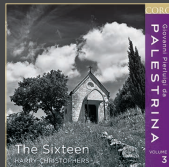


Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina · Vol.3

"The Sixteen's Palestrina cycle may just be a classic in the making."

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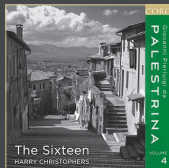


CORI6106

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INTERNATIONAL RECORD REVIEW



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Choral & Song Choice October 2015, BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE

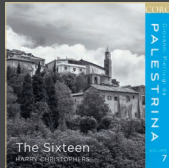


CORI6133

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina · Vol.7

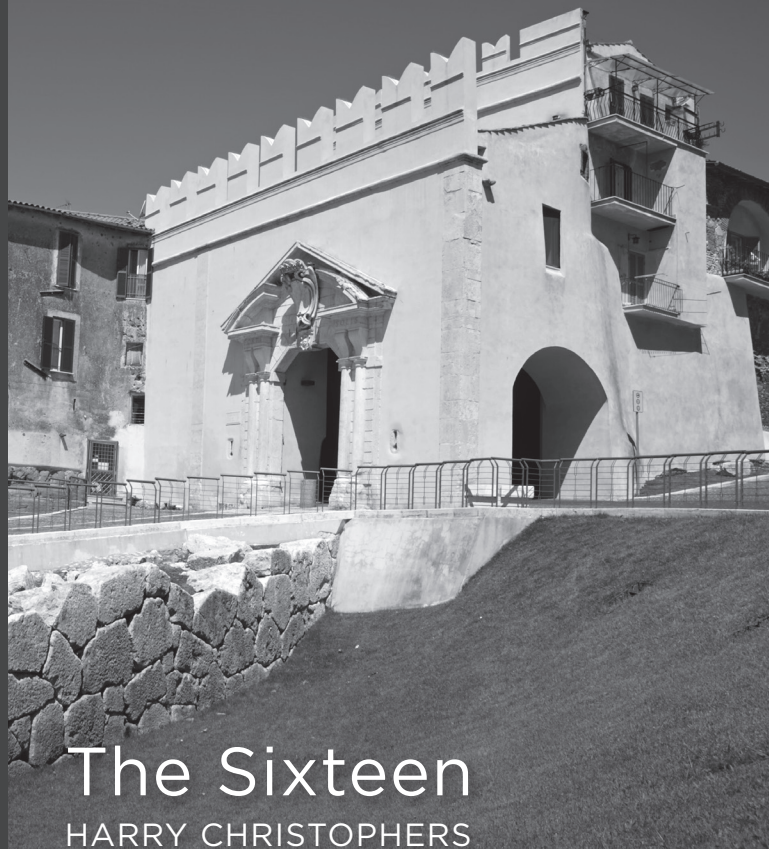
*"Christophers moulds this heavenly music with masterly attention to shape, form and nuance." ******

THE SCOTSMAN



CORI6155

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The Sixteen
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS

Palestrina's legacy and impact on sacred music worldwide is second-to-none. Composers through the centuries have studied and learnt from his gift for writing exquisite polyphony. Small wonder then that he has been called not only "the prince and father of music" but also "the saviour of church music". At the final session of the Council of Trent, there were many discussions about the use of polyphony and whether or not it should be banned. In 1607, the composer Agostino Agazzari wrote "music of the older kind is no longer in use because of the confusion and Babel of the words." And he went on to say that this music would have come very near to being banished from the holy church by a sovereign pontiff had not Giovanni Palestrina found the remedy. The price of fame for Palestrina was that his legacy was to contain as many myths as facts.

Over the next few years, we are going to undertake a series honouring his great art, recording much unfamiliar but stunning music from every part of his life, giving a more accurate picture of his great achievements in music. I hasten to add that we are not endeavouring to record every note Palestrina penned – that would be more than a lifetime's work considering he wrote 104 Masses! But what we will do is present each volume based around a single Mass, here *Missa Fratres ego enim accipi*, and a theme relevant to that Mass – in this case Easter and in particular Jesus' words "Take, eat, this



Photograph: Marco Borggreve

is my body: do this in remembrance of me" – alongside some of his settings of texts from the Song of Songs. Palestrina published 29 such settings, which he dedicated to Pope Gregory XIII. In that dedication, he apologised, and indeed "blushed and grieved", for possessing light and vain ideas in the past (presumably referring to such music as his hugely popular madrigals on profane texts); and he asserts that he has changed his purpose now by choosing "those poems which have been written of the praises of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Most Holy Mother the Virgin Mary". Remember that the Song of Songs comes from that part of the Old Testament which was often considered too sensual and erotic to be read. It was originally Hebrew love poetry, written down possibly 300 years or so before the birth of Christ, but these are texts which in Renaissance times were used in praise of the Virgin Mary.

I have always regarded Palestrina as the master craftsman whose music composers of all ages have attempted to emulate. He shapes his music in a beautifully sonorous way using a lot of suspensions but always coming back into the line of the music. However, it is this perfect craftsmanship that can sometimes make Palestrina's music sound all too perfect and occasionally academic. We have attempted to achieve real ebb and flow in his music, not clipping the ends of phrases but allowing the music to breathe, to convey the real meaning of the words and making our breaths part of the music as a whole. There is a wealth of word painting in which to indulge, especially in his Song of Songs motets. Our aim has been to be sensitive to this wonderful poetry and inject an energy and beauty to our performances that I hope goes some way to honour Palestrina as "the celebrated light of music".

Harry
 Christophers

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|------|
| 1 | Ego sum panis vivus | 6.00 |
| 2 | Fratres ego enim accepi | 3.33 |
| 3 | Accepit Jesus calicem | 4.21 |

MISSA FRATRES EGO ENIM ACCEPI

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|------|
| 4 | Kyrie | 4.43 |
| 5 | Gloria | 4.41 |
| 6 | Credo | 7.57 |
| 7 | Sanctus | 2.16 |
| 8 | Benedictus | 2.32 |
| 9 | Agnus Dei | 3.08 |
| 10 | Caro mea vere est cibus | 5.39 |
| 11 | Pater noster | 3.59 |
| 12 | Sacerdotes Domini | 2.37 |

SONG OF SONGS: nos. 25-27

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|------|
| 13 | Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui | 3.13 |
| 14 | Duo ubera tua | 3.13 |
| 15 | Quam pulchra es | 2.58 |
| 16 | Victimae paschali laudes | 3.28 |
| 17 | Pange lingua | 9.01 |

Total Running Time	73.21
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Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was, during his lifetime, regarded as the greatest composer of the age and this reputation has, justifiably, continued to our own time. He was born in the town of Palestrina which lies about 25 miles south-east of Rome, probably between February 1525 and February 1526, later moving to Rome where he spent the rest of his life in the service of the Church. Like his contemporaries Philippe de Monte at the court of Maximilian II in Vienna and Orlande de Lassus in Munich, Palestrina was a prolific composer of music for all the liturgical needs of the Church. Much of this was published during his lifetime and for 30 or more years after his death, and it was widely distributed, copies even reaching the Americas.

Perhaps unusually for a church musician working at the highest level in the Roman Catholic Church, at St John Lateran, at the Cappella Giulia (St Peter's) and Santa Maria Maggiore, in regular association with Popes and the Sistine Chapel, also appointed *Modulator Pontificus* (Papal

composer), Palestrina was married. In June 1547 he had set up house with a Lucrezia Gori, by whom he had three sons.

Unfortunately for Palestrina, personal tragedy was never far away, for his son Rodolfo, born c. 1549, died in 1572; and Angelo, born c. 1551, passed away in 1575, in an influenza epidemic which killed maybe 10,000 people. His recently married sister Palma also died suddenly in 1564, and his brother Silla in 1573, followed in 1581 by two grandchildren by his now-deceased son, Angelo, and one by his third son, Iginio. The most crushing blow, however, had come in the previous August, when the composer's wife, Lucrezia, had been snatched away from him in an epidemic. No doubt deeply affected, Palestrina in November 1580 petitioned Pope Gregory XIII to be ordained into the priesthood, and he received the tonsure and minor orders in December of that year.

However, surprisingly, and suddenly, in March 1581, Palestrina, like his widowed

father before him, married for a second time. His bride, Virginia Dormoli, was the widow of the Papal wine and fur merchant Giuliano Guerrazzi, who had died in 1576, aged 36. As a dowry of 1,500 scudi and an established wine and fur business came with the marriage, it seems Palestrina might now have been financially secure for the rest of his life.

There were various sources of income, as composer and choirmaster. His salary in his first prestigious appointment, as *maestro* in the Cappella Giulia in September 1551, was 120 scudi per annum plus 48 scudi for upkeep of two choirboys. In 1555 he was appointed to the choir of the Sistine Chapel by Pope Julius III, but dismissed nine months later by Pope Paul IV because choir members had to be celibate: as a result, Palestrina received a pension of 9 scudi per month. In March 1561 the composer entered employment at Santa Maria Maggiore, receiving 192 scudi per annum, including upkeep for four choirboys. In 1575 he was earning 240 scudi per annum at St Peter's

(Cappella Giulia). A composer of his stature would undoubtedly have received regular commissions for new pieces: indeed we know he provided a series of Masses for the Mantuan liturgy in 1578, although the size of the payment is not known.

To give some perspective to these figures, we know that in 1567 the agents of Maximilian II offered Palestrina the post of *maestro* at the Imperial Chapel in Vienna. Palestrina apparently asked for 400 scudi per annum: this was thought to be excessive, and the post went to Philippe de Monte for 300 scudi plus some benefits. We also know that in 1569 Palestrina purchased a house in Rome for 725 scudi. The dowry must have been a significant boost and Palestrina was indeed well-off in his later years.

It is not just of passing interest how much Palestrina earned, for the composer himself oversaw the printing of a prodigious amount of his own music in his lifetime: the total eventually comes to nearly 100 volumes, including reprints,

up to 1625: 12 books of Masses (16 or more reprints), seven motet collections (over 40 reprints) and madrigals, hymns, Lamentations and offertories: could he have financed some of these himself, wholly or partly? Or was he wholly reliant on sponsorship and publishers willing to underwrite the costs? The second and third books of Masses of 1567 and 1570 were dedicated to Philip II of Spain: one assumes there was some contribution expected and surely received. In 1594, after the composer's death, the then Pope, Clement VIII, underwrote the publication of the seventh book of Masses to the tune of 100 scudi, quite a large sum, it seems. Could Palestrina have afforded such sums? The print containing the 29 motets on texts from the Song of Songs was reprinted four times before 1594 and 11 times in all; the first book of motets reprinted seven times by 1594, ten times in all, for example.

It is difficult not to conclude that there must have been good profits in publishing Palestrina's music. This view

is reinforced by the fact that most of the posthumous printing of Palestrina's music was carried out by his son, Iginio (who died in 1610). Lassus' sons too were responsible for carrying on the publication of their father's work long after his death, mainly with the *Magnum Opus Musicum* of 1604, which contained over 500 works. We might well conclude that even after Palestrina's death, there was still considerable family finance available to continue publishing the composer's works.

The music recorded on this album combines in various ways all the elements defining the Blessed Sacrament: the supreme feast, the Last Supper; the Body and Blood of Christ imagined in the bread and the wine; and the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross at the first Easter as a ransom for the world.

Ego sum panis vivus is for the feast of Corpus Christi. It was printed in 1572 in Venice in Palestrina's *Motettorum*

liber secundus. The composer scores it for two sopranos, alto, tenor and bass, in Responsory form, (ABCB sections). The *secunda pars* repeat of “*Si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane...*” is more or less exactly as in the *prima pars*, except that the closing triple-time “*Alleluia*” is varied.

The text of ***Fratres ego enim accipi*** is taken from the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, chapter 2, 23-24. It echoes the words of institution of communion as recorded in the Gospels of Christ at the Last Supper. To be sung at Corpus Christi, the motet was also used in Holy Week. For example, we know it was sung at Vila Viçosa at the chapel of the Duke of Braganza (later King João IV of Portugal) on Maundy Thursday. Palestrina writes for 8 voices, double choir, in the grand Roman polychoral style he took part in creating.

Accipit Jesus calicem also commemorates the Last Supper and is suitable for use in Holy Week, at Corpus Christi, and in the communion service. Written for six voices,

two of them in canon, the 2nd alto part follows the 1st tenor at the 4th above throughout.

The ***Missa Fratres ego enim accipi*** is of course based on the music of Palestrina’s motet of the same name. One of his grandest and finest Masses, it was only published posthumously in 1601, accompanied by three other 8-voice Masses. The motet was issued in print even later, in 1614 (Rome) and 1617 (Strasbourg), in anthologies with added *basso continuo* parts.

The opening of the motet, characterised by the falling interval of a 4th in the alto with the falling 5th in the soprano, is mirrored in the Mass at the start of each of the five main sections: e.g. the *Credo* begins with almost exact quotation from the motet, also including the 2nd section at “*visibilium omnium*” (= “*Quod et tradidi vobis*”) as choir II enters. Palestrina reworks the opening motifs more extensively when beginning the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*, but again quotes directly

when choir II sings “*Dominus Deus Sabaoth*” (= “*Dominus Jesus in qua nocte*”).

The words of ***Caro mea vere est cibus*** are from the Gospel according to St John, chapter 6, 55-59. Set by Palestrina in two *partes*, for a high choir with two sopranos and a low choir with two tenors, the motet is consistently in a sonorous eight-voice, double-choir style. The text unites all the elements of the Christian rite from the Last Supper: the Body and Blood of Christ, the bread of heaven, and everlasting life achieved by the eating thereof.

The Lord’s Prayer, the ***Pater noster***, contains what must be the best-known words in Christianity. This apparently simple prayer comes down to us in two of the Gospels, Matthew (chapter 6, 9-13) and Luke (chapter 11, 2-4). However, there are some variants in the words used by Jesus as he led the apostles in prayer. The main difference, which has caused considerable argument through the centuries as to the exact meaning, occurs in the third invocation: here

the Vulgate reads “... *panem nostrum supersubstantialem*” in Matthew; whereas the Luke version is “... *panem nostrum quotidianum*”; this is although the Greek word (ἐπιούσιον), the adjective qualifying “bread” in the earliest Greek text available to St Jerome, is the same in both Gospels.

The 68 offertories for five voices were published in two books in 1593. They are a summation of Palestrina’s life’s work and style. ***Sacerdotes Domini***, for the feast of Corpus Christi, sets the words of Leviticus, chapter 21, 5, extolling the offering up of incense and bread to the Lord.

Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui, Duo ubera tua and ***Quam pulchra es***

The 29 motets with texts from the Song of Songs were probably the most popular and successful of all Palestrina’s compositions, for they were reprinted no fewer than 11 times between their first publication in 1583/84 and 1613. They are, with his books of secular and sacred madrigals, somewhat anomalous amongst his oeuvre, certainly in their

choice of texts. At least the words were Biblical, having long been accepted into the canon. Allegorical, without doubt, in their Latin form, Palestrina and his audience must have loved them. Like the offertories, they share a succinctness, a perfection of technique, and an absolute clarity in word setting, while maintaining constant polyphonic interest.

With a text for Easter Sunday, *Victimae paschali laudes* is one of the four medieval sequences retained in the liturgy after the Councils of Trent in the mid-16th century. Palestrina uses the version of the text in the revised Missal of 1570, from which the section “*Credendum est...*”, with pejorative reference to the Jews, has been excised.

Written by St Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, the hymn *Pange lingua*, for the feast of Corpus Christi, also for Holy Week, has been set to music by composers from the beginnings of polyphony right up to our own time. Published first in 1589, Palestrina’s version is in the standard

form of chant verses *alternatim* with four-voice polyphony. The fifth verse “*Tantum ergo sacramentum*” was sometimes set to music as a separate piece – in any case it was commonly given greater emphasis by composers, being sung at the presentation of the Blessed Sacrament: Palestrina adds a second tenor to the vocal texture, giving an extra element of magnificence to this important verse.

In 1593, after a lifetime in the service of the Roman Church, and internationally renowned as a composer, Palestrina apparently had plans to return to his home town as *maestro* at the Cathedral of San Agapito there. There was to be no retirement, however, for Palestrina died in Rome on February 2nd 1594, at the age of 68, apparently unexpectedly, for he left no will. He was buried in the Cappella Giulia, in the crypt where his first wife and the two sons, Rodolfo and Angelo, who had predeceased him, already lay.

Martyn Imrie

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Nel corso della sua esistenza Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina era considerato il più grande compositore dell’epoca e questa reputazione è meritatamente continuata fino ai nostri tempi. Nacque nella città di Palestrina, che si trova a circa 40 chilometri a sud-est di Roma, probabilmente tra il febbraio del 1525 e quello del 1526, trasferendosi poi a Roma dove trascorse il resto della vita al servizio della Chiesa. Come i suoi contemporanei Philippe de Monte alla corte di Massimiliano II a Vienna e Orlande de Lassus a Monaco, Palestrina fu un prolifico compositore di musica per tutte le occasioni liturgiche della Chiesa. Gran parte della sua produzione è stata pubblicata durante la sua vita e nei circa 30 anni dopo la morte, ed è stata ampiamente distribuita, con copie che raggiunsero anche le Americhe.

Palestrina era sposato, insolitamente per un musicista ecclesiastico che lavorava ai più alti livelli nella Chiesa cattolica romana, a San Giovanni in Laterano, alla Cappella Giulia (S.Pietro) e Santa Maria Maggiore, e che era in costante contatto

con i Papi e la Cappella Sistina; egli fu anche nominato *Modulator Pontificus* ovvero compositore papale. Nel giugno del 1547 iniziò a convivere con una certa Lucrezia Gori, dalla quale ebbe tre figli.

Sfortunatamente per Palestrina, la tragedia personale non gli fu mai lontana, infatti suo figlio Rodolfo, nato nel 1549 circa, morì nel 1572 e la stessa sorte toccò ad Angelo, nato nel 1551 circa, che morì nel 1575 in un’epidemia di influenza che uccise probabilmente 10.000 persone. Sua sorella Palma, recentemente sposata, morì improvvisamente nel 1564, e suo fratello, Silla, nel 1573, seguito nel 1581 da due nipoti, figli del suo figlio defunto, Angelo, e uno del suo terzo figlio, Iginio. Il colpo più devastante però era arrivato ad agosto, un anno prima, quando la moglie del compositore, Lucrezia, gli era stata strappata da un’epidemia. Senza dubbio profondamente colpito, nel novembre del 1580 Palestrina chiese al Papa, Gregorio XIII, di essere ordinato sacerdote, e ricevette la tonsura e gli ordini minori nel dicembre di quell’anno.

Tuttavia, sorprendentemente e improvvisamente, nel marzo 1581, Palestrina, come suo padre vedovo prima di lui, si sposò per la seconda volta. La sua sposa, Virginia Dormoli, era la vedova di Giuliano Guerrazzi, mercante papale di vino e pellicce che era morto nel 1576 all'età di 36 anni. Dato che con il matrimonio ricevette una dote di 1.500 scudi e un consolidato commercio di vino e pellicce, pare che Palestrina avrebbe goduto di sicurezza finanziaria per il resto dei suoi giorni.

Palestrina godeva di varie fonti di reddito, come compositore e direttore di coro, infatti il suo stipendio per il primo prestigioso incarico, come maestro nella Cappella Giulia nel settembre del 1551, era di 120 scudi all'anno più 48 scudi per il mantenimento di due giovani del coro. Nel 1555 fu nominato al coro della Cappella Sistina da papa Giulio III, ma fu destituito nove mesi dopo da Papa Paolo IV perché ai membri del coro si richiedeva di essere celibi, di conseguenza, Palestrina ricevette una pensione di 9 scudi al mese. Nel

marzo 1561 il compositore fu impiegato a Santa Maria Maggiore, ricevendo 192 scudi l'anno, compreso il mantenimento di quattro cori. Nel 1575 guadagnava 240 scudi all'anno a San Pietro (Cappella Giulia). Indubbiamente un compositore della sua statura riceveva regolari commissioni per nuovi pezzi, in effetti sappiamo che fornì una serie di messe per la liturgia mantovana nel 1578, anche se l'entità del pagamento non è nota.

Per vedere queste cifre in una certa prospettiva, sappiamo che nel 1567 gli inviati di Massimiliano II offrono a Palestrina il posto di maestro nella Cappella Imperiale di Vienna. Palestrina apparentemente esigeva 400 scudi all'anno, questo fu ritenuto eccessivo e il posto venne assegnato a Philippe de Monte per 300 scudi più alcune agevolazioni. Sempre nel 1569, Palestrina acquistò una casa a Roma per 725 scudi. La dote doveva essere stata causa di un miglioramento significativo e nei suoi ultimi anni Palestrina era decisamente benestante.

I guadagni di Palestrina non sono solo di interesse superficiale, perché il compositore stesso curò la supervisione della stampa di una quantità prodigiosa della propria produzione musicale nel corso della sua vita: il totale arriva a circa 100 volumi, comprese le ristampe, fino al 1625: 12 libri di Messe, (16 o più ristampe), sette collezioni di mottetti (oltre 40 ristampe) e madrigali, inni, lamentazioni e offertori: è possibile che avesse finanziato alcuni di questi lui stesso, in tutto o in parte? O dipendeva interamente da finanziamenti e dagli editori disposti a sottoscrivere i costi? Il secondo e il terzo libro di Messe del 1567 e del 1570 furono dedicati a Filippo II di Spagna: si presume che l'autore si attendesse un contributo, sicuramente ricevuto. A quanto pare nel 1594, dopo la morte del compositore, l'allora papa Clemente VIII finanziò la pubblicazione del settimo libro di messe con la somma di 100 scudi. Palestrina poteva permettersi tali somme? Ad esempio, la stampa contenente i 29 mottetti sui testi del Cantico dei Cantici fu ristampata quattro volte prima del 1594 e

11 volte in tutto; il primo libro di Mottetti fu ristampato sette volte nel 1594, dieci volte in tutto.

È difficile non concludere che la pubblicazione della musica di Palestrina dovesse generare sostanziali profitti. Questo punto di vista è rafforzato dal fatto che la maggior parte della stampa postuma della musica di Palestrina è dovuta a suo figlio, Iginio (morto nel 1610). Anche i figli di Lasso furono responsabili della pubblicazione del lavoro del padre molto tempo dopo la sua morte, principalmente con il *Magnum Opus Musicum* del 1604, che conteneva oltre 500 opere. Potremmo dedurre che, anche dopo la morte di Palestrina, la famiglia disponeva ancora di considerevoli finanze che consentivano di continuare a pubblicare le opere del compositore.

La musica registrata in questo album combina in vari modi tutti gli elementi che definiscono il Santissimo Sacramento: la ricorrenza suprema, l'Ultima Cena; il

Corpo e il Sangue di Cristo immaginati nel pane e nel vino, e il sacrificio di Cristo sulla Croce come riscatto per il mondo alla prima Pasqua.

L'**Ego sum panis vivus** è inteso per la ricorrenza del Corpus Domini. Fu stampato nel 1572 a Venezia nel *Motetorum liber secundus* di Palestrina. L'autore lo compone per due soprani, contralto, tenore e basso, in forma di Responsorio, (sezioni ABCB). La ripetizione di *secunda pars* di "Si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane ..." è più o meno esattamente come nella parte precedente, tranne la variazione del triplo *Alleluia* di chiusura.

Il testo di **Fratres ego enim accepi** è tratto dalla Prima lettera di Paolo ai Corinzi, II, vv. 23-24. Fa eco alle parole dell'istituzione della comunione riportate nei Vangeli di Cristo nell'ultima cena. Pensato per essere cantato al Corpus Domini, il mottetto era presentato anche nella Settimana Santa. Ad esempio, sappiamo che fu cantato

a Vila Viçosa nella cappella del Duca di Braganza (in seguito Re João IV di Portogallo) il Giovedì Santo. Palestrina scrive per 8 voci, doppio coro, nel grande stile policorale romano alla creazione del quale egli ha contribuito.

Anche **Accepit Jesus calicem** commemora l'Ultima Cena ed è adatto per l'uso nella Settimana Santa, al Corpus Christi, e nella funzione per la Comunione. Scritto per sei voci, due delle quali in canone, lungo tutta la composizione la parte del secondo contralto segue una quarta sopra quella del primo tenore.

La **Missa Fratres ego enim accepi** è ovviamente basata sulla musica del mottetto di Palestrina dallo stesso titolo. Questa è una delle sue più grandiose e belle Messe, fu pubblicata solo postuma nel 1601, accompagnata da altre tre messe a otto voci. Il mottetto fu pubblicato anche più tardi, nel 1614 (Roma) e nel 1617 (Strasburgo), in antologie con aggiunte di *basso continuo*. L'apertura del mottetto, caratterizzata

dall'intervallo discendente di una quarta nel contralto con la quinta discendente nel soprano, si riflette nella Messa all'inizio di ciascuna delle cinque sezioni principali: ad esempio, *Credo* inizia con una citazione quasi esatta dal mottetto, includendo anche la seconda sezione di *visibillum omnium* (= *Quod et tradidi vobis*) mentre entra il Coro II. Palestrina rielabora più ampiamente i motivi di apertura all'inizio di *Sanctus* e *Agnus Dei*, ma cita di nuovo direttamente quando il Coro II canta *Dominus Deus Sabaoth* (= *Dominus Jesus in qua nocte*).

I testi di **Caro mea vere est cibus** provengono dal Vangelo secondo San Giovanni, VI, 55-59. Ambientato da Palestrina in due *partes*, per un coro alto con due soprani e un coro basso con due tenori, il mottetto è consistentemente in un sonoro insieme di otto voci, in stile doppio coro. Il testo unisce tutti gli elementi del Rito Cristiano dell'Ultima Cena: il Corpo e il Sangue di Cristo, il Pane del Cielo e la vita eterna raggiunta con il suo consumarsi.

La Preghiera del Signore, il **Pater noster**, contiene le parole più famose del cristianesimo. Questa preghiera apparentemente semplice ci giunge da due dei Vangeli, Matteo (VI, v. 9-13) e Luca (XI, vv. 2-4). Tuttavia ci sono alcune varianti nelle parole usate da Gesù mentre guidava gli Apostoli in preghiera. La principale differenza, che nel corso dei secoli ha suscitato un notevole dibattito sul suo esatto significato, si verifica nella terza invocazione: qui la Vulgata recita "... *panem nostrum supersubstantialem*" in Matteo; mentre la versione di Luca è "... *panem nostrum quotidianum*"; questo nonostante la parola greca (ἐπιούσιον), l'aggettivo qualificante "pane" nel primo testo greco disponibile per San Girolamo, è la stessa in entrambi i Vangeli.

I 68 Offertori per cinque voci furono pubblicati in due volumi nel 1593. Sono una sintesi dell'opera e dello stile di Palestrina. **Sacerdotes Domini**, per la ricorrenza del Corpus Domini, inscena le parole di Levitico XXI, v.5, esaltando l'offerta al Signore di incenso e pane.

**Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui,
Duo ubera tua e Quam pulchra es**

I 29 mottetti con i testi dal *Cantico dei Cantici* sono stati probabilmente i più popolari e di successo tra tutte le composizioni di Palestrina, poiché sono stati ristampati non meno di 11 volte tra la loro prima pubblicazione nel 1583/84 e il 1613. Sono, con i suoi volumi di madrigali sacri e profani, un po' anomali nel contesto della sua opera, perlomeno nella scelta dei testi, pur essendo le parole bibliche e da tempo accettate nel Canone. Allegorici, senza dubbio, nella loro forma latina, Palestrina e il suo pubblico devono averli molto amati. Come gli Offertori, condividono una sintesi, una perfezione tecnica e un'assoluta chiarezza nell'impostazione delle parole, mantenendo costante l'interesse polifonico.

Con un testo per la domenica di Pasqua, **Victimae paschali laudes** è una delle quattro sequenze medievali conservate nella Liturgia dopo il Concilio di Trento alla metà del XVI secolo. Palestrina impiega la

versione del testo nel Messale riveduto del 1570, dalla quale è stata rimossa la sezione "*Credendum est ...*", con il riferimento peggiorativo riguardo agli ebrei.

Scritto da San Tommaso d'Aquino nel XIII secolo, l'inno **Pange lingua**, per la festa del Corpus Domini e anche per la Settimana Santa, è stato musicato da vari compositori dall'inizio della polifonia fino ai giorni nostri. Pubblicata per la prima volta nel 1589, la versione di Palestrina è nella forma convenzionale di versi di canto *alternatim* con polifonia a quattro voci. Il quinto verso "*Tantum ergo sacramentum*" veniva talvolta musicato come pezzo a sé – in ogni caso i compositori vi ponevano comunemente maggiore enfasi, essendo cantato all'atto della presentazione del Santissimo Sacramento: Palestrina aggiunge un secondo tenore alla trama vocale, fornendo un ulteriore elemento di magnificenza a questo importante verso.

Nel 1593, dopo una vita al servizio della Chiesa romana, e internazionalmente famoso come compositore, Palestrina

apparentemente aveva intenzione di tornare nella sua città natale come *maestro* nella Cattedrale di San Agapito. Palestrina non ne ebbe tuttavia il tempo, poiché morì a Roma il 2 febbraio 1594, all'età di 68 anni, apparentemente all'improvviso, dato che non aveva lasciato testamento. Fu sepolto nella Cappella Giulia, nella

cripta dove già riposavano la sua prima moglie e i due figli Rodolfo e Angelo che lo avevano preceduto..

Martyn Imrie

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Italian Translation

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1 Ego sum panis vivus

*Ego sum panis vivus,
qui de caelo descendi:
si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane,
vivet in aeternum.
Alleluia.*

*Panis quem ego dabo,
caro mea est,
pro mundi vita:
si quis manducaverit ex hoc pane,
vivet in aeternum.
Alleluia.*

I am the living bread
which came down from Heaven:
whosoever eateth of this bread
shall have eternal life.
Alleluia.

The bread which I give you
is my flesh
and life for the world:
whosoever eateth of this bread
shall have eternal life.
Alleluia.

2 Fratres ego enim accepi

*Fratres ego enim accepi a Domino,
quod et tradidi vobis,
quoniam Dominus Jesus
in qua nocte tradebatur,
accepi panem:
et gratias agens fregit,
et dixit:*

*Accipite et manducate, hoc est corpus meum.
Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.*

Brethren, I have received of the Lord
that which I also delivered unto you,
that the Lord Jesus
the same night in which he was betrayed
took bread:
And when he had given thanks, he brake it,
and said:
Take, eat, this is my body:
do this in remembrance of me.

3 Accipit Jesus calicem

*Accipit Jesus calicem
postquam caenavit, dicens:
hic calix novum testamentum est
in meo sanguine.
Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.*

Jesus took the cup
after having supped, saying:
This cup is a new testament
in my blood:
Do this in my memory.

MISSA FRATRES EGO ENIM ACCEPI

4 Kyrie

*Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.*

Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.

5 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 caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.*

Glory be to God on high.
And on earth peace to men of good will.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee,
we worship Thee, we glorify Thee.
We give thanks to Thee
for Thy great glory.
Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy upon us.

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

For Thou only art holy,
Thou only art the Lord,
Thou only art the most high, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilato;
passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum scripturas;
et ascendit in caelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
iudicare vivos et mortuos,
cuius 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.
Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum
et vitam venturi saeculi.
Amen.*

And was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again
according to the scriptures;
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of the Father.
And He shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified;
who spake by 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.

6 Credo

*Credo in unum Deum
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae,
visibilem omnium et invisibilem.
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 caelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est.*

I believe in God
the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds.
God of God, light of light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by Whom all things were made.
Who for us men,
and for our salvation,
came down from heaven.
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary and was made man.

7 Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.*

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

8 Benedictus

*Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.*

Blessed is He that cometh
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

9 Agnus Dei

*Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi:
miserere nobis.*

Lamb of God,
Who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.



10 Caro mea vere est cibus

*Caro mea vere est cibus,
et sanguis meus vere est potus.
Qui manducat meam carnem,
et bibit meum sanguinem,
in me manet, et ego in illo.
Sicut misit me vivens Pater,
et ego vivo propter Patrem,
et qui manducat me,
et ipse vivet propter me.*

*Hic est panis,
qui de caelo descendit.
Non sicut manducaverunt patres vestri manna,
et mortui sunt.
Qui manducat hunc panem,
vivet in aeternum.*

For my flesh is meat indeed:
and my blood is drink indeed.
He that eateth my flesh,
and drinketh my blood,
abideth in me, and I in him.
As the living Father hath sent me,
and I live by the Father;
so he that eateth me,
the same also shall live by me.

This is the bread
that came down from Heaven.
Not as your fathers did eat manna,
and are dead.
He that eateth this bread
shall live for ever.

11 Pater noster

*Pater noster, qui es in caelis,
sanctificetur nomen tuum.*

Adveniat regnum tuum.

Fiat voluntas tua sicut in caelo, et in terra.

Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie.

Et dimitte nobis debita nostra,

sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.

Et ne nos inducas in tentationem,

sed libera nos a malo.

Amen.

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,

as we also forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

12 Sacerdotes Domini

*Sacerdotes Domini incensum
et panes offerunt Deo:*

et ideo sancti erunt Deo suo,

et non pollutent nomen eius.

Alleluia.

The priests of the Lord offer up incense
and bread to the Lord;

and therefore they shall be holy to their Lord
and not defile his name.

Alleluia.

SONG OF SONGS ~ nos. 25-27

13 Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui

*Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui in calceamentis,
filia principis.*

*lunctorum femorum tuorum sicut monilia
quae fabricata sunt manu artificis.*

*Umbilicus tuus crater tornatilis,
numquam indigens poculis.*

*Venter tuus sicut acervus tritici
vallatus liliis.*

How beautiful are thy sandalled feet,
O daughter of princes.

The joints of thy thighs are like jewels
made by the hand of craftsmen.

Thy navel is like a rounded bowl
never without cups.

Thy belly is like a heap of wheat
set about with lilies.

14 Duo ubera tua

*Duo ubera tua sicut duo hinnuli
gemelli capreae.*

Collum tuum sicut turris eburnea.

Oculi tui sicut piscinae in Hesebon,

quae sunt in porta

filiae multitudinis.

Nasus tuus sicut turris Libani,

quae respicit contra Damascum.

Caput tuum ut Carmelus:

et comae capitis tui sicut purpura regis

iuncta canalibus.

Thy breasts are like two fawns,
roes that are twins.

Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.

Thine eyes are like the pools in Hesebon,

which are at the Gate of the

Daughter of the Multitude.

Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon

that looks towards Damascus.

Thy head is like Carmel,

and the hair of thy head as royal purple

braided in strands.

15 Quam pulchra es

*Quam pulchra es, et quam decora,
carissima, in deliciis.*

*Statura tua assimilata est palmae,
et ubera tua botris.*

*Dixi: Ascendam in palmam,
et apprehendam fructus eius:
et erunt ubera tua
sicut botri vineae:*

et odor oris tui sicut odor malorum.

How beautiful art thou, and how comely,
my dearest, in delights.

Thy stature is like to a palm tree
and thy breasts to clusters [of fruit].

I said: I will go up into the palm tree
and I will take hold of the fruit thereof.

And thy breasts [also] shall be
as the clusters of the vine;
and the odour of thy mouth like apples.



16 Victimae paschali laudes

*Victimae paschali laudes
immolent Christiani.*

Agnus redemit oves:

Christus innocens

Patri reconciliavit peccatores.

*Mors et vita duello conflixere mirando:
dux vitae mortuus, regnat vivus.*

Dic nobis Maria, quid vidisti in via?

Let Christians declare their praises to
the Paschal Victim.

The lamb has redeemed the sheep;
the innocent Christ

has reconciled sinners with the Father.

Death and life have fought in wondrous conflict;
after death the leader of life, living, reigns.

Tell us, Mary, what thou saw upon thy way?

*Sepulchrum Christi viventis,
et gloriam vidi resurgentis:*

*angelicos testes,
sudarium, et vestes.*

*Surrexit Christus spes mea:
praecedet vos in Galileam.*

*Scimus Christum surrexisse a mortuis vere:
tu nobis, victor Rex, miserere. Amen.*

Alleluia.

I saw the sepulchre of the living Christ,
and the glory of his rising,
the angelic witnesses,
the veil and the garments.
Christ, my hope, has arisen,
he goes before you into Galilee.

We know in truth that Christ has risen from the dead:
be merciful unto us, O victorious King. Amen.
Alleluia.

17 Pange lingua

*Pange lingua gloriosi
Corporis mysterium,
Sanguinisque pretiosi
Quem in mundi pretium,
Fructus ventris generosi,
Rex effudit gentium.*

*Nobis datus, nobis natus
Ex intacta Virgine,
Et in mundo conversatus,
Sparso verbi semine;
Sui moras incolatus
Miro clausit ordine.*

Sing, O tongue,
of the mystery of the glorious
body and of the precious blood,
which as ransom of the world,
the King of all people,
fruit of a noble womb, poured forth.

Given to us, born for us,
from the pure Virgin,
and residing in our world,
he has sown the seed of the Word,
ending his sojourn
with a miracle.

*In supremae nocte caenae
Recumbens cum fratribus,
Observata lege plene
Cibus in legalibus;
Cibum turbae duodenae
Se dat suis manibus.*

*Verbum caro, panem verum,
Verbo carnem efficit,
Fitque sanguis Christi merum;
Et, si sensus deficit,
Ad firmandum cor sincerum
Sola fides sufficit.*

*Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui;
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui.
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.*

*Genitori Genitoque
Laus et iubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio;
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio.
Amen.*

In the night of that supreme feast,
reclining with his brethren,
he has observed the obligations
of that lawful meal;
now with his own hands he gives himself
to his twelve companions.

With a word, the Word made flesh
is true bread
and the blood of Christ is wine;
and, if our senses fail
to comprehend,
faith alone will suffice.

Let us venerate the Sacrament
with bowed head,
and may the ancient rules
give way to new rites.
May faith supplement
the defects of our senses.

To the Father and the Son
be praise and jubilation,
homage, honour, virtue
and all blessings;
and to him who proceeds from both,
let equal praise be given.
Amen

HARRY CHRISTOPHERS stands among today's great champions of choral music. In partnership with The Sixteen, the ensemble he founded over 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 festivals.



Photograph: Marco Borggreve

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.



§ The Sixteen

Whether performing a simple medieval hymn or expressing the complex musical and emotional language of a contemporary choral composition, The Sixteen does so with qualities common to all great ensembles. Tonal warmth, rhythmic precision and immaculate intonation are clearly essential to

the mix. But it is the courage and intensity with which The Sixteen makes music that speak above all to so many people.

The Sixteen gave its first concert in 1979 under the direction of Founder and Conductor Harry Christophers CBE. Their pioneering work since has made a profound impact on the performance of choral music and attracted a large new audience, not least as 'The Voices of Classic FM' and through BBC television's *Sacred Music* series.

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§ The Sixteen

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Charlotte Mobbs	Kim Porter	George Pooley	Rob Macdonald
Emilia Morton			
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Recording Producer: Mark Brown
Recording Engineer: Mike Hatch (Floating Earth)
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