

stile antico

In a single decade, Stile Antico has established itself as one of the world's most accomplished early music vocal ensembles. Offering new programmes for 2019, the ensemble enjoys a prestigious touring career and has an award-winning discography with Harmonia Mundi.

SONGS OF LONGING AND EXILE

With Rihab Azar – 12 singers and oud

Inspired by Dowland's melancholic song *Flow my tears*, and the heartbreaking stories of contemporary refugees, vocal ensemble Stile Antico and Dartington Arts commissioned poet Peter Oswald to create texts for Dowland's instrumental *Lachrimae pavans*. These new poems about displacement and exile present a counterpoint to Dowland's exquisite music. Between the pavans, Syrian oud player Rihab Azar intersperses partly-improvised music for oud. The performance ends with a new work for oud and voices by Giles Swayne, providing a fitting climax to a unique and powerful concert experience.

BREAKING THE HABIT

Music written by and for women in Renaissance Europe – 12 singers

The sixteenth century saw an unprecedented number of female rulers. From the powerful Medici women in Italy to the great Tudor queens of England, women across Europe held more power than ever before. Many of these monarchs used their patronage to facilitate the production of music of exquisite beauty by the finest composers of the day, extravagant showcases of their power contrasting with intimate and personal compositions. The century also saw the first publications of music by female composers, often Italian nuns, whose convents supported musical groups of astonishing ability.

QUEEN OF MUSES

Elizabeth I as Monarch, Patron & Lover – 12 singers

The reign of the great Tudor Queen, Elizabeth I, saw an unparalleled flowering of the arts in England. The 'Virgin Queen', herself a talented musician, presided over a court which revelled in the skill of great composers such as Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, and John Dowland. This programme explores the way music was used to gain favour with the Queen by courtiers, diplomats and even suitors. Along the way, we meet foreign spies, disgraced favourites and plotting noblemen, illuminating the life of a court which rejoiced in some of the finest music ever created in England.

TENEBRAE RESPONSORIES

Tomas Luis da Victoria's intense settings of the Tenebrae Responsories – 12 singers

Arguably the finest work of the Spanish Renaissance, Tomas Luis da Victoria's intense settings of the Tenebrae Responsories provide a glimpse into the Catholic liturgy at the height of the church year. The emotionally charged motets follow the story of Christ's passion from his betrayal to his burial. The Responsories were traditionally performed at the end of Holy Week and this programme is particularly suitable for performance by candlelight. *Released on Harmonia Mundi in early 2018.*

A SPANISH NATIVITY

For Advent, Christmas & Epiphany – 13 singers

For its latest Christmas programme, Stile Antico turns to the sensuous musical world of Renaissance Spain, drawing together an irresistible mix of sumptuous polyphony and infectiously joyful folk dances. A superbly rich and luminous mass by Alonso Lobo, based on a motet by Guerrero and intended for performance at Toledo Cathedral, forms the programme's centrepiece. Interspersed between its movements are an exuberant 'ensalada' by Mateo Flecha, beautiful Christmas miniatures by Tomás Luis de Victoria, and classic *villancicos* - Spain's answer to the traditional carol.

