



SACRED CHORAL STORIES

CREÁTUS CHAMBER SERENATA SPP CHOIR

21st OCTOBER 2023

CHURCH OF STS. PETER & PAUL (SINGAPORE)

Foreword

The problems of a world that we read in history books seem to persist even to present day. Strife and conflict ebb and flow in various communities, affecting both the innocent and the shrewd.

While our bodies may one day pass and wither back into the earth, the memories of our lives live on among our loved ones. For some of us who believe in the afterlife, our souls live on for eternity – resilient – in a space where time has no effect.

Such are the stories behind some of the songs that live on today. They give us a glimpse of the person who had written them, or the people who had sung their manuscripts. The politics, social uncertainties, spiritual truths, assurance and lessons. These have transcended time and space, and they continue in a timeless trajectory. We are but a passing experience – interpreting and sharing the music as well as the stories, however we encounter them.

May the songs enable a moment of reflection; a wave of peace and calm. That they be able to punctuate the flurry and hurry, or the anxiety and concerns that burden you. Because your story and your spirit will continue to live on, and face whatever life has to offer: both the sunshine, and the rain.

Kenneth Wee
Creátus Chamber

Programme

Creátus Chamber

“Ne Irascaris Domine” (William Byrd)

“Sepulto Domino” (Jan Dismas Zelenka)

Serenata

“I Will Sing Forever” (Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ)

“Munting Sanggol” (Ryan Cayabyab)

Creátus Chamber

“Illumina Faciem Tuam” (Kevin Allen)

“Let Me Ride In That Morning” (Mary MacDonald)

Creátus Chamber, Serenata & SPP Choir

“Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo” (Haydn)

Kyrie

Gloria

Credo

Sanctus

Benedictus

Agnus Dei

Creátus Chamber & Serenata

“Ang Puso Ko’y Nagpupuri” (Eduardo Hontiveros, SJ)

Creátus Chamber

Conductor: Kenneth Wee



Creátus Chamber was formed in 2016 primarily to explore and study Sacred Polyphony. As most of its repertoire was used in a liturgical setting, Creátus Chamber aims to share a more spiritual interpretation of the music for various audiences; as well as its history and how it remains to be beautiful and relevant for the modern listener.

The group has been a regular participant at the Voices of Singapore festival and has had collaborations and joint concerts with various singing groups in Singapore: Cappella Martialis, The Crescendos, Vox Camerata as well as around the region with the Byrd Consort (Australia/UK) and Ottophony (Malaysia).

Serenata

Conductor: Maricris Fermin



Serenata (*Italian: serenade*) refers to music specifically written and performed in someone's honour. Serenata sings songs in honour of our God Almighty Father.

We are one of the many Filipino choirs in Singapore built from friendship and love of music. The choir was founded in February 2019 with members coming from various professions. Being members of different parishes, the choristers also serve numerous liturgical services, spiritual gatherings and church events in Singapore. To mention a few, we have Simbang Gabi (Advent Night Masses) to commemorate the coming of Birth of Jesus Christ, regular Tagalog Anticipated Mass, St. Nino (Holy Child) Mass, various church weddings etc.

THE STORIES

“Ne Irascaris Domine” (1589)

William Byrd (1539/40 - 1623)

William Byrd was a prolific composer & musician serving in the English Royal courts during the reformation. It was a period of heightened volatility. Byrd had to manoeuvre the politics between the Protestants and Catholics while remaining faithful to his Catholic faith, and stay alive.

This first piece is a double motet, consisting of two symmetrical parts: Ne Irascaris Domine, and Civitas Sancti Tui.

Ne Irascaris Domine paints the lamentations of God’s people when they were exiled from Jerusalem – more specifically, pleading for divine mercy.

In Civitas Sancti Tui, the lamentations continue over the loss of the holy cities. The people experience a desolation that God has deserted them and left their homes and cities to ruin, while they themselves are displaced to new masters.

Latin:

Ne irascaris Domine satis,
et ne ultra memineris iniquitatis nostrae.
Ecce respice populus tuus omnes nos.

Civitas sancti tui facta est deserta.
Sion deserta facta est,
Jerusalem desolata est.

English:

Be not angry, O Lord,
and remember our iniquity no more.
Behold, we are all your people.

Your holy city has become a wilderness.
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem has been made desolate.

“Sepulto Domino”

Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679 – 1745)

Text: No. 9 of the Tenebrae Responsories for Holy Saturday

Jan Dismas Zelenka was a Czech composer and musician during the Baroque period. His music is admired for its harmonic inventiveness and master of counterpoint. During his years serving the German courts, there would be periods of contest for power in government. Yet he was able to hold onto his positions and mentor younger musicians who would later serve in Dresden. He would mentor Nicola Porpora, who in turn would later be Joseph Haydn's teacher. In Zelenka's later years, retiring from the royal courts, he held the position of Church Composer and was later succeeded by J.S. Bach. – who himself held Zelenka in high esteem.

Sepulto Domino is taken from the text of the 9th Responsory of Tenebrae on Holy Saturday (the eve of Easter Sunday). It marks the end of the Passion story.

The responsory re-tells the moment when Jesus was placed in the tomb with the entrance sealed with a huge rock. The Chief Priests, fearing that the disciples of Jesus would steal his body away, petitioned Pontius Pilate to place soldiers to watch over the tomb.

Latin:

Sepulto Domino, signatum est monumentum,
Volventes lapidem ad ostium monumenti,
Ponentes milites qui custodirent illum.

Accedentes principes sacerdotum ad Pilatum,
petierunt illum.

In pace factus est locus eius, et in Sion habitatio eius.
Ne forte veniant discipuli eius, et furentur eum, et
dicant plebi: surrexit ad mortuis.

Ponentes milites qui custodirent illum

English:

The Lord being buried, the tomb was sealed
By rolling a stone across the door,
And soldiers were placed to guard it.

The chief priests went to Pilate and petitioned him.
In peace is his place, and his dwelling is in Sion.
It may be that his disciples come and steal him away,
and tell the people: he is risen from the dead.

And soldiers were placed to guard it.

“I Will Sing Forever” (1982)

Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ (b. 1965)

A song that expresses joy and hope that comes from praising God through singing. The song is known for many believers all over the world, inspiring them to keep singing praises to HIM even when life gets tough.

This song was among the earliest songs composed by Fr. Manoling V. Francisco S.J. in 1982; but it became more popular in the mid-90's after Mr. Norman Agatep arranged and jazzed it up.

In this song, you can hear lot of chant-like lyrics “mamayedobap bareba” which was added by the arranger as part of his fascination with African praise songs. Put that together with the melody and the rhythm and you'll be engulfed to sing your praise to the Lord in whatever language you are singing.

Chorus:

**I will sing forever of your love, oh Lord
I will celebrate the wonder of your name
For the word that you speak is a song of forgiveness
And a song of gentle mercy and of peace**

Let us wake at the morning and be filled with your love
And sing songs of praise all our days
For your love is as high as the heavens above us
And your faithfulness as certain as the dawn

I will sing forever of your love, oh Lord
For you are my refuge and my strength
You fill the world with your life giving spirit
That speaks your word
Your word of mercy and of peace

And I will sing forever of your love, oh Lord
Yes I will sing forever of your love, oh Lord

“Munting Sanggol” (Little Infant)

Ryan Cayabyab (b. 1954)

It is as story of the very first Christmas that we all know about: That in one majestic night, JESUS was born in a stable and laid to sleep in a manger. The birth of the Little Infant becomes the foundation of the belief that GOD loves us so much that HE would send HIS son to this world to grow and live the same way that we do.

Composed, arranged, and popularized by Philippine National Artist Maestro Ryan Cayabyab, this song depicts what is written in the scripture; “May our hearts be the place where GOD’s child rests and may GOD grant us blessings of peace and joy during this season and all the days to come”. Gloria in Excelsis Deo!

Tagalog:

Munting Sanggol kalong-kalong ng Iyong ina
Munting Sanggol may ningning ang 'Yong mga mata
Batid mo bang kay raming naghihintay sa 'yo
Nananabik, nag-aabang ng pagsilang Mo

Mga pastol sa sabsaban ay nagpupugay
Tatlong hari mula silangan ay nag-aalay
Dala'y ginto, kamanyang at mira
Para sa 'yo Hesus, Hari ng Sanlibutan

At nagsisi-awit ang mga angel sa langit
Luwalhati sa Diyos sa kaitaasan
At sa lupa'y kapayapaan
Gloria in excelsis Deo...

English:

Little Infant cradle by her mother
Little Infant there's a spark in Your eyes
Did You know everyone is expecting and excited to see Your
birth

Shepherds in the manger are rejoicing
Three kings from the south offered
gold, frankincense and myrrh
For You Jesus, King of the world

And there are angels from heaven singing
"Glory to God in the highest
And on Earth peace

Gloria In Excelsis Deo! (Eng: "Glory be to God on high.")

“Illumina Faciem Tuam” (2011)

Kevin Allen (b. 1964)

Kevin Allen is a highly regarded composer of opera, chamber and orchestral music. He has developed a unique reputation as a composer of for the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church whose works are reminiscent of the polyphonic masters from the Renaissance. Based in Chicago, he is the current choirmaster of the Monastery of the Holy Cross, and had also served as Director of Music for the highly prolific St. John Cantius Church.

The motet “Illumina Faciem Tuam” is from the Communion antiphon (chant) for the 3rd Sunday before Ash Wednesday (Septuagesima) in the Tridentine Calendar.

The text is from Psalm 31. It’s composer, King David. The prose of the psalm expresses a great distress in King David because he is lamenting to God about the pain that his own son, Absalom, is entering into Jerusalem to kill him and usurp the throne from David. Through a series of dramatic events, Absalom is killed by one of King David’s generals, while David mourned deeply over the loss of his son.

Latin:

Illumina faciem tuam super servum tuum,
et salvum me fac in misericordia tua:

Domine, non confundar,
quoniam invocavi te.

English:

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant,
and save me in thy mercy;

O Lord, let me not be confounded,
for I have called upon thee.

“Let Me Ride In That Morning” (2019)

Mary McDonald (b. 1956)

Mary McDonald lives in Knoxville, Tennessee. As a composer, she has published over 1,000 choral anthems, cantatas and organ collections. She is also a well-known choral clinician throughout the United States – conducting workshops, sharing rehearsal techniques and shaping choirs. She also worked as a Sacred Choral editor for the Lorenz Corporation for nearly 20 years and continues to work for them as a consultant. She has served as the first woman President of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference and is a member of the American Guild of Organists.

“Let Me Ride in That Morning” pairs familiar traditional spirituals “Let Me Ride (Swing Down Chariot)” and “In That Great Getting’ Up Morning”. The rhythmic energy and text tell the good news of a “home on the other side”. This is ironic because many of these African American traditional spirituals were born during the time of great suffering in American Slave history. Slave Masters would impose their Christianity on Sunday, while whipping and tormenting their slave workers on weekdays to “drive the devil” out of them. The songs were a means of comfort for these African American slaves and over the generations, became a sarcastic retort to the systemic racism and segregation that has become ingrained in American history.

The text of the song narrates the setting of the Great Judgement during the “end of times” where the apocalyptic backdrop presents the meeting of the Great Prophets and the Chariot (of Ezekiel’s vision) bringing the faithful home.

I'm gonna tell you 'bout the comin' of the judgement.
Fare thee well, fare thee well.
There's a better day a-comin', fare thee well, fare thee well.
In that great getting' up morning, fare thee well, fare thee well.

(Chorus)

***Why don't you swing down chariot, stop, and let me ride?
Swing down chariot, stop and let me ride.
Rock me, Lord, rock me, Lord,
Calm and easy; I've gotta home on the other side.***

Well, Ezekiel was out in the middle of the field;
he saw an angel with a chariot wheel.
He wasn't too particular about that wheel,
he wanted to see how a chariot feels.

Why don't you swing down chariot, stop, and let me ride?
Swing down chariot, stop and let me ride.
Rock me, Lord, rock me, Lord,
Calm and easy; I've gotta home on the other side.

When you see the lightnin' flashin'
When you hear the thunder crashin';
you see the stars a-fallin'
and you hear the chariots callin': Good news! Chariots a-comin'!
Good news! Chariots a-comin'!
So glad! Chariots a-comin' and I don't wanna be left out.

There's a long white robe in the heaven I know.
Long white robe in the heaven I know.
(Chorus)

“Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo” (1775)

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809)

Kyrie (Lord, have mercy)

Gloria (Glory to God)

Credo (the Creed)

Sanctus (Holy, Holy)

Benedictus (the Benediction)

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

Joseph Haydn was an Austrian composer of the Classical period. He was a friend and mentor of Mozart, and a tutor to Beethoven. From young, he trained in voice, violin and keyboard and served in St. Stephen's Cathedral (Vienna) as a chorister and professional musician. He then struggled as a freelance musician for 7 years before finding stable employment in his late 20's with the aristocrats who noticed his talent. His patrons Prince Paul Anton & Nikolaus I kept Haydn in their employment for 30 years in which time, Haydn composed numerous works which eventually led to his international popularity. Being well-received in England, he profited lucratively while performing symphonies in the London concert scene between 1791 – 1795. He was a devout Catholic who often turned to his rosary when he had trouble composing. He is familiarly known as the “father of the symphony” as he composed 107 symphonies.

The Missa Brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo was written around 1775 for the order of the Brothers Hospitallers in Eisenstadt, whose patron saint was John of God – a Portuguese soldier turned health-care worker and founder of the Brothers Hospitallers (a worldwide Catholic religious institute dedicated to the care of the poor, sick and those with mental disorders).

The work is also known as the Kleine Orgelmesse (Little Organ Mass) due to an extended organ solo in the Benedictus movement, which also includes a solo Soprano.

The movements Gloria and Credo are kept extremely short by employing “telescoped text” (multiple lines of text sung simultaneously in different voicings). A longer version of the Gloria was later written by Haydn’s brother – Michael Haydn – where this technique was not allowed in the Mass.

The music is written specifically for the Catholic liturgy. As the priest prays or prepares the eucharist, the *schola cantorum* (a school of singers) would chant the prayers to accompany the liturgical action.

Ang Puso Ko'y Nagpupuri (The Magnificat) (2009)

Fr. Eduardo Hontiveros, SJ (1923 - 2008)

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

Based on Luke 1:46-56, this song beautifully portrays our expression of praise, devotion, and gratitude to GOD. The song speaks of a heart that praises the LORD and is filled with joy and happiness because of HIM; expressing the gratitude that even the lowly and downtrodden child will be saved and blessed by the LORD. It is a song that celebrates the essence of majesty and wonder of the LORD, inspiring every one of us to be grateful and be blessed for all that we have.

The song shows us how to love and serve the LORD as one of HIS followers; recognizing HIS power and compassion to "Let things be done according to HIS will".

This Tagalog song was composed by Fr. Eduardo Hontiveros, SJ. This particular arrangement was released in 2009 by famous Philippine arranger Paulo Tirol, a year after the passing of Fr. Hontiveros.

Tagalog	English
Chorus: Ang puso ko'y nagpupuri Nagpupuri sa Panginoon Nagagalak ang aking espiritu Sa 'king Tagapagligtas (Repeat) Sapagkat nilingap Niya Kababaan ng Kanyang alipin Mapalad ang pangalan ko Sa lahat ng mga bansa (Chorus) Sapagkat gumawa ang Poon Ng mga dakilang bagay Banal sa lupa't langit Ang pangalan ng Panginoon (Chorus) Luwalhati sa Ama Sa Anak at sa Espiritu Santo Kapara noong unang-una Ngayon at magpakailanman (Chorus)	Chorus: My heart is praising Praising the Lord My spirit is rejoicing In my Saviour (Repeat) Because He looked after The lowliness of His servant Blessed is my name In all nations (Chorus) Because the Lord made Great things Holy on earth and in heaven The name of the Lord (Chorus) Glory to the Father To the Son and Holy Spirit As it was in the beginning Now and forevermore (Chorus)

You Raise Me Up (2001)

Løvland & Graham

You Raise Me Up was written by and released in 2001 in Secret Garden's 4th album "Once in a Red Moon". Composed by Rolf Løvland (Secret Garden), while famous Irish songwriter and novelist Brendan Graham penned the lyrics. The song was a huge international hit and has been covered by different artists almost 400 times – most well-known by American singer, Josh Groban.

Originally an instrumental piece titled "Silent Story", Løvland approached Graham to pen the lyrics for the song after reading one of his novels: "The Whitest Flower" – the story of the indomitable spirit of one woman amidst Ireland's despair in the Great Famine of 1845. After Graham's text was added, the song was first performed at the funeral of Løvland's mother.

In 2020, Graham released his spoken version of "You Raise Me Up" in support of Doctors Without Borders for their efforts and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Doctors Without Borders work daily to save the lives of the poorest, those displaced by war and people in war-torn places of conflict where there are no proper hospitals.

When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary
When troubles come and my heart burdened be
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence
Until You come and sit awhile with me.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be

There is no life, no life without its hunger.
Each restless heart beats so imperfectly.
But when You come and I am filled with wonder
Sometimes I think, I glimpse eternity.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be.

You raise me up to more than I can be.

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Macris Fermin and Serenata, and SPP CHOIR for kindly
collaborating with us on the Missa Brevis (Haydn).



Thank You for coming

Thank you for visiting us in support of the work of this evening's performers. The event is made Free-Entry so that people of all abilities may experience Sacred Polyphony and the choral arts community.

Do follow us on our social media pages and we hope to see you again in our future performances.

Godspeed, and have a blessed evening.

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