

VIVALDI

Laudate pueri Dominum, RV 600

Stabat Mater, RV 621 • Cantata in prato, RV 623

**Tracy Smith Bessette • Marion Newman
Aradia Ensemble • Kevin Mallon**



Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741): Sacred Music • 2

Laudate pueri Dominum • Stabat Mater • Canta in prato • Claræ stellæ

Laudate pueri Dominum, RV 600		22:23
1	Laudate pueri Dominum	2:06
2	Sit nomen benedictum	2:45
3	A solis ortu	1:53
4	Excelsus super omnes gentes	2:58
5	Quis sicut Dominus	2:16
6	Suscitans a terra	1:25
7	Ut collocet eum	1:50
8	Gloria Patri	3:24
9	Laudate, pueri ... Sicut erat in principio	1:47
10	Amen	1:58
Stabat Mater, RV 621		18:50
11	Stabat Mater dolorosa	13:30
12	Eia Mater, fons amoris	2:46
13	Fac, ut ardeat	1:39
14	Amen	0:54
Canta in prato, ride in monte, RV 623		8:31
15	Canta in prato	3:48
16	Sacra fulgescit	0:50
17	Avenæ rusticæ	2:20
18	Alleluia	1:33
Claræ stellæ, scintillate, RV 625		11:09
19	Claræ stellæ, scintillate	5:28
20	Cæli repleti iam	0:49
21	Nunc iubilare	2:11
22	Alleluia	2:41

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741): Sacred Music • 2

Laudate pueri Dominum • Stabat Mater • Cantata in prato • Claræ stellæ

Known in his native Venice as the red priest, from the inherited colour of his hair, Antonio Vivaldi was born in 1678, the son of a barber who later served as a violinist at the great Basilica of St Mark. Vivaldi studied for the priesthood and was ordained in 1703. At the same time he won a reputation for himself as a violinist of phenomenal ability and was appointed violin-master at the Ospedale della Pietà. This last was one of four such charitable institutions, established for the education of orphan, indigent or illegitimate girls and boasting a particularly fine musical tradition. Here the girls were trained in music, some of the more talented continuing to serve there as assistant teachers, earning the dowry necessary for marriage. Vivaldi's association with the Pietà continued intermittently throughout his life, from 1723 under a contract that provided for the composition of two new concertos every month. At the same time he enjoyed a connection with the theatre, as the composer of some fifty operas, director and manager. He finally left Venice in 1741, travelling to Vienna, where there seemed some possibility of furthering his career under imperial patronage, or perhaps with the idea of travelling on to the court at Dresden, where his pupil Pisendel was working. He died in Vienna a few weeks after his arrival in the city, in relative poverty. At one time he had been worth 50,000 ducats a year, it seemed, but now had little to show for it, as he arranged for the sale of some of the music he had brought with him.

Vivaldi had started his service at the Pietà in 1703. The following years brought brief gaps in his tenure, but the allegedly temporary departure in 1713 of Francesco Gasparini, *maestro di coro* at the Pietà since 1700, allowed Vivaldi to show his ability in sacred choral composition, for which the governors of the Pietà rewarded him in 1715. The following year he was appointed *maestro de' concerti*, with

a performance of his oratorio *Juditha triumphans* in November 1716. In 1717 he left the Pietà and the next year was in Mantua as *maestro di cappella da camera* to Prince Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt, Governor of Mantua from 1714 to 1735. He renewed his connection with the Pietà in 1723. Various datings have been suggested for Vivaldi's sacred music. Those for the Pietà fall generally into the period after Gasparini's departure, from 1715 to 1717, and to a later period, from 1737 to 1739, when the position of *maestro di coro* was again vacant.

Three settings by Vivaldi of the second Vespers Psalm CXII, *Laudate pueri Dominum* survive. These may be presumed to have formed part of settings of Vespers intended for major events in the Church calendar, although this psalm is included in the office of Vespers on a number of occasions in the year, forming part of the group of psalms sung at Sunday Vespers. *Laudate pueri Dominum*, RV 600, for soprano, strings and continuo, in C minor, follows its energetic opening *Allegro* with a *Largo* E flat major setting of *Sit nomen Domini benedictum*, accompanied by violins and violas. For *A solis ortu*, in G minor, the *basso continuo* returns in a movement that calls for some vocal agility. The moving D minor *Excelsus super omnes gentes*, an *Andante*, includes a solo cello obbligato, while violins and violas remain silent. The key changes to A minor for *Quis sicut Dominus*, with its wide violin leaps, leading to the agitated opening of *Suscitans a terra*, with its contrasts of pace and feeling, as the word *suscitans* suggests a mood of urgency. *Ut colloct eum*, an *Allegro* in B flat major, is united by its repeated thematic material. The doxology starts with a G minor *Largo*, the original key of C minor resumed for its continuation, intercalated with the earlier text and music of the psalm. The setting ends with a fugal *Amen*.

Michael Talbot has suggested that Vivaldi's setting of

the *Stabat Mater* was the result of a visit to Brescia by the composer and his father, Giovanni Battista, a native of that city, to take part in performances at the Oratorian church of Santa Maria della Pace for the Feast of the Purification on 2nd February and for further ceremonies on Sexagesima Sunday in 1711 (Michael Talbot: *The Sacred Vocal Music of Antonio Vivaldi*, Florence, 1995). Vivaldi provided the Chiesa della Pace with a commissioned setting of the *Stabat Mater* the following year, presumably to be identified with the surviving *RV 621*, for contralto, strings and continuo. Consisting of twenty verses, the whole poem, which had been eliminated from the liturgy by the reforming Council of Trent, was restored for use in full as a Sequence in 1727. Parts of the original medieval poem, however, remained in use, including the first ten verses, as set by Vivaldi, which were used as a hymn for Vespers on the Feast of the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin on the Friday after Passion Sunday. Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* repeats the music of the first three movements, which set the first four verses of the hymn, for the following four verses. Since the three-line verses may be paired into six-line stanzas with the third and sixth lines rhyming, this arrangement makes prosodic sense. The first section of the work, in F minor, is imbued with the feeling of grief, with a chromatically descending bass-line lament. *Cuius animam*, in C minor, is a recitative that becomes an *arioso*, with a return to F minor for *O quam tristis*, a moving aria. The pattern is repeated in the following three sections of the work. *Eia Mater* is set in C minor without the *basso continuo* in a characteristically Vivaldian texture, with dotted violin figuration for the united first and second violins, accompanied only by the violas. The original key is restored for *Fac, ut ardeat*, with its gently lilting 12/8 metre. The setting ends with a fugal *Amen*.

The motet in early eighteenth-century Venice served its purpose in the liturgy as an additional piece to be sung at

Mass after the *Credo* or at another point in the service, or as an insertion into Vespers. Vivaldi, who wrote a quantity of such compositions, followed a simple formula of two arias, framing a recitative, with a final *Alleluia*, scored generally for a solo voice, strings and continuo. The non-liturgical Latin texts set often lacked distinction. Twelve of Vivaldi's motets survive, with eight examples of *Introduzioni*, compositions in similar form but lacking an *Alleluia*, and related to another liturgical text.

Canta in prato, *RV 623*, Michael Talbot has suggested, was probably written by Vivaldi for Rome during his period there in 1723-24, perhaps for Cardinal Ottoboni's church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, for which a different setting of the same text was used as an *Introduzione*. Perhaps intended for a castrato soloist, the work opens with a virtuoso *da capo* aria, setting a text filled with conventional pastoral allusions. The following recitative provides a link with the second *da capo* aria, with further pastoral references in the text, if not in the music. The motet ends with an *Alleluia*.

Claræ stelle, scintillate, *RV 625*, for contralto, strings and *basso continuo*, seems to have been written about 1715 for the Pietà singer Geltruda, who enjoyed a career in Venice over some years. It is probably tailored to her voice, offering a chaster lyricism than *Canta in prato*, and was presumably performed on the Feast of the Visitation, 2nd July, in the same year, a festival mentioned in the anonymous text. The first *da capo* aria is joined by a linking recitative to a second aria, without *da capo* but consisting of a continuing series of sections, with the vocal line accompanied an octave higher by the violins, while the viola, in a register that often overlaps with the voice, provides the equivalent of a bass line. The final *Alleluia* makes fuller use of the *basso continuo*, although the violins still shadow the vocal line an octave higher.

Keith Anderson

Tracy Smith Bessette

Tracy Smith Bessette studied vocal performance at the Universities of Calgary and Toronto and in 2000 joined the young artist programme at the Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal. She recently completed her second and final season as a member of the Centre de formation lyrique de l'Opéra National de Paris. During her time in the young artist programme at the Opéra de Montréal, she performed Marie in Donizetti's *La fille du régiment*, Adina in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Amelia in Menotti's *Amelia al ballo* and Despina in Mozart's *Costa fan tutte*. On the main stage at the Opéra de Montréal she portrayed Giannetta in *L'elisir d'amore* and the High Priestess in Verdi's *Aida*. In Toronto with the Arbor Oak Trio, she was Venus in John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* and Belinda in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. In the summer of 2002 she was a fellow at Tanglewood Institute and in the summer of 2000 she studied with Marilyn Horne at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. At the Opéra National de Paris she has been an understudy for several productions. In the 2004-2005 season she sang Fekluša in Janáček's *Káťa Kabanová* at the Bastille (Opéra National de Paris) and also at the Opéra de Rouen. Tracy Smith Bessette is also on the concert stage and has performed many recitals. Her recordings for Naxos with Aradia include works by Charpentier and Vivaldi, and she has given the premières of many Canadian works, several of which were written expressly for her.

Marion Newman

The native Canadian mezzo-soprano Marion Newman has been described as a “jewel in Canada’s impressive performing arts crown”, having appeared in a number of operatic rôles, including Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Margret in *Wozzeck* and Juno in *The Tempest*. International touring includes the Czech Republic and Germany in Mozart's *Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe*, Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and *Suor Angelica* in Italy, as well as *Carmen* with Opera 2005 in Ireland. She has performed with many ensembles including the Victoria Symphony, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Symphony Nova Scotia, and the Elora Festival Singers. Her repertoire extends from the baroque to contemporary music. In 2004 she traveled to Lithuania with the ERGO ensemble to perform at the *Is Arti New Music Festival*. Marion Newman has featured four times as soloist on CBC's *National Aboriginal Achievement Awards*, and in the opening of the 2002 *Royal Golden Jubilee Gala* at Roy Thompson Hall, performing with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra before Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Her recordings include the rôle of Goffredo in Handel's opera *Rinaldo* (Naxos. 8.660165-67).

Aradia Ensemble

One of the most exciting new groups to emerge in the early music world, the Toronto-based Aradia Ensemble specialises in presenting an eclectic blend of orchestral, operatic and chamber music played on original instruments. The group records for Naxos and has made more than 20 recordings. They have made two music videos, one film soundtrack, have collaborated with Isadora Duncan and Baroque dancers, have co-produced opera and worked with Balinese Gamelan. While focusing heavily on the repertoire of seventeenth-century France and England, Aradia also performs works by the Italian and German masters of the baroque, as well as contemporary pieces commissioned by the group. In July 2000 Aradia was the featured ensemble in residence at the New Zealand Chamber Music Festival and in July 2003 performed at Musica nel Chostro in Tuscany. According to Robert Graves, Aradia was the daughter of Apollo's twin sisters. She was sent by the gods to teach mankind to order the music of the natural world into song.

Violins

Julia Wedman (concert-mistress
and violin solo)
Aislinn Nosky
Paul Zevenhuizen
Liz Johnston
Cristina Zacharias
Bethany Bergman
Catherine Emes

Violas

Tomas Georgi
Karen Moffatt

Celli

Joan Harrison (continuo)
Simon Fryer

Double Bass

J. Tracy Mortimore

Organ

Paul Jenkins

Theorbo

Lucas Harris

Kevin Mallon

The Irish musician Kevin Mallon, now resident in Canada, is quickly developing a world-wide reputation. With an impressive background that includes conducting studies with John Eliot Gardiner, composition with Peter Maxwell Davies, training at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, and at Dartington College of Arts, he learnt his craft as a violinist with such orchestras as the Hallé and the BBC Philharmonic, and later as concert-master with Le Concert Spirituel and Les Arts Florissants in Paris. With these groups he has recorded extensively and toured the world. He has performed concerts all over Europe, including Vienna, London, Berlin and Paris, with appearances in Russia, the Baltic States, China, Japan, New Zealand, the United States and Canada. Before moving to Canada to take up positions with the University of Toronto and the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Kevin Mallon was active in both his native Ireland and throughout Europe. He was conductor of the Irish Baroque Orchestra as well as the Musical Director of the Harty Ensemble in Belfast. He also conducted numerous orchestras and opera companies in Ireland, including the Ulster Orchestra, Castleward Opera and the National Chamber Choir. Kevin Mallon formed and became the Music Director of the Aradia Ensemble in 1996. This vocal and instrumental group has achieved extraordinary successes. All their recordings for Naxos have received international praise. The ensemble was featured in 2000 at the New Zealand International Chamber Music Festival, and in 2003 at the Musica nel Chiostro festival in Tuscany. Although Kevin Mallon specialises in music of the Baroque period, he is in demand to conduct a wider repertoire. As part of his recording contract with Naxos, he is Music Director of the Toronto Camerata, a group made up of some of Toronto's best orchestral musicians, with whom he has already made nine recordings. In recent years he has also developed an association with the contemporary opera company Opera Anonymous, with which he has conducted Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and the early nineteenth-century opera *Lucas et Cécile* by the Canadian Joseph Quesnel. He has also conducted Toronto's Opera in Concert in a varied repertoire. Kevin Mallon's recordings for Naxos include works by Charpentier, Rameau, Boyce, Saint-Georges and Handel. Engagements as a guest conductor have taken him to Finland, Sweden, Poland and the United States. He has recently taken up the position of Music Director of Opera 2005 in Cork, Ireland, conducting a series of operas as part of Cork's tenure as European Capital of Culture. Also interested in Irish music, he is a member of the Toronto-based traditional group Dulaman.

Laudate pueri Dominum RV 600 (Psalm CXII)

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|----|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Laudate pueri Dominum.
Laudate nomen Domini.</i> | Praise the Lord, ye servants.
Praise the name of the Lord. |
| 2 | <i>Sit nomen Domini benedictum,
ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.</i> | Blessed be the name of the Lord,
from this time forth for evermore. |
| 3 | <i>A solis ortu usque ad occasum,
laudabile nomen Domini.</i> | From the rising up of the sun
unto the going down thereof
the Lord's name is praised. |
| 4 | <i>Excelsus super omnes gentes Dominus,
et super caelos gloria eius.</i> | The Lord is high above all heathen,
and his glory above the heavens. |
| 5 | <i>Quis sicut Dominus, Deus noster,
qui in altis habitat,
et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra?</i> | Who is like unto the Lord our God,
that hath his dwelling so high, yet humbleth himself
to behold the things that are in heaven and earth? |
| 6 | <i>Suscitans a terra inopem
et de stercore erigens pauperem.</i> | He taketh up the simple out of the dust
and lifeth the poor out of the mire. |
| 7 | <i>Ut collocet eum cum principibus,
cum principibus populi sui.
Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo,
matrem filiorum laetantem.</i> | That he may set him with the princes,
even with the princes of his people.
He maketh the barren woman to keep house,
and to be a joyful mother of children. |
| 8 | <i>Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.</i> | Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost. |
| 9 | <i>Sicut erat in principio,
et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum.</i> | As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be,
world without end. |
| 10 | <i>Amen.</i> | Amen. |

Stabat Mater dolorosa, RV 621

11 *Stabat Mater dolorosa
iuxta crucem lacrymosa,
dum pendebat Filius.*

*Cuius animam gementem,
contristatam et dolentem,
pertransivit gladius.*

*O quam tristis et afflicta
fuit illa benedicta
Mater Unigeniti*

*Quae mærebat et dolebat
Et tremebat, cum videbat
Nati pœnas inclyti.*

*Quis est homo qui non fleret
Christi Matrem si videret
in tanto supplicio?*

*Quis non posset contristari
piam Matrem contemplari
dolentem cum Filio?*

*Pro peccatis suæ gentis
vidit Iesum in tormentis
et flagellis subditum.*

*Vidit suum dulcem natum
moriendo desolatum
dum emisit spiritum*

12 *Eia, Mater, fons amoris,
me sentire vim doloris
fac ut tecum lugeam*

The grieving Mother stood
weeping by the Cross
where hung her Son.

Her spirit groaning,
saddened and grieving
a sword has pierced.

O how sad and afflicted
was that blessed
Mother of the Only-Begotten;

Who mourned and grieved
and trembled, when she saw
the punishment of her glorious son.

Who is the man that would not weep
if he saw the Mother of Christ
in such torment?

Who could fail to feel sorrow
to regard the merciful Mother
grieving for her son?

For the sins of His people
she saw Jesus in torment
and submitted to the scourge.

She saw her sweet offspring
forlorn in dying
as He yielded up His spirit.

Ah, Mother, fountain of love,
to feel the force of grief
grant that I may mourn with you.

13 *Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
in amando Christum Deum
ut sibi complaceam.*

14 *Amen.*

Grant that my heart may burn
in loving Christ, God,
that I may please Him.

Amen.

Canta in prato, ride in monte, RV 623

15 **Aria**

*Canta in prato, ride in monte
Philomena læta in fonte,
vox respondeat exultando.*

*Et vox illa sit amœna
vox lætitiæ, nec tua pœna
gaudia turbet deplorando*

16 **Recitative**

*Sacra fulgescit nobis
digna communi gaudio optata dies
Pater beate, gaude
cœlesti gloria tua,
gaude sereno obsequio.
Vos mortales, plaudite et exultate,
et si plaudunt in cœlo amœni chori,
gaudeat et omnis vivens
et semper plaudendo sacro honori.*

17 **Aria**

*Avenæ rusticæ
sinceri fervida
amoris iubila
docete nos.*

Vos gaudia discite,

Sing in the meadow, laugh on the hill
Philomena happy in the fountain,
let her voice answer in exultation.

And may that voice be pleasing
the voice of happiness, nor let your pain
disturb joys by weeping.

The holy day shines bright for us,
the desired day, time for general joy,
Blessed Father, rejoice
in your celestial glory
rejoice in serene ceremony.
You mortals, clap your hands and be glad,
and if the happy choirs rejoice in heaven,
let every living thing rejoice
and always be glad in holy ceremony.

Rustic reeds
teach us
ardent rejoicing
in sincere love.

Learn joys,

*tympana et organa
si agrestis fistula
invitat vos.*

18 *Alleluia.*

Claræ stellæ, scintillate, RV 625

19 **Aria**

*Claræ stellæ, scintillate
et splendorem novum date
huius diei tanto fulgori.*

*Mundus vivat in lætitiis
et mox habeat suas delicias
tantæ pompæ suo decori.*

20 **Recitative**

*Cæli repleti iam novo splendore
plaudunt in tanta die,
et simul terra arripit tota
in tam solemnî pompa.
Dum festum celebratur
almæ Visitationis
gaudeat etiam cor meum
Mariam laudando et collaudando Deum.*

21 **Aria**

*Nunc iubilare,
semper letare
gaudio immenso
anima mea.*

*Et sit tibi iubilando,
et sit tibi memorando*

tambours and organs
if the country pipe
invites you.

Alleluia.

Bright stars, shine
and give new splendour
to the brilliance of this day.

Let the world live in joys
and soon have its delights
in its grace with such ceremony.

The heavens now are filled with new splendour
And are glad at such a day
and at the same time the whole earth is happy
in so solemn a ceremony.
While the feast is celebrated
of the blessed Visitation
let my heart too rejoice
praising Mary and praising God.

Now rejoice,
always be happy
with great joy
my soul.

And for you let there be rejoicing,
and let there be celebration

mundi et cordis alma spes.

*Si non es lætitia plena
tantæ pompæ aura serena
sit dulcedo tuæ mæstitiæ
et in te solum sint mille deliciæ.*

22 Alleluia.

kind hope of the world and the heart.

If you are not full of joy
let the serene air of such a ceremony
be the sweetness of your sorrow
and may a thousand delights be yours alone.

Alleluia.

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Antonio
VIVALDI
 (1678–1741)
Sacred Music • 2

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11-14	Stabat Mater, RV 621 ²	18:50
15-18	Canta in prato, ride in monte, RV 623 ¹	8:31
19-22	Claræ stellæ, scintillate, RV 625 ²	11:09

Tracy Smith Bessette, Soprano ¹
Marion Newman, Contralto ²
Aradia Ensemble • Kevin Mallon

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