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# Programme

Duo Seraphim	Francisco Guerrero
Lay a Garland	Robert Pearsall
Miserere	Gregorio Allegri
<i>Solo quartet: Bonnie Pearce, Katherine Chan, Stephanie Eaton &amp; Gino Sanidad</i>	
Incipit lamentatio Ieremiae	Tomás Luis de Victoria
Lamentation of Jeremiah	Joseph Twist
<i>Sarvenaz Monfaredi &amp; Bronwyn Mitchell (sopranos)</i>	
A Hymn to the Virgin	Benjamin Britten
<i>Solo quartet: Bronwyn Mitchell, Alisen McLeod, Ross Jelf &amp; Gino Sanidad</i>	
The Gallant Weaver	James MacMillan
Ubi Caritas	Paul Mealor
<i>Alisen McLeod (alto)</i>	
Funeral Ikos	John Tavener
In One Endless Day (from <i>Infinity to Dwell</i> )	Robert Kyr
<i>Katherine Chan &amp; Shannon Atkin (sopranos)</i>	
Pilgrims' Hymn (from <i>The Three Hermits</i> )	Stephen Paulus

# Texts & Translations

## Duo Seraphim

*Music: Francisco Guerrero (Spanish, 1528-99)*

*Text: Matins responsory for Trinity Sunday*

One of the great composers of the Spanish Renaissance, Guerrero spent much of his working life at the cathedrals in Jaén and Seville in the south of Spain, but he also did much travelling in Portugal, Italy and the Holy Land. He died from plague shortly before a second planned visit to the Holy Land in 1599. His music included both sacred and secular works and remained popular for years following his death, particularly in the cathedrals of Latin America. *Duo Seraphim* is a work for three separate choirs. Opening with the dialogue of the seraphs, it then switches between the three choirs in conversation with each other, leading to a glorious homophonic climax where all choirs sing as one.

Two seraphim cried to one another:  
Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.  
The whole earth is full of his glory.

There are three who bear witness in heaven:  
the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit:  
and these three are one.  
Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.  
The whole earth is full of his glory.

## Lay a Garland

*Music: Robert Pearsall (English, 1795-1856)*

*Text: Francis Beaumont & John Fletcher, early 17<sup>th</sup> century*

Robert Pearsall was an English composer born into a wealthy Quaker family and privately educated, living mostly in Germany and Switzerland after suffering a mild stroke at the age of thirty. Moving abroad gave him opportunities to develop an interest in composing; while he likely had some formal training in composition, his early attempts would seem largely self-taught. He is primarily remembered for his part-songs and madrigals, of which *Lay a Garland* is probably the best known. The text is by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, the latter of whom was one of the most influential dramatists of his day and who followed Shakespeare as house playwright to the King's Men.

Lay a garland on her hearse of dismal yew.  
Maidens, willow branches wear, say she died true.  
Her love was false, but she was firm.  
Upon her buried body lie lightly, thou gentle earth.

# Miserere

Music: Gregorio Allegri (Italian, 1582-1652)

Text: Psalm 51

Of the many works which might have made our 'desert island' choral list, Allegri's *Miserere* is such a landmark of early music that we felt compelled to include it today. Gregorio Allegri was a singer, priest and composer who spent most of his life in Rome. The *Miserere* is without doubt his most famous work, although he also wrote numerous motets, masses and concerti and is credited with the first string quartet. It was composed during the reign of Pope Urban VIII, probably during the 1630s, and used exclusively for the Tenebrae service in the Sistine Chapel during Holy Week each year. At some point it became forbidden by the Vatican to transcribe the music; writing it down or performing it elsewhere was punishable by excommunication. Mozart is thought to have produced the first unauthorised copy when, according to the popular story (which is backed up by family correspondence), he transcribed it during a visit to Rome at the age of 14 after hearing it only once. It was published in London shortly afterwards and the ban lifted, the Pope of the time choosing to praise the young Mozart's obvious musical gift rather than punish him. The work is musically simple which allows for improvisation and embellishments according to the performers' tastes, but the infamous 'top C' was most likely not included in the original. It is sung by two choirs which alternate verses of the psalm, interspersed with single lines of plainchant.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness:

according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness:

and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my faults:

and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:

that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness:

and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts:

and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:

thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness:

that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Turn thy face from my sins:

and put out all my misdeeds.

Make me a clean heart, O God:

and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence:

and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

O give me the comfort of thy help again:

and stablish me with thy free Spirit.

Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked:  
and sinners shall be converted unto thee.  
Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the God of my health:  
and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.  
Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord:  
and my mouth shall shew thy praise.  
For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee:  
but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.  
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit:  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.  
O be favourable and gracious unto Sion:  
build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.  
Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations:  
then shall they offer young calves upon Thine altar.

## **Incipit lamentatio Ieremiae**

*Music: Tomás Luis de Victoria (Spanish, c. 1548-1611)*

*Text: From the Lamentations of Jeremiah*

## **Lamentation of Jeremiah**

*Music: Joseph Twist (Australian, born 1982)*

*Text: From the Lamentations of Jeremiah*

It is a time-honoured tradition for composers to write variations on works which have influenced them, either to quote certain musical passages in homage to another composer, or to play with the same ideas or structure to create something new. This is the case with the next two pieces. The first is by Victoria, a contemporary of Guerrero and a significant musical figure in the Counter-Reformation. He is sometimes referred to as the 'Spanish Palestrina', having lived for a lengthy period in Italy and possibly studied at some point with Palestrina. The second work is by Joseph Twist, who completed his PhD in composition at UQ and is now living in New York writing film scores. He is also a singer with a great love of polyphony and early music. Both pieces use the same text from the Book of Lamentations, which mourns the destruction of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.

Here begins the Lamentations over Jerusalem of Jeremiah the Prophet:

*Aleph.* How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is the mistress of the Gentiles become as a widow: the princes of provinces made tributary! *Beth.* Weeping she hath wept in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: there is none to comfort her among all them that were dear to her: all her friends have despised her, and are become her enemies.

Jerusalem! Jerusalem, return unto the Lord thy God.

## A Hymn to the Virgin

Music: Benjamin Britten (English, 1913-76)

Text: Anonymous, circa 1300

Benjamin Britten was a central figure in 20<sup>th</sup> century music. A composer, conductor, and pianist, his many works spanned the worlds of opera, choral, orchestral, solo vocal and film music. One of the most important influences throughout his life and career was his personal and professional partner Peter Pears, himself a well-known tenor in his day. *Hymn to the Virgin*, which uses a Middle English text from the very early 14<sup>th</sup> century, is one of Britten's earliest works, written when he was just 16.

Of one that is so fair and bright,  
    *Velut maris stella,* [as a star of the sea]  
Brighter than the day is light,  
    *Parens et puella:* [mother and maiden]  
I cry to thee, thou see to me,  
Lady, pray thy Son for me,  
    *Tam pia,* [thou gracious one]  
That I may come to thee.  
    *Maria.* [Mary]

All this world was forlorn  
    *Eva peccatrice,* [sinful Eve]  
Till our Lord was y-born  
    *De te genetrice.* [of your mother]  
With *ave* it went away  
Darkest night and comes the day  
    *Salutis;* [of salvation]  
The well springeth out of thee,  
    *Virtutis.* [of virtue]

Lady, flow'r of ev'rything,  
    *Rose sine spina,* [rose without a thorn]  
Thou bear Jesu, Heaven's King,  
    *Gratia divina:* [by divine grace]  
Of all thou bear'st the prize,  
Lady, queen of paradise  
    *Electa:* [chosen one]  
Maid mild, mother es  
    *Effecta.* [thou art proved]

## The Gallant Weaver

*Music: James MacMillan (Scottish, born 1959)*

*Text: Robert Burns (1759-96)*

James MacMillan is known mostly for his choral and orchestral work, which is often infused with spiritual and political themes, and with those of his native Scottish culture. The Gallant Weaver, while not one of his more well-known works, sets a text by Robert Burns, widely regarded as the national poet of Scotland and the country's 'favourite son'.

Where Cart rins rowin to the sea,  
By mony a flow'r and spreading tree,  
There lives a lad, the lad for me,  
He is the gallant Weaver.

Oh I had woosers aught or nine,  
They gied me rings and ribbons fine,  
And I was feared my heart would tine,  
And I gied it to the Weaver.

My daddie sign'd the tocher-band  
To gie the lad that had the land,  
But to my heart I'll add my hand,  
And give it to the Weaver.

While birds rejoice in leafy bowers;  
While bees delight in op'ning flowers;  
While corn grows green in simmer showers,  
I love my gallant Weaver.

## Ubi Caritas

*Music: Paul Mealor (Welsh, born 1975)*

*Text: Antiphon for Maundy Thursday*

Paul Mealor is currently Professor of Composition at the University of Aberdeen, but he first came to wide public attention when he was commissioned to write this beautiful setting of *Ubi Caritas* for the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in April 2011. The text has been set many times, most notably by French composer Maurice Duruflé who based his on the original Gregorian melody. Mealor also quotes this melody in the solo which concludes the piece.

Where charity and love are, God is there. Christ's love has gathered us into one. Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him. Let us fear, and let us love the living God. And may we love each other with a sincere heart.

## Funeral Ikos

Music: John Tavener (English, born 1944)

Text: From *The Order for the Burial of Dead Priests*, translated from the Greek by Isabel Hapgood

Sir John Tavener is one of the best known and regarded composers of his generation. He claims direct descent from the 16<sup>th</sup> century composer John Taverner and was educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London. In 1977 he joined the Russian Orthodox Church, and the theology and liturgy of the tradition became a major influence on his work. He is particularly drawn to mysticism and in his later years has also incorporated elements of non-Western music, such as those from Hinduism and Islam. He received a knighthood in 2000 for his services to music. *Funeral Ikos* is quite powerful in its simplicity, with much of it consisting of unison chant in which the music is essentially a backdrop to the text. The simple harmonic language allowing the full impact of the words to be conveyed and reveals the composer's deep religious conviction.

Why these bitter words of the dying, O brethren, which they utter as they go hence? I am parted from my brethren. All my friends do I abandon, and go hence. But whither I go, that understand I not, neither what shall become of me yonder; only God, who hath summoned me knoweth. But make commemoration of me with the song: *Alleluia*.

But whither go now the souls? How dwell they now together there? This mystery have I desired to learn, but none can impart aright. Do they call to mind their own people, as we do them? Or have they forgotten all those who mourn them and make the song: *Alleluia*?

We go forth on the path eternal, and as condemned, with downcast faces, present ourselves before the only God eternal. Where then is comeliness? Where then is wealth? Where then is the glory of this world? There shall none of these things aid us, but only to say oft the psalm: *Alleluia*.

If thou hast shown mercy unto man, O man, that same mercy shall be shown thee there; and if on an orphan thou hast shown compassion, the same shall there deliver thee from want. If in this life the naked thou hast clothed, the same shall give thee shelter there, and sing the psalm: *Alleluia*.

Youth and the beauty of the body fade at the hour of death, and the tongue then burneth fiercely, and the parched throat is inflamed. The beauty of the eyes is quenched then, the comeliness of the face all altered, the shapeliness of the neck destroyed; and the other parts have become numb, nor often say: *Alleluia*.

With ecstasy are we inflamed if we but hear that there is light eternal yonder; that there is Paradise, wherein every soul of Righteous Ones rejoiceth. Let us all, also, enter into Christ, that all we may cry aloud thus unto God: *Alleluia*.

## In One Endless Day from *Infinity to Dwell*

Music: Robert Kyr (American, born 1952)

Text: Traditional Latin; Chiyo-ni (1703-1775); Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Robert Kyr is an American composer, writer and filmmaker who teaches at the University of Oregon. He is also an engaged activist for peace and environmental issues, and through his compositions he has collaborated on projects which bring together diverse cultures or mix music with other media. He draws widely from different cultural and spiritual traditions when selecting texts. *In One Endless Day* is the last in a song cycle of five pieces, which layers the traditional Latin text with a haiku by Chiyo-ni, who is considered one of the greatest female haiku poets, and with a poem by 17<sup>th</sup> century English poet Robert Herrick. Fusion sang the first piece in the same cycle, *Seed of Clear Water*, in their June 2012 programme.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine. [Grant them eternal rest, O Lord.]

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clearest, cool water  
all fireflies vanishing  
and then nothing more.

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O Years and Age! Farewell:  
Behold I go,  
Where I do know  
Infinity to dwell.

And these mine eyes shall see  
All times, how they  
Are lost I' th' Sea  
Of vast Eternity.

Where never Moon shall sway  
the stars, but she,  
And Night, shall be  
Drown'd in one endless Day.

## **Pilgrims' Hymn from *The Three Hermits***

*Music: Stephen Paulus (American, born 1949)*

*Text: Michael Dennis Browne*

American composer Stephen Paulus is mostly known for his opera and choral writing, but he has produced a vast body of music comprising more than 450 works in different genres over his 40 year career. *Pilgrims' Hymn* is from his one-act opera *The Three Hermits*, first performed in 1997, but has since become one of his most-loved choral pieces, performed as a stand-alone work by choirs around the world.

Even before we call on Your name to ask You, O God,  
When we seek for the words to glorify You, You hear our prayer;  
Unceasing love, O unceasing love, surpassing all we know.

Glory to the Father and to the Son,  
And to the Holy Spirit.

Even with darkness sealing us in, we breathe Your name,  
And through all the days that follow so fast, we trust in You;  
Endless Your grace, O endless Your grace, beyond all mortal dream.

Both now and for ever, and unto ages and ages. Amen.

*Programme notes by Bronwyn Mitchell*

*Fusion thanks the Reverend Andrew Gillies and St Stephen's Uniting Church for kindly allowing us to use their beautiful venue this evening. You are warmly invited to join us for a light supper following the concert.*