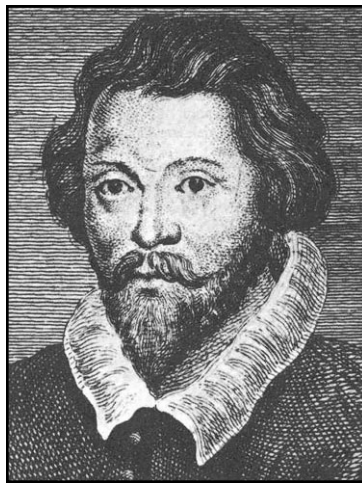


A Byrd Celebration



William Byrd 1540-1625

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LECTURES AT THE WILLIAM BYRD FESTIVAL

EDITED BY RICHARD TURBET

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Cover picture is of the Lincoln Cathedral, England, where William Byrd was the choirmaster and organist for nine years, 1563–1572.

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PREFACE



Byrd Celebration celebrates the first ten years of the Portland William Byrd Festival.

Founded in 1998 by Dean Applegate, director of *Cantores in Ecclesia*, this festival brings together for a fortnight each summer a team of internationally renowned performers and scholars, drawn from the United States and Great Britain. In addition to concerts devoted to Byrd's sacred and secular vocal music, there are customarily two or three lectures, an organ recital, and four or more services during which the Masses for Three, Four, and Five Voices—as well as the evening canticles from the Great Service—are sung liturgically.

Byrd's own situation—a staunchly Catholic composer in the Chapel Royal during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James—is aptly reflected in the singing of texts in Latin and in English for both the Catholic and the Anglican rites. Aptly too, all those involved with the festival are—or have been—church musicians active in one or other of these religious traditions.

This publication includes a selection of the lectures delivered to date. The list of contributors includes the world's foremost Byrd scholars: Joseph Kerman, Philip Brett, William Mahrt, Kerry McCarthy, David Trendell, Richard Turbet.

The book also includes a catalogue of all the music so far performed at the festival, whether by soloists—such as the distinguished mezzo-soprano, Clare Wilkinson, and the keyboard virtuoso, Mark Williams—or by *Cantores in Ecclesia*. Based in Portland, formerly as the resident choir of St. Patrick's Church, this highly accomplished group concentrates on performing liturgically music by Renaissance composers at a time when this rich heritage is in danger of being lost by the Catholic Church. The choir has under its wing a children's *schola* devoted to chanting throughout the year the mass propers in plainsong. These young musicians also enhance the Masses at each Byrd Festival, singing this challenging repertoire with confidence and sensitivity.

The impressive achievements of *Cantores in Ecclesia* are due to a quiet, unassuming local church musician: Dean Applegate, organist of Holy Rosary, Portland. A graduate of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and of Oxford University, he is not only an outstanding choral director but a leading authority on Gregorian chant. With the founding of *Cantores*, he created the cornerstone on which the Byrd Festival itself was to be founded, an initiative warmly encouraged by enthusiasts of Renaissance music both in the States and further afield. He has been ably assisted, musically and administratively, by his son, Blake. Dean Applegate's vision and dedication have seen the venture flourish beyond all expectations.

As the conductor invited to direct the choir every year, I feel not only a sense of privilege and delight but also a sense of awe and humility. Byrd is a composer of such immense stature. The more

one gets to know his music—be it motet, consort song or keyboard fantasia—the more one is astounded by his versatility and imagination, his sheer technical skill, his ability to color, project, move.

I look forward to future festivals with enthusiasm: many wonderful riches lie in store.

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