

The Choir and Soloists of Cantata Dramatica
present a preview of

PERPETUA

The martyrdom of Vibia Perpetua told in music, verse and her own words

A new dramatic cantata by Nick Bicât

Andrew Parrott, Conductor
Emily Van Evera as Perpetua

DA PACEM

Arvo Pärt

REQUIEM

Nick Bicât
(first UK public performance)

Sarah Tenant-Flowers, Conductor

Church of St John The Baptist, Burford Friday 9th March at 7:30pm

PROGRAMME

Da Pacem

Arvo Pärt

Requiem

Nick Bicat

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

Drinks will be served in the Warwick Hall next to the church.

Scenes from *Perpetua*

Nick Bicat

Act 1, Scenes 1 - 4

Act 2, Scene 5

Cantata Dramatica is established under the Charities Aid Foundation, Registered Charity Number 268369. It is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to promote new music, especially staged dramatic cantatas, in large churches and cathedrals, schools, colleges and other appropriate spaces.

Da Pacem

Arvo Pärt (b.1935)

In his earliest works the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt experimented liberally with serialism and collage techniques, but by the mid-1960s he began to look back to previous eras to find fresh modes of expression. He turned first to Bach with such works as *Collage sur B-A-C-H* (1964). Then, after several years of virtual silence during which he studied Gregorian chant, renaissance masters such as Victoria and Palestrina and the music of the Russian Orthodox Church, a new style emerged, as if from a chrysalis, for which Pärt coined the term 'tintinnabulation'. The essence of this style is that it is centred on simple melodic chant, moving principally in stepwise motion, around which surrounding parts provide harmonic resonance. Simplicity and restraint are the hallmarks of this style. From the later 1970s onwards Pärt increasingly asserted his belief in the insoluble link between spirituality and music in a number of large-scale and shorter a cappella religious pieces.

Da Pacem was composed in 2004 and revised in 2006. The text is a prayer for peace, taken from the Book of Common Prayer, and the music characteristically draws on various techniques to be found in medieval music. The alto line provides the a chant like cantus firmus, which is shadowed by the bass part singing in parallel 10ths beneath, a vox organalis as it were. Sopranos and tenors provide harmonic resonance, singing repeated notes of a d minor triad throughout in a quasi hocketing fashion. Subtle changes of rhythm and emphasis do occur, but the absence of extreme harmonic, rhythmic or dynamic variety creates a soothing backdrop against which the simple text of the prayer is articulated sincerely and reverently.

Da pacem Domine
in diebus nostris
quia non est alius
qui pugnet pro nobis
nisi tu Deus noster

*Give peace, O Lord,
in our time
because there is no one else
who will fight for us
but only You, our God.*

Requiem

Nick Bicât (b.1949)

Composer Nick Bicât is well known for his film, television, theatrical and operatic range. His *Requiem* was composed over a number of years and combines traditional texts from the Mass for the Dead with a selection of early Christian epitaphs in both Greek and Latin. The result is both poignant and powerful, with soaring choral lines and lyrical solo passages that dovetail seamlessly with the movements of the liturgy.

Nick Bicât writes:

In researching early Christian memorial texts (particularly those from the catacombs in Rome, Greece, Alexandria and all around the Mediterranean) I was struck by the tone of the epitaphs – many written for people of no civic status or importance – the positive imagery, the loving tone of the inscriptions, and particularly by the absence of warnings about hell fire and torment, even the absence of the crucifix image.

In studying the evolution of the Requiem Mass for the Dead, it became clear that more and more fear and damnation entered the text as the centuries passed (notably the 28 verses of the Dies Irae (a 13th Century addition). These epitaphs have a wonderfully matter-of-fact character; they are tender and optimistic, more about renewal than sin, and celebrate people from all walks of life. They are the simple and heartfelt words which people use to make their own ritual, and remind us of what underlies the monumental structure of the text we take for granted, of the human lives it is meant to serve.

The *Requiem* is scored for unaccompanied four part (SATB) choir with occasional expansion into up to eight parts. A notable feature is the occasional extension of the vocal lines to the extremes of their natural ranges which gives a special quality to the sound and produces an additional emotional intensity. The final movement (*In Paradisum*) contains fragments of the individual Greek and Roman epitaphs interwoven with choral passages of great beauty and the piece ends with a low quiet prayer for eternal rest.

Requiem Text and Translations

Agáthi

Agáthi etelévtsen
Etôn exíkonta paraskeví
Tes enéa apó kalandhôn
septemvríôn.
Kháris ou tô Kyríô ke tô Khristô

*Agatha died aged sixty years, on a
Friday, the ninth day before
September.*

*Thanks be to God and to Christ for
this.*

Requiem

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.

*Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and
let perpetual light shine upon them.*

Leondios

Ekimíthi o makarítis Leóndios
En miní pharmouthí
O Theós anapávi
Metá osíôn ke dhikéôn
En tópo chloís anapávzeôs
Idhátôn en paradhísô
Triphís enth' apédhra
Odíni ke lípi ke stenagmós
Ágios ágios Kyrios Sabáoth
Plírís o ouranós ke i ghi
Tis aghías sou dhóxis

*Happy Leondios fell asleep in the
fourth month of pharmouthí
God gives him rest
with the pious and the just in the
green place of refreshment in the
waters of the paradise of delight
whence have fled pain, suffering and
grieving (groaning). Holy holy holy,
Lord God of Sabaoth, heaven and
earth are full of your holy glory.*

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie
eleison

*Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Lord have mercy.*

Anatolie

Anatólie imôn protótokon téknon
óstis imín edhóthis pros olígon
chrónon
évchou ipér imôn

*Anatolius our firstborn
you who were given to us for a little
while
pray for us*

Offertorium

Libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis infernis et de profundo lacu: libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat eas tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum.

Domine Jesu Christe, Rex Gloriam, sed signifier sanctus Michael representet eas in lucem sanctam: Quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

Hostias et preces tibi Domine laudis offerimus: tu suscipe pro animabus illis, quarum hodie memoriam facimus. Fac eas Domine de morte transire ad vitam quam olim Abrahae promisisti et semini ejus.

Deliver the souls of the departed from the torments of Hell and from the bottomless pit; save them from the lion's mouth, let them not be swallowed in the fiery lake, nor fall into utter darkness. Lord Jesus Christ, King of Glory, let St Michael, the standard-bearer, bring them into eternal light, as once you promised Abraham and his seed.

We offer to you, O Lord, a sacrifice of praise and prayer. Receive it on behalf of the souls of those whose memories we commemorate today. Bring them, O Lord, from death unto life, as you promised of old to Abraham and his seed.

Agios

Ágios ágios ágios
cháirete I to gliki phôs vlépontes
tou patrós imôn tou en tis ouránis
imás dhe anapávzate en Christóu
lisóu tou Kyríou imôn ke tou aghiou
ke zoopiou avtoú pnévματος

*Holy Holy Holy!
Hail to you who see the sweet light of our Father who is in heaven.
And grant us rest in Jesus Christ our Lord and in his holy and life-giving spirit.*

Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Magus

Magus, puer innocens, esse jam inter innocentes coepisti.

Magus, innocent boy, you have now begun to be among the innocents.

Quam stabilis tibi haec vita est!
Quam te laetum excipit mater
ecclesiae de hoc mundo revertentem.
Comprematum pectorum gemitus!
statuatur fletus oculorum!

*How firm this life is for you! How
pleased you are now the Church's
mother* is receiving you as you
return from this world! Let us subdue
the groaning in our chest! Let us put
an end to the weeping of our eyes!*

Pie Jesu/Agnus Dei

Pie Jesu, dona eis sempiternam
requiem.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona eis requiem.

Holy Jesus, grant them eternal rest.

*Lamb of God, that takest away the
sins of the world, grant them eternal
rest..*

Florentina

Florentina quae vixit annos viginti sex
crescens fecit bene merenti et sibi et
suis domum aeternam in pace

*Florentina, who lived for twenty-six
years, as she grew created an eternal
home in peace for herself who
deserved it well and for her loved
ones.*

Libera Me

Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna
in die illa tremenda: quando coeli
movendi sunt et terra: dum veneris
iudicare saeculum per ignem.
Dies illa, dies irae, calamitatis et
miseriae, dies magna et amara valde.

*Deliver me, O Lord, from everlasting
death on that dreadful day when the
heavens and earth shall be moved,
when you will come to judge the
world by fire. That day, day of wrath,
day of disaster and misery, that day
both great and exceedingly bitter.*

Makaria

Íkos eônios en Khristô Makaría
evangelís Pistí en Khristô Ézisen
ámemptos Éti íkosi mínas enéa
Iméras éptakédheka Parthénos
agnotáti

*Eternal dwelling in Christ, Makaria,
messenger. Faithful in Christ she
lived blameless twenty years, nine
months, seventeen days, a most
chaste maiden.*

Libera Me – Coda and Julio

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine.
Et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Julio, O filio pientissimo.

*Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and
let perpetual light shine upon them.
Julio, O most pious son.*

In Paradisum

In paradisum deducant te angeli
In tuo adventu suscipiant.
Chorus angelorum te suscipiat
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere
aeternam habeas requiem.

*May angels lead you to paradise.
On your arrival may the Martyrs
receive you. May a choir of angels
receive you and with Lazarus, who
was once a pauper, you will have
eternal rest.*

***Scenes from Perpetua* Nick Bicât (b.1949)**

Perpetua is a new commission by Cantata Dramatica with libretto by Nick Pitts Tucker. It tells the story of Vibia Perpetua, an early Christian martyr, who lived in what is now North Africa and was cruelly executed for defying the might of the Roman Empire in AD203. Perpetua wrote a remarkable account of the events and her own feelings up until the eve of her death and this material has been combined with contemporary Greek lyric passages to produce a powerful and unusual libretto.

The work is presented as a dramatic cantata or staged oratorio, with (eventually) 8 principal singers, a mixed chorus and a small chamber ensemble, featuring an oud (a North African/Middle Eastern instrument similar to a fretless lute) and an accordion as well as more conventional instruments. The production is designed and directed by Peter Champness, independent film maker and producer, and will include creative lighting and projected graphics to enhance the story and reinforce the dramatic qualities of the music.

BIOGRAPHIES



Photo: Kevin Harvey

Sarah Tenant-Flowers studied music at Oxford and Durham Universities and conducting with Sir Charles Groves, Laszlo Heltay and others. She has worked with the Cape Town Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra, the Kantorei der Friedenskirche of Düsseldorf, Cardiff Polyphonic Choir, Reading Bach Choir and many others. She is currently artistic director of professional choir Singscape which specialises in multimedia collaborations and contemporary repertoire and lecturer in choral conducting at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama



Photo: Dan Porges

Andrew Parrott has kept Baroque and earlier music at the centre of his musical activities (both as performer and researcher) and is perhaps best known for over 50 ground-breaking recordings with his Taverner Consort, Choir & Players. In addition he works widely in later repertoire with modern-instrument orchestras, choirs and opera companies. Recent recordings include 19th-century and contemporary Slovak music, Beethoven's complete piano concertos and (in 2011) his own première reconstruction of Bach's lost Trauer-Music (Music to mourn Prince Leopold). Besides co-editing the New Oxford Book of Carols (1992), he is the author of various scholarly articles and The Essential Bach Choir (2000).

Emily Van Evera (Perpetua)

Emily Van Evera has earned an international reputation for her versatile and expressive interpretation of earlier vocal repertoires. She also sings new music and traditional folk song, Ives and Vaughan Williams, Mahler, Stravinsky and whatever takes her fancy. Emily is a soloist on over fifty recordings including ground-breaking and award-winning discs of works by Hildegard of Bingen, Monteverdi, Bach and Handel, with the Taverner Consort and others. She sang the title role for the BBC-commissioned commemorative recording of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas and has been a soloist at the BBC Proms on several occasions. Stage and television appearances include operatic works by Monteverdi, Lully, Charpentier, Purcell and Handel.

Paul Austin-Kelly (Saturus)

Tenor Paul Austin Kelly has sung leading operatic roles and concerts on international stages throughout the world, including The Metropolitan Opera, the Royal Opera and La Scala. As an East Sussex resident he runs the children's music company Walking Oliver, composes and records for various companies and organisations and writes a classical music column for Viva Lewes magazine.

Zoe Brown (Felicitas)

Having trained principally as a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, Zoë has been a professional singer since 2008. Zoë is a member of the Monetverdi Choir, with whom she has toured extensively both as a member of the choir and as a soloist, as well as other esteemed groups such as The Sixteen, The Gabrieli Consort, Collegium Vocale, Tenebrae and Polyphony.

Ethan Clarke (Dinocrates)

Ethan started singing with the Oxford Boys' Choir before joining the Radley College Chapel Choir in 2007. Ethan also sings as a soloist outside choir including performances in Mendelssohn's Elijah and at the Royal Academy of Music. For 2012 Ethan gained a place as an oboist in the National Children's Wind Sinfonia.

Guy Hayward (Sextus, Pudens)

Guy Hayward is a young baritone who started singing as a boy chorister at Bath Abbey and later became a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. He is a performer of Early music, Lieder and English Song, as well as the repertoire of Frank Sinatra (boulderandcad.tumblr.com). Guy is currently completing a PhD at Cambridge exploring how and why groups synchronise their singing all around the world.

Pippa Thynne (Perpetua's Mother)

No stranger to first performances, Pippa Thynne has sung with some of the country's finest and most adventurous vocal groups. As a founder member of the New London Chamber Choir, she has made numerous recordings and broadcasts and worked with many eminent composers including Mauricio Kagel, György Ligeti and Iannis Xenakis.

Jeremy White (Quintus)

Jeremy White has appeared with the Royal Opera every season since 1990 and at La Scala, the Met and the opera houses of Valencia, Amsterdam, Bordeaux and Toronto, as well as Glyndebourne, ENO and Opera North, in roles from Monteverdi to Turnage. Concert work with all the major orchestras and conductors has taken him from Brazil to Jerusalem.

Maartin Allcock (Guitar/Oud)

Maartin Allcock, a multi-instrumentalist originally from Manchester and now living in Snowdonia, has recorded on over 200 albums from Robert Plant to Yusuf Islam, and has toured the world with many different acts from Jethro Tull to Mike Harding.
www.maartinallcock.com.

Adam Bushell (Percussion)

Adam Bushell is a versatile and eclectic percussionist based in Brighton. Since starting to play in his dad's village band in the 1970s, his interests have broadened to include everything from traditional folk to classical music to free improvisation.

Dirk Campbell (Wind)

Dirk Campbell is a composer and instrumentalist specialising in non-Western traditions. He performs regularly on film and television scores and in works by contemporary composers.

Angus Lyon (Accordion)

One of Scotland most innovative accordionists, he is perhaps best known for his work with Fiddler player Ruaridh Campbell & The Halton Quartet. Angus has also recorded and performed with Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens), Paul McCartney, Bobby McFerrin, Scott Mathews & Eliza Carthy.

Danny Thompson (Bass)

In his 50-plus years as a professional musician, Danny Thompson has worked with the cream of the music industry, from Roy Orbison and Rod Stewart to Richard Thompson and John Martyn. A founder member of the jazz folk fusion group Pentangle, he was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in 2007.

Chris Walker (Piano/Keyboard)

As well as being a prolific composer and record producer, Chris Walker has been associated with many West End and Broadway shows as musical director or orchestrator. He is currently orchestrating Top Hat (UK National Tour, opening at the Aldwych Theatre, London in May 2012) and re-orchestrating Ragtime for this summer's Open Air Theatre season in Regent's Park.
www.fletcherassociates.net.

CANTATA DRAMATICA CHOIR

Conductor: Sarah Tenant-Flowers

Soprano

Janet Allen, Gill Brooke, Elizabeth Collins, Megan Hooper, *Helen Morton, Julia Stutfield, Bernadette Thompson

Alto

Judith Finch, Ruth Marshal, Hannah Rolls, *Pippa Thynne, Fiona Winstone

Tenor

John Thompson, John Tucker, Richard de Lacy, Cameron Hall

Bass

David Clover, Keri Dexter, John Paternoster, *Mark Sproson, Richard White

*soloist

CANTATA DRAMATICA SOLOISTS

Conductor: Andrew Parrott

Vibia Perpetua

Dinocrates (*Perpetua's younger brother*)

Vibia Secunda (*Perpetua's mother*)

Vibius Quintus (*Perpetua's father*)

Vibius Sextus (*Perpetua's elder brother*)

Felicitas (*a slave*)

Saturus (*a slave*)

Pudens (*Tribune and prison governor*)

Emily Van Evera

*Ethan Clarke

*Pippa Thynne

Jeremy White

*Guy Hayward

*Zoe Brown

*Paul Austin Kelly

*Guy Hayward

*also soloist in **Requiem**

Piano/Keyboard

Percussion

Bass

Guitar/Oud

Accordion

Wind

Chris Walker

Adam Bushell

Danny Thompson

Maartin Allcock

Angus Lyon

Dirk Campbell