

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Directed by Michael Harris

Festival Concert

Sunday 13th August 2006 8.00pm
St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place

The Scottish Chamber Choir

with the St Giles' Chamber Ensemble

Director: Michael Harris

G F HANDEL
(1685–1750)

DIXIT DOMINUS

DIXIT DOMINUS DOMINO MEO
VIRGAM VIRTUTIS TUAE
TECUM PRINCIPIUM IN DIE VIRTUTIS
JURAVIT DOMINUS
TU ES SACERDOS IN AETERNUM
DOMINUS A DEXTRIS TUIS
DE TORRENTE IN VIA BIBET
GLORIA PATRI, ET FILIO

SOPRANO 1 PHILIPPA WOOD
SOPRANO 2 ALISON BISHOP
ALTO ANNE BARKER
TENOR JAMES VERGE
BASS ANDREW O'NEILL

I N T E R V A L of 10 minutes

PETER WARLOCK
(1894–1930)

CAPRIOL SUITE

BASSE-DANSE
PAVANE
TORDION
BRANLES
PIEDS EN L'AIR
MATTACHINS

W A MOZART
(1756–1791)

VESPERAE SOLENNES DE CONFESSORE (K339)

DIXIT DOMINUS

CONFITEBOR TIBI

BEATUS VIR

LAUDATE PUERI

LAUDATE DOMINUM

MAGNIFICAT

SOPRANO	JENNY O'NEILL
ALTO	MARJORY LOBBAN
TENOR	MALCOLM WOOD
BASS	GEORGE BURGESS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Handel *Dixit Dominus*

Handel's setting of the Latin Psalm, *Dixit Dominus*, dates from his time in Rome in the spring of 1707. The work, which begins and ends in G minor, is in eight varied movements.

The first movement, which with its eight solo passages and ritornelli owes something to the concerto grosso idiom, is dominated by a cantus firmus figure heard first in the upper parts that is probably based on a plainchant theme. There then follow two solo movements, one for alto (*Virgam virtutis*) and one for soprano (*Tecum principium*). The opening of the following chorus, *Juravit Dominus*, provides some of the most dramatic writing of the piece, with the intense chromaticisms of the Grave sections. Also of interest is Handel's scoring of endings of the faster passages, particularly the second one where he indicates a diminuendo to *ppp*; such specific dynamic indications were relatively rare at this point in musical history. This is contrasted in the fifth movement with the easy counterpoint of *Secundum ordinem Melchisedech*, where furiously running semiquavers are woven around a slower motif.

The sixth movement (*Dominus a dextris tuis*) is sectional, opening with an instrumental dialogue which gives way to a soprano duet and other soloists followed by the full chorus. The central part of the movement is fugal but at the same time virtuosic, with much energetic semiquaver writing which eventually leads to the hammer-blow imagery of *Conquassabit capita* in the final part of the movement. There is a sense of quiet repose in the following adagio, *De torrente in via*, which precedes the vigorous *Gloria Patri* finale. Handel sets the adagio for soprano soloists accompanied by a chanted tenor and bass part, with a slow moving accompaniment full of gentle dissonances. The concluding *Gloria Patri* is however marked by a return to the brilliantly energetic style, seen especially in the fast moving octave leaps in the vocal parts of the concluding *Amen*.

Warlock Capriol Suite

The English composer Philip Heseltine adopted the pseudonym Peter Warlock early in his career. His formative years, during which he received no formal music education, saw him come under the influence of Delius, with whom he formed a long-lasting friendship. Particularly important for works such as the Capriol Suite was his interest in Elizabethan music, on which he was a leading authority in the 1920s; he was, among other things, an important early editor of music from lute tablature.

The Capriol Suite takes as its basis a number of dance tunes from Arbeau's *Orchésographie* of 1588, each exhibiting different characters, some extrovert, such as Bransles or the concluding Sword Dance (Mattachins), and others, such as Pieds-en-l'air, much more refined, literally in this case giving the impression of the feet not touching the ground. The *Orchésographie* was a dissertation in which a mentor gives guidance to Capriol in the art of 16th century dance.

Mozart *Vesperae solennes de Confessore* K339

This setting of Vesper Psalms and the Magnificat is part of a long tradition of such settings that reaches back to Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers. At the time that Mozart wrote this setting he was in the employ of the Prince Archbishop Hieronymus, Count of Colleredo, who made strict demands on the composer regarding style and length both in his Mass settings and in the music for the evening Office. The result was an extremely compact setting of the text, with the whole cycle taking less time than Handel's setting of the one psalm. At some points the texts are even superimposed upon each other in contrapuntal passages.

The work is a sequence of six movements, rather than a unified whole, with only the keys of the opening *Dixit Dominus* and the concluding *Magnificat* being the same. Apart from the fourth movement, *Laudate pueri*, which is strictly contrapuntal in a *stile antico* idiom for much of its length, each setting is essentially homophonic with opening and closing choral sections interspersed with solo episodes. The other exception to this pattern is the soprano aria that opens *Laudate Dominum*, a simple soaring melody which is then answered by the full chorus.

Programme notes by Michael Harris

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

DIXIT DOMINUS

*Dixit Dominus Domino meo:
Sede a dextris meis: donec ponam inimicos
tuos, scabellum pedum tuorum.
Virgam virtutis tuae
emittet Dominus ex Sion:
dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.
Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae
in splendoribus sanctorum:
ex utero ante luciferum genui te.
Juravit Dominus, et non poenitebit eum:
Tu es sacerdos in aeternum
secundum ordinem Melchisedech.
Dominus a dextris tuis,
confregit in die irae suae reges.
Judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas,
conquassabit capita in terra multorum.
De torrente in via bibet:
propterea exaltabit caput.
Gloria Patris et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

The Lord said to my lord:
"Sit at my right hand, until I make your
enemies your footstool."
The Lord will send you the sceptre of your
power from Zion: you will reign in the midst of
your enemies.
In the day of your power, the people will make
you offerings with a holy worship before dawn
breaks.
The Lord has sworn and will not turn back:
"You are a priest for ever, after the order of
Melchisedek."
The Lord at your right hand will destroy kings
in the day of his wrath. He will judge among
the nations, filling (places) with the dead, and
will shatter heads in many lands.
He will drink from the brook beside the way:
therefore he will lift up his head.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the
Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now,
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Psalm 110

CONFITEBOR TIBI

*Confitebor tibi Domine in toto corde meo
in consilio justorum et congregatione.
Magna opera Domini exquisita in omnes
voluntates ejus.
Confessio et magnificentia opus ejus
et justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.
Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, misericors
et miserator et justus.
Escam dedit timentibus se.
Memor erit in saeculum testamenti sui.
Virtutem operum suorum annuntiabit populo
suo ut det illis hereditatem gentium.
Opera manuum ejus veritas et iudicium; fidelia
omnia mandata ejus: confirmata in saeculum
saeculi, facta in veritate et aequitate.*

I will praise the Lord with my whole heart in the
company of the upright and among the
congregation.
The works of the Lord are great and sought out
by all who take delight in them.
His deeds are acknowledged and splendid and
his righteousness stands for ever.
His marvellous acts have made him be
remembered: he shows pity, is compassionate
and merciful.
He gives food to those that fear him.
He remembers his covenant for ever.
He showed his people the power of his acts in
giving them the heritage of the heathen.
The works of his hands are faithful and just and
all his commandments are sure; they stand firm
for ever and ever, they are done in faithfulness
and in truth.

*Redemptionem misit Dominus populo suo:
mandavit in aeternum testamentum suum.*

Sanctum et terribile nomen ejus.

*Initium sapientiae timor Domini,
intellectus bonus omnibus facientibus eum:
laudatio ejus manet in saeculum saeculi.*

Gloria . . .

The Lord sent redemption to his people:
he ordained his covenant for ever.

Holy is his name and worthy to be feared.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of
wisdom, and of good understanding are those
who keep his commandments: his praise shall
endure for ever.

Glory . . .

Psalm 111

BEATUS VIR

*Beatus vir qui timet Dominum:
in mandatis ejus volet nimis.
Potens in terra erit semen ejus:
generatio rectorum benedicetur.
Gloria et divitiae in domo ejus:
et justitia eius manet in saeculum saeculi.
Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis:
misericors et miserator, et justus.
Jucundus homo qui miseretur et commodat,
disponet sermones suos in iudicio:
quia in aeternum non commovebitur.
In memoria aeterna erit justus:
ab auditione mala non timebit.
Paratum cor ejus, sperare in Domino,
non commovebitur donec
despiciat inimicos suos.
Dispensit dedit pauperibus:
justitia ejus manet in saeculum saeculi:
cornu ejus exaltabitur in gloria.
Peccator videbit, et irascetur,
dentibus suis fremet et tabescet:
desiderium peccatorum peribit.
Gloria . . .*

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord and
greatly delights in his commandments.

His children shall be mighty in the land:
a race of upright men who will be blessed.

Riches and plenty shall be in his house
and his righteousness stands for ever.

Light arises in darkness for the upright:
he is compassionate, merciful and fair.

It goes well with the man who acts generously
and lends, who guides his affairs with justice:
surely he shall never be moved.

The righteous shall be held in everlasting
remembrance. He will not fear bad tidings.

His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.
He is confident and will not fear:
he will see the downfall of his enemies.

He gives freely to the poor:
his righteousness stands for ever;
his head is uplifted in glory.

The wicked man will see it and be angry:
he will gnash his teeth and consume away,
and the hope of the wicked shall fail.

Glory . . .

Psalm 112

LAUDATE PUERI

(Bass) *Laudate pueri Dominum, laudate nomen
Domini.
(Tenor) Sit nomen Domini benedictum, ex hoc
nunc, et usque in saeculum, laudabile
nomen Domini.
(Alto) A solis ortu usque ad occasum, laudabile
nomen Domini.
(Soprano) Excelsus super omnes gentes
Dominus, et super coelos gloria ejus.*

Praise the Lord, you that are his servants:
O praise the name of the Lord.

Let the name of the Lord be blessed
from this time forward and for ever:
let the name of the Lord be praised.

From the rising of the sun to its going down
let the name of the Lord be praised.

The Lord is exalted above all the nations
and his glory is above the heavens.

*Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster,
qui in altis habitat, et humilia respicit
in coelo et in terra?
Suscitans a terra inopem
et de stercore erigens pauperem,
ut collocet eum cum principibus populi sui.
Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo,
matrem filiorum laetantem.
Gloria . . .*

Who is like the Lord our God, who has so high
a dwelling, yet condescends to look on things
in heaven and on earth beneath?
He raises the lowly from the dust, and lifts the
poor out of the dunghill, that he may set them
among the princes of his people.
He causes the barren woman to keep house,
and makes her the joyful mother of children.
Glory . . .

Psalm 113

LAUDATE DOMINUM

*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes:
laudate eum omnes populi:
quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia
ejus, et veritas Domini manet in aeternum.
Gloria . . .*

O praise the Lord all you nations:
O praise him all you people.
For great is his loving kindness toward us, and
the faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever.
Glory . . .

Psalm 117

NOTE: The numbering of the Psalms given above follows the Protestant usage,
and the translations are based on the Alternative Service Book 1980.

MAGNIFICAT

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum,
et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo;
quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae.
Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes. Quia fecit mihi magna, qui
potens est, et sanctum nomen eius,
et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.
Fecit potentiam brachio suo, dispersit superbos
mente cordis sui,
deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles,

esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit
inanes.
Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiae suae, sicut locutus est ad patres
nostros, Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

Gloria . . .*

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord:
my spirit rejoices in God my saviour; for he has
looked with favour on his lowly servant.
From this day, all generations will call me
blessed. The Almighty has done great things for
me, and holy is his name.
He has mercy on those that fear him in every
generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm: he has
scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.
Glory . . .

Luke 2:46–55

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Since its formation in 1968, the **Scottish Chamber Choir** has performed throughout Scotland and Northern England to great acclaim. Each season the choir presents four concerts in Edinburgh, climaxing with an appearance at the Festival Fringe. These are usually supplemented by a Christmas concert and guest appearances at local Music Societies and Festivals throughout the year, keeping members quite busy!

The choir sings both shorter items from the chamber choir repertoire and more extended works, such as the Bach *St John Passion* at our Festival Fringe concert in 2004. Whilst some concerts are given *a cappella*, at others we are joined by a variety of instrumental forces, making possible an exceptional freedom of programming and great interest for both participants and audience.

The choir's hallmark has always been its breadth of repertoire, encompassing a wide range of music from the 16th century to the present day, with music by living composers featuring in programmes during most seasons. Often there is a thread linking a series of concerts, encouraging regular attendance. The highly successful and critically praised Silver Jubilee season, for example, concentrated on 20th century British music, and was recognised by an Enterprise Award from the Performing Rights Society – one of only three such awards in Scotland.

From time to time, vacancies occur in all sections of the choir. Any singer interested in obtaining further details should contact Bill Wood, the President, by phone on 0131 339 7663 or by email at info@scottishchamberchoir.org.uk. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings in the Ian Tomlin School of Music at Napier University's Craighouse campus.

Michael Harris received his earliest musical education as a chorister of Gloucester Cathedral. He was Organ Scholar of St Peter's College, Oxford, and continued his studies at the Royal College of Music. He studied organ with Nicholas Danby and has taken part in masterclasses given by, among others, Nicolas Kynaston, Daniel Roth and Piet Kee.

Michael has been Organist and Master of the Music of St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, since November 1996; he is also a Lecturer at the Ian Tomlin School of Music in Napier University, Edinburgh. Prior to moving to Edinburgh he held posts as Sub-Organist of Leeds Parish Church and Assistant Organist of Canterbury Cathedral. As Organist of St Giles' Cathedral he hosts many organ concerts on the famous Rieger organ (built in 1992) and his work has involved him in numerous recordings and broadcasts, both for Television and Radio. Under his direction the Cathedral Choir has visited the USA and Greece, and in October 2006 will undertake a short tour of southern France.

His solo recordings include *The Organ at St Giles'*, and he has directed the Cathedral Choir in a number of CD recordings, including *An Edinburgh Celebration* to mark their first tour of the USA in Autumn 2004.

Elsewhere Michael has given recitals at many venues in Germany, Belgium, Italy and the USA, as well as in the UK. Since 1998 he has been Musical Director of the Scottish Chamber Choir. He is also much involved in organ and choral education and is Director of the Edinburgh Organ Academy, an international annual Springtime organ course founded in 1998.

Keep in touch with the Choir – visit our web site at

www.scottishchamberchoir.org.uk

to see our plans for the season, details of forthcoming concerts
and useful links, plus an archive of our programmes back to 1993.

The Scottish Chamber Choir

Sopranos	Alison Bishop	Jenny O'Neill
	Adrienne Burgess	Sasha Salinasova
	Rebecca Caskie	Jacobine Scott
	Lorraine Fraser	Adriana Skaraas
	Jenny Mackenzie	Philippa Wood
	Pauline McClellan	Milda Zinkus
Contraltos	Anne Barker	Guen Innes
	Bridget Beagan	Marjory Lobban
	Jean Brodie	Alison McCleery
	Myra Brown	Sheila Robertson
Tenors	Andrew Polson	Bill Wood
	James Verge	Malcolm Wood
Basses	Mike Arthur	Frank Lucas
	George Burgess	Andrew O'Neill
	Bryan Campbell	Martin Tarr

The St Giles' Chamber Ensemble

Violin 1	Ian Laing (leader)	Linda Herkess
	Sheena Robertson	
Violin 2	Fiona Coutts	Daya Rasaratnam
	Peter Dayan	
Viola	Fiona Mackintosh	Alison Lucas
Cello	Ruth Beauchamp	Mary Stabler
Double Bass	Margaret Graham	
Trumpet	Alistair Douglas	Richard Parton
Timpani	Stuart Haigh	
Chamber Organ	Philip Sawyer	