

# **SEMF Renaissance workshop with Peter Wendland**

**Sunday 23 February 2025 in Headcorn Village Hall**

## **Background note by Peter Wendland**

We will work on 5 pieces from great composers of their time.

1.) **Orlando di Lasso** (1532-1594) was a composer of the late Renaissance who wrote over 2000 compositions in the Franco – Flemish style. As a child he was kidnapped three times for other choirs because of his outstanding voice.

His sacred motet which was first published in 1573 is truly a tutti piece and will set us up for the day! We will enjoy the richness of the sounds.

### ***Laudate Dominum omnes gentes a12***

O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.

Praise ye the Lord.

2.) **Hans Leo Hassler** (1564-1612) a German composer born in Nuernberg. He was first taught music by his father. In 1584, Hassler became the first of many German composers of the time who went to Italy to study the polychoral style of the Venetian school. While in Venice, Hassler became friends with Giovanni Gabrieli, with whom he composed a wedding motet for Georg Gruber, a Nuernberg merchant living in Venice, in 1600. Together they studied with Andrea Gabrieli, Giovanni's uncle.

The 16 part sacred Motet is an excellent example of a poly choir piece in the Venetian style at the time.

### ***Duo Seraphim***

Two seraphim cried to one another:

Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.

The whole earth is full of his glory.

There are three who bear witness in heaven:

the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit:

and these three are one.

Holy is the Lord God of Sabaoth.

The whole earth is full of his glory.

3.) **Tomas Luis de Victoria** c.1548 – c.1611) was the most famous Spanish composer of the Renaissance. His surviving *oeuvre*, unlike that of his colleagues, is almost exclusively sacred and polyphonic vocal music, set to Latin texts. As a Catholic priest, as well as an accomplished organist and singer, his career spanned both Spain and Italy. However, he preferred the life of a composer to that of a performer.

### ***Super Flumina Babylonis a 8***

Over the waters of Babylon, there we sat and wept, as we reminisced about Sion.

4.) **Mikotaj Zielenski** 1550-1614 was a Polish composer, organist and Kapellmeister from the 16<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> century. Hardly anything is known about him, but we can find some publications with include in total 131 compositions. One can describe him as the Polish Venetian style composer at his time. His Magnificat is so beautiful that I decided to put it in our repertoire for today.

#### ***Magnificat a 12***

My soul doth magnify the Lord.  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid:  
for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
Because he that is mighty hath done great things to me: and holy is his name.  
And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him.  
He hath shewed might in his arm:  
he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy.  
As he spoke to our fathers: to Abraham and to his seed for ever.

5.) **Hieronymus Praetorius** (1560-1629) A North German composer, not related to Michael Praetorius, who wrote in the Venetian style by using polychoral technique.

He was born in Hamburg and spent most of his life there. He studied organ with his father, before moving to Cologne for further study. In 1580 he became organist in Erfurt but remained there only two years. After returning to Hamburg in 1582 he worked with his father as assistant organist, becoming principal organist in 1586 when his father died, a post he retained until his own death 43 years later.

His *Exultate iusti à 16* (first published in 1618) will be our second 16-part piece and concludes our day. It is a great example of how to mix different choir combinations to achieve a very flourishing sound.

#### ***Exultate iusti***

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for it becometh well the just to be thankful.  
Praise the Lord with harp: sing praises unto him with the lute, and instrument of ten strings.  
Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing praises lustily unto him with a good courage.  
For the word of the Lord is true: and all his works are faithful.  
He loveth righteousness and judgement: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.