

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK

FREDERICK RENZ – DIRECTOR

*Burgundian
Renaissance*



Sacred & Salacious

Polyphony circa 1500

*Josquin Desprez &
Contemporaries*

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

Saturday, 5 November 2011, 8:00 PM

Sunday, 6 November 2011, 2:00 PM

Early Music Foundation presents

EARLY MUSIC NEW YORK

FREDERICK RENZ - DIRECTOR

Burgundian Renaissance

D'ung aultre amer

MISSA: D'UNG AULTRE AMER

Kyrie

Gloria

Johannes Ockeghem, c.1430-1497

Josquin Desprez, c.1450-1521

Recercare primo [Lute-book, ca.1517]

LATIN MOTETS

Ave verum corpus

Ave vera virginitas

Absalon fili mi (on the occasion of the death of Juan Borgia)

Vincenzo Capirola, 1474 – after 1548

Josquin

Josquin

Josquin

EN ITALIEN

Ballo

“La Bernadina de Josquin”

In te Domine speravi (frottola)

Scaramella (frottola) - 2 settings

Saltarello & Piva

Capirola

Francesco Spinacino, fl.1507

Josquin

Josquin & Compère

Joan Ambrosio Dalza, fl. 1508

Eric Brenner - alto	Joe Chappel - bass
Michael Denos - tenor	Eric Dudley - tenor
Patrick Fennig - alto	Todd Frizzell - tenor
Jonathon Hampton - alto	Thomas McCargar - baritone
John Rose - bass-baritone	Charles Weaver - baritone & lute
Christopher Morrongiello - lute	

LA DEPLORATION SUR LA MORT DE OCKEGHEM: Josquin
 Nymphes des bois

La Magdalena [Dixhuit basses dances, 1529-30] Pierre Attaignant, c.1494-1551/52

COMPOSERS NAMED IN "LA DEPLORATION"

O vos omnes (motet) - "Compère"	Loyset Compère, c.1445-1518
Mater patris et filia (motet) - "Brumel"	Antoine Brumel, c.1460-1512/13
Myn hert altyt heft (Dutch lied) - "Pierchon"	Pierre de la Rue, c.1452-1518

MISSA: DUNG AULTRE AMER

Josquin

Sanctus: Tu solus qui facis mirabilia (motetto missale)

Agnus Dei

A FRENCH CHANSONNIER, 1527 (a gift to Filippo Strozzi)

<i>Prelude</i>	<i>Attaignant</i>
Nostre chamberiere	Ninot le Petit, fl. 1510
"Le serviteur"	Heinrich Isaac, c.1450-1517
Je méfie toute le monde	Henricus Morinensis, fl.1515
<i>Gaillarde</i>	<i>Attaignant</i>
Frapes petit coup, petit Jehan mon amy	Antoine Bruhier, d.1521
Comment peult avoir joye	Josquin
<i>Canto bello</i>	<i>Capirola</i>
Mon amy m'avoit promis	Ninot le Petit

NOTES

The secular songs on this program, though apparently so straightforward and informal, represent a major musical revolution at the turn of the sixteenth century that quickly spread to all corners of Europe. The all-pervasive antecedent of the style was the secular Burgundian chanson, usually arranged for solo voice and a few instruments, highly contrapuntal, detailed, delicate and refined, deliberately conservative in an attempt to adhere to medieval forms and textures. When the interest of the finest trained composers of the late fifteenth century was stimulated towards popular song as a possible starting-point of serious music, their compositions dealt the final deathblow to those medieval forms, and ultimately built the foundations for modern tonality and sonority.

The **Strozzi Chansonnier** (Florence Bibiloteca del Conservatorio di Musica, MS Basevi 2442), from which much of the French-language repertoire for this program is taken, is one of the earliest to indicate *a cappella* vocal performance as a preferred medium. This manuscript was prepared, in about 1527, as a gift to the nephew of Pope Leo X, Filippo Strozzi, a Francophile and seasoned traveler, a cosmopolite who we may assume would have been amused at the rustic flavor of the singers, perhaps appropriately costumed, without the customary appurtenance of instrumental accompaniment. Yet the style was about thirty years old at the date of the manuscript, and the popularity of the genre was waning; such pieces had begun to appear in the 1480s and by 1527 most of the composers represented here had died. After all, the possibilities of development in such an intentionally simple style soon had been exhausted.

Though the songs are in French, and refer exclusively to Parisian customs and places, a very strong Italian influence must be recognized in the music itself. Serious music in Italy for a century had been dominated by *maestri* imported from the north, and as a sort of nationalistic “grassroots” revolt, the native *frottola* was beginning to be cultivated in the noble courts of Italian patrons. It was strophic, minimally contrapuntal, in what we would call “harmony” of three or four parts, optionally, and it allowed for any manner of performance. It was so simple as to be supposedly capable of extempore improvisation. The round sonority, simple harmonic structure, and direct text declamation, not to mention the wild popularity, of the *frottole* could not help but attract the French and Flemish composers in the employ of the pope in Rome, among whom were Nino le Petit, Jean Mouton, and Antoine Bruhier.

Let it be said that not all of the 55 pieces in the Strozzi Chansonnier are obscene; there are lyric, pastoral, rustic, and narrative songs as well. What the repertoire most importantly represents is a movement away from what Howard Mayer Brown (in an article on this manuscript in *Acta Musicologica* XL (1969), 115) calls “the flaccid *fin de siècle* artifice of many of the Burgundians,” and a movement toward the acceptance of the more common human passions as subjects for artistic expression. Yet, as Brown observes, “the rhythm of the words rather than their meaning determines the musical style, this reluctance to interpret the inner significance of the poetry being a characteristic of French composers and of popular music at all times.” Notes by Lucy Cross excerpted from Early Music New York’s record album entitled “Salacious Chansons,” Musicmasters 20016).

Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza of Milan assembled for his personal devotions a choir which rivalled any in Italy, including the Papal Choir of the Sistine Chapel. He also encouraged his personal court poets to compose new cycles of devotional lyrics, or *motetti missales*, to be set to music as substitute pieces for the everyday text of the Mass Ordinary. These cycles of motets characteristically included much cutting-edge polyphonic music; each cycle would also contain a single motet -- for the most holy moment of the Elevation of the Host -- with a simpler, more chordal texture, which allows the text to be easily comprehended. **Josquin Desprez**' motet **Tu solus, qui facis mirabilia** seems intended for such intimate and private devotions.

Throughout the piece, short duets mingle their textures with the clear, chordal homophony. The text addresses God intimately and personally, with sets of block chords marked with *Coronae* (fermatas) on every note highlighting texts such as the opening “You alone” and the name “Jesu Christe.” This intimacy is heightened in the second part of the motet, where Josquin quotes (in French!) a popular love song directly: “To love another would be foolishness.” Ottaviano Petrucci printed this motet on its own as early as 1503, but it also appears as part of the **Missa: D’ung aultre amer** in several sources, suggesting composition in the 1480s, when Josquin had contact with the Milanese court.

Josquin and his many talented contemporaries vested Flemish polyphony with increasing renown internationally. Interest in this music spread after Italy, to German speaking countries. **Heinrich Isaac**, ‘de Flandria’, (c. 1450-1517) can be considered the founder of Flemish polyphony in Germany. Starting as a singer in Florence, where he was in close contact with Lorenzo de Medici ‘Il Magnifico,’ he was appointed court composer in 1496 to emperor Maximilian I, the political and cultural heir of the Burgundian dukes.

To the typically German musical tradition - polyphonic settings of mass Propers based on plainchant melodies - Isaac added the technical and expressive achievements of Flemish polyphony attained during Josquin's generation: the highly developed contrapuntal techniques based on imitation and paraphrase, as well as the closer relation between words and music. One of the most remarkable results of this fusion is the impressive three-volume cycle of sacred music, *Choralis Constantinus*, named after the city of Konstanz: the second volume was intended for the cathedral chapter in this city. A total of ninety-nine of these compositions formed a collection of polyphonic settings of the Proper for the most important feast-days of the liturgical year. '*Rorate caeli*' is the Introit from the mass for the fourth Sunday during Advent.

The so-called **Capirola Lutebook** manuscript is one of the most important sources of early sixteenth century Italian lute music. It is an illuminated manuscript which comprises the entire surviving output of Vincenzo Capirola. It was compiled in 1520 by Vitale, a pupil of Capirola. The compositions included probably date from around 1517. Vitale informs the reader that he adorned the lute book with paintings to ensure its survival: even owners not interested in musical matters would, by Vitale's reasoning, keep the lute book in their collections because of the paintings. This explanation is followed by a substantial text on lute playing technique, ornaments and notation—one of the most important sources on performance practice of the time.

Attaignant is considered to be first large-scale publisher of single-impression movable type for music-printing, thus making it possible to print faster and cheaper than predecessors such as Ottaviano Petrucci. He acquired royal privileges for his music books, which were renewed many times. Eventually he was named *imprimeur et libraire du Roy en musique* (Royal music-printer and librarian).

Thanks to Todd Frizzell for score transcriptions, and to
Charles Weaver for historic French pronunciation research.

FREDERICK RENZ, founder of the Early Music Foundation, researches and performs music and music drama from the eleventh through the eighteenth centuries. Internationally acclaimed for his work as a conductor, producer, director, and performer, Renz has received commissions from the Spoleto Festival, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ingram Merrill Foundation.

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Cathedral of St. John the Divine

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