

Christmas Pastoral

Concerts: Fri. Dec. 8, St. Luke's 7:30; Sunday Dec. 10, St. Mary's 4 p.m.; Tuesday Dec. 12, Cath. of Immaculate Conception, 7:30

I

Nowell, Owt of your Slepe - men 15th century English carol
Alleluia: A newë work -sopranos & altos 15th century English carol
soloists: Abra Mueller, Jenna Guiggey, Christopher Garrepy

Reading: John 1:1-5;14, Bible trans. by John Wycliffe (1382 to 1395)
John D. Adams

In principio erat verbum Josquin Des Prez (1450-1521)

Reading: from 'A Christmas Carol' Robert Herrick (1591-1674)
Rachel Keller

Resonet in laudibus Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

Reading: Luke 1:26-28; 35 King James Bible
Bruce Canterbury

O Seelenparadies - from Cantata 172 J. S. Bach
Martin Lescault, tenor; Mary Jo Carlsen, violin; Philip Carlsen, cello;
Timothy Burris, archlute; Bruce Fithian, organ

Reading: from the Exeter Book (8th-9th c., anonymous Old English)
Stephen White

Sanctus from *Missa in illo tempore* Claudio Monteverdi

Reading: Luke 2:8-14 King James Bible
Erin Chenard

Gloria from *Missa gantz Teudsch* Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)
soloists: Christine Letcher, Rachel Keller, Martin Lescault, Paul McGovern; Violin I, Mary Jo Carlsen; Violin II, Lauren Hastings Genova; Viola da gamba, Kathryn Sytsma; Cello, Philip Carlsen; organ, Bruce Fithian

II

Reading: Reading: from 'Rosa Mystica' -Gerard Manley Hopkins
(1844-1889) Andra Graichen

Flos florum - Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474)

Christopher Garrupy, Martin Lescault, Bruce Fithian

Reading: Rorate coeli desuper - William Dunbar (1460-1520)

Molly Harmon

Rorate coeli desuper - from 'Kleine geistliche Konzerte Heinrich Schütz

Erin Chenard, Andrea Graichen, John Adams (Dec. 8,12)

Christine Letcher, Jenna Guiggey, Bruce Canterbury (Dec. 10)

Viola da gamba, Kathryn Sytsma; Archlute, Timothy Burris;

organ, Bruce Fithian

Reading: Noël by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872)

Excerpts from 'Pastorale sur la Naissance de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ'

H. 483 Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643-1704)

Bergères - Erin Chenard, Christine Letcher, Rachel Keller

Bergers - Bruce Canterbury, Martin Lescault, Paul McGovern

L'ancien - John D. Adams

l'Ange - Molly Harmon

Second Ange - Andrea Graichen

Violin I, Mary Jo Carlsen

Violin II, Lauren Hastings Genova;

Cello, Philip Carlsen;

Viola da gamba - Kathryn Sytsma;

Archlute - Timothy Burris

Positif organ - Bruce Fithian

The St Mary Schola

Soprano: Erin Chenard, Molly Harmon, Rachel Keller, Christine Letcher

Mezzo-soprano: Andrea Graichen, Jenna Guiggey, Abra Mueller

Countertenor: Christopher Garrepy

Tenor: Bruce Fithian, Martin Lescault, Paul McGovern

Baritone, Bass: John D. Adams, Bruce Canterbury, Stephen White

Violin I: Mary Jo Carlsen

Violins II: Lauren Hastings Genova

Recorder: Scotte Budde

Recorder: Edwin Douglas

Viola da gamba: Kathryn Sytsma

Cello: Philip Carlsen

Theorbo: Timothy Burris

Positif organ: Bruce Fithian

Translations and Readings

Wycliffe Bible, John 1:1-5; 14 (middle English)

1 In the bigynnyng was the word, and the word was at God, and God was the word.

2 This was in the bigynnyng at God.

3 Alle thingis weren maad bi hym, and withouten hym was maad no thing, that thing that was maad.

4 In hym was lijf, and the lijf was the liyt of men; and the liyt schyneth in derknessis,

5 and derknessis comprehendiden not it.

14 And the word was maad man, and dwellyde among vs, and we han seyn the glorie of hym, as the glorie of the `oon bigetun sone of the fadir, ful of grace and of treuthe.

In principio erat Verbum,

et Verbum erat apud Deum,

et Deus erat Verbum.

Hoc erat in principio apud Deum.

Omnia per ipsum facta sunt:

et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est.

In ipso vita erat,

et vita erat lux hominum:

et lux in tenebris lucet,

*et tenebræ eam non comprehenderunt.
Et Verbum caro factum est,
et habitavit in nobis:
et vidimus gloriam ejus,
gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre
plenum gratiæ et veritatis.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

From 'A Christmas Carol' Robert Herrick

What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Heart, ear, and eye, and everything.
Awake! the while the active finger
Runs division with the singer.
Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honor to this day,
That sees December turned to May.

*Resonet in laudibus cum iucundis plausibus
Sion cum fidelibus apparuit, quem genuit Maria.
Sunt impleta quae praedixit Gabriel. Eia.
Virgo Deum genuit, quem divina voluit clementia.
Hodie apparuit in Israel, ex Maria virgine est natus Rex.
Magnum nomen Domini, Emmanuel,
quod annunciatum est per Gabriel*

Let the praises ring out with lovely sounds
Zion and their followers, He who was born of Mary has appeared;
Gabriel's prophesies have been fulfilled. Eia.
The virgin has given birth to God as divine mercy willed.

Today a king has appeared in Israel, born of the virgin Mary.
Great is the Lord's name: Emmanuel, as announced by Gabriel.

Luke 1:26-28; 35 King James Bible

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favoured, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

From Cantata 172 J. S. Bach

*O Seelenparadies,
Das Gottes Geist durchwehet,
Der bei der Schöpfung blies,
Der Geist, der nie vergehet;
Auf, auf, bereite dich,
Der Tröster nahet sich.*

O paradise of the soul,
fanned by the Spirit of God,
which blew at creation,
the Spirit, which never passes away;
arise, arise, prepare yourself,
the Comforter approaches.

From 'The Exeter Book' 8th-9th century

*Thu eart se wealsitan the tha wyrhtan iu
withwurpon to weorce. Wel the greiseth
thaet thu heafod sie healle maerre,
ond gesomnige side weallas.*

Forthon hy, daedhwaete, dome geswithde,

*thaet sothfaeste seraphinnes cynn,
uppe mid englum a bremende,
“Halig eart thu, heahengla brego,
soth sigores frea, simle thu bist halig.”*

Translation by Charles W. Kennedy:

Thou art the wall-stone that of old the workmen
from their work rejected: Well it beseemeth thee
that thou be head of the great hall
and unite the spacious walls with a fast joint.

Wherefore the righteous band of seraphims
with glory crowned
ever sing fervently with angels on high,
“Holy art thou, holy Lord of archangels,
righteous king of victory; O Lord of Hosts, ever art thou holy.”

Sanctus - Monteverd

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini. Osanna in excelsis.*

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Luke 2:8-14 King James Bible

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping
watch over their flock by night.
And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord
shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings
of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Gloria - Praetorius

*Glory sey Gott in der Höhe,
Und auf Erden Fried den Menschen Wohlgefallen.*

Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace, goodwill towards all.

*Wir loben dich an, wir beten dich an,
Wir preisen dich, wir sagen dir danck umb deiner grossen Ehre willen.*

We praise you, we pray to you,
we exalt you, we give you thanks for your great glory

*Herr Gott himlischer König, Gott allmächtiger Vater,
Herr eingeborner Sohn Jesu Christe du aller Höchster;*

Lord God, heavenly King, God the father almighty,
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ;

*Herr Gott Lamb Gottes, ein Sohn des Vaters,
der du nimbst die Sünde der Welt,
erbarm dich unser.*

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takes aay the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

*Qui tollis
Der du hinnimbst die Sünde der Welt,*

*nimb an unser Gebet,
Der du sitzt zu der Rechten des Vaters,
erbarm dich unser.*

You, who takes away the sins of the world,
Listen to our prayer,
You, who sits at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

*Denn du bist allein heilig, du bist allein der Herr,
du bist der Allerhöchste, Jesu Christe,
samt dem heiligem Geist
in der Herrlichkeit Gott des Vaters: Amen*

For you only are holy, you alone are the Lord,
you are the highest of all, Jesus Christ,
together with the Holy Ghost
in the glory of God the Father. Amen

Reading: from 'Rosa Mystica' - Gerard Manley Hopkins

The rose is a mystery - where is it found?
Is it anything true? Does it grow upon ground?
It was made of earth's mould but it went from men's eyes
And its place is a secret and shut in the skies.

*In the garden of God, in the daylight divine
Find me a place by thee, mother of mine*

Flos florum - Guillaume Dufay
*Flos florum, fons hortorum, regina polorum,
spes veniæ, lux letitiæ, medicina dolorum.
virga recens et virgo decens, tu forma bonorum:
parce reis et opem fer eis pro pace piorum,
pasce tuos, succure tuis, miserere tuorum.*

Flower of flowers, fount of gardens, queen of the heavens,
hope of pardon, light of joy, remedy of sorrows.

fresh branch and seemly virgin, model of goodness:
spare the guilty and bring them a reward in the peace of the righteous,
feed your own, succour your own, have mercy upon your own.

Rorate coeli desuper - William Dunbar (1460-1520)

Heavens, distill your balmy showers,
For now is risen the bright day star
From the rosemary, flower of flowers.
The clear sun, whom no cloud devours,
Surmounting Phoebus in the East,
Is come down of his heavenly towers
ET NOBIS PUER NATUS EST.

Rorate coeli - Heinrich Schütz

*Rorate, coeli, desuper, et nubes pluant justum; aperiatur terra et germinet
salvatorem. (Introit, Advent IV)*

Let dew fall, heavens, from above, and let the clouds pour forth their proper
rain; let the earth be opened and bring forth the savior as a shoot.

Noël by Théophile Gautier

*Le ciel est noir, la terre est blanche;
– Cloches, carillonnez gaîment ! –
Jésus est né; – la Vierge penche
Sur lui son visage charmant.*

*Pas de courtines festonnées
Pour préserver l'enfant du froid;
Rien que les toiles d'araignées
Qui pendent des poutres du toit.*

*La neige au chaume coud ses franges,
Mais sur le toit s'ouvre le ciel
Et, tout en blanc, le choeur des anges*

Chante aux bergers: »Noël ! Noël ! »

The sky is black, the earth is white;
Bells, ring out gayly!
Jesus is born; the virgin's charming face
bends over him.

No curtains festoon him,
protecting him from the cold;
Only spider webs
Which hang from the roof's rafters.

The snow from the thatch gathers in his tresses
But on the roof the heavens open up
And, all in white, the chorus of angels
Sing to the shepherds: "Noël! Noël!"

Pastorale sur la naissance de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ - Charpentier

*Bergère: Que nos soupirs, Seigneur, réveille tes bontés.
Ce ne sont point les maux de cette triste vie
que ton peuple affligé de finir te supplie
Mais le péché qui les a mérités.
Que nos soupirs, etc.*

Shepherdess: May our sighs, Lord, kindle your acts of goodness.
It is not the troubles of this sad life
which your afflicted people hoping to end, entreat you;
rather it the sin that they have earned.

*Deux Bergers: Il est temps, Seigneur, que tu paraisses.
De tes divines lois on n'observe plus rien.
Pas un seul qui fasse le bien,
pas un seul qui te reconnaisse.
Le règne du péché va croissant à tes yeux.
Plus l'homme vit, plus il s'égare.
Fais donc pleuvoir du haut des cieux ta justice qui le répare.*

Two shepherds: It is time, Lord, for you to appear!
Your divine laws are no longer observed.
There is no one who does good,
no one who recognizes you.
The reign of sin grows in your sight.
The more we live, the more we stray.
Let your justice from the high heavens rain upon us, so that it may repair us.

*Du démon triomphant viens confondre l'effort.
Affranchir la nature en ses fers prisonnière,
et ramener à la lumière tes peuples languissants
dans l'ombre de la mort.*

Confound the triumphant devil's efforts!
Free nature from her iron prison bars,
and bring back to light your languishing people
under the shadow of death!

*L'Ancien: Ecouter-moi, peuple fidèle,
Si j'entends bien nos saints écrits
les temps de l'heureuse nouvelle
sont sur le point d'être accomplis.
La semaine mystérieuse que vit de si loin Daniel
s'avance pour ouvrir le ciel à la nature malheureuse.
Après tout le bruit et l'éclat du changement des monarchies
tout est dans le tranquille état que demandent les prophéties,
Demandons-en l'effet, demandons le toujours,
heureux si c'était en nos jours!*

The ancient one: Listen to me, faithful people!
If I rightly understand our saintly texts,
the time for happy news
is ready to be accomplished.
This mysterious week which Daniel foresaw so long ago is coming,
so that the heavens will open upon our sad nature.
After the clangor and flames of changing monarchies,

everything is now quiet, which the prophecies foretold,
Let us ask for this, let us always ask for this, this happiness if it could be in
our time.

*Bergers: Cieux, répandez votre rosée,
fondez-vous divine nuée,
versez le juste en ces bas lieux.
Ouvre ton sein, terre féconde,
et conçois le Sauveur du monde pour le faire éclore à nos yeux.*

Shepherds: Heavens, let your dew spread over us,
melt over us, divine clouds,
Pour justice upon these base spaces!
Open your breast, fertile earth,
and let the savior of the world be conceived,
so that he will shine in our eyes.

*L'Ange: Régnez, calme profond sur la terre et les mers,
régnez jusqu'au plus haut des airs.
Cieux, redoublez votre silence.
Du trône souverain qui régit l'univers,
le verbe auteur de tout vient prendre ici naissance,
que tout se taise à sa présence.*

The angel: Let there reign profound calm upon the earth and the seas,
let this reign from the highest skies!
Heavens, double your silence!
From the sovereign throne who rules the universe,
the author of the word of all will now be born;
may everything be silent in his presence!

*Bergers: Dans les lieux écartés, d'où peut venir ce bruit?
Quelle charmante voix a frappé mon oreille?
Quelle lumière au milieu de la nuit!
Que nous promet cette merveille?
Pasteurs! Qu'entendons-nous, qu'est-ce que nous voyons?
tout est en feu, fuyons, fuyons amis, fuyons.*

Shepherds: In these remote places, where does this sound come from?
What is this charming voice which strikes my ear?
What a great light in the middle of the night!
What does this marvel promise us?
Shepherds! What do we hear, what do we see?
Everything is aflame, let's flee, flee!

*L'Ange: Pasteurs, ne craignez rien.
Messager du Très-Haut, je viens pour vous apprendre
la nouvelle du plus grand bien,
que vous puissiez jamais attendre.
Reprenez vos esprits, pasteurs, ne craignez rien.*

The angel: shepherds, do not be afraid!
I, the messenger from the Most High, come to let you know
about the greatest goodness
that you could ever expect.
Gather up your spirits, shepherds, don't be afraid!

*L'Ancien: Messager du TrèsHaut, qu'avez-vous à nous dire?
Pouvons-nous croire qu'aujourd'hui,
notre Dieu veut que son peuple respire -
Trouvons-nous grâce devant lui?
Messager du TrèsHaut, qu'avez-vous à nous dire?*

The ancient one: Messenger of the Most High, what are you telling us?
Can we believe that today
our God wants his people to breathe,
will we find grace before him?
Messenger of the Most High, what are you telling us?

*L'Ange: De l'univers entier, apprenez le bonheur.
La ville de David en ce moment voit naître un enfant,
notre maître, un Dieu votre Sauveur.*

The angel: From the entire universe, learn of this happiness!
In the town of David at this time a child will be born,
our master, God your savior.

*Bergers: ministre ailé du Dieu de gloire,
daignez encor le répéter, et nous n'en pouvons douter,
et nous n'osons le croire.*

Shepherds: O winged minister of God' glory,
Repeat this again for us; we dare not believe it!

*L'Ange: De l'univers entier apprenez le bonheur.
La ville de David voit naître le Sauveur.
Vous le connaîtrez à ces marques:
Un enfant nouveau-né, de langes revêtu
et dans une crèche étendu, est ce monarque des monarques.
Allez lui rendre vos honneurs, allez lui faire votre offrande,
et sachez que celle des coeurs est tout ce qu'il demande.*

The angel: From the entire universe, learn of this happiness!
The town of David will see this savior born.
You will recognize him by these signs:
a new born child, wrapped in swaddling clothes,
the monarch of monarchs will be and lying in a manger.
Go! Offer him your devotions, go to him with your offerings,
and know that the offerings of the heart are all that he asks for.

Bergers: Nous partons, nous allons, divin esprit, nous y volons.

The shepherds: Let us leave, let us go, divine spirit, we fly there!

*L'Ange: Céleste compagnons, trônes, vertus, Archanges,
venez, et du Seigneur, célébrons les louanges.*

The angel: Celestial companions: thrones, virtues, archangels - come, and
from God, let us celebrate with these praises!:

*Les Anges: Gloire dans les hauts lieux, gloire éternelle.
Louange à jamais dans les cieux,
louange à l'essance immortelle.*

The angels: Glory in the highest, eternal glory.
Praise for ever in the heavens,
praise to the eternal essence.

*Second Ange: Paix en terre, paix à jamais, repos, douceur,
paix assurance, paix sans fin, éternelle paix,
aux objets de sa complaisance.*

Second angel: Peace on earth, peace for ever, repose, sweetness,
confirmed peace, peace without end, eternal peace
to the objects of his love.

Les Anges: Gloire dans les hauts lieux, etc.
The angels: Glory in the highest, etc.

*L'Ange: Chantez donc à l'envie,
chantez à la naissance de ce Roi glorieux.
Un si rare présent, un don si précieux
ne veut être reçu qu'avec réjouissance.
Chantez donc à l'envie,
chantez à la naissance de ce Roi glorieux.*

The angel: Sing, then, of these desires!
Sing about the birth of this glorious King!
Such a rare present, a precious gift
can only be received by rejoicing!
Sing, then, of these desires!
Sing about the birth of this glorious King!

*Bergers: Faisons de nos joyeux cantiques retenir le vague des airs.
Echos, échos, répétez nos concerts, echo: répétez nos concerts.
Nos voix et nos flûtes rustiques
auront peut-être le bonheur de plaire au Dieu naissant
qui connaît notre coeur.*

The shepherds: Let us stop the winds in their tracks with our joyful songs!
Echoes! Repeat our singing!
Our voices and our rustic flutes

will perhaps please our God newly born
who knows our hearts.

*Bergère: O nuit en merveille féconde,
ô nuit en qui Jésus nous luit.
Non, non le plus beau jour du monde
n'a jamais à nos yeux tant de pompe produit.*

Shepherdess: O marvelous, fruitful night,
O night in which Jesus' light shines upon us.
No, no, the most beautiful day in the world
in our eyes could never equal such splendor!

*Berger: Flambeau qui naît du sein de l'onde,
flambeau dont l'onde est le tombeau;
Non, non l'or de ta tresse blonde
n'eut jamais tant d'éclat
que Jésus au berceau.*

Shepherd: For a torch which is born in the breast of the waves,
the waves can be the tomb of the torch
But no, no, the gold of your blond tresses
never had as much brilliance
as Jesus in his cradle!

*Deux bergères: Ne laissons point sans louanges
celle qui nous a donné le céleste pain des Anges
en cet enfant nouveau-né.*

Two shepherdesses: Let us not forget to praise her,
who has given us the heavenly bread of the angels
with this newly born child!

*Deux bergers: Chantons cette vierge pure,
chantons son humilité qui du ciel
a mérité que l'auteur de la nature
prit dans sa chaste clôture notre faible humanité.*

Two shepherds: Let us sing about this pure virgin;
let us sing of her humility which from heaven
allowed the author of nature
to take in her chaste enclosure our feeble humanity.

Tous: Chantons cette vierge pure,
chantons son humilité qui du ciel
a mérité que l'auteur de la nature
prit dans sa chaste clôture notre faible humanité,
sans que son intégrité en reçut aucune injure.
Chantons cette vierge pure, chantons son humilité.

All: Let us sing about this pure virgin;
let us sing of her humility which from heaven
allowed the author of nature
to take in her chaste enclosure our feeble humanity,
so that her integrity received no injury.
Let us sing of this virgin pure: let us sing of her humility!

Translation by Bruce Fithian

Notes

Michael Praetorius uniquely adapted the great polychoral style of the Venetians like Giovanni Gabrielli to the German church. The gloria movement from his massive *Missa gantz Teudsch* written in 1619 shortly after Luther's Reformation, uses a sumptuous double chorus with instruments, and adapts the German language to the Italian Venetian style

Charpenitier's *Pastorale sur la Naissance de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ* begins with an extensive movement for the season of advent, the preparation for Christ's birth. There is very moving music for soloists and chorus depicting the longing for a savior. The second part of the cantata celebrates the birth with rousing choruses and instrumental dances with strings, recorders and continuo.

If we exaggerate a little, the life of Marc-Antoine Charpentier had something of the dramas, he probably would have liked to compose, if he had been given the chance. But the operatic scene was dominated by Jean-Baptiste Lully, who wanted to make sure that no Italian influences disturbed the development of a purely French style. Charpentier had been in Rome for some years and that discredited him as a true French composer. He created just one opera, *Médée*, generally considered one of the masterworks of 17th-century French music.

His Italian affiliations also prevented him from taking a major position in French musical life, for instance at the court of Louis XIV. For about twenty years he was in the service of the family De Guise, which had lived for some time in Italy and loved Italian music. For the Hôtel de Guise, as the Maison de Guise was known, he composed a large amount of music, among them the *Pastorale sur la naissance de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, which is the main work in this recording of the Ensemble Correspondances, directed by Sébastien Daucé.

The *pastorale* was a popular genre in the second half of the 17th century. Charpentier composed at least five such pieces; the best-known is *Actéon*. Originally it was a secular genre. In 1672 Charpentier composed the *pastorale Eglogue en Musique et en Danse* as a prologue to Molière's play *Le Malade imaginaire*. But the features of such a piece were well suited to the subject of the shepherds, who are chosen by God to be the first to hear about the birth of Jesus. The *Pastorale* is in two parts and it is likely that, in between, a sermon was held. In the first part several protagonists - a shepherdess, an old shepherd - express the misery of everyday life as a consequence of mankind having fallen into sin. The old shepherd expresses his expectation of salvation coming soon and this is followed by an angel announcing the birth of Jesus. "The Word, author of all things, comes here to be born. Let all be silent in his presence". Here Charpentier requires "une grande silence". It is followed by a lively dialogue between the old shepherd and the angel; the latter is supported by a

host of angels, who end the first part with a song of praise: "Glory in the highest".

The second part begins with a shepherdess warning the shepherds of the danger of wolves. They have already taken some of her sheep. "Alas, am I not thousand upon thousand times unhappy?" But she is answered by the other shepherds: "Happy thousand upon thousand times". They urge each other to "banish all sorrows"; the loss of sheep is more than made up for by the birth of the Saviour. The piece goes on with the shepherds expressing their joy about the fact of Jesus' birth and its effects on mankind.

This *Pastorale* dates from 1684. In the next two years Charpentier adapted it: he replaced the second part by new lyrics and music. Both versions are recorded here which allows the listener to hear every version complete. In the second version of 1685 the second part is about the fact of the birth of Jesus. The old shepherd we met in the first part presents the new-born child to the shepherds. The contrast between the divine status of baby Jesus and the rather poor surroundings are emphasized. Charpentier includes elements of folk music here. It ends with a chorus in praise of the Virgin Mary. The third version of 1686 is shorter and here it is the Sun which is used as a symbol of the birth of Jesus. The sun, which rises in the morning, has limited powers as elsewhere it is night. In contrast the Lord is "surrounded by radiance" and is "ever bright, ever new and everlasting beyond all eternity". A chorus of shepherds about the "source of light and grace" closes this version.

This *Pastorale* is a mixture of solos and tutti, often in quick succession. Some passages are first sung by a solo voice and then repeated by the tutti. There are fine solos by some of the members of the ensemble, in particular the sopranos Caroline Weynants and Violaine Le Chenadec, the baritone Etienne Bazola and the bass Renaud Bres. Notable is the important role of the instruments: two recorders and two violins.

In between the first version of the *Pastorale* and the two next versions we hear a different kind of music, written for the liturgy. The *Grandes Antiennes O de l'Avent* - or *Salut de la veille des O et les 7 O suivant le romain* as they are officially called - date from the 1690s, when Charpentier worked as *maître de musique* of the principal Jesuit church

in Paris, St Louis. These seven *O antiphons*, as they are often called, root in a long tradition which goes back to the 8th century. On each of the seven days before Christmas one of these antiphons was sung at the Vespers Magnificat. They appeal for the coming of the Saviour who is given the names which refer to his qualities: wisdom (*sapientia*), Lord (*Adonai*), root of Jesse (*radix Jesse*), key of David (*clavis David*), dawn (*oriens*), King of the nations (*Rex gentium*) and 'God with us' (*Emmanuel*). They are preceded by *O salutaris hostia*, sung on 16 December; the text is by St Thomas of Aquinas. The *O Antiphons* are set for one to four voices and basso continuo; in three of them these are joined by instruments. The antiphons are divided into two sections; the second begins with the word "veni" (come) and here Charpentier often changes the metre to underline the urgency of the appeal. In this recording one of Charpentier's *Noëls sur les instruments* is inserted. This folk song, *Or nous dites Marie*, returns at the end of the *O antiphons*, in a four-part vocal version, which was printed by the Paris publisher Ballard. That is an especially nice addition, as this song's melody is very well-known, but its text is seldom sung. This piece shows that simple music can be very beautiful and moving.

It is given an excellent performance by the ensemble and that goes for the entire recording. I already mentioned some of the soloists from the ensemble. In the *O antiphons* we also hear the beautiful voice of hautecontre Stephen Collardelle; he plays a major role here, which probably can be explained from the fact that Charpentier was an hautecontre himself. The ensembles and choruses are just as good as the solos. This ensemble is one of the best around, especially in regard to the performance of French music of the 17th century. It is disappointing, though, that it apparently is not willing to adopt a historical pronunciation of French. It is rather inconsistent, in particular as it uses a historical - French - pronunciation of Latin.

That said, this disc is one of the best with French music for Christmastide. It is a major acquaintance for every CD collection and a disc you very likely will return to every year at Christmastide.

Johan van Veen

Michael Praetorius uniquely adapted the great polychoral style of the Venetians like Giovanni Gabrielli to the German church. The gloria movement from his massive *Missa gantz Teutsch* written in 1619 shortly after Luther's Reformation, uses a sumptuous double chorus with instruments, and adapts the German language to the Italian Venetian style.

Charpenitier's *Pastorale sur la Naissance de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ* begins with an extensive movement for the season of advent, the preparation for Christ's birth. There is very moving music for soloists and chorus depicting the longing for a savior. The second part of the cantata celebrates the birth with rousing choruses and instrumental dances with strings, recorders and continuo.