

Please turn off phones and pagers

Programme

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| Libera nos, salva nos | John Sheppard |
| Benedictio | Urmas Sisask |
| Miserere | Josquin des Prez |
| <i>Small group: Julia Golding, Bronwyn Mitchell, Nikki Jenkins, Alisen McLeod, Ross Jelf, Tim Smetham, Robin Maurer & Gino Sanidad</i> | |
| Candor est lucis | Gerardo Dirié |
| <i>Katherine Chan (soprano) & Alisen McLeod (mezzo-soprano)</i> | |
| Selig sind die toten | Heinrich Schütz |
| In pace | René Clausen |
| Northern Lights | Ola Gjeilo |
| Stars | Ēriks Ešenvalds |
| Earth Song | Frank Ticheli |
| Eternity | Michael Bojesen |

*Fusion thanks the parish of St Andrew's Anglican Church
for kindly allowing us to use their beautiful space this afternoon.
You are warmly invited to join us for refreshments following the concert.*

This afternoon's programme weaves together a mix of early and contemporary music ranging from the 15th century to works composed in the last couple of years. While we did not intend at the outset to choose any particular theme or idea to explore this season, nonetheless a few themes have emerged as we have worked to shape the music for today's performance.

The first common theme we noticed was how many of the works, both early and contemporary, use a Latin text. While Latin has been the language of the church for several hundred years, it is interesting to note how many contemporary composers are still drawn to the poetic beauty and rhythm of the language, even when not exploring specifically religious and liturgical ideas. That Urmas Sisask, Ola Gjeilo, René Clausen and Gerardo Dirié have all found inspiration in short Latin passages speaks to the enduring power of the language to communicate something about our search for beauty, peace and wisdom in the twenty first century.

Another common theme – and again, this was not intentional – is how many of the contemporary composers are originally from Baltic and Scandinavian countries, a part of the world of spectacular beauty, with long stretches of winter darkness and summer light. These subjects seem to lend themselves easily to music, and perhaps it is no accident that there is such a rich choral tradition in these countries, where singing is cultural, historical and vital in maintaining a strong sense of national identity.

The third theme, and perhaps this is closely linked to the second, is that several of the pieces focus on the splendour of the night sky. Given that the far north of Scandinavia experiences almost complete darkness for weeks on end

during the northern hemisphere winter, there is a sense of vastness to the night sky that is hard to comprehend in tropical Queensland where day and night remain relatively even throughout the year. Urmas Sisask began exploring the relationship between music and astronomy from a very young age and today lives in a small Estonian village in the tower of an old castle which serves as an observatory-planetarium, music studio and concert hall. He also devised his own tuning system based on theoretical sound values for the rotation of planets, which he was astonished to later discover was identical to one of the Japanese pentatonic scales. Several of his pieces use this tuning system.

Ola Gjeilo's *Northern Lights* was inspired by the first time he saw the *aurora borealis*, and he writes: “It is one of the most beautiful natural phenomena I've ever witnessed, and has such a powerful, electric quality that must have been both mesmerising and terrifying to people in the past, when no one knew what it was and when much superstition was attached to these experiences.”

As our increasingly-secular world looks less to religion and more towards science for answers to the mysteries of life, there is a sense in which the Divine is now found in the unfathomable size of the universe and our tiny place in it. When looking up at the night sky it is not hard to identify with the final line of Ēriks Ešenvalds' *Stars*:

“I know I am honoured to be witness of so much majesty”.

Libera nos, salva nos

Music: John Sheppard (English, c. 1515-1558)

Text: Antiphon for the Trinity

Libera nos, salva nos, justifica nos, O beata Trinitas.

Free us, save us, defend us, O blessed Trinity.

Benedictio

Music: Urmas Sisask (Estonian, born 1960)

Text: From the Apostolic Blessing, also known as the Papal Blessing

Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus. Amen.

May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Miserere

Music: Josquin des Prez (Franco-Flemish, c. 1450-1521)

Text: Psalm 51

I. Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam:

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

et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.

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

Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.

Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.

For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci:

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

ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum judicaris.

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

Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti:

But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts:

incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.

and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

Asperges me hysopo, et mundabor:

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

lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor.

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

II. Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitiam:

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness:

et exsultabunt ossa humiliata.

that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele.

Turn thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds.

Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.

Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

Ne proicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.

Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu principali confirma me.

O give me the comfort of thy help again: and stablish me with thy free Spirit.

Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur.

Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked: and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae:

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the God of my health:

et exsultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.

and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.

III. Domine, labia mea aperies: et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.

Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord: and my mouth shall shew thy praise.

Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem utique:

For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee:

holocaustis non delectaberis.

but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus:

The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit:

cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicias.

a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.

Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion: ut aedificentur muri Ierusalem.

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Tunc acceptabis sacrificium iustitiae, oblationes, et holocausta:

Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations:

tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

then shall they offer young calves upon Thine altar.

Candor est lucis

Music: Gerardo Dirie (Argentinian-Australian, born 1958)

Text: Liber Usualis, Festa Augusti, 6.

Alleluia. Candor est lucis aeternae, speculum sine macula, et imago bonitatis illius.
Alleluia. *Wisdom is eternal light, a mirror with no blemishes, and the semblant of His kindness.*

Selig sind die Toten

Music: Heinrich Schütz (German, 1585-1672)

Text: Revelation 14:13

Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herren sterben, von nun an.
Ja, der Geist spricht: Sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit und ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach.

*Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord, from now on.
Yea, the Spirit speaks: they rest from their labours and their works follow them.*

In pace

Music: René Clausen (American, born 1953)

Text: John Sheppard (c. 1515-1560)

In pace, in idipsum dormiam et requiescam.
Si dederō somnum oculis meis
Et palpebris meis dormitationem,
Dormiam et requiescam.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Amen.

*In peace, in true peace, I shall sleep and rest.
If I give slumber to my eyes,
And to my eyelids drowsiness,
I shall sleep and rest.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Northern Lights

Music: Ola Gjeilo (Norwegian-American, born 1978)

Text: Song of Solomon 6:4-5

Pulchra es amica mea, suavis et decora sicut Jerusalem, terribilis ut castrorum acies ordinata. Averte oculos tuos a me quia ipsi me avolare fecerunt.

Thou art beautiful, O my love, sweet and comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army set in array. Turn away thy eyes from me, for they have made me flee away.

Stars

Music: Ēriks Ešenvalds (Latvian, born 1977)

Text: Sara Teasdale (1884-1933)

Alone in the night
On a dark hill
With pines around me
Spicy and still,

And a heaven full of stars
Over my head,
White and topaz
And misty red;

Myriads with beating
Hearts of fire
That aeons
Cannot vex or tire;

Up the dome of heaven
Like a great hill,
I watch them marching
Stately and still,
And I know that I
Am honoured to be
Witness
Of so much majesty.

Earth Song

Music: Frank Ticheli (American, born 1958)

Text: Frank Ticheli

Sing, Be, Live, See...

This dark stormy hour,
The wind, it stirs.
The scorched earth
Cries out in vain:

O war and power,
You blind and blur.
The torn heart
Cries out in pain.

But music and singing
Have been my refuge,
And music and singing
Shall be my light.

A light of song
Shining strong: Alleluia!
Through darkness, pain and strife, I'll
Sing, Be, Live, See...

Peace.

Eternity

Music: Michael Bojesen (Danish, born 1960)

Text: Ellen Heiberg, translation by Lisa Freeman

Find a stone that glistens when you walk on the shore,
One rolled throughout the ages by the ocean's mighty roar.
Feel it with your fingers, with a grain of sand
Salted with the memories of far off distant lands.
Hide it in your pocket where other eyes can't see
It's your piece of the ocean and all eternity.

Programme notes by Bronwyn Mitchell