

Programme of the Psalm Concert on Wednesday 6 August 2014
46th International Jewish-Christian Bible Week, Haus Ohrbeck

The Fourth Book of Psalms – in Tones and Sounds

Psalm 90:12-14

Herr, lehre uns bedenken

Johann Hermann Schein (1586–1630)

No. 25 from "Israelsbrünnlein"

Schein lived in the central German region (Dresden, Weissenfels, Weimar) and was active for 14 years as the cantor of the Thomaskirche (St Thomas's Church) in Leipzig. The 26 motets of the "Israelsbrünnlein" are marked by a distinctive combination of nuanced textual interpretation and expressive word-and-tone relationship, and they represent some of the most important sacred choral music of the Early Baroque.

Psalm 91

Der du im Schirm des Höchsten ruhst

Alon Wallach (born 1980)

Work commissioned by the Frankurt Tehillim-Psalms Project in November 2013

Alon Wallach studied guitar and composition in Haifa and Stuttgart. He leads the "Assamblea Mediterranea" and is intensively involved with Sephardic music. For his arrangement of Psalm 91 he chose 5/4 time in order to express the insecurities and vicissitudes of human life.

Psalm 92:1-8

Tov l'hodos l'Adonai

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

D 953

Commissioned by Salomon Sulzer, Schubert, who was distinguished by his dogma-free approach to religion, set Psalm 92 to music for the collection Schir Zion. Sulzer wished to reform liturgical synagogue music by means of the introduction of polyphonic choral singing and organ accompaniment.

Psalm 93

Adonaj moloch

David Rubin (1837–1922)

from the Frankfurt "Freimann Collection"

Rubin lived in Prague and was the head of the cantorial academy there. He was also the choir director at the "New Jewish Temple" (the Spanish Synagogue). This Psalm arrangement comes from the collection Schirej Hejchal, which was widely used throughout Europe and America, sung both in Reform synagogues and in concerts.

Psalm 94

Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Choral Prelude to Cantata BWV 21

This early Cantata by J S Bach came into being during his time at the royal court of Weimar and is marked by its extraordinary musical diversity. The contents depict the progress of a soul from mourning and struggle to faith, confidence and a world-embracing joy.

Psalm 96

Cantate Dominum canticum novum

Vytautas Miškinis (born 1954)

Born in Lithuania, the composer allocates the male voices a pulsating layer of sound in sections of the composition forming a framework, and above this he allows the female voices to develop the theme, partly as a canon. The meditative central section is arranged for two choral ensembles and is marked by a layered and colourful harmony.

Psalm 97:2-3 (Vulgate)

Viderunt omnes

Pérotin (approx 1150 – approx 1200)

Pérotin is considered to be the most important composer of the Notre Dame school. He further developed the two-voiced structure of his predecessor Léonin into a four-part polyphony. The rhythmic freedom of plainchant was sacrificed in favour of a modal rhythm derived from Antique metrical standards.

Psalm 98

The Lord is king, let the earth rejoice

David Hurd (born 1950)

Chant in 5 voices from the *Anglican Chant Psalter*, 1987

In the Anglican tradition the Psalms are sung according to series of repeating polyphonic chord sequences. Mostly there is a structure of four short sections, whose frequent repetition permits a deep meditative immersion in the Psalm text.

Psalm 99:1-3

Or est maintenant l'Éternel regnant

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

No. 32 from the "Livre Quatriesime et Conclusionnal des Psaumes de David"

The multi-voice arrangement of all of the Psalms on the basis of the French version of the texts contained in the Geneva Psalter is without a doubt Sweelinck's magnum opus. The Reformer Calvin was responsible for bringing about this lyrical re-working of all of the Psalm texts. Accompanied by melodies, the Psalms of the Geneva Psalter in due course formed the Reformed Hymnal.

Psalm 100:1-5

Mizmor letoda: Hari'u l'Adonai, kol ha-aretz

Salomone Rossi (approx 1570 – approx 1630)

Rossi, who came from an Italian Jewish family, was the master of music and composer to the court of Mantua. Besides instrumental music, he also wrote choral music for the synagogue, amongst other things the "Songs of Solomon" (Ha-Shirim asher li-Shlomo). Baron Edmond de Rothschild collected all of Rossi's compositions 200 years after this death.

Psalm 102

Domine, exaudi orationem meam

Orlando Lasso

from "Psalmi Davidis Poenitentiales"

Next to Palestrina, Lasso was one of the most significant composers of the High Renaissance, and lived in the Netherlands, Rome and Munich. The seven Penitential Psalm Motets were composed for Duke Albert V of Bavaria. Lasso chose the 8 traditional liturgical modes as his overarching idea and attached an additional text to Psalm 148.

Psalm 105:1-4, 6-12, 47-48

Alleluja! Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus

Clemens Garbe (born 1976)

First performance

Clemens Garbe is a self-taught musician who has been singing in various choirs and ensembles for several years. His encounter with choral music of the most varied periods and styles inspired this composition. The Alleluia leitmotiv recurs throughout the work and combines contemporary choral music with Baroque quotations and elements of pop music.

Ensemble members

The **Ensemble Quintstärke** (from Hamburg) is made up of

Natalie Kopp, soprano – Daniel Lager, alto – Rüdiger Bültmann, tenor –
Ulrich Bildstein, baritone – Clemens Garbe, bass

Bettina Strübel (piano, voice, programme conception)