

Orlande de Lassus

Missa ad imitationem
Vinum Bonum
'Good Wine Mass'



Ex Cathedra

His Majestys
Sagbutts & Cornetts

**Jeffrey
Skidmore**

alto

Lassus is often named along with Palestrina and Victoria as a member of the great triumvirate of renaissance polyphonic composers but, despite having the most prolific and varied output, his music is the least often performed and recorded. Of the bi-, tri-, and quarter-centenaries celebrated over the last few years, that of Lassus had a particularly disappointing impact. This is a pity since, as this disc shows, he was a composer of great distinction and originality.

Lassus was born in Mons, in what we would now call Belgium, in 1532. He joined the household of a member of the Gonzaga family in 1544 and returned with him to Mantua, Palermo and then Milan. He worked in Naples for a while then in 1533 became *maestro di cappella* at St. John Lateran in Rome. Only two years later, however, Lassus had been succeeded by Palestrina and had himself returned north to Antwerp. He may have made a brief visit to England. In 1556 he moved to the court of Duke Albrecht V in Munich, initially as a singer - at least, that was his nominal position, though he was presumably engaged primarily as composer and received a salary greater than his director, Ludwig Daser. He took charge of the Duke's large musical establishment in 1563 and remained there for the rest of his life. His status was considerably higher than that of the normal musician. He was on friendly terms with the Duke's son Wilhelm, though the relationship became less close when Albrecht died in 1579. Wilhelm V encountered financial problems and so cut the number of musicians from 44 to 17.

Lassus wrote more than 60 masses, most of them based on earlier compositions, some by other composers, others, like *Vinum bonum*, by himself. Both motet and mass are for double choir. The text of the motet may well derive from the tradition of Latin drinking songs that can be traced back to the *Carmina Burana* and earlier. Taken in isolation, it seems to call on Christ's turning water into wine at the wedding at Cana as a justification for drinking. In relationship to the mass, however, the praise of good wine has another meaning. So although the motet itself is not a church piece, there is nothing sacrilegious in basing a mass on it. The motet was published in 1570, the mass in 1577; the versions recorded here come from *in memoriam* collections issued after Lassus' death, which incorporate some revisions.

At a celebration of the mass, the 'ordinary' (the sections that musicians generally think of as 'a mass') is not sung as a single item but is spread throughout the service. This CD does not present a liturgical reconstruction, but creates the same musical effect by separating the mass movements (apart from the Kyrie and Gloria, which are sung consecutively in the liturgy) with other pieces.

One function of the use of parody technique in the mass then becomes apparent: it has its own sound-world, distinct from any other music which may have intervened. This is even more apparent if you play the source motet several times first so that you have it in your head. Each movement begins by paraphrasing the opening of the motet, though quite freely in the Sanctus and Agnus Dei; each movement except the Sanctus ends in a way that derives from the motet; there are many interrelationships in between. The joyful triple-time section of the motet (*quod laetantes hic bibemus...*) is recalled in the Credo at *resurrectionem* but is otherwise reserved for the Hosanna.

The quantity, range and quality of Lassus' motets is extraordinary. After his death his sons Rudolph and Ferdinand collected some 516 into an anthology *Magnum opus musicum*, and that is by no means the total extent of his output of music with Latin words. The disc appropriately begins with a motet which eloquently demonstrates its text, even if a recording may not be the best protection for entering a lion's cage. The final motet, *Vide homo*, is the conclusion to Lassus' setting of 20 poems that make up the Italian poet Pietro Tansillo's *Lagrime di San Pietro*, expressing St Peter's remorse at betraying Christ. It was the conclusion of Lassus' life's work. He wrote its dedication to the Pope three weeks before his death on 14th June 1594, and the religious intensity of this setting of words (possibly by Lassus himself) put into the mouth of Christ on the cross is matched by music that is eloquent and powerful.

The *Magnum opus musicum* begins with two dozen *bicinia*, half with text, half without. A *bicinium* was a piece for two voices or instruments used in learning how to sing and compose. Lassus' examples, first published in 1577 and reprinted several times, are the climax of a tradition, forming excellent models for students; they are still used for that purpose. Here, apart from their intrinsic merit, they provide a contrasting texture to the mass and motets.

Lassus' sons did their best to keep his reputation alive; in addition to the *Magnum opus musicum* they published six of his masses (including *Vinum bonum*) in 1610 and a hundred Magnificats in 1619. The grandson of his French publisher reprinted a mass as late as 1687, but his music was virtually forgotten until the mid-19th century when, along with that of Palestrina, it was revived as part of the Cecilian movement to reform Catholic church music. An attempt to publish his complete works began at the tercentenary of his death in 1894, but was never finished; it is still impossible to go to a library and study his complete oeuvre, a regrettable distinction he shares with Lully and Rameau, whereas Palestrina and Victoria have received two editions each. Fortunately, recordings are redressing the balance.

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From its home city of Birmingham, **Ex Cathedra** has established an international reputation as a leading UK choir and Early Music ensemble. It aims to explore, research and commission the finest choral music and to set the highest standards for excellence in performance and training. Ex Cathedra is known for its passion for seeking out the best, the unfamiliar and the unexpected in the choral repertoire, for its thorough research and for its dynamic performances.

Founded by Jeffrey Skidmore in 1969, Ex Cathedra has grown into a unique musical resource, comprising specialist choir, vocal Consort, period-instrument orchestra and thriving education programme. Ex Cathedra presents a series of concerts in Birmingham, where it is an Associate Artist at Town Hall, and is delighted to receive invitations to appear at festivals and concert series across the UK and abroad. Recent performances have included the Aldeburgh, Aranjuez, Canterbury, Chelsea, Chichester, Edinburgh International, Kilkenny, Lufthansa, Newbury Spring, Paisley, Santiago de Compostela, Salisbury, Stratford, St David's and Three Choirs festivals, and in Champagne, Poissy, New York and at the Royal Opera House.

Its education programme is central to Ex Cathedra's mission. It has delivered its Singing Playgrounds project to over 180 schools across the UK, and to schools in Bangkok and New Zealand. Singing Medicine has been delivered for over five years at Birmingham Children's Hospital, and recently started at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital. The group runs its own youth training choir, the Academy of Vocal Music (male and female singers aged 16 and above) and the Junior Academy of Vocal Music (boys & girls aged 7-16), trained by Rebecca Ledgard.

Discover more at www.excathedra.co.uk and www.facebook.com/excathedra.

Ex Cathedra

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Tom Lees (Tenor); Patrick Jackman (Bass) Robert Goodhew (Bass)

Jeremy West, director

Jeffrey Skidmore, conductor

Ex Cathedra is supported by Birmingham City Council and Arts Council England.

Jeffrey Skidmore is one of the country's foremost choral conductors and is highly regarded by instrumentalists, singers and audiences for the high quality of his performances. He is well-known for exciting programming which is often challenging but always accessible. Jeffrey read music at Magdalen College, Oxford, before returning to his native Birmingham to develop Ex Cathedra into the internationally-acclaimed choral group it has become today.

Directing Ex Cathedra and its associated Baroque Orchestra and Consort, Jeffrey has appeared in concert series and festivals across the UK and abroad and made more than a dozen highly-acclaimed recordings. He regularly conducts other ensembles and in the last five years has commissioned more than ten new works and conducted many world premieres by both well-established composers and new, young talent. Composers include Fyfe Hutchins, Gabriel Jackson, John Joubert, Daryl Runswick, Peter Sculthorpe, Philip Sheppard, Peter Wiegold, and Roderick Williams.

Jeffrey is a pioneer in the field of research and performance of neglected choral works of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and has won wide acclaim in particular for his recordings of French and Latin American Baroque music with Ex Cathedra. An Honorary Fellow at Birmingham Conservatoire and a Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham, he has prepared new performing editions of works by Araujo, Charpentier, Lalande, Monteverdi and Rameau.

His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts is a group of virtuoso wind players who specialise in playing Renaissance and Baroque music in historically appropriate styles on original instruments. The noble sound of cornetts and sackbuts was among the most versatile instrumental colours available to composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In its heyday the cornett was one of the most favoured of wind instruments being employed by

composers in courts and churches. Blown like a trumpet but fingered like a recorder, it is capable of both astonishing virtuosity and heart-rending vocal expression. The sackbut is the direct forerunner of the modern trombone - indeed the Italians already called it trombone, or 'large trumpet' - but perfectly matches the vocal timbre of the cornett, thanks to its relatively narrow bore and shallow mouthpiece.

The group's illustrious sounding name is taken from Matthew Locke's "five-part ttings for His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts" that were probably played during the coronation celebrations for King Charles II in 1661.

Discover more at www.hmsc.co.uk

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1. Musica Dei donum a 6

Musica Dei donum optimi trahit homines, trahit deos;
Musica truces molit animos tristesque mentes erigit.
Musica vel ipsas arbores et horridas movet feras.

Music gift of God most high draws men, draws gods;
Music calms savage passions and cheers sad minds;
Music moves even the very trees and the frightening wild beasts.

2. Bicinium III

3. Vinum bonum a 8

Vinum bonum et suave,
nunquam bibi vinum tale,
vinum cor laetificat,
vinum purum et germanum morbos pellit
reddens sanum corpus quod rectificat:
vinum bonum mere sumptum
senem facit mire promptum formosullis commendans.
Christus vinum semel fecit ex aqua,
quod non deficit et bibentes saturans.
Ne mireris semel factum,
sed mirere tale factum in vite quotidie.
Ergo Christum invocemus,
quod laetantes hic bibemus tale vinum porrigat.
Fiat. Amen.

This is good smooth wine.
Never did I drink one such
wine which gladdens the heart,
pure & genuine wine which wards off sickness,
giving back health to the body it restores:
good wine taken undiluted
wonderfully renews an old man's appreciation of feminine beauty.
Christ once made wine out of water,
of which there was plenty, slaking the thirst of all who were drinking.
Do not marvel that this was done once
but that it happens every day.
Therefore let us call upon Christ
that rejoicing, we may drink the wine he offers.
Let it be so. Amen.

Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum

4. Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy on us.
Christ have mercy on us.
Lord have mercy on us.

5. Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus.
Tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe
cum sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen

Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace to men of goodwill.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee.
We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.
Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty,
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesu Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy.
Thou only art the Lord.
Thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most high,
together with the Holy Ghost in the glory of God the Father.
Amen

6. Salve Regina a 6

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae,
vita dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus exsules filii Evae.
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle.
Eia ergo advocata nostra illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.
Et Jesum benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

Hail, Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness and our hope, Hail,
To thee we cry, exiled children of Eve.
To thee we sigh, lamenting and weeping in this vale of tears.
Therefore, our advocate, turn thy merciful eyes upon us.
And after this exile show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus:
O gracious, O good, O sweet Virgin Mary.

7. Bicinium XIV

8. Laudent Deum a 4

Laudent Deum cythara,
chori vox, tuba, fides,
cornu, organa. Alleluia

Let them praise God, the lute,
the voice of the chorus, the trumpet, the harp,
the horn and the organ. Alleluia.

9. Justorum animae a 5

Justorum animae in manu Dei sunt,
et non intanget illos tormentum mortis,
visi sunt oculis
insipientium mori :
illi, autem sunt in pace

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,
and the torment of death shall not touch them:
in the sight of the unwise
they seem to die,
but they are at peace.

Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum

10. Credo

Credo in unum Deum patrem omnipotentem,
factorem coeli et terrae,
visibilem omnium et invisibilem.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei, unigenitum,
et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum, non factum,
consubstantialem Patri
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines
et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis
Et incarnatus est
de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine:
Et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis:
sub Pontio Pilato passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum scripturas.
Et ascendit in caelum: sedet ad dexteram Patris.

I believe in one God
the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God;
Begotten not made:
being of one substance with the Father
by whom all things were made.
Who for us men
and for our salvation came down from heaven
And was incarnate
by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary:
And was made man. He was crucified also for us
under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father

Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare
vivos et mortuos: cuius regni non erit finis
Credo in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem;
Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit;
Qui cum Patre et Filio
simul adoratur et conglorificatur.
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Credo in unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum,
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum
Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

11. Quam pulchra es a 6

Quam pulchra es et decora charissima in deliciis:
statura tua assimilata est palmae,
et ubera tua botris.

Dixi: Ascendam in palmam,
et apprehendam fructus eius
et erunt ubera tua sicut botri vineae
et odor oris tua sicut odor malorum.

Guttur tuum sicut vinum optimum,
dignum dilecto meo ad potandum
labisque et dentibus illitis ad ruminandum.

12. Agimus Tibi a 3

Agimus Tibi gratias,
Rex omnipotens Deus,
pro universis beneficiis tuis,
qui vivis et regnas per omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen

13. Christus resurgens a 5

Christus resurgens ex mortuis,
iam non moritur; mors illi ultra non dominabitur
quod enim mortuus est, peccato mortuus est semel,
quod autem vivit, vivit Deo. Alleluia.

Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum 14. Sanctus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabbaoth.
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.

And He shall come again with glory to judge
both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.
I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord the Giver of Life;
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who together with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified;
who spoke by the Prophets.
I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins
And I look for the resurrection of the dead
And the life of the world to come. Amen

How beautiful you are and how graceful in your delights, my dearest:
your stature is like a palmtree
and your breasts a cluster of grapes.

I said: I shall climb up into the palmtree
and I shall pick its fruit
and your breasts will be like the grape clusters of a vine
and your breath like the sweet smell of apples

Your throat is like the finest wine,
worthy for my beloved to drink
and for him to savour with his lips and teeth.

We give Thee thanks,
O almighty King and God,
for all thy goodness
who lives and reigns throughout all ages.
Amen

Christ being raised from the dead
dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
For in that he died, he died unto sin once,
but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Alleluia.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabbaoth,
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

15. Benedictus

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.
Osanna in excelsis.

Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

16. Tristis est anima mea a 5

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem:
sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum:
nunc videbitis turbam quae circumdabit me:
vos fugam capietis, et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.

My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death:
tarry ye here and watch with me.
Now shall ye see the crowd who will come about me:
ye shall take flight and I shall be sacrificed for you.

18. Ave verum corpus a 6

Ave verum corpus, natum de Maria Virgine,
vere passum immolatum in cruce pro homine:
cuius latus perforatum unda fluxit sanguine.
Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.
O dulcis, O pie, O Jesu, Fili Mariae,
miserere mei. Amen.

Hail true body, born of the Virgin Mary,
Who suffered on the cross for mankind
From whose side when pierced by a spear flowed water and blood.
Be to us at our last hour the source of consolation.
O loving, O holy, O Jesu, Son of Mary,
have mercy upon me. Amen.

Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum

19. Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, Qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, Qui tollis peccata mundi: miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei, Qui tollis peccata mundi: Dona nobis pacem.
Amen

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world Grant us thy peace.
Amen

20. Bone Jesu a 8

Bone Jesu, verbum Patris,
splendor paternae gloriae,
in quem desiderant angeli prospicere,
doce me facere voluntatem tuam,
ut a spiritu tuo bono deductus,
ad beatam illam perveniam civitatem,
ubi est dies aeternus,
et unus omnium Spiritus,
ubi est certa securitas
et secunda aeternitas
et aeterna tranquillitas
et tranquilla felicitas
et felix suavitas,
et suavis jucunditas,
ubi tu Deus cum Patre,
cum Patre et sancto Spiritu,
vivis et regnas per infinita saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Good Jesus, word of the Father,
splendour of the Father's glory,
on whom all angels long to look,
teach me to do your will,
so that, led by your good inspiration,
I may arrive at that blessed city,
where there is eternal day
and one spirit of all,
where there is sure freedom from care,
and carefree eternity,
and eternal peacefulness,
and peaceful happiness,
and happy sweetness,
and sweet delight,
where you live as God with the Father
and the Holy Spirit,
and reign for endless generations of generations. Amen.

21. Tui sunt coeli a 8

Tui sunt coeli Et tua est terra;
orbem terrarum et plenitudinem ejus tu fundasti;
justitia et judicium praeparatio sedis tuae.

22. Vide homo a 7

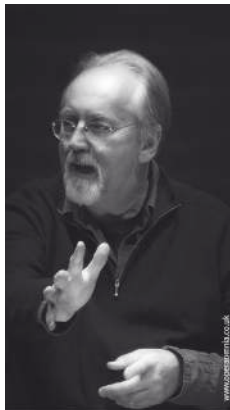
Vide homo quae pro te patior;
Ad te clamo, qui pro te morior;
Vide poenas, quibus afficio;
Vide clavos quibus confodior;
Non est dolor, sicut quo crucior;
Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior,
Intus tamen dolor est gravior;
Tam ingratum cum te experior.

The heavens are thine The earth also is thine;
As for the world and the fullness thereof, thou hast founded them.
Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne.

Behold, O Man, what I suffer for you;
I cry unto you, for whom I die;
Behold the agonies I endure;
See the nails which pierce me.
There is no pain like that of the cross;
And great as this outward pain might be,
the pain within is heavier
to have experienced such ingratitude from you.



Ex Cathedra



Jeffrey Skidmore

Orlande de Lassus (1532-1594)

Ex Cathedra Jeffrey Skidmore

His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts Jeremy West

[1] Musica Dei donum a 6	4:32	Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum	
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[3] Vinum bonum a 8	3:43	[15] Benedictus	1:46
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[4] Kyrie	2:05	[17] Bicinium IX	1:55
[5] Gloria	3:28	[18] Ave verum corpus a 6	4:07
[6] Salve Regina a 6	3:52	Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum	
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[8] Laudent Deum a 4	0:42	[20] Bone Jesu a 8	4:59
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Missa ad imitationem Vinum bonum		[22] Vide homo a 7	3:50
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[11] Quam pulchra es a 6	6:48		
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