



St Alphege Church, Solihull

Wednesday 9th July at 1.10pm

A Lunchtime Recital given by

Jonathan Vining

Accompanied by **Nicholas Johnson**

Programme

Domine Deus (Gloria)	Vivaldi
Agnus Dei (Coronation Mass)	Mozart
Alleluia (Exsultate Jubilate)	Mozart
Benedictus (Little Organ Mass)	Haydn
On Mighty Pens (The Creation)	Haydn
Corpus Christi Carol	Britten
The Birds	Britten
The Turtle Dove	Vaughan Williams
Pie Jesu (Requiem)	Fauré
Evening Hymn	Purcell

Domine Deus from Gloria

Antonio Vivaldi

1678 – 1741

Vivaldi worked in the Ospedale Della Pietà, an orphanage for talented girls. He composed many sacred works, as well as hundreds of instrumental concertos. It is believed that he composed three settings of the Gloria, although one is lost. This version was rediscovered in the 1920s and the first modern performance was in 1939.

The Gloria in D to accommodate trumpets, is typical of Vivaldi's works with its uplifting nature and its clear melodies and rhythms. The text is straight from the Latin Mass, and it would have been used liturgically, although nowadays it is almost always performed in a concert setting.

The Domine Deus has a "Sicilienne" feel in 12/8 time, with oboe obbligato and continuo. The oboe plays in between the soprano phrases and sometimes in 3rds or 6ths with the soloist. The bass line uses an octave pattern throughout, echoing the bass line of the opening movement.

*Domine Deus,
Rex caelestis,
Deus pater omnipotens.*

*Lord God,
heavenly King,
God the Father almighty*



Antonio Vivaldi

Agnus Dei from the Coronation Mass

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756 – 1791

Mozart wrote a substantial amount of solo vocal and choral music, ranging from the short and serene motet Ave Verum Corpus to the dazzling and spirited Exsultate Jubilate. Of his large-scale choral works, the Missa Solemnis and the Requiem (both of which were unfinished) show him in serious, darker mood.

The Mass in C, K317 was composed for the Easter Day service in 1779 for the Archbishop in Salzburg. The Archbishop appears to have preferred a hybrid style of mass, and this conforms to that, with the use of wind instruments suggesting a “Solemn Mass” and its length suggesting a “Short Mass”. Mozart himself wrote that a mass must not last more than three quarters of an hour, but must also be grand with a variety of instruments. The nickname “Coronation Mass” comes from it being performed for the coronation of Francis I as King of Bohemia in 1792.

There is a marked similarity between the operatic style of the soprano solo of the Agnus Dei and the aria “Dove Sono” from The Marriage of Figaro, which was very popular at the time.

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.

The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for the Agnus Dei from the Coronation Mass. The score is written on multiple staves, with the vocal line (Soprano) at the top and instrumental parts below. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The page is numbered '14' in the top left corner. The title 'Agnus Dei' is written in the top right, along with the composer's name 'Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart' and the date '1779'. There are also some handwritten notes and markings on the right side of the page, including the word 'Liguri' and the number '110'.

Alleluia from Exsultate, Jubilate

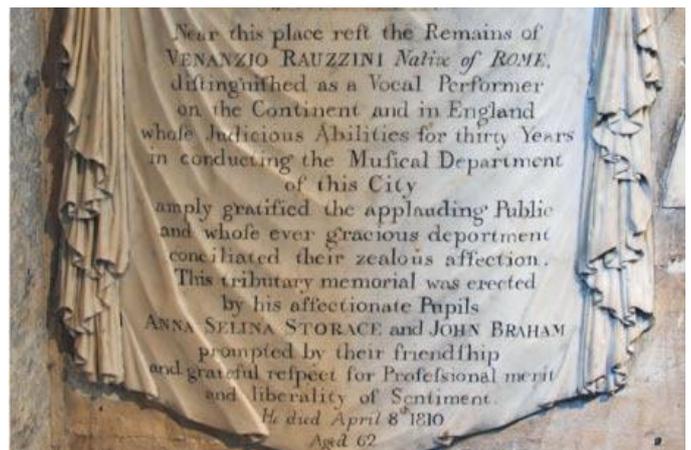
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Exsultate, Jubilate, a three movement motet, was composed in Milan when Mozart was still a teenager. It was composed for the Castrato Venanzio Rauzzini who was much admired for his powerful and high voice. In modern times, it is almost always performed by female sopranos or boy trebles. Mozart composed it in under three weeks, while his opera Lucio Silla, in which Rauzzini took a leading role, was being premiered. It was first performed in the Church of San Antonio in Milan in January 1773.

The Motet was written for Solo voice, orchestra and organ. The author of the text is unknown, and the music does not make it suitable for liturgical use, but as a Concert Aria in an operatic style. Much of Mozart's liturgical music is also written in an operatic style, which church leaders did not always like.

Mozart enjoyed writing for the voice, and this shows in his works. He is able to bring out the beauty of the voice, while showing off the skill of the singer. This is shown to great effect in the Alleluia with the long coloratura passages, based around an eight-bar melody, and the high C at the end, which was not written in the original score but is often added in by choice by performers.

Text: Alleluia



Venanzio Rauzzini and his memorial in Bath

Benedictus from Missa Brevis St. Joannis de Deo (Little Organ Mass)

Franz Joseph Haydn

Haydn composed the Little Organ Mass in the mid-1770s for the Eisenstadt House of the Order of the Brothers of Mercy, and dedicated it to Saint John of God. The Missa Brevis was popular in mid-eighteenth century Austria as it was compact and used smaller groups of players. In this Mass he uses an orchestra of a string quartet and continuo and four-voice chorus, perhaps because it was first played in a very tiny chapel.

The structure of the Mass indicates that it was to be used liturgically, with each movement being kept quite short. The chorus sings each movement except the Benedictus which uses soprano soloist.

It was common practice to use a longer and more decorative setting of the Benedictus, and this was often the musical highlight of the mass. This is no exception as the music grows much more expressive, with an elaborate organ part and the strings providing a fitting accompaniment for the simple but effective solo line, which can be enhanced with ornamentation.

*Benedictus qui venit
In nomine Domine*

*Blessed is he who comes
In the name of the Lord*



The Chapel of the Brothers
of Mercy at Eisenstadt



Franz Joseph Haydn

“And God Said, Let the Waters” and “On Mighty Pens” from The Creation

Franz Joseph Haydn

1732 – 1809

Haydn was invited by the impresario JP Salomon to visit England in 1790, and was a great success. Salomon commissioned the Creation, providing Haydn with a libretto based on the book of Genesis and Paradise Lost, originally intended for Handel 50 years before. On returning to Vienna, Haydn asked Baron Gottfried van Swieten to translate the libretto into German, so that the work could be performed in either German or English using the same music.

The 63 year old Haydn took two years to write it. He refused to hurry, saying that he “intended it to last a long time”. It was first performed in Vienna, and was very successful, rivalling Messiah and becoming the iconic oratorio of Austria.

This Recitative and Air open part two of the three-part work, and represent the fifth day, the creation of birds. The Air expressively imitates the flight of the eagle using an ascending scale, then shows the merry lark, the cooing dove and the beautiful song of the nightingale. The singing of the birds is represented in a very original way for its time.

Recitative:

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heav'n.

Air (Gabriel):

*On mighty pens up lifted soars
The eagle aloft, and cleaves the sky
In swiftest flight, to the blazing sun.*

*His welcome bids to morn the merry lark,
And cooing calls the tender dove his mate.
From ev'ry bush and grove resound
The nightingale's delightful notes.
No grief affected yet her breast,
Nor to a mournful tale were tun'd
Her soft enchanting lays.*

The Eagle



The Nightingale

Skylark



Corpus Christi Carol

Benjamin Britten

1913- 1976

This carol is an arrangement, by Britten himself, of Variation 5 from “A Boy was Born”, for solo voice or a few voices and piano. The original was dedicated to the treble John Hahessy, from Westminster Cathedral. The text is from an anonymous 15th Century carol which Britten discovered when he was 19, although he wrote this aged 47 in 1961.

In “A Boy was Born” it is written for boys’ voices superimposed over female voices singing a setting of “In the Bleak Midwinter”.

The text is a medieval courtly parable, in which the knight represents Christ, the maid his mother and the falcon the Holy Spirit, taking Christ up to Heaven, while Christ is bleeding for the sins of the world.

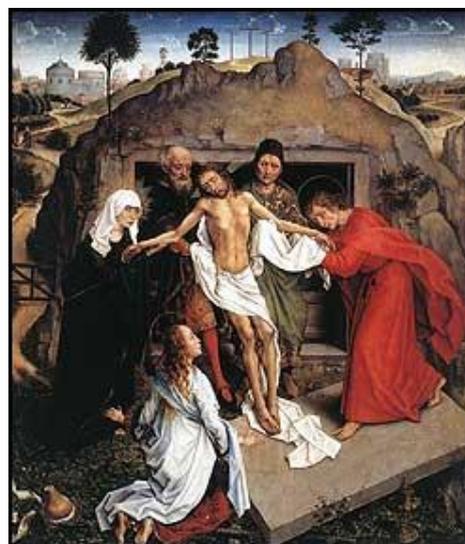
This setting evokes a sense of timelessness, with a simple accompaniment and a repetitive melody which only ranges just over one octave, from D to Top E.

*He bare him up, he bare him,
He bare him into an orchard brown.
Lully, Lullay, The falcon hath borne my make away.
In that orchard there was an hall,
That was hanged with purple and pall.
And in that hall there was a bed,
It was hanged with gold so red
Lully Lullay, The falcon hath borne my make away.
In that bed there lieth a knight,
His woundes bleeding, day and night.
By that bedside kneeleth a may,
And she weepeth both night and day.
Lully Lullay, The falcon hath borne my make away.
And by that bedside there standeth a stone,
Corpus Christi written thereon.*



Benjamin Britten

Rogier van der Weyden.
Entombment, 1450



The Birds

Benjamin Britten

1913 – 1976

Britten wrote 'The Birds' when he was only 16 years old, and revised it a year later when he entered it for the Royal College of Music's annual composition scholarship competition. He dedicated it to his mother, and it became one of her favourite songs. It was sung at her funeral, and also at the wedding of Britten's sister, Beth. Britten's teacher at the time was Frank Bridge, who helped him finish it.

The text is by Hilaire Belloc and the music reflects the childlike nature of the text. It is a beautiful song, and shows how Britten, at this early age, benefitted from a more simplistic approach, although the piano part gradually becomes more elaborate to reflect the text. Britten uses what was to become one of his key techniques at the end, as the piece ends in the "wrong key" which nevertheless seems perfectly logical. Britten used this technique many times, including in the 'Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings' and the 'War Requiem'.

*When Jesus Christ was four years old,
The angels brought Him toys of gold,
Which no man ever had bought or sold.*

*And yet with these He would not play.
He made Him small fowl out of clay,
And blessed them till they flew away.*

*Tu creasti, Domine.
Jesus Christ, Thou child so wise,
Bless mine hands and fill mine eyes,
And bring my soul to Paradise.*



The Turtle Dove

Ralph Vaughan Williams

1872 – 1958

Ralph Vaughan Williams is considered by some to be the most important British composer of his time. He wrote a wide variety of works, including vocal and instrumental, set to sacred and secular texts, as well as dance, film and theatre music. He spent ten years building up a collection of folk songs from Norfolk, Surrey, Sussex, Herefordshire and other counties.

Many of his settings are more than mere transcriptions of what he heard, including “The Turtle Dove”. Vaughan Williams came across the melody in Sussex in 1904, and he first published his setting in 1919, since when it has been re-arranged for various combinations of voices. The music grows in intensity to reflect the traveller being destined to roam the earth while his love is left behind, ending quietly, as it began as he regrets the loss of his love.

*Fare you well, my dear, I must be gone,
And leave you for a while;
If I roam far away I'll come back again,
Though I roam ten thousand miles, my dear,
Though I roam ten thousand miles.*

*So fair thou art, my bonny lass,
So deep in love am I;
But I never will prove false to the bonny lass I love,
Till the stars fall from the sky, my dear,
Till the stars fall from the sky.*

*The sea will never run dry, my dear,
Nor the rocks melt with the sun,
But I never will prove false to the bonny lass I love,
Till all these things be done, my dear,
Till all these things be done.*

*O yonder doth sit that little turtle dove,
He doth sit on yonder high tree,
A-making a moan for the loss of his love,
As I will do for thee, my dear,
As I will do for thee.*



Pie Jesu

Fauré

1845-1924

Fauré wrote the Requiem in D minor, Op. 48 while he was organist at the church of La Madeleine in Paris. He began it in 1887, for pleasure, using elements of ideas he had 10 years before. He first wrote it for two soloists, chorus, organ and small orchestra. In 1900 he adapted it for full symphony orchestra. He was careful not to make the texture too thick because he didn't want it to be too Germanic or operatic in style. He intended the soprano line to be sung by children, including the Pie Jesu. In 1924 the full version was performed at Fauré's own funeral.

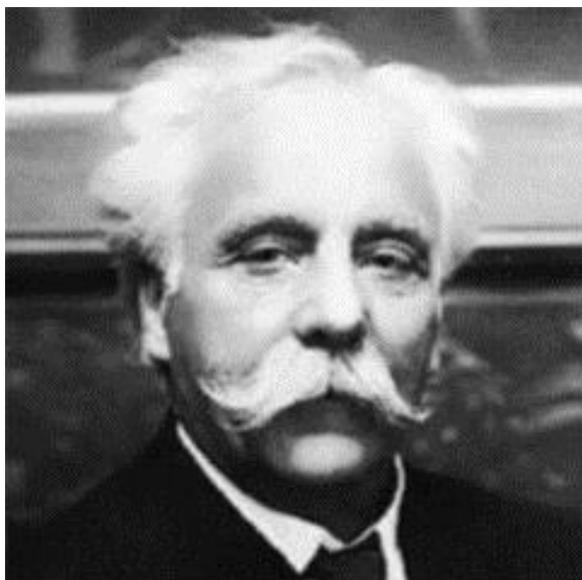
Fauré wanted people to get comfort, rather than dreading the Day of Judgement, so he omitted the Dies Irae, and included the Pie Jesu, with words mostly taken from the Sequence, to replace the Benedictus.

Pie Jesu starts with a melody line which forms the basis for the rest of the movement which is in Ternary form. The lyrical melody and accompaniment are a statement of hope for eternal rest and peace.

*Pie Jesu, Domine
Dona eis requiem
Sempiternam requiem*

*Blessed Jesu, Lord I pray
in thy mercy, grant them rest,
grant them everlasting rest.*

trans. John Rutter



Gabriel Fauré



The Church of La Madeleine, Paris

Evening Hymn

Henry Purcell

1659 -1695

Text: William Fuller. Arr. Whittaker

Purcell became Organist at Westminster Abbey and composed much music for Church and Court services, as well as composing secular songs. He wrote the first English opera, “Dido and Aeneas”. (1689)

“Evening Hymn” featured in Henry Playford’s 1688 collection “Harmonia Sacra”, setting words by Dr William Fuller, late Lord-Bishop of Lincoln. It wasn’t intended for performance during the liturgy, but perhaps for a small private concert or service.

The melody line is set over a ground bass, which is mostly a repeating five bar, descending pattern. This makes the piece an example of a chaconne (a dance), which was originally used for upbeat music, but by this time was being used for more stately music. The continuo would use figured bass to improvise an accompaniment. The melody doesn’t always follow the five bar pattern which makes the piece more interesting. Purcell appears to have indicated the tempo, “Slow”, which is also quite unusual for this time.

*Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light, and bid the World good-night,
to the soft Bed my body I dispose, but where shall my soul repose?
Dear, dear God, even in Thy Arms, and can there be any so sweet security!
Then to thy rest, O my Soul!
and singing, praise the mercy that prolongs thy Days;
Hallelujah.*



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Recitals at St Alphege, Solihull

Lunchtime Recitals are held each **second and fourth Wednesday** of the month at 1.10pm by kind permission of the church wardens and clergy of this church. They feature visiting recitalists, and our choristers and music staff. The next organ recital is on 23rd July at 1.10pm and features Paul Carr of St Paul's, Birmingham. On 9th August, we will welcome Timothy Emberson (Baritone) and Eden Walker (Piano) whose recital is entitled "Schubertiade", featuring a selection of songs from "Schwanengesang" and others, celebrating Schubert's finest works.

Friends of the Music Festival Weekend: 9th - 13th July

Wednesday 9th July, 1.10pm – Lunchtime Recital – Jonathan Vining
6.30pm – Choral Evensong

Friday 11th July, 7.30pm. Festival Evensong followed by Harp Recital.
Refreshments will be served.

Saturday 12th July, 7.30pm. Supper by Candlelight at the Gatehouse, with entertainment from Catherine Arlidge, CBSO violinist.
Tickets £22.50 from John Emmett, tel 01675 443274,
jxemmett@gmail.com

Sunday 13th, Former Choristers' Reunion.

11am Eucharist with all choirs, former choristers and orchestral accompaniment. Chorister presentations will take place during this service.

Bring and Share Lunch in Oliver Bird Hall, all very welcome.

3.30pm Choral Evensong with St Alphege Boys' and Men's Choirs, joined by former choristers.

We thank you for your attendance. There will be a retiring collection at the end of this recital to assist with the music making in this church and the upkeep of the organ, to ensure that it continues to work soundly in the years to come. Please do give as generously as you can.

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