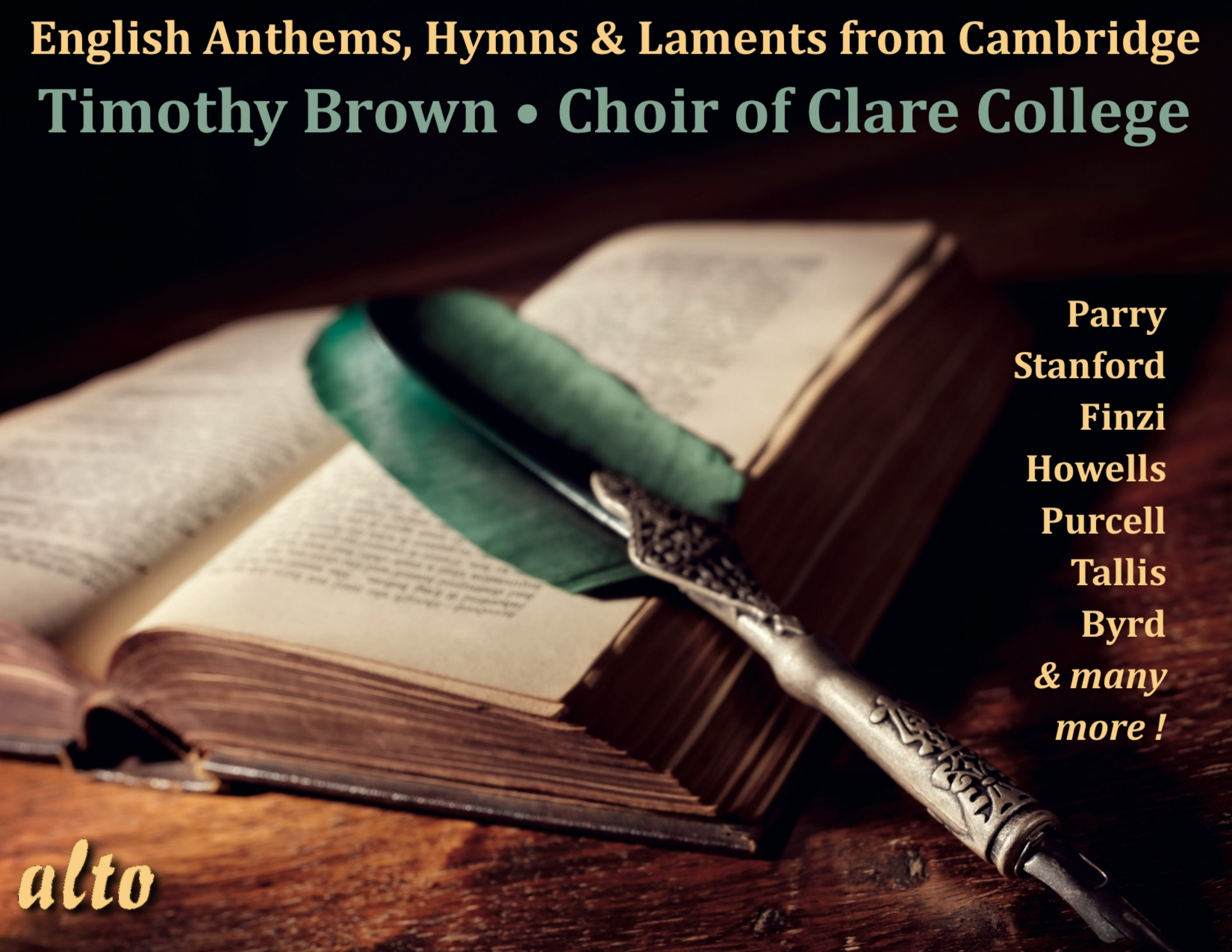


English Anthems, Hymns & Laments from Cambridge

Timothy Brown • Choir of Clare College

An open antique book with a green bookmark and a quill pen resting on it. The book is open to a page with text, and the quill pen is positioned diagonally across the pages. The background is dark and textured.

Parry
Stanford
Finzi
Howells
Purcell
Tallis
Byrd
& many
more !

alto

English Anthems, Hymns & Laments from Cambridge

[1]	Thomas Tallis: <i>Lamentations of Jeremiah</i> (Bible, Book of Lamentations Chapters 1 & 2)	07:28
[2]	William Byrd: <i>Civitas sancti Tui</i> (Bible, Isaiah 64:10)	04:19
[3]	George Kirbye: <i>Vox in Rama</i> (Bible, Jeremiah 31:15)	04:29
[4]	Robert Ramsey: <i>How are the Mighty Fallen</i> (Bible, 2 Samuel 1:19, 25, 27)	07:38
[5]	Thomas Weelkes: <i>When David Heard</i> (Bible, 2 Samuel 18:33)	04:19
[6]	Thomas Tomkins: <i>When David Heard</i> (Bible, 2 Samuel 18:33)	04:40
[7]	Henry Purcell: <i>Hear my Prayer, O Lord</i> (Bible, Psalm 102:1–2)	02:04
[8]	Purcell: <i>O God, Thou art my God</i> (Bible, Psalm 63:1–5.)	03:31
[9]	Hubert Parry: <i>I was glad</i> (Bible, Psalm 122:1–3, 6–7)	05:15
[10]	William Walton: <i>Set me as a Seal</i> (Bible, Song of Solomon 8:6–7)	03:07
[11]	Ernest Bullock: <i>Give us the Wings of Faith</i> (Bible, Isaiah 40:28–31)	02:49
[12]	Herbert Howells: <i>Like as the Hart</i> (Bible, Psalm 42:1–3, 5.)	05:38
[13]	Gerald Finzi: <i>God is gone up</i> (Bible, Psalm 47:5–8.)	04:24
[14]	William McKie: <i>We wait for Thy loving Kindness</i> (Bible, Psalm 48:9–10)	02:20
[15]	Charles Wood: <i>Expectans expectavi</i> (Bible, Psalm 40:1–3)	03:57
[16]	John Ireland: <i>Greater love</i> (Bible, John 15:12–13)	05:45
[17]	Charles Villiers Stanford: <i>Coelos ascendit</i> (Bible, Psalm 47:5–6)	01:45
[18]	Henry Balfour Gardiner: <i>Evening Hymn</i> (text derived from Te Deum)	05:21

Choir of Clare College Cambridge

Timothy Brown, conductor

The history of music in the Western Church is essentially the history of Gregorian chant. Developed from Hebrew chanting, it found a stable Christian form as early as the seventh century. Initially a means of communicating to a largely illiterate congregation the Psalms and Holy Scripture, in the clear and unequivocal manner that sung speech allows, plainsong became an art form in itself, developed as much through aural tradition as by means of notation. From 800 and 1300 it assumed melodic and rhythmic shapes of extraordinary and compelling beauty, often as elaborate and decorative as the great cathedrals and abbeys with which it became identified. In the Middle Ages, polyphonic decoration was gradually added to the chant, which nonetheless remained the essential music of the liturgy. By the late 16th century, this polyphonic elaboration had to an extent undermined the supremacy of chant, especially in the reformed, Protestant church. Though plainsong remained the basis of the Catholic liturgy (and continued for some time to influence the music of composers for the Protestant churches), freely-composed polyphonic works became increasingly popular. This, then, is the background to the present recording, in which chant is combined with a variety of polyphonic compositions.

The death of a loved one is one of the most distressing experiences in human existence, and it is possibly for this reason that composers down the centuries have repeatedly seized on this theme and set these texts to create their most beautiful and deeply affecting works. Whether relating to a murdered son (*When David heard*) or the Virgin Mary, seeing her son die on the cross it is a universally affecting grief that emerges from their music.

It was during Palestrina's lifetime that that Church in England broke away from Rome. Consequently, the existing repertoire of Latin motets and Masses was declared to be unusable, and instead, English hymns and liturgy alone were to be adopted. Thomas Weelkes's *When David heard* is an outstanding example of a hymn that echoes the intimate style of a madrigal. The hushed second section evokes the solitude in which David must endure his pain at the death of his son Absalom. Another example of a madrigal-hymn is *How are the mighty fallen* by Robert Ramsey, a composer of whom very little is known — only that he was organist at Trinity College, Cambridge from 1628-44.

Selected Lamentations Texts

Translations: Kenneth Chalmers

TALLIS: *Lamentations of Jeremiah*

Incipit lamentatio Jeremiae prophetae.

Aleph.

Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo: facta est quasi vidua domina gentium, princeps provinciarum facta est sub tributo.

Beth.

Plorans ploravit in nocte, et lacrimae ejus in maxillis ejus: non est qui consoletur eam ex omnibus caris ejus: omnes amici ejus spreverunt eam, et facti sunt ei inimici.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

BYRD: *Civitas sancti tui*

*Civitas sancti tui
facta est deserta;
Sion deserta facta est,
Jerusalem desolata est.*

KIRBYE: *Vox in Rama*

*Vox in Rama audita est,
ploratus et ululatus,
Rachel plorans filios suos,
noluit consolari quia non sunt.*

*Here beginneth the lamentation of
Jeremiah the prophet:*

First.

How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among nations, and princess among provinces, how is she become tributary!

Second.

She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, return to the Lord thy God.

*Bow Thine ear, O Lord, and hear,
let Thine anger cease from us;
Zion is wasted and brought low,
Jerusalem desolate and void.*

*Once a voice in Rama was heard,
great mourning and lamentation,
Rachel weeping over her children,
nor would she be consoled, for they are not.*

RAMSEY: *How are the mighty fallen*

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle, O Jonathan, thou wast slain in high places.

O Jonathan, woe is me for thee, my brother Jonathan, very kind hast thou been to me:

thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war destroyed.

2 Samuel 1: 25-27

WEELKES: *When David heard*

When David heard that Absalom was slain, he went up into his chamber over the gate,

and wept; and thus he said: O my son, Absalom my son, would God I had died for thee.

2 Samuel 18: 33

TOMKINS: *When David heard*

When David heard that Absalom was slain, he went up into his chamber over the gate, and

wept; and thus he said: O my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son.

2 Samuel 18: 33

Henry Purcell (1659-95), being organist at the Chapel Royal as well as at Westminster Abbey, had a close working relationship with the monarchy (he served under four rulers - Charles II, James II, William III and Mary). ***Hear my prayer, O Lord*** (Z 15) was composed sometime before 1683) is a fine setting of Psalm 102 for eight-part choir and was originally part of a more substantial work. The powerful image of pain and suffering is maintained with great intensity throughout its thirty-four bar span by means of imitation.

In the verse anthem '***O God, thou art my God***' (Z 35 c1680-2 using as its text Psalm 63) there are two groups of solo singers, one of which comprises two sopranos and alto, and the other with alto, tenor, and bass. These are placed in their respective groups, *decani* (those on the side of the Dean) and *cantoris* (on the side of the precentor), and sing antiphonally. The music is effectively written, using dissonance at '*my soul thirsteth*' and the sopranos singing comfortingly in thirds at '*thy loving kindness*'. There is in addition a fine imitative effect at the word '*seeking*'. The final dance-like '*Halleluja*' section is familiar as the hymn tune Westminster Abbey ('*Christ is made the sure foundation*' and '*Blessed city, heavenly Salem*') which with its bouncy rhythms sounds positively secular.

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The church anthems which make up the remainder of the disc come from a range of nineteenth and twentieth century British based composers and represent a cross section of settings for the Anglican service. William Walton was a contemporary of Britten and Tippett but produced only a handful of works before retiring to the island of Ischia in Italy; of those the oratorio *Belshazzar's Feast* best shows his talent for a setting with large scale choral forces. An earlier generation saw the lyrical gifts of two minor English masters, Gerald Finzi and Herbert Howells, The latter is again renowned for a major choral work, the *Hymnus Paradisi*, a memorial to the tragic loss of Howells' young son. John Ireland's contribution to religious music comes as something of a surprise for a composer of the socialist beliefs of his major choral work *These things shall be*. King Charles III himself is a supporter of the work of C.Hubert Parry, whose *I was Glad* remains his own 'favourite choral piece.'

What however, all these anthems show, with the help of the collegiate choir of Clare in Cambridge, is that the English anthem with its roots in Tudor times survived well into the final years of the twentieth century.

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