

LAGRIME DI SAN PIETRO Orlande de lassus (1532 – 1594)

1	II magnanimo Pietro	[2.12]
2	Ma gli archi	[2.25]
3	Tre volte haveva a l'importuna	[2.21]
4	Qual a l'incontro di quegli occhi santi	[2.44]
5	Giovane donna il suo bel volto in specchio	[2.15]
6	Così talhor	[2.00]
7	Ogni occhio del Signór lingua veloce	[2.12]
8	Nessún fedél trovai, nessún cortese	[2.44]
9	Chi ad una ad una raccontár potesse	[2.18]
10	Come falda di neve	[2.54]
11	È non fu il pianto suo rivo	[2.19]
12	Quel volto, ch'era poco inanzi stato	[2.35]
13	Veduto il míser quanto differente	[3.09]
14	E vago d'incontrár chi giusta pena	[2.40]
15	Váttene, vita, va	[2.31]
16	O vita troppo rea	[2.35]
17	A quanti, già felici in giovanezza	[2.25]
18	Non trovava mia fé si duro intoppo	[2.31]

19	Queste opre e più	[2.14]	
20	Negando il mio Signór	[2.27]	
21	Vide homo, quæ pro te patior	[3.47]	
	Total timings:	[53.21]	

GALLICANTUS GABRIEL CROUCH DIRECTOR

www.signumrecords.com

In the early summer of 1594, at the court of the Duke of Bavaria in Munich, Orlande de Lassus dedicated his just-completed *Lagrime di San Pietro*, the 'Tears of St Peter', to the first apostle's living successor, Pope Clement VIII. "I send and dedicate to Your Holiness with the greatest reverence", he wrote, "these tears of St Peter, which were composed some time ago by Luigi Tansillo and have been clothed in harmony by me for my personal devotion in my burdensome old age."

The burden which Lassus refers to had weighed heavily on the composer, now in the last month of his long life, for at least seven years, and we might reasonably wonder if he sensed that final relief was at hand. From 1587 the flow of compositions became less constant, and

at the Duke's insistence, he had relinquished his daily duties in the court Chapel. His wife Regina wrote of his decline, recalling frequent bouts of 'melancholy', a condition which could bear any number of physical or emotional manifestations, and a preoccupation with his own death. (He was attended to frequently by the court physician Dr Mermann, and such was his gratitude for the treatment he received that he took the unusual step of dedicating an entire volume of madrigals to him.)

It would be understandable for Lassus to feel penitent as his health declined in those final years. His sense of mischief and taste for scandalous subject matter, which revealed itself in his Italian, German and most of all his French secular music, had continued

to flourish through his sixth decade and there was no sign of censorship or discouragement from his employer. His correspondence with the young Duke Wilhelm prior to his accession in 1579 reveals a man still possessed of playful. youthful humour, enamoured with puns and wordplay, and he was about 50 years old when he produced a parody Mass based, of all things, upon a chanson which celebrates the charms of teenage girls - the Missa entre vous filles of 1581. No doubt there was plenty to atone for in the course of what seems to have been an adventurous life. His later years certainly contained a great deal of music which was conventionally tailored for the Catholic Rite (enthusiastically embraced in Counter-Reformation Munich), but this was familiar territory through most of his career. Not so with the Lagrime di San Pietro, an exceptional cycle of madrigali spirituali (sacred madrigals) whose unclothed confessional tone makes that reference to 'personal devotion' in the dedication to Pope Clement feel wholly sincere.

The architecture of the *Lagrime* reveals a series of devotional musical gestures which, woven together, lend the whole work a spiritual symmetry worthy of Bach himself. At the heart of it all lies the number seven: There are seven voices in

the score, the work employs seven of the eight church modes, many of the movements are divisible into seven sections, and the total number of movements is 21- or seven times the number of the Trinity. Of course the number has a profound significance for one engaged in the act of penitence — there are seven deadly sins, seven penitential psalms, and seven sorrows of the Virgin Mary. Seven is also the number of times Peter suggests to Christ (Matthew:18) that his sinful brothers be forgiven, only to be rebuked by the answer that even 'seventy times seven' acts of mercy would not suffice.

No doubt then, that the elderly Lassus would have identified with the anguish of Peter; but it seems likely too that his selection of texts by Luigi Tansillo was carefully considered. One of the great inheritors of the Petrarchan school, Tansillo wrote the 42 stanzas of his Lagrime towards the end of a career which had seen notoriety and Papal censorship of his more licentious work. The text of the Lagrime was itself an act of penitence, and it won the explicit approval of the Pope — the same approval that Lassus sought in setting the first 20 stanzas of the work three decades later. Read consecutively, the stanzas present the stages of remorse experienced by Peter after his threefold denial

of Christ. In the first few movements the focus lingers on the eyes of Christ, which in Tansillo's hand become weapons to pierce Peter's soul, later transformed to mirrors in which Peter witnesses his great crime with unbearable clarity. In the seventh and eighth madrigals Peter imagines the voice of Christ chastising him for his betrayal. The next twelve madrigals form a sequence of self-recriminations which begin with depictions of the tears of Peter (madrigals 9 to 13) and conclude with his desire to receive the punishment of death (madrigals 14 to 20).

By deliberate design, the 21st and final movement lies outside the harmonic plan of the cycle: The first 20 madrigals chart a tonal arc through modes I to VII. but the final motet Vide Homo. quae pro te patior is based upon the tonus peregrinus ('wandering tone'), which perhaps reflects a shift in perspective from the worldly to the celestial. This release does not bring consolation - in fact, we witness the crucified Christ bitterly rebuking his audience. demanding witness to his suffering which, though painful, does not compare to the agony of man's ingratitude for his sacrifice. Appropriately for the voice of Christ, this 13th-century text by Philippe de Grève is delivered in Latin, not Italian - though the

anguish depicted in Lassus' music is every bit as searing as before.

Lassus treasures every syllable of Tansillo's poetry and goes to great lengths to see that we hear the lines as he does. The musical phrases echo the natural rhythms of speech, with no room for florid embellishment or melisma Lines of text are repeated for emphasis where necessary, and are set antiphonally (between alternating smaller groups of singers) where some sense of dialogue is appropriate. Each madrigal has its own emotional arc, and the points of climax are set with both text and music in mind. Every phrase has its own colour, and though gloom and anguish surely dominate, there is the occasional moment of reprieve or a glimpse of the humour of the old days - witness the earthy song of the cockerel in the 11th madrigal, or the limping of the lame in the 18th. As a model for the fruitful union of music and poetry the Lagrime di San Pietro sits at the pinnacle of the sacred madrigal cycles of the late 16th century, and is one of the great musical achievements "comparable in its artistry, its dimensions, its asceticism." wrote Alfred Einstein in 1949. "to the Musical Offering and the Art of Fugue." Gabriel Crouch @ 2013

- 4 -

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Il magnanimo Pietro, che giurato havea tra mille lance e mille spade al suo caro Signór morír a lato, poi che s'accorse, vinto da viltade, nel gran bisogno havér di fè mancato, il dolór, la vergogna e la pietade del proprio fallo e de l'altrui martiro di mille punte il petto gli feriro.

2 Ma gli archi che nel petto gli aventaro le saette più acute e più mortali fur gli occhi del Signór, quando il miraro: gli occhi fur gli archi e i sguardi fur gli strali che, del cor non contenti, sen passaro fin dentro a l'alma; e vi fer piaghe tali che bisognò, mentre che visse poi, ùngerle col licor de gli occhi suoi.

3 Tre volte haveva a l'importuna, e audace ancella, al servo ed a la turba rea detto e giurato che già mai seguace non fù del suo Signor, né'l conoscea. Il gallo publicatol contumace il dì chiamato in testimón v'havea, quando, del suo gran fallo a pena avvisto s'incontrár gli occhi suoi con quei di Christo.

When warm-hearted Peter, who had sworn to die beside his dear Lord amidst a thousand spears and swords, realized that, overcome by cowardice, he had been found wanting at the vital moment, the pain, shame and sorrow for his own failure and for his Lord's agony wounded his heart with a thousand blows.

But the bows which targeted his chest with the sharpest and most deadly arrows were the eyes of the Lord, when they fixed on him: The eyes were the bows and their missile was his gaze which, not content with the heart, bore into the soul; and inflicted such deep wounds that he must, for the rest of his life, bathe them with the tears of his eyes.

Three times he had sworn to the insolent and brazen maid, and to the servant, and to all the accusing mob, that he had never been a disciple of his Lord, nor knew him at all. The cock, proclaiming his guilt, announced the new day as a witness, and as he realized the extent of his sin his eve met those of Christ.

4 Qual a l'incontro di quegli occhi santi il già caduto Pietro rimanesse non sia chi di narrárlo hoggi si vanti ché lingua non saría, ch'al ver giungesse; paréa ché 'I buon Signór, cinto di tanti nemici e de' suoi privo, dir volesse: «Ecco ché quel ch'io dissi egli è pur vero, amico dislèal. discépol fiero».

5 Giovane donna il suo bel volto in specchio non vide mai di lucido cristallo come in quel punto il misérabil vecchio ne gli occhi del Signór vide il suo fallo; né tante cose udír cúpid' orecchio potría se stesse ben senza intervallo intento a l'altrui dir cento anni, e cento, quant' ei n'udío col guardo in quel momento.

Gosì talhor (benché profane cose siano a le sacre d'agguagliársi indegne), scoprir mirando altrui le voglie ascose suól amator, senza ch'a dir le vegne, chi dunque esperto sia ne l'ingegnose scole d'amór, a chi no'l prova insegne come senza aprir bocca o scriver note con gli occhi ancora favellár si puote.

Upon encountering those holy eyes, what the already miserable Peter felt nobody could claim to know, for no tongue could get close to the truth. It appeared as if the good Lord, surrounded by enemies and deserted by friends, wanted to say: "What I foretold has come to pass, disloyal friend, proud disciple."

Never did a young girl see her lovely face so clearly in a polished crystal mirror as the miserable old man saw his fault in the eyes of the Lord; and nor could a keen ear, even it were to listen without interruption for hundreds of years for the words of another, hear as much with one look as he did in that moment.

Just as sometimes (though it is unseemly to make such comparison between profane and sacred) a lover reveals through his gaze hidden desires to another without uttering a word, so he who is an expert in the noble art of love can teach the uninitiated how, without a spoken word or a scribbled note, he might be able to speak with his eyes.

-6-

- 7 Ogni occhio del Signór lingua veloce paréa che fusse, et ogni occhio de' suoi orecchia intenta ad ascoltár sua voce.

 «Più fieri», paréa dir, «son gli occhi tuoi de l'empie man che mi porranno in croce; né sento colpo alcún che si m'annoi, di tanti ché'l reo stuól in me ne scocca, quant'il colpo ch'uscio della tua bocca.
- 8 Nessún fedél trovai, nessún cortese di tanti ch'ò degnato d'esser miei: ma tu, dove il mio amór via più s'accese, perfido e ingrato sovra ogni altro sei. Ciascún di lor sol col fuggir m'offese: tu mi negasti, et hor con gli altri rei ti stai a páscer del mio danno gli occhi, perché la parte del piacér ti tocchi».
- 9 Chi ad una ad una raccontár potesse le parole di sdegno e d'amór piene che parve a Pietro di vedér impresse nel sacro giro de le sue serene luci, scoppiár faria chi l'intendesse: ma se d'occhio mortal sovente viene virtù che possa in noi, ch'il prova pensi che puóte occhio divin ne gli human sensi.

Each eye of the Lord was like a swift tongue, and each of Peter's eyes was an ear, straining to catch his voice. "More cruel," he seemed to say, "are your eyes than the merciless hands that will put me on the cross; nor do I suffer any blow that wounds me, among the many that rained down on me, like that which issued from your lips.

I found no one faithful, no one kind among those I had chosen to be my own; but you, for whom I bore such great love, are treacherous and ungrateful above all others. Each of them wounded me by running away, but you denied me, and so, with the other wrongdoers, you stand and feast your eyes on my pain, since you chose the trouble-free path.

He who could recount one by one the words filled with both scorn and love that Peter seemed to see written in those serene and holy eyes, would be shattered by the experience. If from mere mortal eyes great influence can be brought to bear on a man, what power can divine eyes exert on human senses? 10 Come falda di neve, che agghiacciata il verno in chiusa valle ascosa giacque, a primavera poi, dal sol scaldata, tutta si sface, e si discioglie in acque; così la tema, ch'entro al cor gelata era di Pietro allór che'l vero tacque, quando Christo ver lui gli occhi rivolse tutta si sfece, e in pianto si risolse.

11 È non fu il pianto suo rivo, o torrente che per calda stagión già mai seccasse; ché, benché il Re del Cielo immantinente a la perduta gratia il ritornasse, de la sua vita tutto il rimanente non fu mai notte, ch'ei non si destasse udendo il gallo a dir quanto fu iniquo dando lagrime nove al fallo antiquo.

asperso tutto di colór di morte, per lo sangue che al cor se n'era andato, lasciando fredde l'altre parti e smorte, dal raggio de' santi occhi riscaldato divenne fiamma, e per l'istesse porte ch'era intrato il timór, fuggendo sparve: e nel suo loco la vergogna apparve.

Like a snowflake that lies frozen in winter in a shrouded and hidden valley, and then in springtime, warmed by the sun, melts and flows into the water, so the fear which sat like ice in the heart of Peter when the truth struck him, when the eyes of Christ turned towards him, melted and turned to weeping.

And this weeping was not a river or stream that the warm season could cause to dry up; for although the King of Heaven immediately restored his fallen grace, for the rest of his life there remained not one night when he was not disturbed, hearing the cockerel's reminder of the magnitude of his sin and drawing new tears over the lifelong guilt.

That face, which moments earlier had taken on the colour of death, for all the blood had rushed to the heart leaving the other parts cold and pale, warmed by the beams of the holy eyes became enflamed, and by the same portal through which it entered, fear retreated: and in its place shame was left.

- 8 -

13 Veduto il míser quanto differente dal primo stato suo si ritrovava, non bastándogli il cor di star presente a l'offeso Signór, che sì l'amava senza aspettar se fiera o se clemente sententia il duro tribunál gli dava, da l'odioso albergo ove era allora piangendo amaramente uscì di fuora.

14 E vago d'incontrár chi giusta pena desse al suo grave errór, poi che paura di maggiór mal l'ardita man raffrena, per l'ombre errando de la notte oscura ne va gridando, ove il dolór il mena; e la vita, che inanzi hebbe sì a cura hor più ch'altro odia, e sol di lei si duole; e. perché lo fé errar, più non la vuole.

15 «Váttene, vita, va», dicéa piangendo, «dove non sia chi t'odi o chi ti sdegni, Lásciami; so ché non è ben ch'essendo compagnia così rea meco ne vegni. Váttene vita, va, ch'io non intendo che una altra volta ad ésser vil m'insegni! Né vò, per prolungár tue frali tempre, uccider l'alma nata a viver sempre.

The wretched man, seeing how different from his former self he had become, without the strength of heart to remain with his wronged Lord who loved him, and without waiting to hear whether the verdict of the holy tribunal would be severe or merciful, from the squalid place where he was, he went outside. weeping bitterly.

Hoping to meet someone who would administer just punishment for his grievous sin, since a fear of greater evil inhibits the bold hand, he wandered the shadows of the dark night crying out when his agony thus moved him; and life, for which he had once cared so much, he now loathes more than anything, and feels pain because of it: Since it caused his sin, he wants no more of it.

"Leave me, life, be gone!" he cried, weeping, "go where no one hates or scorns you. Leave me; for it is wrong for you to be in the company of a wretch like me. Leave me, life, be gone, for I have no wish to be taught such cowardice once more! Nor shall I, to preserve your fragile existence, kill the spirit born to live in eternity. 16 O vita troppo rea, troppo fallace, che per fuggir qua giù sì breve guerra pérder m'hai fatto in cielo eterna pace: chi più desia godérti in su la terra, più tosto senza te schernito giace; e chi vorria lasciárti, e gir sotterra, non vuoi mal grado suo giàmai lasciarlo, vaga di sempre a novo duòl serbarlo.

17 A quanti, già felici in giovanezza recò l'indugio tuo lunghi tormenti?
Che, se inanzi al venir de la vecchiezza sciolti fússer dal mondo, più contenti morti sarián, poi che non ha fermezza stato alcún che si temi o si paventi.
Onde io, vita, a ragión di te mi doglio che stessi meco e stai più che non voglio!

18 Non trovava mia fé sì duro intoppo Se tu non stavi sì gran tempo meco! Se non havésser gli anni, e il viver troppo portato il senno, e la memoria seco, pensár dovéa, ch'io vidi dar al zoppo i piè, la lingua al muto e gli occhi al cieco; e, quel che più maravigliár fe' l'ombre, rènder l'anime ai corpi ond' éran sgombre. O life, too wicked, too false, that so that I might escape one little hardship on earth has made me lose the eternal peace of heaven: He who most desires to enjoy your fruits on earth is the first to be deprived of you and scorned by you; and he who would willingly leave you to lie beneath the earth you will never release, whatever his wish, in order to revel in each new pain you bring him.

To how many, happy in their youth, has the wait for you brought prolonged torment? and who, if before old age came they had been delivered from this world, would have been more content? for there is no dignity in a life attended by such a state, such a dreaded state. So, life, I am rightfully pained by you, since you have stayed with me when you are not wanted!

My faith would not have found such a daunting challenge

if you had not stayed so long with me!

If the many years and prolonged life had not eroded my good sense and memory with them, I would have recalled how the lame were made to walk, the dumb to speak, and the blind to see; and most astounding of all, how in the darkness the souls were restored to the bodies whence they came

-10-

19 Queste opre e più che'l mondo et io sapea ramentár mi dovéan che il lor Fattore fontana di salute ésser dovea, e sgombrár dal mio petto ogni timore. Ma come quel, che per l'età ch'avea, era di senno e di me stesso fuore, nel gran periglio ricercando aita per tema di morir negai la vita.

20 Negando il mio Signór, negai quel ch'era la vita, ond'ogni vita si deriva; vita tranquilla, che non teme o spera, né puòte il corso suo giúnger a riva. Poi ché dunque negai la vita vera, non è, non è ragión che unqua più viva. Vátten, vita fallace, e tosto sgombra: se la vera negai, non chiedo l'ombra!».

21 Vide homo, quæ pro te patior, Ad te clamo, qui pro te morior, Vide poenas quibus afficior; Vide clavos quibus confodior; Non est dolor sicut quo crucior; Et cum sit tantus dolor exterior, Intus tamen dolor est gravior, Tam ingratum cum te experior. These deeds, which the world and I witnessed, should have reminded me that their author was the fount of all salvation, and thus removed all fear from my heart. But as a man made feeble with age, deprived of sense and brought out of my true self, looking for help in that moment of danger, from fear of dying I renounced life.

By denying my Lord, I denied the very life from which all other life springs; a tranquil life which knows neither fear nor hope, whose course may not reach its farthest shore. Because I have denied true life, there is no reason, none at all, to continue living. Be gone then, cruel life, and leave without delay: As I have denied your truth, I have no wish for your shadow!"

See, O man, what I have suffered for you; I cry out to you, I who am dying for you; See the agonies with which I am afflicted; See the nails with which I am pierced. There is no pain like that which torments me; And though the outward pain be great, The internal agony is graver still, When I find you to be so ungrateful.



Countertenor David Allsopp & Mark Chambers
Tenor Nicholas Todd & Christopher Watson
Baritone Richard Bannan & Gabriel Crouch
William Gaunt

Literally meaning 'rooster song' or 'cock crow', Gallicantus takes its name from monastic antiquity for the office held just before dawn: a ceremony that evokes the renewal of life offered by the coming day. Dedicated to Renaissance music and directed by Gabriel Crouch, the membership of this early music group boasts a wealth of experience in consort singing, drawn from groups such as The Tallis Scholars, Tenebrae, and The King's Singers. Both their concerts and CD recordings are praised for their programming and shaping.

The group is bound by a shared love of communicating text, and creates performances which draw out unifying themes within apparently diverse repertoire. To this end they are as meticulous about providing context and

insight for audiences as they are about crafting interpretations of the music they love.

Gallicantus released their first Signum Classics in 2009. Hymns. and Lamentations, dedicated to the music of Robert White. Critics acclaimed an "impressive (Observer) of "impassioned, exciting music" (The Times), whilst Gramophone Magazine declared: "What an outstanding disc ... The opening of the Lamentations could stand as a kind of illuminated initial at the beginning of a gorgeous manuscript, so transparent and luminous is it." Their second recording Dialogues of Sorrow - Passions on the Death of Prince Henry (1612) was described as possessing "singing of clarity, suppleness and poignancy" (Daily Telegraph), "milking every plangent suspension" (Independent on Sunday), and as "one of the year's best choral releases." (TheArtsDesk.com). The 2012 release The Word Unspoken, featuring music by William and Philippe de Monte was equally well received, with The Sunday Times saying "The intensity of the music is reflected in Gallicantus's beautifully shaped performances".

More information may be found at www.gallicantus.com

- 12 -



Gallicantus gratefully acknowledges the support of the Princeton University Committee for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Recorded in St Michael's Church, Highgate, London from 2 - 4 January 2013.
Producer - Nigel Short
Recording Engineer & Editor - Andrew Mellor
Language Consultant - Antonio Tilli

Cover Image - Shutterstock Design and Artwork - Woven Design www.wovendesign.co.uk

© 2013 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd © 2013 The copyright in this CD booklet, notes and design is owned by Signum Records Ltd

Any unauthorised broadcasting, public performance, copying or re-recording of Signum Compact Discs constitutes an infringement of copyright and will render the infringer liable to an action by Jaw. Licences for public performances or broadcasting may be obtained from Phonographic Performance Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this booklet may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission from Signum Records Ltd.

SignumClassics, Signum Records Ltd., Suite 14, 21 Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx UB6 7JD, UK. +44 (0) 20 8997 4000 E-mail: info@signumrecords.com www.signumrecords.com

ALSO AVAILABLE ON **SIGNUMCL**ASSICS



Dialogues of Sorrow Gallicantus, Gabriel Crouch

SIGCD210

"... this is a well-sung, intelligently produced and exhaustively researched project, which deserves great success."

International Record Review



The Word Unspoken Gallicantus, Gabriel Crouch

SIGCD295

"... delivered with such intelligence and persuasiveness that the cumulative weight of their Byrd, in particular, is well-nigh symphonic in effect ... 'Domine' is here as moving as it's ever been."

Gramophone, Vocal Disc of the Month

Customer SignumClassics Catalogue No.SIGCD339

Job Title: Lassus

COLOURS CYAN MAGENTA YELLOW BLACK

