library of up-to-date polyphonic repertory, and this Bull supplied, bringing about 70 works with him from Oxford.

But the brilliant choral institution at Canterbury would not last long. Henry died in 1547 and the Protestant Reformation that ensued took a dim view of such popish decorations as professional choirs and the highly sophisticated Latin music they sang. All the elaborate polyphonic music of late medieval English Catholicism

became, at best, obsolete; at worst it was viewed as gaudy ornament to a despicable ritual. Many musical sources were destroyed and if a manuscript escaped deliberate destruction by zealots, it might yet be subjected to other indignities:

A greate nombre of them which purchased those superstyouse mansyons [former monasteries], reserved of those librarye bokes, some to serve their jakes [privies], some to scoure their candelstykkes, and some to rubbe their bootes. Some they solde to the grossers and sope-sellers.... Yea the univertyees of thys realm are not all clere in this detestable fact.... I know a merchaunt man, which shall at thys tyme be namelesse, that boughte the contentes of two noble lybraryes.... Thys stuffe hath he occupied in the stede of graye paper [wrapping-paper] for the space of more than these x yeares, and yet hath store ynough for as many yeares to come.

Preface to *The laboryouse Journey & serche of Johann Leylande for England's Antiquities* (1549)²

Very few books of church music survived. The main extant sources from the first half of the sixteenth century comprise a mere three

choirbooks, four sets of partbooks, and one organ manuscript. (Compare this paucity to, for example, the sixteen choirbooks owned in 1524 by a single establishment, Magdalen College, Oxford.) Bull's manuscripts, a set of five partbooks (one each for the standard five parts of early sixteenth-century English polyphony: treble, mean, contratenor, tenor, and bass), made their way to the library of Peterhouse, Cambridge, by the 1630s, where they survived yet another cataclysm of Protestant destruction, that wrought by the Puritans in the 1640s. Today they may be consulted on the worldwide web in astonishingly high-resolution photographs taken by the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music (www.diamm.ac.uk).

Or, at least, some of Bull's set may be viewed there. Somewhere along the way the tenor partbook disappeared, along with several pages of the treble book. Now, of the 72 pieces in the set (known today as the Henrician set of Peterhouse partbooks, for their present location and the monarch during whose reign they were copied), 39 are transmitted uniquely, while another dozen or so are incomplete in their other sources. The result is that some fifty pieces of music—a significant portion of all that survives from pre-Reformation England—now lack their tenor, and some of these are also missing all or part of their treble. We are able to sing this music today only thanks to the extraordinarily skilled reconstruction of the English musicologist Nick Sandon. (Sandon also pieced together the story of the genesis of

the partbooks and of the *Missa Regnum mundi* that I have related above.)

Sandon completed his dissertation on the Peterhouse partbooks in 1983, including in it recompositions of most of the missing tenor lines; in the years since he has been refining his work and gradually issuing it in Antico Edition. We perform the *Missa Regnum mundi* and Richard Pygott's *Salve regina* from Sandon's editions. For the Mass he recomposed the entire tenor line and, from a point midway through the Credo, the treble as well. In the case of Pygott's *Salve regina*, both tenor and treble parts are entirely lost. Thus nearly two-fifths of the polyphonic texture you hear on this recording have been restored by Sandon in a brilliant feat of reimagination.

This recording presents the *Missa Regnum mundi* in a musical context like that of its probable original occasion, a festal mass for St Margaret. Thus we surround Ludford's polyphonic Mass Ordinary (those texts sung invariably at any mass) with plainchant items from the Proper (the texts specific to the occasion in the liturgical calendar, in this case a mass for the feast of a virgin martyr). As usual in early sixteenth-century English Masses, the *Missa Regnum mundi* does not include a Kyrie, so we sing this in chant as well.

Melodious, radiant, and full of invention and color, the *Missa Regnum mundi* displays in marvellous form many hallmarks of late-medieval

English polyphony that one can hear in other Peterhouse repertoire: a constantly varying texture of duos, trios, and quartets building towards sections for the full five parts; long melismas at the ends of individual words and of phrases; imitation used sometimes for the sake of variety, sometimes as a structural device, according to the inspiration of the composer (whether Ludford or Sandon); a supple sense of melody and rhythm, with each individual line pursuing its own nearly independent course while at the same time interacting with its partners; and a fine sense of large-scale development over the course of each movement and across the entire cycle, so that the Agnus dei feels like the culmination of all that has been heard before.

Each of the four movements of the Mass opens with the same extended passage (fifteen breves or measures long), challenging the singers to find appropriate ways to express the very different words it sets ("Et in terra pax hominibus voluntatis," "Patrem omnipotentem, factorem celi et terre..." "Sanctus," or "Agnus dei"). That early sixteenth-century singers were expected to express the text clearly and to respond to the rhetorical opportunities offered by text and music, rather than simply building a sonic edifice of beautiful but undifferentiated sound, is suggested by statements like this one:

Thus...to be regarded as of the highest judgment are those who, in sing-

ing, put all their effort into expressing the words well, when they are of substance, and who make the music accompany them in such a way that the words are the masters, accompanied by servants so as to appear more honorable; not creating the affects and the meanings from the music, but rather creating the music from the meanings and the affects...

Vincenzo Calmeta, *Vita del facondo poeta volgare Serafino Aquilano* (1504)³

It may be surprising to learn that this typically "Baroque" understanding of the relationship of text and music was set down not around 1600 but a century earlier. Thomas More's *Utopia* of 1516 conveys a similar attitude:

Their musike...dothe so resemble and expresse naturall affections, the sound and tune is so applied and made agreeable to the thinge, that whether it bee a prayer, or els a dytty of gladnes, of patience, of trouble, of mournynge, or of anger: the fassion of the melodye dothe so represente the meaning of the thing, that it doth wonderfullye move, stirre, pearce, and enflame the hearers myndes.

Sir Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516), Bk. II

Nicola Vicentino, in his *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* of 1555, describes some of the methods that may be used to achieve the desired effect and draws a parallel with the techniques used by an orator:

Sometimes a composition is performed according to a certain method that cannot be written down, such as uttering softly and loudly or fast and slow, or changing the measure [i.e. tempo] in keeping with the words, so as to show the effects of the passions and the harmony... The measure should change according to the words, now slower and now faster...

The experience of the orator can be instructive, if you observe the technique he follows in his oration. For he speaks now loud and now soft, now slow and now fast, thus greatly moving his listeners. This technique of changing the tempo has a powerful effect on the soul... If the orator moves listeners with the devices described above, how much greater and more powerful will be the effect of well-coordinated music recited with the same devices, but now accompanied by harmony.

Nicola Vicentino, *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (1555)⁴

Of course, in a Mass there is a basic difference between the movements with regard to text: the Gloria is quite wordy and the Credo more so, while the Sanctus and Agnus dei have very short texts. Nevertheless, Ludford's Gloria and Credo are about the same length; although the Agnus dei is shorter, it is still plenty expansive, and the Sanctus is positively luxuriant, nearly a third again as long as the Gloria and Credo. Thus the word setting is relatively terse in the Credo, whereas in the Sanctus bars and bars on end are sung on a single syllable. But because the beginning of each phrase is set syllabically, or nearly so, every single word of the text of the Mass can be understood by the listener. In these last moments of English medieval catholicism a polyphonic Mass can both instruct and provide unbounded spiritual delight.

Salve regina

The votive antiphon was an extra-liturgical form, not part of the regular Divine Office but appended to it. Addressed most often to Mary, sometimes to Jesus, very occasionally to another saint, in England it was typically sung after Vespers and Compline in a separate evening devotion, perhaps by a group of singers gathered before an altar or image. At its simplest, the votive antiphon might be monophonic or even spoken. Pygott's *Salve regina* represents the form at its most ornate. Whether recited simply or sung in elaborate polyphony, though, the Marian antiphon (according to the eminent historian of music

in medieval Britain, Frank Lloyd Harrison) "was the universal and characteristic expression of the devotional fervour of the later Middle Ages."⁵ The most popular texts were available to the non-scholastic public in prints such as the diglot *Prymer* or Book of Hours issued by Robert Redman, whose 1537 English version of the *Salve regina* is reproduced among the translations.

Pygott's *Salve regina* sets the most popular of all votive antiphon texts, including the three stanzas of verse tropes inserted between the acclamations "O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Maria" that are found in virtually every English setting of the *Salve*. The tropes expand upon the images of the original text, in some ways intensify its sentiments, and provide an opportunity for further meditation. Pygott's *Salve* prolongs the meditation even further: at well over 22 minutes in length it is one of the longest votive antiphons extant. The music is so varied and so beautifully paced, however, that the passage of time goes almost unremarked, despite a deliberate (and unusual) concentration on just two textures of reduced forces, a high trio of treble, mean, and contratenor and a low trio of contratenor, tenor, and bass. On one occasion the lowest voice of the high trio is taken by the tenor rather than the contratenor, giving the contra its only real rest in the piece, and the cries and sighs of the exiled children of Eve (beginning "Ad te clamamus") are given to a quartet of low voices, the contratenor dividing into two lines.

Pygott's music succeeds so well over the course of its length due to its "rhetorical efficiency," a term coined by Fabrice Fitch to describe the way John Browne (a composer from the generation before Pygott's) uses techniques of texture, form, and counterpoint to heighten the "dramatic or rhetorical dimension" of his music.⁶ Like Browne, Pygott uses texture to articulate the structure of his text: thus, in the second half of the work, the full ensemble sings the acclamations ("O clemens," "O pia," "O dulcis Maria," each more captivating than the last) while the verse tropes are given to trios. And like Browne's, Pygott's lines are rhythmically complicated and melismatic, if somewhat less gothically intricate than those of the earlier composer.

Pygott was a member in turn of the household chapels of Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII, two of the very best choirs in England, and a highly accomplished composer who must have written numerous works, but his music almost didn't survive at all. The only pieces by him that one might perform today are the *Missa Veni sancte spiritus* (also in the Peterhouse part-books, lacking one voice of five), one antiphon (this *Salve regina*, lacking two), a four-voice respond, and a three-voice Latin carol. The bass part only of another antiphon and an English carol also survive, as well as a two-voice textless fragment of a larger work.

PERFORMANCE PITCH

This is not the place to discuss, in the depth it deserves, the thorny and much-debated topic of the historically appropriate performance pitch of sixteenth-century English music. Nevertheless, as our practice has evolved since our first disc in this series of recordings of Peterhouse repertoire and now differs in a small but significant way from the present-day norm, a few words are in order.

The question of the performing pitch of a *cappella* music before the early seventeenth century resists easy answers, due on the one hand to the near-complete absence of surviving instruments whose pitch might be measured, and on the other to the fact that sacred polyphony was normally sung by voices alone. It is often claimed, more or less off-handedly and on scant or no historical evidence, that all-vocal ensembles simply chose a pitch out of the air and that the result was a complete lack of vocal pitch standard across Europe. Besides the lack of evidence in support of this view, there are serious objections to its plausibility. Not the least of these is the fact that when demonstrable pitch standards for music that combined voices and instruments do begin to emerge in the later sixteenth century, whether in Italy, Germany, France, or England, they fall into clear patterns. The most common pitch on the continent in the seventeenth century is around A466, a semitone above A440; the next most common is A415, a semitone

below A440; a third, rather less common pitch is found another semitone down at about A392. (Less usual pitches also existed higher than A466, at around A440, and rather lower than A392.) That is to say, the most common pitches are a higher pitch (A466) and a lower one (A415) separated by a whole tone, with a third pitch (A392) a minor third lower than the higher and more common of the two. As Bruce Haynes realised and documented in his landmark study of 2002 (based on his doctoral dissertation of 1995), pitches existed at integral intervals (not less than a semitone) on a “grid” which allowed players of instruments tuned in meantone (organs and most winds) to transpose between them if necessary, for while transpositions of a whole tone and a minor third are usually possible in meantone tuning, a transposition of a semitone is not. And these pitches are associated with names: the pitch around 466 is often called something like “choir pitch” and the pitches at 415 and 392 “chamber pitch.”⁷ England, as ever marching to its own drummer, had its own grid that lay slightly above the continental standard. Its “Quire-pitch” was about A473-478.⁸

(Endnotes) ?????

1

I think that a reasonable argument may be made that this Quire-pitch is the most likely historical pitch of a *cappella* vocal music in England in the early sixteenth century, as follows:

- 1) The normal written range of unaccompanied vocal polyphony is far from arbitrary, but rather is tied to sounding pitch and grew from a profound understanding of the ranges of human voices. This knowledge is embedded in and manifested by the gamut or standard musical space of medieval and Renaissance music and its range of three octaves from bass F to treble f” which encompasses the ranges of male singers from the low notes of the average bass to the high notes of the average male falsettist; by the five-line staff, which allows a range of an octave and a fourth to be notated without the use of ledger lines; and by the clefs of vocal music (bass, tenor, alto, and soprano), which imply an ordinary range of F to b for a bass, c to f’ for a tenor, and b to e” for a (male falsettist) soprano: at a pitch somewhere around A415 to 466, these ranges correspond to the comfortable ordinary ranges of human beings, within which they can sing “naturally” and deliver text clearly and persuasively, qualities valued by Renaissance writers.
- 2) This explains why standard written vocal ranges are generally stable across the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (a phenomenon remarked on by Roger Bowers and David Fallows, both of whom drew the conclusion that A440 is about the right pitch for most music of this period, despite their both arguing that the relationship

between written and sounding pitch was entirely arbitrary at the time⁹). These basic ranges remain the same in the seventeenth century as well, in music with and without accompanying instruments.

- 3) The pitch of unaccompanied vocal performance was surely related to the pitch of instrumental music, whether or not instruments played simultaneously or *alternatim* in church or whether singers simply heard them and performed with them on other occasions. Professional singers nowadays develop a strong physical sense of where a pitch lies in the voice; how much more this must have been true of singers in the past, who experienced nothing like the dizzying variety of styles a 21st-century musician may participate in. And pitch shifts of less than a semitone can be especially disconcerting to a musician’s sense of pitch.
- 4) In the absence of a reason to alter it, performing pitch is unlikely to change. As Haynes observes, “it is in everyone’s interest that it remain stable.”¹⁰ At most times there will have been many reasons to conserve pitch standards and the pitch grid (while allowing for variations in taste between regions and individual musicians), enabling music to cross distances in space and time and saving a lot of money which would otherwise have to be spent on purchasing or refitting instruments.

- 5) As one would expect according to this line of argument, both the pitch grid on the continent and its sibling grid in England are demonstrably stable from the late sixteenth century into the middle of the eighteenth century¹¹ and in England its orientation to Quire-pitch at circa A473-478 can be extended back to the early sixteenth century, as Andrew Johnstone has recently shown.¹²

Now, our own modern pitch-grid being centered on A440 and its relatives at integral semitones away, a present-day *a cappella* ensemble finds it quite challenging to shift itself into the cracks and sing at 473 or so, maintaining that foreign pitch for the considerable durations demanded by the Peterhouse repertoire. In the future Blue Heron may learn to sing at 473, somewhat more than a semitone above 440, and perhaps the results will be revealing of something. For the present recording, however, we sing at about A465, a semitone above 440—the most usual choir pitch of the continent, and *almost* English Quire-pitch.

But all this bother about pitch would go for nothing if one were not at least as concerned with using the right vocal scoring; and that too would be useless in the case of Ludford’s *Missa Regnum mundi* if one did not recognize the work as being written in system of high clefs, implying a transposition downwards of (in this case) a fourth.

Vocal scoring and voice-types

As Roger Bowers has shown, the five-voice scoring of pre-Reformation English polyphony employs four basic voice-types: treble (sung by a boy with a specially trained higher voice), mean (sung by a boy with an ordinary voice or by an adult male falsettist), tenor, and bass.¹³ Tenor parts are further divided into tenor and contratenor; by the end of the fifteenth century the latter usually (but not invariably) tended to lie higher than the former, as it is in the Ludford Mass. It might then be called a *contratenor altus*, a “high part written against the tenor,” but it was still sung by a man we might call a high tenor. (The specialty flourished later in French Baroque opera as the *haute-contre*.)

As for our forces, we sing two or three to a part. Since we are not bound by the old ecclesiastical prohibition against men and women singing sacred music together, our treble parts are sung by women, rather than boys. Sixteenth-century English choirs used either boy altos or adult male falsettists on the “mean” or alto line, the second line from the top in the standard five-part scoring; our mean is sung by one man and one or two women. In its size and distribution our ensemble very closely resembles the one pre-Reformation choir for which we have detailed evidence of the distribution of voices used in actual performance, as opposed to a roster of the singers on staff. On one typical occasion in about 1518, this choir (that of the household chapel of the Earl of

Northumberland) was divided 3/3/2/2/3 from top to bottom.¹⁴

For the plainchant we follow the instructions of the Use of Salisbury for a simple feast of nine lessons like Margaret’s, which specify the role and number of rulers (in the Introit, Kyrie, Offertory, and Communion) and soloists (in the Gradual and Alleluia). The intonations of the Gloria and Credo are assigned to the celebrant, the first phrase of the Ite to the deacon. We employ the full choir to chant, including means and trebles. Boys must have participated regularly in plainchant, which was the basic training ground of sixteenth-century choristers; the Use furthermore directs that the soloists in the Gradual be two boys.

High clefs and transposition

The *Missa Regnum mundi*, like a number of other pieces in the Peterhouse partbooks, is written in a system of high clefs with a g-clef on the bottom line of the staff for the treble part and a c-clef on the top line for the bass part. This allowed Ludford to notate its plainchant cantus firmus, a fifth-mode melody with a range extending from E below middle C to F above, at its standard written pitch, while maintaining its usual position in the tenor relative to the other four parts in the polyphonic texture. Such a combination of clefs is a signal to the singers to transpose down a fourth or fifth, and transposed down a fourth to a final on C, the five parts of the *Missa Regnum mundi*

lie right in the normal ranges of music notated in ordinary clefs, with an overall compass of 22 notes from F to f[♯]. Although disagreement persists nowadays about the practice of transposing high clef music, it is amply documented from the later sixteenth century onwards¹⁵ and an unambiguous prescription to the effect is found as early as Silvestro Ganassi’s *Lectione seconda* of 1543.¹⁶ Ganassi writes as if he is describing a completely standard practice, not inventing a new one, but I do not know of an earlier description of it. Nevertheless, numerous instances of high clef notation exist dating back as far as the mid-fifteenth century and it may be that both the practice and the reason for it (to preserve the written appearance of a high fifth- or seventh-mode cantus firmus) are of English origin and were conveyed to the continent by that celebrated transmitter of technical innovation, the anonymous *Missa Caput* composed in the 1440s.¹⁷

—Scott Metcalfe

A thorough account by Nick Sandon of the history of the Peterhouse partbooks and his restoration work may be found in Volume 1 of Blue Heron’s series of recordings of the Peterhouse repertoire. Much of the historical information on the partbooks and the *Missa Regnum mundi* offered here is drawn from Sandon’s editions and from his 1983 dissertation, “The Henrician partbooks belonging to Peterhouse, Cambridge,” PhD. diss. University of Exeter, 1983.

¹ Andrew Kirkman, *The ritual world of the early polyphonic Mass* (2010), p. 53.

² Quoted in Roger Bray, *The Blackwell history of music in Britain: The sixteenth century* (1995), pp. 7–8.

³ Translation slightly modified from Anne Smith, *The performance of 16th-century music* (2011), p. 103, where the original Italian is also quoted.

⁴ Cited in Smith (2011), pp. 107–8; translation by Maria Rika Maniates in *Ancient music adapted to modern practice* (1996), pp. 301–2. Further

source material about rhetorical performance in the sixteenth century may be found in chapter 7 of Smith’s book. I also benefited from private conversations on the topic with the late Bruce Haynes, always generous in sharing his ideas and research in advance of publication.

⁵ Frank Ll. Harrison, *Music in medieval Britain* (1958), pp. 81–88 *et passim*.

⁶ Fabrice Fitch, “Hearing John Browne’s motets: registral space in the music of the Eton Choirbook,” *Early music* 36 (2008): 19–40.

⁷ Bruce Haynes, *A history of performing pitch* (2002), Introduction, section 0–3; ch. 2; *et passim*.

⁸ Haynes (2002), ch. 2–5; Andrew Johnstone, “As it was in the beginning: organ and choir pitch in early Anglican church music,” *Early music* 31 (2003): 506–525.

⁹ Roger Bowers, “The vocal scoring, choral balance and performing pitch of Latin church polyphony in England, c. 1500–58,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, vol. 112, no. 1 (1986–7): 38–76, esp. 38–53; David Fallows, “Specific information on the ensembles for composed polyphony, 1400–1474,” in *Studies in the performance of late medieval music*, ed. S. Boorman (1983): 109–159, esp. 125–6; Fallows, “The performing ensembles in Josquin’s sacred music,” *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 35 (1985): 32–64, esp. 47–53.

¹⁰ Haynes (2002), p. 96.

¹¹ Haynes (2002), *passim*.

¹² Johnstone (2003).

¹³ Bowers (1986–7); Bowers, “To chorus from quartet: the performing resource for English church polyphony, c. 1390–1559,” in J. Morehen, ed. *English choral practice 1400–1650* (1995): 1–47.

¹⁴ See Bowers (1986–7), esp. pp. 57–9.

¹⁵ See Andrew Parrott, “Transposition in Monteverdi’s *Vespers of 1610*,” *Early music* 12 (1984): 490–516; Patrizio Barbieri, “*Chiovette* and modal transposition in Italian practice (c. 1500–1837),” *Recercare* 3 (1991): 5–79; Jeffrey Kurtzman, *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610* (1999), ch. 17; Parrott, “Monteverdi: onwards and downwards,” *Early music* 32 (2004): 303–317; Andrew Johnstone, “High clefs in composition and performance,” *Early music* 34 (2006): 29–53.

¹⁶ Quoted in Barbieri (1991), pp. 39–41.

¹⁷ The idea is Andrew Johnstone’s, shared with me in a private conversation in Cambridge, England, in September 2010.



Scott Metcalfe

Pamela Dellal

Teresa Wakim

Jason McStoots

Sumner Thompson

Julia Steinbok

Ulysses Thomas

Martin Near

Paul Guttry

Shari Wilson

Peter Walker

Owen McIntosh

not pictured: Jennifer Ashe, Michael Barrett

The vocal ensemble **BLUE HERON** has been acclaimed by *The Boston Globe* as “one of the Boston music community’s indispensables” and hailed by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* for the “expressive intensity” of its interpretations; the *Boston Musical Intelligencer* calls Blue Heron “a fantastic model for the fully-realized potential of early music performance in the 21st century.” Combining a commitment to vivid live performance with the study of original source materials and historical performance practices, Blue Heron ranges over a wide and fascinating repertoire, including fifteenth-century English and Franco-Flemish polyphony, from Dunstable and Du Fay through Ockeghem to the generation of Josquin; Spanish music between 1500 and 1600; and neglected early sixteenth-century English music, especially the rich repertory of the Peterhouse partbooks, copied c. 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral. The ensemble has also reached outside these areas to perform very early music (organum by the twelfth-century French composer Perotin) and very recent music (new works by the Australian composer Elliott Gyger).

Founded in 1999, Blue Heron presents subscription series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and New York City and has performed across the country, including concerts for the Boston Early Music Festival; the Berkeley Early Music Festival; The Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art), the 92nd Street Y, and Music Before 1800 in New York; Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C.; Festival Mozaic in San Luis Obispo, California; the Renaissance and Baroque Society in Pittsburgh; and Monadnock Music in New Hampshire. Blue Heron’s first CD, featuring music by Guillaume Du Fay, was released in 2007; its second, *Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks* (vol. 1) by Hugh Aston, Robert Jones, and John Mason, followed in 2010. Both discs have received international critical acclaim and the Peterhouse CD made the Billboard charts.

SCOTT METCALFE has gained wide recognition as one of North America’s leading specialists in music from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries and beyond. Musical and artistic director of Blue Heron, he is also music director of New York City’s Green Mountain Project (Jolle Greenleaf, artistic director), whose performances of Monteverdi’s *Vespers* have been hailed by *The New York Times* as “quite simply terrific” and by *The Boston Globe* as “stupendous.” Metcalfe has been a guest director of TENET (New York), Emmanuel Music (Boston), the Tudor Choir and Seattle Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver, BC), Quire Cleveland, and the Dryden Ensemble (Princeton, NJ), and he conducted Early Music America’s Young Performers Festival Ensemble in its inaugural performance at the 2011 Boston Early Music Festival. Metcalfe also enjoys a career as a baroque violinist and currently plays with Cleveland’s Les Délices (dir. Debra Nagy), Montreal’s Arion, and other ensembles in Boston, Montreal, and elsewhere. When not playing or directing, he is at work on a new edition of the songs of Gilles Binchois and teaches choral repertoire and performance practice at Boston University. Metcalfe received a bachelor’s degree in 1985 from Brown University, where he majored in biology (perhaps uniquely in the early music world, he has published an article in the *Annals of Botany*), and in 2005 completed a master’s degree in historical performance practice at Harvard.

For more about Blue Heron, please visit www.blueheronchoir.org

Sanctae Margaretae virginis et martyris

[1] Introitus

Me expectaverunt peccatores ut perderent me: testimonia tua, Domine, intellexi. Omnis consummationis vidi finem, latum mandatum tuum nimis.

Ps. Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulat in lege Domini.

Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto: sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper, et in secula seculorum. Amen.

[2] Kyrieleyson. Christeleyson. Kyrieleyson.

[3] 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.

[4] Graduale

Specie tua et pulchritudine tua: intende prospere et regna. *V.* Propter veritatem et mansuetudinem et iusticiam: et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua.

For Saint Margaret, virgin and martyr

Introit

The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: I will consider your testimonies, O Lord. I have seen an end of all perfection, but your commandment is exceeding broad.

Ps. Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

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.

Gradual

In your comeliness and beauty, hearken, prosper and reign. *V.* Because of truth and meekness and justice: and your right hand shall lead you wondrously.

[5] Alleluia. Veni electa mea et ponam te in thronam meum: quia concupivit rex speciem tuam.

[6] 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 iudicare vivos et mortuos: cujus 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 seculi. Amen.

[7] Offertorium

Offerentur regi virgines: proxime eius offerentur tibi in leticia et exultatione, adducentur in templum regi domino.

Alleluia. Come, my chosen one, and I will place you on my throne: for the king has desired your beauty.

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. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. And I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. And I await the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offertory

The virgins shall be offered to the king: her companions shall be offered to you with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be led into the temple, to the Lord, the king.

8 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.

9 Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

10 *Communio*
Feci iudicium et iustitiam, Domine: non calumniantur michi superbi: ad omnia mandata tua dirigebar: omnem viam iniquitatis odio habui.

11 *Ite missa est. Deo gratias.*

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.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Communio
I have wrought judgement and justice, O Lord: let me not be oppressed by the haughty. I have been guided by all your commandments: and I have hated every false way.

Go, it is finished. Thanks be to God.

12 Salve regina, mater misericordie, vita dulcedo et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus exules filii Eve. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle. Eya ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte, et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

Virgo mater ecclesie,
Eterna porta glorie,
Esto nobis refugium
Apud patrem et filium.

O clemens.

Virgo clemens, virgo pia,
Virgo dulcis, O Maria,
Exaudi preces omnium
Ad te pie clamantium.

O pia.

Funde preces tuo nato
Crucifixo, vulnerato,
Et pro nobis flagellato,
Spinis puncto, felle potato.

O dulcis Maria, salve.

Hayle, quene, mother of mercy, our lyfe, our swetenes, our hope, all hayle. Unto thee do we crye, whyche are the banyshed chylidren of Eva. Unto thee do we syghe, wepyng & waylyng in this vale of lamentacyon. Come of therefore, our patronesse. Caste upon us those pytefull iyes of thyne. And after this our banyshement, shewe unto us the blessed fruite of thy wombe Jesu.

Virgin mother of the congregacion
Gate of glory that never is donn
Be for us a reconciliacion
Unto the father and the sonne.

O merciful.

Virgin mercifull, virgin holy
O swete virgin, o blessed Mary
Heare theyr prayers gracyously
Whiche crye and call unto thee.

O holy.

Praye for us unto thy sonne,
Wounded and crucified for us all
And sore turmented with flagellation
Crowned with thorne, & fedde with gall.

O swete Mary, [hayle].

This Prymer in Englyshe and in Laten
(Robert Redman: London, 1537)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our greatest thanks to Nick Sandon for making it possible for the incomplete Peterhouse music to sound again in our time. His work is an unflinching inspiration for ours.

Blue Heron's series of recordings of music from the Peterhouse partbooks is made possible by our Peterhouse Partners, a leadership group of donors who pledge support for the complete 5-disc series, enabling Blue Heron to bring this extraordinary and neglected repertoire to a wider modern audience. We are deeply grateful for their vision, commitment, and generosity.

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Thanks to Suzy Westcott, Elton Matos, and the Church of the Redeemer for hosting the recording sessions.

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