

A large, teal-colored abstract shape, resembling a stylized 'C' or a curved banner, is positioned on the left side of the page, extending from the top to the bottom. It partially overlaps the text and the hexagonal graphic.

HEXAD
COLLECTIVE

AFTER BYRD
ST PETER • ST PAUL • ASSUMPTION

20TH JULY 2023

BRUNEL TUNNEL SHAFT, ROTHERHITHE

Nunc Scio Vere (William Byrd – Introit for St Peter and St Paul)

Kyrie (Piers Kennedy)

Contituos eos (Byrd – Offertory for St Peter and St Paul)

Gloria (Kennedy)

Tu es Petrus (Byrd - Communion for St Peter and St Paul)

O Notte, O Ciel (Maddalena Casulana)

Gaudeamus omnes (Byrd – Introit for the Assumption)

Assumpta est Maria (Byrd – Offertory for the Assumption)

Sanctus and Benedictus (Anna Semple)

Vidi Speciosam (Rafaella Aleotti)

Agnus Dei (Semple)

Optimam Partem Elegebit (Byrd – Communion for the Assumption)

Ave Generosa (Margaret Rizza)

Notes

The mass: truly the most controversial recurring event of the late 16th and early 17th century, decades of turmoil and upheaval, bloodshed and suspicion between old age Catholics and new age Protestants. This evening's programme is conceived around the mass - more specifically a pair of masses and feasts, close as we are in the calendar to St Peter and St Paul (29th June) and the Assumption (15th August). These two summer liturgical feasts are celebrated through a new musical setting specially commissioned from HEXAD Collective's Composer-Singers for different forces of 6 voices - the outer movements, Kyrie and Agnus Dei received their first performance in May, where we celebrated the nearby feasts of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, and the mass is completed this evening with the first performances of Piers' Gloria and Anna's Sanctus and Benedictus. Threading it all together is the music of a man belonging firmly but covertly to the Catholic side of the Elizabethan debate, whose 400th anniversary of death fell on July 4th this year, William Byrd. We hear three motets written for each high religious occasion, with an Introit to set the feast in motion, an Offertory motet to punctuate the liturgy and the Communion to waft into the space as bread and wine became flesh and blood. In and amongst it all, the works of three women - Rafaella Aleotti and Maddalena Casulana, their music only now achieving recognition after centuries of being hidden away in convent libraries, and Margaret Rizza, who deserves to have her music heard more frequently than it is as she nears her 95th birthday. 'After Byrd' explores hidden music in hidden spaces, and we hope you enjoy this voyage of discovery.

Anna Semple: 'My Sanctus and Benedictus take Byrd's Mass for Four Voices as their starting point: weaving fragments of the original material into a musical tapestry. In each movement there is a ripieno and solo group, and they remain aurally separate throughout. I wanted to create a static sphere of sound to give Byrd's timeless lines space to interact and overlap and to give the audience an opportunity to zoom-out on the composer's vast legacy.'

Piers Kennedy: 'One of the contributing factors to the enduring appeal of William Byrd's music is its playfulness, manifest in rhythmic and harmonic interplay, which makes it so fun to perform. This Gloria is my tribute to Byrd's inventive playfulness - in particular, the oscillation between imitative and homophonic textures. This is used to reflect specific passages of the text, but it also create a sense of scatterment and regathering which is, to me, a central characteristic of Byrd's inventive musicality.'

About HEXAD Collective



HEXAD Collective, founded by Daniel Gethin in 2019, specialises in vocal chamber music, focusing on musical textures, imaginative programming, regular commissioning, and education through contemporary music. The ensemble comprises eight members, granting the flexibility for different pairings of voices to showcase the unique resonance and timbre of each group, and to explore a wide range of music with a particular interest in six-voice music. The members of the group are highly in-demand consort singers, working with the likes of Tenebrae, EXAUDI, Academy of Ancient Music, Alamire, The Sixteen and Siglo de Oro.

We are unique in having two Composer-Singers as part of our regular membership: Anna Semple and Piers Kennedy. The composers are given the platform to create new music for our line-up, and work on these pieces from their perspective within the group. The group has performed at the inaugural choral concert at Hay Castle, for Minchinhampton Parish Church, Concerts for Craswall, Wye Valley Music, the Friends of St Martin's Gospel Oak, and have upcoming concerts in St Bart's the Great hosted by City Music Society for the 900th anniversary, as well as engagements at WoNDERFeel Festival and Schiermonnikoog Festival in the Netherlands.

Fiona Fraser - Soprano
Danni O'Neill - Soprano
Anna Semple - Mezzo-Soprano
Daniel Gethin - Countertenor and Director
Gopal Kambo - Tenor
Sebastian Hill - Tenor
Simon Grant - Baritone
Piers Kennedy - Bass
www.hexadcollective.com



Photo by Harry Flynn

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