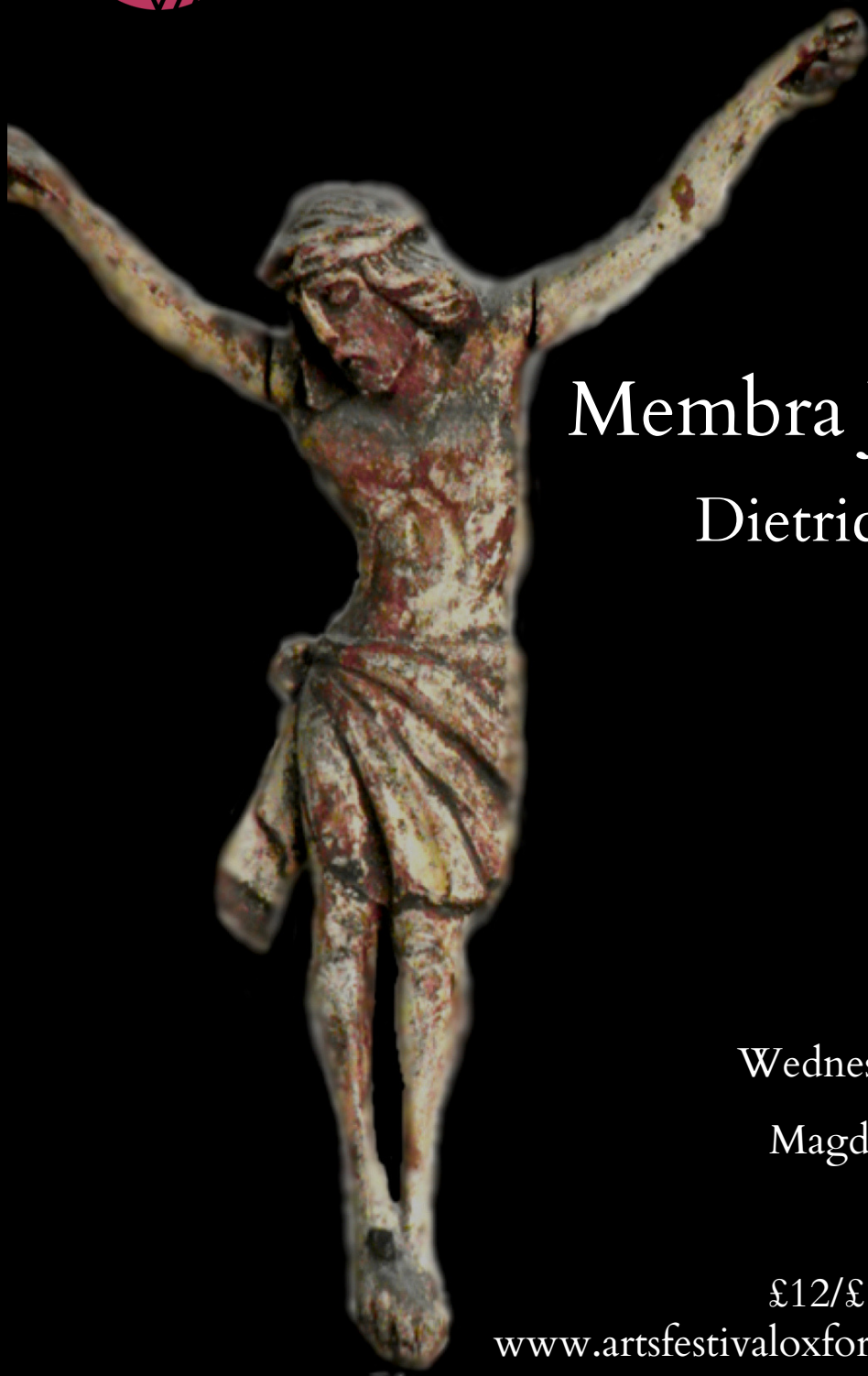




three parts vied



Membra Jesu Nostri
Dietrich Buxtehude

Wednesday 26th June, 9pm

Magdalen College Chapel

£12/£10/£2

www.artsfestivaloxford.org





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BUXTEHUDE

Membra Jesu Nostri Patientis Sanctissima

with

Readings — Dr Cathy Oakes

Rare books — Daryl Green

Historical research — Dr Katie McKeogh

Wednesday 26th June, 9pm

Magdalen College Chapel

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directed by Alexander Pott

Soprano I

Fleur Smith

Helena Thomson

Soprano II

Jennifer Attia

Katie McKeogh

Alto

Edward Edgcumbe

Tenor

Ben Durrant

Bass

Angus McPhee

Violin I

Chris Jones

Violin II

Becky Windram

Cello

Gay Amherst

Continuo

Alexander Pott

OXFORD
FESTIVAL
of the **ARTS**

Membra Jesu Nostri Patientis Sanctissima

BuxWV 75

Passionssalve

Sigmund von Birken, tr. Isabella van Elferen

I: Ad Pedes

Madrigal

St. John of the Cross

II: Ad Genua

Salve Deus Rex Iudæorum (excerpt)

Æmelia Lanier

III: Ad Manus

Man to the Wound in Christ's Side

Robert Southwell SJ

IV: Ad Latus

The Hymne

Henry Hawkins SJ, tr. Etienne Luzvic SJ

V: Ad Pectus

Denial

George Herbert

VI: Ad Cor

Of patient bearing the crosse of Christ

Thomas à Kempis, tr. Thomas Rodgers

VII: Ad Faciem

Please refrain from recording or taking photographs during the concert.

The passion cantata *Membra Jesu Nostri Patientis Sanctissima* ('The most holy limbs of our suffering Jesus') was published in 1680 with the sub-title 'sung whole-heartedly in the humblest devotion'. Buxtehude dedicated the work to his friend and patron Gustav Düben, master of music at the Swedish Court. It is not a liturgical work, but it nevertheless belongs to sacred space and devotional attitude. Buxtehude was attracted to pietism, an influential movement in German Lutheranism which focused on individual devotion over Church dogma. The influence of this inward-looking personal form of spirituality finds clear expression in *Membra Jesu Nostri*, in which the believer meditates upon the earthly suffering and the hopelessness that characterised the three days between Christ's Passion and Resurrection. It has at its core the individual believer's emotional response to the mutilated body of the mortal son of God.

In Germany, the confessional wrangling of the past 150 years — the Reformation — was largely settled by the late seventeenth century, but it remained a multi-confessional society where religious tensions were an everyday concern. Buxtehude was not a Reformation composer, but his was a society still facing Reformation questions of co-existence; how could the ungodly live alongside the godly? Lübeck, where Buxtehude lived and worked, was a thriving Lutheran city, but its people were still negotiating recent religious turmoil. As organist of the *Marienkirche*, Buxtehude worked in a church named for Mary whose interior decoration signalled its late-medieval Catholic incarnation. Changes would be made in Buxtehude's time, but these belong to a later phase, after *Membra Jesu Nostri* was completed. Residents of Lübeck benefited from the series of devotional evening concerts, *Abendmusiken*, which Buxtehude ran at the *Marienkirche*. These offered performances of music to aid meditation and spiritual contemplation in the church outside of the pattern of services. It is conceivable that *Membra Jesu Nostri* — or parts of it — may have been performed as part of these.

The texts are drawn from the Bible and the *Rythmica oratorio* by the thirteenth-century devotional poet Arnulf of Louvain. Like many of the texts Buxtehude used, the latter had devotional appeal across confessional boundaries and was acceptable to both Lutherans and Catholics. The devotional texts read before each movement follow this thread, exploring responses from men and women who wrote from different confessional perspectives throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: the English Jesuits Robert Southwell and Henry Hawkins, the English Protestant Æmilia Lanier, the Maltese-Spanish friar St John of the Cross, and the Welsh Church of England priest and metaphysical poet George Herbert. The final text is an excerpt from a sixteenth-century English translation by the Protestant controversialist Thomas Rodgers of the popular medieval devotional text *Imitatio Christi* by the Dutch-German monk Thomas à Kempis.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Sigmund von Birken (1626-890, 'Passionssalve' (1679), tr. Isabella van Elferen

Ah! This place
was the death-bed
of Jesus,
the cross-altar.
Here He became the sacrifice for our sins.
His sacred head was made to bear the thorns.
His faithful hands and arms, full of mercy,
He stretches out to embrace us wretches.
Our names are inscribed
On His hands
by the nails.
Here His heart
unlocks His Side;
it is large and wide
a refuge from Hell
for your soul.
Here the Lamb was burnt
on the wood of the cross
in love-flames
dripping with blood,
inviting us
to bread and wine.
Weak knees
bend here:
because His prayer
goes out for you.
Embrace His feet,
they surely walk
ahead of you
to Heaven's gate:
through cross and pain
to Heaven's joy.

*with grateful thanks to Professor van Elferen for permission to use her translation:
I. van Elferen, *Mystical Love in the German Baroque: Theology, Poetry, Music* (2009)*

Membra Jesu Nostri I: Ad Pedes (to the feet)

Chorus

Ecce super montes
pedes evangelizantis
et annunciantis pacem

Behold, upon the mountains
the feet of one bringing good news
and proclaiming peace.

Aria

Salve mundi salutare,
salve, salve Jesu care!
Cruci tuae me aptare
vellem vere, tu scis quare,
da mihi tui copiam.

Hail, salvation of the world,
Hail, hail, dear Jesus!
On Your cross would I hang
Truly, You know why
Give me Your strength.

Aria

Clavos pedum, plagas duras,
et tam graves impressuras
circumplector cum affectu,
tuo pavens in aspectu,
tuorum memor vulnerum

The nails in Your feet, the hard blows
and so grievous marks
I embrace with love,
Fearful at the sight of You
Mindful of Your wounds.

Aria

Dulcis Jesu, pie Deus,
Ad te clamo licet reus,
praebe mihi te benignum,
ne repellas me indignum
de tuis sanctis pedibus.

Sweet Jesus, merciful God
I cry to You, in my guilt
Show me Your grace,
Turn me not unworthy away
From Your sacred feet.

Chorus

Salve mundi salutare (repeat)

Hail, salvation of the world (repeat)

St. John of the Cross (1542-91), 'Madrigal'

Once a young shepherd went off to despond:
how could he dance again? how could he sing?
All of his thoughts to his shepherdess cling,
with love in his heart like a ruinous wound.

The root of his sorrow? No, never the wound:
the lad was a lover and welcomed the dart
that lodged where it drank the red race of his heart—
but spurned by his fairest, went off to despond.

For only to think he was spurned,
and by one radiant shepherdess, drove him afar,
cost him a drubbing in foreigners' war,
with love in his heart like a ruinous wound.

The shepherd boy murmured: O murrain* descend
on the traitor estranging my angel and me!
charming her vision that stares stonily
on the love in my heart like a ruinous wound.

*curses, pestilence

Time passed: on a season he sprang from the ground,
swarmed a tall tree and arms balancing wide
beautifully grappled the tree till he died
of the love in his heart like a ruinous wound.

Membra Jesu Nostri II: Ad genua (to the knees)

Chorus

Ad ubera portabimini,
et super genua blandientur vobis.

You will be brought to nurse
and dandled on the knees.

Aria

Salve Jesu, rex sanctorum,
spes votiva peccatorum,
crucis ligno tanquam reus,
pendens homo verus Deus,
caducis nutans genibus.

Hail Jesus, King of Saints
Hope of sinners' prayers,
like an offender on the wood of the cross,
a man hanging, true God,
Bending on failing knees!

Aria

Quid sum tibi responsurus,
actu vilis corde durus?
Quid rependam amatori,
qui elegit pro me mori,
ne dupla morte morerer.

What answer shall I give You,
Vile as I am in deed, hard in my heart?
How shall I repay Your love,
Who chose to die for me
Lest I die the second death?

Aria

Ut te quaeram mente pura,
sit haec mea prima cura,
non est labor et gravabor,
sed sanabor et mundabor,
cum te complexus fuero.

That I may seek You with pure heart,
Be my first care,
It is no labour nor shall I be loaded down:
But I shall be cleansed,
When I embrace You.

Chorus

Ad ubera portabimini (repeat)

You will be brought to nurse (repeat)

Æmelia Lanier (1569-1645), from 'Salve Deus Rex Iudæorum' (1611)

Now went our Lord unto that holy place,
Sweet *Gethsemane* hallowed by his presence,
That blessed Garden, which did now embrace
His holy corpse, yet could make no defence
Against those Vipers, objects of disgrace,
Which sought that pure eternal Love to quench:
Here his Disciples willed he to stay,
Whilst he went further, where he meant to pray.

None were admitted with their Lord to go,
 But *Peter*, and the sons of *Zebed'us*,
 To them good *Jesus* opened all his woe,
 He gave them leave his sorrows to discuss,
 His deepest griefs, he did not scorn to show
 These three dear friends, so much he did intrust:
 Being sorrowful, and overcharg'd with grief,
 He told them, yet look'd for no relief.

Sweet Lord, how couldst thou thus to flesh and blood
 Communicate thy grief? tell of thy woes?
 Thou knew'st they had no power to do thee good,
 But were the cause thou must endure these blows,
 Being the Scorpions bred in *Adams* mud,
 Whose pois'ned sins did work among thy foes,
 To re-ore-charge thy over-burd'ned soul,
 Although the sorrows now they do condole.

***Membra Jesu Nostri* III: Ad manus (to the hands)**

Chorus

Quid sunt plagae istae
 in medio manuum tuarum?

What are those wounds
 in the midst of Your hands?

Aria

Salve Jesu, pastor bone,
 fatigatus in agone,
 qui per lignum es distractus
 et ad lignum es compactus
 expansis sanctis manibus.

Hail, Jesus, good shepherd,
 wearied in agony,
 tormented on the cross
 nailed to the cross
 Your sacred hands stretched out.

Aria

Manus sanctae, vos amplector,
 et gemendo condelector,
 grates ago plagis tantis,
 clavis duris guttis sanctis
 dans lacrymas cum osculis.

Holy hands, I embrace you,
 and, lamenting, I delight in you,
 I give thanks for the terrible wounds,
 the hard nails, the holy drops,
 shedding tears with kisses.

Aria

In cruore tuo lotum
 me commendo tibi totum,
 tuae sanctae manus istae
 me defendant, Jesu Christe,
 extremis in periculis.

Washed in Your blood
 I wholly entrust myself to You;
 may these holy hands of Yours
 defend me, Jesus Christ,
 in the final dangers.

Chorus

Quid sunt plagae istae (repeat)

What are those wounds (repeat)

Robert Southwell SJ (1561-95), 'Man to the Wound in Christ's Side' (1595)

O pleasant port, O place of rest,
O royal rift, O worthy wound,
Come harbour me a weary guest,
That in the world no ease have found.

I lie lamenting at thy gate,
Yet dare I not adventure in:
I bear with me a troublous mate,
And cumbered am, with heap of sin.

Discharge me of this heavy load,
That easier passage I may find,
Within this bower to make abode,
And in this glorious tomb be shrin'd.

Here must I live, here must I die,
Here would I utter all my grief
Here would I all those pains discry,
Which here did meet for my relief.

Here would I view that bloody sore,
Which dint of spiteful spear did breed,
The bloody wounds laid there in store
Would force a stony heart to bleed.

Here is the spring of trickling tears,
The mirror of all mourning wights,
With doleful tunes, for dumpish cares
And solemn shows for sorrowed sights.

O happy soul that flies so high,
As to attain this sacred cave:
Lord send me wings that I may fly,
And in this harbour quiet have.

Membra Jesu Nostrī IV: Ad latus (to the sides)

Chorus

Surge, amica mea,
speciosa mea, et veni,
columba mea in foraminibus petrae,
in caverna maceriae.

Arise, my love,
my beautiful one, and come,
my dove in the clefts of the rock,
in the hollow of the cliff.

Aria

Salve latus salvatoris,
in quo latet mel dulcoris,
in quo patet vis amoris,
ex quo scatet fons cruoris,
qui corda lavat sordida.

Hail, side of the Saviour,
in which the honey of sweetness is hidden,
in which the power of love is exposed,
from which gushes the spring of blood
that cleans the dirty hearts.

Aria

Ecce tibi appropinquo,
parce, Jesu, si delinquo,
verecunda quidem fronte,
ad te tamen veni sponte
scrutari tua vulnera.

Lo I approach You,
Pardon, Jesus, if I sin,
With reverent countenance
freely I come to You
to behold Your wounds.

Aria

Hora mortis meus flatus
intret Jesu, tuum latus,
hinc expirans in te vadat,
ne hunc leo trux invadat,
sed apud te permaneat.

In the hour of death, may my soul
Enter, Jesus, Your side
Hence dying may it go into You,
Lest the cruel lion seize it,
But let it dwell with You.

Chorus

Surge, amica mea (repeat)

Arise, my love (repeat)

Henry Hawkins SJ (1577-1646), ‘The Hymne’ from *The Devout Harte or Royal Throne of the Pacifical Salomon*, tr. Etienne Luzvic SJ (1634)

I saw a little glimpse of light
As I lay slumb’ring in the night,
Which through a cranny of my wall
Glanc’d on mine eyes & therewithal,
I heard one speak, and rapping hard,
While all my doors were locked & bar’d
With that I half awaked looked round,
And in my hart a thief I found
Discovered by the light. The walls
Were bare, & naked, while he calls
Who stood without, more light appears,
T’augment my hopes, & lessen fears;
Then, JESU, I cried out, come in,
Here’s nought but a privation sin.

Membra Jesu Nostri V: Ad pectus (to the breast)

Trio

Sicut modo geniti infantes rationabiles,
et sine dolo concupiscite,
ut in eo crescatis in salutem.
Si tamen gustatis, quoniam dulcis est
Dominus.

Like newborn infants,
long for the guileless milk of reason,
that by it you may grow into salvation,
if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is
good.

Aria

Salve, salus mea, Deus,
Jesu dulcis, amor meus,
salve, pectus reverendum,
cum tremore contingendum,
amoris domicilium.

Hail God, my salvation,
sweet Jesus, my beloved,
hail, breast to be revered,
to be touched with trembling,
dwelling of love.

Aria

Pectus mihi confer mundum,
ardens, pium, gemebundum,
voluntatem abnegatam,
tibi semper conformatam,
juncta virtutum copia.

Give me a clean breast,
ardent, pious, moaning,
an abnegated will,
always conforming to You,
with an abundance of virtues.

Aria

Ave, verum templum Dei,
precor miserere mei,
tu totius arca boni,
fac electis me apponi,
vas dives Deus omnium.

Hail, true temple of God,
I pray, have mercy on me,
You, the ark of all that is good,
make me be placed with the chosen,
rich vessel, God of all.

Trio

Sicut modo geniti infantes... (repeat)

Like newborn infants....(repeat)

George Herbert (1593-1633), 'Denial' (1633)

When my devotions could not pierce
Thy silent ears,
Then was my heart broken, as was my verse;
My breast was full of fears
And disorder.

My bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,
Did fly asunder:
Each took his way; some would to pleasures go,
Some to the wars and thunder
Of alarms.

“As good go anywhere,” they say,
“As to benumb
Both knees and heart, in crying night and day,
Come, come, my God, O come!
But no hearing.”

O that thou shouldst give dust a tongue
To cry to thee,
And then not hear it crying! All day long
My heart was in my knee,
But no hearing.

Therefore my soul lay out of sight,
Untuned, unstrung:
My feeble spirit, unable to look right,
Like a nipped blossom, hung
Discontented.

O cheer and tune my heartless breast,
Defer no time;
That so thy favours granting my request,
They and my mind may chime,
And mend my rhyme.

Membra Jesu Nostri VI: Ad cor (to the heart)

Trio

Vulnerasti cor meum,
soror mea, sponsa,
vulnerasti cor meum.

You have wounded my heart,
my sister, my bride,
You have wounded my heart.

Aria

Summi regis cor, aveto,
te saluto corde laeto,
te complecti me delectat
et hoc meum cor affectat,
ut ad te loquar, animes.

Heart of the highest king, I greet You,
I salute You with a joyous heart,
it delights me to embrace You
and my heart aspires to this:
that You move me to speak to You.

Aria

Per medullam cordis mei,
peccatoris atque rei,
tuus amor transferatur,
quo cor tuum rapiatur
languens amoris vulnere.

Through the marrow of my heart,
of a sinner and culprit,
may Your love be conveyed
by whom Your heart was seized,
languishing through the wound of love.

Aria

Viva cordis voce clamo,
dulce cor, te namque amo,
ad cor meum inclinare,
ut se possit applicare
devoto tibi pectore.

I call with the living voice of the heart,
sweet heart, for I love You,
to incline to my heart,
so that it may commit itself to you
in the breast devoted to You.

Trio

Vulnerasti cor meum (repeat)

You have wounded my heart (repeat)

**from Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), *Of the Imitation of Christ*,
tr. Thomas Rodgers, 'Of patient bearing the crosse of Christ' (1580)**

Why then fearest thou the crosse, which is the way unto heaven?

In the crosse salvation is; in the cross, life; in the cross, aid against enemies; in the cross, celestial comfort; in the cross, strength of mind; joy of the spirit is in the cross; in the cross, the chiefest virtue; perfection of holiness is in the cross; finally without the cross there is neither salvation of the soul, nor hope of eternal life.

Wherefore take up thy cross, and follow Christ, and thou shalt go unto eternal life. He went before thee bearing his one cross, and for thy sake died on the cross, that thou also mightest bear the cross, and desire to die upon the same. For if thou die with him, thou also shalt live with him; if thou suffer with him, thou shalt also reign with him. For know this, in the crosse, and in dying all things do consist, neither is there any other way unto life and quietness, than by the cross, and daily mortifying of thyself.

Whersoever thou turnest thyself, or castest thine eyes, thou shalt find neither above, nor beneath, a better way unto bliss, than by the cross.

Though thou set all things in never so good order, yet can it not be avoided, but something thou must suffer either voluntarily, or against thy will, & always run upon the cross. For either sickness of body, or sorrow of mind will vex thee. Either God will forsake, or man afflict, or (which worser is,) thou wilt be a burden to thyself: and that in such sort, as no remedy can salve, nor comfort quite thee, but of necessity thou must bear it, as long as God thinks good.

Membra Jesu Nostri VII: Ad faciem (to the face)

Chorus

Illustra faciem tuam super servum tuum,
salvum me fac in misericordia tua.

Let Your face shine upon Your servant,
save me in Your mercy.

Aria

Salve, caput cruentatum,
totum spinis coronatum,
conquassatum, vulneratum,
arundine verberatum
facie spitis illita.

Hail, bloodied head,
all crowned with thorns,
beaten, wounded,
struck with a cane,
the face soiled with spit.

Dum me mori est necesse,
noli mihi tunc deesse,
in tremenda mortis hora
veni, Jesu, absque mora,
tuere me et libera.

Aria

When I must die,
do not then be away from me,
in the anxious hour of death
come, Jesus, without delay,
protect me and set me free!

Cum me jubes emigrare,
Jesu care, tunc appare,
o amator amplectende,
temet ipsum tunc ostende
in cruce salutifera.

Aria

When You command me to depart,
dear Jesus, then appear,
O lover to be embraced,
then show Yourself
on the cross that brings salvation.



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