



CANTICA SACRA

Sacred music from d'Astorga & Mozart

Musical Director
Thomas Nikora

SUNDAY 2 OCTOBER, 3PM
St Andrew's on The Terrace
Wellington

1. Emanuele d'Astorga – Stabat Mater

The Stabat Mater Dolorosa (Latin: the sorrowful mother stood) is thought to have been written by Jacopone da Todi, a Franciscan friar in the 13th century. The text was taken into the Roman liturgy in the late 15th century. The text describes Mary's sorrow at the cross of Jesus Christ. Since the 15th century, approximately 600 composers and musicians have been inspired to set the text to music; right up to modern times.

The earliest established melody of the Stabat Mater was sung in Italy on the Friday after Palm Sunday. It was banned by the Council of Trent (an ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church) during the 16th century. However, in 1727, the Stabat Mater was sanctioned by Pope Benedict XIII and was sung on the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of our Lady (nowadays 15 Sept). The popular hymn is also sung during Lent, for the service of the Stations of the Cross.

Composers Vivaldi, Pergolesi, Haydn, Rossini, Dvořák, Verdi, Schubert, and Arvo Pärt are just some of the hundreds who have set the Stabat Mater into music. Of the more than 60 English translations of the Stabat Mater, Edward Caswall's version (1849) is the most extensively used. Cantoris will sing Emanuele d'Astorga's moving and melancholic work, believed to have been written in the early 17th century and first performed in 1713.

An Italian of Spanish descent, d'Astorga was born in Sicily and well known for his chamber cantatas, of which more than 150 survived. The Stabat Mater is his most enduring work and is his only sacred composition to survive. d'Astorga is believed to have died in 1736 in Bohemia, but many facts about his life are still uncertain.

2. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Ave verum corpus

Ave verum corpus (Latin: Hail, True Body) is a short hymn that dates back to the 14th century and attributed to Pope Innocent VI. The hymn has been set to music by various composers, including Mozart who composed his motet in the final year of his life (1791). Mozart wrote the gentle and serene composition for Anton Stoll, a friend who was a chorus master in a church in Baden. He wrote it as a thank-you for Stoll who helped with planning travel arrangements for Mozart's pregnant wife Constanze, who visited a spa near Baden. The motet was written to be performed on the Feast of Corpus Christi by the church's small choir.

3. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – Vesperae solennes de confessore

Vesperae solennes de confessore was composed by Mozart when he was 24 in 1780 for the Salzburg Cathedral, shortly after his mother's death in Paris. The addition "de confessore" was not Mozart's own (added by a later hand to his manuscript) and suggests that the work may have been intended to be sung at Vespers celebrating a specific (but unknown) saint's day. Investigations into who the saint in question is has been inconclusive. "Solennes" simply indicates that the work has orchestral accompaniment.

Known during his lifetime primarily as an opera composer, the influence of operatic style was often present in non-operatic works by Mozart. With the Vesperae, Mozart infuses a sacred text with the spirit of opera, while still maintaining the strict and proper religious spirit of the times. The operatic style is introduced by the music given to the soloists; middle section of the Confitebor, the Beatus Vir and the Magnificat, and the Laudate Dominum, set as an operatic aria for the soprano soloist.

- I. **Dixit**
- II. **Confitebor**
- III. **Beatus vir**
- IV. **Laudate pueri**
- V. **Laudate Dominum**
- VI. **Magnificat**



MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Thomas Nikora has been Cantoris' musical director since the start of the year. For his first concert with Cantoris, Thomas led the choir on a journey across the years of music with a programme that brought together two extremes in music, baroque and Broadway.

For this next concert, Thomas has put together a programme of sublime sacred compositions by the much-loved composer Mozart, and the lesser-known d'Astorga.

Thomas has high ambitions for Cantoris and aims to get the choir doing larger works in the near future and would love nothing better than for the choir to become top of its game. To find out more about Thomas, please visit our website cantoris.net.nz.

CANTORIS

Formed over 40 years ago, Cantoris aimed to explore early music repertoire that was not at the time, commonly performed. Since then the choir has evolved to explore a much wider repertoire under the musical direction of talents such as Robert Oliver, Michael Vinten, Rachel Hyde, Richard Apperley, Brian O'Regan, Bruce Cash and our current director Thomas Nikora.

For more information on the choir, sign up for our mailing list or enquire about joining the choir, please visit our website - cantoris.net.nz.

SOLOISTS

Olivia Marshall ~ *Soprano* | Linden Loader ~ *Alto* | Jamie Young ~ *Tenor* | Joe Haddow ~ *Bass*

CANTORIS SINGERS

Soprano

Catherine Conland, Dora Coventry, Renata Colwell, Ro Cumming, Shirleen Oh, Suzanne Manning, Victoria Smith, Viv Hurnen.

Alto

Aedeon Boadita, Gail Milner, Helen Milne, Maria Cash, Rosemary Coppell, Ruth Sharman, Vivienne Coppell.

Tenor

Clive Conland, Francesco Van Eerd, Max George, Paul Beres, Paul Oliver.

Bass

Adam Jaffe, Danny Sung, David Crabbe, Ed Schmidt, Jolyon Stewart, Peter Russell.

ENSEMBLE

The choir will be supported by an ensemble of musicians from Wellington.

DECEMBER CONCERT

Please join us on Saturday 3 December at the Museum of Wellington (formerly the Museum of City & Sea), where Cantoris will be giving a performance premiering new work by Jonathan Berkahn, based on William Blake's poem "The Tyger". Jonathan is a highly sought after accompanist, musical director of several choirs and visiting lecturer at the NZ School of Music. Entry fee: koha.

KEEP UP TO-DATE

To stay up to-date with Cantoris news (upcoming concert details, reviews, special choir news, etc), sign up to our newsletter. Complete the form at the reception desk or visit our website cantoris.net.nz.

