



Stile Antico

This Joyful Birth

National Centre for Early Music
Thursday 12 December 6.30pm

Stile Antico

This Joyful Birth

A Voice from Heaven

Conditor alma siderum

Plainchant

Audivi vocem de caelo

John Taverner c.1490-1545

O lieber Herre Gott (SWV381)

Heinrich Schütz 1585-1672

Laetentur caeli

William Byrd c.1540-1623

The Obedience of Mary

Ave Maria

Sebastián de Vivanco c.1551-1622

There is no Rose of such virtue

Anonymous from the Trinity Carol Roll

Übers Gebirg Maria geht

Johannes Eccard 1553-1611

The Joy of the Angels

O magnum mysterium

Tomás Luis de Victoria 1548-1611

El Jubilate

Matteo Flecha c.1530-1604

Ein Kind geboren in Bethlehem

Michael Praetorius 1571-1621

The Eagerness of the Shepherds

Pastores quidnam vidistis

Clemens non Papa c.1510/15-1555/6

Rutilante in nocte

Claudio Monteverdi 1567-1643

Quem vidistis pastores

Richard Dering c.1580-1630

The Perseverance of the Wise Men

Tribus miraculis

Luca Marenzio 1553/54-1599

A un nino llorando

Francisco Guerrero 1528-99

Reges Tharsis

John Sheppard c.1515-1558

The Peace of the Christ Child

Senex puerum portabat

Giovanni da Palestrina 1525/26-1594

Maria wallt zum Heiligtum

Johannes Eccard

Nunc dimittis *from* the Great Service

William Byrd

Resonet in laudibus

Orlandus Lassus c.1532-1594

Tonight's programme not only traces the familiar Christmas story, but also offers a wonderful opportunity to compare the different styles of sacred music which flourished across early modern Europe.

With the exception of the seventh-century plainchant hymn *Conditor alme siderum*, the oldest music that we perform is an anonymous *There is no rose of such virtue*, found in Trinity Carol Roll (c.1420) – the earliest surviving source for English-texted polyphonic music. Its simplicity contrasts sharply with the sophisticated music of Taverner and Sheppard, writing just over a century later, during the reign of Henry VIII. Taverner's *Audivi vocem de caelo* was probably intended for upper voices – perhaps a nod to the 'wise virgins' described in the text – and weaves supple polyphony around a plainsong line. Chant is also the foundation of Sheppard's magisterial *Reges Tharsis*, which boasts a rich six-part texture ranging from low bass to high treble – the quintessential sonority of pre-Reformation English music.

Byrd would have grown to love Sheppard's music as a choirboy during Queen Mary's reign, but such monumental sonorities had no place in Elizabeth's Protestant church. Perhaps a certain amount of musical latitude was permitted at the Chapel Royal where Byrd worked; his lavish *Great Service*, from which we perform the 'Nunc dimittis', comes as close as any piece of Anglican music to the richness of the earlier style, but even here Byrd is careful to ensure that the English words are clearly audible. Latin-texted music did however live on in England, intended not for Anglican worship, but for the enjoyment of musical cognoscenti. Byrd – a lifelong Catholic – seized on this pretext to publish motets whose texts can be read as a bitter commentary on the state of English Catholicism. *Laetentur caeli* comes from his most obviously subversive collection, the 1589 *Cantiones sacrae*; perhaps its ebullient melismas reflect Byrd's own confidence that 'justice will dawn... our Lord will come and show mercy on his poor people'.

Byrd's fellow Catholic, Dering chose to emigrate in order to practise his faith openly. *Quem vidistis pastores*, published in 1618 shortly after his arrival in Brussels, shows how quickly he adapted his style in response to the new vogue for Italianate music. Prior to this shift in taste, it had been Dering's adopted homeland of the Low Countries which had led the way in musical progress, producing successive generations of hugely influential figures such as Ockeghem, Josquin and Clemens non Papa, whose beautifully balanced style is heard in *Pastores quidnam vidistis*. Many Franco-Flemish composers had enjoyed illustrious careers abroad. Lassus spent most of his life in Munich at the Bavarian court, where he wrote his vivacious 1569 *Resonet in laudibus* based on a traditional carol melody, best known as 'Josef lieber, Josef mein'.

Though Munich remained Catholic, many other German states embraced the Lutheran religion, which – unlike many other forms of Protestantism – retained a special affection for music. Eccard, who had studied with Lassus as a young man, made his career in Lutheran Königsberg. His charming motets *Übers Gebirg Maria geht* and *Maria wahl't zum Heiligtum* employ simple textures so as to speak directly to the listener. The prolific composer and theorist Michael Praetorius worked chiefly in Wolfenbüttel; his 1607 *Ein Kind geboren in Bethlehem* is an energetic dance, building sequentially from two to six voices. Schütz, who studied in Italy at different times with Giovanni Gabrieli and Monteverdi, spent almost his entire life in Dresden, where he forged a deeply satisfying fusion of German and Italian styles. His reactionary 1648 collection *Geistliches Chormusik*, from which *O Lieber Herr Gott* is taken, eschewed the use of instruments; he wrote that

‘I was occasioned to undertake once again a slight work of this kind without basso continuo, and perhaps in this way to encourage a few – especially some of the novice German composers – that, before they proceed to the concerted [modern Italianate] style, they might first crack this hard nut (wherein is to be found the true kernel and the very foundation of good counterpoint)...’

During the later Renaissance the centre of musical gravity shifted inexorably southwards. The exquisitely crafted music of the Roman master Palestrina, represented here by the motet *Senex puerum portabit* (1569), was so admired that later generations codified it as the exemplar of the *stile antico*. Marenzio, who worked in Rome and Florence, was most famous for his madrigals, but his sacred music is no less attractive: *Tribus miraculis* (1585) shows his flair for text-setting. Madrigals were a stock-in-trade for Monteverdi; his friend the musician and poet Aquilino Coppini, convinced that all good music could be made ‘commendable to God and to his saints’ – furnished many of them with new texts, expertly tailored to Monteverdi’s musical effects. *Rutilante in nocte*, which relates the angels’ appearance to the shepherds, began life as *Io mi son giovinetta*, a light-hearted love dialogue from the Fourth Book of Madrigals (1607).

Palestrina’s closest Spanish counterpart is Victoria, who spent his formative years working in Rome; his rapt *O magnum mysterium* epitomises the directness and emotional intensity of his style. As a boy at Ávila Cathedral he would have sung alongside Vivanco, whose sunny *Ave Maria* paraphrases the traditional plainsong. The music of Francisco Guerrero is often earthier in character, as in his *villancico* (Spanish-language carol) *A un niño llorando* (1589), which describes the visit of the Magi to the stable in an irresistible dance meter. Yet even this music seems straight-laced next to Flecha’s remarkable *El Jubilate* – one of his so-called

ensaladas (literally, 'salads') which mix together different languages and clashing musical styles and meters. It is an absurd and immensely entertaining account of the Virgin Mary fighting off the devil with the words 'French lazybones, leave me in peace'!

Andrew Griffiths

Conditor alme siderum,
aeterna lux credentium
Christe, redemptor omnium,
exaudi preces supplicum.

Qui condolens interitu
mortis periret saeculum,
salvastis mundum languidum,
donans reis remedium:

Vergente mundi vespere,
uti sponsus de thalamo,
egressus honestissima
Virginis matris clausula:

Cujus forti potentiae
genu curvantur omnia,
caelestia, terrestrial,
mutu fatentur subdita.

Te deprecamur agiae,
venture iudex saeculi,
conserva nos in tempore
hostis a telo perfidi.

Laus, honor, virtus, gloria
Deo Patri et Filio,
sancto simul Paraclito,
in saeculorum saecula.

Creator of the stars of night,
thy people's everlasting light,
Jesu, Redeemer, save us all,
and hear Thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving that the ancient curse
should doom to death a universe,
hast found the medicine, full of grace,
to save and heal a ruined race.

Thou cam'st, the Bridegroom of the bride,
as drew the world to evening-tide;
proceeding from a virgin shrine,
the spotless victim all divine.

At whose dread name, majestic now,
all knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
and things celestial Thee shall own,
and things terrestrial, Lord alone.

O Thou whose coming is with dread
to judge and doom the quick and dead,
preserve us, while we dwell below,
from every insult of the foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
laud, honour, might, and glory be
from age to age eternally.

Audivi vocem de caelo venientem: Venite omnes virgines sapientissimae; Oleum recondite in vasis vestris, dum sponsus advenerit. Media nocte clamor factus est. Ecce sponsus venit.

I heard a voice from heaven saying: Come, all you wise virgins; Lay up the oil in your vessels when the bridegroom cometh. At midnight there was a cry made: Behold the bridegroom cometh.

Matins responsory for All Saints

O lieber Herre Gott, wecke uns auf, daß wir bereit sein, wenn dein Sohn kömmt, ihn mit Freuden zu empfangen und dir mit reinem Herzen zu dienen, durch denselbigen deinen lieben Sohn Jesum Christum, unsern Herren. Amen.

O dear Lord God, wake us up, so that we are ready, when your Son comes, to receive him with joy and to serve you with a pure heart, by the same, thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Laetentur coeli, et exultet terra. Jubilate montes laudem,
quia Dominus noster veniet, et pauperum suorum miserebitur.

Orietur in diebus tuis justitia et abundantia pacis.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice. Let the mountains be joyful with praise, because our Lord will come, and will show mercy to his poor.

In your days, justice and abundance of peace shall arise.

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.

Isaiah 49:13 and Psalm 71:7

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum;

benedicta tu in mulieribus,

et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.

Sancta Maria, Regina Caeli,

O Mater Dei, dulcis et pia,

ora pro nobis peccatoribus,

ut cum electis te videamus.

Alleluia.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;

blessed art thou among women,

and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Queen of heaven,

O Mother of God, sweet and merciful,

pray for us sinners,

that with the elect we may gaze upon thee.

Alleluia

There is no rose of such virtue

As is the rose that bare Jesu;

Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was

Heaven and earth in little space;

Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see

That he is God in persons three,

Pari forma.

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis Deo:
Gaudeamus.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth;
Transeamus.

Übers Gebirg Maria geht

zu ihrer Bas Elisabeth.
Sie grüßt die Freundin, die vom Geist
freudig bewegt Maria preist
und sie des Herren Mutter nennt;
Maria ward fröhlich und sang:

Mein Seel den Herrn erhebet,
mein Geist sich Gottes freuet;
Er ist mein Heiland, fürchtet ihn,
Er will allzeit barmherzig sein.

Was bleiben immer wir daheim?
Laßt uns auch aufs Gebirge gehn,
da eins dem andern spreche zu,
des Geistes Gruß das Herz aufthu,
davon es freudig werd und spring,
der Mund in wahren Glauben sing.
[Mein Seel den Herrn erhebet etc]

Ludwig Helmbolt

Maria walks across the mountains
to her cousin Elizabeth.

She greets the friend who, joyfully
moved
by the Spirit, praises her,
and calls her Mother of the Lord;
Maria became full of joy and sang:

My soul magnifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God;
He is my saviour, to be feared,
He shall always be merciful.

Why ever are we staying home?
Let us, too, go to the mountains,
where we encourage each other,
and the Spirit's greetings open the
heart,
to grow joyful and excited,
and the mouth sings in true faith:
[My soul magnifies etc]

O magnum mysterium et admirabile sacramentum, ut animalia viderent
Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio. O beata Virgo, cujus viscera meruerunt portare Dominum
Jesum Christum. Alleluia!

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the new-born
Lord
lying in a manger! O blessed is the Virgin, whose womb was worthy to bear Christ
the Lord. Alleluia!

Responsory for Christmas

Jubilate Deo omnis terra.
Cantate et exultate, et psallite.

Mil plaçeres acá estén, amen.
Y así lo digo yo
Por el Niño que nació esta niche en
Belén,
¡Oh, gran bien, por quien se diría:
Para mí me lo querria, madre mía.
¿Por dó veniste, bien tal?
Por la Virgen preservada,
la qual dijo en su llegada
al peccado original:
“Poltrón françoy, lasáme andaré
que soy infantina del bel maridare”.
El diablo que lo oyó, se temió
por que no pudo creer
que lo que mujer perdió
lo cobremos por mujer.
(¡Que sí puede ser, señor bachiller!)
¡Oh, qué bonita canción!
“Mejor le fuera el mal año,
al tacaño, al tacaño,
yaún a quantos con él son
de la ro ro ro rón
que es un bella coladrón”.
En la ciudad de la Gloria
dó los serafines son
en medio de todos ellos
cayó un pícaro baylón,
de la ro ro ro rón.
El banastón me espanta,
que traga con su garganta
los padres primeros.
¡Oh, grosseros!
¿No veis que la Virgen santa
dixo contra Lucifer:
“Non fay el cavaller, non fay tal villanía
que fillola me soy de Dios de Abrán,
señor de la jerarchía.
¡L’anima mía!”

O be Joyful in the Lord, all ye lands.
Sing, rejoice, and praise.

A thousand pleasures be here, amen.
And this way I say it.
Because of the baby that is born tonight in
Bethlehem,
oh greatest good, for whom it would be said:
for myself He would want it, Mother,
from where did such good come?
For the preserved Virgin,
who on her birth said
to the original sin:
‘French fool, let me go
for I am a child of the good marriage.’
The devil, who heard this, was afraid,
since he could not believe that,
that which the woman lost,
we could reclaim it from a woman.
(Yes, you can do so, Sir Knight!)
Oh what a beautiful song!
The bad year was better for the crafty,
and as many as there are are with him,
tralala
for he is a hairy great thief,
tralala.
In the city of Glory
where the seraphs are,
in the middle of them all
a dancing swindler fell off,
tralala.
The glutton, which swallows
down his throat
the new parents, frightens me.
Oh fools!
Can you not see that the holy Virgin
said to Lucifer:
‘Good Knight, do not do such villainy,
as I am the daughter of the God of Abraham,
supreme Lord.
My soul!’

El maldito replicó:
“¡Nunca más paporreó!
Assí, assí, ¡cuerpo de nos!
Aquí veré yo como bailaréis vos a la
giringonça”.
“¡Saltar y baylar con voces y grita!”
¡Y vos renegar, ser piente maldita!
La Virgen bendita os hará baylar a la
giringonça.

Et ipsa conteret caput tuum, alleluia.

Ein Kind geboren in Bethlehem

des freuet sich Jerusalem,
Alleluia!

Hier liegt es in dem Krippelein,
Ohn' Ende ist der Herrschaft sein,
Alleluia!

Das Öchslein und das Eselein
Erkannten Gott den Herren Sein.
Alleluia!

Die König aus Saba kamen dar
Gold, Weihrauch, Myrrhen brachten's dar.
Alleluia!

Sein Mutter ist die reine Magd,
Die ohn ein Mann geboren hat.
Alleluia!

Die Schlang ihn nicht vergiften kunnt,
Ist worden unser Blut ohn Sünd.
Alleluia!

Er ist uns gar gleich nach dem Fleisch
Der Sünden nach ist'r uns nicht gleich.
Alleluia!

Damit er uns ihm machet gleich
Und wiederbrächt in Gottes Reich.
Alleluia!

The damned one replied:
'Never again will I eat up!
Yes, by my body,
here I will see how you dance the tralala.
'Jump and dance, with big voices and an
uproar!
And to repudiate you, you damned snake!
The blessed Virgin will make you dance to
the tralala.

And she will bruise your head, alleluia.

A Child is born in Bethlehem,
The Joy of all Jerusalem.
Alleluia!

The Child who in the manger lies,
Forever reigns above the skies.
Alleluia!

The ox and donkey bring Him laud,
For well they know the Lord their God.
Alleluia!

The eastern kings have journeyed there,
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh they bear.
Alleluia!

His mother is the virgin maid,
Who gave Him birth with no man's aid.
Alleluia!

The Serpent could not poison Him,
He's joined our race, yet without sin.
Alleluia!

As to the flesh He is our kin,
And yet unlike us as to sin.
Alleluia!

Like unto Him we thus are wrought,
And back into God's kingdom brought.
Alleluia!

Für solche gnadenreiche Zeit
Sei Gott gelobt in Ewigkeit.
Alleluia!

For such a season, rich in grace,
To God forevermore be praise!
Alleluia!

Lob sei der heil'g'n Dreifaltigkeit
Von nun an bis in Ewigkeit. Alleluia!

Praise to the Holy Trinity,
From now unto eternity! Alleluia!

Attrib. Johann Spangenburg

Pastores quidnam vidistis? Annunciate nobis in terris quis apparuit. Natum vidimus, et chorus angelorum collaudantes Dominum et dicentes: Gloria in altissimis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.

Shepherds, tell us, what have you seen upon earth? We have seen the newborn babe and choirs of angels praising the Lord together and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will'.

Matins responsory for Christmas

Rutilante in nocte,
exultant laeti angelorum chori
cantantes gloriam Infantis nati.
Ecce Angelorum ad
eum cantum sonorum,
tremunt pastores et greges errantes
et maturare fugam.
In cava antra parant glaciali,
stupefacti pavore;
sed Angelorum chori
cantant: Pastores, ite ad pupulum,
Dominum vestrum,
ite et adorete
Salvatorem qui nunc natus est vobis.'

In the glowing night,
the joyful choirs of angels rejoice,
singing the glory of the newborn child;
Behold, at the song of the angels
singing to him,
the shepherds and the errant sheep
tremble
and run in a crowd, fleeing in haste;
in hollowed caves they appear frozen,
stunned with fear.
But the choirs of angels
sing, 'Shepherds, go to the little child,
your Lord; go, and adore
the saviour who has been born for you'.

Aquilino Coppini

Quem vidistis, pastores, dicite, annunciate nobis, in terris quis apparuit? Natum vidimus et chorus angelorum collaudantes Dominum, Alleluia.

Whom did you see, shepherds, say, tell us: who has appeared on earth? The newborn we saw and choirs of angels praising the Lord, Alleluia!

Anon.

Tribus miraculis ornatum, diem sanctum colimus:

Hodie stella Magos duxit ad praesepeum:

Hodie vinum ex aqua factum est ad nuptias:

Hodie in Jordane a Joanne Christus baptizari voluit,
ut salvaret nos, Alleluia.

We observe this holy day, ornamented with three miracles:

Today a star led the Magi to the manger;

Today wine was made from water at the wedding;

Today in the Jordan Christ desired to be baptised by John,

so that He might save us, Alleluia.

Magnificat antiphon for Epiphany

A un niño llorando al hielo

van tres Reyes a adorar

Porque el niño puede dar

Reinos, vida, gloria y cielo.

Nace con tanta bajeza

Aunque es poderoso Rey

Porque nos da cielo ley

Abatimento y pobreza.

Por eo llorando al hielo

van tres Reyes a adorar

Porque el niño puede dar

Reinos, vida, gloria y cielo.

Three kings go to adore

a child crying in the cold,

Because the child can give

Kingdoms, life, glory and heaven.

He is born with such lowliness

Although he is a powerful king,

Because he is giving us through his law

Humbleness and poverty.

To him crying in the cold,

Three kings go to adore him,

Because the child can give

Kingdoms, life, glory and heaven.

Reges Tharsis et insulae munera offerent,

reges Arabum et Saba dona domino Deo adducent.

Et adorabunt eum omnes reges omnes gentes servient ei.

...reges Arabum et Saba dona Domino Deo adducent.

Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto

...domino Deo adducent.

The kings of Tharsis and the isle offer their gifts,

the kings of Arabia and Sheba bring gifts to the Lord God.

And all the kings worship him, all peoples bow before him.

...the kings of Arabia and Sheba bring gifts to the Lord God.

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

...bring gifts to the Lord God.

Psalm 71:10-11

Senex puerum portabat:

puer autem senem regebat:
quem virgo peperit,
et post partum virgo permansit:
ipsum quem genuit, adoravit.
Hodie beata Virgo Maria
puerum Jesum presentavit in templo,
Et Simeon, repletus Spiritu Sancto,
accepit eum in ulnas suas,
et benedixit Deum in aeternum.

*Mass Proper for the Purification of the
Blessed Virgin Mary*

Maria wallt zum Heiligtum und
bringt ihr Kindlein dar,
das schaut der greise Simeon, wie ihm
verheißen war.
Da nimmt er Jesum in den Arm und
singt im Geiste froh:
Nun fahr' ich hin mit Freud,
dich, Heiland, sah ich heut,
du Trost von Israel, das Licht der Welt.
Hilf nun, du liebster Jesu Christ, dass
wir zu jeder Frist
an dir wie auch der Simeon all uns're
Freude han
und kommt die Zeit, sanft schlafen ein
und also singen froh:
Nun fahr' ich hin mit Freud,
dich, Heiland, sah ich heut,
du Trost von Israel, das Licht der Welt.

An old man carried the child,
yet the child ruled the old man.
Him whom the virgin had borne
– after which she remained for ever a
Virgin –
she herself worshipped.
Today the Blessed Virgin Mary
presented the child Jesus in the temple
and Simeon, full of the Holy Spirit,
took Him in his arms,
and blessed God for evermore.

Mary made a pilgrimage to the temple
and brought her child there,
who was seen by the aged Simeon, as
the prophets had foretold.
Simeon took Jesus in his arms, and
joyfully sang:
Now I go forth with joy,
for today I have seen You, Saviour,
comfort of Israel, light of the World.
O dear Jesus, grant now that we at all
times
find all our joy in Thee, just as Simeon
did,
and that, when the time comes, we
pass away gently and thus sing gladly:
Now I go forth with joy,
for today I have seen You, Saviour,
comfort of Israel, light of the World.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face
of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy
people Israel.

Luke 2:29-31

Resonet in laudibus

cum jucundis plausibus
Sion cum fidelibus:
apparuit quem genuit Maria.
Sunt impleta quae praedixit Gabriel.
Eya, eya, Virgo Deum genuit
quod divina voluit clementia.
Hodie apparuit in Israel:
Ex Maria Virgine est natus Rex.
Magnum nomen Domini Emmanuel
quod annuntiatum est per Gabriel.
Eya, eya, Virgo Deum genuit
quod divina voluit clementia

Let praises resound
with joyous acclaim:
To Sion's faithful
the child born of Mary has appeared.
What Gabriel foretold has been fulfilled.
Eia, a Virgin bore God,
As the divine mercy willed.
Today He has appeared in Israel:
From the Virgin Mary is born a King.
Great is the name of the Lord
Emmanuel,
As was announced by Gabriel.
Eia, a Virgin bore God,
As the divine mercy willed.

Stile Antico

Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Rebecca Hickey *soprano*

Emma Ashby, Amy Blythe, Rosie Parker *alto*

Andrew Griffiths, Benedict Hymas, Will Wright *tenor*

James Arthur, Nathan Harrison, Gareth Thomas *bass*

Stile Antico is firmly established as one of the world's most accomplished and innovative vocal ensembles. Working without a conductor, its twelve members have thrilled audiences on four continents with their fresh, vibrant and moving performances of Renaissance polyphony. Its bestselling recordings have earned accolades including the Gramophone Award for Early Music, Diapason d'or de l'année, Edison Klassiek Award and Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. The group has received three Grammy® nominations, and performed live at the 60th Grammy® Awards at Madison Square Garden.

Based in London, Stile Antico has appeared at many of the world's most prestigious venues and festivals. The group enjoys a particularly close association with Wigmore Hall, and has performed at the BBC Proms, Buckingham Palace, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Cité de la Musique, Luxembourg Philharmonie, Leipzig Gewandhaus and Madrid's Auditorio Nacional. Stile Antico is frequently invited to appear at Europe's leading festivals: highlights include the Antwerp, Bruges, Utrecht and York Early Music Festivals, the Lucerne Easter Festival and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival.

Since its 2009 North American debut at the Boston Early Music Festival, Stile Antico has enjoyed frequent tours to the US and Canada. The group performs

regularly in Boston and New York, and has appeared at the Ravinia Festival, Washington's National Cathedral and Library of Congress, Vancouver's Chan Centre, and in concert series spanning twenty-five US states. Stile Antico has also appeared in Mexico and Colombia, and in 2018 visited East Asia for the first time, performing in South Korea, Macau and Hong Kong.

Stile Antico's performances are often praised for their immediacy, expressive commitment, and their sensitive and imaginative response to text. These qualities arise from the group's collaborative working style: members rehearse and perform as chamber musicians, each contributing artistically to the musical results. The group is also noted for its compelling programming, which often draws out thematic connections between works to shine new light on Renaissance music. In addition to its core repertoire, Stile Antico has premiered works by Joanna Marsh, John McCabe, Nico Muhly, Giles Swayne and Huw Watkins. The group's diverse range of collaborators includes Fretwork, the Folger Consort, Marino Formenti, Lemn Sissay, B'Rock, Rihab Azar and Sting.

Alongside its concert and recording work, Stile Antico is passionate about sharing its repertoire and working style with the widest possible audience. As well as leading courses at the Dartington International Summer School, the group has been resident at Zenobia Música, is often invited to coach university ensembles, and regularly holds Come and Sing days open to all. The support of the charitable Stile Antico Foundation has enabled the group to offer bursaries to talented young professional singers and ensembles, and to run an annual Youth Consort course. Stile Antico is proud to be a member of the European early music network REMA.

Stile Antico's 2024 engagements have included a debut at *La folle journée* in Nantes, major European tours marking Holy Week and Christmas, a return to the US, performances at Wigmore Hall and the Louvre, and a complete cycle of the Divine Office for Martin Randall Travel. The group will also record an album of works by Palestrina to be released by Decca in 2025, the year when Stile Antico celebrates its 20th anniversary.

stileantico.co.uk

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