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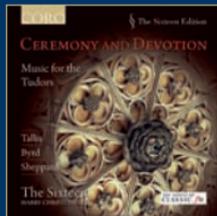


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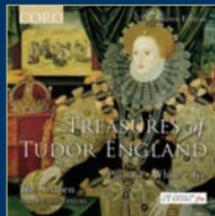
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CORO

The Deer's Cry

Arvo Pärt

William Byrd

The Sixteen

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS



Although separated by over four centuries, the music of William Byrd and Arvo Pärt makes for a perfect match. Both spent many years facing adversity and persecution and both sought solace through their sacred music.

Byrd's later life was lived under constant threat of religious persecution – a devout Catholic and, moreover, a practising Catholic in a country where only the Anglican faith could be celebrated. However, Queen Elizabeth I not only loved music but also possessed a private empathy for Catholicism and in 1575 she granted a patent to William Byrd (now in his 30s) and the aged Tallis to publish music. The result was *Cantiones sacrae*, containing 17 pieces by each of them. Six of the works included in this programme come from this collection, the most monumental of which is *Tribue, Domine*. Its long text comes from the book of Meditations attributed to St Augustine, and Byrd treats us not only to a variety of vocal combinations, but also clear codes to his unswerving Catholic faith. In *Ad Dominum cum tribularer* the urgent words of the psalmist are heard: “I speak peace to them and they clamour for war” (*Ego pacem loquebar et illi bellum conclamabant*), while in *Tribue, Domine* Byrd portrays the word “kingdom” (*imperium*) with a certain triumphalism.

Pärt spent most of his life in Soviet-controlled Estonia – remember, it was not until the summer of 1994 that the last Russian troops withdrew from that country. For the



Photograph: Marco Borggreve

young Pärt it all seemed normal. “We had what we had...it wasn't until I was older that I began to appreciate what it was to live in the Soviet Union, everything enclosed or forbidden.” In 1979 Pärt and his family acquired exit visas to leave the Soviet Union and moved to Berlin; it was around this time that he began to experiment with tintinnabulation – which is what? Perhaps best for Pärt himself to explain: “it is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers – in my life, my music, my work. Here I am alone with silence. I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements – with one voice, with two voices. I build with the most primitive materials – with the triad. The three notes of the triad are like bells. And that is why I called it tintinnabulation.”

The result is music where the text has total clarity but is highly charged in a very specific manner. Pärt's setting of the *Nunc dimittis* is at times tender and serene – “for mine eyes have seen thy salvation” (*quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum*) but then bursts out into exhilarating joy at “a light to lighten the gentiles” (*lumen ad revelationem gentium*). *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* is even more extraordinary, with Jesus' words eloquently delivered and made even more powerful by the silences.

Unlike Byrd, Pärt did not write for the liturgy, but that does not mean his music is any less sacred – far from it. I have no doubt his music will resonate for years to come just as Byrd's has done for centuries.

Harry
Anington,

The Deer's Cry

1	BYRD (c.1540-1623)	<i>Diliges Dominum</i>	3.16
2	BYRD	<i>Christe qui lux es et dies</i>	4.54
3	PÄRT (b.1935)	<i>The Deer's Cry</i>	4.23
4	BYRD	<i>Emendemus in melius</i>	3.58
5	PÄRT	<i>The Woman with the Alabaster Box</i>	6.12
6	BYRD	<i>Miserere mihi, Domine</i>	2.25
7	BYRD	<i>Ad Dominum cum tribularer</i>	10.12
8	TALLIS/BYRD	<i>Miserere nostri</i>	3.00
9	TALLIS (c.1505-1585)	<i>When Jesus went</i>	2.37
10	BYRD	<i>O lux beata Trinitas</i>	4.10
11	PÄRT	<i>Nunc dimittis</i>	6.40
12	BYRD	<i>Laetentur coeli</i>	3.28
13	BYRD	<i>Tribue, Domine</i>	11.31
		Total running time	66.52

The music of the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (b.1935) speaks in ancient accents, shot through with flashes of modernity. Lean, pure, and fired by the enduring tenets of the Christian faith, it shuns everything romantic, and instead hints at arcane rituals acted out in solemn ways. Its medieval quality means that Pärt combines supremely well with genuinely old music, and some thrilling combinations can be imagined. Pärt and Pérotin; Pärt and Machaut; Pärt and Ockeghem; Pärt and Josquin. For this recording, Harry Christophers has aligned Pärt with two Tudor composers, Thomas Tallis (d.1585) and William Byrd (d.1623), a pairing made all the more apt by Harry's choice of some English works that are themselves composed rigorously according to logic and rule, or address the fusion of old with new. Here, Tallis and Byrd meet Pärt on common ground.

There are times when a composer may concern himself with aspects of craft

that are hard or even impossible for the listener to follow. Audiences find this puzzling, and deem such works to be cryptic and mathematical. If music is by definition sound – humanly organized sound – then why organize sounds in such ways that the listener is excluded? The point is neatly made by this disc's opening work, Byrd's eight-voice motet *Diliges Dominum*. If you have the means to do so, try playing this track backwards, and you will find that, words apart, it sounds the same as it does forwards. The piece is a perfect palindrome, yet no one could possibly know that from performance alone. Our brains cannot process temporal symmetry in the way we instantly see visual symmetry.

Why, then, was this weird work written? At least three answers come to mind. First, Byrd composed it because he could. If carefully chosen, chordal sequences and melodies will work both forwards and backwards, and Byrd must have

loved the challenge of working this out for himself. Second, he wrote this crab-canon for the delight of the eight singers who, using Byrd's original notation, must read from only four melodic lines. Four of them sing these melodies forwards, the other four sing them backwards; and by doing so, their eyes unlock the work's musical conceit. But Byrd's third reason for composing this piece may be the most important, for he placed it in a book that ensured its readership across Europe. In 1575, Byrd and Tallis jointly published a collection of motets called *Cantiones sacrae* ('Sacred songs'). It was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, and it was explicitly made for export, to display the brilliance of Tudor culture to the outside world. Small wonder, then, that both Tallis and Byrd do some musical showing off in these motets.

The most breathtaking piece in the 1575 book is the one placed at its end: the seven-voice *Miserere nostri* (track [8]). Usually

this work is credited to Tallis alone, but more likely it is by Tallis *and* Byrd, the two men working collaboratively: first four voices composed by Byrd, then three more added by Tallis. The strange beauty of this piece hints that something arcane lurks under its sonorous surface, and indeed it does – but it can only be grasped by viewing the piece from the singer's perspective, since it too is concerned with sight as well as sound. Just three notated lines are needed to convey this work's seven-voice polyphony, two of them bearing instructions (or 'canons') telling how they must be deciphered. The first melody, attributed to Byrd in the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae*, is to be read by four low-voice singers, all starting on the same note at the same time. The first of them sings the line exactly as written. The second doubles all the durations of the notes (x2), and turns all the intervals upside down. The third singer quadruples the durations (x4) and restores the intervals. The fourth octuples the durations (x8)

and re-inverts the intervals. Thus four different versions of the same melody sound simultaneously, in various states of augmentation and inversion – a conceit that is utterly impossible to follow in sound. Byrd then handed this to Tallis, who deftly added a superstructure: two sopranos sing in straightforward canon at the unison (very easy for listeners to hear), and a free seventh voice plugs some polyphonic gaps. *Miserere nostri, Domine* ('Have mercy on us, Lord') are all the words supplied for this lean and logical motet.

Other works on this recording play compositional games, some more easily discerned than others. Simplest to follow is the two-voice canon in Tallis's *When Jesus went* (track [9]), in which the soprano replicates the baritone an octave higher after two beats. In the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae* this work was published as a motet, *Salvator mundi*, in which form it is most often heard today; but some

Elizabethan manuscripts transmit the music with an English text telling the story of Jesus and the woman with the alabaster box (Matthew 26:6), and our recording opts for this version, to pair with Pärt's *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* (track [5]). Byrd's game in *Christe qui lux es et dies* (track [2]) is also quite easy to follow. Five voices are in play here, and five stanzas of text are set to polyphony. In turn, each voice sings the traditional plainchant melody used for this hymn, starting with the bass (polyphonic stanza 1), then rising through the texture to the soprano (polyphonic stanza 5). Each statement is harmonized in simple block chords filled with surprises – not unlike the choral chanting favoured by Arvo Pärt, in which strings of consonant chords are locally spiced with piquancies.

Cleverer by far are two further Byrd motets from the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae* – 'cleverer' in the sense that they took immense skill to devise, even though

Byrd knew from works by mid-century continental masters such as Nicolas Gombert and Jacobus Clemens non Papa. In *Emendemus in melius* (track [4]), Byrd turned instead to his musical friend and contemporary Alfonso Ferrabosco, an Italian composer-cum-spy resident at the Tudor court, who became Byrd's musical sparring partner in the 1570s. Hence *Emendemus in melius*, Byrd's first contribution to the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae*, which builds on (and frankly improves upon) a piece by Alfonso himself. As for *Laetentur coeli* (track [12]), it reveals Byrd's fully mature style in which Italian and English elements are perfectly fused, and it therefore sets the tone for the rest of Byrd's composing career.

The three pieces by Arvo Pärt all belong to the decade 1997-2007. They speak in Pärt's unmistakable voice, with its unique blend of ancient and modern. Spare textures, drones, notes left hanging as if suspended, structures built around

scales, others that open and close like scissors – and above all, the solemn chanting of words in ways that hint at Orthodox chant: all these are locally present, though differently permuted in each piece. *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* of 1997 (track [5]) sets the narrative text of Matthew 26:6-13, and is the most dramatic of the three. *Nunc dimittis* of 2001 (track [11]), composed for liturgical use, is remarkable for its doxology ('Gloria Patri'), which is crafted in Pärt's bell-like 'tintinnabuli' style; it leaves the listener wondering whether its undulating scales and arpeggios, which gently collide with one another (and against a drone), follow some arcane system or are merely random. Finally *The Deer's Cry* of 2007 (track [3]) sets part of the lorica (incantation) attributed to the fifth-century St Patrick. This powerful text has come to be known by various names; the one chosen by Pärt has also been used for this disc.

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TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

[1] BYRD *Diliges Dominum*

*Diliges Dominum Deum tuum
ex toto corde tuo
et in tota anima tua
et in tota mente tua;
diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum.*

You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your mind;
you shall love your neighbour as yourself.

[2] BYRD *Christe qui lux es et dies*

*Christe qui lux es et dies,
noctis tenebras detegis,
lucisque lumen crederis,
lumen beatum praedicans.*

O Christ, who are light and day,
you disperse the shadows of the night,
and we believe in you as light from Light
who speak to us of the heavenly Light.

*Precamur, sancte Domine,
defende nos in hac nocte,
sit nobis in te requies,
quietam noctem tribue.*

We pray you, Holy Lord,
defend us this night,
let our rest be in you
and grant to us a quiet night.

*Ne gravis somnus irruat,
nec hostis nos surripiat,
nec caro illi consentiens
nos tibi reos statuat.*

Let no burdensome dream invade us,
nor let the enemy surprise us
lest our flesh in yielding to him
should render us guilty in your sight.

*Oculi somnum capiant,
cor ad te semper vigilet,
dextera tua protegat
famulos qui te diligunt.*

*Defensor noster aspice,
insidiantes reprime;
guberna tuos famulos,
quos sanguine mercatus es.*

*Memento nostri, Domine,
in gravi isto corpore;
qui es defensor animae,
adesto nobis Domine.*

*Deo Patri sit gloria,
eiusque soli Filio,
cum Spiritu Paraclito,
et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen.*

Let our eyes win sleep,
but let our hearts always watch for you,
and let your right hand protect
the servants who love you.

Look on us, our defender,
repulse all who lie in wait for us,
and direct us, your servants,
whom you have redeemed by your blood.

Remember us, Lord,
burdened by this body,
and as defender of our souls
be present to us, Lord.

To God the Father be glory
and to his only Son,
with the Spirit, the Comforter,
both now and for ever. Amen.

3 PÄRT *The Deer's Cry*

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ in me, Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me,
Christ with me.

St Patrick (372-466)

4 BYRD *Emendemus in melius*

*Emendemus in melius
quae ignoranter peccavimus,
ne subito praeoccupati die mortis
quaeramus spatium poenitentiae,
et invenire non possumus.
Attende, Domine, et miserere,
quia peccavimus tibi.*

*Adiuva nos, Deus salutaris noster,
et propter honorem nominis tui,
libera nos.*

Let us change for the better those sins
which in ignorance we have committed,
lest, suddenly overtaken by the day of death,
we look for time to repent,
and find we have none.
Listen, Lord, and have mercy,
for we have sinned against you.

Come to our aid, God our saviour,
and for the honour of your name,
set us free.

5 PÄRT *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,
there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment,
and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.
But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste?
For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.
When Jesus understood it, he said unto them: Why trouble ye the woman?
For she hath wrought a good work upon me,
for ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.
For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.
Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world,
there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Matthew 26: 6-13

6 BYRD *Miserere mihi, Domine*

*Miserere mihi, Domine,
et exaudi orationem meam.*

Have mercy on me, Lord,
and hear my prayer.

7 BYRD *Ad Dominum cum tribularer*

*Ad Dominum cum tribularer clamavi,
et exaudivit me.
Domine, libera animam meam a labio mendacii
et a lingua dolosa.
Quid detur tibi,
aut quid apponatur tibi, ad linguam dolosam?
Sagittae potentis acutae
cum carbonibus desolatoriis.*

*Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est;
habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar,
multum incola fuit anima mea.
Cum his qui oderunt pacem,
eram pacificus;
ego pacem loquebar,
et illi bellum conclamabant.*

When I was in distress I called on the Lord,
and he gave ear to me.
Lord, set free my soul from the lying mouth
and from the deceitful tongue.
What reward shall you have,
what shall be laid on you, deceitful tongue?
The sharp arrows of the mighty
and the coals that devastate.

Woe is me, I have too long been a sojourner;
I have lived among the inhabitants of Kedar,
long has my soul dwelt among them.
With those who hate peace,
I was a peacemaker;
I spoke of peace,
and they called out for war.

8 TALLIS/BYRD *Miserere nostri*

*Miserere nostri, Domine,
miserere nostri.*

Have mercy on us, Lord,
have mercy on us.

9 TALLIS *When Jesus went*

When Jesus went into Simon the Pharisee's house and sat down at meat,
behold a woman in the city which was a sinner.

As soon as she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house,
she brought an alabaster box of ointment,
and stood at his feet behind him weeping,
and began to wash his feet with tears,
and did wipe them with the hairs of her head,
and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

10 BYRD *O lux beata Trinitas*

*O lux beata Trinitas
et principalis Unitas,
iam sol recedit igneus;
infunde lumen cordibus.*

*Te mane laudum carmine,
te deprecemur vesperi;
te nostra supplex gloria
per cuncta laudet saecula.*

*Deo Patri sit gloria
eiusque soli Filio
cum Spiritu Paracleto
et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen.*

O Trinity, blessed light,
and Unity, foremost in might,
now the fiery sun has withdrawn;
pour your light into our hearts.

In the morning, with our song of praise,
and in the evening let us send up our prayer;
as suppliants we hymn your glory
throughout all the ages.

To God the Father be glory
and to his only Son
with the Spirit, the Comforter,
both now and for ever. Amen.

11 PÄRT *Nunc dimittis* soprano: Julie Cooper

*Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine,
secundum verbum tuum in pace.
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum,
quod parasti
ante faciem omnium populorum.
Lumen ad revelationem gentium,
et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.
Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio
et nunc et semper
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

Lord, now let your servant depart in peace:
according to your word.
For mine eyes have seen: your salvation,
which you have prepared:
before the face of all people.
To be a light to lighten the gentiles:
and to be the glory of your people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be:
world without end. Amen.

12 BYRD *Laetentur coeli*

*Laetentur coeli et exultet terra.
Iubilante montes laudem,
quia Dominus noster veniet,
et pauperum suorum miserebitur.*

*Orietur in diebus tuis iustitia,
et abundantia pacis;
et pauperum suorum miserebitur.*

Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad;
you mountains sing forth your praise,
for our Lord will come
and will take pity on his poor people.

In your days justice will dawn,
and the fullness of peace;
and will take pity on his poor people.

13 BYRD *Tribue, Domine*

*Tribue, Domine,
ut donec in hoc fragili corpore positus sum,
laudet te cor meum, laudet te lingua mea,
et omnia ossa mea dicant:
Domine, quis similis tui?
Tu es Deus omnipotens,
quem trinum in personis
et unum in substantia deitatis colimus et adoramus:
Patrem ingenitum,
Filium de Patre unigenitum,
Spiritus Sanctum de utroque procedentem
et in utroque permanentem,
Sanctam et individuam Trinitatem,
unum Deum omnipotentem.*

*Te deprecor, supplico et rogo,
auge fidem, auge spem,
auge caritatem:
fac nos per ipsam gratiam tuam
semper in fide stabiles et in opere efficaces,
ut per fidem rectam
et condigna fidei opera
ad vitam, te miserante, perveniamus aeternam.*

Grant, Lord,
that until this frail body is laid to rest,
my heart and tongue may sing your praise,
and my very bones may cry:
Lord, who could be compared to you?
You are the all-powerful God
whom we celebrate and adore as three
in persons but one in divine being;
the uncreated Father,
the only Son of that Father
and the Holy Spirit issuing from both
yet dwelling in both,
a holy and undivided Trinity,
one almighty God.

I beseech you with humble prayer,
increase my faith, increase my hope,
increase my love:
make us through your kindness
always firm in faith and strong in deed,
that through that upright faith
and the good works of faith
we may, with your mercy, win eternal life.

*Gloria Patri, qui creavit nos,
gloria Filio, qui redemit nos,
gloria Spiritui Sancto, qui sanctificavit nos:
gloria summae et individuae Trinitati,
cuius opera inseparabilia sunt,
cuius imperium sine fine manet.
Te decet laus, te decet hymnus,
tibi debetur omnis honor,
tibi benedictio et claritas,
tibi gratiarum actio,
tibi honor, virtus et fortitudo, Deo nostro,
in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

Glory to the Father, who made us,
glory to the Son, who redeemed us,
glory to the Holy Spirit, who has made us holy:
glory to the most high and undivided Trinity
whose works are ever one
and whose kingdom lasts for ever.
To you belong hymns of praise,
to you every honour and blessing
and renown is owed,
to you be all thanks and tribute,
all virtue and strength, our God,
through endless ages. Amen.

Translations © Jeremy White, 2015



Harry Christophers is known internationally as founder and conductor of The Sixteen as well as being 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 Asia-Pacific, gaining a distinguished reputation for his work in Renaissance, Baroque and 20th- and 21st-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.



Photograph: Marco Borggreve

Since 2008 Harry Christophers has been Artistic Director of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society; he is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Granada Symphony Orchestra. As well as enjoying a 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.

Harry has conducted numerous productions for Lisbon Opera and English National Opera as well as conducting the UK premiere of Messenger'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 *Semele*, *Samson*, *Saul* and *Jephtha*.

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 by the University of Leicester. He was awarded a CBE in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours.

§ The Sixteen

After three decades of worldwide 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- and 21st-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 The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, Artistic Associate of Kings Place and hold a 2015-2016 Artist Residency at Wigmore Hall. 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 *The Fairy Queen* in Tel Aviv and London, a fully staged production of Purcell's *King Arthur* in Lisbon's Belém 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 130 recordings reflect The Sixteen's quality in a range of work spanning the music of 500 years. In 2009 the group won the coveted Classic FM Gramophone Artist of the Year Award and the Baroque Vocal Award for Handel's *Coronation Anthems*. The Sixteen also features 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.



§ **The Sixteen**
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

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RECORDING PRODUCER: Mark Brown

RECORDING ENGINEER: Mike Hatch (Floating Earth)

RECORDED AT: Church of St Augustine, Kilburn, London, 26-28 October 2015

IMAGES: cover: Getty Images page 9: Shutterstock

DESIGN: Andrew Giles: discoyd@aegidius.org.uk



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§ tracks [1](#) [2](#) [7](#) [8](#) [12](#)

track [11](#)

