

# THE QUEENES CHAPPELL

cantus                   mariana rodrigues, lucy thalange  
altus                    kieran white  
tenor                    steven van der linden, james micklethwaite  
                              jacob dyksterhouse  
bassus                   seán purtell

harpichord/  
direction               matthew brown

# BELLOT ENSEMBLE

violin                   edmund taylor, rebecca windram  
viola                   christopher mcclain  
bass violin             pablo tejedor gutiérrez

recorder/cornetto     matyas houf  
recorder               olivia petryszak  
sackbutts              adam quilter

organ                   dominika maszcyńska  
theorbo                jens franke

with thanks to  
Revd Peter Babington, Karen Little, Sean Jay, St Mary le Strand Church, St Mary's Stoke  
D'Abernon, and Seán Purtell.



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# MONTEVERDI VESPERS OF 1610

SATURDAY 17TH JUNE 2023  
ST MARY LE STRAND CHURCH



IN COLLABORATION WITH  
BELLOT ENSEMBLE

# THE QUEENES CHAPPELL

# MONTEVERDI VESPERS OF 1610

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <b>Deus in adjutorium</b>    | 5. <b>Pulchra es</b>         |
| 2. <b>Dixit Dominus</b>         | 6. <b>Laetatus sum</b>       |
| 3. <b>Nigra Sum</b>             | 7. <b>Duo seraphim</b>       |
| 4. <b>Laudate pueri Dominum</b> |                              |
| <hr/>                           |                              |
| 8. <b>Audi coelum</b>           |                              |
| 9. <b>Lauda Jerusalem</b>       |                              |
| 10. <b>Ave maris stella</b>     |                              |
| 11. <b>Magnificat</b>           |                              |
| a. Magnificat                   | g. Deposuit potentes         |
| b. Et exultavit spiritus meus   | h. Esurientes implevit bonus |
| c. Quia respexit humilitatem    | i. Suscepit Israel           |
| d. Quia fecit mihi magna        | j. Gloria Patri              |
| e. Et misericordia eius         | h. Sicut erat in principio   |
| f. Fecit potentiam              |                              |

## NOTES

The *Vespro della Beata Vergine* is one of Claudio Monteverdi's most enduring works of music, despite his huge body of varied output. Composed in Mantua for his patrons and employers, the Gonzagas, this large-scale work was published in Venice in 1610 and represents some of Monteverdi's most innovative, ambitious and genre-defining efforts.

The musical background on the Italian peninsula at this time was a fascinating one. A variety of social and religious factors were pushing greater compositional innovation than had occurred over the course of the 16th century, such as the demands of the Council of Trent for more text-focused religious music, desires at courts for larger-scale theatrical entertainments, and the pressures of particular groups of forward-thinking artists such as the Florentine Camerata necessitating other composers to "catch up" with their new genres and concepts. These new styles were not without their opponents, however. Monteverdi was forced to defend his own innovations against more purist critics; Artusi's complaints are well known, in which he critiques Monteverdi's music as being vulgar, crass, and contrary to the established rules of composition. Monteverdi's simple response was that these rules belonged to the old practice, the "prima prattica", and his music was something new: the "seconda prattica".

The music of the *Vespers* is varied, dramatic, and makes use of a wide range of instruments and voices. The "prima" and "seconda" styles are both represented for dramatic effect, with some movements such as *Nigra sum* and *Duo seraphim* making use of the "seconda" texture of declamatory solo voices over a continuo line, and *Et misericordia eius* and *Sicut erat in principio* relying more upon the many-voiced polyphonic texture of the "prima" style. Perhaps the most impressive thing about this is how swiftly and elegantly Monteverdi moves between texture; the final four movements of the Magnificat, for example, begin with solo voices and instrumental ritornelli, then solo voices upon a bass line, florid solo singing with echoes on a static bass, before a full voiced polyphonic conclusion, without the impression that we are listening to substantially different music. Monteverdi's prodigious skill to unite many singers and instruments in a complex, multi-movement work which retains a feeling of cohesiveness throughout, is truly impressive.