Music for Three Sovereigns
Maximilian I, Marguerite of Austria, and Dido, Queen of Carthage

Friday, March 30, 2012 · 8 pm
First Church in Cambridge, Congregational
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PROGRAM

I. Music for the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519)
   FROM THE LIBER SELECTARUM CANTIONUM (1520)

Josquin des Prez (c. 1455–1521)
   *Inviolata, integra et casta es, Maria*

Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450–1517)
   *O Maria, mater Christi*

II. Music from the songbooks of Marguerite of Austria (1480–1530)

Josquin
   *Fama, malum qua non aliud velocius ullum*

Johannes Ghiselin (doc. 1491–1507)
   *Dulces exuvie*

Alexander Agricola (c. 1445/6–1506)
   *Dulces exuvie*

Josquin
   *Que vous, madame / In pace (instrumental)*

III. From the Librario Selectarum Cantionum

Ludwig Senfl (c. 1486–1542/3)
   *Beati omnes*
INTERMISSION

IV. FROM THE *LIBER SELECTARUM CANTIONUM*

Jacob Obrecht (1457/8–1505)
   *Salve crux*
   MNJM AS DM PG

V. FROM THE SONGBOOKS OF MARGUERITE OF AUSTRIA

Loyset Compère (c. 1455–1518)
   *O devotz cueurs / O vos omnes (instrumental)*
   MC SM MR

Jean Mouton (before 1459–1522)
   *Dulces exuvie*
   PD JM AS PG

Josquin
   *Dulces exuvie*
   SW OM MS DM

VI. FROM THE *LIBER SELECTARUM CANTIONUM*

Isaac
   *Virgo prudentissima*

Pre-concert talk by Keth Polk
(Professor Emeritus, University of New Hampshire) sponsored in part by
The Cambridge Society for Early Music.

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Blue Heron
Jennifer Ashe
Pamela Dellal
Martin Near
Shari Wilson
Owen McIntosh
Jason McStoots
Aaron Sheehan
Mark Sprinkle
David McFerrin
Dashon Burton
Paul Guttry
Michael Collver, *cornetto*
Mack Ramsey, *trombone*
Scott Metcalfe, *director, vielle*
Music for Three Sovereigns
Maximilian I, Marguerite of Austria, and Dido, Queen of Carthage

Three sovereigns, four sources
This program celebrates the musical legacy of two outstanding patrons from a dynasty of patrons, the Habsburg Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519) and his daughter, Marguerite of Austria (1480–1530), as it is transmitted by four documents of the early sixteenth century. The first is the Liber selectarum cantionum, a print of 1520 that preserves the most highly esteemed sacred repertory of Maximilian’s imperial chapel. The second and third are manuscripts that were prepared in the scriptorium of Petrus Alamire at the court of Marguerite in the Netherlands. One of these, a song-book containing mostly secular music, was copied for Marguerite between c. 1508 and 1516 (Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS 228); among the contents are two settings of Dido’s last words, beginning “Dulces exuvie,” from the fourth book of the Aeneid by Virgil. The other contains mostly motets, but it also contains a sequence of five settings of Dulces exuvie; this manuscript was copied sometime between 1513 and 1525 and sent to Henry VIII of England and his wife of the moment, Catherine of Aragon (London, British Library, MS Royal 8 G. vii). The fourth source is a manuscript copied in Savoy that accompanied Marguerite to the Netherlands; like her other songbook, it now resides in Brussels (Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, MS 11239).

Through his marriage to Mary, the only child of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, Maximilian captured the brilliant political and cultural inheritance of the Burgundian court for the central European Habsburgs. (His grandson, the future Charles V, would extend the family’s reach all the way to the Iberian peninsula, joining his Austrian grandfather’s dominions to those of his maternal grandparents, Ferdinand and Isabella of Aragon and Castile.) The Burgundian heritage, in turn, transformed Maximilian and the Habsburgs. While MSS 228 and 11239 paint an intimate portrait of the musical tastes of a child of Burgundy on her native ground, the Liber selectarum cantionum bears witness to the hegemony of Franco-Flemish music and musicians across the continent in the first decades of the 1500s, and the presentation manuscript sent to Henry VIII, MS Royal 8 G. vii, shows the Habsburg-Burgundians using music composed and copied under their auspices as a diplomatic tool.

Habsburgs and Burgundians
The title King of the Romans, despite its name, was conferred by election upon the sovereign among German nobles; if the Holy Roman Emperor was alive when the king was elected, that king would become emperor upon the emperor’s death, the coronation traditionally being confirmed by papal anointment. The Habsburg family ascended to the throne of King of the Romans in 1273 and occupied it, with few interruptions, for centuries, but in the mid-fifteenth century the Habsburg emperor Friedrich III was fighting the efforts of the Burgundian dukes to extend their sovereignty into central Europe by having themselves crowned King. Matters came to a head at Neuss in 1475, when Friedrich’s troops clashed with the Burgundian army led by duke Charles the Bold. The battle ended without a victory for either side, but the ensuing negotiations, rather than making Charles King of the Romans as he had hoped, instead saw his only child Mary betrothed to Friedrich’s 16-year-old son, Maximilian. Scarcely two years later, in January of 1477, Charles was killed on the battlefield at Nancy, fighting the combined forces of the Swiss and Rene II, duke of Lorraine, who had the financial backing of Louis XI of France—and undoubtedly the support of Friedrich as well. The aspirations of the Burgundians perished with Charles. Mary and Maximilian were married at Ghent the following August, and the Burgundian inheritance passed into the Habsburg line.

Arriving at the glittering court of Burgundy at age eighteen, Maximilian embraced wholeheartedly its
life of cultural sophistication. Later, founding his own court chapel, he would look to the Burgundian chapel, whose members included Antoine Busnoys and Pierre de la Rue, for an example. Maximilian’s marriage to Mary was exceptionally happy, and for the next few years he lived content in Bruges, despite the political turmoil seething around him after the collapse of Burgundian power and the arrival of the foreign Habsburgs. A son, Philip the Fair, was born in 1478, and Marguerite in 1480. These rosy days were fated to end all too soon, however, for Mary died in 1482 after a hunting accident, and Maximilian embarked on a life of itinerancy, wandering back and forth across his loosely-amalgamated lands and across the Alps into Italy.

Marguerite, from infancy a pawn in the dynastic games of the European nobility, was betrothed at age two to the dauphin of France and sent off to be raised at the French court. The engagement was broken off in 1491 after Maximilian violated the terms of the original agreement. In 1497 Marguerite was married to Juan, son of Ferdinand and Isabella (her brother, Philip the Fair, had married their daughter, Juana, the year before), but Juan died suddenly within mere months of the wedding. In 1501 she married Philibert II, duke of Savoy; he too died unexpectedly young, in 1504. Marguerite ruled as duchess of Savoy for a few more years, but after her brother Philip died in Spain in 1506, leaving the Burgundian polity in disarray once again, the Estates of the Netherlands offered their regency to Maximilian, who in turn assigned it to Marguerite. She returned to the Low Countries and established her court in Malines (Mechelen), where she ruled as regent until her nephew Charles V came of age in 1515. In 1518 Charles appointed her governor of the Netherlands, where she remained until her death in 1530, a highly cultured, politically savvy, and famously melancholy lady who took as her motto “Fortune infortune fort une”: Fortune makes a woman very unhappy.

Liber selectarum cantionum

The Swiss composer Ludwig Senfl entered the Vienna Hofcapelle as a choirboy in 1496, may have studied with Isaac, and succeeded him as court composer in 1517. Three years after Isaac’s death and one year after Maximilian’s, Senfl oversaw the publication of the Liber selectarum cantionum (Book of Select Songs). A large and magnificent choirbook, the Liber contains “musical compositions...of that serious kind and in a style worthy in particular of the ears of ruling men, compositions which are called motets by the more customary name, edited by the most laborious and very expensive work by the famous cultivator of that very art itself, Ludwig Senfl, that well-known Swiss who made famous the music of the chapel of Emperor Maximilian after the departure of his illustrious teacher, Isaac, the German Orpheus” (from the preface, translated by Kenneth Roberts). There are twenty-four motets—eight each for four, five, and six voices—by Josquin, Isaac, Senfl, La Rue, Obrecht, Mouton, and one or more anonymous composers. Dedicated to the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, the collection is also clearly a tribute to Maximilian, who is named in several works within, and to the imperial chapel. Our program presents a small selection of these select songs: a motet by the most celebrated musician of the time, Josquin des Prez, two by Isaac, and one by Obrecht, and a psalm-setting by the volume’s editor, Senfl.

We open with Josquin’s Inviolata, integra et casta es, Maria, a work whose serene beauty rests on a structure provided by the plainchant melody in the tenor (the fourth voice to enter, here doubled by trombone), followed in canon a fifth above by the alto (here doubled by cornett). The canonic imitation draws closer in time as the work proceeds, the delay decreasing from three breves in the first part to two in the second and one in the third, lending a wonderful sense of propulsion to the motet. In the beginnings of the first and second parts the freely-composed voices anticipate the chant melody, thus lending camouflage
to the canonic entries. As so often with Josquin, the music conveys at every moment the emotions of the text; Marguerite’s court historiographer, the poet Jean Lemaire, wrote fittingly in a poem of 1511 of “de Josquin les verbes coulorez” (Josquin’s colored words). Particularly striking here is the ecstatic repetition of music for the three-fold exclamations of the final couplet, above the three-fold repetition of a bit of melody in the plainchant.

Senfl’s *Beati omnes* sets the complete text of Psalm 127, quoting the psalm-tone reciting formula in the first several bars of the tenor. The motet reveals Senfl to be a worthy heir to the Franco-Flemish tradition. A small masterpiece of formal control harnessed to expressive purpose, it moves easily between syllabic declamation and flowing melisma, deploys dissonance in a most finely-judged manner (caressing, for example, the words “Uxor tua,” your wife), and creates dramatic effects by means of harmonic motion (listen for the amazing series of harmonies related by a third that rises through “Et videas filios filiorum,” as if unfolding from generation to generation), all leading to fulfillment at the words “pacem super Israel.”

Obrecht’s *Salve crux* takes two plainchant cantus firmi referring to the cross and builds upon them an elaborate structure of polyphony. The work is a virtuosic example of the compositional *varietas* praised by contemporary theorists of art and music alike, in imitation of classical rhetorical precepts. Obrecht deploys now two, now three, now all five voices in ever-shifting combinations; the metric organization starts in triple, changes to duple for the *secunda pars*, and returns to triple; the rhythms of the melodies, jazzy and jittery at one moment, at the next become a plain sequence of equal note values. The main text of the motet refers to battles waged by the emperor Constantine against his pagan rival Maxentius in the year 312 and the emperor Heraclius against the shah of Iran, Chosroes or Khusraw II, in 628; the latter had overrun most of the Byzantine empire and even managed to capture the True Cross in Jerusalem.

The two works by Isaac, a composer highly esteemed in his own day but relatively little-heard in our own, evoke different moods. Where the six-voice *Virgo prudentissima* is monumental and unmistakabley imperial in effect, the profound and engaging *O Maria, mater Christi*, set in a rich E mode for four low voices, feels intimate and personal despite its considerable length. It is kin to Senfl’s *Beati omnes* in employing a wide diversity of textures, harmonies, mensurations, and varieties of melodic motion.

Although he was elected King of the Romans in 1486 and succeeded to the title of Holy Roman Emperor upon his father’s death in 1493, Maximilian never managed to get to Rome for a coronation at the hands of the Pope. In 1507 he convened a Reichstag in Constance to plan for the coronation, but Venetian troops prevented him from reaching the Holy City and he was instead crowned in Trent in 1508 by a papal legate. While the Reichstag in Constance proved fruitless as far as a papal coronation was concerned, it was there that Isaac composed *Virgo prudentissima*, a motet whose text and music, as David Rothenburg has written recently, “appropriate the liturgy and theology of the Assumption of the Virgin so that Maximilian’s ascent to the Imperial throne and coronation as Emperor might be aligned symbolically with the Virgin Mary’s Assumption into heaven and coronation therein as Queen.” The scaffolding for the motet is a plainchant cantus firmus, the antiphon to the Magnificat at the Feast of the Assumption. The chant melody is sung in long notes by the tenor, and the virtuosic duets which open the work derive their opening phrases from the chant melody. The florid counterpoint of the duets and trios contrasts dramatically with the majestic and slow-moving harmonies of the sections for full choir undergirded by cantus firmus. These portray the awesome grandeur of the Queen of Heaven, surrounded by the nine orders of angels:
archangels and angels, holy legions, fiery cherubim
and seraphim, streaming sparkling light. Maximilian
basks in her glory. The text, an elaborate gloss on
the antiphon written in classical hexameters, is most
likely by Georg Slatkonia, Maximilian's chapel master,
who gives himself a special plug in the secunda pars.

Dido's lament
Dido was born Elissa, a princess of Tyre in Phoenicia.
Fleeing the treachery of her brother, Pygmalion, who
had murdered her husband, Sychaeus, she sailed across
the Mediterranean and made land on the shores of
northern Africa in what is now Tunisia. Here she struck
a deal with the local sovereign that she might have
as much land as could be enclosed within the hide of a
bull. By cutting the hide into a long and narrow
strip she claimed enough territory to found the city of
Carthage—Qart Hadasht or “New City”—and became
its queen, changing her name to Dido or “wanderer.”

While the city was still under construction, Aeneas,
a Trojan (or Dardan) prince fleeing the sack of Troy
(or Ilium) with his followers, was wrecked on the coast,
bitten far off course by storms sent against him by
the wrathful Juno.

Juno’s hatred of the Trojans derived from the incident
known as the Judgement of Paris, when Paris, son of
King Priam of Troy, judged Venus fairer than Juno or
Minerva. As a reward Venus promised him Helen, the
most beautiful woman in the world. But Helen was
already married to Menelaus, king of Sparta, and her
elopement with Paris sparked off the long and bloody
Trojan War, which culminated in the destruction of
Troy. Juno, intent on finishing the job by drowning
Troy’s survivors, was opposed by Venus, who, besides
favoring Trojans in general on account of Paris’s favor
towards her, was Aeneas’s mother. Venus managed
to get the storm-weary Trojans to Carthage, whereup-on
she sent her other son, Cupid, to sink his fateful arrow
in Dido’s breast, causing the proud widow to fall
desperately in love with Aeneas. Dido and Aeneas
soon became lovers. Jupiter, however, intended that
Aeneas continue to Italy to found the Roman em-
pire. Peremptorily recalled to his divine mission by
Mercury, Aeneas abandoned Dido, whereupon the
queen built a funeral pyre heaped with gifts brought
by the Trojan prince, mounted it, set it alight, and
stabbed herself with his sword.

The two manuscripts prepared in the Habsburg-Bur-
gundian scriptorium, MS Royal 8 G.vii and Brussels
228, transmit six settings of Dido’s last words in the
Aeneid, beginning with “Dulces exuviae, dum fata
deusque sinebat.” All are anonymous but most can be
ascribed from other sources. MS Royal 8 G.vii
contains settings by Alexander Agricola, Josquin,
Jean Mouton, Johannes Ghiselin, and an unidentified
composer, perhaps Pierre de la Rue; Brussels 228 has
two, that by Agricola and another by Marbriano de
Orto. Each manuscript also includes one setting of
an earlier passage beginning with the words “Fama
malum”—by Josquin in MS Royal 8 G.vii, by an un-
identified composer in Brussels 228. Our program
offers a selection from this group of eight pieces. We
don’t know what inspired the creation of these works
on Virgilian texts, but they clearly belong to some sort
of set and it may be that all of them were composed
at or around the Habsburg-Burgundian court in 1505,
for Orto arrived there early that year and the entire
court and chapel left for Spain on January 4, 1506. This
would date their composition before Marguerite’s ar-
ival in the Netherlands from Savoy, in July 1507, but
the two songbooks that are the main source of the
Aeneid settings were copied during her tenure, and
we might speculate that Marguerite identified herself
with Dido: noble, crafty, strong-willed, battered by
fate, destroyed in the end by the machinations of the
gods and her own overwhelmingly passionate nature.

Not unusually for chansons from around 1500, many
of the Dido songs are characterized by a rather ob-
scure connection between language and melody,
although the music is generally very expressive of
Dido’s nobility and grief. Ghiselin’s setting has a great
dignity about it and it also adheres most clearly to the structure of the poetry, coming to rest at the end of each line; Agricola’s is filled with restless energy and melisma; Mouton’s emerges from a motionless beginning, becomes more and more animated as Dido asks for death to release her and states that her life has run its course, and then subsides once again. All the Dulces exuviae settings in the 1505 group seem to comment upon one other, sharing fragments of melody and certain harmonic gestures, but those attributed to Josquin and Mouton are more directly related: their cantus parts are identical throughout, aside from an extra final note in the Josquin. As to who borrowed whose cantus, the sources are silent, but David Fallows, the eminent scholar of fifteenth-century song and author of the recent monograph Josquin, believes that Mouton’s setting came first.

Fama malum describes Rumor, “of all evils the swiftest,” carrying abroad the scandal of Dido’s dalliance with Aeneas, and Josquin’s work is as much a marvel of precise dramatic characterization as Virgil’s. It begins with a worrying, obsessive ostinato figure on the words “Fama, malum” which returns at twice the speed for the word “velocius” (swifter). The top parts sing a duo on the words “parva metu primo” (small at first through fear), interrupted by a duo in the lower parts at “mox sese attolit in auras” (soon she mounts up to heaven); the next entry of the superius creates a jarring false relation with the tenor (in our reading of the chromatic inflection called for at the tenor’s cadence). The effect of the whole work is threatening and unsettling, foreshadowing the tragic events to follow.

Rising at dawn, Dido sees Aeneas’s fleet putting out to sea and knows that she has been betrayed. She races to a pyre heaped up with everything Aeneas has left behind and prepares to kill herself with his sword. “Dido, trembling and frenzied with her awful purpose, rolling her bloodshot eyes, her quivering cheeks flecked with burning spots, and pale at the coming of death, bursts into the inner courts of the house, mounts in madness the high pyre and unsheathes the Dardan sword, a gift besought for no such end!” (translation by H. R. Fairclough). Beholding her lover’s garments and the bed they shared, she sinks down in tears to speak her last words, words as proud and dignified as they are grief-stricken: “I have lived, and have fulfilled the course that Fortune gave me, and now my mighty shade shall pass beneath the earth.” In the following lines, Dido lists her accomplishments: avenging her husband, punishing her treacherous brother, and founding a city, that powerful symbol and locus of Renaissance civilization.

Urbem praecaram statui, mea moenia vidi, ulta virum poenas inimico a fratre recepi: felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum nunquam Dardaniae tetigisset nostra carinae.

A noble city have I built; I have seen my own walls; avenging my husband, I have punished my brother and foe: happy, ah! too happy, had but the Dardan keels never touched our shores!

To the vocal works we add instrumental performances of two more pieces from Marguerite’s chansonniers, Compère’s O devotz cueurs / O vos omnes from Brussels 228 and Josquin’s Que vous madame / In pace from Brussels 11239. Both pieces are motet-chansons which combine French poetry with a sacred Latin cantus firmus, a genre well represented in Marguerite’s collections, perhaps because it appealed to her serious nature.

**Performance practices**

Maximilian, although constantly on the move and frequently at war, did not lack a substantial and varied musical establishment. As was the custom of the peripatetic nobles of Europe, he simply brought it along with him. His musical entourage included trumpeters and drummers, fifers and pipers, lutenists and fiddle players, and an organist. On the road his vocal forces
comprised a choir of eight for liturgical services, a chamber ensemble of three or four singers, including women, and a special solo singer. Passing through Italy in 1492, Maximilian engaged the Flemish composer Heinrich Isaac. Isaac became court composer in 1497 and was associated with the imperial court until his death, although he preferred to live primarily in Italy. In 1498 Maximilian refounded the imperial chapel in Vienna under the direction of Jorg Slakany or Georg Slatkonia, a humanist, poet, composer, and eventually Bishop of Vienna. Slatkonia’s choir, along with Maximilian’s entire court—knights, officers, soldiers, fencers, jesters, fools, jousters, hunters, and many musicians—is memorialized in an epic sequence of 137 woodcuts depicting an enormous triumphal procession, *The Triumph of Maximilian I*. Maximilian himself
specified the layout of the *Triumph* and composed the verses which were to be engraved on the plaques carried in the procession.

The illustration of the *Canterey* pictures the imperial choir borne on a low cart which is decorated with the figures of Apollo and the nine Muses. Clustered behind a large lectern and reading from the choirbook set upon it are sixteen singers—nine boys and seven men—as well as a cornettist and a trombonist. Slatkonia is seated on a throne at the rear, his bishop’s mitre resting nearby. The verse for the adjacent woodcut of the bison which draw the cart has Slatkonia describing how he, with the emperor’s encouragement, trained and improved the choir. The plaque born on the cart itself was to read:

> Posaun vnd Zinkhen han wir gestelt zu dem Gesang, wie dann gefelt der Kaiserlichen Mayestat dardurch sich oft erlustigt hat aufs fröhlichst mit rechtem grundt wie wir desselben hetten kundt.

*Trombone[s] and cornets have we placed with the singers, as it pleased his Imperial Majesty, who has often enjoyed this with great pleasure, and rightly so, as we have had cause to know.*

Propaganda designed to perpetuate the emperor’s glorious memory, the *Triumph* without a doubt presents an idealized vision of his court. Nevertheless, the illustration of the *Canterey* points to several aspects of choral performance practice around 1500 which are confirmed by documentary evidence. First is the size of the choir, in the *Triumph* sixteen singers, somewhat exaggerating the number Maximilian normally employed, which in the years from the late 1480s onwards seem to have fluctuated between eight and twelve or more, perhaps reflecting the state of the emperor’s purse. (Today our choir for the sacred works includes from five to eleven singers, depending on the number of parts in a piece and whether we sing one or two to a part; the secular music is sung one to a part, as was the norm.) Second is the use of boys together with men. (Unconstrained by ecclesiastical strictures on the sex of those singing in church, we are happy to have women on the top parts, joined by one adult male falsettist, for whom a boy was an alternative.) Third and perhaps most interesting is the placement of a cornettist and a trombonist among the singers. Maximilian names the players in his text: “Stewdl shall be the master of the trombones, Augustin of the cornettišt.”

A generation and more ago it was not unusual to hear Renaissance polyphony performed by colorfully heterogeneous ensembles that combined voices and instruments in ways that now seem historically implausible. In subsequent years instrumental participation in vocal music came to be regarded with considerable suspicion, even distaste. Crumhorns and shawms and their kin were banished from sacred repertoire and we grew accustomed to strictly *a cappella* renditions of every sort of polyphonic music. Recently, however, the pendulum has begun to swing back towards a more nuanced view, with considerably enhanced geographical and temporal focus. In the case of Burgundian and Austrian choirs there is, in fact, a great deal of evidence for the combination of instruments with voices in liturgical settings. Between about 1480 and 1520 such instrumental participation usually took the form of a single player or two within the vocal ensemble. For example, at a Mass in Toledo in 1502, described in the chronicle of Antoine de Lalaing, “The singers of the King [Ferdinand] sang one part of the Mass, the singers of monseigneur [Philip the Fair] the other part; master Augustin played the cornet with the singers of monseigneur, which was good to hear with the singers.” This Augustin is the same player featured in the *Triumph*, Augūstin Schubinger, a virtuoso from an Augsburg family of wind players who spent a large part of his career in service to Habsburg-Burgundian courts. His performances with
the singers of Philip and Maximilian are documented at masses in the Netherlands, France, and Spain, as well as in German lands.

We don’t know, however, what these wind players—Augustin Schubinger, his colleague Hans Stewdl (or Stewdlin), or any other players under their direction—actually did as part of a vocal ensemble. The most obvious choice, and the one we have adopted, is to have the winds substitute for or double a vocal line, though such a solution moots the question of how simple doubling could have been so impressive that Maximilian in the Triumph or a chronicler would name the choir’s wind players rather than any of the singers or composers. Perhaps master Augustin was showing off his chops with virtuoso diminutions, weaving ornamentation into the polyphonic texture, but experimentation tends to reveal that finely-wrought vocal polyphony in four to six equal parts is more disturbed than enhanced by added noodling, even more so in the lower parts that Stewdlin must have played. Schubinger and Stewdlin may simply have stood out from the singers on account of the hardware they carried; perhaps the fame they had won by other sorts of performance meant that their presence in any venue was sure to be noticed by the court chroniclers, who are acutely sensitive to the nuances of social standing and reputation; or just possibly they astounded by the beauty of their tone and their ability to convey the nuances of the text, speaking through their instruments.

—Scott Metcalfe

For more on these topics, see the following sources:


Fallows, David. Josquin (Brepols, 2009), especially pp. 300–2.


Picker, Martin. The chanson albums of Marguerite of Austria (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1965).

__. “Liber selectarum cantionum…: a neglected monument of Renaissance music and music printing,” in Quellenstudien zur Musik der Renaissance 3 (Wiesbaden, 1998).


Polk, Keith. German instrumental music of the late middle ages (Cambridge, 1992). See also many articles by the same author cited within.


A reproduction of the complete Triumph, with English translations of Maximilian’s captions, may be found in a Dover book edited by Stanley Appelbaum.

Special thanks to the Houghton Library at Harvard University, where I was able to consult an original copy of the Liber selectarum cantionum, and also to Harvard’s Loeb Music Library and Isham Memorial Library, where may be found microfilms and facsimile reproductions of the Liber, MS 228, and MS Royal 8 G.vii.
Inviolata, integra et castra es, Maria

Sequence

Inviolata, integra et castra es, Maria,
quaes est effeclta fulgida caeli porta.
O mater alma Christi carissima,
susciepia pia laudum praeconia.

Hodie ut pura pectora sint et corpora,
quaes profutant devota corda et ora.
Tua per precata dulcisona
nobilis concedas veniam per secula.

O benigna! O regina! O Maria!
quaes sola inviolata permansiisti.

Paraliturgical Marian text

O Maria, mater Christi, virgo pia,
maestorum consolatrix, pauperum adjutrix,
perditorum restauratrix, lapsorumque pia relevatrix,
lamentium curatrix, nostrae salutis adamatrx.

Ave Domina, deitatis cellulna,
inter omnes virgines castrissima,
te petimus nostra dele facinora,
quaes es caelis altior, terris latior,
stellis purior, abyssus profundior,
O Maria, cunctis sanctis es sanctior.

O jucunda, tu es Aaron virgula fructifera
quaes fructum vitae, Christum, nobis protulit,
omnes virtutes omnium lapidum in se continens
atque cunctarum herbarum vim retinens.

Ave sanctissima, dele peccamina, reprime noxia,
sensus nostros visita et flagita,
ut gaudia possideamus caelica post carnis exsilium,
O Maria.

O Mary, mother of Christ, holy virgin,
consoler of the sorrowful, helper of the poor,
restorer of the lost, pious relief of the fallen,
cure of the infirm, great lover of our salvation:

Hail, Lady, shelter of deity,
most chaste of all virgins:
we beg you to remove our crimes,
you who are higher than heaven, broader than the earth,
purer than the stars, deeper than the abyss,
O Mary, holier than all the saints.

O happy one, you are Aaron’s fruit-bearing rod,
which for us brought forth the fruit of life, Christ,
containing in it all the virtues of all precious stones
and bearing the power of all herbs.

Hail, most holy one, remove sins, curb offenses,
visit and exhort our senses,
that we may possess heavenly joys after fleshly exile,
O Mary.
**Fama, malum qua non aliud velocius ullum:**
mobilitate viget virisque adquirit eundo,
parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras
ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.

*Aeneid IV: 174-7*

**Dulces exuviae**, dum fata deusque sinebat,
accipite hanc animam meque his exolvite curis.
Vixi et quem dederat cursum fortuna peregri
et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.

*Aeneid IV: 651-8*

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**Beati omnes**

*Psalm 127 (128)*

Beati omnes qui timent Dominum, qui ambulabant
in viis ejus.
Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis: beatus
es, et bene tibi erit.
Uxor tua sicut vitis abundans, in lateribus domus
tuae: filii tui sicut novellae olivarum, in circuitu
mensae tuae.
Ecce sic benedicetur homo qui timet Dominum.
Benedicat tibi Dominus ex Sion: et videas bona
Jerusalem omnibus diebus vitae tuae.
Et videas filios filiorum tuorum, pacem super Israel.

**Blessed are all those who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways.**
For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands: blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee.
Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like young olive trees round about thy table.
Behold, thus shall be blessed the man who feareth the Lord. The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.
And thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.
Salve crux
Various texts for the feast of the
Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Salve crux, arbor / vitae praeclarae / vexillum Christi / thronus et ara.
O crux, profanis / terror et ruina / tu christianiis / virtus et divina / salus et victoria.
Tu properantis / contra Maxentium / tu proeliantis / iuxta Danubium / Constantini gloria.
Favens Heraclio / perdis cum filio / Chosroes profanum. / In hoc salutari / ligno gloriari / decet christianum.
Crucis longum, latum / sublime, profundum / sanctis propalatum / quadrum salvat mundum / sub quadri figura.
Medicina vera / Christus in statera / crucis est distractus / pretiumque factus / solvit mortis iura.
Crux est nostrae / libra iustitiae / sceptrum regis / virga potentiae.
Crux coelestis / signum victoriae / belli robur / et palma gloriae.
Tu scala, tu ratis / tu crux desperatis / tabula suprema / tu de membris Christi / decorem traxisti / regum diadema.

O crux, lignum triumphale / mundi vera salus, vale. / Inter ligna nullum tale / fronde, flore, germine.

Per lignum crucis de inimicis nostris libera nos, Deus noster.

Hail, Cross, most glorious tree of life, Christ’s banner, throne, and altar.
O Cross, to the heathen a terror and ruin, to Christians you are divine virtue, salvation, and victory.
You are the glory of Constantine, hastening against Maxentius and doing battle beside the Danube.
Helping Heraclius, you destroy the heathen Chosroes with his son. It beseems a Christian to glory in this tree of salvation.
The length, breadth, height, and depth of the cross, revealed to the saints in the form of a square, saves the four corners of the earth.
Christ, the true remedy, was torn apart on the weigh-beam of the cross and, having become the price [of salvation], redeemed the rights of death.
The Cross is the balance of our justice, the King’s sceptre, the rod of power.
Heavenly Cross, sign of victory, strength in war and palm of glory.
You ladder, you raft, you last plank for those in despair, from Christ’s limbs you have taken the beauteous crown of kings.

O Cross, tree of triumph, true salvation of the world, hail.
Among trees is none such in leaf, flower, and germ.

By the wood of the Cross deliver us from our enemies, O you our God.

(adapted from translation by Leofranc Holford-Stevens)
Virgo prudentissima, quae pia gaudia mundo
Attulit, ut sphaeras omnes transcedit et astra
Sub nitidis pedibus radiis et luce chorisca
Liquit et ordinibus iam circumsepta novenis
Ter tribus atque ierarchiis excepta suprmi
Ante dei faciem steterat, patrona reorum:
Dicite, qui colitis splendentia culmina Olimpi—
Spirituum proceres, archangeli et angeli et alme
Virtutesque, throni vos principum et agmina sancta,
Vosque potestates et tu dominatio caeli,
Flammantes cherubin verbo seraphinque creati—
An vos leticie tantus perfuderit nunquam
Sensus, ut eterni matrem vidisse tonantis
Consessum, coelo terraque marique potentem
Reginam, cuius numen modo spiritus omnis
Et genus humanum merito veneratur adorat.

Vos, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael testamur ad aures
Illius, ut castas fundetis vota precesque
Pro sacro Imperio, pro Caesare Maximiliano.
Det Virgo omnipotens hostes superare malignos,
Restituat populis pacem terrisque salutem.
Hoc tibi devota carmen Georgius arte
Ordinat Augusti Cantor Recto<erque capelle,
Austriacae praesul regionis sedulus omni
Se in tua commendat studio pia gaudia, mater.
Praeipum tamen est illi quo assumpta fuiisti,
Quo tu pulchra ut luna micas, elec<ta es et ut sol.

[cantus firmus]
Virgo prudentissima, quo progrederis quasi aurora
valde rutilans?
Filia Sion, tota formosa et suavis es,
pulchra ut luna, elec<ta ut sol.

When the virgin most wise, who brought holy joys to the world, transcended all the spheres, dissolved the stars beneath her feet with sparkling light, and, surrounded by the nine Orders and received by the thrice-three Hierarchies, stood before the face of the supreme God as patroness of suppliants:
Say, you who inhabit the dazzling heights of Olympus—noble Spirits, Archangels and Angels and gracious Virtues, you Thrones of princes and holy Armies, you Powers and you Heavenly Sovereignty, fiery Cherubim and Seraphim created from the Word—whether such a sense of joy ever overwhelmed you as when you beheld the resounding assembly of the mother of the eternal almighty: the Queen, powerful in Heaven, on land and at sea, whose divine majesty is now rightly venerated and adored by every spirit and human being.

You, Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, we call upon to pour upon her ears chaste vows and prayers for the holy Empire, for the Emperor Maximilian. May the omnipotent Virgin grant that he conquer his wicked enemies; may he restore peace to the people and safety to the lands. With devoted skill Georgius, singer and master of the Emperor’s chapel, directs this hymn to you: Bishop of the Austrian region, diligent in all things, he earnestly commends himself to your tender joys, Mother. The highest place, however, belongs to Him by whom you were borne upwards, to whom you shine fair as the moon and are as bright as the sun.

Virgin most wise, whither do you go, shining brightly like the rosy dawn?
Daughter of Sion, you are all beautiful and sweet, fair as the moon, bright as the sun.
The vocal ensemble Blue Heron has been acclaimed by The Boston Globe as “one of the Boston music community’s indispensables” and hailed by Alex Ross in The New Yorker for the “expressive intensity” of its interpretations; the Boston Musical Intelligencer calls Blue Heron “a fantastic model for the fully-realized potential of early music performance in the 21st century.” Combining a commitment to vivid live performance with the study of original source materials and historical performance practices, Blue Heron ranges over a wide and fascinating repertoire, including fifteenth-century English and Franco-Flemish polyphony, from Dunstable and Du Fay through Ockeghem to the generation of Josquin; Spanish music between 1500 and 1600; and neglected early sixteenth-century English music, especially the rich repertory of the Peterhouse partbooks, copied c. 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral. The ensemble has also reached outside these areas to perform very early music (organum by the twelfth-century French composer Perotin) and very recent music (new works by the Australian composer Elliott Gyger).

Blue Heron’s first CD, featuring music by Guillaume Du Fay, was released in 2007; its second, of music from the Peterhouse partbooks by Hugh Aston, Robert Jones, and John Mason, followed in 2010. Both discs have received international critical acclaim and the Peterhouse CD made the Billboard charts. The second volume of Blue Heron’s 5-CD series Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, featuring music of Nicholas Ludford and Richard Pygott, has just been released.

Founded in 1999, Blue Heron presents subscription series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in New York City. The ensemble has appeared at the Boston Early Music Festival; in New York City at The Cloisters, the 92nd Street Y, and Music Before 1800; at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., and Monadnock Music in New Hampshire; in Pittsburgh for the Renaissance and Baroque Society; and with the wind band Piffaro and the viol consort Parthenia in Philadelphia. Blue Heron made its West Coast debut at Festival Mozaic in San Luis Obispo, California, and will return to California this June for a debut at the Berkeley Early Music Festival.

Jennifer Ashe, soprano, has been hailed by the Boston Phoenix for her “rock solid technique” and “the kind of vocal velvet you don’t often hear in contemporary music.” Ashe is a familiar face in the Boston new music scene, frequently performing on series such as Harvard Group for New Music, New Music Brandeis, and the Fromm Festival at Harvard. She is a senior member of the Callithumpian Consort led by Steven Drury, and the soprano for the Boston Microtonal Society’s chamber ensemble NotaRiotous. She is also a founding member of the flute and soprano duo Prana, with Alicia DiDonato. Formerly on the faculty at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA, she is currently an Assistant Professor at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Baritone Dashon Burton, a native of Bronx, NY, has been praised in The New York Times for his “nobility and rich tone.” He began studies at Case Western Reserve University and graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. Upon graduation, he was invited to join Cantus, a professional men’s classical vocal ensemble based in Minneapolis. After finishing his tenure with Cantus in 2009, Dashon completed an MM at Yale University’s Institute of Sacred Music. His solo repertoire includes such diverse works as Monteverdi’s Vespers of 1610, Jesus in Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, Mendelssohn’s Elijah, and Ned Rorem’s song cycle War Scenes. He is also a co-founding member of Roomful of Teeth, an ensemble devoted to new compositions using the fullest possible range of vocal techniques.

Upon finishing his degree at San Diego State University in 1975, Michael Collver continued his musical education in Switzerland at the Schola Cantorum
Basiliensis, specializing in early vocal techniques and cornetto. His collaboration with the Schola has continued since then with residencies involving special projects, recordings, books, and research publications. Mr. Collver is a founding member of Project Ars Nova (P.A.N.), with which he has concertized. His performances have also included solo work with Ensemble Sequentia of Cologne, the Empire Brass Quintet, Tafelmusik, Boston Baroque and the Boston Camerata. Many of these concerts have been augmented by recordings with Telarc International, Erato, Deutsche EMI and Harmonia Mundi. As an oratorio soloist he has performed with orchestras ranging from Ashton Magna to the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Pamela Dellal, mezzo-soprano, is an acclaimed soloist and recitalist whose singing has been praised for her “exquisite vocal color,” “musical sensitivity,” and “eloquent phrasing.” She has been featured in leading roles in operas of Purcell, Mozart, Britten, and others. With Sequentia, Ms. Dellal has recorded the music of Hildegard von Bingen and toured the US, Europe, and Australia. Passionate about chamber music, early music, and contemporary music, she performs frequently with Dinosaur Annex, Boston Musica Viva, Ensemble Chaconne, Blue Heron, and the Musicians of the Old Post Road. She has been a regular soloist in the Emmanuel Music Bach Cantata series for twenty-five years and has performed almost all 200 of Bach’s extant sacred cantatas. Recent appearances include the premiere of a new John Harbison work, The Seven Ages, at Merkin Concert Hall in New York City, followed by performances in San Francisco, Boston and London.

Bass-baritone Paul Guttry enjoys the variety of opera, oratorio, and a specialization in early music. A former member of Chanticleer, Paul has performed throughout the USA and internationally with Sequentia, the Boston Camerata, and New York’s Ensemble for Early Music. He has appeared in concert and opera with the Seattle Early Music Guild, St. Paul’s Ex Machina, the Plymouth Music Series in Minneapolis, the Austin-based choir Conspirare, and the Santa Fe Pro Musica. In Boston he has appeared as soloist with Emmanuel Music, the Handel & Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, the Tanglewood Music Center, Cantata Singers, Boston Cecilia, Prism Opera, Intermezzo, Boston Revels, and Collage. In addition to Blue Heron’s discs, Paul can be heard on recordings of medieval music by Sequentia, Kurt Weill’s Johnny Johnson and French airs de cour with the Boston Camerata, and music of Bach by Emmanuel Music. Praised by The New York Times for his “appealingly textured sound,” baritone David McFerrin is building a critically acclaimed career across a variety of genres. Recently he debuted with Boston Lyric Opera in Handel’s Agrippina, with Opera Boston in Berlioz’ Beatrice et Benedicte, and with Seattle Opera in the world premiere production of Daron Hagen’s Amelia. Other operatic roles have included Guglielmo in Cosi fan tutte, Aeneas in Dido and Aeneas and Taddeo in L’Italiana in Algeri. On the concert stage, Mr. McFerrin has performed Monteverdi’s Vespers at St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice, with Maestro Gustavo Dudamel and the Israel Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall, and with the Boston Pops. He has also sung with the Green Mountain Project and at the Blossom, Marlboro, and Caramoor Festivals, and has completed a residency with the French ensemble Les Arts Florissants. A resident of Boston, he has been a soloist with various local choral ensembles, sings with the Handel & Haydn Society, and serves as bass section leader for the choirs at Trinity Church.

Tenor Owen McIntosh is the recipient of a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and is quickly gaining a reputation at home and abroad. His most recent performances include the Evangelista in St. Luke and St. John Passions by Telemann, the role of Coprimario in Opera Boston’s production of The Nose, and a Jordan Hall performance of Benjamin Britten’s Serenade for tenor and horn. He
was featured as a soloist in the 2009 Festival Ensemble Stuttgart and sang solo roles in the NEC production of *L’Egisto*, the Kurt Weill Festival’s *Hin und Zurück* in Dessau, Germany, and *Così fan tutte* and *Gianni Schicchi* with the North Star Opera Repertory Theater. Mr. McIntosh performs with various Boston-based ensembles including Exsultemus, Boston Baroque, Blue Heron, Juventas New Music, Boston Secession, and Opera Boston. He recently sang the role of David in Helios Early Opera’s production of Charpentier’s *David et Jonathas*.

Tenor **Jason McStoots** has performed around the world and throughout the US in opera, oratorio, and recital. He has been described by critics as “a natural, a believable actor and a first-rate singer,” “light and bluff, but neither lightweight nor bland, and with exemplary enunciation,” and as having “a silken tenor voice” and “sweet, appealing tone.” Recent appearances include a Japanese tour of Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* and his European debut in the *Christmas Oratorio* with the Bach Ensemble in Belgium, both under the direction of Joshua Rifkin; Monteverdi’s *Return of Ulysses* and *1610 Vespers* in Seattle, directed by Stephen Stubbs; and Handel’s *Acis and Galatea* with the Boston Early Music Festival. McStoots has appeared with the Green Mountain Project, Boston Lyric Opera, Pacific MusicWorks, the Boston Camerata, the Handel Choir of Baltimore, the New Haven Symphony, Tragicomedia, and the Tanglewood Music Center. He can be heard on recordings with Blue Heron on the Blue Heron label and, for the CPO label, on the Grammy-nominated recording of Lully’s *Psyché* and a newly-released disc of music by Marc-Antoine Charpentier and John Blow.

**Scott Metcalfe** has gained wide recognition as one of North America’s leading specialists in music from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries and beyond. Musical and artistic director of Blue Heron, he is also music director of New York City’s Green Mountain Project (Jolle Greenleaf, artistic director), whose performances of Monteverdi’s *Veñpers* have been hailed by *The New York Times* as “quite simply terrific” and by *The Boston Globe* as “stupendous.” Metcalfe has been a guest director of TENET (New York), Emmanuel Music (Boston), the Tudor Choir and Seattle Baroque, Pacific Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver, BC), Quire Cleveland, and the Dryden Ensemble (Princeton, NJ), and he conducted Early Music America’s Young Performers Festival Ensemble in its inaugural performance at the 2011 Boston Early Music Festival. Metcalfe also enjoys a career as a baroque violinst and currently plays with Cleveland’s Les Délices (dir. Debra Nagy), Montreal’s Arion, and other ensembles in Boston, Montreal, and elsewhere. When not playing or directing, he is at work on a new edition of the songs of Gilles Binchois and teaches choral repertoire and performance practice at Boston University.

Countertenor **Martin Near** began his professional singing life at age ten in the choir of men and boys at Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue in New York City, advancing to Head Chorister. Mr. Near enjoys a varied singing career, exploring his passions for early music—both as a soloist and in ensemble settings—and new music. In March 2011 he took the role of Hamor in Handel’s *Jephtha* with Boston Cecilia, and was noted for his “fine work” in Buxtehude’s *Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn* with Boston Baroque. In 2008, Mr. Near appeared as alto soloist with Boston Cecilia in Bach’s *Mass in B Minor*, and was praised as “winsome and lyrical” in the role of David in Handel’s *Saul* with the Harvard University Choir and Baroque Orchestra in 2009. He also relishes ensemble work as a renowned ensemble singer with Emmanuel Music, Boston Baroque, and Handel & Haydn Society, and as a producer for Cut Circle’s upcoming CD release, *Roman Warriors: L’homme armé Masses by Marbrianus de Orto and Josquin des Prez*. A founding member of the professional early music ensemble Exsultemus, Mr. Near has been Music Director since
2009. Upcoming engagements include appearing as countertenor soloist in Dominick DiOrio’s *Stabat Mater* with Juventas New Music Ensemble in November.

**Mack Ramsey** specializes in the performance of repertoires ranging from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Equally at home on a number of different wind instruments, he has been especially fascinated with the role of the municipal and court wind bands of the sixteenth century and the special skills and performance practices that help us interpret this music. Mack performs on bass sackbut with the seventeenth-century ensemble Dark Horse Consort, with the Green Mountain Project, and with other wind bands and orchestras such as The Toronto Consort, Tafelmusik, Piffaro, The Whole Noyse, Boston Baroque, and ARTEK.

Grammy-nominated tenor **Aaron Sheehan** has quickly established himself as one of the leading American tenors of his generation. His voice is heard regularly in the U.S. and Europe and he is equally comfortable in repertoire ranging from oratorio and chamber music to the opera stage. His singing has taken him to many festivals and venues, including Tanglewood, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Washington National Cathedral, the early music festivals of Boston, San Francisco, Houston, Tucson, Washington, D.C., and Madison. Known especially for his Baroque interpretations, Aaron has made a name as a first-rate singer of oratorios and cantatas. He has appeared in concert with Blue Heron, the Green Mountain Project, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, North Carolina Symphony, Charlotte Symphony, Boston Cecilia, Charleston Bach Festival, Baltimore Handel Choir, Pacific Chorale, Boston Early Music Festival, Tempesta di Mare, Aston Magna Festival, Washington National Cathedral, Bach Collegium San Diego, Tragicomedia, Folger Consort, and Les Voix Baroques. Tenor **Mark Sprinkle** has sung throughout the US and Europe, collaborating with the Boston Early Music Festival, the Boston Camerata, the Mark Morris Dance Group, Emmanuel Music, Concerto Palatino, Boston Baroque, the Cambridge Bach Ensemble, the Handel & Haydn Society, and Blue Heron. An active Bach Evangelist, he has sung the part with the Boulder Bach Festival, the Oriana Singers of Vermont, Seraphim Singers, the Andover Choral Society, Boston’s Chorus Pro Musica, and the Handel & Haydn Society, among others. He was a fellow of the Britten Pears Institute, Aldeburgh, UK. He teaches voice privately in Boston and in Maine.

**Shari Wilson** is among the new generation of singers specializing in early and modern music. The range of ensembles with which she has appeared testifies to her versatility and stylistic sensitivity: Blue Heron, Exsultemus, La Donna Musicale, Lorelei Ensemble, Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia, Piffaro, Schola Cantorum, Boston Secession, and the Festival of Two Worlds (Spoleto, Italy). Shari made her New York City solo debut in 2006 at Merkin Hall in a world premiere performance of Benjamin C.S. Boyle’s *Cantata: To One in Paradise*; recent performances have also included concerts in San Francisco with the American Bach Soloists under the direction of Jeffrey Thomas. Her work at the Festival of Two Worlds brought collaborations with artists including Gian Carlo Menotti, Richard Hickox, Carlos Saura, and Gunther Kramer. She sings with the acclaimed ensemble The Crossing, based in Philadelphia under the direction of Donald Nally, with whom she performed the regional premiere of David Lang’s *Little Match Girl Passion*, and she can be heard on the recent recording of Kile Smith’s *Vespers* with Piffaro and The Crossing. Of a recent Bach performance a Philadelphia critic wrote that she “sang with … tonal beauty, timbral clarity, lyrical phrasing and rhythmic vitality.”
Blue Heron is much more than an ensemble of musicians. Without the devotion, hard work and financial support of a community of board members, staff, volunteers, donors, and concertgoers, Blue Heron would not exist. Those of us fortunate enough to have music as our trade give most grateful thanks to all those who join us in this endeavor of creating, nurturing and sustaining an organization dedicated to making the music of the 15th and 16th centuries come alive in the 21st.

Thanks to our rehearsal hosts, The Church of the Good Shepherd in Watertown.

Evan Ingersoll (Angstrom Images) designs our programs and built our website, Erik Bertrand maintains the website, Chris Clark (Cave Dog Studio) designs our publicity materials and program covers, and Philip Davis records our concerts. All of them support us generously in ways that extend beyond their professional services. We are fortunate to have such expertise on our side.

Thanks to The Cambridge Society for Early Music for supporting the pre-concert talks.

Many thanks to all our volunteers for their help this evening and throughout the year.

We are honored and grateful to have so many generous donors. Blue Heron would not exist without you. Many thanks to you all!

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Blue Heron undertakes a 5-CD recording project of Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks

It is with great excitement that we announce the release this month of the second installment in our series of Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, featuring Nicholas Ludford’s radiant Missa Regnum mundi and the grandly-scaled Salve regina by Richard Pygott. See details on the next page.

Blue Heron will record three more CDs in the series over the next few years. The Peterhouse partbooks, copied in 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral, are the largest and most important extant source of pre-Reformation English sacred music, but the repertoire has gone unsung, unheard, and unregarded, largely on account of the disappearance, centuries ago, of one of the five partbooks and a portion of another. For providing a remedy to this situation we are indebted to the English musicologist Nick Sandon, retired from the University of Exeter, who has devoted the greatest part of his professional life to the Peterhouse music and by now has published brilliant and idiomatic reconstructions of nearly all of the incomplete music. Blue Heron has been involved with the Peterhouse repertoire since its founding in 1999 and is deeply steeped in the particularities of its richly melismatic style; the ensemble is thus ideally suited to act as an ambassador on behalf of this wonderful music and Doctor Sandon, its devoted restorer, who has joined Blue Heron as an advisor in this undertaking.

A set of five CDs will surely help restore the Peterhouse repertoire to the central position in music history and in concert life that it merits. This is an expensive and ambitious undertaking, and we thank those who have provided seed money in this early phase. Please consider providing a significant gift in support of our plans for a 5-CD Peterhouse set, which will help expose more and more of this important repertoire to the world. Please contact John Yannis (jy@blueheronchoir.org) to discuss plans for a special recording fund.

Blue Heron’s series of recordings of music from the Peterhouse Partbooks is made possible by our Peterhouse Partners, a leadership group of donors who pledge support for the complete 5-disc series, enabling Blue Heron to bring this extraordinary and neglected repertoire to a wider modern audience. We are deeply grateful for their vision, commitment, and generosity.

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To learn more about becoming a Peterhouse Partner, please contact Blue Heron at office@blueheronchoir.org.
Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks, volume 2
Nicholas Ludford Missa Regnum mundi
Richard Pygott Salve regina

Restored by Nick Sandon

The second installment in Blue Heron’s 5-CD series of Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks features Nicholas Ludford’s radiant Missa Regnum mundi, sung in a musical context like that of its probable original occasion, a festal mass for St Margaret, with plainchant items from the Proper according to the Use of Salisbury. The disc concludes with Richard Pygott’s extraordinary Salve regina, one of the longest votive antiphons extant and a marvel of rhetorical expression.

This is the world premiere recording of all the music on the disc.
Blue Heron’s second CD presents superb music by three English composers of the early 16th century: Hugh Aston, Robert Jones, and John Mason. Although their music is gorgeous and of superlative quality, Aston, Jones, and Mason are virtually unknown to performers and scholars today, for the primary extant source of the music—in the case of Robert Jones’s, the sole extant source—is now incomplete through the loss of one partbook and a portion of another, out of an original set of five. The set, known as the Peterhouse partbooks for its present location in the library of Peterhouse, Cambridge, was copied in 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral and is the largest and most important source of English music surviving from the period just before the Reformation; it contains over seventy works, fifty of which are unique to Peterhouse. Blue Heron’s recording uses brilliantly idiomatıc reconstructions by Nick Sandon, a British musicologist now living in France, who has devoted his career to the music of the Peterhouse partbooks.

This is the first disc in a projected series of recordings of music from the Peterhouse partbooks and includes world premiere recordings of three works and the first of another in the form recorded here.

“…my sense of Aston’s voice owes much to Blue Heron’s imaginative realization of his scores. Through an array of interpretative choices – fine gradations of dynamics; pungent diction; telling contrasts of ethereal and earthly timbres; tempos that are more lusty than languid; a way of propelling a phrase toward a goal – the music takes on narrative momentum, its moods dovetailing with the theme of the text. It is good to feel a hint of turbulence, of mortal fear, in performances such as Blue Heron’s …; with that quiver of passion, the music inspires even greater awe.”

Alex Ross | *The New Yorker*, January 10, 2011

“simply gorgeous….Each selection is a gem….a splendid addition to anyone’s collection.”

Karen Cook | *Early Music America*, Spring 2011

“… the American ensemble BLUE HERON [has] a fine sense of the idiom of this distinctive music, and their performances are rich, muscular and expressive … the singing and interpretations are impeccable.”

D. James Ross | *Early Music Review* (UK), June 2010

“It would be impossible to overstate the luscious beauty of this recording, and its deep musical and historical significance is beyond argument. The sound quality is warm, rich and inviting. ….I simply have to rate this disc as utterly essential in every way.”

Rick Anderson | *Music Media Monthly*, June 2010
Blue Heron's first CD, featuring music of Guillaume Du Fay, including three iso-rhythmic motets, two hymns, the Sanctus “Papale,” and a selection of chansons. Also available through our website, and through CD Baby: www.cdbaby.com.

Craig Zeichner | Early Music America, Fall 2007

“This debut marks Blue Heron as a leading new actor in the field of early Renaissance music, both for studying the sources and bringing them to life.... Altogether, this is one of the finest Dufay collections to come out in recent years...”
J. F. Weber | Fanfare, September/October 2007

The most attractive aspect of this recital is its feeling of immediacy and freshness.... For me, the high points are the Sanctus Papale, for which it is very welcome to have such a confident and poised rendition; and some of the later songs, for example Malheureux cuer, que veux tu faire, and the cheeky Puisque vous estez campieur ... More, please.
Fabrice Fitch | Goldberg, August/September 2007

ATTENTION EDUCATORS!

Are you a music teacher or professor? Blue Heron offers a wide variety of educational programs, for students ranging from elementary school to the post-graduate level, including master classes, ensemble coaching, lecture-demontrations, and workshops, as well as recital and concert programs. We are eager to build relationships with and among educators, and an appearance by Blue Heron at your institution may be more affordable than you think. If you are interested, please contact Gail Abbey at office@blueheronchoir.org.

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