



St
Martin
in
the
Fields

A Renaissance Christmas

St Martin's Voices
Andrew Earis Director

Available until 16th January 2021

St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square London WC2N 4JJ
www.smitf.org

PROGRAMME

ADVENT

Vigilate – William Byrd (1543-1623)

Canite tuba – Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599)

NATIVITY

Videte miraculum – Thomas Tallis (1505-1595)

Ave Maria à 8 – Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548-1611)

Angelus ad pastores ait – Raffaella Aleotti (c.1570-c.1646)

Quem vidistis, pastores? – Richard Dering (1580-1630)

O magnum mysterium – Victoria

Videntes stellam magi – Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594)

CHRISTMAS MORNING

Verbum caro factum est à 6 – Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)

Nesciens mater – Jean Mouton (1459-1522)

O beatum et sacrosanctum diem – Peter Philips (1561-1628)

Resonet in laudibus – Johannes Eccard (1553-1611)

Puer natus est nobis – Byrd

Hodie Christus natus est – Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621)

PROGRAMME NOTES

by Charlotte Marino

Vigilate

William Byrd

Byrd was an English composer of the Renaissance period and is widely considered to be one of the greatest British composers of all times. His *Vigilate* takes inspiration from the Italian madrigal traditions, resulting in colouring that is vivid, detailed and full of lulling suspensions. This piece is a beautiful example of Byrd's compositional individuality and astonishingly consistent level of inspiration.

Canite tuba

Francisco Guerrero

Francisco Guerrero was a Spanish Catholic priest and talented young composer of the Renaissance period. At age 17, Guerrero was appointed Maestro de Capilla at Jaen Cathedral, and a few years later he accepted a prestigious position in Seville. He established an exceptional reputation as a singer and composer even before his thirtieth birthday, with his music known for its powerful range of moods, from joy to despair, longing, elation and devotional stillness. His music remained popular for hundreds of years, especially in cathedrals in Latin America.

Videte miraculum

Thomas Tallis

Tallis lived during a period of complete turmoil in England, with four monarchs, the establishment (and abolishment) of the Anglican Church of England, the Spanish Armada and continuous religious persecutions from the Anglican and Catholic divide. Although Tallis was one of the first composers to write music for the new Anglican rite, he remained a devout Catholic for his entire life. Surprisingly, Tallis managed to not only avoid persecution under the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, but he thrived in his career, with total freedom despite his religion. This was after Queen Elizabeth reputedly declared that he was 'no danger to the country, for he is a mere musician'!

Ave Maria à 8

Tomás Luis de Victoria

Tomás Luis de Victoria is the most significant composer of the Counter-Reformation in Spain, and one of the best-regarded composers of sacred music in the late Renaissance, a genre to which he devoted himself exclusively. His *Ave Maria* has the most magical of romantic harmony and suspensions, with chant taken from Chapter 1 of St Luke's Gospel. With two SATB choirs, the setting is written in such sumptuous antiphony; it is no wonder that Victoria's music underwent a revival in the 20th century, with numerous recent recordings.

Angelus ad pastores ait

Raffaella Aleotti

Raffaella Aleotti was an Italian Augustinian nun, composer and organist. She was renowned during the period for her versatile talents at performance on organ, harpsichord, trombone and several other wind instruments. She was Maestra at the convent until her death and enjoyed complex music, often composing with harmony and dissonance to heighten the text. However, she was at times criticised for utilising the voices too elaborately, risking the holiness of the music and giving way to pleasure

Quem vidistis, pastores?

Richard Dering

Richard Dering is known for his use of compositional techniques which anticipated the crossover from Renaissance to Baroque music in England. Dering was likely born Protestant but converted to Roman Catholicism after a visit to Italy, where he may not have considered himself as protected as composers such as Tallis during Elizabethan reign. Some of Dering's surviving choral works are part of the repertoire of Anglican church music today, but *Quem vidistis, pastores?* is perhaps his most well-known work, with rich textures and plenty of antiphonal effects.

O magnum mysterium

Victoria

O magnum mysterium (O great mystery) is a response chant from the Holy Matins of Christmas service, describing the wonderment of the animals as they gaze on Christ. Victoria published his *O magnum mysterium* in 1572 as a Renaissance choir piece, or choral motet, and then recycled the composition 20 years later as the basis for his Mass. Listen out for his use of serenely interwoven polyphony in the opening bars, leading to hushed chordal passages for the words "O Blessed Virgin", followed by an extended "Alleluia" section, first in triple time, then double time.

Videntes stellam magi

Orlando di Lasso

Orlando di Lasso was a composer of the late Renaissance period and chief representative of the mature polyphonic style of the Franco-Flemish school. Lasso wrote over 2,000 works in all Latin, French, Italian and German vocal genres known in his time, making him one was one of the most prolific, versatile, and universal composers of the time. Interestingly, no strictly instrumental music is known to survive, or ever to have existed, which is a notable omission for a composer otherwise so wide-ranging. Born in Belgium, information about his early years is sparse, although a surviving story tells of how he was kidnapped three times because of the singular beauty of his singing voice!

Verbum caro factum est à 6

Hans Leo Hassler

Hans Leo Hassler, son of an organist, was born in Nuremberg and received his initial training in music from his father. As a young man he studied in Venice and became close friends with Giovanni Gabrieli, both eventually studying composition with Gabrieli's uncle. Hassler gained a reputation as an innovative composer and also traveled throughout Germany as a consultant in the construction of pipe organs. *Verbum caro factum est à 6* is a late Renaissance triumph for six-part choir, set to a Latin sacred text. The expressive beauty of Hassler's composition may be enjoyed with a cappella voices or accompanied with a small instrumental consort.

Nesciens mater

Jean Mouton

Nesciens mater is renowned for combining one of the most ingenious canonic structures with complete musical mastery. The eight voices comprise a canon at the interval of a fifth and a distance of two breves. Within this strict constraint, Mouton achieves an enviable variety not only of harmony, but also of counterpoint, texture, and speed of harmonic motion, creating a musical structure that fully deserves its reputation as one of the finest masterpieces of the sixteenth century. The result is an exquisite undulating tapestry of sonorous beauty.

O beatum et sacrosanctum diem

Peter Philips

Peter Philips spent his childhood and youth in London as a choirboy at St Paul's Cathedral, but in later life found himself exiling to Belgium, like many Roman Catholic composers of the time. In 1593 he was accused by the Dutch authorities of planning the murder of Queen Elizabeth I, but after imprisonment and trial, he was released. After this, Philips probably took Holy Orders, for in 1610 he was appointed to a canonry. His motets are generally more Italian than English in style, *O beatum et sacrosanctum diem*, from his *Cantiones Sacrae* of 1612, is a joyful Christmas motet.

Resonet in laudibus

Johannes Eccard

Johannes Eccard was a German composer and pupil of Orlando di Lasso, known for his setting of the year's cycle of Lutheran chorales. He worked in many prestigious positions over his career, including Kapellmeister in the chapel of Prince Georg Friedrich of Preussen-Ansbach in Königsberg, and Kapellmeister to the electors of Brandenburg until his death. Eccard wrote in a narrow range of forms and favoured short sacred pieces, so his surviving music is very specifically precious to current repertoire. His *Resonet in laudibus* has a jolly, festive sound, with a lighthearted triple-time signature that gives a dance-like quality to the music.

Puer natus est nobis

Byrd

The Mass of Christmas Day opens with the introit *Puer natus est nobis*, which is a lively setting taken from Byrd's second book of Gradualia, published in 1605. These two books provided the liturgical music for the principal feasts of the Catholic Church's year and are appropriately virtuosic to accompany a special festivity or celebratory event. *Puer natus est nobis* exemplifies Byrd's most mature style, effortlessly combining concentrated counterpoint with rhythmic intricacy and virtuosic vocal writing.

Hodie Christus natus est

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

The late-Renaissance composer, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, succeeded his father as organist at the Oude Kerk in Amsterdam, where he spent his entire career. His son, Dirck, then succeeded Jan Pieterszoon, giving an almost unbroken line of family organists there for two years short of a century. Immensely influential as a teacher, he was accorded the distinction of being honoured with burial inside the church with which he became synonymous, like J. S. Bach in Leipzig. *Hodie Christus natus est* is breathtakingly inventive, juxtaposing rhythmic lines and a punctuated cyclic opening, sometimes performed in inversion. The whole work is imbued with joyful cascades of 'alleluias' and is a perfect festive celebratory setting.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Vigilate

Vigilate, nescitis enim
quando dominus domus veniat,
sero, an media nocte,
an gallicantu, an mane.
Vigilate ergo, ne cum venerit repente,
inveniat vos dormientes.
Quod autem dico vobis, omnibus dico:
vigilate.

*Watch ye therefore, for you know not
when the lord of the house cometh,
at even, or at midnight,
or at the cock crowing, or in the morning:
Watch therefore, lest coming on a
sudden, he find you sleeping.
And what I say to you, I say to all:
watch.*

Mark 13: 35-37

Canite tuba

Canite tuba in Sion,
quia prope est dies Domini.
Ecce veniet ad salvandum nos.
Erunt prava in directa,
et aspera in vias planas:
Veni, Domine, et noli tardare.
Alleluia.

*Blow the trumpet in Zion,
for the day of the Lord is nigh.
Lo, He comes to our salvation.
The crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways plain.
Come, Lord, and do not delay.
Alleluia.*

*1st antiphon at Lauds and Vespers for Advent IV
Joel 2.1 and Isaiah 40.4*

Videte miraculum

Videte miraculum matris Domini:
concepit virgo virilis ignara consortii,

stans onerata nobili onere Maria;
et matrem se laetam cognosci,
quae se nescit uxorem.
Haec speciosum forma prae
filiis hominum
castis concepit visceribus,
et benedicta in aeternum
Deum nobis protulit et hominem.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.

*Behold the miracle of the mother of the Lord:
a virgin has conceived though she knows
not a man,
Mary, who stands laden with her noble burden;
knowing not that she is a wife,
she rejoices to be a mother.
She has conceived in her chaste womb
one who is beautiful beyond the
sons of men,
and blessed for ever,
she has brought forth God and man for us.
Glory to the Father and to the Son and
to the Holy Spirit.*

*First Vespers, Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Translation by Mick Swithinbank*

Ave Maria à 8

Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum;
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

*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, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Luke 1.28 & 1.41

Angelus ad pastores ait

Angelus ad pastores ait:
'annuntio vobis gaudium magnum,
quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator
mundi.'
Alleluia.

*The angel [of the Lord] said to the shepherds:
'I bring you tidings of great joy,
for the Saviour of the world has been born
to you today.'
Alleluia.*

Luke 2.10-11

Quem vidistis, pastores?

annuntiate nobis, in terris quis apparuit?
Natum vidimus et choros angelorum
collaudantes Dominum, Alleluia.

*Whom did you see, shepherds?
Speak and tell us: who has appeared on earth?
We saw the new-born and choirs of angels
praising the Lord, Alleluia.*

Third responsory, Matins, Christmas Day

O magnum mysterium

et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepe.
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!*

Fourth responsory, Matins, Christmas Day

Videntes stellam magi

gavisi sunt gaudio magno:
et intrantes domum,
invenerunt puerum,
cum Maria, matre eius,
et procidentem adoraverunt eum.

*Seeing the star, the magi
rejoiced with great joy;
and entering the house,
they found the boy,
with Mary, His mother,
and fell down and worshiped Him.*

Et apertis thesauris suis,
obtulerunt ei munera:
aurum, thus et myrrham.

*And having opened their treasures,
they offered Him gifts:
gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

Responsory, Matins of Epiphany

Verbum caro factum est à 6

Verbum caro factum est
et habitavit in nobis,
et vidimus gloriam ejus
gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre
plenum gratiae et veritatis.

*And the Word was made flesh,
and dwelt among us,
and we beheld his glory,
the glory as of the only begotten of the
Father,
full of grace and truth.*

*John 1.14. Responsory, Matins, Christmas Day.
Translation: King James Bible*

Nesciens mater virgo virum
peperit sine dolore
salvatorem saeculorum.
Ipsam regem angelorum
sola virgo lactabat,
ubere de caelo pleno.

*Knowing no man, the Virgin mother
bore, without pain,
the Saviour of the world.
Him, the king of angels,
only the Virgin suckled,
breasts filled by heaven.*

O beatum et sacrosanctum diem
in qua Dominus noster de Virgine Maria
pro nobis nasci dignatus est.
Gaudeat itaque universus orbis,
et cantemus illi,
in sono tubæ, cithara,
psalterio et organo.
Congratulemur cum multitudine
angelorum exercitus,
semper suas laudes cantantibus.
Noe.

*O blessed and most holy day
on which our Lord was born
of the Virgin Mary for our sake.
Let the whole world therefore rejoice,
and let us sing to him
to the sound of the trumpet, strings,
the harp and the organ.
Let us rejoice with the numerous
hosts of angels,
ceaselessly singing his praise.
Noel!*

Resonet in laudibus
cum jucundis plausibus
Sion cum fidelibus:
apparuit quem genuit Maria.
Sunt impleta quae predixit Gabriel.
Eia, eia, Virgo Deum genuit
quod divina voluit clementia.
Hodie apparuit in Israel:

*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:*

ex Maria Virgine est natus Rex.
Magnum nomen Domini Emmanuel
quod annuntiatum est per Gabriel.

*From the Virgin Mary is born a King.
Great is the name of the Lord Emmanuel,
as was announced by Gabriel.*

Carol c.1360

Translation: James Gibb

Puer natus est nobis
Et filius datus est nobis
Cuius imperium super humerum eius
Et vocabitur nomen eius
Magni consilii Angelus
Cantate Domino canticum novum
Quia mirabilia fecit
Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc,
et semper,
in secula seculorum. Amen.

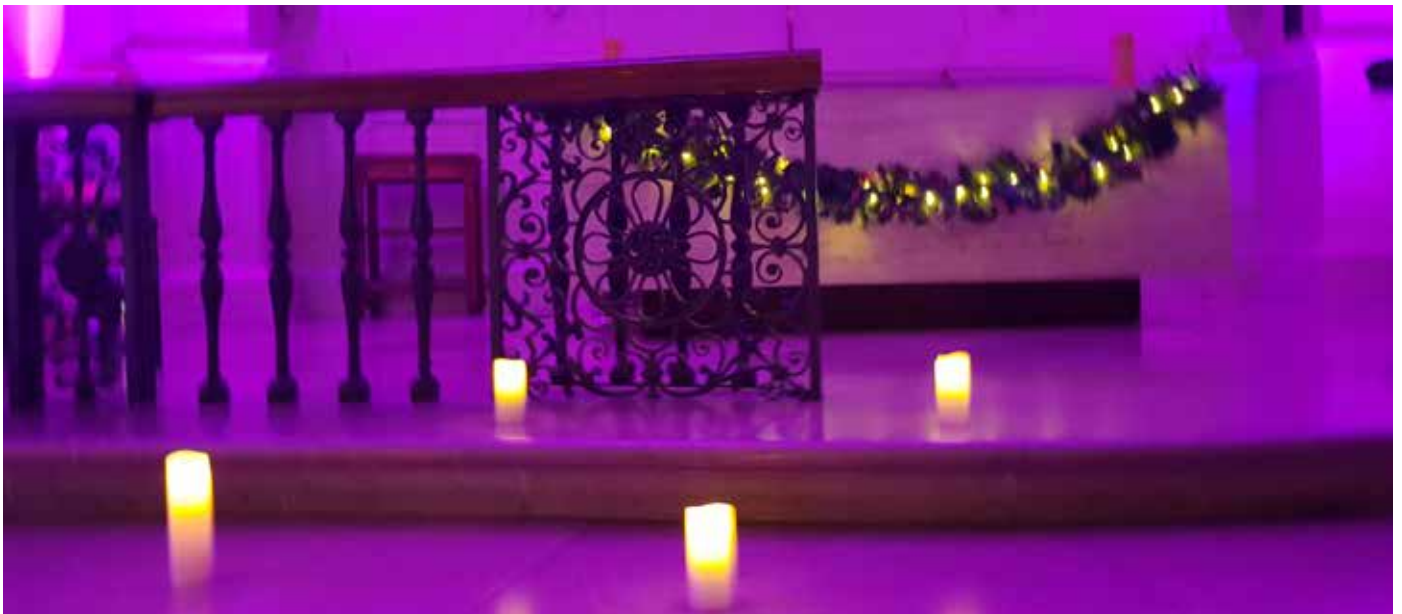
*A boy is born to us,
And a son is given to us,
upon whose shoulders authority rests,
and His name will be called
"The Angel of Great Counsel".
Sing to the Lord a new song,
because he has done the miraculous.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, and is now,
and always will be,
in every human generation. Amen.*

*Introit for the Mass of Christmas Day
Isaiah 9.6 & Psalm 98*

Hodie Christus natus est: Noe.
Hodie Salvator apparuit: Alleulia.
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli. Noe.
Hodie exsultant iusti, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Noe. Alleulia.

*Today Christ is born: Noel.
Today the Savior appeared: Alleulia.
Today on Earth the Angels sing,
Archangels rejoice: Noel.
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Noel. Alleulia.*

*Antiphon to the Magnificat, Vespers on Christmas Day
Translation: Allen H. Simon*



PERFORMERS

St Martin's Voices
Andrew Earis Director

St Martin's Voices

Soprano Hilary Cronin, Isabella Gibber, Rachel Haworth and Victoria Meteyard

Alto Christopher Mitchell and Helen Stanley

Tenor Jack Granby and William Wright

Bass Nathan Harrison and Ben Tomlin

St Martin's Voices is an exciting and dynamic professional vocal ensemble, primarily made up of talented past and present choral scholars who come together to sing concerts and special events at St Martin-in-the-Fields and beyond. Recent performances have included Mozart Requiem and Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, and Beethoven *Mass in C* with Southbank Sinfonia. St Martin's Voices regularly broadcast on the BBC, including Radio 3 Choral Evensong and BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship and Daily Service. They also make regular national and international tours, including recent performances at Greenbelt Festival and visits to the USA – Minneapolis, Washington DC, New York – and Johannesburg, South Africa.



Andrew Earis is Director of Music at St Martin-in-the-Fields where he oversees the music programme at this busy London church. Andrew is a graduate of the Royal College of Music and Imperial College, London, and holds a PhD from the University of Manchester.

Recent performances include Mozart's Mass in C Minor with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and Beethoven Mass in C with Southbank Sinfonia. He has given organ recitals in venues including King's College Chapel, Cambridge, Westminster Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Washington National Cathedral, and has performed as soloist in performances of Poulenc's Organ Concerto and Saint-Saëns' Organ Symphony.

In addition to his duties at St Martin's, Andrew is a regular contributor to BBC Radio's religious output as a producer of programmes including Radio 4 Sunday Worship and Radio 3 Choral Evensong.

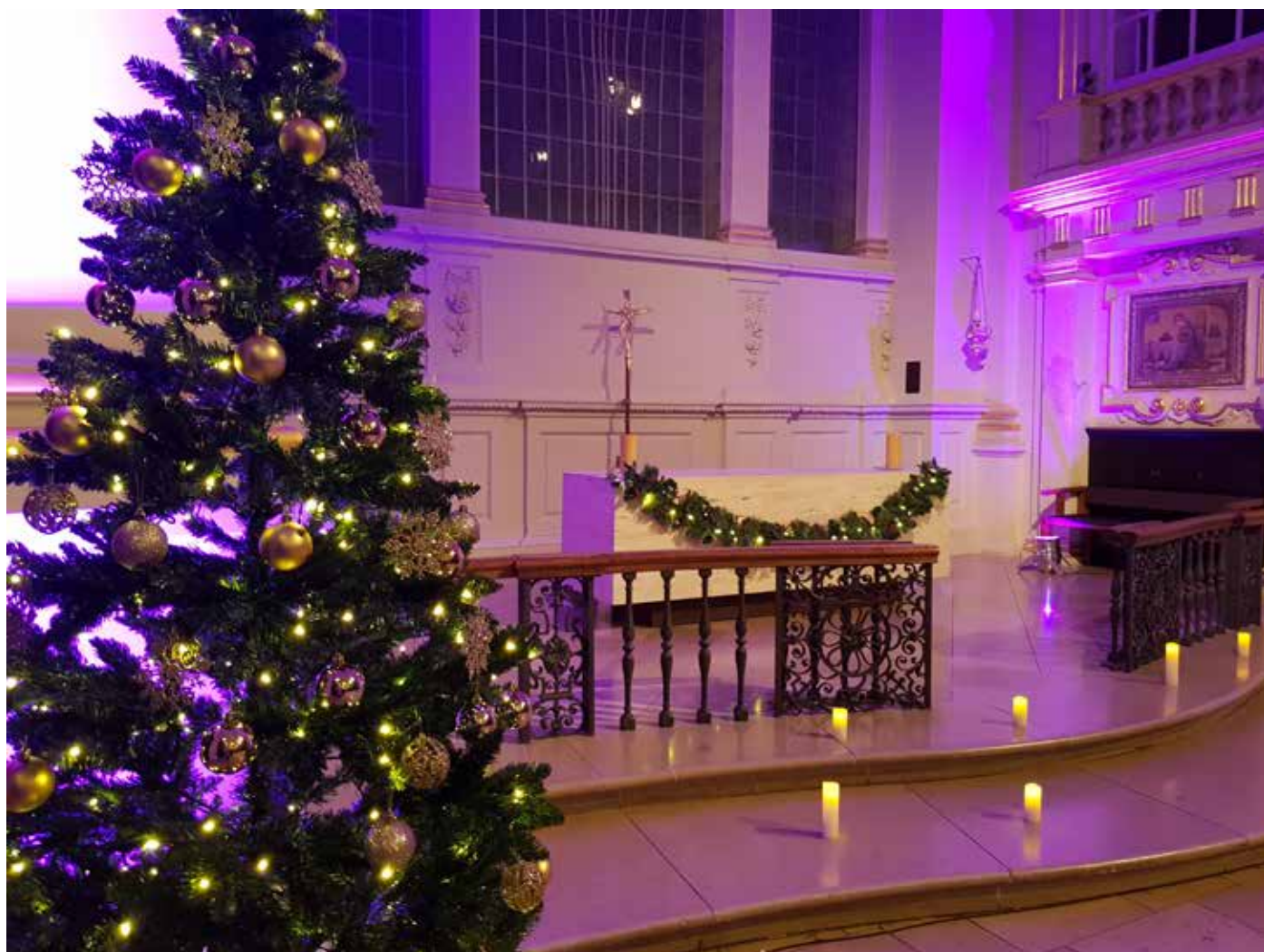
Our thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund, for supporting the Online Christmas Concert series at St Martin-in-the-Fields.

As the impact of COVID-19 takes hold, we need people like you to keep supporting us and helping the musicians we work with. To help us keep playing on, please consider [making a donation today](#).

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St Martin's Online Christmas Concert Series

A series of three specially recorded concerts to enjoy online this Christmas:

Festive Family Carols

[Watch online](#) until Thursday 31 December

Enjoy an hour of favourite readings and music for families from St Martin's Voices. This joyful celebration concert includes much loved favourites: *Jingle Bells*, *Little Donkey* and *We wish you a Merry Christmas*.

Carols for Christmas

[Watch online](#) until Thursday 31 December

Join St Martin's Voices and presenter, Zeb Soanes for an hour of your favourite carols and readings in an uplifting celebration of the Christmas season.

A Baroque Christmas Celebration

[Watch online](#) until Thursday 31 December

A beautiful sequence of baroque music for Christmas from St Martin's Voices and St Martin's Players including much-loved choruses from Handel's *Messiah*.

Other available online concerts from St Martin-in-the-Fields

Haydn Nelson Mass

[Watch online](#) until Monday 4 January

Haydn's Mass for Troubled Times received its premiere on the same day that Austria heard that Horatio Nelson had led a stunning defeat over Napoleon, and the great Admiral later heard the piece for himself on a later visit to Vienna himself, thus cementing the work's nickname – the 'Nelson' Mass. Whilst we can't offer you naval fireworks on the banks of the Nile, we can offer you choral fireworks near the banks of the Thames, courtesy of St Martin's Voices and St Martin's Players.

Vivaldi Magnificat: Music for Advent

[Watch online](#) until Monday 4 January

A programme of some of the finest Baroque choral music ever written. J.S.Bach's cantata *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* was written for Advent Sunday in 1714, and sits alongside works by Heinrich Schütz, Vivaldi, Monteverdi and Isabella Leonarda – one of the most prolific female composers of the period.

Merry Christmas from us all at St Martin-in-the-Fields!