



SCATTERED ASHES: Josquin's *Miserere* and the Savonarolan Legacy
MAGNIFICAT
Directed by Philip Cave

To launch the release of their 25th anniversary recording *Scattered Ashes*, Magnificat return to Cambridge and brings to life compositions inspired by Girolamo Savonarola, the fifteenth-century Dominican friar who preached passionately for political, social and spiritual reform in Florence. Savonarola's followers stoked the famous "Bonfires of the Vanities" burning art, books and other "worldly" items. His outspoken criticisms of Pope Alexander VI ultimately led to Savonarola's excommunication, imprisonment, admission of heresy under torture, and execution.

Amongst the "vanities" Savonarola decried was over-elaborate sacred music, yet Savonarola had a long-lasting – if inadvertent – musical influence after his death. His writings inspired some of the greatest compositions of the sixteenth century, including Josquin's exquisite *Miserere mei*, *Deus* and Byrd's masterpiece *Infelix ego*.

Josquin's *Miserere*, referred to as 'epic', 'massive', 'courageous' and 'bold' with similarities in stature and significance frequently drawn between the music of Josquin and Beethoven, opens the programme. Josquin's musical architecture, and his sensitivity to the text, combine to produce a work of astonishing delicacy, with kaleidoscopic twists and turns, rich and subtle use of texture and variety exploiting and illustrating the text with a heartfelt empathy. Both challenging and thrilling to sing, Josquin's *Miserere* perfectly demonstrates why Magnificat's world-class reputation for clarity, flawless intonation and purity of tone is second to none.

You can listen to the group on YouTube:

Josquin - *Miserere mei*: <https://youtu.be/DkL1cOdpTYo>

Palestrina - *Tribularer, si nescirem*: <https://youtu.be/nS2z61hH57U>

Clemens - *Tristitia obsedit me*: <https://youtu.be/VrGOvwgJaLI>

Byrd - *Infelix ego*: <https://youtu.be/CiOGis-sVII>

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EMMANUEL UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 1RR

Box office: Cambridge Early Music

www.CambridgeEarlyMusic.org

Tel: 0333 666 3366 (TicketSource)

Tickets: £23, £18 (concessions), £5 student-standby and FREE under-18s

Please note booking fees apply for online and telephone bookings.

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Notes to Editors:

Magnificat is one of the world's premier vocal ensembles, internationally acclaimed for its sophisticated, historically-informed performance of Renaissance choral masterpieces. Equally at home in concert hall and recording studio, the ensemble has established a reputation for innovative programming, presenting previously undiscovered works alongside familiar repertoire in a fresh context.

Recording exclusively for Linn Records, Magnificat has released a series of award-winning recordings focusing on works from late-Renaissance Spain and post-Reformation England. Spem in alium was hailed as "quite the best performance of Tallis's 40-part Spem in alium that I have heard" by Gramophone and was "First Choice" in Building a Library on BBC Radio 3's CD Review. The Tudors at Prayer continues Magnificat's exploration of Latin-texted music from sixteenth-century England, following the success of Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang, an album featuring works by William Byrd, Robert Parsons and Robert White.

Magnificat has also released three recordings celebrating the music of Philippe Rogier. Music from the Missae Sex offers the first complete recordings of both the Missa Inclita stirps Jesse and the Missa Philippus Secundus Rex Hispaniae. The ensemble's recordings of music by Rogier on Linn also feature the Missa Ego sum qui sum and the Missa Domine Dominus noster. The latter recording, accompanied by His Majesty's Sagbutts & Cornetts, casts new light on the Spanish polychoral tradition, including the premiere recording of Rogier's rediscovered twelve-part motet Domine, Dominus noster.

Other recordings of music from the "Golden Age" include an album of motets by Gesualdo, Guerrero, Josquin, Rebelo and Victoria together with Allegri's Miserere and Palestrina's Stabat mater; a highly acclaimed recording of Victoria's Officium Defunctorum of 1605; and an album of Palestrina's twenty-nine motets from the Song of Songs. Visit www.magnificat-consort.uk for more information.

With an international reputation as a singer and conductor, **Philip Cave's** career began as a chorister at the age of seven, followed by musical studies at Oxford University with Simon Preston and David Wulstan. In 1991, he founded Magnificat, which has since attracted much critical acclaim for its vibrant performances and recordings.

Philip was a founding member of the Tallis Scholars, with whom he gave over 400 performances, and he has performed, toured and recorded with the Hilliard Ensemble, The Sixteen, the Choir of the English Consort, the King's Consort, the Cardinall's Musick, and the Choirs of Christ Church and New College, Oxford.

As a soloist, he has performed under many celebrated conductors including Leonard Bernstein and Sir Roger Norrington, at venues including the Beethovenhalle in Bonn and the Sydney Opera House. He has performed at the BBC Promenade Concerts in London, and has shared the concert platform with many distinguished musicians, including Sir Peter Pears, Sting and Sir Paul McCartney.

Philip was a joint recipient (with Sally Dunkley) of the American Musicological Society's Greenberg Award for work on Philippe Rogier's music; he received the Byrne Award by the London Handel Society, and is an Honorary Fellow of London's Academy of St Cecilia. Now based in the USA, Philip is Executive Director of Chorworks (www.chorworks.com), a non-profit organization that provides singers and conductors with opportunities to study and perform choral music with special emphasis on works from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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High-resolution photos are available on request from info@CambridgeEarlyMusic.org

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