

VOCAL POLYPHONY

FRANCO-FLEMISH COMPOSERS OF THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

Friday, November 19, 2021 Live! at 10th & G 945 G Street NW, Washington, DC

Saturday, November 20, 2021 St. Paul's Episcopal Church 228 S Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA

VOCAL POLYPHONY FRANCO-FLEMISH COMPOSERS OF THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. | Live! at 10th & G, Washington, DC SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. | St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Alexandria, VA

PROGRAM

Inviolata, integra et casta es, Maria Salve Regina à 5 In te Domine speravi Nymphes des bois El grillo Osculetur me Stabat Mater dolorosa Prophetiae sibyllarum Prologue: Carmina chromatico I. Sibylla Persica II. Sibylla Libica Josquin des Prez (1450/55-1521)

Pierre de Manchicourt (1510-1564)

J. des Prez

Orlande de Lassus (1530/32-1594)

Nicolas Gombert (1490–1556)

Jacobus Clemens non Papa (1510/15–1555/56)

MUSICIANS

Soprano Susan Kavinski Sara MacKimmie

Carole Magnus eras

Alto Kristen Dubenion-Smith P. Lucy McVeigh **Tenor** Jacob Perry, Jr. Gregório Taniguchi

Bass Edmund Milly Jason Widney **Sackbut** Michael Holmes

Dana Marsh, Conductor & Artistic Director



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Upon the 500th anniversary of the death of Josquin des Prez, it seems apt to celebrate the remarkable musical culture of Europe in the 16th century during Josquin's career. Josquin and the subsequent several generations of composers were like the most popular of rock stars today, traveling from place to place throughout Europe working in the finest courts and chapels of the time with reputations that preceded them during their lifetimes and remembered after their deaths with great lamentations. It is tempting, according to the sentiment of the text of *Musae Jovis*, to acclaim Josquin as the best amongst them all, but this idea belies the evidence that all of the composers represented on this program are equally worthy of praise.

From a young age, Josquin was associated with some of the best musical establishments in France, Northern Italy, and for some time in the papal choir in Rome. It is to this cosmopolitan career that one can attribute a style that easily melds sinuous melody, contrapuntal complexity, homophonic textures, and the lightness and playfulness of Italian secular music. Josquin had a reputation during his career as a master both of musical technique and of expression, supremely inventive with melody while maintaining excellence in contrapuntal skill. But Josquin's works are not simply the mixture of a variety of contemporary techniques. They are also notable for the composer's frequent and pervasive imitative style that builds upon small, repeated cells in glorious cascades of sound. Almost all of Josquin's motets use some kind of compositional constraintborrowed melodies used as structural material, rhythmic canons, retrograde and inversion of melodic material—all of which in combination is a joy to both hear and to sing.

The three motets by Josquin on this program, *Inviolata*, *integra et casta est*, *Salve Regina*, and *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, utilize some sort of manipulation of a borrowed melody. *Inviolata* sets a chant for the feast of Mary's Immaculate Conception in the second tenor voice which is then imitated in canon by the altos a fifth higher. The five-voice setting of *Salve Regina* is notable for a remarkable cantus firmus which is simply a statement of the first four pitches of the original chant repeated over and over alternating between the original pitch-level and a fourth lower. Josquin's version

of the Marian lament *Stabat Mater* is constructed around a cantus firmus modelled on Binchois's chanson *Comme femme desconfortée.* It is sometimes shocking for modern audiences to hear such a strange juxtaposition between this chanson's distinctively female voice weeping in despair in her pain and desolation after her lover's death, but it is an appropriate secular foil to Mary's lament over Jesus her son hanging on the cross. Josquin uses an archaically slowly moving cantus firmus in combination with his most modern contrapuntal techniques in the other voices.

While Josquin was employed south of the Alps, he likely was exposed to the popular secular song genre known as the "frottola." These playful and amorous songs generally have some combination of a repeated refrain and multiple verses and are almost uniformly syllabic and homophonic. At first glance, the Latin-texted first line of *In te Domine speravi* (In you, O Lord, I have put my hope) from Psalm 30 might not seem all that playful, but there is a legend that Josquin sent this charming tune to his patron Cardinal Ascanio Sforza to remind him that he still needed payment for services. Among the most famous of Josquin's secular works is *El grillo*, the adorably chirping frottola for a cricket who is always singing for love.

One is hard-pressed to classify one of Josquin's most moving works—Nymphes de bois (also known as La déploration de la mort de Johannes Ockeghem) as either a chanson or a motet. Written in 1497 after the death of Josquin's musical predecessor Johannes Ockeghem, Josquin borrows the sacred chant melody from the Introit for the Requiem Mass as a structural foundation and sets a secular text by Jean Molinet that praises the wonderful qualities of the learned composer. Josquin apparently even added his own line to the poem about Ockeghem's handsome appearance. (He was not at all stout!) The first section of music is slow and affecting, much in the style of Ockeghem. The terrifying Fate Atropos is invoked as she cuts the thread of life, and all the musicians of the age—Josquin, Pierson (which may be a nickname for Pierre de la Rue), Antoine Brumel, and Loyset Compère—are called upon to weep for their father. As the work comes to an end, all the voices join together to sing the final supplication: "May he rest



ABOUT THE PROGRAM (cont'd)

in peace. Amen." In a touching gesture of visual mourning, the tenor voice is notated with entirely black noteheads, standing out starkly on the page as if clothed in mourning.

French composer Pierre de Manchicourt may be less wellknown than Josquin today, but he was a very important figure in the period after Josquin's death. Manchicourt did not travel as widely as Josquin or Lassus, but had an enormously successful career first in France and then as the master of the capilla flamenca (the Flemish chapel) of King Philip II in Madrid. One might ask why there are Flemish musicians in Spain, but this is due to Philip's Habsburg inheritance from his grandparents, Flemish Philip the Fair and Spanish Joanna of Castille. Manchicourt's compositional style brings together the full textures of Ockeghem, the pervasive imitation of Josquin, and the well-crafted melodic lines and constantly varying textures of his contemporaries Nicolas Gombert and Jacobus Clemens non Papa. Manchicourt's motet Oscoletur me sets two texts from the Biblical Song of Songs. These gorgeous love songs (sometimes explicit) were considered as metaphors both for the intense love of the soul for God and also the devotion of Mary to Jesus. Although the tenor's text is "Tota pulchra es," Manchicourt does not use the chant melody from the liturgy. Instead, the tenor quotes the melody of a popular German song with loose associations with the Habsburg imperial dynasty, Kein Adler in der Welt. ("Adler" means eagle in German. The heraldic emblem of the Holy Roman Emperor, which in 1554 was Philip's father, Charles V, is the double-headed eagle.)

Legend tells of the extraordinary beauty of Orlande de Lassus's voice as a boy. It was so gorgeous that he was apparently kidnapped three different times! Like many of his predecessors, Lassus had a peripatetic career, traveling from his native Flanders to Mantua, Sicily, Milan, Naples, and by 1553 to Rome where he was made *maestro di cappella* of St. John Lateran. This was an extremely prestigious post for someone only aged 22. He stayed in this position one year, but after further travels to France and to England, Lassus joined the court of Albrecht V, Duke of Bavaria, who wanted a court in the style of the Italians. Lassus was apparently happy in Munich and settled there for the rest of his career despite many other job offers. He was extremely

famous and composers from all over Europe traveled to Munich to study with him, including Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli. Although Lassus composed in almost every known vocal genre of the period, both highbrow and low, he is infamous for utilizing a style of composition called musica reservata. This style is marked by intensely expressive text and chromaticism. The *musica* reservata was written for an exclusive group of musical connoisseurs who were meant to appreciate the thorny sonorities and rapidly shifting textures of these works. One such setting is a group of twelve motets plus a prologue entitled *Prophetiae Sibyllarum*. The wildly chromatic prologue "Carmina chromatico" (Chromatic Song) stops even the biggest fan of musical avant-garde techniques in their tracks. The following motets are setting of words allegedly written by ancient pagan prophets named for the place from whence they originated—Persia, Libya, etc.—and that support the Christian narrative of a virgin birth of God incarnate. As such, the texts verge on heretical. Prelates at The Council of Trent (1545–1563) advised reading them with caution. These texts appear to be an analog to the chromatic *musica reservata*, intended only for those of the most sophisticated and esoteric knowledge. It is interesting to note that Michelangelo's painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel depicts these same pagan sibyls side-by-side to Old Testament prophets.

Like Nymphes des bois, Gombert's six-voice motet, Musae Jovis, is a lament for a musical master. In most cases, Gombert abandons the musical techniques of the older generation ostinato, canon, cantus firms, multiple texts—except here in homage to Josquin. Gombert uses a long-note cantus firmus with the text, ""The groans of death surrounded me, Hell's agonies surrounded me," as the other voices make references to the Muses; their father Jupiter, king of the gods; and to their frequent companion Apollo, the god of music. Gombert lowers the cantus firmus melody by a half step in order to end on the pitch E instead of F. This creates a Phrygian-mode sonority which is often associated with sorrow and lament. Gombert's typically dense and continuous sonic landscape is replete with cross-relations, clashing half steps, and root-position triads a tritone apart contributing to the sorrowful texture of the music. But not all is mourning. The end of the motet shifts into a triple meter marking



Josquin's elevation by Apollo into the stars of the heavens.

Clemens non Papa, unlike many of his contemporaries lived most of his life in Flanders. It appears he never traveled to Italy and there is little evidence of international influence on his style. Nevertheless, composers such as Lassus knew his music well and incorporated elements of Clemens non Papa's music in their own works. Clemens non Papa was prolific in many genres of vocal music. He composed some 233 motets, three of which have secular texts in praise of music. *Carole magnus* is a ceremonial motet praising Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (r. 1519–1556), who was formerly only the King of Spain (r. 1516–1556). The text mentions him by name and also praises his son, the future King Philip II of Spain. The poem is akin to an aural coat of arms, including a quotation of the Habsburg motto "plus ultra" and the heraldic emblem of the Pillars of Hercules that mythically stood at the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. The remainder of the text is over the top, celebrating all of the lands under the rule of Charles including the recently colonized and exploited lands of Asia and Africa. Densely packed imitation and cascading melodies gloriously celebrate that nothing is more powerful and nothing is beyond the glory and rule of Charles's empire.

Carolann Buff, assistant professor of music at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, specializing in choral musicology.

Text and Translations

Inviolata, integra et casta es, Maria

Inviolata, integra et casta es Maria, Quae es effecta fulgida caeli porta. O Mater alma Christi carissima, Suscipe pia laudum praeconia.

Nostra ut pura pectora sint et corpora, Quae nunc flagitant devota corda et ora. Tua per precata dulcisona, Nobis concedas veniam per saecula.

O benigna, O regina, O Maria, Quae sola inviolata permansisti. Undefiled, unblemished, and pure are you, Mary, Who has made the gates of heaven shine. O kind and dearest Mother of Christ, Accept the faithful praise of our worship,

That our hearts and bodies may be pure, Which now our devoted souls and mouths pray. Through your sweet-sounding prayers Please grant us forgiveness for ever.

O bountiful, O queen, O Mary, You who only remain undefiled.

Translation ©2012 David Wyatt

Salve Regina à 5

Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae, Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Hevae.

Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes, In hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia ergo, advocata nostra, Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, Nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.

Hail Queen, Mother of mercy, Our life, our sweetness, and our hope, hail.

To you we call, we the exiled children of Eve,

To you we sigh, mourning and weeping, In this valley of tears.

O, therefore, our advocate, Turn your pitiful eyes to us.

And Jesus, the blessed fruit of your womb, Show him to us after this exile.

O merciful, O holy, O sweet Virgin Mary.

In te Domine speravi

In te Domine speravi Per trovar pietà in eterno, Ma in un tristo e oscuro inferno Fui, et frustra laboravi.

Rotto e al vento ogni speranza, Veggio il ciel voltarmi in pianto, Suspir, lachrime me avanza Del mio tristo sperar tanto. Fui ferito, se non quanto Tribulando ad te clamavi. In te Domine speravi.

Lo cecato voler mio Per sin qui m'ha fatto muto, Et hor poco al dolor mio Per mio dir vien proveduto. Deh, Signor, porgime adiuto, Quia de me iam desperavi. In te Domine speravi. In thee, O Lord, have I trusted To find eternal mercy; But I have been in a dark, miserable hell, And have labored in vain.

All my hopes broken and cast to the winds, I see the heavens plunge me into sorrow; Only sighs and tears are left Of my great, unhappy hope. I was struck down, except that In my trouble I called out to thee. In thee, O Lord, have I trusted.

My blind will Till now has made me mute, And even now my words have done Little for my pain. Ah, Lord, grant me aid, For I despair of myself. In thee, O Lord, have I trusted.

Translation ©2008 Elizabeth Baber

Nymphes des bois Text: Jean Molinet (1435–1507)

Nymphes des bois, déesses des fontaines, Chantres experts de toutes nations, Changez voz voix tant clères et haultaines En cris trenchans et lamentations.

Car Atropos, très terrible satrape, A vostre Ockeghem attrapé en sa trappe. Vrai trésorier de musique et chief d'œuvre, [Doct, élégant de corps et non point trappe.] Grant dommage est que la terre le couvre.

Acoustrez vous d'habits de deuil Josquin, Pierson, Brumel, Compère, Et plourez grosses larmes d'œul : Perdu avez vostre bon père.

Requiescat in pace. Amen.

Cantus firmus: Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, Et lux perpetua luceat eis. Requiescat in pace. Amen. Nymphs of the woods, goddesses of the fountains, Expert singers from all nations, Turn your voices, so clear and high, Into piercing cries and lamentations.

For Atropos, the terrible satrap, Has your Ockeghem caught in her trap. The true treasurer of music and of masterpiece, [Learned, handsome, and not stout.] A great shame that he is now covered in earth.

Clothe yourselves in mourning dress, Josquin, Pierson, Brumel, Compère, And weep great tears from your eyes: For you have lost your good father.

May he rest in peace. Amen.

Cantus firmus: Give them eternal rest, O Lord, And may perpetual light shine upon them. May he rest in peace. Amen.

El grillo

El grillo è buon cantore Che tiene longo verso. Dalle beve grillo canta. El grillo è buon cantore.

Ma non fa come gli altri uccelli Come li han cantato un poco, Van de fatto in altro loco Sempre el grillo sta pur saldo, Quando la maggior el caldo Alhor canta sol per amore.

Osculetur me

Song of Songs 1:1-3, 4:7 & 11

Osculetur me osculo oris sui; quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino, fragrantia unguentis optimis. Oleum effusum nomen tuum, ideo adolescéntulae dilexerunt te.

Trahe me, post te curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum. Introduxit me rex in cellaria sua. Exsultabimus et laetabimur super vinum. Recti diligunt te.

Cantus firmus: Tota pulchra es, amica mea, et macula non est in te.

Favus distllans labia tua; mel et lac sub lingua tua.

Odor unguentorum tuórum super ómnia arómata.

Stabat Mater dolorosa

Stabat Mater dolorosa Juxta crucem lacrymosa, Dum pendebat Filius, Cujus animam gementem, Contristantem et dolentem Pertransivit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta Fuit illa benedicta Mater Unigeniti. Quae maerebat et dolebat, Et tremebat, dum videbat Nati poenas inclyti.

Quis est homo qui non fleret, Christi Matrem si videret The cricket is a good singer Who can sing a long verse. The cricket sings of drinking. The cricket is a good singer.

But he does not do as the other birds, When they have sung but a little, They in fact go elsewhere; The cricket always stays in place; When it is hottest, He then sings only for love.

Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth; For your breasts are better than wine, Fragrant with the best balms. Your name is as oil poured out; Therefore young women have loved you.

Draw me, we will run after you, For the scent of your balm. The king brought me into his cellar. We shall exult and rejoice over wine. The righteous love you.

Cantus firmus: You are all beautiful, my love, and there is no blemish within you. Your lips drip like a honeycomb; honey and milk [are] under your tongue. The scent of your balm is above all manner of spices.

The grieving mother stood Next to the cross, tearful, While her son hung, Through her weeping soul, Saddened and grieving, The sword pierced.

O how sad and afflicted Was that blessed Mother of the Only-begotten, Who mourned and grieved, And trembled upon seeing The torment of her glorious son.

Who is one who would not weep, Seeing the Mother of Christ In tanto supplicio? Quis non posset contristari, Piam Matrem contemplari Dolentem cum filio?

Pro peccatis suae gentis, Vidit Jesum in tormentis, Et flagellis subditum. Vidit suum dulcem natum Morientem desolatum, Dum emisit spiritum.

Eia Mater, fons amoris, Me sentire vim doloris Fac, ut tecum lugeam. Fac ut ardeat cor meum In amando Christum deum, Ut sibi complaceam.

Virgo virginum praeclara, Jam mihi non sis amara, Fac me tecum plangere. Fac, ut portem Christi mortem, Passionis ejus sortem, Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari, Cruce hac inebriari, Ob amorem filii. Inflammatus et accensus, Per te Virgo sim defensus In die judicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri, Morte Christi praemuniri Confoveri gratia. Quando corpus morietur Fac ut animae donetur Paradisi gloria. Amen.

Prophetiae Sibyllarum

Prologue:

Carmina chromatico quae audis modulata tenore, Haec sunt illa quibus nostrae olim arcana salutis Bis senae intrepido cecinerunt ore Sibyllae.

I. Sibylla Persica

Virgine matre satus, pando residebit asello Iucundus princeps, unus qui ferre salute Rite queat lapsis; tamen illis forte diebus Multi multa ferent, immensi facta laboris. Solo sed satis est oracula prodere verbo: Ille Deus casta nascetur virgine magnus. In such torment? Who could not be saddened Beholding the holy Mother Suffering with her son?

For the sins of his people, She saw Jesus in torture, And subjected to scourging. She saw her sweet son Forsaken, While he gave up his spirit.

O Mother, fountain of love, Make me to feel the power of sorrow, That I may mourn with you. Let my heart burn, In loving Christ the Lord, That I may please him.

Noblest virgin of virgins, Be not bitter with me, Let me weep with you. Grant that I may bear the death of Christ, Share in his Passion, And remember his wounds.

Wound be with his wounds, Inebriated by the cross, For love of the son. Inflamed and set afire, May I be defended by you, Virgin, On the day of judgement.

Let me be protected by the cross, Armed by Christ's death, Cherished by grace. When my body dies, Grant that my soul be given The glory of paradise. Amen.

Polyphonic songs which you hear with a chromatic tenor, These are they, in which our twice-six sibyls once Sang with fearless mouth the secrets of salvation.

The son of a virgin mother shall sit on a crook-backed ass, The joyful prince, the only one who can rightly bring Salvation to the fallen; but it will happen in those days that Many shall tell many prophecies of great labor. But it is enough for the oracles to bring forth with a single That great God shall be born of a chaste virgin.

II. Sibylla Libyca

Ecce dies venient, quo aeternus tempore princeps,

Irradians sata laeta, viris sua crimina tollet,

Lumine clarescet cuius synagoga recenti: Sordida qui solus reserabit labra reorum, Aequus erit cunctis, gremio rex membra reclinet Reginae mundi, sanctus, per saecula vivus.

Musicae Jovis

Text: Gerard Avidius (?)

Musae Jovis ter maximi proles, canora plangite, Comas cypressus comprimat: Josquinus ille occidit, Templorum decus et vestrum decus.

Saevera mors et improba, quae templa dulcibus sonis privas,

Et aulas principum, malum tibi quod imprecer, Tollenti bonos, parcenti malis.

Apollo sed neccem tibi minatur, Heus mors pessima: Instructus arcu et spiculis Musas hortatur addere, et laurum comis et aurum comis.

Josquinus inquit optimo et maximo gratus Jovi, Triumphat inter coelites et dulce carmen concinit, Templorum decus, musarum decus.

Cantus firmus: Circumdederunt me gemitus mortis Dolores inferni circumdederunt me.

Carole Magnus eras

Carole magnus eras cum solus regna tenebas Major ab imperio maximus a puero Rex multos Caesar plures ditione tenebas. Nunc omnes nato tu regis a puero, Roma tua est, Europa tua est, Asia Africa tota quid plus ultra, Non potes omnia habes Behold the days will come, at which time the immortal prince,

Sowing abundant crops, shall take away their crimes from men,

Whose synagogue will shine with new light; He alone shall open the soiled lips of the accused, He shall be just to all; let the king, holy, living for all ages, Recline his limbs in the bosom of the queen of the world.

Translation ©2015 Peter Bergquist

Muses, offspring of thrice-greatest Jupiter, wail in song, Let the cypress pull together its foliage: Josquin himself is dead,

The ornament of churches and your own ornament.

O harsh and wicked death, who deprives the churches of their sweet sounds

And the courts of princes too, the evil which I will invoke on you

Is for taking away the good, and sparing the bad.

But Apollo threatens you with being killed, O most terrible death: he is skillful with bow and arrows, And encourages the Muses to join in, and has laurel and gold in his hair.

Josquin, welcomed by Jupiter the greatest and best, speaks And makes his triumphal entry among heaven's dwellers and sings a sweet song, The ornament of churches, the ornament of the Muses.

Cantus firmus: The groans of death surrounded me, Hell's agonies surrounded me.

Translation ©2012 David Wyatt

Charles, you were mighty when you were only a king, Mightier as an emperor, mightiest through your son, A Caesar, a king of many, you held many domains. You rule all through your son, Rome is yours, Europe is yours, Asia and Africa—what is further beyond? You cannot have more when you have everything.

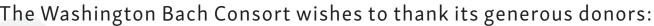
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dana Marsh began his musical training as a boy chorister at St. Thomas Church Choir School in New York and at Salisbury Cathedral in England. He earned his undergraduate degree in organ performance at the Eastman School of Music and received masters and doctoral degrees in historical musicology from the University of Oxford. Praised by *The Los Angeles Times* as an "energetic and persuasive conductor," and by *The Washington Post* as "a superb choral conductor, energetic and precise," Marsh has entered into fruitful collaborations with the London Mozart Players, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, the Choir of St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, the Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, among others. As an acclaimed countertenor soloist and consort singer (1992–2008), he performed with the American Bach Soloists, Concert Royal of New York, New York Collegium, Seattle Baroque Orchestra, and the Academy of Ancient Music. As a singer/soloist with the

Choir of New College Oxford while undertaking his D.Phil. research, he toured frequently with the Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the European Union Baroque Orchestra, recording 15 discs with New College Choir, one of which won the Gramophone award in early music in 2008. Marsh was Assistant Director of Music and Director of Chapel Music at Girton College Cambridge, and he currently serves as Director of the Historical Performance Institute at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.





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