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OBSIDIAN

THE SPY'S CHOIRBOOK

Petrus Alamire
& the Court of
Henry VIII

ALAMIRE

ENGLISH CORNETT
& SACKBUT ENSEMBLE

DIRECTED BY
DAVID SKINNER

The Spy's Choirbook

CD1

1. Celeste beneficium (Jean Mouton, c.1459–1522)
2. Adiutorium nostrum (Antoine de Févin, c.1470–1511/12)
3. Nesciens mater (Anonymous)
4. Ave regina caelorum (Pierre de la Rue, c.1452–1518)
5. Descendi in hortum meum (attrib. Josquin Desprez, c.1450–1521)
6. Sancta trinitas unus Deus (Févin)
7. Vexilla Regis / Passio Domini nostri (La Rue)
8. Fama malum (Josquin)
9. Doleo super te frater mi Ionatha (La Rue)
10. O Domine Iesu Christe / Et sanctissima mater tua (Anonymous)
11. Maximilla Christo amabilis (Anonymous)
12. Sancta Maria succurre miseris / O werder mondt (Franciscus Strus, fl. 1500)
13. Sancta et immaculata virginitas (Anonymous)
14. Missus est Gabriel archangelus (Josquin)
15. Dulcissima virgo Maria (Anonymous)
16. Tota pulchra es amica mea / O pulcherrima mulierum / Salve (Anonymous)
17. O sancta Maria virgo virginum (Anonymous)
18. Verbum bonum et suave (Pierrequin de Therache, c.1470–1528)
19. Recordamini quomodo praedixit filium (Anonymous)
20. O beatissime Domine Iesu Christe / Fac me de tua gratia ut (Anonymous)

CD2

1. Ave sanctissima Maria (Anonymous)
2. Ecce Maria genuit nobis (Mouton)
3. Congratulamini mihi omnes (Anonymous)
4. Egregie Christi martir Christophore / Ecce enim (Févin)
5. Alma redemptoris mater (Anonymous)
6. Dulces exuviae (Anonymous)
7. Dulces exuviae (Alexander Agricola, c.1446–1506)
8. Dulces exuviae (Josquin)
9. Dulces exuviae (Mouton)
10. Dulces exuviae (Johannes Ghiselin, fl. 1500)
11. Absalon fili mi (attrib. Josquin / La Rue)
12. Iesus autem transiens (Anonymous)
13. Anima mea liquefacta est / Invenerunt me / Filiae Ierusalem (Heinrich Isaac, c.1445–1517)
14. Tribulatio et angustia invenerunt me (attrib. Josquin)

ALAMIRE, directed by David Skinner

Sopranos:

Grace Davidson, Kirsty Hopkins

Contraltos:

Ruth Massey, Martha McLorinan,
Clare Wilkinson

Tenors:

Guy Cutting, Benjamin Hymas,
Nicholas Todd, Simon Wall,
Christopher Watson

Baritones:

Eamonn Dougan, Greg Skidmore,
Timothy Scott Whiteley

Basses:

William Gaunt, Robert Macdonald

ENGLISH CORNETT & SACKBUT ENSEMBLE

Gawain Glenton (straight cornetto by Christoph Schuler), Sam Goble (slide trumpet by Graham Nicholson; curved cornetto by Paolo Fanciullacci), Emily White (tenor sackbut in A after Schnitzer, by Ewald Meinel), Tom Lees (tenor sackbut in A after Heinlein, by Egger Workshops), Nicholas Perry (tenor shawm by John Hanchet/Perry; alto shawm by Robert Cronin/Perry; soprano shawm by Barbara Stanley)
All instruments at A=466

Producer: Nigel Short

Engineer and Mastering: Jim Gross
Editions by David Skinner and
Thomas Neal

Dr Skinner's research assistant:

Thomas Neal

Project Patron: Mrs Patricia Brown

One of the most magnificent musical treasures in the British Library is a sumptuously illuminated choirbook given the shelf-mark Royal MS 8.g.vii. It is magnificent for several reasons, not least its beauty and contents, but also its origin, history, and ultimate destination. The book was devised and assembled in one of the finest music scriptoriums of all of Europe: the workshop of Petrus Alamire. Alamire (aka Peter Imhoff or van den Hove), was not only a brilliant illuminator and music scribe, he was also a noted musician, singer and composer in his own right. As a businessman he adopted the ingenious marketing ploy to change his surname to 'A-la-mi-re', referencing the pitch 'a' within the hexachord system; indeed he often signed his name with musical notation.

As a scribe Alamire enjoyed a hugely successful career, having rubbed shoulders not only with Henry VIII, but also Emperor Maximilian, Margaret of Austria, Charles V, Christian II of Denmark and even the Dutch humanist Erasmus. Born in around 1470 he rose from his German origins in Nuremberg to many fruitful years in Antwerp, first under the employ of the young Archduke Charles then on to a long association as music copyist for the Confraternity of Our Lady for whom he produced a large number of music books. He continued his links with the Hapsburg Burgundian court until 1535, and died on 26 June 1536.¹

There were, however, many sides to Petrus Alamire: he was also a merchant, mining engineer, and, most notably, a diplomat and spy. Musicians of Alamire's popularity and talent were often widely travelled, frequently visiting the various courts of Europe; such a career was a perfect cover for sensitive political and diplomatic exchanges. A number of letters survive which show that Alamire acted as a spy for Henry VIII against Richard de la Pole, duke of Suffolk and last member of the House of York who openly sought claim to the English throne. Pole was in exile and gained the support of Louis XII of France who aided him in his failed attempt for a Yorkist reclaiming of the English crown. Alamire wrote to Henry VIII in May 1515 to inform him that his musician friends had spied on Pole, and, presumably to gain favour and interest, he sent the king an 'excellent' composition for five voices, as well as six small part-books (which included music by Alexander Agricola), a manicordium 'cum pedale' (thought to be a very early example of a clavichord with pedals) and thirteen crumhorns. Early in 1516 Richard de la Pole was in Metz, where he was visited by Alamire and others in the affair. Here suspicion arose on the English side, and it was feared that Alamire might have become sympathetic to Pole's situation and had engaged in counter-espionage. In Alamire's last letter to Wolsey,

¹ For an illuminating account of Alamire's life and works, as well as a catalogue of his surviving manuscripts, see *The Treasury of Petrus Alamire: Music and Art in Flemish Court Manuscripts, 1500–1535*, ed. Herbert Kellman, which also contains the insightful article 'Petrus Alamire: Music Calligrapher, Musician, Composer, Spy' by Eugene Schreurs.

dated 1517, he was keen to preserve his reputation by confessing all, but it would seem that trust had diminished and he was never again to return to England. In the same letter, Alamire additionally expressed concern that he received no reward, or even gratitude, for a hoard of musical gifts delivered to Henry VIII, which included five music books, eight cornetts, a large consignment of lute strings and, most interestingly, a magnificent parchment manuscript.

No fewer than four manuscripts from the Alamire scriptorium contain Henry's coat of arms, only one of which ever seems to have been destined for England. It is therefore highly probable that the 'magnificent parchment manuscript' sent to Henry VIII at some point in 1516 or 1517, is indeed Royal 8.g.vii. The first layer of the book includes works which invoke the desire for childbearing. The first two motets – *Celeste beneficium* by Mouton and *Adiutorium nostrum* by Févin, both published in 1514 as a pair – were originally composed for Louis XII of France and Anne of Brittany, and here modified for the English royal couple. Unable to produce a male heir, Anne of Brittany died in January 1514 and Louis XII married Henry VIII's sister, Mary Tudor, the following October; however in less than three months Louis himself died. It seems to make sense that the choirbook was indeed originally prepared for Louis and Anne. Upon Louis's death Alamire converted the dedication to

Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, who similarly were attempting to produce a male heir, so the subject matter of the music was perfect. Alamire was keen to remain high in Henry VIII's favour, and this was a convenient recipient for a most lavish manuscript with no other destination. One wonders, too, if Mary Tudor had any influence here.

Nevertheless, the transformation was simple: in *Adiutorium nostrum* the names 'Anna', 'Renate' (intercessor for those desiring children, sons in particular), and 'Ludovicus' (Louis), were changed to 'Katherina', 'Georgi' (patron saint of England), and 'Henricus'. Then the first opening of the book was adorned with beautifully executed illustrations of the arms of Henry VIII, with Garter and motto, supported by a dragon and greyhound, with a red and white Tudor rose, as well as a pomegranate (symbol of Catherine of Aragon); other images include a portcullis, Henry VIII's symbol, and a combined Tudor rose and pomegranate. A sumptuous (albeit second-hand) royal gift.

Another interesting aspect of the book is the curious inclusion, pasted at the front, of a Garter canon 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' by Clement Morel, dedicated to 'the earl of Arundel', clearly Henry Fitzalan, who was made a Knight of the Garter in 1544. This was the same earl who oversaw the dissolution of his family's collegiate chapel at Arundel Castle, where the present recording was made. The

canon is mentioned in a catalogue made in around 1610 of the estate and library of John Lord Lumley (the son-in-law of the last earl of Arundel, and who inherited the Fitzalan library), but no mention is made here of the choirbook. The canon and the choirbook, therefore, seem to have come together shortly before 1757 when George II left the Royal Library to the newly founded British Museum. At that time the collection, along with others including Lumley, were temporarily housed at Ashburnham House where they were rescued from fire, which claimed so many precious volumes.

Royal 8.g.vii has since lain more or less dormant for several centuries, but the rich legacy of Petrus Alamire remains. He played a central role in preserving the finest compositions of his age, and was a particular advocate of Josquin and De la Rue. The body of manuscripts produced from his workshop amounted to over 600 works, including Masses, motets, chansons and instrumental music. The Spy's Choirbook, and the 34 motets contained within, stands out as perhaps one of the most interesting and musically versatile manuscripts to emerge from his workshop.

THE MUSIC

None of the motets are attributed, but some are known from other manuscripts or early printed editions. They are without doubt among the finest French and Franco-Flemish

compositions available from the first decades of the sixteenth century, which, given the choirbook's royal destination(s), is not surprising.

The late fifteenth and early sixteenth century was one of the most fertile and creative periods for musical composition, and it is no accident that each and every one of these motets are uniquely expressive and inventive. The main composers represented are Josquin Desprez, Pierre and La Rue, Jean Mouton and Antoine de Févin – with notable masterworks from these towering figures – but nearly a third of the choirbook's content remains anonymous, and many of these are among the gems in the collection. Space does not permit a critique on all, but *Dulcissima virgo Maria* alone, in its brevity, is utterly teeming with ideas. Essentially a prayer in preparation of death, its texture modulates from a hollow, stark opening to a quite rhythmically marked imitative passage to a most harmonically adventurous setup to the final cadence which may be described as an unprepared cluster-chord before resolution. *Tota pulchra* es is an exercise on the first four notes of the 'Salve regina' chant, which in the first half is taken in imitation by the upper two voices, and similarly by the lower two in the second half. Such treatment was commonly exploited in the period, but the expert execution of the composed voices which surround the canonic chant seems to suggest a setting by one of the Renaissance masters, if not Josquin himself (though any attribution on

style alone is of course dangerous territory). The more extended musical essays, *O Domine Iesu Christe* and *O beatissime Domine Iesu Christe*, both similarly meditations on impending death, also demonstrate the variety of textures and harmonic invention of these unknown composers.

There are also a number of works associated with Margaret of Austria and Archduke Charles, sprinkling Hapsburg musical gems among the Tudor court. *Doleo super te* by La Rue is thought to allude to the death of Margaret's brother, Philip the Fair, while the anonymous *O sancta Maria, virgo virginum* (here performed by instrumental consort) includes a specific prayer for Charles. *Maxsimilla Christo amabilis*, also anonymous, is one of the few motets in the book that has a specific liturgical function: its text is a Vespers antiphon for the feast of St Andrew (30 November), patron saint of Burgundy and the Order of the Fleece.

The final layer of the choirbook, thought to have been assembled shortly before delivery to England, includes five consecutive settings of Dido's last words from Virgil's *Aeneid* which became a popular theme of composers during the early sixteenth century. Another Virgil text *Fama malum* by Josquin appears much earlier in the choirbook, but the *Dulces exuviae* motets seem almost to have been included by special request, and it is uncertain whether they were collected together for Anne of Brittany or Catherine of Aragon. As Frank Tirro has noted,

there are remarkable parallels in the lives of the two women of this manuscript. Both enjoyed a happy childhood and an auspicious first marriage that ultimately led to a tragic end, which is aptly reflected in Virgil's text (see translation below). Both women also suffered the death of a young husband and, later, the torment of many stillborn sons. So it is perhaps no coincidence that the *Dulces exuviae* set is immediately followed by one of the most profoundly beautiful settings of David's lament of his son, *Absalon fill mi*, which has long been attributed to Josquin but thought by some to be by La Rue.

David Skinner

A NOTE ON THE INSTRUMENTS

The 'loud' wind instruments of Tudor England were the inheritors of a tradition stretching back to the medieval *alta capella* ensemble and its distinctive three-part combination of shawms and slide trumpet. As instrument technology developed so did the nature of this wind band and by Henry VIII's time the trombone had become a mainstay of such groups, augmented eventually by the recently-imported cornetto. The strength and immediacy of these instruments made them highly practical in large acoustics and ideal for projecting such abstract notions as regal splendour and power. As the sixteenth century developed the nature of these ensembles was to change markedly once

again. This recording then is a snapshot of the colourful courtly wind band typical of Henry's time, utilised here in a 'high-art' vocal context rarely heard in modern concerts or recordings.

During Alamire's visits to England it is known that he travelled with the sackbut player Hans Nagel, who also acted as a spy in the Henry VIII/Richard de la Pole affair. Some of the motets in the choirbook, especially in the later layers, seem perfectly adaptable to instrumental performance, especially *Recordamini* and *Iesus autem transiens*, which provide only the text incipits while the compositional style is more instrumental than vocal. For other motets the blend between voices and instruments seem perfectly matched, and are here combined for the more substantial items such as the opening motets by Mouton and Févin, and the latter's extended setting of *Egredie Christi martir Christophore*. Doubling has also been deployed for the final motet in the book *Tribulatio et angustia invenerunt me*, attributed elsewhere to Josquin. *Ave regina caelorum* is unique in the choirbook in having three equal upper parts, with unusually wide vocal ranges; this seems, too, to be suitable for instrumental performance. *Sancta Maria succurre miseris*, by the illusive Franciscus Strus, is constructed around the tune 'O werder mond', which has been taken by the tenor shawm.

Gawain Glenton & David Skinner

THE SPY'S CHOIRBOOK

Texts & Translations

1. Celeste beneficium (Jean Mouton)

Celeste beneficium introivit in Annam per quam nobis nata est Maria virgo. O beata Deo grata, mater matris nati patris, Anna nobiscum filia, Christo reconcilia.

A divine favour entered into Anne through whom the Virgin Mary was born to us. O blessed one, pleasing to God, the mother's mother born of the Father, Anne, with your daughter, reconcile us with Christ.

2. Adiutorium nostrum (Antoine de Févin)

Adiutorium nostrum in nomine Domini. Quis non confitebitur tibi? Orat, plorat, et exorat Katherina sibi; Te orantes deprecamur fac ut cito adiuvemur per tuam clementiam. O Georgi tamo beate, Henricus Rex clamat ad te; audi queso vocem nostram.

Our help is in the name of the Lord. Who will not be confessed to you? Katherine prays, weeps, and pleads for herself; praying, we beseech you, act that we might be helped quickly by your clemency. O most blessed George, King Henry cries to you; I beg you, bear our voice.

3. Nesciens mater (Anonymous)

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

*Knowing no man, the virgin mother bore, without pain,
the Saviour of the world. Only the virgin suckled him,
the King of the Angels, with her breast filled by heaven.*

4. Ave regina caelorum (Pierre de la Rue)

Ave, regina caelorum, ave, domina angelorum:
salve, radix, sancta ex qua mundo lux est orta:
gaude, gloriosa, super omnes speciosa. Vale, O
valde decora, et pro nobis Christum exora.

*Hail, queen of heaven, hail, mistress of the angels:
hail, root and sanctuary from which the light of the
world has arisen: rejoice, O glorious one, beautiful
above all others. Farewell, O most comely maiden, and
pray for us to Christ.*

5. Descendi in hortum meum

(attrib. Josquin Desprez)

Descendi in hortum meum, ut viderum poma
convallium, et inspicerem si flourisset vinea, et
germinassent mala punica. Revertere, revertere,
Sulamitis, ut intueamur te. Alleluia.

*I went down into my garden so that I might see the
fruits of the valley and see whether the vine had
flourished and the pomegranates budded. Return,
return, O Sulamite, that we might look upon you.
Alleluia.*

6. Sancta trinitas unus Deus (Févin)

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis. Te
invocamus, te laudamus, te adoramus, O beata
Trinitas. Sit nomen Domini benedictum ex hoc
nunc et usque in saeculum.

*Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us. We cry to
you, we praise you, we adore you, O blessed Trinity.
Blessed be the name of the Lord both now and for ever.*

7. Vexilla Regis / Passio Domini nostri

(La Rue)

Vexilla Regis prodeunt,
Fulget crucis mysterium,
Quo carne carnis conditor
Suspensus est patibulo.

Passio Domini nostri Iesus Christi secundum
Ioannem. In illo tempore dixit Iesus discipulis
suis: Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem.
Iesus autem iterum clamans voce magna emisit
spiritum.

*The banners of the king issue forth, the mystery of
the cross shines, by which the creator of flesh is hung
in the flesh on the cross. The Passion of our Lord
Jesus Christ according to John. At that time Jesus
said to his disciples: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful,
even unto death." And Jesus again crying with a loud
voice, yielded up the ghost.*

8. Fama malum (Josquin)

Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum;
mobilitate viget virisque acquirit eundo,
parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras
ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.

*Rumour, an evil than which no other is more swift:
she thrives on movement and acquires strength by
movement. Small, at first, out of fear, soon she raises*

*herself into the airs, steps on the earth and bides her
head among the clouds.*

9. Doleo super te frater mi Ionatha (La Rue)

Doleo super te, frater mi Ionatha, decore nimis,
et amabilis super amorem mulierum. Sicut
mater unicum amat filium suum, ita ego te
diligebam. Quomodo ceciderunt robusti, et
perierunt arma bellica.

*I grieve for you, my brother Jonatha; wondrously fair,
your love surpassed the love of women. As a mother
loves her only son, so I loved you. How are the mighty
fallen, and the weapons of war perished.*

10. O Domine Iesu Christe /

Et sanctissima mater tua (Anonymous)

O Domine Iesu Christe, fili Dei vivi, qui
dignatus es pro nobis miseris peccatoribus
nasci; pati, mori voluisti, et resurgere a mortuis:
miserere nobis.

Et sanctissima mater tua sit advocata nostra
dum mortis venerit hora. Amen.

*O Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God, who
deigned to be born for us miserable sinners; you wished
to suffer, to die and to rise from the dead: have mercy
on us.*

*And may your most holy mother be our advocate when
the hour of death approaches. Amen.*

11. Maximilla Christo amabilis (Anonymous)

Maximilla Christo amabilis, tulit corpus
Apostoli, optimo loco cum aromatibus sepelivit.

*Maximilla, beloved of Christ, took the apostle's body
[St. Andrew] and buried it in the choicest place with
spices.*

12. Sancta Maria succurre miseris / O werder mondt (Franciscus Strus)

Sancta Maria, succurre miseris, juva pusillanimes,
refove flebiles: ora pro populo, interveni pro
clero, intercede pro devoto femineo sexu.

*Holy Mary, help the helpless, aid the weak, comfort the
sorrowful: pray for the people, intervene for the clergy,
intercede for the devout female sex.*

13. Sancta et immaculata virginitas

(Anonymous)

Sancta et immaculata Virginitas, quibus te
laudibus referam, nescio: quia, quem caeli
capere non poterant, tuo gremio contulisti.

*Holy and immaculate Virginity, I do not know with
what praises I should extol you: for you have borne in
your womb him whom the heavens could not contain.*

14. Missus est Gabriel archangelus (Josquin)

Missus est Gabriel archangelus ad Mariam
Virginem, nuncians ei verbum: Ave Maria,
gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in
mulieribus. Alleluia.

*The archangel Gabriel was sent to Mary the Virgin,
announcing to her the word: 'Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women.
Alleluia.'*

15. Dulcissima virgo Maria (Anonymous)

Dulcissima Virgo Maria, mitis, humilis, et pia mater Dei, memor esto mei et pro me Christum exora dum mortis venerit hora.

Sweetest Virgin Mary, meek, humble, and holy mother of God, remember me and pray for me to Christ when the hour of death comes.

16. Tota pulchra es amica mea / O pulcherrima mulierum / Salve (Anonymous)

Tota pulchra es amica mea et macula non est in te. Quam pulchri sunt gressus tui; oculi tui columbarum; et comae capitis tui sicut purpura regis; collum tuum sicut turris eburnea. Quam pulchra es et quam decora carissima. Veni de Libano, veni coronaberis.

O pulcherrima mulierum, surge propera amica mea, columba mea, formosa mea, et veni. Ostende mihi faciem tuam, sonet vox tua in auribus meis: vox enim tua dulcis est et facies tua decora.

Salve!

You are all fair, my love, and there is no stain in you. How beautiful are your feet; your eyes are as those of doves; and the hairs of your head as the purple of the king; your neck is like a tower of ivory. How beautiful you are, and how comely, my dearest. Come from Libanus; come, be crowned.

O fairest of women, arise, make haste my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come. Show me your face, let your voice sound in my ears, for your voice is sweet and your face comely.

Hail!

17. O sancta Maria virgo virginum (Anonymous)

O Sancta Maria, virgo virginum, sancte trinitatis speculum, angelorum mirabile speculum, stella sanctorum omnium, tutum peccatorum, refugium famuli tui Caroli. Omne suum desiderium suscipe clementissima, omne suum suspirium, et comple omne suum bonum desiderium; fac sibi placitum filium tuum regem regum et universalis qui cum patre et spiritu sancto vivat et regnat Deus per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.

O Holy Mary, Virgin of virgins, mirror of the Holy Trinity, wondrous mirror of the angels, star of all the saints, protector of sinners, refuge of your vassal, Charles. O most merciful one, receive each of his prayers, his every sigh, and fulfil all his every virtuous desire; reconcile him with your son and universal king of kings, who lives and reigns with the God the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

18. Verbum bonum et suave (Pierrequin de Therache)

Verbum bonum et suave,
Personemus, illud Ave,
per quod Christi fit conclave
Virgo, mater, filia.

Per quod 'Ave' salutata
Mox concepit fecundata
Virgo David stirpe nata
Inter spinas lilia.

Ave templum Salomonis,
Mater, vellus Gedeonis,
Cuius magi tribus donis
Laudant puerperium
Supplicamus nos emenda
Emendatos nos commenda
Tuo nati ad habenda
Sempiterna gaudia. Amen.

*Let us ever sound that 'Ave',
The good and sweet word
Through which Christ dwelt within
Virgin, mother, daughter.*

*Saluted with that 'Ave',
She soon became fertile,
The virgin of David's line,
A lily among the thorns.
Hail, temple of Solomon,
Mother, fleece of Gideon,
Whose childbirth the magi
Honoured with three gifts.*

*We pray you to amend us,
And, being amended, commend us
To your son, so that we might have
Everlasting joys. Amen.*

19. Recordamini quomodo praedixit filium (Anonymous)

Recordamini quomodo praedixit quia oportet filium hominis crucifige et tertia die a morte suscitari. Alleluia.

Let us recall how it was prophesied that the son of man must be crucified, and on the third day would be raised from death. Alleluia.

20. O beatissime Domine Iesu Christe / Fac me de tua gratia ut (Anonymous)

O beatissime Domine Iesu Christe, respicere digneris super me, miserum peccatorum, oculis misericordiae tue quibus respexisti Petrum in atrio, Mariam Magdalenam in convivio, et latronem in crucis patibulo.

Fac me de tua gratia ut, cum Petro digne fleam, cum Maria Magdalena perfecte amore te diligam et cum latrone in saecula saeculorum te videam.

O most blessed Lord Jesus Christ, vouchsafe to cast on me, a miserable sinner, the merciful eyes with you looked on Peter in the courtyard, Mary Magdalene at the feast, and the thief on the cross.

Grant me your grace so that I might be worthy to weep with Peter, and that with Mary Magdalene I might love you with perfect love, and with the thief may behold you world without end.

21. Ave sanctissima Maria (Anonymous)

Ave sanctissima Maria, mater Dei, Regina caeli, porta paradisi, domina mundi. Tu es virgo singularis. Tu concepisti Iesum sine peccato. Tu peperisti creatorem et salvatorem mundi. Ora Iesum dilectum filium tuum, et libera nos ab omnibus malis. Amen.

Hail, most holy Mary, mother of God, queen of heaven, gate of paradise, mistress of the world. You are a virgin beyond compare. You conceived Jesus without sin. You gave birth to the creator and saviour of the world. Pray to Jesus your beloved son, and free us from all our sins. Amen.

22. Ecce Maria genuit nobis (Mouton)

Ecce, Maria genuit nobis salvatorem, quem Ioannes videns exclamavit, dicens: Ecce, Agnus Dei, ecce, qui tollit peccata mundi. Alleluia.

Behold, Mary bore us a saviour whom John saw and proclaimed: "Behold, the Lamb of God, behold, him who takes away the sins of the world." Alleluia.

23. Congratulamini mihi omnes (Anonymous)

Congratulamini mihi omnes qui diligitis Dominum, quia cum essem parvula, placui altissimo. Alleluia. Et de meis visceribus genui Deum et hominem. Alleluia.

Rejoice with me, all you who love the Lord, for while I was little girl, I pleased the Most High. Alleluia. And from my womb I brought forth God and man. Alleluia.

24. Egregie Christi martir Christophore / Ecce enim (Févin)

Egregie Christi martir Christophore suscipe preces nostras precare. Precare Dominum pro excessibus nostris, quos nimium comprimunt vincula delictorum.

Ecce enim festus est nobis hodie dies beati Christophori, quem dominus Iesus Christus

et regni caelestis gaudiis cum triumpho feliciter introivit. Ora pro nobis beate martir Christophore, ut digni efficiamur promissione Christi. Alleluia.

Christopher, admirable martyr of Christ, accept our prayers. Pray to the Lord for our transgressions, bound too fast by the chains of sin.

For, behold, the feast of blessed Christopher is this day, whom the Lord Jesus Christ and king of heavenly joys with triumph entered joyfully. Pray for us, blessed martyr Christopher, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Alleluia.

25. Alma redemptoris mater (Anonymous)

Alma redemptoris mater, quae pervia caeli porta manes, et stella maris, succurre cadenti, surgere qui currat populo: tu quae genuisti, natura mirante, tuum sanctum genitorem, virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.

Fruitful mother of the redeemer, who remains the open gate of heaven, star of the sea, help the fallen people who strive to rise again: you who gave birth, to the wonderment of nature, to your holy creator, Virgin before and after, receiving that "Ave" from Gabriel's mouth: have mercy on sinners.

26–30. Dulces exuviae dum fata deusque (Anonymous; Alexander Agricola; Josquin; Mouton; Johannes Ghiselin)

Dulces exuviae, dum fata Deusque sinebant accipite hanc animam, meque his exsolve curis.

Vixi, et, quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi,
et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.

Sweet remembrances, while the fates and the divine allow it, take this spirit, set me free from these cares. I have lived, and as far as the course of Fortune allowed, I have finished, and now my great soul will go underground.

31. Absalon fili mi (Josquin or La Rue)

Absalon, fili mi, quis det ut moriar pro te, fili mi, Absalon. Non vivam ultra, sed descendam in infernum plorans.

Absalon, my son, if only I had died instead of you, my son, Absalon. I shall live no more, but go down to hell, weeping.

32. Iesus autem transiens (Anonymous)

Iesus autem transiens per medium illorum ibat. *Jesus, passing through their midst, went on his way.*

33. Anima mea liquefacta est / Invenerunt me / Filiae Ierusalem (Heinrich Isaac)

Anima mea liquefacta est, ut dilectus meus [locutus est]: quaesivi et non inveni illum, vocavi, et non respondit mihi.

Invenerunt me custodes civitate; et percusserunt me, et vulneraverunt me; tulerunt pallium meum custodes murorum.

Filiae Ierusalem nunciate dilecto meo, quia amore lango.

My soul melted when my beloved spoke, I sought him, but could not find him; I called him, but he did not answer me.

The watchmen of the city found me, and bit me, and wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil from me.

Daughters of Jerusalem, tell my beloved that I am sick of love.

34. Tribulatio et angustia invenerunt me (attrib. Josquin)

Tribulatio et angustia invenerunt me, quia mandata tua meditatio mea est. Tribulationem et dolorem inveni, et nomen Domini invocavi.

Tribulation and anxiety have come over me, for my thoughts are of your commandments. I have come upon tribulation and sorrow, and have invoked the name of the Lord.

BIOGRAPHIES

Alamire boasts some of the finest consort singers in the world under the charismatic directorship of David Skinner. Inspired by the great choral works of the medieval and early modern periods, the ensemble expands or contracts according to repertoire and often combines with instrumentalists, creating imaginative programmes to illustrate musical or historical themes. The ensemble was formed in

2005 by three friends and early music experts: David Skinner, Rob Macdonald and Steven Harrold.

Performing throughout Europe and the USA, the consort records exclusively for Obsidian Records for whom they have won a number of awards. In March 2011 they received critical acclaim (Gramophone Record of the Month) for their ground-breaking CD of the complete motets of the Cantiones Sacrae (1575) of Thomas Tallis and William Byrd. This is the first in the exciting project entitled Library of English Church Music - a series of 30 recordings which will explore the highlights of the repertoire. Alamire's latest release for Christmas 2012 was Deo Gracias Anglia, a recording of the complete Trinity Carol Roll, which was also featured on the Early Music Show (BBC Radio 3).

Recent collaborations with Andrew Lawrence-King, QuintEssential Sackbut & Cornett Ensemble and highly acclaimed projects including soundtracks for TV and film, sound installations for art galleries, festival appearances and radio broadcasts have been extremely well received. In summer 2013 Alamire appeared in David Starkey's TV series "Music and Monarchy", broadcast on BBC 2; David Skinner also acted as a music adviser for the series. The 2013-14 season included performances at the Rheinvokal festival in Germany and the York Early Music Christmas

Festival, as well as headline performances at the American Choral Directors' Association 2014 conference in Santa Barbara. The consort is also exploring collaborations with contemporary composers.

David Skinner is a renowned scholar and choral director. He was co-founder of The Cardinal's Musick in 1989, and has also worked with many other leading early music groups in the UK including The Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen, the Hilliard Ensemble and the King's Singers. David founded Alamire in 2005 as an extension to his research and performance activities. The ensemble has already received critical acclaim for their performances and recordings and has released nine CDs on the Obsidian label, of which David is Artistic Director.

An engaging presenter, David has worked extensively for BBC radio, appearing in and writing a variety of shows on Radio 3 and 4. He acted as music advisor for the *Music and Monarchy* series on BBC 2 with historian David Starkey; he and Alamire appear in the first two episodes of the series. He has published widely on music and musicians of early Tudor England and has an excellent reputation as an editor of performance scores. David's edition of the complete Tallis Psalter was published by Novello in 2012 and was well reviewed, receiving 5 stars in *Early Music Today*. The follow up to this collaboration, "The Gibbons Hymnal" was released in March 2014. David

is also working with the King's Singers on a series of recordings, the first of which was the Richafort Requiem. David advised the group on the programming of the disc and wrote the accompanying notes.

David is Fellow, Praelector, and Osborn Director of Music at Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge where he teaches historical and practical topics from the medieval and renaissance periods. He directs the Choir of Sidney Sussex College, with whom he has toured and made highly acclaimed recordings. David is frequently invited to lecture, lead workshops and coach choirs throughout Europe and the USA, and is noted for his refreshing and entertaining approach. Most recently, he gave a lecture on Tallis' life for Martin Randall Travel in Canterbury in November 2013, and is preparing an collected edition of Tallis's early Latin works for Early English Church Music (Stainer & Bell) for publication in 2015.

The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble is a virtuoso period instrument ensemble at the forefront of the early music scene. Since its formation in 1993, ECSE has performed at many major music festivals in the UK including The Bath International Festival, York Early Music Festival, Dartington International Summer School, and the Three Choirs Festival, and has given sell-out recitals at London's Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square and the Purcell Room. Highlights of ECSE's recent

performance history include a memorable recital with Cantus Cölln of music from Monteverdi's Selva Morale, in celebration of the re-opening of the gothic cathedral in Trier, in 2011, their BBC Proms Debut at the Royal Albert Hall, for *1612 Italian Vespers* with I Fagiolini in 2012, and a tour with the same group performing Striggio's *Mass in 40 Parts*. ECSE has been involved in many memorable recordings, including *A Hanseatic Festival* (2004); *Flower Of Cities All* (2008) with music from Shakespeare's London; a world premiere of Francesco Scarlatti's *Miserere* with Emma Kirkby; *1612 Italian Vespers* with I Fagiolini (Decca); and the world premiere recording of the momentous Striggio's *Mass in 40 Parts*, again with I Fagiolini, which scooped both the Gramophone Award for Early Music and a Diapason d'Or.

ECSE's members also perform individually with some of the world's leading period instrument groups and they can also often be seen performing at London's gloriously reconstructed Globe Theatre.

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