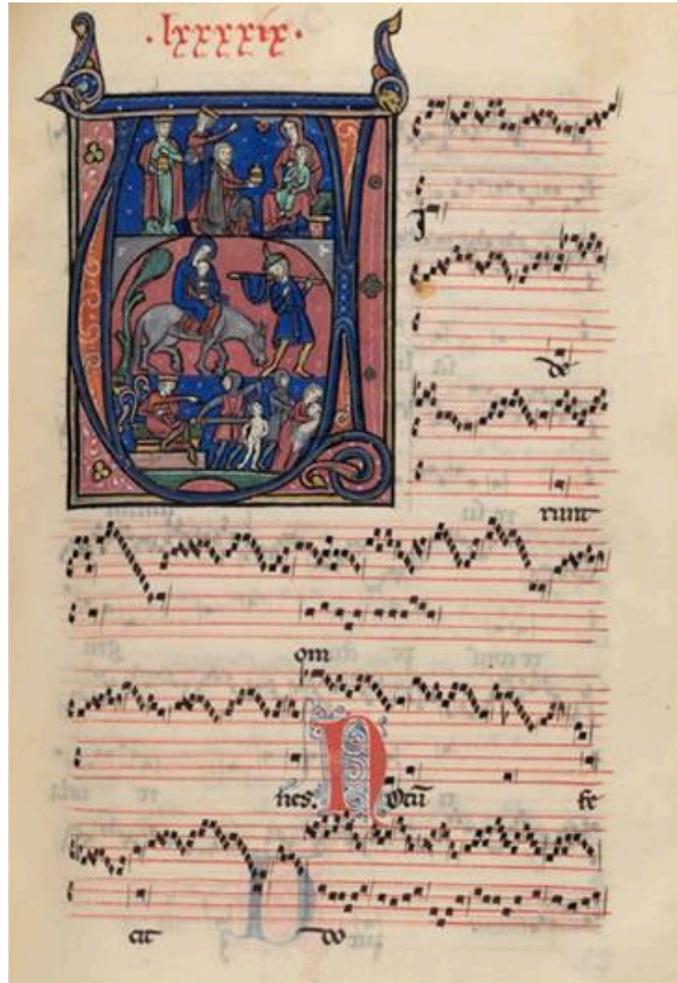


In Nativitate Domini

– Medieval Music for Christmastide –

24th November, 7:30pm – Selwyn College Chapel



Helena Moore (Soprano)
Chloë Allison (Mezzo-soprano)
Daniel Brown (Alto)

Gopal Kambo (Tenor)
Louis Watkins (Tenor)
Matthew Gibson (Bass)

Adam Mathias & Chloë Allison (Directors)

With generous support from Adam Mathias' research project entitled *Sound Memories: The Musical Past in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* funded by HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area).

Adam Mathias and **Chloë Allison** are PhD students in Historical Musicology at the University of Cambridge. Today's concert is inspired by their research into the musical cultures of late 12th- and early 13th-century Paris. Their individual studies of Parisian choral repertoires investigate how this highly elaborate music was made, shared, and written down. An aim of this concert is to give their research a beautiful, musical voice, combining current scholarship with performance. The concert illustrates something of the breadth of medieval musical practice, exploring a range of styles and genres (from chant to four-voice motets), and the many different ways in which medieval singers made music.

Advent and Christmas – times of particular importance in the Christian calendar – have long captured the imaginations of musicians and composers. Indeed, such is the volume of surviving music in celebration of the Nativity that someone scheduling a programme of medieval music associated with the winter season might well feel spoiled for choice. In a number of manuscripts, we encounter not only an abundance of chants associated with this special time, but also elaborate polyphonic settings of those chants. As well as this, we find carols, hymns, and other compositions that take the Christmas story as their starting point.

The books that survive from the 13th century, and especially those that are connected with Paris, are remarkable in several ways. They are, for instance, among the first surviving books whose main content is polyphonic music. From the pages of these polyphonic collections we learn that musicians developed a system of singing in measured rhythm, and explored ways of writing their rhythmic song down. We can also see that some of these books are big, deluxe collections not intended for regular use, rather, they are archival books that were created as a monument to this highly valued musical repertory.

As testament to the cultural importance of 12th- and 13th-century Paris, and the prestige of this musical practice, manuscripts of this sort of polyphonic music spread as far as Scotland, Spain, and Poland. During this period the city became a centre of economic prosperity, and one renowned as a seat of academic excellence. At the city's heart lay the University of Paris and the new Cathedral of Notre Dame – this magnificent building, and its radiating influence, stood as an emblem of the cultural status of Paris in late medieval Europe. Scholars and merchants flocked to this centre of intellectual, economic, and artistic activity; returning home, they spread Parisian musical materials and practices across Europe.

Against this backdrop, we can understand how Parisian polyphony became the most influential and widely disseminated, polyphonic musical repertory that Europe had yet seen. By all accounts, this highly sophisticated music, conceived in the surrounds of Notre Dame and the University of Paris, reflects the cultural and intellectual ambitions of this dynamic cosmopolitan centre.

Responsory: *Aspiciens a longe*

Aspiciens a longe:
ecce video Dei potentiam venientem,
et nebulam totam terram tegentem.

Respond

Ite obviam ei, et dicite:
nuntia nobis, si tu es ipse
qui regnaturus es in populo Israel.

Verses

Quique terrigenae et filii hominum,
simul in unum dives et pauper. [R]

Qui regis Israel, intende:
qui deducis velut ovem Ioseph,
qui sedes super cherubim. [R]

Excita domine potentiam tuam et
veni: ut salvos facias nos. [R]

Gloria patri et filio: et spiritui sancto.

I look from afar: and lo, I see the
power of God coming, and a cloud
covering the whole earth.

Respond

Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us, if you are the one who is
going to reign over the people of
Israel?

Verses

You who are born of the earth, the
sons of men, together as one, rich
and poor: [R]

You, who are of Israel's royalty, hear:
thou that leads Joseph like a sheep,
and sits among the cherubim. [R]

Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and
come: so that we might be saved. [R]

Glory be to the Father, and to the
Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

* * *

Carol: *Angelus ad virginem*

Angelus ad virginem
subintrans in conclave.
Virginis formidinum
Demulcens inquit "Ave."
Ave regina virginum,
coeliteraeque dominum
concipies et paries intacta,
salutem hominum.
Tu porta coeli facta
medella criminum.

Quomodo conciperem,
quae virum non cognovi?
Qualiter infringerem,
quae firma mente vovi?
'Spiritus sancti gratia
perficiet haec omnia;

The angel came to the Virgin,
entering secretly into her room;
calming the Virgin's fear, he said,
"Hail!
Hail, queen of virgins:
you will conceive the Lord of heaven
and earth and bear him, still a virgin,
to be the salvation of mankind;
you will be made the gate of heaven,
the cure of sins."

"How can I conceive,
when I have never known a man?
How can I transgress
resolutions that I have vowed with a
firm mind?" The grace of the Holy
Spirit shall do all this.

ne timeas, sed gaudeas, segura,
quod castimonia
manebit in te pura
dei potentia.'

Ad haec virgo nobilis
respondens inquit ei;
ancilla sum humilis
omnipotentis Dei.
Tibi coelesti nuntio,
tanta secreti conscio,
consentiens et cupiens videre
factum quod audio,
parata sum parere
Dei consilio.

Eia mater Domini,
Quae pacem reddidisti
angelis et homini,
cum Christum genuisti;
tuem exora filium
ut se nobis propitium
exhibeat, et deleat peccata;
praestans auxilium
vita frui beta
post hoc exsilium.

Responsory: *Descendit de caelis*

Descendit de caelis, missus ab arce
Patris:
introivit per aurem virginis in
regionem nostram, indutus stola
purpurea.
Et exivit per auream portam, lux et
decus universae fabricae mundi.

Verse
Tanquam sponsus dominus
procedens de thalamo suo.

Organum à 3: *Descendit de caelis*

Do not be afraid, but rejoice
without a care, since your chastity
will remain in you unspoil
through the power of God."

To this, the noble Virgin,
replying, said to him,
"I am the humble maidservant
of almighty God.
To you, heavenly messenger,
and bearer of such a great secret,
I give my consent, and wishing to see
done what I hear,
I am ready to obey
the will of God."

Hail, Mother of our Lord,
who brought peace back
to angels and men
when you bore Christ!
Pray your son
that he may show favour to us
and blot out our sins,
giving us help
to enjoy a blessed life
after this exile.

He descended from heaven, sent
from the citadel of the Father:
he entered our domain through the
ear of a virgin, clothed in a purple
robe. And he departed through a
gate of gold, the light and glory of
the entire created world.

Verse
As a bridegroom coming out of his
chamber.

* * *

Hymn: *A solis ortus cardine*

A solis ortus cardine,
ad usque terrae limitem,
Christum canamus principem,
natum Maria Virgine.

Beatus auctor saeculi
servile corpus induit,
ut carne carnem liberans
ne perderet quos condidit.

Castae parentis viscera
caelestis intrat gratia;
venter puellae baiulat
secreta quae non noverat.

Domus pudici pectoris
templum repente fit Dei;
intacta nesciens virum
concepit alvo Filium.

Enititur puerpera
quem Gabriel praedixerat,
quem ventre matris gestiens
Baptista clausum senserat.

Foeno jacere pertulit;
praesepe non abhorruit;
et lacte modico pastus est,
per quem nec ales esurit.

Gaudet chorus caelestium,
et angeli canunt Deo;
palamque fit pastoribus
Pastor creator omnium.

Iesu, tibi sit Gloria,
qui natus es de virgine
cum patre et almo spiritu,
in sempiterna saecula.
Amen

From the rising of the sun
to the ends of the earth,
let us sing of Christ the King,
born of the Virgin Mary.

The blessed creator of the world
took a servant's form, so that,
by flesh liberating flesh, he would
not lose what he had made.

In the virgin mother's holy womb,
the heavenly grace entered;
the maiden's womb carries
secrets which she has not known.

The home of her modest breast
becomes God's new temple;
untouched, without knowing a man,
she conceived the Son in her womb.

She laboured and brought forth
the One foretold by Gabriel,
whom the Baptist, still in his
mother's womb,
had sensed, as he leapt with joy.

He endured lying in hay;
he did not scorn the manger;
and with little milk he was fed,
through whom not even a bird goes
hungry.

The heavenly chorus rejoices,
and the angels sing to God;
and the Shepherd, the creator of all,
becomes known to the shepherds.

Jesus, to you be the glory,
who is born of a virgin,
who with the father and the Spirit,
will dwell for ever.
Amen.

Introit: *Puer natus est nobis*

Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus
est nobis:
cuius imperium super humerum
eius: et vocabitur nomen eius, magni
consilii Angelus.

Verse

Cantate domino canticum novum:
quia mirabilia fecit.

A child is born to us, and a Son is
given to us:
whose government is upon His
shoulder:
and His Name shall be called the
Angel of Great Counsel.

Verse

Sing ye to the Lord a new song:
because He hath done wonderful
things.

Conductus: *Puer Nobis est Natus*

Puer nobis est natus,
dum deus humanatus,
non carnis, sed reatus
honus est dignatus,
qui genitus divinitus,
et patri coequalis,
dum nascitur, exceditur
lex partus naturalis.
Nam in carnari sustinens
de virgine procedit.

Quos Adam deformavit
nos Christus reformavit,
qui celos inclinavit,
et tenebras calcavit,
nam pristinae caligine,
de mersos vetustatis,
nos extulit, et retulit
ad lucem veritatis.

Nascens mundo consuluit,
et plebe periture,
et humanam preprosuit,
angelice nature.

A boy is born for us,
as God becomes man,
his burden is worthy,
not through the flesh, but through
guilt,
he is begotten of the divine,
and equal with the father,
when he was born,
the righteous word was spread,
when, nurtured by the flesh
of the virgin, he appeared.

Us who Adam disfigured,
Christ reformed,
he came down from heaven,
and crushed the darkness,
and though we were drowned
by the former gloom of old,
he raises us, and restores us
to the true light.

Springing forth he cared for the
world,
and was despised by the heathen,
and he ruled over humanity,
begotten of the angels.

* * *

Carol: *Orientis partibus*

Orientis partibus
adventavit asinus,
pulcher et fortissimus,
sarcinis aptissimus.

Hez, Sir Asne, hez!

Saltu vincit hinnulos
dammas et capreolos,
super dromedarios
velox madianeos.

Hic in collibus Sychen
iam nutritus sub Ruben,
transiit per Iordanem
saliit in Bethlehem.

Dum trahit vehicula
multa cum sarcinula,
illius mandibula
dura terit pabula.

"Amen" dicas, asine,
iam satur de gramine
"Amen, amen" itera
aspernare vetera.

In eastern lands
the ass arrived,
handsome and strong,
fit for burden.

Get up, Sir Ass, get up.

In his leaps he conquers the mules,
the fallow deer and roebucks,
and surpasses
the fast camels of the Medes.

Here in the hills of Sichen,
already suckled below the Ruben,
he crosses the Jordan,
he enters Bethlehem.

While he pulls carts,
with many heavy loads,
his jaws
grind tough fodder.

You say "amen" ass,
all filled with grass
"Amen, amen" once again,
spurning the past.

Motet: *In Bethleem* / IN BETHLEEM

In Bethleem Herodes iratus,
quia puer natus,
timens principatus
sceptro se privari,
iubet decolari
pueros bimatus.
O mira novitas facinoris!
O, O, O, O
livoris immanitas!
O puritas innocentium
pede gemino sequentium
agni vestigium!
O rosa rubens!
O candoris liliium, flos odoris,
vox infantium
laudes Deo dicentium,
cantantium "O, O, O, Osanna!"

In Bethleem Herod is angry,
because a boy is born.
Fearing that he might be deprived
of his sovereign power,
he orders all two-year old
boys to be slain.
O what an unprecedented crime!
O, O, O, O
the barbarity of his hatred!
O the purity of the Innocents,
who follow pace by pace
the path of the Lamb!
O red rose!
O lily of purity, flower of fragrance,
the voice of the infants
singing praises to God,
chanting "O, O, O, Osanna!"

* * *

Clausulae à 2: DOMINUS & NUSMIDO (from *Viderunt Omnes*)

Organum à 2: *Viderunt Omnes*

Viderunt omnes fines terrae
salutare Dei nostri.
Iubilare Deo omnis terra:

Verse

Notum fecit Dominus salutare
suum:
ante conspectum gentium revelavit
iustitiam suam.

All the ends of the world have seen
the salvation of our God.
Shew yourselves joyful unto the
Lord, all ye lands:

Verse

The Lord declared his salvation:
his righteousness hath he openly
shewed in the sight of the heathen.

* * *

Clausula à 2: TANQUAM (from *Descendit de caelis*)

Motet à 4: *Qui voudroit / Deboinerement / Quant naist / TANQUAM*

Top voice

Qui voudroit femme esprover,
n'i porroit trover loiauté
car tot adés est preste de fauser.
Biau samblant seivent moutrer
por musart fere muser;
mes quant l'en voient torner,
dont font lor joie, ne font el que
chifler. mar si vouldra nul fier:
trestout le mont la devroit eschiver.
Qui plus est a son gré
et loiaument l'aime et tient en
chierté,
c'est cil que plus het
et que plus tient en vilté.
Por ce lo ceus qui l'ont acoustumé,
qu'il s'en retraient si feront que sené.

He who would want to put women
to the test would not be able to find
any loyalty, for they are always right
ready to deceive. They know how to
put on a false face to make the pipe
sound; but when they see them
fooled (from whence comes their
glee), they do nothing by mock them.
Woe to anyone who would trust in
women. Everyone should avoid
them. It is the one who best does
their will, who most loyally loves
and cherishes them, whom they hate
the most and consider the most vile.
For this reason, do I advise those
who are involved with women that it
is only good sense to pull back.

Second voice

Deboinerement atendrai merci
de la bele, qui cors a bel ait gent;
n'a si avenant de Paris dus qu'a
Gant.

Mes de s'amor vers moi m'esprent,
que je sui fin amant et son
bienvoellant, son serjant.

Mes li mesdisant la m'ont esloigniee:
si ont fait vilanie. A mains jointes si
la pri et quier merci:

Alegiés vostre ami, car ja en tout
mon vivant n'amerai fors li!

I will courteously await mercy from
the fair one who is so beautiful and
fine that there is none so comely
between Paris and Gent.

I am inflamed by an increase in her
love for me, for I am her true lover
and her friend and her servant. But
the slanderers have made her leave
me: in this they do a villainous thing.
With praying hands I beg her and
ask for mercy: Grant relief to your
sweetheart, for never in all of my life
will I love another than you!

Third voice

Quant naist la flour en la pree,
que l'arbete et la rousee
contre le soleil resplant, lors droit joie
estre menee de la gent, qui d'amors
ont grant talent; car la seson est
tornee en rejevenissement.

Si est joie asesounee
a ceus, qui maintiennent jovent.

En droit moi nomeement
n'ert ele ja oubliee, car ne sai vivre
autrement:

Je m'en vois si mignotement.

When flowers burgeon in the
meadows, when the dew-sparkled
grass is resplendent in the sun, then
should those who have a great desire
to love be joyful, for the season is
rejuvenating. And joy is granted
aplenty to those who maintain their
youth. Especially as practiced by me
it will never be forgotten, for I don't
know how to live otherwise:
I go off so delightedly.

* * *

Carol: *Verbum patris umanatur*

Verbum patris umanatur, o, o,
dum puella salutatur, o, o;
salutata fecundatur,
viri nescia.
Eya, nova gaudia!

Novus modus geniture, o, o,
sed excedens ius nature, o, o;
dumunitur creature
creans omnia.
Eya, nova gaudia!

The word of the father is made man,
while a maiden is greeted;
the greeted one is fruitful
without knowledge of man.
Rejoice anew!

A new manner of birth,
but exceeding in power of nature,
when the creator of all things
is made creature.
Rejoice anew!

In parente salvatoris, o, o,
non est parens nostri moris, o, o;
virgo parit nec pudoris,
marcent lilia.
Eya, nova gaudia!

Audi partum preter morem, o, o,
virgo parit salvatorem, o, o;
creatura creatorem,
patrem filia.
Eya, nova gaudia!

Homo deus nobis datur, o, o,
datus nobis demonstratur, o, o;
dum pax terris nunciatur,
celis gloria.
Eya, nova gaudia!

In the saviour's birth
there is no parent of our kind:
a maiden gives birth,
nor do the lilies of her chastity
whither. Rejoice anew!

Hear of a birth beyond precedent:
a virgin hath given birth to the
saviour, the created bears the
Creator, the daughter, the Father.
Rejoice anew!

God made man is given to us,
the given one is shown to us,
while peace is announced to the
nations and glory to the heavens.
Rejoice anew!

* * *

We would love to hear what you thought about the concert – please do take a moment to fill out the short feedback form and hand it to us as you leave! Any questions, comments, and thoughts are greatly appreciated. If you want to get in touch, send us an email at:

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This concert would not have been possible without the kind support of a number of people. In particular, we would like to thank Professor Susan Rankin for her invaluable advice in preparing this programme and Selwyn College for kindly allowing us to use this wonderful chapel.