Monteverdi: Vespers of 1610

“This is surely one of the most refined versions of the Vespers currently available.”
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Monteverdi: Messa a quattro voci et salmi of 1650, Volume I

“Pure – and vintage – Monteverdi, starting with a Dixit Dominus and ending grandly with a version of Beatus Vir… Ideal consort singing.”
THE SUNDAY TIMES, CULTURE MAGAZINE

Monteverdi: THE SELVA MORALE E SPIRITUALE COLLECTION

“Insightfully dramatic and precise… a series well worth collecting.”
GRAMOPHONE

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It took Monteverdi quite some time to find fulfillment in his work and his workplace but in the end he was revered by all. It is a tribute to the reverence in which he was held that after his death some of his unpublished works were printed. These make up the 1650 *Messa a quattro voci et salmi* and we will be continuing our survey of Monteverdi’s music with two volumes of this publication. It is jam-packed with brilliant works, from solo songs to thrilling eight-part vocal pieces, some with added strings; every composition is full of luscious harmonies, always inventive and beautifully constructed for all concerned.

Once again the three days we spent recording Monteverdi’s works proved to be some of the most enjoyable and evocative music-making in which we have ever participated. In effect, we recorded in the round, the harpsichord precariously placed (well, it looked that way, but was actually very safe) on top of the chamber organ, so that Al could move with ease from one instrument to the other, chittarone, harp and strings on either side with the choir facing them. Everyone was in eye contact so that each subtle nuance and invention could be passed aurally and visually from one to another with great ease. Not that the music is easy; Monteverdi stretches every singer’s versatility to the limit. It is demanding but so exhilarating. Just listen to the rhythmic vitality of the five-part *Laetatus sum* where voices and instruments converse with such enjoyment over a mesmeric ostinato bass; the thematic economy of his *Messa a quattro voci* where Monteverdi combines the old and new styles with consummate ease; and the extraordinary bass duet *Laudate Dominum* where Stuart and Jimmy contest a two-octave range of florid tracery. Every piece is full of contrasts, not only vocally but also instrumentally. Frances, Dai and Al luxuriate in Monteverdi’s harmonic language: the variety of textures and sonorities they achieve are quite extraordinary.

Performing Monteverdi’s sacred music is in many ways no different from performing his operas; the same principles apply. It is essential we follow Monteverdi’s dictum: *recitar cantando* (speak through singing). This allows the most amazing licence. As a result, time relationships do not become mechanical but are intuitively felt, thus giving us the freedom to be expressive and interpret the words, just as any great actor recites Shakespeare. A set of words, often repeated many times, can have different inflections, a different gesture each time. *Nisi Dominus* is just that – a series of gestures.

This is the second and final volume of this particular Monteverdi collection. Thanks to the whole choir but, in particular, Elin, Grace, Jeremy, Mark, George, Stuart and Jimmy for their extraordinarily versatile singing, Simon, Andrea and Joe for being always intuitive and responding so instinctively in their interplay with the singers, all finally signed and sealed by our classy continuo team, Al, Dai and Frances. Simply a pleasure!
Messa a quattro voci et salmi of 1650  Volume II

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)  Francesco Cavalli (1602-76)
Alessandro Piccinini (1566-c.1638)

1 Monteverdi  Dixit Dominus (Secondo) a 8  SV192  5.07
Choir 1:  Elin Manahan Thomas, Julie Cooper, Kirsty Hopkins, David Clegg, Kim Porter,
        Simon Berridge, Steven Harrold, Ben Davies, Eamonn Dougan
Choir 2:  Grace Davidson, Daniel Collins, Ian Aitkenhead, Jeremy Budd,
        George Pooley, Mark Dobell, Tim Jones, Jimmy Holliday, Stuart Young

2 Cavalli  Salve Regina  5.42
  Alto:  Ian Aitkenhead, Daniel Collins, Kim Porter
  Tenor:  Simon Berridge, Mark Dobell, Jeremy Budd, George Pooley
  Bass:  Ben Davies, Eamonn Dougan, Tim Jones

3 Monteverdi  Laetatus sum a 5 instrumenti & 6 voci  SV198  7.26
  Soprano:  Grace Davidson, Elin Manahan Thomas
  Tenor:  Jeremy Budd, Mark Dobell
  Bass:  Jimmy Holliday, Stuart Young

4 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Kyrie  3.56
  Soprano:  Ian Aitkenhead, Daniel Collins, Kirsty Hopkins, Kim Porter
  Tenor:  Simon Berridge, Jeremy Budd, George Pooley
  Baritone:  Ben Davies, Mark Dobell, Hugo Hymas
  Bass:  Eamonn Dougan, Jimmy Holliday, Stuart Young

5 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Gloria  4.19
6 Monteverdi  Laudate Dominum a due bassi  SV197a  3.36
Stuart Young, Jimmy Holliday

7 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Credo  5.31

8 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Sanctus  2.30

9 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Benedictus  1.22

10 Monteverdi  Messa a quattro voci  SV190: Agnus Dei  2.36

11 Piccinini  Ciaccona in G major  1.55

12 Monteverdi  Confitebor tibi Domine (Primo)  SV193  8.18
Elin Manahan Thomas

13 Monteverdi  Lauda Jerusalem a 5  SV195  6.01
  Soprano:  Julie Cooper, Grace Davidson, Kirsty Hopkins, Elin Manahan Thomas
  Alto:  Ian Aitkenhead, David Clegg, Daniel Collins, Kim Porter
  Tenor:  Simon Berridge, Mark Dobell, Steven Harrold, George Pooley
  Bass:  Ben Davies, Eamonn Dougan, Tim Jones, Stuart Young

14 Monteverdi  Nisi Dominus a 6  SV201  9.03
  Elin Manahan Thomas, Grace Davidson, Jeremy Budd,
  Mark Dobell, George Pooley, Stuart Young

  Total running time  67.23
Claudio Monteverdi
Messa a quattro voci et salmi of 1650  Volume II

Mass and Vespers were the services most often celebrated in elaborate music at the state church of San Marco in Venice, where Monteverdi worked as choirmaster for the last 30 years of his life. Although the Messa...et salmi was published in 1650, over six years after Monteverdi died, it seems likely that its contents were acquired soon after his death by the publisher Alessandro Vincenti. Not only does the volume contain some of the finest of Monteverdi's Venetian church music, but Vincenti seems to have had access to a wide enough range of the composer's work to enable him to compile a substantial volume, including the five Vespers psalms for both male and female saints. In that respect it was a more balanced collection than the great Selva morale et spirituale of 1641 and probably more saleable.

By his own account, Monteverdi had to write a new Mass for Christmas Eve every year at San Marco. Unfortunately, only two of his Venetian Masses survive, one of them being the attractive Mass setting of the 1650 collection. It represents Monteverdi completely at ease in the 'old style' of the a cappella Mass. The setting is notable for its tight motivic integration, with material generated from only a few basic ideas. Most of the setting is based on the initial motifs of the first Kyrie – a falling
scale followed by two rising thirds. In the Kyrie’s second paragraph the rising thirds are filled in to produce a sequence of rising scales; and in the third paragraph the initial idea is inverted to produce a rising scale and a sequence of falling thirds. In the second paragraph of the Christe this sequence of falling thirds is filled out with additional notes and given a new rhythmic impetus, producing yet further material which becomes an important element of the remainder of the setting: it is heard at ‘Laudamus te’ in the Gloria, for example, at ‘visibilium omnium’ in the Credo, in a slightly different form in the ‘Hosanna’ of the Sanctus and Benedictus, and at the words ‘qui tollis’ in the Agnus Dei where it acts as a countersubject to the original descending motif, bringing the beginning and end of the setting together.

Although the result is very different, the tight motivic control of the 1650 Mass harks back to the Mass for six voices that Monteverdi published in the Missa ac Vespere of 1610, and some of the 1610 music may still have been at the back of Monteverdi’s mind: the pattern of falling thirds at the beginning of the second Kyrie is a feature of both Mass settings, and the energetic syncopated sequences of the ‘Amen’ of the Gloria are strongly reminiscent of similar passages in the Dixit Dominus of the 1610 Vespers.

Of the Vespers psalm settings on this recording, Dixit Dominus (Psalm 109; Book of Common Prayer 110) sets the psalm that initiates most Vespers celebrations. It is in eight parts, for two four-part choirs, and we can imagine the two choirs placed in the two singing galleries (pergoli), one on each side of the chancel of San Marco, or standing together in the large pulpit (bigonzo) on the south side of the chancel screen. In either case, their sound was directed into the chancel where the doge, the clergy and senior officials of the state would sit. The acoustic of the chancel allowed the texts of the psalms to be heard clearly, unaffected by the domes that create a very resonant and confused acoustic in the rest of the church.

At San Marco eight-part settings for double choir were compulsory for those days on which the gem-encrusted altarpiece – the pala d’oro – was opened at Vespers, and they are often in what was, by the mid-17th century, a rather old-fashioned notation – mainly semibreves and minims, with the crotchet as the shortest note-value. Whereas early settings of this kind alternated the text of the psalm verse by verse, Monteverdi chooses a more varied pattern, running verses 1 and 2 together for choir 1, and then verse 3 and 4 in alternation. The setting of verse 5 begins as if in the same pattern, but when we reach the phrase that foretells Jesus’ priesthood – ‘Tu es sacerdos’ – Monteverdi brings in all eight voices in long notes to emphasise its importance. For verses 6 and 7, in which the psalmist speaks of smiting the Lord’s (and by implication Venice’s) enemies, the full eight voices are used again, with short phrases tossed from one side of the choir to the other, culminating in close imitative phrases for ‘in terra mulorum’ (in many lands). Few of Monteverdi’s late settings employ plainsong consistently. Dixit Dominus, for example, begins with a plainsong intonation, with the
remainder of the plainsong allotted to the bass voice; but the plainsong
is then heard again only at the beginnings of verses 4 and 8 and the
‘Gloria Patri’.

Two other psalms that feature in Vespers for male saints – Confitebor tibi Domine (Psalm 110; BCP 111) and Laudate Dominum omnes gentes (Psalm 116; BCP 117) – are unusual in being for solo voice, at least in their original form, and both are designed to show off the performers’ ability to sing ornamental passages with ease. Monteverdi seems to have had very capable bass singers at his disposal and featured them as soloists in the large-scale motet ‘Ab aeterna ordinata sum’ and the psalm ‘Laudate Dominum in sanctis eius’ (Psalm 150) in the Selva morale of 1641, as well as in this setting of Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, one of the shortest of all psalms, comprising only two verses and the ‘Gloria Patri’. Nevertheless, Monteverdi manages to build a substantial structure. In verse 1 he exploits the parallel between the first two lines – ‘Laudate ... omnes’ – beginning each with a declamation and moving to ornamental passagework at the word ‘omnes’. Verse 2 is set in joyful triple time, with a brief interruption as the singer contemplates God’s mercy. The two verses of the ‘Gloria Patri’ are each treated to an ostinato bass in triple time, while the ‘Amen’ returns to the initial figuration of the setting. On this recording the psalm is performed with a conjectural second bass part added by Peter Holman.

Confitebor tibi Domine is set for solo soprano and two violins, which play an introductory sinfonia in three sections, the last then punctuating the remainder of the setting as a ritornello. Monteverdi sets the text as a set of variations over a bass mainly elaborating a descending scale of C major. For the most part he sets the psalm verse by verse, though he divides verses 1 and 9 and runs on verses 5 and 6 without the instrumental ritornello. When he sets verse 2, he breaks with the initial bass pattern, moving to the minor mode for the words ‘Magna opera Domini’ (Great are the works of the Lord), a pattern that he repeats at verse 9, at the words ‘Sanctum et terribile nomen eius’ (Holy and fearsome is his name). These moments, together with the ending of the ‘Gloria Patri’, are the only points at which Monteverdi brings violins and voices together, moving away from an essentially melodious style to a declamatory one coupled, in verse 9, with virtuosic lines for the words ‘et terribile’. Incidentally, Monteverdi reworked this solo version as a setting for soprano and tenor, recorded on Volume I of The Sixteen’s 1650 collection.

Three psalms from Vespers for female saints present a very varied trio of settings. Lauda Jerusalem (Psalm 147; BCP 147, vv 12-20) contains few opportunities for word-painting – running quavers for ‘velociter’ (swiftly) and flowing waters (‘fluent aquae’) in verses 4 and 7 respectively, and melting chromaticism for ‘et liquefaciet ea’ (he melteth them), also in verse 7, and there is no obvious over-arching image that Monteverdi might have used. Instead, he responded with a setting for five voices that is an almost seamless stream of counterpoint, with complete breaks only at the
end of verse 5, to reinforce the words ‘nebulam sicut cinerem spargit’ (and scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes), and before the beginning of the ‘Gloria Patri’. As in Dixit Dominus, Monteverdi uses plainsong only sparingly here. The psalm tone is present in long notes in the soprano part at the beginning of the setting, and again, with a certain wit, for the words ‘sicut erat in principio’ (as it was in the beginning) in the ‘Gloria’.

Though the opportunities for word-painting are few in Lauda Jerusalem, Nisi Dominus (Psalm 126; BCP 127) has them in abundance, and Monteverdi takes full advantage of them in his six-part setting, producing some memorable musical imagery: the struggle to get up early in the morning (‘vanum est vobis’), the drawn-out dissonances for ‘panem doloris’, and, most striking of all, therocketing lines for ‘sicut sagittae’. There is even a short reference to the genre concitato (the warlike genera) of Monteverdi’s eighth book of madrigals (1638) in the striding chords of ‘non confundetur’.

If Nisi Dominus is the equivalent of a large-scale madrigal, then Laetatus sum (Psalm 121; BCP 122) for six voices and five instruments is a huge aria, over an ostinato bass that is a shortened version of the one that Monteverdi used at the beginning of the Laetatus sum of the 1610 Vespers. While we know from a contemporary account that Monteverdi used bassoons in his Vespers performances, Laetatus sum contains the only surviving example in his music of a bassoon obbligato, which he saves up for verses 6 and 7, before moving into the triple time that dominates the remainder of the setting until the beginning of the ‘Gloria Patri’. The whole setting, then, takes its cue from the opening words ‘Laetatus sum’ (I was glad) and is one of Monteverdi’s happiest inventions.

Two other composers are represented on this recording. The Bolognese composer Alessandro Piccinini is represented by a Chiaccona from his Intavolatura di liuto, et di chitarone (Bologna, 1623). This consists of variations over an ostinato bass which by the 1630s had become inseparable from chaconnes, both vocal and instrumental. Francesco Cavalli, probably the co-compiler of the 1650 volume, is represented by a setting of Salve Regina for four voices from his Musiche sacre of 1656. The Marian antiphon ‘Salve Regina’ was sung after Vespers during most of the church year at San Marco and Cavalli teases the ear by starting the uppermost voice with the first four notes of the ‘Salve Regina’ plainsong, leading us to suppose that, as usual, the choir would continue singing in unison. Instead, the initial notes are passed gradually down through the voices, against newly-invented counterpoints, a device that Cavalli continues through the second paragraph of the text. At ‘Ad te clamamus’ and ‘Ad te suspiramus’ he deploys a similar device, though this time turning a phrase of the plainsong upside down. These, and other references to the plainsong in this setting, would surely have been recognisable to a choir, clerics and congregation accustomed to hearing and singing the ‘Salve Regina’ day after day at San Marco.
Monteverdi  Dixit Dominus  (Secondo) a 8 SV192

De torrente in via bibet:
propertera exaltabit caput.

Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Psalm 109 in Roman psalter

Cavalli  Salve Regina

He will drink of the stream by the way:
and therefore he will hold his head high.

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.

Psalm 110 in Book of Common Prayer

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae.
Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exules fili evae.
Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes,
in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia ergo, advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos
ad nos converte.
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsiliium ostende.
O clemens, o pia, o dulcis virgo Maria.

Hail Queen, mother of mercy.
Our life, our sweetness and our hope, hail.
To you we cry,
banished children of Eve.
To you we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping
in this our vale of tears.
Ah, therefore, our advocate,
turn your merciful eyes
towards us, and show us Jesus,
the blessed fruit of your womb,
after our exile here,
O gentle, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Antiphon of the Blessed Virgin Mary
I was glad when they said to me: we will go into the house of the Lord.
And now our feet are standing within your gates, Jerusalem.
Jerusalem, which is built as a city strongly compact.
For there all the tribes of the Lord went up, Israel's witness, professing the Lord’s name.
For there were placed the seats of judgement, judgement over the house of David.
Pray for the peace, Jerusalem, and for the prosperity of those who love you.
May peace reign within your walls, and prosperity within your towers.

I will speak peace upon you.
I have sought good things for you.
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.

For the sake of my brothers and my neighbours
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:

Messo a quattro voci
Kyrie eleison.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Kyrie eleison.
Monteverdi  *Messa a quattro voci* SV190: *Gloria*

Gloria in excelsis Deo, 
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. 
Laudamus te. 
Benedicimus te. 
Adoramus te. 
Glorificamus te. 
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis, 
Deus Pater omnipotens. 
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe. 
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris. 

Qui tollis peccata mundi, 
meriser nobis. 
Qui tollis peccata mundi, 
suscepte deprecationem nostram. 
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, 
meriser nobis. 

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, 
tu solus Dominus, 
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe, 
cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, 
And on earth peace to men of good will. 
We praise you. 
We bless you. 
We adore you. 
We glorify you. 
We give thanks to you for your great glory. 

Lord God, heavenly King, 
God the Father almighty. 
Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son. 
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. 

You who take away the sins of the world, 
have mercy on us. 
You who take away the sins of the world, 
receive our prayer. 
You who sit at the right hand of the Father, 
have mercy on us. 

For you alone are Holy, 
you alone are Lord, 
you alone are Most High, Jesus Christ, 
with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Monteverdi  *Laudate Dominum a due bassi* SV197a

Laudate Dominum omnes gentes, 
laudate eum omnes populi. 
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia eius: et veritas Domini manet in aeternum. 
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto: 

Psalm 116 in Roman psalter

Psalm 117 in Book of Common Prayer

Monteverdi  *Messa a quattro voci* SV190: *Credo*

Credo in unum Deum 
Patrem omnipotentem, 
factorem coeli et terrae, 
visibilium omnium et invisibilium. 

Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum, 
Filium Dei unigenitum. 

Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. 
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, 
Deum verum de Deo vero. 
Genitum, non factum, 
consubstantialem Patri, 
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui, propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem, descendit de coelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine: Et homo factus est.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum scripturas; et ascendit in coelum: sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos: cuibus regni non erit finis.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem: qui ex Patre Filioque procedit. Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per Prophetas.


Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven. And was made incarnate by the Holy Ghost from the Virgin Mary, and became man.

He was crucified also for us; under Pontius Pilate he suffered death and was buried. And on the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again in glory to judge both the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, and who spoke through the prophets.

And I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Monteverdi  *Messa a quattro voci* SV190: *Sanctus*


Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Monteverdi  *Messa a quattro voci* SV190: *Benedictus*

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Monteverdi  *Messa a quattro voci* SV190: *Agnus Dei*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis. Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi: dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Piccinini  *Ciaccona in G major*
Monteverdi  **Confitebor tibi Domine (Primo)** SV193

Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo:
in consilio iustorum, et congregatione.

Magna opera Domini:
exquisita in omnes voluntates eius.

Confessio et magnificentia opus eius:
et iustitia eius manet in saeculum saeculi.

Memoriam fecit mirabilia suum,
misericors et miserator Dominus:
escam dedit timentibus se.

Memor erit in saeculum testamenti sui:
virtutem operum suorum annuntiabit populo suo.

Ut det illis haereditatem gentium:
opera manuum eius veritas et iudicium.

Fidelia omnia mandata eius:
confirmata in saeculum saeculi:
facta in veritate et aequitate.

I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart:
secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation.
The works of the Lord are great:
sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
His work is worthy to be praised and had in honour:
and his righteousness endureth for ever.
The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done
his marvellous works:
that they ought to be had in remembrance.
He hath given meat unto them that fear him.
He shall ever be mindful of his covenant.
He hath shewed his people the power
of his works:
That he may give them the heritage of the heathen.
The works of his hands are verity and judgement.
All his commandments are true.
They stand fast for ever and ever:
and are done in truth and equity.

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

Sanctum et terribile nomen eius:
initium sapientiae timor Domini.

Intellectus bonus omnibus facientibus eum:
laudatio eius manet in saeculum saeculi.

Gloria Patri et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto:
Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Psalm 110 in Roman psalter

Monteverdi  **Lauda Jerusalem a 5** SV195

Lauda Jerusalem Dominum:
lauda Deum tuum Sion.

Quoniam confortavit seras portarum tuarum:
benedixit filiis tuis in te.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem:
praise thy God, O Sion.

For he hath made fast the bars of thy gates:
and hath blessed thy children within thee.

[The Lord] sent redemption unto his people:
he hath commanded his covenant for ever;
Holy and reverend is his name.
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.
A good understanding have all they that do thereafter;
the praise of it endureth for ever.
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.

Psalm 111 in Book of Common Prayer
Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum: 
in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.

Nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem: 
frustra vigilat qui custodit eam.

Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere: 
surgite postquam sederitis, 
qui manducatis panem doloris.

Cum dederit dilectis suis somnum. 
Ecce haereditas Domini, filii: 
merces, fructus ventris.

Sicut sagittae in manu potentis: 
ita filii excussorum.

Beatus vir qui implevit 
desiderium suum ex ipsis: 
non confundetur cum loquetur 
inimicis suis in porta.

Gloria Patri et Filio, 
et Spiritui Sancto: 
As it was in the beginning, 
is now and ever shall be: 
world without end. Amen.

Psalm 126 in Roman psalter

Psalm 126 in Book of Common Prayer

Psalm 147 in Roman psalter

Psalm 147, vv. 12-20 in Book of Common Prayer

Psalm 127 in Book of Common Prayer
Harry Christophers stands among today’s great champions of choral music. In partnership with The Sixteen, the ensemble he founded almost 40 years ago, he has set benchmark standards for the performance of everything from late medieval polyphony to important new works by contemporary composers. His international influence is supported by more than 150 recordings and has been enhanced by his work as Artistic Director of Boston’s Handel and Haydn Society and as guest conductor worldwide.

The Sixteen’s soundworld, rich in tonal variety and expressive nuance, reflects Christophers’ determination to create a vibrant choral instrument from the blend of adult professional singers. Under his leadership The Sixteen has established its annual Choral Pilgrimage to cathedrals, churches and other UK venues, created the Sacred Music series for BBC television, and developed an acclaimed period-instrument orchestra. Highlights of their recent work include an Artist Residency at Wigmore Hall, a large-scale tour of Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610, and the world premiere of James MacMillan’s Stabat mater; their future projects, meanwhile, comprise a new series devoted to Purcell and an ongoing survey of Handel’s dramatic oratorios.

Harry has served as Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society since 2008. He was also appointed as Principal Guest Conductor of the City of Granada Orchestra in 2008 and has worked as guest conductor with, among others, the London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the Deutsches Kammerphilharmonie. Christophers’ extensive commitment to opera has embraced productions for English National Opera and Lisbon Opera and work with the Granada, Buxton and Grange Park festivals.

He was appointed a CBE in the Queen's 2012 Birthday Honours for his services to music. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, as well as the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has Honorary Doctorates in Music from the Universities of Leicester, Canterbury Christ Church and Northumbria.