



## **STILE ANTICO**

**TOWARD THE DAWN**

Filmed at **Beverley Minster, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

Streamed Online **5<sup>th</sup> June 2021** until **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021**

## **TOWARD THE DAWN**

A musical journey from evening to sunrise

### **EVENING**

'Twilight gray had in her sober livery all things clad' (Milton)

Draw on, sweet night                      **John Wilbye** (1574–1638)

Christe, qui lux es et dies IV        **Robert White** (c. 1530–1574)

Come, sable night                      **John Ward** (c. 1589–1638)

### **THE SMALL HOURS**

'Come Sleep, the certain knot of peace' (Sidney)

Vigilate                                      **William Byrd** (c. 1540–1623)

Toutes les nuitz                          **Orlande de Lassus** (c. 1532–1594)

Miserere                                      **Gregorio Allegri** (1582–1652)

Gentle Sleep                              **Nico Muhly** (b. 1981)  
Muhly/Shakespeare  
Published by Chester Music Ltd

### **DAWN**

'The morning steals upon the night, melting the darkness' (Shakespeare)

O nata lux                                      **Thomas Tallis** (c. 1505–1585)

Ecco mormorar l'onde                  **Claudio Monteverdi** (1567–1643)

Ave Dei Patris filia                      **John Taverner** (c.1490–1545)

Tonight's programme charts a course from twilight to sunrise, echoing both the rhythms of church liturgy and the medieval experience of night, seductive and unsettling in equal measure.

We begin with John Wilbye's *Draw on, sweet night*, published in 1598 in the last years of Elizabeth I's reign. The poet, wallowing in gloom, yearns for darkness to mirror his own inner state. Wilbye's music perfectly captures the bittersweet quality of the text in chains of deliciously drawn-out dissonance. A similar poetic conceit underlies *Come, sable night* from the 1613 First Book of Madrigals by the Jacobean composer John Ward, whose outstanding music deserves to be much better known. Ward clothes his melancholy text in music of startling nuance and harmonic richness.

Between these madrigals we sing one of four settings of *Christe, qui lux es et dies* by Robert White, whose career spanned the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth I. Despite its Latin text, this glorious music is probably Elizabethan, and would therefore have been intended for private devotion. White alternates verses of plainsong and polyphony, with the melody heard in equal note values in the highest part. The text – a plea for God's protection through the night – would have been sung at compline (the last of the monastic hours) during Lent, itself a period of metaphorical darkness before the new light of Easter.

William Byrd served as a Gentleman of Elizabeth's Chapel Royal, but nevertheless remained active in the undercover Catholic community. His music often expresses coded support for the Catholic cause – nowhere more than in his subversive 1589 *Cantiones sacrae*, whose texts, while scrupulously biblical, would have carried clear resonances for his persecuted Catholic friends. The superb *Vigilate* is a case in point, exhorting true believers to stay awake and prepare for the return of their judge. Byrd pulls out all the stops, depicting the crowing of the cockerel, the drooping head of the lethargic believer, and the sudden panic at the unexpected return of the master, in vivid madrigalian fashion.

Night arrives, but our sleep is fitful at best. The luscious chanson *Toutes les nuitz* by Lassus, first published in 1563, depicts a solitary lover with only a pillow to kiss; constantly shifting between minor and major, it sounds like a study in frustration. Insomnia of a different sort characterises Nico Muhly's *Gentle Sleep*, a 2016 Wigmore Hall commission for Stile Antico. Muhly sets verses from *Henry IV Part II*, in which sleep evades the careworn monarch. Muhly wrote that 'setting Shakespeare is near impossible and risks becoming "an act of vandalism".' His solution was therefore 'to fragment the text so that specific lines emerge from a soporific texture of repeated phrases.' The result is a rich, complex tapestry of sound, by turns lulling and insistent, but never finding repose.

We mark the darkest watch of the night with the famous *Miserere mei* (c. 1638) by Gregorio Allegri, written for the service of tenebrae in Holy Week – the bleakest moment of the entire liturgical year. Few works have been the subject of so much myth-making; tradition relates that it was so jealously guarded that unauthorized copyists risked excommunication, that its famous ornaments were never notated, but solemnly passed from singer to singer, and that it was finally smuggled out of the Sistine Chapel in the head of the young Mozart. Though most of this is demonstrably untrue, it is clear that the work we have now is far from what Allegri wrote – and in particular that the famous passage containing the soprano top Cs is a bizarre conflation of different editions and transpositions.

The work, then, is inauthentic, but it is precisely its inauthenticity which has become its most enduring feature: this odd hybrid has a hypnotic beauty all of its own. A complete setting of the penitential Psalm 51, it is based on the plainchant *tonus peregrinus*. Two separate choirs, one of five voices and one of four, harmonise and elaborate the chant in falsobordone style, alternating with verses of unadorned plainchant. Only in the final psalm verse do the two choirs come together to close the work in satisfyingly monumental fashion.

The first glimmers of dawn are signalled by Tallis's *O nata lux*, taken from England's earliest printed publication of music, the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae*. The text, a hymn appropriate for the morning service of lauds, describes Christ as 'Light born of Light'; the crystalline simplicity of Tallis's music conjures an atmosphere of freshness and renewal. Soon we sense nature stirring in the morning breeze, painted with exquisite poise by Monteverdi in *Ecco mormorar l'onde* from the Second Book of Madrigals (1590).

Our musical sunrise arrives in the shape of John Taverner's immense *Ave Dei Patris filia*. Probably written during the 1520s, it is based on the matins plainchant *Te Deum*, and its text praises the Virgin, who is compared to both the sun and the moon; Taverner relishes the words 'ut sol' (like the sun) playing on their double meaning as the ascending fifth in the medieval hexachord. Like many large-scale antiphons, it falls into two parts – the first in triple time, and the second in duple metre. Sections for solo singers (most thrillingly, for three high voices in the second part) alternate with monumental sections of polyphony for the full choir. The most remarkable music of all is reserved for the final Amen: a dazzling web of complex rhythmic and motivic interplay, leaving the listener bathed in golden light.

**White: Christe, qui lux es et dies**

Noctis tenebras detegis,  
 Lucisque lumen crederis,  
 Lumen beatum praedicans.  
 Precamur Sancte Domine,  
 Defende nos in hac nocte,  
 Sit nobis in te requies,  
 Quietam noctem tribue.  
 Ne gravis somnus irruat,  
 Nec hostis nos surripiat,  
 Nec caro illi consentiens,  
 Nos tibi reos statuatur.  
 Oculi somnum capiant,  
 Cor ad te semper vigilet,  
 Dextera tua protegat  
 Famulos qui te diligunt.  
 Defensor noster aspice,  
 Insidiantes reprime,  
 Guberna tuos famulos,  
 Quos sanguine mercatus es.  
 Memento nostri Domine  
 In gravi isto corpore,  
 Qui es defensor animae,  
 Adesto nobis Domine.  
 Deo Patri sit gloria,  
 Eiusque soli Filio,  
 Cum Spiritu Paraclito,  
 Et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen.

Christ, who art the light and day,  
 You drive away the darkness of night,  
 You are called the light of light,  
 For you proclaim the blessed light.  
 We beseech you, Holy Lord,  
 Protect us this night.  
 Let us take our rest in you;  
 Grant us a tranquil night.  
 Let our sleep be free from care;  
 Let not the enemy snatch us away,  
 Nor flesh conspire within him,  
 And make us guilty in your sight.  
 Though our eyes be filled with sleep,  
 Keep our hearts forever awake to you.  
 May your right hand protect  
 Your willing servants.  
 You who are our shield, behold;  
 Restrain those that lie in wait.  
 And guide your servants whom  
 You have ransomed with your blood.  
 Remember us, O Lord,  
 Who bear the burden of this mortal form;  
 You who are the defender of the soul,  
 Be near us, O Lord.  
 Glory be to God the Father,  
 And to his only Son,  
 With the Spirit, Comforter,  
 Both now and evermore. Amen.

**Byrd: Vigilate**

Vigilate, nescitis enim quando dominus  
 domus veniat, sero, an media nocte, an  
 gallicantu, an mane. Vigilate ergo, ne cum  
 venerit repente, inveniat vos dormientes.  
 Quod autem dico vobis, omnibus dico:  
 vigilate.

Watch ye therefore for you know not  
 when the lord of the house cometh, at  
 even, or at midnight, or at the cock  
 crowing, or in the morning: Watch  
 therefore, lest coming on a sudden, he find  
 you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to  
 all: Watch

**Lassus: Toutes les nuitz**

Toutes les nuitz que sans vous je me  
 couche,  
 Pensant à vous ne fay que sommeiller,  
 Et en revant jusques au resveiller  
 Incessemment vous quiers parmi la couche,  
 Et bien souvent au lieu de vostre bouche  
 En soupirant je baise l'oreiller.

Every night that I sleep without you,  
 Thinking of you makes me want only to  
 slumber,  
 So as to dream of you until awakening  
 Seeking you incessantly in the bed,  
 And often in place of your mouth  
 With a sigh I kiss the pillow.

*Anon*

### **Alleghi: Miserere**

Miserere mei, Deus: secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.  
Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum, dele iniquitatem meam.  
Amplius lava me ab iniquitate mea: et a peccato meo munda me.  
Quoniam iniquitatem meam ego cognosco: et peccatum meum contra me est semper.  
Tibi soli peccavi, et malum coram te feci: ut justificeris in sermonibus tuis, et vincas cum judicaris.  
Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum: et in peccatis concepit me mater mea.  
Ecce enim veritatem dilexisti: incerta et occulta sapientiae tuae manifestasti mihi.  
Asperges me hysopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealabor.  
Auditui meo dabis gaudium et laetitia: et exsultabunt ossa humiliata.  
Averte faciem tuam a peccatis meis: et omnes iniquitates meas dele.  
Cor mundum crea in me, Deus: et spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis.  
Ne proicias me a facie tua: et spiritum sanctum tuum ne auferas a me.  
Redde mihi laetitiam salutaris tui: et spiritu principali confirma me.  
Docebo iniquos vias tuas: et impii ad te convertentur.  
Libera me de sanguinibus, Deus, Deus salutis meae: et exsultabit lingua mea justitiam tuam.  
Domine, labia mea aperies: et os meum annuntiabit laudem tuam.  
Quoniam si voluisses sacrificium, dedissem utique: holocaustis non delectaberis.  
Sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus: cor contritum, et humiliatum, Deus, non despicias.  
Benigne fac, Domine, in bona voluntate tua Sion: ut aedificentur muri Ierusalem.  
Tunc acceptabis sacrificium iustitiae, oblationes, et holocausta: tunc imponent super altare tuum vitulos.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.  
According unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies remove my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin.  
I knowingly confess my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.  
Against Thee only have I sinned, and done evil before Thee: that they may be justified in Thy sayings, and might they overcome when I am judged.  
But behold, I was formed in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me.  
Behold, Thou desirest truth in my innermost being: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.  
Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, make me whiter than snow.  
Open my ears and make me hear of joy and gladness: and my bones that have been humbled shall rejoice.  
Turn away Thy face from my sins: and remember not all my misdeeds.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God: and make anew a righteous spirit within my body.  
Do not cast me away from Thy presence: and take not Thy holy spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.  
I will teach those that are unjust Thy ways: and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.  
Deliver me from blood, O God, the God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips: and my mouth shall spring forth Thy praise.  
For Thou desirest no sacrifice, where others would: with burnt offerings Thou wilt not be delighted.  
Sacrifices of God are broken spirits: dejected and contrite hearts, O God, Thou wilt not despise.  
Deal favourably, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.  
Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with small and large burnt offerings: then shall they lay calves upon your altar.

**Tallis: O nata lux**

O nata lux de lumine,  
Jesu redemptor saeculi,  
Dignare clemens supplicum  
Laudes precesque sumere.  
Qui carne quondam contegi  
Dignatus es pro perditis,  
Nos membra confer

O Light born of Light,  
Jesus, redeemer of the world,  
with loving-kindness deign to receive  
suppliant praise and prayer.  
Thou who once deigned to be clothed in  
flesh  
for the sake of the lost,  
grant us to be members  
of thy blessed body.

**Monteverdi: Ecco mormorar l'onde**

Ecco mormorar l'onde  
e tremolar le fronde  
a l'aura mattutina e gli arboscelli,  
e sovra i verdi rami i vaghi augelli  
cantar soavemente  
e rider l'oriente.  
Ecco già l'alba appare  
e si specchia nel mare  
e rasserena il cielo  
e [le campagne] imperla il dolce gelo,  
e gli alti monti indora.  
O bella e vaga Aurora,  
L'aura è tua messaggera,  
[e tu de l'aura  
ch'ogni arso cor ristaura.

Here are the waves murmuring  
and the foliage quivering  
at the morning breeze; and the shrubs,  
and on the tree branches the pretty birds  
sing softly;  
and the Orient smiles.  
Here dawn looms up  
and is reflected in the sea  
and brightens up the sky  
and beads the sweet ice  
and gilds the tall mountains.  
O beautiful and vague dawn,  
the gentle breeze is your herald  
and you [are the herald] of the breeze  
which refreshes every burnt heart.

Tasso

## **Taverner: Ave Dei Patris filia**

Ave Dei Patris filia nobilissima,  
Dei filii mater dignissima,  
Dei Spiritus sponsa venustissima,  
Dei unius et trini ancilla subiectissima.  
Ave summae aeternitatis filia  
clementissima,  
summae veritatis mater piissima,  
summae bonitatis sponsa benignissima,  
summae trinitatis ancilla mitissima.  
Ave aeternae caritatis desideratissima filia,  
aeternae sapientiae mater gratissima,  
aeternae spirationis sponsa sacratissima,  
aeternae maiestatis ancilla sincerissima.  
Ave Jesu tui filii dulcis filia,  
Christi Dei tui mater alma,  
sponsa sine ulla macula,  
deitatis ancilla sessioni proxima.  
Ave Domini filia singulariter generosa,  
Domini mater singulariter gloriosa,  
Domini sponsa singulariter speciosa,  
Domini ancilla singulariter obsequiosa.  
Ave plena gratia solis regina,  
misericordiae mater, meritis praeclara,  
mundi domina, a patriarchis praesignata,  
imperatrix inferni, a profetis praeconizata.  
Ave virgo facta  
ut sol praelecta,  
mater intacta,  
sicut luna perpulcra,  
salve parens inclita,  
enixa puerpera,  
stella maris praefulgida,  
felix caeli porta:  
esto nobis via recta  
ad aeterna gaudia,  
ubi pax est et gloria.  
O gloriosissima semper virgo Maria.  
Amen.

Hail, most noble daughter of God the father,  
most worthy mater of the Son of God,  
most graceful bride of God's Spirit,  
closest servant of God one and trine.  
Hail, most clement daughter of the highest  
Eternity,  
most blessed mother of the highest Truth,  
most benign bride of the highest Kindness,  
meekest servant of the highest Trinity.  
Hail, most beloved daughter of everlasting Charity,  
most thankful mother of everlasting Wisdom,  
most sacred bride of everlasting Inspiration,  
sincerest servant of everlasting Majesty.  
Hail, sweet daughter of your son Jesus,  
bountiful mother of Christ, your God,  
bride without the slightest blemish,  
handmaid of the coming of the Lord.  
Hail, most singularly generous daughter of the  
Lord,  
most singularly glorious mother of the Lord,  
most singularly beautiful bride of the Lord,  
most singularly obedient handmaid of the Lord.  
Hail, queen of the sun, full of grace,  
mother of mercy, famous by her merits,  
mistress of the world, preordained by the  
patriarchs,  
empress of hell, foretold by the prophets.  
Hail, virgin made  
as unique as the sun,  
mother unblemished,  
as beautiful as the moon,  
hail, famous begetter,  
diligent mother,  
splendid star of the sea,  
auspicious gate of Heaven:  
be for us a straight path  
to eternal joy,  
where peace and glory are.  
Oh, most glorious and ever-virgin Mary.  
Amen



## STILE ANTICO

**Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Rebecca Hickey** *sopranos*

**Emma Ashby, Cara Curran, Hannah Cooke** *altos*

**Andrew Griffiths, Jonathan Hanley, Benedict Hymas** *tenors*

**James Arthur, William Dawes, Nathan Harrison** *basses*

Stile Antico is established as one of the world's most accomplished and innovative vocal ensembles. Working without a conductor, its twelve members have thrilled audiences on four continents with their fresh, vibrant and moving performances of Renaissance polyphony. Its bestselling recordings have earned accolades including the *Gramophone* Award for Early Music, Diapason d'or de l'année, Edison Klassiek Award, and Preis der deutschen Schallplattenkritik. The group has received three Grammy® nominations, and performed live at the 60<sup>th</sup> Grammy® Awards at Madison Square Garden.

Based in London, Stile Antico has appeared at many of the world's most prestigious venues and festivals. The group enjoys a particularly close association with the Wigmore Hall, and has performed at the BBC Proms, Buckingham Palace, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Cité de la Musique, Luxembourg Philharmonie, and Leipzig Gewandhaus. Stile Antico is frequently invited to appear at Europe's leading festivals: highlights include the Antwerp, Bruges, Utrecht and York Early Music Festivals, the Lucerne Easter Festival and the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival

Since 2009 Stile Antico has performed regularly in Boston and New York, and appeared at the Ravinia Festival, Washington's National Cathedral and Library of Congress, Vancouver's Chan Centre, and in concert series spanning twenty-five US states. Stile Antico has also appeared in Mexico and Colombia, and in 2018 visited East Asia for the first time, performing in Korea, Macau and Hong Kong.

Stile Antico's performances are often praised for their immediacy, expressive commitment, and their sensitive and imaginative response to text. These qualities arise from the group's collaborative working style: members rehearse and perform as chamber musicians, each contributing artistically to the musical results. In addition to its core repertoire, Stile Antico has premiered works by Joanna Marsh, John McCabe, Nico Muhly, Giles Swayne and Huw Watkins. The group's diverse range of collaborators includes Fretwork, the Folger Consort, Marino Formenti, B'Rock, Rihab Azar and Sting.

Alongside its concert and recording work, Stile Antico is passionate about sharing its repertoire and working style with the widest possible audience, and its masterclasses and workshops are much in demand. The support of the charitable Stile Antico Foundation has enabled Stile Antico to expand its work with younger people, and to offer bursaries to talented young professional singers and ensembles.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Stile Antico has thrown its energy into digital projects, producing a 'virtual choir' recording of Tallis's *Spem in Alium*, a music film to mark the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower voyage, and a series of lecture-recitals, *Sundays with Stile*, as well as giving live-streamed concerts from Wigmore Hall and the York Early Music Festival. In 2021 the group releases its first recording on the Decca Classics label, marking 500 years since the death of Josquin.

[stileantico.co.uk/](http://stileantico.co.uk/)

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## JOIN US IN 2022

The 2022 Beverley & East Riding Early Music Festival will take place from Friday 27 to Sunday 29 May. Join the mailing list on [www.ncem.co.uk/bemf](http://www.ncem.co.uk/bemf) to ensure that you get full details of artists and booking arrangements this autumn.

**BEVERLEY & EAST RIDING EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL** is directed by Delma Tomlin MBE and administered by the National Centre for Early Music through The York Early Music Foundation (registered charity number 1068331)

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**St Margaret's Church**  
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