



BRIGHTON CONSORT
DIRECTOR: GREG SKIDMORE

MUSICA MODERNA

*Monteverdi Moving Fast
and Breaking Things*

Saturday 9 May, 7:30pm
St Michael's Church,
Lewes BN7 1XU

Sunday 10 May, 7:30pm
Friends Meeting House,
Brighton BN1 1AF
As part of Brighton Fringe 2026

Friday 15 May, 7:30pm
St Mary-de-Haura,
Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5DQ

Tickets: brightonconsort.org.uk or on the door
Information: info@brightonconsort.org.uk



Brighton Consort:
registered charity no. 1096432



Musica Moderna

Monteverdi Moving Fast and Breaking Things

Brighton Consort
Greg Skidmore, Musical Director

Concert Programme

Christe, adoramus te

Ch'io non t'ami

Domine ne in furore

From ***Messa a 4 voci da Cappella (1650)***

- Kyrie
- Gloria

Ohime, il bel viso

From ***Messa a 4 voci da Cappella (1650)***

- Credo

Adoramus te, Christe

INTERVAL

From ***Messa a 4 voci da Cappella (1650)***

- Sanctus

Four madrigals from ***Il Quarto Libro de Madrigali a cinque voci***

- Sfogava con le stelle
- Luci serene
- Anima dolorosa
- Ah dolente

Laudate pueri

Rimanti in pace

From ***Messa a 4 voci da Cappella (1650)***

- Agnus

NB: Our concert in Brighton at the Friends Meeting House on Sunday, 10 May 2026 will be shorter (approximately 1 hour, no interval) and will contain a selection of the music above.

Programme Notes

In the early years of the 17th century, in a quite famous academic argument (and what better kind of argument can there be?), an up-and-coming northern Italian composer by the name of Claudio Monteverdi came in for serious criticism. In his early thirties, he was already pretty successful and had a great job as *maestro di cappella* for the Dukes of Gonzaga in Mantua, but had not yet entered the upper echelons of internationally renowned composers. Nevertheless, his music was circulating among the intelligentsia who would gather in places like Florence and Ferrara to discuss art and culture and make themselves look good of an evening. As was predictable, these gatherings involved clashes between 'conservatives' and 'progressives', as they always have and always will, but in this particular argument something very important happened in the history of music.

A music theorist and academic (alarm bells should already be ringing) named Giovanni Maria Artusi became so incensed by some music he heard at one of these academic parties because of the 'monstrous errors' he identified in it that he went to the trouble and expense of publishing a pamphlet - a short treatise presumably only read by people who attended these gatherings and no one else - decrying, like every other culturally minded man over the age of 40 has done ever since, the 'imperfections of modern music'. So far, so predictable. In a gentlemanly fashion, Artusi didn't name the composer of the works he heard that contained the 'sins against nature' that had so offended him, but he did include the music itself (printed without the words) and this has allowed us to identify the pieces as madrigals by, of course, Claudio Monteverdi.

The main charge was that Monteverdi was breaking the 'rules' of counterpoint, how to set note against note in polyphonic music. These were developed over centuries by many composers to avoid dissonance and create works of transcendent beauty. Without getting technical, these rules involved some maths about frequency relationships and didn't, as evidenced by Artusi's failure to include them, take into account the words, neither their meaning nor their emotional impact, that a vocal piece might set.

Evidently a man not lacking in self confidence, Monteverdi's primary retort to this criticism was to briefly mention in the preface to a published book of madrigals containing some of the very pieces Artusi had highlighted, almost by way of a throw-away comment, that he wasn't really breaking the rules as much as throwing them out entirely and creating his own. He was, by his own assertion, creating a completely new way of writing music. Indeed, so he said, he had already 'found' it and it was in fact entirely dependent on the words Artusi hadn't even bothered to include. Music was, for Monteverdi, to be 'ruled' by the meaning of the words, and the words were to come 'first'.

In a way, this is still not unexpected. Successful and talented people in their early thirties often claim they are creating the future and destroying the past. The difference is that this time, insofar as the history of music is concerned, Monteverdi was *right*. He is now known by some as the 'Father of Modern Music' and his unabashed belief that music should fundamentally be about human psychology and things we can grasp and understand (words, stories, characters), rather than abstraction and ineffable transcendence, has shaped every kind of music that came after him. He was of course a product of his time and his contribution fit into the broader cultural movements of humanism and the Enlightenment to come but he is alone among composers as having so clearly articulated what 'modernity' meant for him in a way that was then so validated by the rest of history. Monteverdi was absolutely at the cutting edge, he knew it, and he was unapologetic. He moved incredibly fast and broke many things, and the result was music of extraordinary power with literally centuries of influence.

The music on our programme tonight contains some of the technical experimentation at the heart of the controversy, but all of the arrogance, ambition, and power with which Monteverdi raced into the future. Much of the sacred music he wrote throughout his life confronted, probed, examined, and almost satirised the clash between old and new that he had identified. His secular music is where his new ideas found their fullest expression. We present both of these kinds of music, using a mass setting composed late in his life entitled simply 'a mass for four voices' and appearing on the surface to be a conservative piece but powered by the beating heart of Baroque music, as a scaffold for a programme that contains an early madrigal (*Ch'io non t'ami*) and a late one (*Ohime, il bel viso*), some wildly contrasting sacred music (the exquisite pair of *Christe, adoramus te* and *Adoramus te, Christe* contrasts so well with the jagged and uncontrolled motets *Domine, ne in furore* and *Laudate pueri*), and a focus on the pinnacle of Monteverdi's a cappella madrigal output with four selections from his fourth book of madrigals (published right at the middle of the controversy with Artusi). This all leads toward a towering masterpiece, the lengthy and incredibly powerful madrigal *Rimanti in pace*, claimed by many to be the best he wrote.

Monteverdi's take on the perennial clash between old and new, conservative and progressive, traditional and scandalous, was unique in ambition, audacity, and influence. Monteverdi's modern music, while indeed breaking things, ushered in a way of thinking about what music is for at a fundamental level that has never left.

Programme note by Greg Skidmore
May 2026

Brighton Consort

Musical Director, Greg Skidmore

Soprano

Sue Clough
Rashmi Crockford
Diana Gobel
Kathy Holloway
Rebecca Rees

Alto

Eleanor Clapp
Ellie Hale
Stella Holman
Alicia Newell
Liz Petty
Susie Pontin

Tenor

James Futcher
Paul Lane
David Waterhouse
Nigel Watson

Bass

David Game
John Petley
Christopher Powell
Alessio Santamaria
Nick Tier

Texts & Translations

Christe, adoramus te

Christe, adoramus te,
et benedicamus tibi,
quia per santam crucem tuam
redemisti mundum.
Domine, miserere nobis.

Christ, we adore you,
Christ, we adore you,
and we bless you,
for through your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Ch'io non t'ami, cor mio?

Ch'io non sia la tua vita e tu la mia,
che per novo desio
e per nova speranza io t'abandoni?
Primo che questo sia
morte non mi perdoni!
Ma se tu sei quel core
onde la vita m'e si dolce e gradita,
fonte d'ogni mio ben, d'ogni desire
come poss'io lasciarti e non morire?

That I do not love you, my heart?
That I am not your life and you mine,
that for a new passion
and a new hope I would abandon you?
If this were to happen
may death not forgive me!
But if you are that heart
which makes my life so sweet and pleasant,
source of my every good, of every desire,
how could I leave you and not die?

Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me,

neque in ira tua corripias me.
Miserere mei, Domine,
quoniam infirmus sum,
sana me, Domine,
quoniam conturbata sunt ossa mea
et anima turbata est valde.
Sed tu, Domine, usquequo?

Lord, in your rage do not condemn me,
nor, in your anger, reprove me.
Have mercy, Lord,
for I am weak;
heal me, Lord,
for my body is in torment
and my mind is greatly distressed.
But Lord, for how long?

Kyrie, eleison

Christe, eleison
Kyrie, eleison

Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy

Gloria in excelsis Deo

et in terra pax hominibus
bonae voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi
propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,
Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine Fili, unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.
Qui tollis peccata mundi
miserere nobis
Qui tollis peccata mundi
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus,
tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe.
Cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen

Glory to God in highest heaven
and on earth peace to
people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you.
We thank you
for your great glory.
Lord God, King of heaven,
God the Father almighty.
Lord, the only Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father.
You who take away the sins of the world
have mercy on us.
You who take away the sins of the world
receive our prayer.
You who sit at the right hand of the Father
have mercy on us.
For you alone are holy,
you alone are Lord,
you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit
in the glory of God the Father. Amen

Oimè il bel viso, oimè il soave sguardo,
oimè il leggiadro portamento altero,
oimè il parlar ch'ogni aspro ingegno
et fero facevi humile,
ed ogni huom vil gagliardo!
Et oimè il dolce riso, onde uscio 'l dardo
di che morte,
altro bene omai non spero!
Alma real dignissima d'impero
se non fossi fra noi scesa si tardo:
per voi conven ch'io arda, e'n voi respiro,
ch' i' pur fui vostro; et se di voi son privo
via men d'ogni sventura altra mi dole;
di speranza m'empie et di desire
quand' io parti' dal sommo piacer vivo,
ma 'l vento ne portava le parole.

Credo in unum Deum
Patrem omnipotentem,
factorem caeli et terrae
visibilium omnium et invisibilium.
Et in unum Dominum Jesum Christum,
Filium Dei unigenitum,
et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.
Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine,
Deum verum de Deo vero.
Genitum non factum,
consubstantiali Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines
et propter nostram salutem
descendit de caelis.
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine
et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis
sub Pontio Pilatus,
passus et sepultus est.
Et resurrexit tertia die
secundum scripturas.
Et ascendit in caelum,
sedet ad dexteram Patris
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
iudicare vivos et mortuos:
cuius regni non erit finis.
Et in Spiritum Sanctum Dominum
et vivificantem
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur
et conglorificatur:
qui locutus est per Prophetas.
Et unam sanctam catholicam
et apostolicam ecclesiam
Confiteor unum baptisma
in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum
et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen

Ah that beautiful face, that gentle glance,
that graceful, proud bearing,
that voice that humbled every bitter
and harsh wit
and would turn every coward brave!
And ah that sweet smile from which issued the
arrow of the death,
the only good I can ever hope for!
Her regal soul could have ruled an empire
if she had not arrived among us so late:
Naturally, for you I burn, in you I breathe,
that I have lived for you alone; and if I have to
live without you, this outdoes all my other grief;
You filled me with hope and desire
when I left you in great delight
But the wind did not carry my words to you.

I believe in one God
Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
of all that can be seen and all that can't.
And I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
born of the Father before the world began.
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God,
Was born not made,
of one being with the Father,
through whom everything was made.
For us all
and for our salvation
He came down from heaven.
And he became flesh by the power of the Holy
Spirit from the Virgin Mary
and became a man.
He was crucified for us
under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered and was buried.
And he rose again on the third day
according to the writings of old.
And he ascended into heaven
where he sits at the right hand of the Father.
And he will come again with glory,
to judge the living and the dead
and of his kingdom there will be no end.
And I believe in Holy Spirit, the Lord,
The giver of life,
who comes from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped
and glorified:
who has spoken through the Prophets.
And I believe in one holy catholic
and apostolic church
I acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sin.
And I await the resurrection of the dead
and life in the time that will come. Amen

Adoramus te, Christe,

et benedicimus tibi.

Quia per sanguinem tuum pretiosum
redemisti mundum.

Miserere nobis.

We adore you, O Christ,
and we bless you.

For by your precious blood
you have redeemed the world.

Have mercy on us.

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus

Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Holy, holy, holy

is the Lord God of the heavenly host.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Benedictus qui venit

in nomine Domini.

Hosanna in excelsis.

Blessed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest

Sfogava con le stelle

un' infermo d'Amore

sotto notturno ciel il suo dolore,

e dicea, fisso in loro:

O imagini belle dell'idol mio ch'adoro,

si com'a me mostrate,

mentre così splendete,

la sua rara beltate

così mostrast'a lei

i vivi ardori miei:

la fareste, col vostr'aureo sembiante,

pietosa sì, come me fat'amante.

Crying out to the stars

someone sick with Love

spoke of his sorrow under the night sky,

saying, his eyes fixed upon them:

O beautiful images of the idol I adore,

as you are showing me,

while you shine thus,

her rare beauty,

so you could show to her

my burning ardour:

you could make her, with your golden likeness,

show mercy, just as you make me her lover.

Luci serene e chiare,

voi m'incendete, voi;

ma prov'il core

nell'incendio diletto, non dolore.

Dolci parole e care,

voi mi ferite, voi; ma prov'il petto

non dolor ne la piaga, ma diletto.

O miracol d'amore!

Alma ch'è tutta foco e tutta sangue

si strugg'e non si duol,

mor'e non langue.

Eyes serene and clear,

you inflame me;

but my heart feels

delight in the fire, not pain.

Sweet and dear words,

you pierce me; but my breast feels

not pain in the wound, but delight.

O miracle of love!

A soul that is all fire and all blood

consumes itself and does not hurt,

dies and does not languish.

Anima dolorosa che vivendo

tanto peni e tormenti

quant'odi e parli e pensi

e miri e senti, amor spiri?

Che sperì? Ancor dimori

in questa viva morte?

In quest'inferno de le tue pene eterno?

Mori, misera, mori!

Che tardi più? Che fai?

Perché, mort'al piacer,

vivi al martire?

Perché vivi al morire?

Consuma il duol che ti consuma omai,
di questa morte che par vita uscendo.

Mori, meschina,

al tuo morir morendo.

Sorrowful heart, that lives in

such great pain and torment

whatever you hear, speak, think,

wonder at and feel, do you breathe love?

What are you hoping for? Do you still exist

in this living death?

In this hell of your eternal anguish?

Die, wretched one, die!

Why do you delay? What are you doing?

Why, dead to pleasure,

are you living as a martyr?

Why are you living to die?

Devour the sorrow which is now devouring you,
and leave this death that appears to be life.

You are dying, poor thing,

by dying away to your death.

Ah! Dolente partita!

ah, fin della mia vita!
 Da te parto e non moro? E pur i'provo
 la pena de la morte,
 e sento nel partire
 un vivace morire,
 che dà vita al dolore
 per fa che moia immortalmente il core.

Ah! sorrowful parting!
 ah, end of my life!
 Do I part from you and not die? Even so I
 endure the pain of death,
 and feel in the loss
 a vital dying
 that gives life to sorrow
 through which my heart keeps dying forever.

Laudate, pueri, Dominum,
 laudate nomen Domini.
 Sit nomen Domini benedictum
 ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.
 A solis ortusque ad occasum,
 laudabile nomen Domini.
 Excelsus super omnes gentes
 Dominus et super caelos gloria eius.
 Quis sicut Dominus Deus noster
 qui in altis habitat
 et humilia respicit in caelo et in terra.
 Suscitans a terra inopem
 et de stercore erigens pauperem
 ut collocet eum cum principibus
 populi sui.
 Qui habitare facit sterilem in domo
 matrem filiorum laetantem.
 Gloria Patri et Filio
 et Spiritui Sancto,
 sicut erat in principio,
 et nunc et semper,
 et in saecula saeculorum, amen.

Praise the Lord, servants of God,
 praise the name of the Lord.
 May the name of the Lord be blessed
 from this time now and forever.
 From the rising of the sun to its setting,
 the name of the Lord is to be praised.
 High above all nations
 is the Lord and his glory is above the skies.
 Who is there like our Lord God
 who lives on high
 and who regards the lowly in heaven and earth!
 He raises the helpless from the ground
 and lifts the poor man out of the dungheap to
 set him with the princes of
 his people.
 He causes the childless woman to make a
 home, a mother rejoicing in her children.
 Glory to the Father and the Son
 and the Holy Spirit,
 as it was in the beginning,
 is now and ever shall be,
 world without end. Amen.

'Rimanti in pace' a la dolente e bella
 Fillida, Tirsi sospirando disse.
 'Rimanti, io me ne vo;
 tal mi prescisse legge,
 empio fato, aspra sorte e rubella.'

'Rest in peace' sighed Thyrsis
 to the beautiful and grieving Phyllis.
 'Rest, I'm going,
 as has been prescribed for me by laws,
 by cruel fate, by bitter and hostile destiny.'

Ed ella ora da l'una e l'altra stella
 stillando amaro umore, i lumi affisse
 ne i lumi del suo Tirsi e gli trafisse
 il cor di pietosissime quadrella.

And she, as one eye and then the other
 shed a bitter tear, her eyes fixed
 on the eyes of her Thyrsis, pierced his heart
 with the most pitying arrow.

Ond'ei, di morte la sua faccia impressa,
 disse: 'Ahi, come n'andrò senza il mio sole,
 di martir in martir, di doglie in doglie?'

Then, with death imprinted on his face,
 he said 'Ah, how can I leave without my sun,
 from torment to torment, from pain to pain?'

Ed ella, da singhiozzi e pianti oppressa,
 fievilmente formò queste parole:
 'Deh, cara anima mia, chi mi ti toglie?'

And she, overcome by sobs and weeping,
 weakly formed these words:
 'Alas, my dear heart, who takes you from me?'

Agnus Dei,
 qui tollis peccata mundi,
 miserere nobis,
 dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God,
 who takes away the sins of the world,
 have mercy on us,
 grant us peace.

Biographies

Brighton Consort was formed by the late Daphne Elston in 1971 and is best known for its ambitious exploration of the rich repertoire of renaissance and early baroque music. Its Musical Directors have included Deborah Roberts, Katie Thomas, James Dixon and the present director Greg Skidmore. Brighton Consort's programmes have included collaborations with Ensemble Reza, the Paul Nieman Brass Ensemble and Nick Houghton, and the choir has performed in the Brighton Early Music Festival, the Voices of London Festival and at various events in the Royal Pavilion, Brighton. Although our core repertoire mainly consists of Renaissance choral music, in order to offer variety to audiences and singers alike, our programmes sometimes include contemporary pieces and items from other musical periods.

Born in Canada, **Greg Skidmore** arrived in England as an undergraduate at Royal Holloway College, University of London. After graduating with First Class Honours in Music, his post-graduate Choral Scholarship at Wells Cathedral led him to Lay Clerkships at Gloucester Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford. He now lives in London and pursues a varied career as a consort, choral, and solo oratorio singer alongside work as a conductor and workshop leader. He has appeared with *The Tallis Scholars*, *The Sixteen*, *The Cardinall's Musick*, *I Fagiolini*, *Tenebrae*, *Gabrieli Consort*, *Alamire*, *Contrapunctus*, and *Collegium Vocale Ghent*. He can be heard on recordings released by Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, Harmonia Mundi USA, and Gimell Records and in February 2022, Greg made his hundredth appearance with *The Tallis Scholars*.

While at Christ Church in Oxford, he began a course of doctoral research in Musicology at the University of Oxford. He founded *The Lacock Scholars*, one of the UK's premier amateur vocal consorts and recently completed major coaching projects with students at the University of York, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Royal Academy of Music.

He has given workshops and masterclasses in the UK, France, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia in association with *The Sixteen*, *I Fagiolini*, and on his own and he is increasingly engaged in Canada as a guest conductor, clinician, and record producer, founding *The Canadian Renaissance Music Summer Schools* in 2018 and expanding to Australia in 2025 with the *West Australian Renaissance Music Summer School*. He has been published in *Early Music* and his writing has appeared in programmes and CD liner notes for *The Tallis Scholars*, *The Sixteen*, *The Cardinall's Musick*, *The Gabrieli Consort*, *Tenebrae*, and *Ex Cathedra*.

Interested in joining us?

Brighton Consort performs mainly Renaissance and early Baroque choral music but programmes sometimes include contemporary pieces and items from other musical periods too. We normally present three concert programmes per year, usually with two performances of each. We usually rehearse on Wednesday evenings at St George's Church, Kemptown. Rehearsals take place throughout the year, with a break during July and August.

We are always looking to hear from new singers in all voice parts and the best way to inquire about joining us is to get in touch to arrange an audition. We're very open to meeting new people and can't wait to hear from you.

For more information about **Brighton Consort**,
to browse through our past projects, and learn more
about the choir and our musical director, please [visit our website](http://brightonconsort.org.uk):

brightonconsort.org.uk

or [email](mailto:info@brightonconsort.org.uk): info@brightonconsort.org.uk

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