MONTEVERDI
VESPERS OF 1610

OCTOBER 21-23, 2022
I’m so glad that you’ve decided to join us today for the first concert of The Thirteen’s eleventh season, Vanguard. This season seeks to celebrate the greatest innovators in music, and I can think of no composer more deserving than Monteverdi.

With controversy his constant companion, Monteverdi spent his life pioneering an inventive new style of music-making, whose hallmarks were clarity of declamation and the inventive use of basso continuo. This style, which he called ‘seconda pratica,’ became the foundation and keystone of the Baroque period in musical history, inspiring composers from Schütz to Handel, and Vivaldi to Bach.

Monteverdi wrote his Vespers of 1610 as a job application, much as J.S. Bach, writing a century later, would write his Mass in B Minor. And, like Bach’s Mass, Monteverdi’s Vespers represents the cream of the Italian composer’s work and is replete with driving choruses and time-suspending solos.

I’m delighted to be joined by our customary forces for Monteverdi: two spectacular cornetti, two violins, cello, two theorboes, continuo organ, and our peerless singers. It’s a particular delight on this occasion to welcome the sackbuts of Dark Horse Consort, and the choristers of Children’s Chorus of Washington who will sing the chant antiphons. And I can think of no one I’d rather sing Nigra sum et Formosa (“I am black and beautiful”) than the resplendent soprano Michele Kennedy, a well-known Black artist in the early music world. I asked Michele to sing this role as part of our ongoing efforts to honor historically underrepresented perspectives and celebrate artists of color.

The musicians assembled for this program are among the finest in the world and I’m privileged to work with them this week. Following this weekend’s concerts, we will record this work so that we can share the fruits of our work with a broader community.

Having performed most of Monteverdi’s sacred music over the past three years, I remain struck by how red-blooded — how passionate — this music is. Inspired throughout by evocative texts, Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610 embodies the entirety of the human condition in song. Unlocking this work’s mysteries has been our delight as we hope it will be yours.

With warm wishes,

Matthew Robertson
Artistic Director

The Thirteen thanks our Season Sponsors, J. Penny Clark, Charles Cerf & Cindy Dunbar, and Walter Hill & Cheryl Naulty.

We invite you to take photographs (without flash) and to use social media during the concert. We politely decline unauthorized audio or video recordings of our concerts.

Please silence all cell phones.
CHOIR

Hannah Baslee, mezzo-soprano
Blake Beckemeyer, tenor
Steven John Eddy, baritone
Katelyn Jackson, soprano
Michele Kennedy, soprano

Oliver Mercer, tenor
Edmund Milly, bass-baritone
Molly Quinn, soprano
Aaron Sheehan, tenor
Stephen Soph, tenor

ORCHESTRA

Adriane Post, concertmaster
Carrie Krause, violin
Kyle Miller, viola
Jason Fisher, viola
Ezra Seltzer, cello
Jessica Powell Eig, double bass
John Lenti, theorbo

Billy Simms, theorbo
Adam Pearl, organ
Alexandra Opsahl, cornetto
Kiri Tollaksen, cornetto
Greg Ingles, sackbut & recorders
Erik Schmalz, sackbut & recorders
Mack Ramsey, sackbut & recorders
Ben David Aronson, sackbut & recorders

CHILDREN’S CHORUS OF WASHINGTON

Margaret Nomura Clark, Artistic Director

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DC COMMISSION ON ARTS & HUMANITIES

MSAC

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VESPRO DELLA BEATA VERGINE

I. Deus in adjutorium
   Antiphon: Dum esset rex in accubitu suo
II. Dixit Dominus
III. Nigra sum et Formosa | Michele Kennedy
    Antiphon: Laeva eius sub capite meo
IV. Laudate, pueri, Dominum
V. Pulchra es, amica mea | Molly Quinn and Katelyn Jackson
    Antiphon: Nigra sum et formosa
VI. Laetatus sum
VII. Duo Seraphim | Aaron Sheehan, Steven Soph, and Oliver Mercer
    Antiphon: Iam hiems transit
VIII. Nisi Dominus
IX. Audi coelum verba mea | Oliver Mercer and Aaron Sheehan

intermission

Antiphon: Speciosa facta es
X. Lauda, Jerusalem
XI. Sonata sopra sancta Maria
XII. Hymn: Ave maris stella | Michele Kennedy, Katelyn Jackson, and Edmund Milly
    Antiphon: Sancta Maria succurre miseris
XIII. Magnificat
   i. Magnificat
   ii. Et exultavit
   iii. Quia respexit
   iv. Quia fecit
   v. Et misericordia
   vi. Fecit potentiam
   vii. Deposuit potentes
   viii. Esurientes implevit bonis
   ix. Suscepit Israel
   x. Sicut locutus est
   xi. Gloria Patri
   xii. Sicut erat in principio
Towards the middle of his life, Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) emerges as one of the chief architects of a new musical style, a style that was harmonically clariing, text-driven, and intensely emotional. With works like the operas L’Orfeo (1607) and L’Arianna (1608) and madrigals like the plangent “Cruda Amarilli” (published in 1605), he helped forge the early baroque style, amply demonstrating the viability of opera, the ability of music to arouse the emotions, and the dynamic power of music placed in service to a text. In 1610 he published a collection of sacred music that in part furthered the trajectory of his modern bent, but also drew on traditional contrapuntal ideals to create a sacred anthology of stunning variety. The descriptive title page of some of the parts states: To be sung to the most holy Virgin: a Mass for six voices and Vespers for more voices, with some sacred concertos—works suited to the chapels or chambers of princes, lately wrought by Claudio Monteverdi and dedicated to the most blessed Paul V, Pontifex Maximus (translation by John Whenham). So, here is music for Marian liturgies or devotions, sophisticated and sometimes lavish—suitable to princely venues—and dedicated to Pope Paul V, a dedication that might help advance the composer’s hope that his son, Francesco, could attend a seminar in Rome, a hope ultimately unfulfilled. (This hope is voiced in a letter of December 28, 1610 from Monteverdi to Cardinal Ferdinando Gonzaga. Monteverdi seeks the cardinal’s aid that he might enjoy “seeing my son in the Roman seminary with a benefice from the church to pay his board and lodging, I being a poor man.” Modern parents, sending their children off to college might easily relate!) The dedication and, indeed, the publication of this impressive anthology, would have also been strategic in Monteverdi’s quest to leave the service of the Gonzaga family in Mantua and obtain a new position. Most surely, that the collection was printed in Venice would have helped advertise his abilities there, and in 1613, Monteverdi was named to the prestigious post of maestro di cappella at the famed Basilica of St. Mark’s, remaining in that position until his death.

In the 1610 collection, the Mass is a parody of the Renaissance composer Nicolas Gombert’s motet, In illo tempore loquente Jesu, revealing Monteverdi’s fluency in the old contrapuntal style. It seems the fluency was hard-earned. A colleague in Mantua, Don Bassano Casola, noted that this was a work to which Monteverdi brought “great study and effort.” In addition to the mass, the collection presents music for vespers along with “some sacred concertos.”

Vespers is a liturgy offered in the early evening, chiefly consisting of a number of psalms, a hymn, and the canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Magnificat (Luke 1: 46-55). It is the psalmody that forms the backbone of vespers, as it does for the other liturgical offices. In a chanted vespers, the psalms would be sung to simple recitation formulas—“psalm tones”—though framed with melodic refrains—“antiphons”—that tend to particularize the themes of the liturgical day. In this configuration of chants, one discerns a rhythm, moving back and forth from a mode of verbal recitation to lyrical response and back again, repeated throughout the cycle of psalms. Monteverdi’s psalms, however, are not simple recitations; quite the contrary, they are splendid sonic tapestries woven to embed the old psalm tones within their rich textures. The musical content of the psalms is generally modern in its idioms; this technique of employing a pre-existent chant as a scaffold—a cantus firmus—is old-fashioned and points to one way in which the style of this vespers does not easily conform to convenient designations of style.

There are no antiphons or indications of them in the 1610 print. But where the antiphons would fall between the psalms, Monteverdi has interposed sacred concertos for solo or a few voices. Falling where they do in the print, it is easy and tempting to see them as antiphon substitutes, perhaps taking advantage of a degree of liturgical flexibility to adorn and enhance a festive
occasion. Or perhaps it was more simply assumed that the antiphons would be chanted and the concertos would provide another form of interlude, should occasion and desire require. Regardless, interposing the concertos preserves the characteristic rhythm of undulation, moving back and forth between rich ensemble settings and intimate, affective moments. The Thirteenth's performance uses plainsong antiphons for the Marian feast of Our Lady of the Snows, and also interposes the concertos between the psalms to preserve this added layer of alternating modes.

By any measure, Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 is stunning in its diversity, almost kaleidoscopic in its array of colors, textures, figuration, and modes of variation and development. The curtain raiser to the Vespers—Deus in adiutorium meum intende—is a brilliant re-purposing of the opening toccata to the opera, L'Orfeo. The sparkling fanfare figures that would have both saluted the Gonzaga family and heralded the beginning of the drama here set the stage for the liturgy to unfold. Significantly, this is not the only echo of L'Orfeo in the Vespers. For instance, the virtuosic singing in the psalm, Laetatus sum, recalls similar passage work from Apollo and Orfeo in the opera; the clever echoes of the concerto Audi coelum hearken back to Orfeo's lament on the field of Thrace, bewailing the loss of Eurydice with his own echo inadequately consoling him; the paired instrumental interludes in the Deposuit of the Magnificat, especially in their echoes, quickly bring to mind Orfeo's aria, Possente spirto, which he sings in an attempt to gain entry into Hades. Clearly the church door did not bar the entry of these operatic evocations, nor was Monteverdi in this case reluctant to blur the boundaries of genre.

The psalms all take as their foundation one of the recitacional psalm tones. As these are little more than inflected monotones, the pre-existent element is spare and minimal, and yet Monteverdi erects dazzling layers of counterpoint and figuration on top of these bare-boned scaffolds. For example, the first psalm, Dixit Dominus, is a virtual lesson in variety, treating the psalm tone imitatively, using it as a bass line underneath florid passage work for pairs of solo singers, and imbedding it in choral recitation (falsobordone); instrumental ritornelli also punctuate the verses, rendering the architecture of the psalm clear and introducing another layer of color and variation. Showing a different approach, the eight-voice double choir psalm, Nisi Dominus, places the slow-moving psalm-tone in the middle of its rich texture, while around it, the antiphonal singers offer rhythmically energetic declamations and ornamental passagework.

The psalms are inventive, colorful, and often impressive in the richness of their sound. But they unfold in a sequence that finds them in alternation with intimate concertos, intensely and affectively expressive. Several of the texts—Nigra sum and Pulchra es—are taken from the Biblical "Song of Songs," erotic love poetry that in this context transforms the tropes of sexualized human love into an emotive allegory of devotion to Mary. One of the concertos, Audi coelum, is explicitly Marian and in its use of an echo voice to the solo line offers a dialogue between the human soul and heaven. Heaven here is "spiritualized" by the use of echo, which brings a sense of "otherness" to the sound, while the text of the dialogue also draws on inner verbal echoes. For example, the last word of the text lines contains within it another word that forms the text of the musical echo. Thus:

Audi coelum verba mea plena desiderio et perfusa gaudio.
(Echo) Audio.

Dic queso mihi: quae est ista quae consurgens ut aurora rutilat, et benedicam?
(Echo) Dicam.

Hear, O heaven, my words full of longing and suffused with joy.
(Echo) I hear.

I beseech you, tell me who is she that rises up, bright as the dawn, and I shall bless her?
(Echo) I shall tell you.
Somewhat curious is the inclusion of a concerto on the text Duo Seraphim, an adaptation of Isaiah's vision of the heavenly temple in which the angels perpetually sing "holy, holy, holy" at the throne of God. Monteverdi's setting is exquisitely rhapsodic, with close suspensions in the vocal lines becoming the sound of ecstasy as one seraph sings to another. And when not in this ecstatic mode, the seraphim are possessed of a striking degree of virtuosity, setting their music apart from that of mortals, a nod to the same idea in his treatment of Orfeo and Apollo in L'Orfeo. The concerto Duo Seraphim also finds Monteverdi preaching a vivid sermon on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity via musical means. Here the idea that the members of the Trinity are distinct persons but of the same substance is reflected in the three singers—Pater, Verbum, and Spiritus Sanctus respectively—all singing the same virtuosic flourish, one after the other. And guarding against the unlikely possibility that this meaning was somehow unclear, Monteverdi follows this with a setting of the words "and these three are one" that finds a simple triad—three notes—contracting to a simple unison—one note—to illustrate the doctrine with perfect clarity.

Other movements showcase variety in yet different ways. The strophic plainsong hymn, Ave maris stella, presents the melody as an unadorned cantus firmus line in sumptuous eight-voice verses, while other verses cast the melody ornamentally with a dance-like lift for smaller forces. Instrumental interludes punctuate the verses and add their own colorful strand to the mix, as well. The Sonata sopra Sancta Maria is a brilliant instrumental movement with vocal refrain, cast in the form of a litany. Litanies feature varying petitions—we ask this, we ask that—with a fixed response. In the sonata the instruments—an ensemble of violins, cornets, and trombones—vary motives, melodies, and meter to present, in effect, the varying petitions, to which a single treble vocal line responds with repetitions of Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis (Holy Mary, pray for us). Tellingly, the response is not static, but itself undergoes rhythmic alteration, as though to suggest the singer is becoming progressively transformed in the act of praying the litany.

The Magnificat is a tour de force in its own right. As with the psalms, Monteverdi again uses a recitation tone as a cantus firmus, often sustained as a structural voice that undergirds florid singing. But as the verses of Mary's song present diverse images and moods—magnificence, humility, strength, weakness, hunger, fulfillment are all explicit in the text—the music easily shifts its style to express what is at hand. Rhapsodic and virtuosic solo singing, sumptuous tutti, reflective quietude, and instrumental display all find a place here. In this way, the Magnificat becomes something of a microcosm of the aesthetic of variation that so characterizes the work as a whole.

Program note by Steven Plank.
Steven Plank is the Andrew B. Meldrum Professor of Musicology at Oberlin College & Conservatory.
DEUS, IN ADJUTORIUM
Deus, in audientiorem meum intende
Domine, and adjuvandum me festina.
Gloria Patri et Fili
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.
Alleluia.

ANTIPHON:
Dum esset rex in accubitu suo,
nardus mea dedit odorem sua vitatis.

ANTIPHON:
While the king was sitting at the table,
my spikenard sent forth the smell thereof.

DIXIT DOMINUS
Dixit Dominus Domino meo:
sede a dextris meis:
donec panam inimicos tuos scabellum pedum tuorum.

Virgam virtutis tuae mittet Dominus ex Sion:
dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.
Tecum principium in die virtutis tuae
in splendoribus sanctarum:
ex utero ante luciferum genui te.

Iuravit Dominus, et non penetebit eum:
tu es sacerdos in aeternum
secundum ordinem Melchisadech.
Dominus a dextris tuis
confriget in die irae suae reges.

Judicabit in nationibus,
implebit ruinas:
conquassabit capita in terra multarum.
De torrente in via bibet:
propterea exaltabit caput.
Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

The Lord said unto my Lord:
sit at my right hand,
until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send out the rod of thy strength from Zion:
rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.
Thine is the foundation in the day of thy power;
in the beauties of holiness I have born thee
from the womb before the morning star.

The Lord has sworn, and will not repent;
Thou art a priest forever
in the order of Melchisadech.
The Lord at thy right hand has broken
kings in the day of his anger.

He will judge the nations,
he will fill them with ruins:
he will break the heads in the populous land.
He shall drink of the brook on the way;
Thus shall he raise his head.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.
NIGRA SUM

Nigra sum et formosa filia Jerusalem.
Ideo dilexit me Rex, et introduxit
in cubilicum suum et dextit mihi:
Surge, amica mea, et veni.
Jam hiems transiti, imber abiit, et recessit,
flores apparuerunt in terra nostra,
tempus putationis advenit.

ANTIPHON:
Laeva eis sub capite meo,
et dextera illus amplexabitur me.

I am a black and beautiful daughter of Jerusalem.
So the King loved me, and led me
into his bedroom and said to me:
Arise, my love, and come away.
For the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone
and flowers have appeared in our land;
the time of pruning has come.

ANTIPHON:
His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand embraces me.

LAUDATE, PUIRI, DOMINE

Laudate, pueri, Dominum:
laudate nomen Domini.
Sit nomen Domini benedictum,
ex hoc nunc, et usque in saeculum.
A solis ortu usque ad occasum
laudabile nomen Domini.
Excelsus super omnes Dominus,
et super caelos gloria ejus.
Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster,
qui in altis habitat,
et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra?
Suscitans a terra inopem,
et de stercore erigens pauperem:
Ut collocet eum cum princibus,
cum principibus populi sui.
Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo,
matrem filiarum laetentem.
Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Praise the Lord, ye children;
praise the name of the Lord.
Blessed be the name of the Lord,
from this time forth for evermore.
From sunrise to sunset,
the Lord’s name is worthy of praise.
The Lord is high above all nations,
and his glory above the heavens.
Who is like the Lord our God,
who dwells on high,
yet looks down on the humble things in heaven and earth,
raising the helpless from the earth
and lifting the poor man from the dunghill,
to place him among princes,
with the princes of his people?
He makes a home for the barren woman,
a joyful mother of children.
Glory be to the father and to the son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.
PULCHRA ES, AMICA MEA

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

ANTIPHON:

Nigra sum et* formosa filliae Jerusalem;
Ideo dilexit me rex,
Et introduxit me in cubiculum suum.

LAETATUS SUM

Laetatus sum in his, quae dicta sunt mihi:
in domum Domini ibimus.
Stantes errant pedes nostri, in atris tuis, Jerusalem.
Jerusalem, quae aedificatur ut civitas:
cujus participatio ejus in idipsum.
Illec enim ascenderunt tribus,
tribus Domini testimonium Israel
ad confitendum nomen Domini.
Quia illic sederunt sedes in judicio
sedes super domum David.
Rogare quae ad pacem sunt Jerusalem:
et abundantia in diligentibus te.
Fiat pax in virtute tua
et abundantia in turribus tuis.
Propiter fratres meos, et proximos meos,
loquebar pacem de te:
propert domum Domini Dei nostri,
quaesivi bina tibi.
Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Thou art beautiful, my love,
a sweet and comely daughter of Jerusalem.
Thou art beautiful, my love,
sweet and comely as Jerusalem,
terrible as the sharp lines of a military camp.
Turn thine eyes from me,
because they have put me to flight.

ANTIPHON:

I am a black and beautiful daughter of Jerusalem.
So the King loved me, and led me
into his bedroom.

I was glad when they said unto me:
we will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem, that is built as a city
that is at one with itself.
For there the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord, to the testimony of Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.
For there are seats of judgement,
the thrones of the house of David.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
they shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
and plenty within thy palaces.
For my brethren, and my companions,
I will seek peace for thee.
For the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek to do thee good.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.
world without end. Amen.
DUO SERAPHIM

Duo Seraphim clamabant alter ad alterum:
sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth.
Plena est omnis terræ gloria ejus.
Tres sunt, qui testimonium dant in coelo:
Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus:
et hi tres unum sunt.
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Domine Deus Sabaoth.
Plena est omnis terræ gloria ejus.

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

ANTIPHON:

Iam hiems transit imberabili et recessit:
surge amica mea, et veni.

ANTIPHON:

For the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone:
aris my love, and come.

NISI DOMINUS

Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum,
in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eum.
Nisi Dominus custodiet civitatem,
frustra vigilat qui custodit eam.
Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere:
surge postquam sederitis,
qui manducatis panem doloris.
Cum dederit dilectis suis somnum:
ecce, hereditas Domini filii:
merces, fructus ventris.
Sicut sagittae in manu potentis
ita filii excussorum.
Beatus vir qui implavit
desiderium suum ex ipsis:
non confundetur cum loqueretur
inimicis suis in porta.
Gloria Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper.
Et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Except the Lord build the house,
they labor in vain who build it.
Except the Lord keep the city,
the watchman wakeeth but in vain.
It is vain for you to rise before dawn:
to rise when you have sat down,
ye who have eaten the bread of sorrow.
When he will give up sleep to those he loves,
Lo, children are an inheritance of the Lord,
a reward, the fruit of the womb.
As arrows in the hands of the mighty,
thus are the children of outcasts.
Blessed is the man who has fulfilled
his longing by them:
he shall not be perplexed
when he speaks to his enemies at the gate.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.
AUDI COELUM

Hear, O heaven, hear my words
two of desire and suffused with joy.

I HEAR.
Tell me, I pray, who is she
who, rising like the dawn,
shines, that I may bless her?

I SHALL TELL YOU.
Tell me, for she is beautiful as the moon,
radiant as the sun which fills with joy
the earth, heavens and seas.

MARY.
Mary, that sweet virgin
foretold by the prophet Ezekiel,
gate of the orient?

SUCH IS SHE!
That holy and happy gate
through which death was driven out,
but life brought in.

EVEN SO!
She who is always a sure mediator
between man and God,
a remedy for our sins?

A MEDIATOR.
So let us all follow her
by whose grace we gain eternal life.
Let us seek after her.

LET US FOLLOW.
May God the Father grant us this,
and the Son and the Mother,
on whose sweet name we call,
sweet solace for the unhappy.

AMEN.
Thou art blessed, virgin Mary,
world without end.

ANTIPHON:

You are beautiful and sweet in your delights,
holy mother of God.
LAUDA JERUSALEM

Lauda, Jerusalem, Dominum:
lauda Deum tuum, Sion.
Quoniam confortavit seras portarum tuarum:
benedixit fillis tuis in te.
Qui posuit fines tuos pacem:
et adipe frumenti satiat te.
Qui emitit eloquium suum terrae:
velociter currit sermo ejus.
Qui dat nivem sicut lanam:
nebulam sicut cinerem spargit.

Mittit crystalillum suam sicut bucellas:
ante faciem frigoris ejus quis sustinebit?
Emittet verbum suum, et liquefaciet ea:
flabit spiritus ejus, et fluent aquae.

Qui annuntiavit verbum suum Jacob,
justitias et judicia sua Israel.
Non facit taller omni nationi,
et judicia sua non manifestavit eis.
Glória Patri et Filio
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in princípio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem;
praise thy God, O Zion.
For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates;
he hath blessed thy children within thee.
He maketh peace in thy borders,
and filleth thee with the finest wheat.
He sendeth his commandment to the earth;
his word runneth swiftly.
He giveth snow like wool;
he scattereth hoar frost like ashes.
He casts forth his ice like morsels;
before his cold stare who can stand?
He sends out his word, and it melts them;
his spirit blows, and the waters flow.
Who declareth his Word to Jacob:
his justices and his judgments to Israel.
He hath not done in like manner to every nation;
and his judgments he hath not made manifest to them.
Glory be to God the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be
world without end. Amen.

SANCTA MARIA

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.

Holy Mary, pray for us.
Ave Maris Stella

Hail, star of the sea,
Blessed Mother of God
yet ever a Virgin,
O happy gate of heaven!

You that did receive ‘Ave’
from Gabriel’s lips,
confirm us in peace,
and so let “Eva” be changed into an “Ave” of blessing.

Loose the sinner’s chains,
bring light to the blind,
drive from us our evils,
and ask all good things for us.

Show thyself a mother,
and offer our prayers to him,
who would be born of thee,
when born for us.

O incomparable Virgin,
more gentle than all
obtain for us the forgiveness of our sins,
make us gentle and pure.

Grant us a pure life,
prepare a safe way,
that we may be united
with thee in a blissful vision of Jesus.

Praise be to God the Father,
glory to Christ on high,
and with the Holy Spirit
one triple honor. Amen.

ANTIPHON:

Sancta Maria succurre miseris,
iuva pusillanimes, refoveflebiles:
ora pro populo, interveni proclero,
tercede prodevota feminea sexu:
sentiant omnes tuum iuvamen,
quicumque celebrant tuam sanctam festivitatem.
MAGNIFICAT

i. Magnificat anima mea Dominum:
My soul doth magnify the Lord,
et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my savior.

iii. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae:
Ecce enim ex hoc
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden;
Beatam me dicent omnes generationes.
for behold from henceforth
all generations shall call me blessed.

iv. Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est:
Et sanctum nomen ejus.
For he that is mighty hath done great things to me,
and holy is his name.

v. Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.
And his mercy is on them that fear him
from generation to generation.

vi. Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:
Despersit superbos mente cardis sui.
He hath shown strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud of heart.

vii. Deposuit potentes de sede,
et exaltavit humiles.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat
he hath exalted the lowly.

viii. Esurientes implevit bonis:
Et devites dimisit inanes.
He hath filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

ix. Suscepit Israel puerum suum,
Recordatus misericordiae suae.
He hath sustained Israel his servant,
remembering his mercy.

x. Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,
Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.
As he promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed forever.

xi. Gloria Patri et Filio
Et Spiritui Sancto.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

xii. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.

*Informed by biblical scholarship on the subject, The Thirteen has changed the word
"sea" ("but") to "et" ("and") in this instance.*
HOST A MUSICIAN

Did you know that many of The Thirteen’s musicians are drawn from around the country? When they travel here for a concert week, they need a place to stay! To save costs and build community ties, The Thirteen asks you, our audience members, to consider opening your homes to our wonderful artists. Hosts are asked to provide a private bedroom for about six days and are offered two free tickets to one of our concerts in thanks.

For more information, please speak with Managing Director, Todd Stubbs, or send an email to todd@thethirteenthchoir.org. Thanks for your support of The Thirteen!

"...THE SINGERS’ VOICES ARE DISTINCTIVE, BLENDING IN A SOUND THAT’S MORE COLORFUL THAN THE AVERAGE EARLY-MUSIC GROUP..."
- The Washington Post
THE THIRTEEN

The Thirteen is a professional choir and orchestra celebrated for reimagining the potential of vocal music from many periods. Praised for performing with “striking color and richness” that “transfigures the listener” (The Washington Post), and “a tight and attractive vocal blend and excellent choral discipline” (American Record Guide), for a decade the ensemble has been at the forefront of invigorating performances of masterworks ranging from early chant to world premieres and the centuries in between.

The Thirteen’s growing discography includes the newly released “The Outer Edge of Youth;” “Truth & Fable,” which was released in October 2019; “Voice Eternal,” which was pre-nominated for a Grammy® award; “Snow on Snow,” a critically-acclaimed Christmas album; “RADIENT DARK,” a compendium of late Tudor works that reached #28 on the iTunes Classical Charts; and The Thirteen’s debut recording “…to St. Cecilia.”

In past seasons, The Thirteen has performed and been in residence at Yale University, Bowling Green State University, Eastern Illinois University, the University of Central Oklahoma, York College, The University of Tampa, Virginia Wesleyan University, St. Ambrose University, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, Guilford College, as well as concerts at colleges and concert series throughout the United States. In 2018 The Thirteen was awarded the Greater Washington Area Choral Excellence award for Most Creative Programming.

The Thirteen is committed to educating and inspiring the next generation of musicians, and frequently coaches students at the high school and college levels in masterclass, workshop and collaborative performance sessions.

For more information about The Thirteen, please visit www.TheThirteenChoir.org

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

When Matthew Robertson founded The Thirteen in 2013, he initially imagined a collaborative ensemble that performed and toured with twelve singers and one conductor, making music that was best suited for that configuration. Since then, The Thirteen's artistic ambitions have outstripped our name, and we now perform with varying numbers of musicians as required by the music we program, from eight to 50. This led us in 2022 to add “Choir & Orchestra” to our name. Still, while our numbers may expand or contract according to the music we perform, our commitment to touching each member of our audience remains unchanged. So too does our commitment to the collaborative music-making environment that was the initial inspiration for our name, The Thirteen.
American conductor Matthew Robertson (b. 1986) is the founder and driving force of the professional choir and orchestra The Thirteen, which he has led in more than two hundred concerts, two dozen concert tours, seven commercial recordings, and numerous world premieres. Noted for boundary-defying performances that “transfigure the listener” (The Washington Post), for his “incisive tempos and dramatic pacing,” (Washington Classical Review) and “flowing lines and dramatic climaxes” (Fanfare Magazine, UK), Robertson’s kaleidoscopic artistic vision has led to acclaimed performances of a vast and varied repertoire, often featuring inspired use of staging and multimedia. Robertson’s boundless imagination led to The Thirteen’s winning the Most Creative Programming Award from the Greater Washington Area Choral Music Awards.

Recognized as a leader in the field, Robertson advances the frontier of vocal music performance, reimagining music from the entirety of the classical music canon. Equally at home in well-loved classics and contemporary works, Robertson tackles works by Renaissance and Baroque masters and contemporary composers with equal aplomb. For example, Robertson’s curation of Monteverdi’s end-of-life magnum opus Selva morale resulted in three well-received concerts in The Lost Vespers series, while his performance of contemporary composer David Lang’s the little match girl passion was praised by Anne Midgette of The Washington Post: “In contrast to the Tallis Scholars’ slightly dry sound, The Thirteen sings with striking color and richness.” Robertson’s zeal for reinterpreting masterpieces has led to staged performances of J.S. Bach’s St. John Passion and Johannes Brahms’ Requiem, and the use of projected images in Kile Smith’s The Consolation of Apollo and Scott Ordway’s The Outer Edge of Youth.

Drawing on his deep commitment to addressing important issues of our time, Robertson’s programming frequently tackles the topics of ecology and systemic racism. His concerts Sing Willow (2020), From Tree to Shining Tree (2019), and Ordway’s Outer Edge (2022) addressed the existential threat of climate change. His staged 2021 performance of J.S. Bach’s St. John Passion addressed the theme of systemic racism and was called “an indictment of injustice” (The Washington Post). He frequently commissions underrepresented voices, including composers Juhi Bansal, Melissa Dunphy, Lori Laitman, Trevor Weston, and Jonathan Woody. In 2019 he created The Thirteen’s Vocal Fellows Program, an initiative for young singers from underrepresented demographics that debuted in 2021.

Committed to fostering the next generation of musicians and music lovers, Robertson has led educational residencies at more than twenty colleges and universities, including Yale University and The University of Maryland – College Park (where he led a staged performance of Johannes Brahms’ Requiem). He has also directed educational outreach for young people throughout the Washington, D.C. region, including with the LGBTQ+ teen choir, GenOUT.

Robertson’s growing discography with The Thirteen includes seven commercially released albums. He enjoys a fruitful relationship with Acis Records: Truth & Fable received four stars from Choir & Organ and Fanfare when it was released in September 2019, and Ordway’s Outer Edge was just released in September 2022. In 2023 Robertson will release The Thirteen’s recording of Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610 with Dark Horse Consort and the Children’s Choir of Washington.

Robertson also serves as Director of Music at Bradley Hills Church in Bethesda, MD. Leading the Bradley Hills Choir and Orchestra of the Hills, Robertson has performed much of J.S. Bach’s oeuvre; the requiems of Brahms, Duruflé, Fauré, and Mozart; Arvo Pärt’s Passio, Buxtehude’s Jesu membra nostri, Carissimi’s Jephte, and many other masterworks. Robertson is a Trustee of the Denyce Graves Foundation, has also served on the Board of the DC area chapter of the American Choral Director’s Association, and the faculty of Oberlin’s Baroque Performance Institute. Robertson holds a M.M. in conducting from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, where he studied with Andrew Megill and Joe Miller, and was the Robert P. Fountain scholar at Oberlin Conservatory where he studied with Bridget Reischl and Robert Spano. A native Washingtonian, Robertson’s early musical formation included studies with Norman Scribner and J. Reilly Lewis.
DARK HORSE CONSORT

The early music ensemble Dark Horse Consort is dedicated to unearthing the majestic late Renaissance and early Baroque repertoire for brass instruments. Inspired by the bronze horse statues in Venice’s famed St. Mark’s Basilica, the ensemble attempts to recreate the glorious sounds of composers such as Giovanni Gabrieli, Claudio Monteverdi, and Heinrich Schütz. Dark Horse often expands to include vocalists and strings, which, when combined, recreates the rapturous kaleidoscope that was the sound of the early 17th century instrumental ensemble.

Dark Horse Consort has been featured on the San Francisco Early Music Series, the Boston Early Music Festival, the Pittsburgh Renaissance and Baroque Society, The Academy of Early Music, The Houston Early Music Series in addition to multiple appearances throughout North America, including collaborations with vocal and instrumental groups such as The Toronto Consort, The American Bach Soloists, Blue Heron Choir, The Rose Ensemble, Piffaro, Bach Collegium San Diego, and the Clarion Music Society.

CHILDREN’S CHORUS OF WASHINGTON

The Children’s Chorus of Washington (CCW) nurtures artistic excellence and empowers young singers by celebrating our shared humanity and the value of every voice. CCW provides outstanding music education and performance opportunities for children in grades K-12 in the nation’s capital region, and fosters students’ growth as musicians and leaders by emphasizing personal responsibility and working together toward a common goal. Internationally recognized and critically acclaimed for its outstanding artistry, CCW collaborates frequently with leading arts organizations, and maintains an active performance schedule that reaches thousands of audience members in venues across the city and beyond. CCW is committed to deepening its impact across the region through its partnership with DC Public Schools and robust scholarship opportunities for its auditioned ensembles. CCW was founded in 1995 by Joan Gregoryk and is now under the leadership of Artistic Director Margaret Nomura Clark and Executive Director Betsy Bates.

MARGARET NOMURA CLARK

A San Francisco native, Margaret Nomura Clark joined the Children’s Chorus of Washington in August 2016. Under her leadership, CCW has partnered with Dance Institute of Washington, GenOUT, Washington Master Chorale, The Washington Chorus, US Army Band Pershing’s Own, National Symphony Orchestra, and many others. Clark has been instrumental in solidifying CCW’s partnership with DC Public Schools to produce the annual city-wide Honor Chorus, and helping to establish the Joan Gregoryk Scholarship Fund, which supports significant need-based financial assistance for full participation in CCW programming. Her latest project was the Stand Up: Harriet Tubman Tour tracing the route of the Underground Railroad from DC to Philadelphia. In addition to her work at CCW, Clark is an adjudicator for local choral festivals, serves as the Diversity Initiatives Co-Chair for the American Choral Directors Association MD/DC chapter, and is the Creative and Artistic Producer for WETA’s Songs of the Season.
The Thirteen is committed to a diverse and multi-generational audience. Yet this does not always translate to financial security. The fact is, The Thirteen depends on your donations for its existence. Under 15% of our operating budget comes from ticket sales.

We ask that, if you appreciate our artistry, you consider making a commitment to The Thirteen and give as you are able. It means a great deal to us to expand our musical family. Join us in making music.

What are some suggested giving levels? The Thirteen appreciates a donation of any size, but we list some milestones below. All contributors of $50 or more will be listed in our programs.

To donate, please visit TheThirteenChoir.org and click on “Donate,” or send your check payable to The Thirteen to:

**THE THIRTEEN**
P.O. Box 32065
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

The Thirteen gratefully accepts tax-deductible donations of appreciated securities, transferred from your brokerage account directly to ours. The gifts are not only tax-deductible, but since they are transferred directly, you do not need to sell them and will not pay capital gains tax on sales. Please contact todd@thethirteenchoir.org for the appropriate letters and instructions to carry out this kind of donation.

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BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

Following a decade of groundbreaking musical achievement and artistic accomplishment, The Thirteen has launched a fundraising campaign to lay the groundwork for our next stage of growth.

The Building for Tomorrow campaign is an opportunity for those who believe in The Thirteen, and in our commitment to artistic excellence, to lead in this growth. We hope you will choose to give to this campaign in a significant and transformative way in addition to your generous annual support.

To learn more about this important initiative, or to make a pledge or donation, visit www.thethirteenthchoir.org/donate or send an email to info@thethirteenthchoir.org.

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LEGACY SOCIETY

Help ensure The Thirteen’s future through a bequest in your estate. The Thirteen’s Legacy Society recognizes our cherished friends who have included The Thirteen in their long-range financial plans with a gift or trust arrangement.

If you have made a bequest to The Thirteen, please let us know so that you can be recognized as a member of The Thirteen’s Legacy Society. Your gift will serve as an inspiration for others.

For more information about making a gift to The Thirteen through your will or trust, or if you have already included The Thirteen in your plans, please contact Todd Stubbs at: todd@thethirteenthchoir.org.

LEGACY SOCIETY
J. Penny Clark
Dr. Patricia Stocker
“...elegant musical performance, which Robertson molded with incisive tempos and dramatic pacing.”

- Choir & Organ