

Early Music: Prayers at Nightfall

RTHK Radio 4
10 – 11 am

Programme 2
Sunday 8th May 2005

MUSIC: Deus in adjutorium 97R50 // 12 NB: first 0:42 only

KANE: Hello again: I'm Ciaran Kane welcoming you to the *second* of a short series of "Early Music" programmes focussed on 'prayers at nightfall', mostly music from the Vespers service. I said "mostly", because the very *first* piece today is the lovely hymn "Te lucis ante terminum" (Before the day is ended, we implore you). This is a very old hymn, attested from about 1500 years ago, though most likely *not* written by St Ambrose of Milan as has sometimes been claimed. It's long been part of the *final* prayer-service of the day, the office of Compline rather than Vespers. But then, Compline itself is a spin-off from Vespers; and the Anglican reform of the prayer-day put them back together again under the title of 'Evensong'. "Te lucis" is a short 3-stanza hymn, and has had a number of different *chant* versions. In this recording, from Clare College, Cambridge, the polyphonic second verse is the work of Thomas Tallis, written for the 'old' Compline.

MUSIC: Tallis ---- Te lucis ante terminum 93R03 // 19 1:40.

KANE: Thomas Tallis' "Te lucis ante terminum". In the latin Vespers, before and after each psalm that's sung or recited, and before and after the "Magnificat" canticle, there's a short verse or phrase called an "*antiphon*" which serves as a kind of highlight or as a *motif* to link the psalm with, say, a special festival day. In English this became the 'anthem', which later developed into a separate musical text in its own right. Here's a Magnificat antiphon for Vespers on the Feast of All Saints, which maybe indicates how the *anthem* development began: "O quam gloriosum" (How glorious is the kingdom where all the saints rejoice with Christ). The composer is Spanish-born Tomas Luis de Victoria, and he wrote this in Rome when he was organist at one of the Spanish churches there, in his mid-twenties, before 1575.

MUSIC: Victoria --- O quam gloriosum CD 32683 // 13 2:38

KANE: “O quam gloriosum”, a Magnificat antiphon from the Vespers of the Feast of All Saints, by Spain’s best-known late 16th century composer, Victoria. Victoria was ordained a priest in Rome before he returned to Spain: and my *next* composer today was also a priest, in Venice, and known as “the red priest” because of his hair, Antonio Vivaldi. He wrote a setting of the ‘Magnificat’ for the girls of his Venetian Ospedale in the mid-1710s when he was ‘filling-in’ for the absent or non-existent choirmaster there. In the mid or late 1720s Vivaldi wrote a number of sacred compositions which were *not* intended for girls’ voices, and may have been intended for performance in Rome. He *adapted* his earlier ‘Magnificat’ to fit the style of these later works, dividing it into two choirs. According to the convention of the time, Vivaldi’s ‘Magnificat’ is presented as a series of separate numbers, for one or more soloists and choir. This recording is by Ex Cathedra Chamber Choir and Baroque Orchestra, directed by Jeffrey Skidmore.

MUSIC: Vivaldi --- Magnificat 97R19 // 22 – 30 14:13

KANE: Antonio Vivaldi’s “Magnificat”, (My soul glorifies the Lord). The short invocation introducing this month’s ‘Early Music’ comes from one of the Indian nations of south America, the Chiquitos, who learnt their Christianity *and* its music in the famous Jesuit ‘Reductions’ of what was then known as Paraguay. Italian-born Domenico Zipoli was the most prominent musical influence there, though he was only based in Cordoba for about 9 years before his untimely death at 38, in 1726. Before leaving Italy he’d studied with Alessandro Scarlatti and Bernardo Pasquini, and was making a name for himself as organist and composer. It’s not clear if he was the actual *composer* of that opening invocation, and the setting of Ps 109 (“Dixit Dominus”) that follows it, but it’s certainly associated with him, and was used for Vespers by the Chiquitos of San Rafael Reduction.

MUSIC: Zipoli ---- Deus in adjutorium / Dixit Dominus 97R50 // 12 4:44

KANE: The Vespers psalm, “Dixit Dominus”, Ps 109, as sung by Chiquito

Indians of south America in the mid-18th century. In the same manuscript archives is a Chiquito-language hymn to Mary, translated from a latin motet, “Ad Mariam”, with the music *attributed to* Domenico Zipoli. He certainly *did* write *some* motets in a simple style where his baroque musical language was adapted to the more basic needs and capabilities of the people he was serving. But in any case, this hymn, “Zoipaqui” (‘Our Mother’) was in the repertoire of the Indian community where he lived and taught music.

MUSIC: Zipoli ---- Zoipaqui 97R50 // 11 7:27

KANE: “Zoipaqui”, a hymn to Mary, attributed to Domenico Zipoli, in south America around the middle of the 18th century. Vespers at the grand courts of Europe in the baroque age had the best music and musicians that money could buy, and not infrequently the lords and masters themselves were reasonably competent musicians and *judges* of music. The Austrian emperor Leopold I wrote music and himself set the examinations for court musicians and singers, and compiled choirbooks of music by various late Renaissance composers, which continued to be used by his successors. At the court in Vienna, for the festival of the dedication of the church, a hymn of Palestrina was sung at vespers each year up to about 1730. The hymn, “Coelestis Urbs Jerusalem” (Jerusalem, the Heavenly City) was in two parts, and it was the Viennese custom to have an *organ* interlude between them. Here’s Palestrina’s hymn, together with a keyboard piece by Johann Jakob Froberger. Froberger served as court organist in Vienna for twenty years, mostly under Leopold I’s predecessor Ferdinand III. But he was also often absent from Vienna and travelled widely in 17th century Europe. Leopold fired him shortly after becoming emperor; and not long afterwards Froberger died suddenly at the age of 51, during a Vespers service.

**MUSIC: Palestrina ---- Coelestis Urbs Jerusalem
Froberger ---- Fantasia II (organ) 96R10 // 22 – 24 7:51**

KANE: A Vespers hymn for the celebration of a church dedication, by Palestrina. Johann Pachelbel is known today mostly for his now-oft-repeated and worked-over *canon*. But in his lifetime, between 1653

and 1706, he was very well known indeed especially throughout central and south Germany, and his music was very popular, both keyboard and vocal. He had a wide circle of pupils, who included J.S.Bach's eldest brother Johann Christoph. Pachelbel was from Nuremberg, and after some years studying in Regensburg and Vienna, and then working in a number of central and south German towns, he returned as organist to his home town. He wrote both German and Latin motets, always using the *psalms* for his text, with just one exception. While in German he kept very strictly to the Luther translation, he made his *own* alterations to the texts of Latin psalms. To conclude this week's Early Music: Prayers at Nightfall, here's one of Pachelbel's German psalm-motets, 'Make a Joyful Noise', Ps 100. sung here by Cantus Köln.

MUSIC: Pachelbel ---- Make a Joyful Noise 96R11 // 1 5:33

KANE: [[[Pachelbel's setting from Psalm 108, concluding this week's Early Music programme, based on the prayer-service for the ending of the day, Vespers. I'm Ciaran Kane: and I invite you to listen again at the same time next week.]]]]

Music timings: 41:58

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