

The three-times Grammy-nominated Tallis Scholars, under the direction of founding conductor Peter Phillips, will perform vocal music by Spanish Renaissance composers Francisco Guerrero, Juan Vasquez, Alonso Lobo and Tomás Luis de Victoria on Wednesday, April 20, at Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Phillips said in an email interview this is the group's first-ever Tucson appearance.

"It is a huge grab for us," said Arizona Early Music Executive Director [Dominic Giardino](#). "Typically large ensembles like the Tallis Scholars, when they are doing an international tour, they are hitting major metropolitan areas ... bouncing back and forth between Boston, New York and Philadelphia."

The 10-member ensemble, under the direction of Phillips, was expected to perform in Tucson last season, but the concert and the group's American tour was put on hold courtesy of the pandemic.

On the do-over tour, the group will hit mostly college towns in Texas; California; Virginia; Washington, D.C.; Oregon; and Washington State.

Phillips said the group will perform music from the Golden Age of Spanish polyphony, works written toward the end of the Renaissance period.

"It includes one of the greatest masterpieces of the High Renaissance — Victoria's Requiem — which is prefaced with other Spanish compositions by Guerrero, Lobo and Vasquez," he said. "All this music was originally written to be sung as part of the traditional Catholic liturgy."

In addition to Wednesday's performance, Tallis Scholars will hold a masterclass with the students of [University of Arizona](#) Choral Activities Director Elizabeth Schauer at 2 p.m. Tuesday, April 19, at Holsclaw Hall in the Fred Fox School of Music. The public is invited to attend at no cost.

Arizona Early Music was founded by a group of friends that included UA faculty members James Anthony and John Boe in the spring of 1982 to present early music from the Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque periods to Tucson. The group's annual concert series includes some of the world's most celebrated ensembles as well as contemporary artists who are performing early music to younger audiences.

Giardino said his organization also is focused on giving back to the community including with events like the Tallis Scholar's masterclass. Arizona Early Music also offers \$5 tickets to anyone 30 and younger as a way to bring younger audiences to its concerts.

"This is a big part of what we are envisioning for Arizona Early Music," Giardino said. "If we are going to have these really big artists here in Tucson ... then we need to have a way to impact the next generation."

The Tallis Scholars concert closes out a season that included The Aulos Ensemble's final tour, the Parthenia Viol Consort and the dueling lutes of renowned lutists Paul O'Dette and Ronn McFarlane. Arizona Early Music had hoped to present its inaugural Tucson Baroque Music Festival in late January, but the three-day event was [postponed](#) because of the pandemic.

“To be able to close out the year in this way is to end on such a note of optimism,” Giardino said. “We are just so thrilled that this can happen and thrilled to be able to share sort of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hear arguably the best Renaissance ensemble in the world.”

Tickets for Wednesday’s concert, which begins at 7:30 p.m. at Grace St. Paul’s, 2331 E. Adams St., are \$30 through azearlymusic.org. The \$5 young people discounted tickets are only available at the door.

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