



*a Mass
in Canterbury
c. 1540*

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BLUE HERON

Scott Metcalfe, *director*

Noël Bisson
Carol Schlaikjer

Daniela Tošić
Martin Near

Aaron Sheehan
Mark Sprinkle

Allen Combs
Glenn Billingsley

Paul Guttry
Darrick Yee

Sunday, November 13, 2005, at 3 p.m.
First Church in Cambridge, Congregational

Program

Loquebantur variis linguis
Thomas Tallis (1505–85)

Introit: Benedic̄ta sit san̄cta trinitas
Kyrie: Deus creator omnium
Sarum plainchant

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

Gradual: Benedictus es
Alleluia: Benedictus es
Sarum plainchant

Credo
Jones: Missa Spes nostra

∴intermission:∴

Ave Maria dive matris Anne
Hugh Aston (c. 1487–1558)

Offertory: Benedictus sit deus pater
Sarum plainchant

Sanctus
Agnus dei
Jones: Missa Spes nostra

Communion: Benedicimus deum celi
Sarum plainchant

Libera nos, salva nos
John Sheppard (c. 1515–59)

Ite missa est
Sarum plainchant

 Please hold your applause until the end of each half.

Notes

A MASS IN CANTERBURY, c. 1540

This program presents a polyphonic setting of the Ordinary of the Mass—those items which are sung invariably at every Mass: the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus dei—amid the plainchant Propers which vary according to the season or feast being observed. The Ordinary is the *Missa Spes nostra* by Robert Jones, the Propers those for Trinity Sunday from the English or Sarum rite. (The first item of the Ordinary, the Kyrie, is also sung in plainchant, since Jones's Mass, in keeping with contemporary English practice, does not include a Kyrie; the Kyrie chanted for Trinity is an elaborate troped version of the usual ninefold plea for mercy to God and Christ.) The liturgical occasion was suggested by the cantus firmus that underlies Jones's Mass, the chant *Spes nostra*, an antiphon for Matins on Trinity Sunday. The chant melody is quoted in its entirety in the tenor in every movement, and its striking opening gesture, rising from the final of the mode (its home base) through the triad above and up to the seventh scale degree, is given to the treble at the beginning of each movement.

The program also includes a respond by Thomas Tallis, a short antiphon by John Sheppard, and an expansive votive antiphon by Hugh Aston. The Sheppard is another antiphon for Matins on Trinity Sunday, while Tallis's *Loquebantur variis linguis* is for Pentecost and Aston's *Ave Maria dive matris Anne* for an unspecified Marian celebration. The Tallis is linked to the rest of the program by its use of a chant cantus firmus, for the same technique structures both the Jones and the Sheppard; the Aston is transmitted in the same source as the Jones. These "extra" pieces might be felt to replace the parts of the Mass chanted or intoned

by the priest, or they might simply remind us that this is a concert, albeit one whose form is adapted from liturgy.

The concert opens with 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.

Jones's *Missa Spes nostra* and Aston's *Ave Maria dive matris Anne* are both found uniquely in 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 dissolved in 1540 as a monastic institution and refounded the following year as a secular cathedral. The refounded Canterbury Cathedral was staffed with a large and ambitious musical establishment eager to sing the most challenging polyphonic repertoire. This the anonymous scribe supplied in abundance. The partbooks contain 72 works, including large-scale Marian antiphons like *Ave Maria dive matris Anne* and long festal masses like the *Missa Spes nostra*, all written in

the ornately melismatic style of late medieval English Catholicism. Alas for our hardworking scribe, the elaborate Latin repertoire he copied in such quantity was very shortly to be rendered obsolete by the progress of the Reformation in England, the promulgation of the new Book of Common Prayer, and the promotion of simple homophony in the vernacular over Latin polyphony. The partbooks were shelved, and at some point later the tenor book went missing along with several pages of the treble.

The Peterhouse partbooks contain thirty-nine *unica* (works surviving in one source only), as well as about a dozen other works whose concordant sources are incomplete. As a consequence of the missing tenor parts, virtually none of this music is known today, including Jones's Mass and Aston's *Ave Maria dive matris Anne*. In recent years, however, the English musicologist Nick Sandon has been preparing brilliant and astonishingly idiomatic reconstructions of the incomplete Peterhouse music and publishing them in Antico Edition. Professor Sandon has devoted more than three decades to the Peterhouse partbooks and his dissertation is the standard work on the topic. Since our first concert in October 1999 Blue Heron has sung works by Aston, Taverner, Ludford, and Jones in Sandon's reconstructions.

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, plus 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. The same is true of Aston's *Ave Maria dive matris Anne*, a favorite of ours since our very first concert for its gorgeous melodies and breathtaking sense of harmonic motion.

We conclude with the dazzling *Libera nos, salvanos* by the slightly younger composer John Sheppard, in which six voices (pairs of trebles, means or altos, and tenors) spin out their kaleidoscopically intersecting lines above a slow-moving chant cantus firmus in the bass.

—Scott Metcalfe

texts & translations

LOQUEBANTUR Loquebantur variis linguis apostoli,
VARIIS LINGUIS alleluia, magnalia dei. Alleluia.
(respond for Repleti sunt omnes spiritu sancto, et
first Vespers at ceperunt loqui magnalia dei. Alleluia.
Pentecost) Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto.
Alleluia.

INTROIT Benedicta 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.

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

*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.*

*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.*

*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.
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.
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.

GRADUAL Benedictus es, domine, qui intueris
abyssos et sedes super cherubin.
Benedicite deum celi: quia fecit nobiscum
misericordiam suam.

ALLELUIA Alleluia. Benedictus es, domine deus
patrum nostrorum: et laudabilis in secula.

CREDO Credo in unum deum, patrem
omnipotentem, factorem celi et terre,
visibilem omnium, et invisibilem. 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

*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.*

*Blessed art thou, Lord, who contemplate the
abyss, and sit above the cherubim.
Bless the God of heaven, for he has shown us
his mercy.*

*Alleluia. Blessed art thou, Lord God of our
fathers, and worthy to be praised forever.*

*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.*

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. Amen.

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.

AVE MARIA Ave Maria,
DIVE MATRIS dive matris Anne filia unica.
ANNE Ave Maria, que peperisti puerum virili sine semine.
Ave Maria, Jesum tuum filium lactasti sacro ubere.
Ave Maria, ipsum alluisti tua super genua.
Ave Maria, tres vidiisti magos offerentes munera.
Ave Maria, Egyptum fugiens petisti angeli per monita.
Ave Maria, quesisti tuam sobolem magna cum mestitia.
Ave Maria, in templo reperiisti docentem evangelia.
Conserva tuos famulos hec per tua merita, et perduc eos ad celos cum celesti gloria, psallentes et omnes hoc Ave Maria. Amen.

Hail, Mary, only daughter of Anne the holy mother. Hail, Mary, who brought forth a child without the seed of man. Hail, Mary: you nourished your son Jesus at your sacred breast. Hail, Mary: you washed him upon your knee. Hail, Mary: you saw three wise men bringing gifts. Hail, Mary: fleeing, you set out for Egypt, warned by the angel. Hail, Mary: you sought your child with great sorrow. Hail, Mary: you found him in the temple teaching the gospel. Preserve your servants through these your merits, and lead them to the skies with heavenly glory, all singing this Ave Maria. Amen.

OFFERTORY Benedictus sit deus pater, unigenitusque dei filius, sanctus quoque spiritus: quia fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam.

Blessed be God the Father, and the only begotten Son of God, and the Holy Spirit: for he has shown us his mercy.

SANCTUS Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, dominus deus sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Osanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest. 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, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

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.

COMMUNION Benedicimus deum celi, et coram omnibus viventibus confitebimur ei: quia fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam.

We bless the God of heaven, and before all living things we will give thanks to him, for he has shown us his mercy.

LIBERA NOS, Libera nos, salva nos, iustifica nos,
SALVA NOS O beata trinitas.

Free us, save us, justify us, O blessed Trinity. (antiphon for Matins on Trinity Sunday)

ITE MISSA EST Ite missa est. Deo gratias.

Go forth, it is finished. Thanks be to God.

Biographies

Blue Heron is an ensemble of eight to fifteen singers specializing in Renaissance polyphony. Blue Heron combines a commitment to vivid live performance with knowledge of the latest research into source material and historical performance practice. The ensemble's principal repertoire interests in the last few years have been late fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish polyphony, sacred and secular Spanish music between about 1500 and 1575, and neglected early sixteenth-century English music, especially the rich and unexplored repertory of the Peterhouse partbooks (c. 1540). Founded in 1999, Blue Heron presents its own series of concerts in Boston and appears regularly at Monadnock Music in New Hampshire. This season the group will also sing concerts in New York and Vermont, participate in a conference on the music of Luca Marenzio at Harvard, and appear at Boston University in a lecture-demonstration on Morales's Lamentation setting *Et postquam est*.

Baritone **Glenn Billingsley** has sung leading roles with the Chautauqua, Santa Fe, Lake George and New York City Opera National companies. He has appeared in the Spoleto and Madeira Bach Festivals, 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. A longtime member of the Choir of the Church of the Advent, he is a founding member of Boston's Blue Heron Renaissance Choir. Glenn helps his wife, soprano and voice teacher Monique Phinney, to support their two teenage children, Lisa and Ken, in his role as MIT's Director of Arts Development.

Noël Bisson, a co-founder of Blue Heron Renaissance Choir, 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 Camerata. 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 Associate Dean of the College at Colgate University.

Tenor **Allen Combs** is a native of Idaho Falls, Idaho, and received his education at the University of Idaho and the University of Lowell. In addition to his work with Blue Heron, Mr. Combs has performed with Schola Cantorum and Cappella Alamire. His recital repertoire embraces music from the Renaissance to the twentieth century and includes the major song cycles of Schubert and Britten. Mr. Combs has given world premieres at the Lowell New Music Festival and with Composers in Red Sneakers. He also performs frequently at Phillips Academy, Andover, where he is a member of the voice faculty. Currently a soloist and cantor at the Church of the Advent, Mr. Combs has served as music director of the Andover Choral Society since 1990. He is also the vocal director for the Composers' Conference and Chamber Music Center at Wellesley College and music director for the New England Dance Ensemble.

Bass-baritone **Paul Guttry** enjoys a varied career including opera, oratorio, and chamber music. He recently played the Mother in Weill's *7 Deadly Sins* with Intermezzo and Balthasar in Schumann's *Genoveva* with Emmanuel Music. Paul has sung with the medieval music ensemble Sequentia and is a former member of Chanticleer. In Boston he has performed with Emmanuel Music, Handel &

Haydn, the Boston Cecilia, Boston Revels, Prism Opera, and Collage New Music. Paul can be heard on BMG recordings of medieval music with Sequentia, Erato recordings of the Boston Camerata, and Koch International recordings of Bach with Emmanuel Music.

A violinist and conductor with a repertoire extending from the fifteenth century through the eighteenth, **Scott Metcalfe** directs Blue Heron and the Renaissance choir Convivium Musicum, and is concertmaster of the Trinity Consort in Portland, Oregon. He has conducted *Messiah* in Seattle, Bach's *St. John Passion* in Princeton, and Monteverdi's *Vespers* and Handel's *Amadigi* at Monadnock Music in New Hampshire. Metcalfe was a founding member of La Luna and of The King's Noyse and appears on recordings on harmonia mundi, ATMA, Dorian, Wildboar, and elsewhere. He holds a bachelor's degree from Brown University, where he majored in biology, and recently completed a master's in historical performance practice at Harvard.

Countertenor **Martin Near** has been a professional singer since age nine, working his way up to Head Chorister at Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue in New York City, and currently sings with Blue Heron and with the choir of the Church of the Advent. He studied composition at New England Conservatory of Music with Michael Gandolfi. On a grant from the American Composers Forum Boston, Mr. Near served as composer and music director of the one act opera *Six Characters in Search of an Opera* for Project ARIA (AIDS Response by Independent Artists), which was given five performances at Roxbury Community College, Arlington Street Church, and the Boston Center for the Arts. Mr. Near is an advocate of

the performance of new music and has been a soloist in numerous world premieres, including a microtonal piece in 72-note equal temperament performed in Jordan Hall. He studies voice with Mark St. Laurent.

Carol Schlaikjer, soprano, received her vocal training at the Music Conservatory in Cologne, Germany, and the Schola Cantorum in Basel, Switzerland. She lived for almost two decades in Germany, where she was a frequent soloist for the Lutheran Church radio broadcasts in Frankfurt am Main. She has performed throughout Europe, Australia and the U.S. as a concert and recording artist, both as a soloist and as a member of various early music ensembles, including Sequentia's Vox Feminae and the Huelgas Ensemble. Carol is co-director of the Orpheus Vocal Performance Laboratory, which holds workshops for young singers on the South Shore. She also teaches voice in after-school programs in local high schools and at her private voice studio.

Aaron Sheehan, tenor, is now enjoying his fifth season singing with Blue Heron. He has also performed with Theater of Voices, the Handel & Haydn Society, Fortune's Wheel, and Liber unUsualis. Last fall he sang the title role in the Harvard Early Music Society's production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, and last June he appeared as Ivan in the Boston Early Music Festival production of Mattheson's *Boris Goudenow*. He keeps an active teaching schedule with students from Brown University and New England Conservatory's Extension School.

Tenor **Mark Sprinkle** enjoys an active and varied career as a soloist and ensemble singer in repertoire ranging from the 14th to the 18th centu-

ries. He has appeared as a soloist with Concerto Palatino and with the Handel & Haydn Society under Grant Llewellyn and Christopher Hogwood, and sang in the Boston Early Music Festival productions of Rossi's *Orfeo*, Lully's *Thésée* and Conradi's *Ariadne*. In May 2005 he sang the Evangelist in Bach's *St. John Passion* with the Andover Choral Society. He worked for many years with Emmanuel Music and can be heard on their recordings of the motets of Heinrich Schütz and the *St. John Passion*. He is on the voice faculties of Philips Exeter Academy, Salem State College and Boston College.

Mezzo-soprano **Daniela Tošić**, a native of Belgrade, Yugoslavia, toured with the Belgrade-based ensemble Renaissance throughout the former Yugoslavia. In the Boston area she has worked with Ensemble P.A.N., Revels, Balmus, and La Donna Musicale, and has premiered several new works. She is a founding member of Tapestry, the acclaimed vocal ensemble that records with Telarc International and MDG and tours widely throughout the US and abroad. She is also a founding member of the medieval-world fusion ensemble HourGlass.

Darrick Yee has performed with a wide variety of vocal ensembles in the Boston area. He received his bachelor's degree in East Asian Studies and master's degree in Education from Harvard University, where he sang with the Glee Club, the University Choir, the Krokodiloes, and the Collegium Musicum. He currently works for the Massachusetts Department of Education and sings in the ensembles Cut Circle, the Boston Secession, and the King's Chapel Choir.

Upcoming events

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Pre-concert talk at 2:15 by Sean Gallagher, Harvard University

First Church in Cambridge, Congregational

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