



Early Music Hawaii Presents

Sacred Music of the English Reformation

A Virtual Program

The Early Music Hawaii Ensemble
Scott Fikse, director

Taylor Ishida, Naomi Barrett, *soprano*
Sarah Lambert Connelly, *alto*
Benjamin Leonid, Tomás Ramos, *tenor*
Keane Ishii, Scott Fikse, *bass*
Katherine Crosier, *organ*

Première, Friday, October 23, 2020 at 7:00 pm
Available online until 10 pm, Thursday, October 29 at 10 pm

Entrance is free but donations are most welcome!

Program

Hosanna to the Son of David <i>Full Anthem</i>	Thomas Weelkes (c.1575 – 1623)
My Soul doth magnify the Lord <i>Magnificat, Verse Anthem</i>	Orlando Gibbons (1583 – 1625)
Clarifica me Pater <i>Organ solo</i>	Thomas Tomkins (1572 – 1656)
I laid me down to rest and slept <i>Sacred Song</i>	William Byrd (c.1540 – 1623)
When David Heard <i>Full Anthem, Lament</i>	Thomas Tomkins
Never weather-beaten sail <i>Sacred Song</i>	Thomas Campion (1567-1620)
Gloria Tibi Trinitas	Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)
Variations on a Dutch Chorale <i>Organ Solo</i>	John Bull (1562 – 1628)
O Lord, my God <i>Verse Anthem</i>	John Bull

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Program Notes

While the break with Rome and dissolution of the monasteries originated with Henry VIII, a mature structure for worship in English, the Anglican Rite, together with the music, was not settled until later in the reign of Elizabeth I. Her favorite composer, the covert Catholic William Byrd, advanced the art of crafting music to the cadence of the English language, but its full application to the range of polyphonic anthems and service texts replacing the Latin Magnificat, motets and prayers was only reached around the year 1600 during the reign of James I, sponsor of the superbly literate King James Bible.

This evening's brief program provides a selection of the anthems, the most significant of which was the "verse" form, in which sections for one or more solo singers alternate with full choir, in similar fashion to the Roman style of alternating chant and polyphony, notably in the Psalms. A simple accompaniment of organ or consort of viols was usual. The fully polyphonic anthems were mostly sung a cappella in classic renaissance style. The solo sacred song was also sometimes set for small ensemble.

The most distinguished architects of these anthems included Thomas Tomkins, Thomas Weelkes, John Bull and Orlando Gibbons, with verse anthems represented in this program by the English language Magnificat ("My soul doth magnify the Lord"), and "O Lord my God." The full anthems are represented by "Hosanna to the Son of David" and the iconic lament "When David heard that Absalom was slain." The sacred songs in the vernacular follow a tradition dating back to medieval times.

Most of these composers of sacred works were Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal who sang in or directed the monarch's choir at his pleasure, and in several royal chapels, including most notably at St. James's Palace and Westminster Abbey, where all the monarchs of England since William the Conqueror have been crowned. The Abbey was founded in the 7th century and the building as we know it today dates from the year 1269. Although not a cathedral and no longer a monastery, it has been at the center of Anglican worship since its formal rededication in 1560 as a "Royal Peculiar," responsible directly to the monarch as head of the Church of England.

Ian Capps, *The Early Muse*, Hawaii Public Radio