

MAGNIFICAT

John Rutter



Collegium
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MAGNIFICAT

Patricia Forbes (*soprano*)

The Cambridge Singers

City of London Sinfonia

conducted by John Rutter

The passage from St Luke (chapter 1, verses 46–55) known as the Magnificat – a poetic outpouring of praise, joy and trust in God, ascribed by Luke to the Virgin Mary on learning that she was to give birth to Christ – has always been one of the most familiar and well-loved of scriptural texts, not least because of its inclusion as a canticle in the Catholic office of Vespers and in Anglican Evensong. Musical settings of it abound, though surprisingly few of them since J. S. Bach's give the text extended treatment. I had long wished to write an extended Magnificat, but was not sure how to approach it until I found my starting point in the association of the text with the Virgin Mary. In countries such as Spain, Mexico and Puerto Rico, feast days of the Virgin are joyous opportunities for people to take to the streets and celebrate with singing, dancing and processions. These images of outdoor celebration were, I think, somewhere in my mind as I wrote, though I was not fully conscious of the fact till afterwards. I was conscious of following Bach's example in adding to the liturgical text – with the lovely old English poem 'Of a Rose' and the prayer 'Sancta Maria', both of which strengthen the Marian connection, and with the interpolated 'Sanctus' (to the Gregorian chant of the *Missa cum júbilo*) in the third movement, which seems to grow out of the immediately preceding thought 'et sanctum nomen eius'. The composition of *Magnificat* occupied several hectic weeks early in 1990, and the première took place in May of that year in Carnegie Hall, New York.

JOHN RUTTER

Total playing time: 37' 05"

- 1 Magnificat anima mea (6' 50")
- 2 Of a Rose, a lovely Rose (5' 00")
- 3 Quia fecit mihi magna (5' 20")
- 4 Et misericordia (4' 42")
- 5 Fecit potentiam (3' 35")
- 6 Esurientes (6' 15")
- 7 Gloria Patri (5' 02")

The Cambridge Singers

Sopranos: Caroline Ashton, Ruth Gomme, Celia Jackson, Karen Kerslake, Simone Mace, Joanna Maggs, Rachel Platt, Juliet Schiemann, Penny Stow, Clare Wallace, Susanna Watson, Julia Wilson-James

Altos: Nicola Barber, Peter Gritton, Phyllida Hancock, Mary Hitch, Frances Jellard, Melanie Marshall, Susanna Spicer, Lucy Winkett

Tenors: John Bowen, Harvey Brough, Andrew Gant, Paul Gordon, Mark Le Brocq, Angus Smith

Basses: Simon Davies, Bruce Hamilton, Andrew Hammond, Patrick Lee-Browne, James Mure, Charles Pott, Benjamin Thompson, Wen-Ho Tsai

Magnificat is published worldwide by Oxford University Press
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This recording is dedicated to the memory of Joanna Maggs.

Magnificat

1 Magnificat anima mea

Magnificat anima mea Dominum: et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo. Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

(My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maiden: for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.)

2 Of a Rose, a lovely Rose

Of a Rose, a lovely Rose,

Of a Rose is all my song.

Hearken to me, both old and young,
How this Rose began to spring;
A fairer rose to mine liking
In all this world ne know I none.

Five branches of that rose there been,
The which be both fair and sheen;
The rose is called Mary, heaven's queen.
Out of her bosom a blossom sprang.

The first branch was of great honour:
That blest Marie should bear the flow'r;
There came an angel from heaven's tower
To break the devil's bond.

The second branch was great of might,
That sprang upon Christmas night;
The star shone over Bethlem bright,

That man should see it both day and night.

The third branch did spring and spread;
Three kings then the branch gan led
Unto Our Lady in her child-bed;
Into Bethlem that branch sprang right.

The fourth branch it sprang to hell,
The devil's power for to fell:
That no soul therein should dwell,
The branch so blessedfully sprang.

The fifth branch it was so sweet,
It sprang to heav'n, both crop and root,
Therein to dwell and be our *bote:
So blessedly it sprang.

Pray we to her with great honour,
She that bare the blessed flow'r,
To be our help and our succour,
And shield us from the fiendes bond.

*Bote = salvation

(15th-century English)

3 Quia fecit mihi magna

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen eius.

(For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.)

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.

Hosanna in excelsis.

(*from the Ordinary of the Mass)

(Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are filled with thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.)

4 Et misericordia

Et misericordia eius a progenie in progenies timentibus eum.
(And his mercy is on them that fear him throughout all generations.)

5 Fecit potentiam

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui. Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.

(He hath shewed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.)

6 Esurientes

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes. Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus misericordiae suae. Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros, Abraham et semini eius in saecula.

(He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel. As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever.)

7 Gloria Patri

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.

(Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.)

*Sancta Maria, succurre miseris, iuva pusillanimes, refove flebiles: ora pro populo, interveni pro clero, intercede pro devoto femineo sexu: sentiant omnes tuum iuvamen,

quicumque tuum sanctum implorant auxilium. Alleluia.

*(*Antiphon at Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary)*

(Holy Mary, succour those in need, help the faint-hearted, console the tearful: pray for the laity, assist the clergy, intercede for all devout women: may all feel the power of your help, whoever prays for your holy aid, Alleluia.)

Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.)

(English translation of the Magnificat from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer)



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