# YALE INSTITUTE OF SACRED MUSIC AND YALE GLEE CLUB PRESENT

# THE SIXTEEN HARRY CHRISTOPHERS, CONDUCTOR

# The Deer's Cry

OCTOBER 27, 2024 4:00 PM WOOLSEY HALL



#### THE SIXTEEN

### The Deer's Cry

#### HARRY CHRISTOPHERS, CONDUCTOR

The Sixteen respectfully requests that audience members reserve their applause until after each group of pieces, as indicated, rather than after each piece.

Diliges Dominum		William Byrd
		(1540-1623)
Christe qui lux es et dies		Byrd
The Deer's Cry		Arvo Pärt
		(b. 1935)
Emendemus in melius		Byrd
The Woman with the Alabaster B	OX	Pärt
Miserere mihi, Domine		Byrd
Ad Dominum cum tribularer		Byrd
	INTERMISSIO	N
Miserere nostri		Thomas Tallis (1505-85) and Byrd
When Jesus went		Tallis
O lux beata Trinitas		Byrd

(continues on next page)

Nunc Dimittis		Pärt
Julie Cooper soprano		
Laetentur coeli		Byrd
Tribue, Domine		Byrd

Although separated by over four centuries, the music of William Byrd and Arvo Pärt makes for a perfect match. Both spent many years facing adversity and persecution and both sought solace through their sacred music.

Byrd's later life was lived under constant threat of religious persecution—a devout Catholic and, moreover, a practising Catholic in a country where only the Anglican faith could be celebrated. However, Queen Elizabeth I not only loved music but also possessed a private empathy for Catholicism and in 1575 she granted a patent to William Byrd (now in his 30s) and the aged Tallis to publish music. The result was *Cantiones sacrae*, containing 17 pieces by each of them. Six of the works included in this programme come from this collection, the most monumental of which is *Tribue*, *Domine*. Its long text comes from the book of Meditations attributed to St Augustine, and Byrd treats us not only to a variety of vocal combinations, but also clear codes to his unswerving Catholic faith. In *Ad Dominum cum tribularer* the urgent words of the psalmist are heard: "I speak peace to them and they clamour for war" (*Ego pacem loquebar et illi bellum conclamabant*), while in *Tribue*, *Domine* Byrd portrays the word "kingdom" (*imperium*) with a certain triumphalism.

Pärt spent most of his life in Soviet-controlled Estonia – remember, it was not until the summer of 1994 that the last Russian troops withdrew from that country. For the young Pärt it all seemed normal. "We had what we had…it wasn't until I was older that I began to appreciate what it was to live in the Soviet Union, everything enclosed or forbidden." In 1979 Pärt and his family acquired exit visas to leave the Soviet Union and moved to Berlin; it was around this time that he began to experiment with tintinnabulation – which is what? Perhaps best for Pärt himself to explain: "it is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers – in my life, my music, my work. Here I am alone with silence. I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements – with one voice, with two voices. I build with the most primitive materials – with the triad. The three notes of the triad are like bells. And that is why I called it tintinnabulation."

The result is music where the text has total clarity but is highly charged in a very specific manner. Pärt's setting of the *Nunc dimittis* is at times tender and serene—"for mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (*quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum*) but then bursts out into exhilarating joy at "a light to lighten the gentiles" (*lumen ad revelationem gentium*). *The Woman with the Alabaster Box* is even more extraordinary, with Jesus' words eloquently delivered and made even more powerful by the silences.

Unlike Byrd, Pärt did not write for the liturgy, but that does not mean his music is any less sacred—far from it. I have no doubt his music will resonate for years to come just as Byrd's has done for centuries.

#### **Diliges Dominum**

Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo et in tota anima tua et in tota mente tua; diliges proximum tuum sicut te ipsum. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind; you shall love your neighbour as yourself.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### Christe qui lux es et dies

Christe qui lux es et dies, noctis tenebras detegis, lucisque lumen crederis, lumen beatum praedicans.

Precamur, sancte Domine, defende nos in hac nocte, sit nobis in te requies, quietam noctem tribue.

Ne gravis somnus irruat, nec hostis nos surripiat, nec caro illi consentiens nos tibi reos statuat.

Oculi somnum capiant, cor ad te semper vigilet, dextera tua protegat famulos qui te diligunt.

Defensor noster aspice, insidiantes reprime; guberna tuos famulos, quos sanguine mercatus es.

Memento nostri, Domine, in gravi isto corpore; qui es defensor animae, adesto nobis Domine.

Deo Patri sit gloria, eiusque soli Filio, cum Spiritu Paraclito, et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen. O Christ, who are light and day, you disperse the shadows of the night, and we believe in you as light from Light who speak to us of the heavenly Light.

We pray you, Holy Lord, defend us this night, let our rest be in you and grant to us a quiet night.

Let no burdensome dream invade us, nor let the enemy surprise us lest our flesh in yielding to him should render us guilty in your sight.

Let our eyes win sleep, but let our hearts always watch for you, and let your right hand protect the servants who love you.

Look on us, our defender, repulse all who lie in wait for us, and direct us, your servants, whom you have redeemed by your blood.

Remember us, Lord, burdened by this body, and as defender of our souls be present to us, Lord.

To God the Father be glory and to his only Son, with the Spirit, the Comforter, both now and for ever. Amen.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### The Deer's Cry

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ in me, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me, Christ with me.

(St Patrick, 372-466)

#### Emendemus in melius

Emendemus in melius quae ignoranter peccavimus, ne subito praeoccupati die mortis quaeramus spatium poenitentiae, et invenire non possumus. Attende, Domine, et miserere, quia peccavimus tibi.

Adiuva nos, Deus salutaris noster, et propter honorem nominis tui, libera nos. Let us change for the better those sins which in ignorance we have committed, lest, suddenly overtaken by the day of death, we look for time to repent, and find we have none.

Listen, Lord, and have mercy, for we have sinned against you.

Come to our aid, God our saviour, and for the honour of your name, set us free.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### The Woman with the Alabaster Box

Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

When Jesus understood it, he said unto them: Why trouble ye the woman?

For she hath wrought a good work upon me,

for ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

(Matthew 26: 6-13)

#### Miserere mihi, Domine

Miserere mihi, Domine, et exaudi orationem meam.

Have mercy on me, Lord, and hear my prayer.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### Ad Dominum cum tribularer

Ad Dominum cum tribularer clamavi, et exaudivit me.

Domine, libera animam meam a labio mendacii et a lingua dolosa.

Quid detur tibi,

aut quid ap ponatur tibi, ad linguam dolosam?

Sagittae potentis acutae cum carbonibus desolatoriis.

Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est; habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar,

multum incola fuit anima mea.

Cum his qui oderunt pacem, eram pacificus;

ego pacem loquebar,

et illi bellum conclamabant.

When I was in distress I called on the Lord,

and he gave ear to me.

Lord, set free my soul from the lying mouth

and from the deceitful tongue. What reward shall you have,

what shall be laid on you, deceitful tongue?

The sharp arrows of the mighty and the coals that devastate.

Woe is me, I have too long been a sojourner; I have lived among the inhabitants of Kedar,

long has my soul dwelt among them.

With those who hate peace, I was a peacemaker; I spoke of peace,

and they called out for war.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### Miserere nostri

Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri.

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### When Jesus went

When Jesus went into Simon the Pharisee's house and sat down at meat, behold a woman in the city which was a sinner.

As soon as she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house,

she brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment

(Anonymous)

#### O lux beata Trinitas

O lux beata Trinitas et principalis Unitas, iam sol recedit igneus; infunde lumen cordibus.

Te mane laudum carmine, te deprecemur vesperi; te nostra supplex gloria per cuncta laudet saecula.

Deo Patri sit gloria eiusque soli Filio cum Spiritu Paracleto et nunc et in perpetuum. Amen. O Trinity, blessed light, and Unity, foremost in might, now the fiery sun has withdrawn; pour your light into our hearts.

In the morning, with our song of praise, and in the evening let us send up our prayer; as suppliants we hymn your glory throughout all the ages.

To God the Father be glory and to his only Son with the Spirit, the Comforter, both now and for ever. Amen.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### **Nunc dimittis**

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace.
Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum, quod parasti ante faciem omnium populorum.
Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.
Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Lord, now let your servant depart in peace: according to your word.
For mine eyes have seen: your salvation, which you have prepared: before the face of all people.
To be a light to lighten the gentiles: and to be the glory of your people Israel. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### Laetentur coeli

Laetentur coeli et exultet terra. Iubilate montes laudem, quia Dominus noster veniet, et pauperum suorum miserebitur.

Orietur in diebus tuis iustitia, et abundantia pacis; et pauperum suorum miserebitur. Let the heavens rejoice and earth be glad; you mountains sing forth your praise, for our Lord will come and will take pity on his poor people.

In your days justice will dawn, and the fullness of peace; and will take pity on his poor people.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### Tribue, Domine

Tribue, Domine,
ut donec in hoc fragili corpore positus sum,
laudet te cor meum, laudet te lingua mea,
et omnia ossa mea dicant:
Domine, quis similis tui?
Tu es Deus omnipotens,
quem trinum in personis
et unum in substantia deitatis colimus et adoramus:
Patrem ingenitum,
Filium de Patre unigenitum,
Spiritum Sanctum de utroque procedentem
et in utroque permanentem,
Sanctam et individuam Trinitatem,
unum Deum omnipotentem.

Te deprecor, supplico et rogo, auge fidem, auge spem, auge caritatem: fac nos per ipsam gratiam tuam semper in fide stabiles et in opere efficaces, ut per fidem rectam et condigna fidei opera ad vitam, te miserante, perveniamus aeternam.

Gloria Patri, qui creavit nos, gloria Filio, qui redemit nos, gloria Spiritui Sancto, qui sanctificavit nos: gloria summae et individuae Trinitati, cuius opera inseparabilia sunt, cuius imperium sine fine manet.

Te decet laus, te decet hymnus, tibi debetur omnis honor, tibi benedictio et claritas, tibi gratiarum actio, tibi honor, virtus et fortitudo, Deo nostro, in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Grant, Lord,
that until this frail body is laid to rest,
my heart and tongue may sing your praise,
and my very bones may cry:
Lord, who could be compared to you?
You are the all-powerful God
whom we celebrate and adore as three
in persons but one in divine being;
the uncreated Father,
the only Son of that Father
and the Holy Spirit issuing from both
yet dwelling in both,
a holy and undivided Trinity,
one almighty God.

I beseech you with humble prayer, increase my faith, increase my hope, increase my love:
make us through your kindness always firm in faith and strong in deed, that through that upright faith and the good works of faith we may, with your mercy, win eternal life.

Glory to the Father, who made us, glory to the Son, who redeemed us, glory to the Holy Spirit, who has made us holy: glory to the most high and undivided Trinity whose works are ever one and whose kingdom lasts for ever.

To you belong hymns of praise, to you every honour and blessing and renown is owed, to you be all thanks and tribute, all virtue and strength, our God, through endless ages. Amen.

(Translation © Jeremy White, 2015)

#### THE SIXTEEN

Harry Christophers conductor

Soprano	Alto	Tenor	Bass
Julie Cooper	Robin Blaze	Jeremy Budd	Robert Davies
Katy Hill	Daniel Collins	Mark Dobell	Robert Macdonald
Kirsty Hopkins	Stephanie Franklin	Steven Harrold	Ben McKee
Alexandra Kidgell	Kim Porter	George Pooley	Stuart Young
Charlotte Mobbs			
Emilia Morton			

The music of the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (b. 1935) speaks in ancient accents, shot through with flashes of modernity. Lean, pure, and fired by the enduring tenets of the Christian faith, it shuns everything romantic, and instead hints at arcane rituals acted out in solemn ways. Its medieval quality means that Pärt combines supremely well with genuinely old music, and some thrilling combinations can be imagined. Pärt and Pérotin; Pärt and Machaut; Pärt and Ockeghem; Pärt and Josquin. For this programme, Harry Christophers has aligned Pärt with two Tudor composers, Thomas Tallis (d. 1585) and William Byrd (d. 1623), a pairing made all the more apt by Harry's choice of some English works that are themselves composed rigorously according to logic and rule, or address the fusion of old with new. Here, Tallis and Byrd meet Pärt on common ground.

There are times when a composer may concern himself with aspects of craft that are hard or even impossible for the listener to follow. Audiences find this puzzling, and deem such works to be cryptic and mathematical. If music is by definition sound—humanly organized sound—then why organize sounds in such ways that the listener is excluded? The point is neatly made by this programme's opening work, Byrd's eight-voice motet *Diliges Dominum*. Words apart, it sounds the same as it does forwards. The piece is a perfect palindrome, yet no one could possibly know that from performance alone. Our brains cannot process temporal symmetry in the way we instantly see visual symmetry.

Why, then, was this weird work written? At least three answers come to mind. First, Byrd composed it because he could. If carefully chosen, chordal sequences and melodies will work both forwards and backwards, and Byrd must have loved the challenge of working this out for himself. Second, he wrote this crab canon for the delight of the eight singers who, using Byrd's original notation, must read from only four melodic lines. Four of them sing these melodies forwards, the other four sing them backwards; and by doing so, their eyes unlock the work's musical conceit. But Byrd's third reason for composing this piece may be the most important, for he placed it in a book that ensured its readership across Europe. In 1575, Byrd and Tallis jointly published a collection of motets called *Cantiones sacrae* ('Sacred songs'). It was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, and it was explicitly made for

export, to display the brilliance of Tudor culture to the outside world. Small wonder, then, that both Tallis and Byrd do some musical showing off in these motets.

The most breathtaking piece in the 1575 book is the one placed at its end: the seven voice Miserere nostri. Usually this work is credited to Tallis alone, but more likely it is by Tallis and Byrd, the two men working collaboratively: first four voices composed by Byrd, then three more added by Tallis. The strange beauty of this piece hints that something arcane lurks under its sonorous surface, and indeed it does – but it can only be grasped by viewing the piece from the singer's perspective, since it too is concerned with sight as well as sound. Just three notated lines are needed to convey this work's seven-voice polyphony, two of them bearing instructions (or 'canons') telling how they must be deciphered. The first melody, attributed to Byrd in the 1575 Cantiones sacrae, is to be read by four low voice singers, all starting on the same note at the same time. The first of them sings the line exactly as written. The second doubles all the durations of the notes (x2), and turns all the intervals upside down. The third singer quadruples the durations (x4) and restores the intervals. The fourth octuples the durations (x8) and re-inverts the intervals. Thus four different versions of the same melody sound simultaneously, in various states of augmentation and inversion – a conceit that is utterly impossible to follow in sound. Byrd then handed this to Tallis, who deftly added a superstructure: two sopranos sing in straightforward canon at the unison (very easy for listeners to hear), and a free seventh voice plugs some polyphonic gaps. 'Miserere nostri, Domine' ('Have mercy on us, Lord') are all the words supplied for this lean and logical motet.

Other works in this programme play compositional games, some more easily discerned than others. Simplest to follow is the two-voice canon in Tallis's *When Jesus went*, in which the soprano replicates the baritone an octave higher after two beats. In the 1575 *Cantiones sacrae* this work was published as a motet, *Salvator mundi*, in which form it is most often heard today; but some Elizabethan manuscripts transmit the music with an English text telling the story of Jesus and the woman with the alabaster box (Matthew 26:6), and our programme opts for this version, to pair with Pärt's *The Woman with the Alabaster Box*. Byrd's game in *Christe qui lux es et dies* is also quite easy to follow. Five voices are in play here, and five stanzas of text are set to polyphony. In turn, each voice sings the traditional plainchant melody used for this hymn, starting with the bass (polyphonic stanza 1), then rising through the texture to the soprano (polyphonic stanza 5). Each statement is harmonized in simple block chords filled with surprises – not unlike the choral chanting favoured by Arvo Pärt, in which strings of consonant chords are locally spiced with piquancies.

Cleverer by far are two further Byrd motets from the 1575 Cantiones sacrae—'cleverer' in the sense that they took immense skill to devise, even though that skill frankly bypasses us in sound. O lux beata Trinitas, a paean of praise to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, ends with a trinitarian three-voice canon which in Sudoku terms would be classed as 'fiendish'; and Byrd does this because he can, not because he expects us to hear it. In Miserere mihi, Domine he does ingenious things with the plainchant melody of the same name—including, near

the end, a two-voice canon made from the chant, interwoven with a second and totally different canon sung by two more voices. Strange rituals indeed.

The theme of craftsmanship connects all the works mentioned so far; but this programme also features pieces on another theme that has long been of special interest to Arvo Pärt: the judicious balancing of the old against the new. William Byrd too was deeply concerned with this, and four pieces lead us along his pathway of thought. That path starts with *Tribue, Domine*, a vast six-voice motet cast in three big sections, in which Byrd quite openly pays homage to his Tudor ancestors — composers such as Robert Fayrfax, John Taverner, and the youthful Thomas Tallis. *Tribue, Domine* behaves as if it were a votive antiphon, in which sections for reduced choir alternate with ones for *tutti*. Byrd, however, has modernized the form into something more declamatory and expressive, and the subject-matter of its text is different: not a hymn to the Virgin Mary, as in pre-Reformation antiphons, but now an address to the Trinity.

Elsewhere, Byrd weighs old against new by turning his gaze to continental Europe, and redefining his English style in relation to foreign fashion. His mighty eight-voice motet Ad Dominum cum tribularer tackles the musical texture known as 'imitation', in which long and distinctive thematic subjects pass among the eight voices, densely packed together in tight interlock—a craft Byrd knew from works by mid-century continental masters such as Nicolas Gombert and Jacobus Clemens non Papa. In Emendemus in melius, Byrd turned instead to his musical friend and contemporary Alfonso Ferrabosco, an Italian composercum-spy resident at the Tudor court, who became Byrd's musical sparring partner in the 1570s. Hence Emendemus in melius, Byrd's first contribution to the 1575 Cantiones sacrae, which builds on (and frankly improves upon) a piece by Alfonso himself. As for Laetentur coeli, it reveals Byrd's fully mature style in which Italian and English elements are perfectly fused, and it therefore sets the tone for the rest of Byrd's composing career. The three pieces by Arvo Pärt all belong to the decade 1997-2007. They speak in Pärt's unmistakable voice, with its unique blend of ancient and modern. Spare textures, drones, notes left hanging as if suspended, structures built around scales, others that open and close like scissors – and above all, the solemn chanting of words in ways that hint at Orthodox chant: all these are locally present, though differently permutated in each piece. The Woman with the Alabaster Box of 1997 sets the narrative text of Matthew 26:6-13, and is the most dramatic of the three. Nunc dimittis of 2001, composed for liturgical use, is remarkable for its doxology ('Gloria Patri'), which is crafted in Pärt's bell-like 'tintinnabuli' style; it leaves the listener wondering whether its undulating scales and arpeggios, which gently collide with one another (and against a drone), follow some arcane system or are merely random. Finally The Deer's Cry of 2007 sets part of the lorica (incantation) attributed to the fifth-century St Patrick. This powerful text has come to be known by various names; the one chosen by Pärt has also been used for this programme.

Whether performing a simple medieval hymn or expressing the complex musical and emotional language of a contemporary choral composition, **The Sixteen** does so with qualities common to all great ensembles. Tonal warmth, rhythmic precision and immaculate intonation are clearly essential to the mix. But it is the courage and intensity with which The Sixteen makes music that speak above all to so many people.

Celebrating its 45th anniversary this year The Sixteen gave its first concert in 1979 under the direction of Founder and Conductor Harry Christophers CBE. Their pioneering work since has made a profound impact on the performance of choral music and attracted a large new audience, not least as 'The Voices of Classic FM' and through BBC television's *Sacred Music* series.

The voices and period-instrument players of The Sixteen are at home in over five centuries of music, a breadth reflected in their annual *Choral Pilgrimage* to Britain's great cathedrals and sacred spaces, regular appearances at the world's leading concert halls, and award-winning recordings for The Sixteen's CORO and other labels.

Recent highlights include the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat mater* (at the Barbican in 2016 and live streamed from the Sistine Chapel in 2018), and his Fifth Symphony 'Le grand inconnu' (2019 Edinburgh International Festival and the Lincoln Centre, New York), both commissioned for Harry Christophers and The Sixteen by the Genesis Foundation, an ambitious ongoing series of Handel oratorios, extensive tours of the USA and The Netherlands, and a specially commissioned series of programmes presented by Sir Simon Russell Beale entitled *A Choral Odyssey*.

**Harry Christophers** stands among today's great champions of choral music. In partnership with The Sixteen, he has set benchmark standards for the performance of everything from late medieval polyphony to important new works by contemporary composers.

Under his leadership The Sixteen has established its hugely successful annual *Choral Pilgrimage*, created the *Sacred Music* series for BBC television, and developed an acclaimed period-instrument orchestra. Highlights of their recent work include an Artist Residency at Wigmore Hall, a large-scale tour of Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*, the world premiere of James MacMillan's Fifth Symphony at the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival and a live-streamed performance of MacMillan's *Stabat mater* from the Sistine Chapel. Their future projects, meanwhile, comprise extensive tours of the USA and The Netherlands, as well as a continuation of the Choral Pilgrimage 2024 tour.

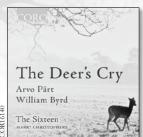
Harry Christophers served as Artistic Director of the Handel and Haydn Society from 2008 to 2022, and is now their Conductor Laureate. He has worked as guest conductor with, among others, the London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie. Christophers' extensive commitment to opera has embraced productions for English National Opera and Lisbon Opera and work with the Granada, Buxton and Grange festivals.

In 2019 collaborated with BBC Radio 3 presenter Sara Mohr-Pietsch to produce a book entitled *A New Heaven: Choral Conversations* in celebration of the group's 40th anniversary.

Harry Christophers was awarded a CBE in the Queen's 2012 Birthday Honours list. He is an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, as well as the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has Honorary Doctorates in Music from the Universities of Leicester, Northumbria, Canterbury Christ Church and Kent.







## All the music from this evening's concert on one album The Deer's Cry

The Deer's Cry album is available from Amazon, Walmart, ArkivMusic and Barnes & Noble as a CD or can be Downloaded or Streamed from all major digital platforms.



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