

REPertoire

<i>God Is With Us</i>	John Tavener*
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<i>Crawford Wiley, organ</i>	
<i>Ave maris stella</i>	James MacMillan†
<i>Prophetiae sibyllarum: III. Sibylla delphica</i>	Orlande de Lassus†
<i>Prophetiae sibyllarum: VIII. Sibylla phrygia</i>	Orlande de Lassus†
<i>Kyrie</i>	Ralph Vaughan Williams*
<i>Anne Hafenstein, Erica Edquist, Matt Reichardt, Aaron Musser, soloists</i>	
<i>Gloria</i>	Ralph Vaughan Williams*
<i>Anne Hafenstein, Erica Edquist, Matt Reichardt, Aaron Musser, soloists</i>	
<i>Prophetiae sibyllarum: I. Sibylla persica</i>	Orlande de Lassus†
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<i>Crawford Wiley, organ</i>	
<i>Daniel Hafenstein, percussion</i>	

* Indicates Chant Claire

† Indicates APERI ANIMAM

Chant Claire

Chant Claire, French for “clear song,” was founded by Director Benjamin Bedroske in the fall of 2013 with the intent to explore rigorous and thoughtful choral repertoire with singers and audiences throughout the Milwaukee area. This auditioned ensemble is comprised of a wide variety of music educators, performers, and community members who are dedicated to Chant Claire’s mission of creating authentic music in an authentic community. With an ensemble of over 65 singers, Chant Claire aims to combine the power of a large choir with the clarity of a chamber ensemble.

Chant Claire has collaborated with numerous ensembles, including Skylight Music Theatre, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Danceworks, the Marion Consort, the Alverno College Choir, Milwaukee Children’s Choir, and the UW-Eau Claire Concert Choir. In 2017, the ensemble was selected to participate in a workshop with lauded choral composer Eric Whitacre at the Basilica of St. Josaphat. Chant Claire holds weekly rehearsals at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Milwaukee.

Chant Claire Members

Benjamin Bedroske - Director
 Julie Fraleigh - Rehearsal Pianist
 Julia Rizzi - Resident Visual Artist
 * - Denotes Section Leader

Soprano:

Sally Alvarado
 Laura Bruschi
 Sarah Ciombor
 Elle Dannecker
 Stephanie Drews
 Danielle Graf
 Jennifer Grokowsky*
 Anne Hafenstein
 Amy Hermanson
 Sarah Lemon*
 Laura Lu
 Maggy Lynch
 Gillian Pacetti
 Jessica Randazzo
 Rachel Reinders
 Julia Rizzi
 Amber Shiessl
 Rachel Szurek
 Grace Wellstein
 Emily Wrobel

Alto:

Katie Ausen
 Audra Boettge
 Lara Brajkovic

Hallie Burns
 Sarah Brumm
 Kayla Carlson
 Kathy Crane
 Colleen Doubleday
 Erica Edquist
 Veronica Fregoso
 Alexis Ganos
 Sarah Kikkert
 Sarah Marman
 Samantha O’Connell
 Cassandra Pacelli*
 Lauren Schell
 Heather Schultz*
 Stephanie Showers
 Laurel Tippe
 Emily Zimmermann

Tenor:

Marco Armanious
 Tom Boehm
 Noah Bossert
 Daniel Bruschi
 Danny Fallon
 David Froiland
 Tyler Graf

Daniel Hafenstein
 Elias King
 Stephen Lanza
 Jeff Olson
 Ben Quartemont
 Alex Randazzo
 Matt Reichardt*
 Crawford Wiley*

Bass:

Cameron Ausen
 Tim Backes
 Will Berendsen
 Jonathan Brooks*
 Brett Hanisko*
 Matthew Hunt
 Matthew Kopetsky
 Will Loder
 Paul Mertz
 Paul Mleziva
 Aaron Musser
 Bill Sakalaucks
 Craig Schaefer
 Sam Showers
 Ethan Tarvin

APERI ANIMAM

An emerging vocal early music ensemble, APERI ANIMAM has quickly drawn the attention of early music enthusiasts and organizations across the United States. In May 2019, they were selected as one of four ensembles and soloists to perform on Early Music America’s Emerging Artists Showcase. Most recently, they premiered Amanda Schoofs’ experimental opera *Eternal Burning* alongside Orlande de Lassus’s *Prophetiae sibyllarum* in a critically acclaimed collaboration with Milwaukee Opera Theatre and Cadance Collective.

APERI ANIMAM’s repertoire spans from Gregorian chant to 21st-century works but focuses primarily on sacred music from the Renaissance, mainly that of the English school. While there is careful attention to historical performance practice, the ensemble emphasizes the meditative and reflective atmosphere that can be manifested through this music’s thoughtful and mindful performance. They hope to bring awareness of its mystical properties and benefit to the soul, which is where their name originates—“open your soul.” Led by artistic director Daniel Koplitz, APERI ANIMAM has been praised for their ensemble precision, full-throated vocals, emotional expressivity, and innovative programming.

APERI ANIMAM has collaborated with Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Plymouth Chorale, Nordic Brass, and Hesternus. They have been featured on the Milwaukee Fringe Festival and the Riverwest FemFest, and have performed through the Madison Early Music Festival fringe series, the University of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Grace Lutheran concert series, Holy Hill Basilica, and Early Music Now. APERI ANIMAM has opened for the world-renowned Flanders Recorder Quartet and worked in a masterclass setting with The Queen’s Six, Calmus Ensemble, Dana Marsh, and members of Piffaro. Currently, they hold residency at All Saints’ Cathedral in Milwaukee.

APERI ANIMAM Members

Daniel Koplitz - Director

Soprano:

Deme Hellwig
Nicole McCarty
Xai

Alto:

Jennifer Jakubowski
Molly Pagryzinski
Jackie Willis

Tenor:

Austin Bare
Daniel Koplitz

Bass:

Joseph Krohlow
Sam Mullooly
Crawford Wiley

Lady, Queen of Paradise—no one who hears Benjamin Britten's famous setting of these words by an anonymous poet of the early 14th century can ever forget the visceral tug at the heart. There is, in the long history of devotion to Mary, always a sense that this devotion springs from a place beyond reason; the millions of those who love Mary do not do so primarily because the Council of Ephesus (A.D. 325) defined her as the *Theotokos* or God-bearer, but because the image of the Mother and Child itself pulls us in by the very archetypal nature of our shared humanity. We are all born, and the presence or absence of our mothers unfolds over the course of our lives in the development of our own psyches.

Miriam herself (the Hebrew name for the English *Mary*, the Latin *Maria*, etc) has only a relatively few appearances in the New Testament, each of them heavy with meaning, and it is fair to say that while these episodes have been a source of renewed contemplation for Christians of every century, Marian devotion as such has never been restricted by this limited material. To understand Marian devotion and art, it is crucial to grasp that Mary is always *encountered*—a distinct and potent individual who seeks out a relationship with her beloved children. Rarely known primarily as theory or concept (a charge frequently laid against unimaginative teaching on the Trinity), Mary's humanity has always remained both vivid and vital, often in surprising ways—think of the legend about the monk who delighted Our Lady by juggling before her!

Tonight's collaborative program is its own sort of Marian juggling-act, tossing up into this reverberant space music of the 16th and 21st centuries, texts tangentially related to Mary and texts explicitly addressing her and music newly composed to ancient texts. All are united by the primal bond described in Brian Keeble's poem set in Tavener's *Mother and Child: The mother's gaze in turn / Contrives a single beam of light / Along which love may move*. This universal bond, transcending even religious and cultural distinctions, is our theme; the warm and nurturing heart at the center of all these centuries of music for Mary and her Child.

***God Is With Us* by John Tavener (1944-2013)**

Winchester Cathedral, for whose choir this piece was commissioned in 1987, was a spiritual home for Sir John Tavener, and the cathedral organ's placement high above the north choir stalls heightens the stunning impact of its first entrance as an utterly otherworldly and remote Other. The text, from the Orthodox Great Compline for Christmas Eve, is largely declaimed by a baritone soloist, with responses by the 8-part choir. The piece is typical of Tavener's work from this period, when he was most heavily influenced by the sound-world of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the baritone soloist is instructed to 'Declaim freely, in Byzantine style'. In this context, the (very Western) organ's entrance at the end is even more shocking and stylistically unexpected, an intrusion rich with potential for symbolic interpretation.

God is with us.

Hear ye people, even to the uttermost end of the earth.
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.
The people that dwell in the shadow of death, upon them the
light has shined.

God is with us,

For unto us a child is born, for unto us a son is given,
And the government shall be upon his shoulder,
And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,

God is with us,

The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.
Hear ye people, even to the uttermost end of the earth:

God is with us,

Christ is born.

Text adapted from the Orthodox Great Compline for Christmas Eve

***Ave maris stella* by James MacMillan (b. 1959)**

The rhythmic pattern of Macmillan's setting of the well-loved Marian hymn *Ave maris stella* is quickly grasped, and the gentle repetition—like the passing of rosary beads through the fingers—is, in its simplicity, a door into contemplation. There is little to say about, but much to learn from this music. The release of the soprano line in the final “Amen” is serene rather than triumphant.

*Ave, maris stella,
Dei mater alma,
atque semper virgo,
felix cœli porta.*

Hail, star of the sea,
Nurturing Mother of God,
And ever Virgin happy,
Gate of Heaven.

*Sumens illud Ave
Gabrielis ore,
funda nos in pace,
mutans Evæ nomen.*

Receiving that “Ave” (hail)
From the mouth of Gabriel,
Establish us in peace,
Transforming the name of “Eva” (Eve).

*Solve vincula reis
profer lumen cæcis,
mala nostra pelle,
bona cuncta posce.*

Loosen the chains of the guilty,
Send forth light to the blind,
Our evil do thou dispel,
Entreat (for us) all good things.

*Monstra te esse matrem,
sumat per the preces
qui pro nobis natus
tulit esse tuus.*

Show thyself to be a Mother:
Through thee may he receive prayer
Who, being born for us,
Undertook to be thine own.

*Virgo singularis,
inter omnes mitis,
nos culpis solutus
mites fac et castos.*

O unique Virgin,
Meek above all others,
Make us, set free from (our) sins,
Meek and chaste.

*Vitam præsta puram,
iter para tutum,
ut videntes Jesum
semper collætetur.*

Bestow a pure life,
Prepare a safe way:
That seeing Jesus,
We may ever rejoice.

*Sit laus Deo Patri,
summo Christo decus,
Spiritus Sancto tribus honor unus.
Amen.*

Praise be to God the Father,
To the Most High Christ (be) glory,
To the Holy Spirit
(Be) honour, to the Three equally. Amen.

Selections from *Prophetiae sibyllarum* by Orlande de Lassus (c. 1530/1532 – 1594)

Orlande de Lassus's *Prophetiae sibyllarum* is fascinating, not only because the music is of the highest quality, but despite being composed in the 1550s, it sounds like it belongs to the 21st century! Inspired by the recent rediscovery of Greek music theory and performance, Lassus pioneered the mid-century avant garde style, where intense emotional expression of text was paramount and strict adherence to the rules of Renaissance counterpoint was pushed aside.

When preparing this set of experimental motets as a gift for the pious yet fashionable Duke of

Bavaria, Lassus fittingly chose poems on the coming of Christ as predicted by the Greek oracles. Focusing on the mysteries of Christ's Incarnation, virgin birth, and role in worldly salvation, the motets are so chromatic that one has difficulty determining any tonal center or "home note," and the unsettling, mystical result is exactly what Lassus desired. Here Lassus is at the height of Renaissance artistic expression, breaking rules and stretching boundaries, and it is no wonder he came to be regarded as one of the most famous and influential composers of the period.

I. Sibylla persica

*Virgine matre satus pando residebit asello
jucundus princeps unus qui ferre salutem rite
queat lapsis: tamen illis forte diebus multi
multa ferent, immensi fata laboris. Solo sed
satis est oracula prodere verbo: ille deus casta
nascetur virgine magnus.*

Born of a virgin mother, the glorious Prince shall come, seated on the back of an ass. He alone will bring salvation to a world of darkness. Many bear the weight of destiny, but this one prophecy may suffice: God shall be born of a chaste virgin.

III. Sibylla delphica

*Non tarde veniet, tacita sed mente tenendum
hoc opus; hoc memori semper qui corde
reponet, huius pertendant cor gaudia magna
prophetæ eximia, qui virginea conceptus ab
alvo prodibit, sine contactu maris, omnia
vincit hoc naturæ opera: at fecit, qui cuncta
gubernat.*

Behold: he comes. Be silent, that it may remain a secret. Remember that he whom the prophets awaited with great joy resides in the heart. Conceived without taint, he will be born of a virgin's womb, conquering all of nature's works, for he is the Lord of creation.

IV: Sibylla cimmerica

*In teneris annis facie præsignis, honore
militiæ æternæ regem sacra virgo cibabit
lacte suo; per quem gaudebunt pectore
summo omnia, et eoo lucebit sidus ab orbe
mirificum; sua dona magi cum laude ferentes,
obiciient puero myrrham, aurum, thura
sabæa.*

Of tender years and beauteous mien, the sacred Virgin will nourish the King with her milk. All things shall rejoice and a wondrous star shall shine in the East. The Magi, bearing their gifts with praise, shall lay at his feet gold, frankincense, and Sabean myrrh.

VIII: Sibylla phrygia

*Ipsa Deum vidi summum, punire volentem
mundi homines stupidos, et pectora caeca,
rebellis. Et quia sic nostram compleverit
crimina pellem, virginis in corpus voluit
demittere coelo ipse deus prolem, quam
nunciet angelus almae matri, quo miseros
contracta sorde lavaret.*

With my own eyes, I saw the all-powerful God who wished to punish the stupidity of men on earth and the blind hearts of rebels, for the measure of our sins is great. That same God sent his Son from heaven to be born of the body of a virgin, as the angel announced to the Mother, and he shall wash the sins of the wicked.

The Mass Text -- Compositions by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) and Frank Martin (1890-1974)

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the Westminster Cathedral Choir at the beginning of the 20th century. The first professional Catholic cathedral choir in the UK since the Reformation, its director, Sir Richard Runciman Terry, not only pioneered the revival of Byrd and Tallis's Latin church music but also commissioned new music from the leading composers of the day. Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Mass in G Minor* was commissioned in 1922, a decade after his *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* was premiered at Gloucester Cathedral, and

both works are permeated by the same love of modal harmonies shifting between two equal 4-part choruses and a small ensemble of 4 soloists. Approached strictly as polyphony, the Vaughan Williams *Mass* is not always equal to its polyphonic models, but as a choral work of sustained impressionistic sensitivity (the importance of RVW's time studying under Ravel should never be underestimated) it has few rivals. The *Kyrie* and *Gloria* excerpted here display real attention to the mood of the text, and a sympathy for the aural world of Gregorian chant in which they would have been sung in the newly built cathedral of Westminster.

There is something moving about the fact that Frank Martin's *Mass for Double Choir*—like Herbert Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi*—was written for deeply personal reasons and never intended for performance or publication. It stands early in the Swiss composer's work (he was only 36 when he completed the *Agnus Dei*, four years after the rest of the piece) and is not typical of his Schoenberg-influenced mature style. It is undoubtedly one of the most astonishingly perfect pieces of 20th c. polyphony, and since its belated premier in 1963 it has been sung widely. In Martin's own words, '*I have introduced the term incarnation as the antithesis of the term expression. To me, it simply symbolizes the fact that a work of art, in its highest purpose, never directly expresses the artist's innermost emotions. . . . Indeed, the feeling thus expressed is of little moment. All that counts is that the work is beautiful, that the artist received and cherished it in that region of the spirit which is beyond joy and sorrow.*' It is in this same region of the spirit that singers and audiences alike continue to take this masterpiece to their hearts. The *Credo* and *Sanctus* excerpted here are without parallel since Byrd himself.

Kyrie

Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

Christe, eleison.

Christ, have mercy.

Kyrie, eleison.

Lord, have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo,

Glory to God in the highest

et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

And on earth peace to men of goodwill.

Laudamus te. Benedicimus te.

We praise You. We bless You.

Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.

We adore you. We glorify You.

Gratias agimus tibi

We give you thanks

propter magnam gloriam tuam.

for Your great glory.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,

Lord God, Heavenly King,

Deus Pater omnipotens,

Almighty God the Father,

Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe;

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father;

Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris:

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

qui tollis peccata mundi,

You take away the sins of the world;

miserere nobis;

have mercy on us;

qui tollis peccata mundi,

You take away the sins of the world;

suscipe deprecationem nostram;

receive our prayer;

qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,

You sit at the right hand of the Father;

miserere nobis.

have mercy on us.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,

For you alone are holy,

tu solus Dominus,

You alone are the Lord,

tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe.

You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,

*Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris.
Amen.*

with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Credo

*Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae, visibilibus omnium, et
invisibilibus.*

I believe in one God, the Father, the
Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, Of all
that is seen and unseen.

*Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum Filium
Dei unigenitum.*

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only
Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father.

Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.

God from God, Light from Light, True God
from true God;

*Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine, Deum verum
de Deo vero.*

*Genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.*

begotten, not made; of one being with the
Father; through Him all things were made.

*Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram
salutem descendit de caelis.*

For us men, and for our salvation, He came
down from heaven;

*Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine:*

by the power of the Holy Spirit He became
incarnate from the Virgin Mary
and was made man.

et homo factus est.

*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: sub Pontio Pilato
passus, et sepultus est.*

for our sake He was crucified under Pontius
Pilate, He suffered death and was buried.

*Et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum Scripturas.*

On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;

*Et ascendit in caelum: sedet ad dexteram
Patris.*

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at
the right hand of the Father.

*Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare
vivos et mortuos:*

He shall come again in glory to judge both
the living and dead,

cujus regni non erit finis.

and His kingdom shall have no end.

*Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et
vivificantem:*

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the
giver of life,

qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.

Who proceeds from the Father and the Son;

*Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et
conglorificatur:*

with the Father and the Son He is
worshipped and glorified;

qui locutus est per Prophetas.

He has spoken through the prophets.

*Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam
Ecclesiam.*

I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic
Church,

*Confiteor unum baptismum in remissionem
peccatorum.*

I acknowledge one baptism for the
forgiveness of sins,

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum.

and I look for the resurrection of the dead,

Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sanctus

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus
Sabaoth:*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and
might;

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini:

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

Hosanna in excelsis.

Hosanna in the highest.

***Bethlehem Down* by Peter Warlock (1894-1930)**

The colorful origins of Warlock's now-immortal *Bethlehem Down* are well known; he and his friend Bruce Blunt wrote the music and text to submit to the *Daily Telegraph's* 1927 carol competition in order to fund an 'immortal carouse' on Christmas Day. (Which they won.) Less commented-upon, but well known to every singer, is the hauntingly perfect marriage of the music to its deeply unsettling text, seeing in the image of the Madonna and Child a foreshadowing of the Pieta. The chromatic descent of the basses in Warlock's reharmonization of the last two verses perfectly matches the descent of the text into this uneasy union of stillness and foreboding.

When He is King we will give him the King's gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes", said the young girl to Joseph
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When He is King they will clothe Him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here He has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep Him from cold,
Mary for love, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

Text by Bruce Blunt

***Haec dicit Dominus* from *Liber secundus sacrarum cantionum* by William Byrd (c. 1540/1543 – 1623)**

Byrd's Cantiones Sacrae of 1591, like its predecessor of 1589, is a collection of varied motets whose texts—insofar as they could be said to have a unifying theme—are usually thought to express and respond to the plight of recusant Catholics in Elizabethan England. Byrd, himself a recusant Catholic, was (like his teacher Thomas Tallis) for centuries largely revered for his anthems and canticles composed in English for the liturgy of the reformed Church of England. In Latin motets like *Haec dicit Dominus*, however, Byrd unleashes an emotional intensity rarely present in his English music. The text describing the anguish of Rachel weeping for her children is inherently dramatic, and Byrd makes use of a full battery of rhetorical devices to heighten the drama, beginning with the homophonic declamation "This is what the Lord says" in the opening bars (the careful listener will hear this declamation repeated nearly halfway through the motet). At the line "There is hope for your future," Byrd's writing becomes ravishingly sweet, and hope is palpable well before the solid joys of the incomparable final cadence.

Haec dicit Dominus: vox in excelsis audita est lamentationis, luctus et fletus, Rachael plorantis filios suos, et nolentis consolari super eos, quia non sunt. Haec dicit Dominus: quiescat vox tua a ploratu, et oculi tui a lacrimis, quia est merces operi tuo, ait Dominus, et est spes in novissimis tuis, et revertentur filii ad terminos suos.

This is what the Lord says: "A cry is heard in Ramah— deep anguish and bitter weeping. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted—for her children are gone." But now this is what the Lord says: "Do not weep any longer, for I will reward you," says the Lord. "Your children will come back to you from the distant land of the enemy. There is hope for your future," says the Lord. "Your children will come again to their own land." (*NLT*)

***A Hymn to the Virgin* by Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)**

Britten's genius for setting the English language with an impeccable ear for mood is already clear in this early piece, composed over the course of a few hours during a stay in the school sanatorium at age 13. The structure of the piece is simplicity itself: Chorus I sings the English line, and Chorus II replies in Latin. This, of course, does nothing to convey the spellbinding beauty of the music itself, lucid and uncomplicated though it is. Awe and tenderness are united here, each illuminating the other.

Of one that is so fair and bright	
<i>velut maris stella,</i>	[like a star of the sea]
Brighter than the day is light,	
<i>parens et puella.</i>	[mother and maiden]
I cry to thee, thou see to me,	
Lady, pray thy Son for me,	
<i>Tam pia,</i>	[thou Holy One]
That I may come to thee.	
<i>Maria!</i>	[Mary]
All this world was forlorn	
<i>Eva peccatrice,</i>	[through Eve, the sinner]
Till our Lord was y-born	
<i>de te genetrix.</i>	[of thee, the mother]
With ave it went away	
darkest night, and comes the day	
<i>salutis;</i>	[of salvation]
The well springeth out of thee	
<i>virtutis.</i>	[of virtue]
Lady, flower of everything,	
<i>rose sine spina,</i>	[rose without a thorn]
Thou bare Jesu, heaven's King,	
<i>gratia divina:</i>	[by divine grace]
Of all that bear'st the prize,	
Lady, queen of paradise,	
<i>Electa:</i>	[chosen one]
Maid mild, mother	
<i>es effecta.</i>	[thou art proved]

Text by Anonymous, circa 1300

***Alma redemptoris mater* by Cecilia McDowall (b. 1951)**

The *Alma redemptoris mater* is one of four short Gregorian hymns to the Virgin Mary known as the Marian antiphons, traditionally sung at the end of Compline before bed. The antiphons are divided up across the liturgical year, and the *Alma redemptoris mater* is sung from the beginning of Advent through the feast of the Presentation (Candlemas) on February 2. Cecilia McDowall's luminous setting, written for the Marian Consort in 2010, takes its opening figure from the incipit of the chant itself. The fern-like music lilts over a series of pedal tones, curling the filigreed ornaments between the six voices until the unison cry of "Gabrielis ab ore" which leads to an ecstatic (and sudden) conclusion.

*Alma redemptoris mater, quæ pervia cæli
Porta manes, et stella maris, succurre cadenti,
Surgere qui curat populo: tu quæ genuisti,
Natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem
Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore
Sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.*

Mother of Christ! Hear thou thy people's cry,
Star of the deep, and portal of the sky! Mother
of Him Who thee from nothing made, Sinking
we strive and call to thee for aid; Oh, by that joy
which Gabriel brought to thee, Thou Virgin first
and last, let us thy mercy see.

***Nunc Dimittis* by Gustav Holst (1874-1934)**

Like Vaughan Williams' *Mass*, Gustav Holst's setting of the *Nunc Dimittis* was commissioned for the Westminster Cathedral Choir, albeit some years previously, for Easter Sunday of 1915. The opening chords, rising slowly out of the lowest voices and sung *pianissimo*, have been compared so frequently to the effect of incense rising slowly in a dark church that one would think the metaphor dead by now. The effect, however, is so *precisely* like this as to be uncanny. Holst's handling of the 8-part choir is always deft, even on such a miniature scale, but nothing can quite prepare one for the alchemy of the final bars; in nine measures, Holst takes perfectly ordinary part-writing and a set of commonplace cascading figures and transforms them into spun gold.

*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 lettest thou thy servant depart in
peace: according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation,
Which thou hast prepared: before the face of
all people;
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles: and to be
the glory of thy 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

***Beata viscera* from *Gradualia: seu cantionum sacrarum ... Liber primus* by William Byrd (c. 1540/1543 – 1623)**

Here, in contrast to the visceral intensity of *Haec dicit Dominus*, Byrd sets one of the propers for a Marian feast day in the smoothest, finest-grained counterpoint imaginable. This setting is taken from his *Gradualia*, a monumental (and illegal) publication of music for all the principal feasts of the Roman Catholic liturgy. There is nothing extroverted or dramatic about this music—no rhetorical gestures for effect. Here, in five voices, (always the medium for Byrd's most mellifluous counterpoint) the glory of Mary—a point of contention in the 16th century—is revealed effortlessly, without exaggeration. The music feels mysterious—the opening figure seems to have grown organically out of silence itself. And since, when this was sung liturgically, the Alleluias would have been followed by a repetition of the opening material, it forms an almost continuous musical loop, suggestive of the mystical text in John Tavener's *Mother and Child*.

*Beata viscera Mariae Virginis, quae
portaverunt aeterni Patris Filium; Alleluia.*

Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary, that
bore the son of the everlasting Father: Alleluia.

***Mother and Child* by John Tavener (1944-2013)**

If Tavener's *God is With Us*, with which this program opened, is typical of his Eastern Orthodox-influenced writing, *Mother and Child* is a perfect example of the Hindu-influenced Universalism of his later years, and a window into the spiritual development of this most compelling of composers. In his own words: 'Mother and Child celebrates the miracle of childbirth. It also celebrates the Virgin Mary in her universal aspect as Mother of all the Prophets, and Co-Redemptress with Christ. But behind all this is the Theophanic light, single and infinite, and the same in every religious tradition. The music is at once tender, ecstatic and luminous. I have interpolated into Brian Keeble's poem texts celebrating the Mother of God and Sophia, the Eternal Feminine (Hail Maria! Hail Sophia!); and then, at the climax, an outburst in Sanskrit of ATMA. This is Supreme Reality; the True Self, shining and infinite; the One Single God; expressed in the music by awesome, pulsating strokes on the Hindu temple gong with organ and choir in massive blocks. This implies that the real 'Mother and Child' are beyond birth and beyond death and beyond being.'

Enamoured of its gaze
The mother's gaze in turn
Contrives a single beam of light
Along which love may move.
Through seeing, through touch,
Through hearing the new-born heart
Conduits of being join.
So is the image of heaven within
Started into life.
As in the first [was] adoration
Another consciousness has come to praise
The single theophanic light
That threads all entrants here --
This paradise where all is formed of love
As flame to flame is lit.

Text by Brian Keeble

LEARN MORE

Thank you for attending tonight's collaboration concert with Chant Claire and APERI ANIMAM. Please join us for our upcoming events!

Chant Claire's Upcoming Performances:

Friday, April 3 at 5:00 p.m., Grace Lutheran Downtown

First Fridays concert series

Saturday, May 16 at 7:30 p.m., St Monica Catholic Church
Martin & Vaughan Williams: Masses for Double Choir

Sunday, June 7 at 7:00 p.m., Lakefront Brewery
Singing in the Good Land: 4th Annual Fundraiser

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APERI ANIMAM's Upcoming Performances:

Sunday, April 19 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m., All Saints' Cathedral

Open Rehearsal, Concert Preview, and Talk Back

Sunday, April 26 at 7:30 p.m., All Saints' Cathedral
Candlelit Compline

Saturday, May 2, time TBD, St Joseph Chapel (School Sisters of St. Francis)
Public masterclass with Blue Heron Ensemble

Saturday, May 9, 7:00 p.m. concert & 6:15 p.m. lecture, St Joseph Chapel
(School Sisters of St Francis) **Mater alma: Marian adoration in Britain**

Saturday, August 22, time TBD, No Studios
Summer Gala Fundraiser

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