

Early Music Foundation presents

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK
FREDERICK RENZ – DIRECTOR

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"bulwark of the city's period-performance community"

~ The New Yorker

43rd Anniversary Season 2017 – 2018

BURGUNDIAN CHRISTMAS

First Church of Christ, Scientist
Central Park West at 68th Street

Saturday, December 9, 2017, 7:30 PM

Artist in Residence ~

Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine
Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street

Sunday, December 10, 2017, 2:00 PM

Sunday, December 17, 2017, 2:00 PM

Christmas Day -- Monday, December 25, 2017, 2:00 & 5:00 PM

BURGUNDIAN Christmas

I

- Noel, noel (*motet*) Antoine Busnois, d. 1492
Conditor alme siderum (*Advent hymn*) Guillaume Dufay, ca.1400-1474
Vergine bella (*cantilena motet*) Dufay

II

- Noe, noe (*motet*) Antoine Brumel, ca.1460-1512/13
Mater patris et filia (*motet*) Brumel
Basse danse: Mon desir/ Allemaingne II & V/Bergerette: Sans roch/Rondo IX-
Aliud/Fagot Tielman Susato, pub., *Het derde musyck boexken*, Antwerp, 1551
Gaude virgo mater Christi (*motet*) Josquin Desprez, 1450/55-1521

III

- Buvons, ma comere (*chanson à boire*)
Benedictus Appenzeller, *Netherlandish Ms, Lo 35087, 1505-6*
Nieuwe almanack (*drinklied*) Lupus Hellinc, Susato, pub.
Wy comen heir gelopen (*drinklied*) Anonymous, Susato, pub.
Danse du Roy/La rocque gaillarde (Phalèse), 3 Rondes/Salterelle Susato, pub.

IV

- Apud dominum (*motet: Vigilia nativitatis Domini*)
Quando natus es (*motet: Circumcisionis et vigilia epiphaniae et purificationis*)
Novum genus potentiae (*In vigilia epiphaniae Domini: ymnus*)
Anonymous, *Zwanenbroedershuis Codex 73, ca. 1544*
Passe et medio/Reprise: La pingne/Gaillarde: Ghequest bin ick/
Ronde: Pour quoy/Ronde: Mon amy/Ronde Susato, pub.

V

- Vox in Rama Jacobus Clemens non Papa, ca. 1510-ca. 1556
(*motet for Holy Innocents' Day*)
Resonet in laudibus (*motet*) Roland de Lassus (AKA Orlando di Lasso), 1532-1594

VI

- O zaligh, heyligh Bethlehem (*kerstliedje*) Goudsmit, arr.
Paulus Matthysz, pub., Amsterdam, ca.1645
O heiligh, zaligh Bethlehem (*instrumental variations*) Jacob van Eyck, 1589/90-1659
Der Fluyten Lust-hof, 1644
Dies est laetitiae (*motet*) Guilielmus Messaus, 1589-1640
Nato nobis Salvatore, *Laudes vespertinae*, 1629 Messaus

VII

- Carillon de village, *Secretum musarum*, 1616 Nicolas Vallet ca.1583-ca1642
Een kindeken is ons geboren (*kerstliedje*) Messaus, arr., pub. 1629
Een kindeken is ons gebooren (*instrumental variations*) Jacob van Eyck
Met vlyt aensyt ("Cantilena Belgica"), 1597 Jan Tollius, ca.1550-ca.1625

VIII

- Fantasia (*instrumental bicinium*) Sweelinck
Ons is gheboren een kindekijn (*kerstliedje*) Anonymous
Hodie Christus natus est (*motet*) Sweelinck

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK
on the *Ex cathedra* Records label
featured compact disc: "A Dutch Christmas" and other holiday titles
can be purchased at the CD sales table immediately following this
performance

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK

FREDERICK RENZ – DIRECTOR

Nathaniel Adams – tenor

Eric Brenner – alto

Daniel Bubeck – alto

Joe Damon Chappel – bass

Tomas Cruz – tenor

Jason Eck – bass baritone

Todd Frizzell – tenor

Joseph Jones – dulcians

Jonathan May – alto

Wilson Nichols – tenor

Arash Noori – lutes & guitar

Adrian Rosas – bass baritone

Tricia van Oers – recorders

Special thanks to Joe Chappel – historical language pronunciations

Todd Frizzell – score transcriptions

Wijnie de Groot – Senior Lecturer in Dutch, Columbia University
– Dutch translations

NOTES

“With *Burgundian Christmas*, we celebrate the golden age of Renaissance polyphony, which reached its zenith in what is now Belgium and the Netherlands. Franco-Flemish works by such masters as Busnois, Dufay, Brumel, Josquin, Lassus: theirs was the sound that ultimately found its way to other European musical centers, in church and at court. Some composers travelled as well – Josquin and Dufay became members of the Papal choir in Rome. The fertile soil of the Low Countries fostered a musical flowering that forever changed the cultural landscape.”

-- Frederick Renz

Music is everywhere – especially at holiday times – but this wasn’t always the case. Before the advent of recordings and mass media like radio and television, people had to travel to hear music, or else make their own. They went to churches for devotional music, and to taverns and town squares for worldly music; royal courts boasted both. Music had a function – it was a means to an end (whether devotion or dancing), not an end in itself.

Historically informed performance inevitably involves imagination, creativity, speculation, and some compromise. Today’s program, presented in a church setting, would almost certainly never have taken place this way when the music was new. So we invite you to be as historically informed as the performance today: Feel free to be moved by – and (within the limitations of the seating arrangements) to move to – the spirit of the music.

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Burgundy today – a region in France – is only a small part of what, in the Renaissance, was the Duchy of Burgundy, extending from France into the Low Countries of northern Europe. The Dutch-speaking regions of Holland and Flanders were the source of some of the finest composers and musicians of the time. Over the course of a couple of centuries, their influence made its way south, not just to France but notably to Italy, where it underwent inevitable stylistic transformations and got sent back north to usher in the baroque era. (You can return on May 5 for EM/NY’s “Monteverdi Echoes” concert, to hear how that worked out.)

Much is known about the music and lives of some of the great Burgundian, French and Franco-Flemish composers on today’s program; others will be familiar only to connoisseurs...among them attendees of some of EM/NY’s previous holiday concerts. With more than two dozen selections by well over a dozen composers, there is only space to provide historical context and biographical detail for a few.

The best represented composer is “Anonymous,” who lived for centuries, seemingly everywhere, and wrote in a bewildering variety of styles. In some cases, he (and it almost always was a “he”) was supported by Tielman Susato, a composer whose works are not included on the program, but whose invaluable work as a publisher – especially of *Musyck boexken*, a series devoted to Dutch-text polyphonic music and instrumental works – enabled much repertoire to circulate and survive.

Other than Anonymous, the earliest composer on the program is Guillaume Dufay, whose birth around the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century placed him at a critical juncture between the medieval and Renaissance eras. He became one of the most famous composers of his time.

The next composer to achieve Dufay’s exalted status and influence was Josquin Desprez, whose work is better known than the details of his life. His output in several genres (principally masses, motets, chansons) embodies the high Renaissance style of polyphonic vocal music. Less known today, but nearly as influential in his own time, was Antoine Brumel, a Burgundian composer born in France.

In the late Renaissance, Roland de Lassus (Orlando di Lasso) was a prolific master whose works (numbering more than 2,000) represent the height of the mature polyphonic style. Like Dufay and Josquin, he had extended sojourns in Italy, influencing and absorbing influence in equal measure.

Although the year 1600 is a convenient bookmark for the start of the baroque era, many composers born before then continued to be productive well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, working in both old and new styles.

The blind nobleman Jacob van Eyck was quite the musical polymath: composer, organist, carillonneur, recorder player, acoustician. An expert in bell casting and tuning, he played a decisive role in the development of the carillon. Two selections from his *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* (*The Flute's Garden of Delights*) for solo recorder – a collection of 144 melodies with variations, many based on previously existing tunes – are on today’s program. With this collection, he single-handedly created a vast repertoire for the solo soprano recorder, much of it so virtuosic that even two hands have a tough time of it.

On today’s program, the recorder – four different ones, in fact – will be joined by lute and guitar, as well as the bass and tenor dulcian, predecessors of the modern bassoon. It wasn’t until late in the baroque era when instrumental combinations became standardized to any extent, so the choice of instruments for *Burgundian Christmas* is simply a matter of covering all the different ranges – treble (recorders) for tunes on top, bass (dulcian) for bottom lines and the in-between (lute). Regarding the vocal component, men’s voices were the rule in church singing (the exception being communities of nuns); as for drinking songs, women did not sing

in public (at least as a rule) during the Renaissance golden age -- let alone in a venue for men only (such as an ale house or men's club). Given the somewhat complex four-part writing, these pieces most likely were sung by men's singing societies or by (all male) choristers, while wetting their whistles after Mass, Vespers, etc. (not at all unlike adult chorister activity these days).

The principal language of the vocal works on the program is Latin, but there also are several in Dutch, and one in French. Most of the texts have some bearing on the theme of the birth of the Christ child, but some of the secular ones (the one in French and a few of the Dutch) are, in fact, drinking songs. (Even one Latin text makes reference to the miracle of the wine.) Let's remember that this is a time for celebration, and that, even before Christmas became "a thing," the changeover from one year to the next has always been an occasion for festivities - New Year's Eve, Feast of Fools, Feast of the Circumcision, and sundry others - all involving the celebration and consumption of somewhat more earthbound spirits. -- **Daniel Guss**

**ABOUT EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK (EM/NY)** - Now marking its 43<sup>rd</sup> season, EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK - FREDERICK RENZ, DIRECTOR is known internationally for its performances of music and music-drama from the medieval through classical periods. Profiled on the award-winning national news programs, CBS Sunday Morning and ABC Nightline, EM/NY performs an annual subscription series in New York City. EM/NY has performed at the Lincoln and Kennedy Centers, Library of Congress, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as The Met's Cloisters, and has toured throughout the United States and abroad at many international music festivals including Athens, Brisbane, Caramoor, Charleston, Edinburgh, Honolulu, Hong Kong, Ilmajoki (Finland), Jerusalem, Krakow, Paris, Ravinia, Regensburg, Santa Fe, Spoleto, and Tokyo. EM/NY records for Musical Heritage Society, Foné, Lyrichord, Musicmasters, and Nonesuch, and produces recordings in collaboration with The Metropolitan Museum of Art on the *Ex cathedra* Records label.

**EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK's 43<sup>rd</sup> Concert Season Continues —**

Saturday, March 3, 2018 at 7:30 PM

**HAYDN IN ESTERHÁZY ~ Genial Kapellmeister**

Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 7:30 PM

**MONTEVERDI ECHOES ~ Venice to Vienna**

Orchestra Concerts at the

**First Church of Christ, Scientist, Central Park West at 68<sup>th</sup> Street**

Tickets remaining

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This series of programs is made possible, in part, with public funds from the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council



and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Andrew Cuomo Governor and the New York State Legislature

Private funding has been generously provided by the  
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