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Harry Christophers & The Sixteen

Tenebrae Responsories
The Strathclyde Motets
The Sixteen
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS
In August 2009, we gave the world premiere of James MacMillan’s *Miserere*. When I received the score, I was overwhelmed to see that James had dedicated it to me. The work had been commissioned by the Flanders Festival and the concert in Antwerp’s glorious Carolus-Borromeuskerk was recorded by both Belgian TV and Radio. Even though Allegri’s famous *Miserere* was in the same programme, it was James’s rendition of Psalm 51, in the composer’s presence, that received a prolonged standing ovation. The following year we gave the UK premiere at the Spitalfields Festival in Hawksmoor’s equally glorious Christ Church; even without the composer present, its reception resulted in another prolonged standing ovation.

Personally, I think that James ranks amongst a trio of truly great composers of sacred music, the other two being Tomás Luis de Victoria and Francis Poulenc. They have a common focus in their total commitment to the Catholic faith, but, for me, what makes them so exceptional is their intensely personal approach to the Scriptures. Of course, it is always said that penitential texts bring out the best in composers and, as with Victoria and Poulenc, that is true of MacMillan. I defy even the strongest atheist not to be moved by James’s *Miserere* or his *Tenebrae Responsories*. The demands made on the singers, especially in the latter, are extraordinary; not only are they harmonically complicated, but they are also technically demanding. Nevertheless, my goodness me, if you were to ask any of my singers whether they were rewarding to perform, the answer would be a resounding “Yes!” Some of the effects he produces are simply brilliant: the low pianissimo of the tenors and basses at the outset, creating a sense of darkness with moments of total silence; the sighing hums of the upper voices at the end of the second movement; the mixture of chanting and babbling by the male voices as the sopranos tell us ‘how they led him (Jesus) to Caiaphas the High Priest where the scribes and Pharisees were met together’ in the final movement; the fortissimo open fifth which crescendos through a series of clusters ‘so that he (Peter) could see the end’; the final virtuosic soprano solo reciting the whole of the text as she walks off into the distance “The wicked man betrayed Jesus to the chief priests and elders of the people. Put Peter followed him afar off, to see the end’ in a Moorish wail that transports us all to the outpouring of grief at Golgotha.

In 2001, for the first time in our history, The Sixteen commissioned a new liturgical work; it had always been my intention to do this, but I was intent on ensuring that it would be a composition that survived the test of time. The result was *O bone Jesu*, and I have no doubt that in this work by James MacMillan we have found that lasting voice. There is a wealth of outstanding music on this CD. Collectively, we feel very honoured and humbled by James’s work and are very proud of our association with him. Wherever we go, be it in the UK, USA or Europe, and whenever one of his compositions is in the programme, surrounded by other great composers, it is always James’s works that have had the greatest effect on the audience. That says it all.

With thanks to Robert Gray, Simon Haslam, Mark & Liza Loveday, and Timothy & Damaris Sanderson for making this recording possible.
B orn in Ayrshire in 1959, the Scottish composer James MacMillan is one of Britain’s most inspirational composers: passionate and articulate; deep-thinking and reflective; unafraid to speak out on moral, theological and social issues; and a master-craftsman.

MacMillan’s profound Roman Catholic faith dates from his youth. At Edinburgh University he was attracted to the Dominican Order: later, when Dominicans assumed the care of St. Columba’s Church, Maryhill, in Glasgow, MacMillan formed its amateur choir, and still conducts it. Every week he writes music especially for the liturgy. Choral works such as Cantos Sagrados, A Child’s Prayer, Seinte Mari Moder Milde and Seven Last Words from the Cross have a unique, moving quality that has earned him countless admirers.

For regular visits to St. Columba’s by Strathclyde University Choir, MacMillan has composed most of his (to date) fourteen ‘Strathclyde Motets’, uplifting settings (in four to eight parts) of the Propers of the Mass for Sundays and Feast Days. They range from penitential and consolatory to enraptured and celebratory.

These often employ plainchant, drawn from the Graduale Romanum. Plainsong offers a link with Christianity’s earliest roots: the chants have a timeless feel and spiritual zeal with which MacMillan warmly identifies. He rarely states plainsong simply and by rhythmic adaptation or elaborate ornamentation he skilfully disguises the chant.

This beautiful decoration has roots in the ancient Gaelic practice of ‘keening’ (caoine, funeral wail or lament); and in traditional instrumental music. ‘The way a bagpiper plays pibroch’, he points out, ‘is judged by his ornamentation: Celtic folk music wouldn't be the same without it.’ Lower lines are often static, sustaining a bagpipe-like ‘drone’, which also harks back to early composers like Pérotin.

‘I was very lucky’, MacMillan recalls, ‘that I learned to study and sing 16th-century
polyphony early on, at school and university. Byrd, Palestrina and Lassus provide crucial lessons for a composer: how to spin larger-scale structures, and manage complexity in not just choral but multi-layered orchestral music.

‘In liturgical music,’ he adds, ‘silence is important: pauses allow the music to resonate not just in the building, but in the ears and minds of listeners.’

MacMillan’s powerful Miserere is dedicated to Harry Christophers. It was commissioned by the Flanders Festival Antwerp and premiered by The Sixteen in the Carolus-Borromeuskerk, Antwerp on 29 August 2009. In eight parts, it is a setting of one of the Christian Church’s great penitential texts, from Psalm 51, also set by Josquin, Palestrina, Gesualdo and Lassus, and most famously, Allegri. It is a steady progression from guilt and sin to hope and optimism, and MacMillan brilliantly captures this urgent sense of forward journey.

Miserere opens sombrely in E minor, with close-harmonied tenors and basses, but quickly brightens at ‘misericordia’ – ‘forgiveness’. Sopranos sing in embellished canon an angelic passage (marked ‘keening, crying’) that flows like pure, healing water. Drawing closer, they soar ever higher over a hushed ‘mm’ in lower parts; then die away. After a forceful interruption this lilting melody returns in unison, then in serene four-part canon. A new climax cedes to a pleading stepwise descending sequence. Four lines of bare plainsong follow, like a moment of frozen stillness. The dark opening returns, desolate yet achingly beautiful, now in A minor. A dramatic eruption of the keening melody ensues, in triads. The plainsong now recurs in each voice in turn, and each time in response a soloist wordlessly sings the sopranos’ decorated tune, now unadorned. The effect is sensational. Then miraculously, the dark opening sequence is metamorphosed into a warm, glowing E major. A gentle fadeout completes this redemptive spiritual journey.

Data est mihi omnis potestas belongs to MacMillan’s 2007 Strathclyde Motets, and is dedicated to Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow. A jubilant eight-part communion motet for Ascension Day, based on St. Matthew, Chapter 28, it enshrines Christ’s injunction to his disciples (essential to the Dominican Order of Preachers), ‘Go and teach all nations’. It opens with an explosive outburst, launched from a unison F and enriched with lively ornaments. Divided sopranos cascade helter-skelter, in a toccata-like flourish, singing electrifying ‘alleluias’. The pedal note in the basses keeps changing (a MacMillan speciality), enhancing onward movement. At ‘euntes docete’ sopranos revert to the appropriate plainsong. Roles are now reversed: the alleluias shift to the lower voices, and this cedes to a thrilling tutti return of the opening, like a dazzling blaze of light.

MacMillan dedicated Dominus dabit benignitatem to St. Columba’s Church in 2006. Designated for the first Sunday in Advent, and (like most Strathclydes) a cappella or unaccompanied, it is based on the plainsong melody for Psalm 84, partly displaced by octave leaps. The opening is mesmerising: lower voices intone a hypnotic repeating figure eleven times, rising in the alto, above alternating chords below: this continues throughout the motet, like a haunting mantra. Above three Messiaen-like ‘amens’ the sopranos chromatically descend, and are left singing ‘mm’, telescoping a fragment of plainsong before fading on a cluster that slily mimics the altos’ rising motif.

Factus est repente, one of the earliest Strathclydes (2005), is dedicated to Father Brendan Slevin OP, Chaplain to Strathclyde University. It graphically evokes the story from Acts, Chapter 2, where the Disciples are filled with God’s spirit and given strength to go and preach. Hence the sonorous opening surges over a bagpiper’s drone, as if the ‘rush of mighty wind’ were indeed hurtling through. The setting of ‘sonus’ is soaring and flamboyant; ornaments cloak the sopranos’ plainchant. Parallel fifths add a medieval feel. Soprano and tenor sing gleefully in octaves; others
hold the keynote, G. ‘Magna’ revisits the wild ecstasy of ‘sonus’: sopranos soar twice to a thrilling top A, before a shyer ‘alleluia’ reappears, settling on G major.

James MacMillan composed \textit{O Radiant Dawn} [5], one of the two Strathclyde Motets sung in English, for his choir at St. Columba’s in 2007. \textit{O oriens, splendor lucis aeternae}, from the seven Christmastide ‘O’ antiphons, compares Christ’s bringing of light and eternal life to the brilliant rising sun, dispensing healing warmth and dispersing shadows at dawn. His four-part setting is simple and hymnlike and similar to the way in which Tallis opened \textit{O nata lux de lumine}. The eagerly rising invocation ‘come’ is heard six times, with affecting alto suspensions. At the passage from Isaiah familiar from Handel’s \textit{Messiah}, ‘The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light’ , upper voices sing in arching parallel thirds, mimicking what precedes. After a first-half repeat, a lovely coda rounds off the section / piece: six ‘amens’, with a forward-shifting bass line, subsiding onto G major.

\textit{O bone Jesu} [6] is James MacMillan’s response to one of the greatest musical works of the Scottish Renaissance: a vast and intricate 19-part motet by Robert Carver (1487-1546). The text, also set by Lassus and Monteverdi, is exquisitely warm and tender. The salient feature of Carver’s setting is its many repetitions of ‘Jesu’: and this MacMillan imitates, harmonising ‘the same melodic motif differently nineteen times’ (before a final descanted twentieth statement), ‘so as to re-clothe Carver’s glorious text in my own Scottish 21st-century language.’

MacMillan’s eight-part motet was commissioned by The Sixteen, who gave its premiere at London’s Southwark Cathedral on 10 October 2002. It was dedicated to his twins, Aidan and Clare, on their first communion. MacMillan works with several motifs, the first (solo tenor) angular, the second (solo alto) in downward flowing semiquavers, plus others later, each complemented by the tender cry ‘Jesu’, set to clustering chords, usually followed by silences. At each call the bass line moves up a semitone, traversing the chromatic scale, so as to ‘dress each appearance in different clothes’.

The motifs are alternated, inverted or intertwined; paired tenors introduce a new rising pattern, and basses initiate a colourful, fugue-like three-part canon. What emerges next is a passage of strange glissandi – expressive vocal slidings by all except first sopranos. For ‘let me not perish…’ MacMillan invokes a four-part fiercely chromatic babble, in contrary motion, edgy and dissonant. The principal motifs are then re-explored, the upper voices blithe and birdlike. Near the close, the dark chromatics are marginally tamed, and the fretful ‘admitte me intrare regnum tuum’ opens onto an impressive sustained crescendo, the final ‘dulcis’ welling up serenely from lower to upper parts, rising skywards – a visionary, celestial moment – to culminate in a surprise last ‘Jesu’ and an ethereal resolution from three solo sopranos.

The Lenten \textit{Videns Dominus} [7], one of MacMillan’s most dramatic motets (2005), describes the raising of Lazarus from the dead, described in St. John, Chapter 11. It is dedicated to Musica Nova’s Alan Tavener, director of music at Strathclyde University. Paired voices in canon evoke a mood of grieving and lamentation, prefacing Jesus’s command: ‘Lazarus, come forth.’ Despite florid ornamentation, this is closely modelled on the Lazarus plainsong. ‘Lazare’, with grace notes on each syllable, is sung nine times, and ‘Veni foras’ (still plainsong) three times, crescendoing. Yet there is no hysteria: all feels mistily suspended, almost floating, and the silences, awed and apprehensive. The effect is magical. Low voices peering through the gloom (plodding triplets suggest Lazarus’s weary emergence) are dark, spectral and haunting. Finally, life restored, the music relaxes, becalmed, onto A minor.

The slow-moving, four-part \textit{Lux aeterna} [8] (2008) sets the well-known text from the Requiem Mass. The dedicatee is Stephen Callaghan, Artistic Director of Glasgow Diocese’s Lentfest. Uniquely among his Strathclydes, MacMillan allots the plainsong, unadorned, to the
altos here, moving a bar at a time like a medieval canus firmus. The opening is broad and spacious: sopranos sing leisurely triplet minims, gradually speeding up. Lower voices mimic the top line: and with a lovely shy intensity, tenors joyously soar above the textures. It ends with seven ‘amens’ (sopranos add an eighth) in two sets, yielding a lovely resolution on the A whence we started.

Uniquely on this recording, In splendoribus sanctorum disports an obbligato instrument, the trumpet, whose expressive, flamboyant flourishes create a special magic and intensity for this confident Strathclyde Motet for Christmas Eve (Nativity) Midnight Mass. It was premiered in 2006 by St. Columba’s Church choir. The plainchant, taken from Psalm 109, is not disguised but sung quite simply, first in unison, rocking like a lullaby, then in organum (parallel fifths) over a bass drone, adding a medieval flavour somehow apt for a humble tribute to the infant Jesus. The trumpet periodically toy with fragments of plainsong, but focuses on Last Post-like flourishes of a fifth: the effect is exalted and uplifting. The two-line text is sung slowly four times: finally the trumpeter plays muted. The whole conveys a sense of wonder at the biblical mystery of the Incarnation. Father Gordian Marshall OP, the dedicatee, supervised the Dominicans’ move to St. Columba’s.

Benedicimus Deum caeli is one of MacMillan’s more recent Strathclyde motets (2010). Its alludes to the touching Old Testament story of Tobias, who embarks on a journey to save his ageing father’s eyesight, and is befriended by the Archangel Raphael. MacMillan’s rapturous setting depicts the angel’s command to the God-fearing Tobias and his family. Plainchant forms the melody, lower sopranos echo it in thirds, tenors parallel both, the altos and basses are more staid. The second ‘benedicimus’ ecstatically extends the plainsong into higher register, triumphant on top Gs. A lilting related phrase keeps transmuting into the joyous main melody, yielding a continuous cycle rather like the exultant peals of change-ringing.

Among the most moving devotional music for Easter Week in the Catholic liturgy are the eighteen Tenebrae Responsories, which form part of the celebration of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Saturday. These texts were set by Victoria, Lassus and Gesualdo, and are of great spiritual intensity, describing the searing events of Holy Week.

MacMillan’s Tenebrae Responsories – commissioned by Cappella Nova and first performed by them at St. Andrew’s in the Square, Glasgow on 4 April 2007, set three of these anguished texts: they poignantly allude to Jesus’s final words on the Cross, his betrayal, and his delivery to judgement.

'The style and range of colours', the composer points out, 'is considerably more complex than in the Strathclyde Motets'. Tenebrae factae sunt starts infernally and spectrally in lower voices. Spitting violence (vicious diminished fifths) at ‘crucifixissent’ heralds a moaning, chromatic descent. A glum, discordant canon ('et circa horam') climaxes loudly at ‘voce magna’. Then an ornamented, whining, medieval-sounding three-part canon (ATT) introduces Christ’s pained cry from the Cross. Lumbering fifths in contrary motion ask, ‘Why hast Thou abandoned me?’ ‘emisit spiritum’ (‘He gave up the ghost’) is simple, beautiful and touching; ‘Pater, in manus tuas’, with all voices massively surging upwards an octave and a half, sounds awe-inspiring. A wild ‘emisit spiritum’ is sombrely echoed an octave below. Lastly sopranos linger above hummed basses, who quietly expire on a low G.

Tradiderunt me opens with three explosive outbursts, the last collapsing by a seventh (G to A) onto a piano chord of D major. Then gentle four-part canons (initiated by basses) and a confidential, atmospheric passage of staccato (‘et inter iniquos’) follow. A long-descending, chromatically-tinged eight-part canon (like an inversion of the upward surge in Tenebrae factae sunt) ensues. The following three-part sequence (SSA) feels strangely exotic, like
an enraptured aubade, one of the most beautiful moments in the Responsories. 'Et sicut gigantes' is, appropriately, slightly clumping, with tumbling chromaticism; the initial falling seventh is recalled, before the opening canon resurfaces (quaeasierunt animam), this time resolving onto C# major (not A). Another climax ('Steterunt contra me') evolves into a miraculous final sequence, with hummed falling sevenths in four upper voices, producing hypnotising clusters that hang magically in the air.

_Jesum tradidit impius_ describes Judas's betrayal in the garden, when Christ is handed over to the High Priests. The three opening cries ('Jesum') are as devastating as those of _O bone Jesu_ were reassuring. Following this exclamation, desolate tenors sing in florid imitation over a long-held bass drone (a bit like Eastern Orthodox chant fusing with Gaelic lament). Lifting upper voices introduce Peter, hovering at a safe distance, and die away ('ut videret finem'). The savage outburst ‘adduxerunt autem’ (the same dramatic falling sevenths as in _Tradiderunt me_) leads to a fascinating passage where all six clustering lower voices mysteriously mutter at a random pace (ad libitum, or senza misura), while sopranos revisit the tenors’ lugubrious, decorative opening music, appending ironic turns to ‘scribes and pharisees’, and swelling to a virulent climax, then silence.

As lower voices repeat St. Peter’s sequence, sopranos softly hum a drone on C#. An angry chromatic ascent (marked _ardente...feroce_) darkly echoes the glorious ascent of ‘in manus tuas’ during _Tenebrae factae sunt_. But the anguish ('Jesum', a shrill high G and A, the falling seventh now recast as a rising tone) yields a mysterious coda: a solo soprano, passionately and urgently, sings a decorative Celtic lament, almost as if at a wake. The effect is exquisite and sublime, as the soloist slowly fades away, repeating the same haunting sequence. The feeling, as the composer says, ‘is of a journey ended, and of completeness.’

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1 MISERERE

soli: Elin Manahan Thomas soprano, Christopher Royall alto, Mark Dobell tenor, Eamonn Dougan bass

_Miserere mei, Deus:
secundum magnam misericordiam tuam._

_Have mercy upon me, O God,
after thy great goodness;
according to the multitude of thy mercies
do away mine offences.
_Wash me throughly from my wickedness;
and cleanse me from my sin._

_For I acknowledge my faults;
and my sin is ever before me._

_Against thee only have I sinned,
and done this evil in thy sight;
that thou mightest be justified in thy saying,
and clear when thou shalt judge._

_Behold, I was shapen in wickedness;
in sin hath my mother conceived me._

_But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts;
and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly._

_Asparges me hyssopo, et mudabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealhabor._

_Audite meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam: et exultabunt ossa humiliata._

_Was the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice._
Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis:
et omnes iniquitates meae dele.
Cor mundum crea in me, Deus:
et spiritum rectum innova, in visceribus meis.
Ne proiecias me a facie tua:
et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.
Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui:
et spiritu principali confirma me.
Docebo iniquos vias tuas:
et impii ad te convertentur.
Libera me de sanquinibus, Deus,
Deus salutis meae:
et exultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.
Domine, labia mea aperies:
et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.
Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedessem utique:
holocaustis non delectaberis.
Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus:
cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicies.
Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion:
et aedificantur muri Jerusalem.
Tunc acceptabis sacrificium justitiae,
oblationes et holocausta:
tunc imponet super altare tuum vitulos.

Turn thy face from my sins;
and put out all my misdeeds.
Make me a clean heart, O God;
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence;
and take not thy holy Spirit from me.
O give me the comfort of thy help again;
and stablish me with thy free Spirit.
Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked;
and sinners shall be converted unto thee.
Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God,
thou that art the God of my health;
and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.
Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord;
et my mouth shall show thy praise.
For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee;
but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.
O be favourable and gracious unto Sion;
build thou the walls of Jerusalem.
Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of
righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations;
them shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.

THE STRATHCLYDE MOTETS

2 Data est mihi omnis potestas

Data est mihi omnis potestas in caelo et in terra, alleluia.
Esuntes, docete omnes gentes,
baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti,
alleluia, alleluia.

All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth, alleluia.
Go therefore and teach all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
allegro, alleluia.

Communion motet for Ascension Day, Matthew 28: 18, 19

3 Dominus dabat benigneatem

Dominus dabat benigneatem:
et terra nostra dabat fructum suum. Amen.

The Lord will bestow his loving kindness,
and our land will yield its fruit. Amen.

Communion motet for the first Sunday in Advent, Psalm 84: 13

4 Factus est repente

Factus est repente de caelo
sonus advenientis spiritus vehementis,
ubercant sedentes, alleluia;
et replete sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto,
loquentes magnalia Dei,
allegro, alleluia.

Suddenly, a sound came from heaven
like the rush of a mighty wind,
in the place where they were sitting,
allegro;
and they were filled with the Holy Spirit,
and they spoke of the great things God had done,
allegro, alleluia.

Communion motet for Pentecost, Acts 2: 2, 4
**O RADIANT DAWN**

O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Isaiah had prophesied, 'The people who walked in darkness have seen the great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.'

Amen.

**Antiphon for 21 December**

**O BONE JESU**

soli: Cecilia Osmond soprano, Rebecca Outram soprano, Mark Dobell tenor, Robert Evans bass

O bone Jesu, O piiissime Jesu, O dulcissime Jesu, O Jesu fili virginis Mariae plenus pietate. O dulcis Jesu, secundum magnum misericordiam tuam, miserere mi. O clementissime Jesu, deprecor te per illum sanguinem pretiosum quem pro peccatoribus effundere voluisti, ut ablaus iniquitatem meam et in me repicias, miserum et indignum peccatorem, et hoc nomen Jesum invocem. O nomen Jesu, nomen dulce, nomen Jesu, nomen dilectable, nomen Jesu, nomen suave; quid enim est Jesus nisi salvator? Ergo, bone Jesu, propter nomen tuum salva me ne peream, et ne permittas me

O kind Jesus, O most loving Jesus, O most sweet Jesus, O Jesus, son of the virgin Mary filled with devotion. O sweet Jesus, according to Thy great mercy, have mercy on me. O most clement Jesus, I pray Thee by that most precious blood which Thou wast pleased to shed for sinners, that Thou wash away my sin and look upon me, wretched and unworthy sinner, even as I call upon this name of Jesus. O nomen Jesu, nomen dulce, nomen Jesu, nomen dilectable, nomen Jesu, nomen suave; quid enim est Jesus nisi salvator?

Ergo, bone Jesu, propter nomen tuum salva me ne peream, et ne permittas me

**THE STRATHclyde MOTETS**

**O Radiant Dawn**

**Videns Dominus**

solo: Mark Dobell tenor

Videns Dominus flentes soreores Lazari ad monumentum, lacrimationes est coram Judaeis, et clamabat: Lazare, veni foras. Et prodict ligatis manibus et pedibus, qui fuerat quatuordecim mortuos. When the Lord saw the sisters of Lazarus in tears near the tomb, he wept in the presence of the Jews and cried: ‘Lazarus, come forth.’ And out he came, hands and feet bound, the man who had been dead for four days.

Communion motet for Pentecost, Acts 2: 2, 4

**Lux aeterna**

Lux aeterna luceat eis, Domine, cum sanctis suis in aeternum, quia pius es. May everlasting light shine upon them, O Lord, with your saints forever, for you are merciful.

Communion motet from the Requiem Mass

whom Thou hast made out of nothing. O kind Jesus, let not my sinfulness be my ruin. I beg Thee, most loving Jesus, let me not be lost whom Thy goodness has made. O sweet Jesus, acknowledge what is Thine and wipe away all that is not. O most loving Jesus, O most longed-for Jesus, O most gentle Jesus. O Jesus, permit me to enter into Thy kingdom, sweet Jesus.
In splendoribus sanctorum
solo: Robert Farley trumpet

In splendoribus sanctorum, 
ex utero ante luciferum genuite.

Amidst the splendours of the heavenly sanctuary, 
from the womb, before the morning star, 
I have begotten you.

Communion motet for Nativity Midnight Mass, Psalm 109: 3

Benedicimus Deum caeli

Benedicimus Deum caeli, 
et coram omnibus viventibus confitebimur ei: 
quia fecit nobiscum misericordiam suam.

Let us bless the God of heaven 
and utter his praises before all who live; 
for he has dealt with us according to his mercy.

Communion motet for Trinity Sunday, Tobias 12: 6

Strathclyde motets: English translation taken from the Gregorian Missal, St Peter's Abbey, Solesmes © 1990

TENEBRAE RESPONSORIES

I  Tenebrae factae sunt

Tenebrae factae sunt, 
dum crucifixissent Jesum Judaei: 
et circa horam nonam exclamavit Jesus 
voce magna: 
Deus meus, ut quid me dereliquisti? 
Et inclinator capite, emisit spiritum. 
Exclamans Jesus voce magna, ait: 
Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.

And darkness fell 
when Jesus was crucified by the Jews; 
and about the ninth hour Jesus cried out 
with a great voice, 
‘O my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ 
And, inclining his head, he gave up his spirit. 
Jesus cried out with a great voice, 
‘Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.’

II  Tradiderunt me

Tradiderunt me in manus impiorum, 
et inter iniquos proiererunt me, 
et non pepercerrunt animae meae: 
congregati sunt adversum me fortes: 
et sicut gigantes steterunt contra me. 
Alieni insurrexerunt adversum me, 
et fortes quasierunt animam meam.

They delivered me into the hands of the impious, 
and cast me out amongst the wicked, 
and spared not my soul. 
The powerful gathered together against me, 
and like giants they stood against me. 
Strangers have risen up against me, 
and the mighty have sought after my soul.

III Jesum tradidit impius

solo: Elin Manahan Thomas soprano

Jesum tradidit impius summis principibus sacerdotum, 
et senioribus populi. 
Petris autem sequebatur eum a longe, 
ut videret finem. 
Adduxerunt autem eum ad Caipham principem sacerdotum, ubi scribae et pharisaei convenerant.

The wicked man betrayed Jesus to the chief priests 
and elders of the people. 
But Peter followed him afar off, 
to see the end. 
And they led him to Caiphas, 
the chief priest, 
where the Scribes and Pharisees were met together.
Harry Christophers

Harry Christophers is known internationally as founder and conductor of The Sixteen as well as a regular guest conductor for many of the major symphony orchestras and opera companies worldwide. He has directed The Sixteen choir and orchestra throughout Europe, America and the Far East gaining a distinguished reputation for his work in Renaissance, Baroque and 20th-century music. In 2000 he instituted the Choral Pilgrimage, a national tour of English cathedrals from York to Canterbury in music from the pre-Reformation, as The Sixteen's contribution to the millennium celebrations. The Pilgrimage in the UK is now central to The Sixteen's annual artistic programme.

In 2008 Harry Christophers was appointed Artistic Director of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society; he is also Principal Guest Conductor of both the Granada Symphony Orchestra and the Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid. As well as enjoying a very special partnership with the BBC Philharmonic, with whom he won a Diapason d'Or, he is a regular guest conductor with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. With The Sixteen he is an Associate Artist at The Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and features in the highly successful BBC television series, Sacred Music, presented by Simon Russell Beale.

Increasingly busy in opera, Harry has conducted numerous productions for Lisbon Opera and English National Opera as well as conducting the UK premiere of Messager's opera Fortunio for Grange Park Opera. He is a regular conductor at Buxton Opera where he initiated a very successful cycle of Handel's operas and oratorios including Semiramide, Samson and Saul. Harry Christophers is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, as well as the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and has been awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Leicester.
After three decades of world-wide performance and recording, The Sixteen is recognised as one of the world’s greatest ensembles. Its special reputation for performing early English polyphony, masterpieces of the Renaissance, Baroque and early Classical periods, and a diversity of 20th-century music, all stems from the passions of conductor and founder, Harry Christophers.

The Sixteen tours internationally giving regular performances at the major concert halls and festivals. At home in the UK, The Sixteen are ‘The Voices of Classic FM’ as well as Associate Artists of Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. The group also promotes the Choral Pilgrimage, an annual tour of the UK’s finest cathedrals.

The Sixteen’s period-instrument orchestra has taken part in acclaimed semi-staged performances of Purcell’s *Fairy Queen* in Tel Aviv and London, a fully-staged production of Purcell’s *King Arthur* in Lisbon’s Belem Centre, and new productions of Monteverdi’s *Il ritorno d’Ulisse* at Lisbon Opera House and *The Coronation of Poppea* at English National Opera.

Over one hundred recordings reflect The Sixteen’s quality in a range of work spanning the music of five hundred years. In 2009 they won the coveted Classic FM Gramophone Artist of the Year Award and the Baroque Vocal Award for Handel’s *Coronation Anthems*. The Sixteen also feature in the highly successful BBC television series, *Sacred Music*, presented by Simon Russell Beale.

In 2011 the group launched a new training programme for young singers called Genesis Sixteen. Aimed at 18 to 23 year-olds, this is the UK’s first fully-funded choral programme for young singers designed specifically to bridge the gap from student to professional practitioner.