

## Recital VII: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022:

### Magnificat: Music for Vespers and Our Lady

In this seventh recital of this series, we continue to explore the role of Gregorian Chant and its use within the works of Baroque organ composers across Europe as well as seeing how chant evolved into hymn melodies in the reformed churches of northern Europe. Earlier recitals have demonstrated the use of the organ in liturgy through the use of Organ Masses of France (Couperin), Italy (Frescobaldi) and Germany (J. S. Bach). In France and Italy, the Gregorian Chant was often used directly either partially or wholly throughout organ works, and we saw the use of the antiphonal style in the organ masses of Couperin and Frescobaldi where the organ replaced the singing of alternate verses of liturgical texts. In the German and Lutheran tradition, the direct use of plainsong is eradicated in favour of metrical hymn tunes, but their melodies often draw on the traditional chant of the Roman church, and the organ is used more commonly to provide choral preludes, which served as meditative introductions or postludes to the singing of these hymns by the choir and congregation. We saw examples of these not only in the Organ Mass of Bach in the November recital, but also in December where Gregorian melodies were used for these new metrical hymns of Advent and Christmas and we saw how a number of German organists used different styles and techniques for displaying the character of the melodies and texts in their compositions.

In this recital, we will see the use of the antiphonal style from baroque France through the Magnificat versets of Jean François Dandrieu and we explore the use of plainsong directly to inspire organ music through works of Nicolas de Grigny and the church's great office hymn for Our Lady, *Ave maris stella*. We then explore how an ancient Gregorian chant melody, the Tonus Peregrinus (wandering tone), became adopted by the reformed Lutheran churches as their own melody for the Magnificat, even though that melody was never associated with that text in the Roman rite. We see examples of how this slightly altered melody is used at the hands of Johann Pachelbel and Johann Sebastian Bach. Finally, pride of place in the programme goes to Dieterich Buxtehude, whose great work, Magnificat Primi Toni, shows the heights of his skills as a composer, using the text of the Magnificat as his inspiration.

As we have seen in the earlier recitals, the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (Bishops' Ceremonies) of 1600 set out the rules for the Roman liturgy at the time, codifying a number of different practices that had evolved over the previous centuries. One of these firmly regulated the use of the organ and the then common *alternatim* style, where the organ literally replaces the singers in alternate verses of various sung parts of the liturgy. In the September recital we saw this in Couperin's *Messe pour les paroisses*, where the organ and singers alternate through the ordinary (the unchanging Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei) of the Mass. In January we saw a similar effect with the text of the great hymn of thanksgiving, the *Te Deum* (belonging properly to the midnight office of Matins), with the music of Louis Marchand, inspired by the words, removing them from being sung and replacing them with organ versets as well. The rules set out in that 1600 ceremonial said that this was used throughout most of the church's great offices on feast days, and they not just

allow, but prescribe, that the organ should be played to replace alternate verses not only in the Mass, but also during the gospel canticles of the main offices such as Lauds, Vespers and Compline. In the first work, Dandrieu's Magnificat Versets in the first mode, the organ provides six versets in alternation with the schola who sing the even numbered verses.

The great office hymn for feasts of Our Lady, *Ave maris stella* (Hail, star of the sea) is normally sung at Vespers of Feasts of Our Lady. Nicolas de Grigny, in his *Livre, d'Orgue* (Organ book) provides a number of versets for this *alternatim* style both for parts of the Mass but also for a number of different hymns throughout the year, including *Ave maris stella*. Today we hear two of these in typical French baroque style.

The Gregorian chant of the Roman church is based around eight principal modes, each of which has its own musical style, each equivalent to a scale on a piano keyboard using only the white notes but starting on a different note for each scale. In our first piece of Dandrieu, the schola is singing the Magnificat verses to the melody of the first mode, similar to a modern D minor. There exists, however, a ninth mode - the *tonus peregrinus* (wandering tone), so called because the main note in the two halves of the chant is different: in all other modes, the two halves are recited on the same note. This *tonus peregrinus* is much less commonly used, but appears in the fifth psalm at Sunday Vespers throughout the year and in only a couple of other places. Despite its rarity, the reformed Lutheran church uses this melody for its own metrical version of the Magnificat - the great canticle of Mary whose words she utters when the angel visits her and tells her she will become the Mother of God. This changed Roman melody becomes one of the major hymn tunes of the Lutheran churches and so becomes the foundation for a number of chorale preludes on this text "My soul doth magnify the Lord". In this recital we hear two versions of Pachelbel, both very simple in style, as well as a more complex fugue by J. S. Bach on the same melody.

Interestingly, the Roman *alternatim* or antiphonal style continues into the reformed Lutheran churches even after the reformation. Pachelbel wrote dozens of Magnificat fugues for use in this style, replacing alternate verses of the choir and congregation singing, and Buxtehude, too, writes two different sets of chorale preludes for this specific use, alternating with the singing. The second set of these includes some references to this *tonus peregrinus* melody in some of the movements, but his greater work on the Magnificat which we hear today, though not directly quoting this melody, instead provides a number of sections where the musical inspiration is taken from the text of the verses that the organ replaces. It is also commonly heard, as today, as a single piece in its own right without the schola, and is one of Buxtehude's most imaginative settings for the organ.

## Jean-François Dandrieu (1682-1738)

### Magnificat en D La Ré from Premier livre de Pièces d'Orgue

*Plein jeu - Duo - Trio - Basse de Trompète - Flûtes - Dialogue*

Consisting of six versets for the organ, all in highly typical French baroque styles with plainchant sung between them. The *plein jeu* is written for the full toned principals and mixtures of the organ and is slow and grand in character. The *duo*, as its name suggests, is just two parts with each given a manual of its own on the characteristic sounds of the *cromorne* and *cornet*. The *trio*, in three parts, has two given to the flutes in the right hand and the lower part to the *hautbois* (oboe) in the left hand. The *basse de trompète* is always a lively movement with a soft right hand part and the main melody in the bass of the left hand on the vibrant *trompette* stop. The *Flûtes* movement is slow and gentle, developing a simple idea on the softer flute stops. The *dialogue* which concludes is the typical style for a final movement in this period, with the music alternating between the *grand jeux* and the *petit grand jeux*, two different scales of rather more brash tone colours which depict the sound world of the French baroque very clearly.

Each of these versets replaces part of the text of the Magnificat, as below.

*The Magnificat is intoned by the celebrant, and then the organ replaces the rest of verse 1: plein jeu*

1. Magnificat anima mea Dominum;

*The schola sings the even-numbered verses*

2. Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,

3. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes. (*organ: duo*)

4. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen ejus,

5. Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum. (*organ: trio*)

6. Fecit potentiam in bracchio suo; dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

7. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles. (*organ: basse de trompète*)

8. Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes.

9. Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae, (*organ: flûtes*)

10. Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, (*organ: dialogue*)

sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in Saecula saeculorum. Amen

1. My soul doth magnify the Lord.

2. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

3. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.

4. For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.

5. And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.

6. He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

7. He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.

8. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.

9. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:

10. As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

## **Ave Maris Stella**

### **Office Hymn for Vespers for Feasts of Our Lady**

*Sung by the Sister Adorers of the Royal Heart of Jesus*

1. Ave, maris stella,  
Dei mater alma,  
atque semper virgo,  
felix coeli porta.

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

3. Solve vincla reis,  
profer lumen cæcis,  
mala nostra pelle,  
bona cuncta posce.

4. Monstra te esse matrem,  
sumat per te precem  
qui pro nobis natus  
tulit esse tuus.

5. Virgo singularis,  
inter omnes mitis,  
nos culpis solutos  
mites fac et castos.

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

7. Sit laus Deo Patri,  
summo Christo decus,  
Spiritu Sancto  
tribus honor unus. Amen.

1. Hail, star of the sea,  
Nurturing Mother of God,  
And ever Virgin  
Happy gate of Heaven

2. Receiving that Ave [hail]  
From the mouth of Gabriel,  
Establish us in peace,  
Transforming the name of Eve.

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

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

5. O unique Virgin,  
Meek above all others,  
Make us, set free from [our] sins,  
Meek and chaste.

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

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

## Nicolas de Grigny (1672-1703)

### Ave Maris Stella from Livre d'Orgue

*Plein jeu - Fugue à 4*

The first of these two movements is in a typical French baroque style, the *plein jeu*, with the manual parts providing a full and bright accompaniment to the main hymn tune melody which is in the pedal in long notes, known as a *cantus firmus*. The second movement is a fugue in four parts in a style of writing typical of de Grigny but more unusual and rarely seen in other French baroque composers. The upper-most two voices are played in the left hand on the characteristic *cornet*, voice number three is in the left hand played on the *cromorne*, a sound similar to a baroque-style clarinet (though the clarinet is not invented for another century), and the lowermost voice is in the pedals on flute stops.

### Magnificat

#### Tonus Peregrinus

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|--|--|
| 1. Magnificat anima mea Dominum;   | 1. My soul doth magnify the Lord.  |
| 2. Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo,   | 2. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  |
| 3. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae; ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.  | 3. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.   |
| 4. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen ejus,  | 4. For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.  |
| 5. Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.  | 5. And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.   |
| 6. Fecit potentiam in brachio suo; dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.  | 6. He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.   |
| 7. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.  | 7. He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.  |
| 8. Esurientes implevit bonis, et divites dimisit inanes.   | 8. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.   |
| 9. Suscepit Israel, puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae,  | 9. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel:  |
| 10. Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.<br>Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto,<br>sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper: et in Saecula saeculorum. Amen. | 10. As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.<br>Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;<br>As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen. |

### **Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)**

#### **Meine Seele erhebt den Herren (two chorale preludes)**

The first of these two chorale preludes by Johann Pachelbel based on the Lutheran translation of the Magnificat set to a melody based on the Tonus Peregrinus is a simple three-part texture with the melody appearing in the uppermost voice in longer notes as a *cantus firmus*. The second is more developed and highly typical of the style of Pachelbel and southern German composers who took great inspiration from the writings of the Italian composers such as Frescobaldi. In this version, though the manual parts make reference to the opening motif of the melody, the full tune is presented in the pedal, also as a *cantus firmus*. This style presents the melody with great clarity and without ornamentation.

### **Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**

#### **Meine Seele erhebt den Herren BWV 733**

Bach, with his usual genius, takes this simple melody derived from the *tonus peregrinus* and develops a full and well-developed four-voice fugue in the manuals based on the main opening motif of the chorale melody. If this work did nothing else it would stand as an exemplar in the repertoire of imitative fugal writing, but in the concluding section the full chorale melody is also presented as a *cantus firmus* - in long notes in the pedal - underneath this four-part manual texture to stunning effect which brings this work to a grand conclusion in the major key.

### **Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707)**

#### **Magnificat primi toni BuxWV 203**

Based on the first of the eight main Gregorian modes as the title suggests (*primi toni* means first tone or more) this is a work of grand scale. It seems to take part of the first mode chant as its basis, though it is well hidden in the different sections. It is a work in eight smaller sections though it could also be understood to be in four larger sections of two movements each, perhaps written for some form of *alternatim* use with the choir and congregation as was prescribed in the Roman church and became somewhat common in the reformed Lutheran churches. Each of the four larger sections is made up of a principal fugue, but introduced and preceded by more freely-composed passages in a *stilus fantasticus* (fantastic, or fantasia-like style), improvisatory in nature, and similar to that we see in his preludes. The second section begins with a slower, chordal passage which leads into the second fugue, in lively gigue rhythm. This gives way to the final two fugues, before the work concludes in a grand manner with a bravura conclusion.