

# The Byrd Ensemble Presents: Portuguese polyphony by Magalhães, Cardoso, and Duarte Lobo

By the 17th century, the transition to the Baroque style was well underway. Portuguese Renaissance composers, however, were not quick to change with the times. Rather than adopting Baroque writing techniques, they kept developing the Renaissance style and incorporated new harmonic flavors from the emerging Baroque movement, yielding some of the most exotic sounding Renaissance motets of the era. This program features Duarte Lôbo, Filipe de Magalhães, and Manuel Cardoso. Join us online for this program of music from the golden age of Portuguese polyphony, recorded and filmed at St. James Cathedral.

## Singers

Ruth Schauble, Soprano  
Margaret Obenza, Soprano  
Christina Siemens, Soprano  
Jane Long, Soprano

Orrin Doyle, Tenor  
Sam Faustine, Tenor  
Jacob Buys, Tenor  
Tim Blok, Tenor

Sarra Sharif-Doyle, Alto  
Joshua Haberman, Countertenor  
Willimark Obenza, Countertenor  
Erin Calata, Alto

Kevin Wyatt-Stone, Bass  
Doug Fullington, Bass  
Ben Merrill, Bass

## Video Recording

Willimark Obenza, willi.pixel

Lauren Kastanas

## Program

MAGALHÃES: O Rex gloriae  
MAGALHÃES: Missa O Soberana luz

CARDOSO: Sitivit anima mea  
CARDOSO: Lamentatio

LOBO: Audivi vocem  
LOBO: Magnificat secundi toni

## Remarks

The final flowering of a cultural era, often occurring simultaneously with the exciting emergence of the next, can produce unique and revelatory musical achievements. Two examples are the late works of Bach (the B-minor Mass and the *Art of the Fugue*), written long after galant style had overtaken fashionable composition, and the Eton Choirbook, a compendium of fifteenth-century English music whose antiphons and Magnificats reveal late-medieval techniques being used well into the Renaissance. A third example may be the small school of Portuguese composers, active during the early seventeenth century, whose sacred vocal works combine the traditions of the *stile antico* with the innovations of the early Baroque. This period is now recognized as the golden age of Portuguese polyphony.

Three of these composers are Filipe de Magalhães (c. 1571–1652), Duarte Lobo (c. 1565–1646), and Manuel Cardoso (1566–1650). In Manuel Mendes (c. 1547–1605) they shared a common teacher at the choir school of Évora Cathedral, a musical hub in south-central Portugal. Magalhães succeeded Mendes as *mestre da claustra* at Évora before relocating to Lisbon, where he became *mestre de capela* of the royal chapel. Lobo also remained in Évora, becoming *mestre de capela* at the cathedral before taking the same position at Lisbon's Hospital Real and then at Lisbon Cathedral, where he served from 1591 to 1639 in the country's most prestigious musical post. Cardoso also found his way to Lisbon, entering the Carmelite convent in 1588 and eventually becoming its *mestre de capela* and sub-prior.

All were published in their lifetimes—Magalhães and Cardoso by Craesbeck in Lisbon and Lobo by the more widely known Plantin in Antwerp. Nevertheless, a significant number of works by Magalhães and Cardoso are believed to have been lost in the Lisbon earthquake and fire of 1755. Stylistically, the compositions of all three show a debt to Spanish and Italian masters of the late-sixteenth century, particularly Victoria, Guerrero, and Palestrina.

The Byrd Ensemble program features two works each by Magalhães, Cardoso, and Lobo and represents the various genres required from a composer at a cathedral or other religious institution: masses, Magnificats, and other liturgical settings and motets for feast days and special occasions.

*O Rex gloriae*, a short, bright Ascension motet for double choir, demonstrates Magalhães's abilities within the Venetian polychoral style. Far more substantial is his *Missa O Soberana luz* for five voices (here, SSATB). The title, "O Sovereign light", may refer to Philip IV of Spain. (The kingdoms of Portugal and Spain were united under the Spanish Hapsburgs from 1580 to 1640.) Victoria's motet, *O lux et decus Hispanie* (O the light and glory of Spain), also refers to Philip as light. A more significant connection to Philip is established by the head motive (a recurring melody at the beginning of each movement) shared by *Missa O Soberana luz* and Cardoso's *Missa Philippina*. Cardoso employs a rising major-mode melody, with most of the

occurrences sung to the words “*Philippus quartus*” (Philip the fourth). Magalhães uses the same melody, but in minor mode and without the special text, usually placed in the tenor voice.

Although the mass is set in duple time throughout, Magalhães achieves variety in other ways, particularly in the alternation of polyphony and homophony. The mass is relatively brief, with words mostly set syllabically. Rhythmic text-declamation is a feature of the *Gloria*, *Credo*, and *Sanctus*. Magalhães provides two settings of the *Christe*, the second for the reduced voicing of SATB. The *Benedictus*, which has its own *Hosanna*, is set for SSAT. Finally, he offers a single but potent setting of *Agnus Dei*—rising and falling passages in thirds within a chromatic landscape add an expressive richness to the end of the mass.

Expression achieved through chromaticism is a powerful element in both works by Cardoso featured on the program. The six-voice funeral motet, *Sitivit anima mea* (SSATTB), published alongside Cardoso’s *Requiem* in 1625, combines verses from Psalms 42 and 55. The expertly crafted polyphonic lines combine to create occasional augmented harmonies, which can be viewed as an assimilation of early Baroque practice. The resulting harmonic intensity makes the resolution at the end of the motet all the more satisfying.

Cardoso’s patron, João IV (better known as John IV) of Portugal reigned from 1641 to 1656. He was a champion of polyphony and a composer in his own right. He wrote a defense of Palestrina (whose works served as models for some of Cardoso’s parody masses) and helped finance the publication of Cardoso’s works. One of the volumes, *Livro de Vários Motetes* of 1648, contains a six-voice setting (SSAATB) of the Lamentations for Holy Thursday (the second lesson at the office of Matins). As was customary, Cardoso set the Hebrew letters—in this case, Vau and Zain—as well as the verses that follow each. The style and harmonic language are similar to that in *Sitivit*. The voices coalesce midway through the final refrain—“Ierusalem convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum (Jerusalem, return to the Lord your God)—with a declamatory statement of “Ierusalem” before winding to a final cadence.

*Audivi vocem de caelo* is another funeral motet, this one a six-voice setting (SSAATB) by Duarte Lobo. The spare opening features an imitative point, introduced by the first soprano, that spans an octave and is eventually taken up by the other voices. The first soprano is featured again, halfway through the motet, as the voice from heaven, declaiming the words, “Beati mortui” (Blessed are the dead).

Among Lobo’s publications is a book of sixteen Magnificat settings—two for each of the eight tones, one with polyphony composed for the even-numbered verses and the other with polyphony for the odd-numbered verses. Each setting would be performed *alternatim* with chanted verses. Lobo’s Magnificat *secundi toni* performed by the Byrd Ensemble features four-voice settings of even-numbered verses. Imitative polyphony prevails throughout, with the first polyphonic verse (“Et exultavit”) opening with a paraphrase of the second tone melody. “Fecit potentiam” is set for three voices (ATB), and the final verse (“Sicut erat”) expands to six (SSAATB) for a suitably grand finish. A canon at the fourth between the soprano and alto, this

time featuring the second tone in long notes, leads to cascading phrases in the surrounding voices at “et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.”

Doug Fullington, 2021

## Texts and translations

### **O Rex gloriae**

Words: Magnificat antiphon at Second Vespers, Ascension

Music: Filipe de Magalhães (c. 1563–1652)

O Rex gloriae, Domine virtutum qui triumphator hodie super omnes caelos ascendisti: ne derelinquas nos orphanos, sed mitte promissum Patris in nos, Spiritum veritatis. Alleluia.

*O King of glory, Lord of virtue, who is the conqueror of this day, you have ascended above all the heavens: do not forsake us as orphans, but send the promise of the Father to us, the Spirit of truth. Alleluia.*

### **Missa O Soberana luz**

Words: Ordinary of the Mass

Music: Filipe de Magalhães

**Kyrie** eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

*Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.*

**Gloria** in excelsis Deo. Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens. Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe; Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Iesu Christe. Cum Sancto Spiritu in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

*Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace to men of goodwill. We praise you. We bless you. We worship you. We glorify you. We give thanks to you for your great glory. Lord God, Heavenly King, Almighty God the Father. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. You take away the sins of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the sins of the world; receive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of the Father; have mercy on us. For you alone are holy, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ. With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

**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 saecula. 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 et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur: qui locutus est per prophetas. Et in unam, sanctam, catholicam, et apostolicam Ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum. Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

*I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds. God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven. descended from heaven. of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he died and was buried, and rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father. And he will come again in glory, to judge the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life: who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified: who spoke by the prophets. And in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

**Sanctus**, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth: pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini: Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might: 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.*

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

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

### **Sitivit anima mea**

Words: Psalm 42:2 and Psalm 55:7

Music: Manuel Cardoso (1566–1650)

Sitivit anima mea ad Deum fortem vivum; quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei mei?  
Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbae, et volabo et requiescam?

*My soul thirsts for God who is great and ever-living; when shall I come and appear before the face of my God? Who will give me wings like a dove, and I shall fly and be at rest?*

### **Lamentatio**

Words: Second lesson at Matins, Holy Thursday; Lamentations 1:6–7

Music: Manuel Cardoso

Vau. Et egressus est a filia Sion omnis decor ejus; facti sunt principes ejus velut arietes non invenientes pascua, et abierunt absque fortitudine ante faciem subsequentis.

Zain. Recordata est Jerusalem dierum afflictionis suæ, et prævaricationis, omnium desiderabilium suorum, quæ habuerat a diebus antiquis, cum caderet populus ejus in manu hostili, et non esset auxiliator: viderunt eam hostes, et deriserunt sabbata ejus.

Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.

*Vau. From the daughter of Zion has departed all her majesty. Her princes have become like rams that find no pasture; they fled without strength before the pursuer.*

*Zain. Jerusalem remembers in the days of her affliction and bitterness all the precious things that were hers in the days of old. When her people fell, and there was none to help her, the foe saw her and mocked at her downfall.*

*Jerusalem, return to the Lord thy God.*

### **Audivi vocem de caelo**

Words: Revelation 14:13

Music: Duarte Lobo (c. 1565–1646)

Audivi vocem de caelo dicentem mihi: beati mortui qui in Domino moriuntur.

*I heard a voice from heaven, saying to me: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*

## **Magnificat secundi toni**

Words: Canticle at Vespers; Luke 1: 46–55

Music: Duarte Lobo

Magnificat anima mea Dominum

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est, et sanctum nomen eius.

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo, dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis et divites dimisit inanes,

Suscepit Israel puerum suum recordatus misericordiæ suæ,

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in sæcula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto:

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

*My soul magnifies the Lord: and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*

*For he has looked on the lowliness of his handmaiden: for behold from this time all generations shall call me blessed.*

*For he who is mighty has magnified me: and holy is his name.*

*And his mercy is on those who fear him in every generation.*

*He has shown strength with his arm: he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

*He has deposed the mighty from their seat: and has exalted the humble.*

*He has filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he has sent empty away.*

*Mindful of his mercy he has helped his servant Israel.*

*As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.*

*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:*

*As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*