

Pinchgut Opera
Phoenix Central Park

Splendour of Venice
Recorded Sunday 3 March 2019
Dangrove, Alexandria

For Phoenix Central Park

Singers

Sopranos: Amy Moore, Anna Sandstrom, Chloe Lankshear
Mezzos: Steph Dillon, AJ America
Tenors: Dan Walker, Owen Elsley
Basses: Andrew O'Connor, Benjamin Caukwell

Players

Violins: Matthew Greco, Rafael Font Viera
Viola: Stephen Freeman
Gamba/Bass de violon: Anton Baba
Cornetti: Matthew Manchester
Alto Sackbut: Ros Jorgenson
Tenor Sackbut: Nigel Crocker
Dulcian/Curtal: Simon Rickard

Conductor and chamber organ: Erin Helyard

Director's Note

Polychoral music (or *cori spezzati*—‘broken choirs’) was one of the very first special effects in music history, in which acoustics had a direct influence on composers and performers. This genre plays off the reverberance of large cathedrals and spaces. Autonomous choirs play off each other in a call-and-response technique that plays with the listener’s expectations. The original “surround sound”, polychoral music was a way to animate and theatricalize large spaces, and as such it was often used for consecrations, feast-days, and important celebrations. Although it did not begin in Venice, polychoral music soon found a natural home in the echoing chambers of St Mark’s Basilica. Beginning with Willaert in the sixteenth century, the peak of sophistication with these effects took place under Giovanni Gabrieli. Gabrieli’s works and techniques were highly influential with composers across Europe, and the *Splendour of Venice* showcases some of his works together with those of his followers (including the great Monteverdi himself). We also include Allegri’s famous *Miserere*, famous for its hidden choir singing in echo. Linking all the excerpts together are organ interludes, following Venetian liturgical practice. This concert was especially curated as a kind of “consecration” of the Great Hall at Dangrove, the centre of philanthropist Judith Neilson. We gratefully acknowledge her support and generosity, and also thank Phoenix Artistic Director Dr. Nena Beretin for sharing with us footage of this event.

--Erin Helyard

Program

Monteverdi Vespro della BV Domine ad adiuvandum
Monteverdi Orfeo Dal mio Permesso amato
Monteverdi Orfeo Echo pur ch'a voi ritorno & In questo prato adorno
Monteverdi Vespro della BV Ave maris stella
Monteverdi Messa a 4 voci e Salmi Laetatus sum
Monteverdi Vespro della BV Pulchra es
G. Gabrieli Sonata con tre violini C214
G. Gabrieli In ecclesiis a 15 Symphoniae sacrae 2
G. Gabrieli Sonata pian e forte C175
Alleghi Miserere
G. Gabrieli Canzon primi toni a 8 C170
G. Gabrieli Jubilate deo a 10 Symphoniae sacrae 2

With grateful thanks to Judith Neilson, Nena Beretin and Phoenix Central Park

For Pinchgut Opera

Erin Helyard, Artistic Director
Alison Johnston, Artistic Manager
Andrew Johnston, Operations Manager

Nathan Cox, keyboard tuning
Kayla Burrett, lighting
Ian Garrard, Intense Lighting Hire, Head LX
Byron Cleasby, Production Assistant