

**O QUAM GLORIOSUM EST:
MUSIC OF THE IBERIAN RENAISSANCE**

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

DECEMBER 8TH, 2021

ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Alma Redemptoris Mater.....Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548 – 1611)

Ave Regina caelorum.....Francisco Guerrero (1528 – 1599)

Regina caeli.....Pedro de Cristo (c. 1550 – 1618)

Missa 'O quam gloriosum'.....Victoria

Kyrie

Gloria

David Newtown, chant intonation

Credo

Tanya Zhurman, chant intonation

Sanctus

Benedictus

Ursula Murray-Bozeman, soprano

Skye Savage, alto

Grant Woods, baritone

Agnus Dei

O quam gloriosum (motet).....Victoria

With thanks to:

Columbia University Department of Music

Music Performance Program at Columbia

Barnard College Department of Music

St. Paul's Chapel Staff

Collegium Musicum, Fall 2021

Justin Gregg, **director**

Soprano

Alexandra Gualario
Ursula Murray-Bozeman
Lily Sones
Margeaux Wolberg
Bethany Younge

Tenor / Baritone

Callum Blackmore
Tianxiang Li
David Newtown
James Pecore
Grant Woods

Alto

Skye Savage
Raley Schweinfurth
Meredith Silfen
Anna-Louise Walton
Silja Weber
Tanya Zhurman

Bass

Jace Li
Charles Liu
Warren McCombs
Richard Oliver
Matthew Rendon

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In this concert—our first since December 2019—Collegium Musicum performs a selection of works by Spanish and Portuguese composers who were active during the late sixteenth century. All the pieces on tonight’s program are polyphonic (i.e., they feature multiple overlapping and often imitative melodies distributed among the voice parts), and all are settings of sacred Latin texts. As a point of reference, our three composers were contemporaries of such canonic figures as Palestrina, Lassus, and Tallis; while the works of these latter composers are frequently heard in concerts around the world, it is much less common to find a performance of works by Victoria, let alone Guerrero or de Cristo. Tonight, we aim to challenge this imbalance, conveying the musical splendor of the Iberian Renaissance.

We begin with Victoria’s 5-voice setting of *Alma Redemptoris Mater*, which is the first of three Marian antiphons—hymns in praise of the Virgin Mary—on tonight’s program. This antiphon is traditionally sung during the season of Advent, and it alludes to Collegium’s last concert (under the direction of Russell O’Rourke), which began with Du Fay’s earlier 3-voice setting of the same text. Though he was Spanish, Victoria spent a significant part of his career in Rome—at the same time as Palestrina—and many of Victoria’s works reflect the ornate contrapuntal style of this Italian contemporary, with whom he may even have studied. Our piece opens with a brief adaptation of the original Gregorian chant melody for this antiphon, and each line of text thereafter is defined by its own melodic material. In the second half of the piece, listen to the soprano line soaring above the choir in a depiction of “natura mirante” [nature marveling] at the birth of Christ. Shortly thereafter, Victoria emphasizes the phrase “Virgo prius ac posterius” [Virgin before and after] quite differently, creating a feeling of

musical stasis to contrast with the preceding sense of motion. As we approach the end of the piece, listen to the five-part imitation beginning on the word “Gabrielis,” which is passed between all voices of the choir—two separate times—within a span of about fifteen seconds.

The second Marian antiphon on tonight’s program is *Ave Regina caelorum*, which is traditionally sung during the season between Christmas and Easter. Francisco Guerrero, who studied under Cristóbal de Morales, made a name for himself by publishing his own music internationally during his lifetime—as far away as Latin America—and many of his works continued to be performed widely for years after his death. At the opening of his setting of the *Ave Regina caelorum*, the soprano section sings the original chant melody as a cantus firmus (i.e., in elongated notes) while the rest of the choir moves in faster rhythms below. In the second stanza of text—starting on “Gaude gloriosa”—the sopranos join the rhythmic motion of the rest of the choir, allowing for four-part imitation and other contrapuntal techniques that contrast with what came before. As we approach the end of the piece, listen as each voice part abandons these shorter note values and settles on longer notes. In something of a reversal of the opening, the soprano section is the last to have a fast-moving melody here, bringing this piece to its expressive close.

De Cristo’s *Regina caeli*—tonight’s only work by a Portuguese composer—is another Marian antiphon, and like Guerrero’s, it begins with a paraphrase of the original chant melody in the soprano line. Unlike the two preceding pieces, however, this one contains a good deal of homorhythm, which refers to segments in which all the voices of the choir sing together in rhythmic unity, rather than overlapping with one another. While we do not know much about de Cristo’s musical career, we do know that the frequent use of homorhythm is a characteristic feature of his compositional style. In any case, this piece features varied textures and multiple notated changes of meter throughout; in our interpretation, we have also chosen to vary the dynamics and even the tempo of different sections. This antiphon is traditionally sung at Easter time, and the joy of that season is certainly conveyed through this exuberant setting.

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The second part of our concert features Victoria’s *Missa ‘O quam gloriosum’*, which is a parody mass, or a polyphonic setting of the Mass Ordinary that incorporates pre-existing music (in all voice parts, in this case) from an earlier composition; the term “parody” does not imply a humorous or negative connotation. Here, Victoria draws on his own motet entitled *O quam gloriosum*, which will be the concluding piece on tonight’s program. Although we are singing the Mass before the motet, the composition of these pieces would have occurred in the reverse order from this, with the motet serving as the musical starting point for the Mass.

The Mass opens with the *Kyrie*, which takes its text from Ancient Greek rather than Latin. This is the shortest movement of the work, but its three distinct sections include a great deal of musical material that will recur throughout the entire Mass. The text here is extremely limited, allowing Victoria’s rich musical style—with its intricate polyphony and textbook examples of note-against-note counterpoint—to come to the fore.

The *Gloria* might be the choir's favorite piece on tonight's program. The text of this movement is almost entirely laudatory, and the music certainly conveys this sentiment as well—with the exception of a slower and more introspective middle section in which the text focuses on the earthly subject rather than on God. For much of this movement, the four voice parts are grouped into two pairs, with the higher voices as one pair and the lower voices as the other, though all voices come together at significant moments, such as two separate instances of the text “Jesu Christe.” There is no shortage of florid melody in this movement; listen, for example, to the basses reaching for the skies on “Rex coelestis” [heavenly king], or to the melismatic “Amen” in all voice parts that brings the movement to its resounding conclusion.

In many ways, the *Credo* seems to be a musical extension of the *Gloria*. As in the previous movement, the voice parts here are often grouped into opposing pairs which come together at significant moments. The most striking example of this begins on the text “et incarnatus est,” when all four voice parts sing in true homophony for the only time in the Mass—and in a new meter, no less. The breadth of the *Credo*'s text gives Victoria plenty of opportunities for word painting, or literal musical depictions of textual ideas; listen for ascending and descending melodies on “ascendit” and “descendit,” as well as the musical excitement that accompanies two discussions of resurrection.

After the liveliness of the preceding two movements, the *Sanctus* begins in a quieter and more reflective style. The long and graceful lines on the word “Sanctus” at the opening contrast with the continuous imitative entrances on “gloria tua” that occur a bit further in. Shortly thereafter, we reach the *Hosanna*, a short movement-within-a-movement, in which this boundless imitation now occurs in a jaunty triple meter, injecting a newfound sense of motion into the piece. Following this, the *Benedictus* (sung by three soloists) ventures briefly into previously uncharted harmonic territory. The discord reaches its peak in a jarring cross relation—in which an A-natural in the soprano line occurs simultaneously with an A-flat in the alto line—but all dissonance seems to be resolved as the *Benedictus* ends and the *Hosanna* is sung once more.

The Mass concludes with the *Agnus Dei*, which is sung twice, but with slightly differing texts. The opening introduces another conflict between A-natural and A-flat, but the piece soon moves beyond this in a passage that seems to be taken directly out of the *Kyrie*. Whereas that first movement was light and energetic, however, this movement is serene and introspective, reaching a poignant conclusion on the words “dona nobis pacem” [grant us peace].

Our concert ends with Victoria's motet *O quam gloriosum*, which is another choir favorite of the semester. The meaning of the word *motet* has varied widely throughout history, but here it refers to a sacred piece of vocal music with Latin text. In this case, the text was originally intended to be sung for the Feast of All Saints. The piece will fly by if you spend too much time reading this note, so it suffices to say that it is a veritable model of word painting techniques. Listen, for example, to the musical festivity on the word “gaudent” [rejoice], or to the voices pursuing one another on “sequuntur” [they follow], or to the wandering chromatic melody on “quocumque ierit” [wherever he goes]. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

- Justin Gregg

Marian Antiphons

Alma Redemptoris Mater, Victoria

Alma Redemptoris Mater,
quae pervia caeli porta manes,
et stella maris,
succurre cadenti surgere
qui curat populo.

Loving Mother of the Redeemer,
who stands as the gate to heaven,
and star of the sea,
help those who strive to rise
among a fallen people.

Tu que genuisti, natura mirante,
tuum sanctum genitorem,
Virgo prius ac posterius,
Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave,
peccatorum miserere.

You who have borne, nature marveling,
your holy creator,
Virgin before and after,
who took from Gabriel's mouth: Hail!
Have mercy on sinners.

~

Ave Regina caelorum, Guerrero

Ave Regina caelorum,
Ave Domina angelorum.
Salve radix sancta,
ex qua mundo lux est orta.

Hail, queen of heaven,
Hail, lady of angels.
Hail, source of holiness,
from whom the world's light has come.

Gaude gloriosa,
super omnes speciosa.
Vale, valde decora,
et pro nobis semper
Christum exora.

Rejoice, glorious one,
splendid beyond all others.
Farewell, o marvelous one,
and forever pray for us
to Christ.

~

Regina caeli, de Cristo

Regina caeli laetare, Alleluia.
Quia quem meruisti portare,
Alleluia.
Resurrexit sicut dixit, Alleluia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, Alleluia.

Queen of heaven, rejoice, Alleluia.
For he whom you were worthy to bear,
Alleluia.
Has risen, as was said, Alleluia.
Pray to God for us, Alleluia.

Mass Ordinary

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy.

Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax
hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

Glory to God in the highest.
And peace on earth
to people of good will.

Laudamus te; benedicimus te;
adoramus te; glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.

We praise you; we bless you,
we worship you; we glorify you.
We give thanks to you
for your great glory.

Domine Deus, Rex coelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili unigenite Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,
Filius Patris.

Lord God, heavenly king,
God the almighty father.
Lord Jesus Christ, the only son.
Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dextram Patris,
miserere nobis.

You who take away the world's sins,
have mercy on us.
You who take away the world's sins,
receive our prayer.
You who sit at the Father's right hand,
have mercy on us.

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus Altissimus, Jesu Christe.
Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris.

For you alone are holy,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Highest, Jesus Christ.
With the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Amen.

Credo

Credo in unum Deum;
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem coeli et terrae,
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum
Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum,
et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.
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 coelis.

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 coelum.
Sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria,
judicare vivos et mortuos:
cujus regni non erit finis.

Et 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.

I believe in one God;
almighty Father,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord
Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all.
God of God, light of light,
true God of true God,
begotten not made;
consubstantial with the Father,
by whom all things were made.
Who for us—humankind—
and for our salvation
descended from heaven.

And was incarnate, by the Holy Spirit,
of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

He was crucified for us
under Pontius Pilate,
suffered and was buried.
And rose again on the third day,
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven.
He sits at the right hand of the Father.
and shall come again with glory
to judge the living and the dead:
His kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit,
Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from Father and Son.
Who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
as was told by the Prophets.

Et unam sanctam
catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum baptisma,
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum
et vitam venturi sæculi.

Amen.

Sanctus & Benedictus

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Benedictus qui venit
in nomine Domini.
Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

And [I believe in] one holy
Catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism
for the remission of sins.
And await the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

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

Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

~

O quam gloriosum (motet), Victoria

O quam gloriosum est regnum,
in quo cum Christo
gaudent omnes Sancti!
Amicti stolis albis,
sequuntur Agnum,
quocumque ierit.

O how glorious is the kingdom
in which with Christ
all the Saints rejoice!
Clad in robes of white,
they follow the Lamb,
wherever he goes.