



## Christmas in 15th-Century France & Burgundy

**Wellesley** Saturday, December 1, 2018

**Cambridge** Friday & Saturday, December 21-22, 2018

**Providence** Sunday, December 23, 2018

## Christmas in 15th-century France & Burgundy

<i>Advent</i>	<b>O clavis David</b> (O-antiphon for December 20) plainchant	
	<b>Factor orbis</b> Jacob Obrecht (1457/8-1505)	JA DT / JM MN / SR MS / MB ST / PG SH
	<b>O virgo virginum</b> (O-antiphon for December 24) plainchant	
	<b>O virgo virginum</b> Josquin Desprez (c. 1455-1521)	MN JM MS MB PG SH
	<b>Conditor alme siderum</b> (alternatim hymn for Advent) Guillaume Du Fay (c. 1397-1474)	MN SR MB
<i>Christmas</i>	<b>Ave Maria gratia dei plena</b> Antoine Brumel (c. 1460-c.1512)	DT PD JA
	<b>O admirabile commercium / Verbum caro factum est</b> Johannes Regis (c. 1425-1496)	PD MN JM ST SH
	<i>INTERMISSION</i>	
	<b>Letabundus</b> (Christmas sequence) Du Fay	DT JM MB / PD MS SR
	<b>Praeter rerum seriem</b> Adrian Willaert (c. 1490-1562)	MN JA MS JM SR ST SH
<i>New Year's Day</i>	<b>La plus belle et douce figure</b> Nicolas Grenon (c. 1380-1456)	DT CW SM
	<b>Dieu vous doinst bon jour et demy</b> Guillaume Malbecque (c. 1400-1465)	JA MS SR / LJ CW SM
	<b>Dame excellent ou sont bonté, scavoit</b> Baude Cordier (d. 1397/8?)	JM MS ST PG
	<b>De tous biens playne</b> (instrumental) Johannes Tinctoris (c. 1435-?1511)	LJ CW SM
	<b>Margarite, fleur de valeur</b> Gilles Binchois (c. 1400-1460)	DT SR MB
<i>Christmas</i>	<b>Ce jour de l'an voudray joie mener</b> Du Fay	PD JM MB / LJ CW SM
	<b>Gloria Spiritus et alme</b> Johannes Ciconia (c. 1370-1412)	JM MS PG SH
	<b>Nato canunt omnia</b> Brumel	PD DT / MN JM / SR MS / MB ST / PG SH
	<i>Pre-concert talk in Cambridge by Irit Kleiman (Boston University)</i>	



Jennifer Ashe  
Pamela Dellal  
Martin Near  
Daniela Tošić  
*cantus*

Michael Barrett  
Jason McStoots  
Stefan Reed  
Mark Sprinkle  
Sumner Thompson  
*tenor & contratenor*

Paul Guttry  
Steven Hrycelak  
*bassus*

Laura Jeppesen  
*rebec*

Charles Weaver  
*lute & voice*

Scott Metcalfe  
*harp, director*



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## CHRISTMAS AT THE COURTS OF 15TH-CENTURY FRANCE & BURGUNDY

### “IN DARKNESS AND IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH”

By mid-December, here in the northeastern corner of the United States, the days have been getting shorter for six months. Compared to northern Europe, of course, New England suffers a relatively mild case of sun deprivation. Boston lies at about 42 degrees north, roughly the latitude of Rome; Paris is nearly 600 miles further north. At the winter solstice Paris sees nearly an hour less daytime than our nine hours; the Low Countries, still further north, endure even shorter days. But for all of us living in the middle regions of the northern hemisphere, the fall brings more and more darkness, and by the time winter finally arrives we live more in darkness than in light.

Whatever the reasons early Christians settled on December 25 to celebrate the birth of Christ, observing the savior’s birthday just a few days after the solstice locates the feast at the cusp of the year, when the sun begins, imperceptibly at first, to climb again in the sky. The penitential, prophetic, and preparatory season of Advent falls during the darkest weeks of the year, and it is there that our program begins.

### ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

The plainchant antiphon *O clavis David* is one of a series of seven ancient “O antiphons” sung to the same melody, one for each of the seven days before Christmas Eve. The O antiphons, each beginning with the interjection “O,” address the Messiah to come with various acclamations: “Sapientia” (wisdom), “Adonai” (Lord), “radix Jesse” (root of Jesse), “clavis David” (key of David), “Oriens” (morning star), “Rex” (king), “Emanuel” (“God with us”). The initial letters of each word after O spell out the promise in a reverse acrostic, SARCORE, “ero cras”: “Tomorrow I shall be there.” An eighth antiphon for Christmas Eve, *O virgo virginum*, was often added to the original seven. In it, the daughters of Jerusalem demand of the virgin Mary that she explain the unique wonder of her conception of Jesus. She admonishes them that what they seek to know is a divine mystery.

Obrecht’s *Factor orbis* quotes both *O clavis David* and *O virgo virginum*, one at the end of each half of the motet, along with texts and some tunes from seventeen other liturgical items. The liturgical texts, mostly for Advent, are introduced by a plea to the Maker of the world to hear the cries of his servants “on this day that brings light.” The musicologist Jennifer Bloxam interprets

*Factor orbis* as a sermon in music, an exegesis of the scripture “Canite tuba in Sion” (“Sound the trumpet in Sion,” Joel 2:1), but to fully comprehend this sermon as it is preached musically is impossible, for at times five different texts are sung simultaneously. The motet’s continuously shifting textures bring now one, now another text to the foreground. The opening plea, sung in imitative duet by the highest voices, comes to a cadence as a third voice enters with “Veni Domini,” “Come, Lord,” whereupon the duetting voices, joined by the bass, break into the acclamation “Noe!” The entrance of the tenor on the cantus firmus “Canite tuba” is marked by a long hemiola in all parts. At the introduction of two non-Advent texts, “Deus qui sedes super thronos” (Epiphany) and “Media vita in morte sumus” (Lent), the texture changes from counterpoint to homophony; the effect is heart-stopping. The homophonic texture is in turn swept away by a return to counterpoint that moves twice as fast as anything beforehand, and this concludes the first part. This “double-time” music appears again to wind up the second part, now at a somewhat slower speed determined by the proportional relationship between the mensurations of the two sections, gathering all the voices together for the final cries of “Noe!”

Josquin’s *O virgo virginum* sets the O-antiphon in its entirety, quoting the complete plainchant melody in the top voice and alluding to it in the five others. Josquin deploys his six voices in antiphonal groups, for example setting the high trio against a low one. Equally characteristic is the hypnotic overlapping of short motives (as at “fiet istud” in the *prima pars* and “Filiae” at the beginning of the *secunda pars*). A disorienting metrical shift at “hoc quod cernitis” heightens the sense of mystery: here the mensural organization shifts proportionally from two beats per bar to three, but at the same time

an extended hemiola at the next higher level of organization divides every pair of bars into three, disrupting the listener’s sense of pulse.

#### EMULATION & HOMAGE

The composers on our concert represent several generations of musicians from northern France or modern-day Belgium. Du Fay was born near Brussels and trained as a choirboy in Cambrai; his contemporary Binchois was born in Mons, just north of the current border. Malbecque seems to be from Maalbeek, north of Brussels. Grenon hailed from Paris or nearby, Ciconia was a proud native of Liège, and Cordier proclaimed his birthplace to be Reims. Regis’s birthplace is unknown, but he spent most of his working life in Soignies, about 50 miles northeast of Cambrai. Tinctoris was born in the early 1430s near Nivelles. Josquin was born near Saint-Quentin in Picardy, Obrecht in Ghent in Flanders, and Brumel possibly near Chartres. The latest of our composers, Willaert, came from the southern Low Countries, perhaps Bruges.

As northern musicians followed their itinerant careers, their paths crossed in one place or another—Malbecque sang with Du Fay in the papal chapel, for example; Du Fay and Grenon worked together at Cambrai Cathedral, which attempted (unsuccessfully) to hire Regis—and the music they composed was disseminated into all the corners of Europe. In such circumstances it is not surprising to come across instances of compositional emulation or rivalry. Regis’s *O admirabile commercium*, Obrecht’s *Factor orbis*, and Brumel’s *Nato canunt omnia* form a trio of works in which Obrecht and Brumel pay homage to Regis. All three motets are for five voices and feature multiple texts and cantus firmi: Reinhard Strohm has described *O admirabile commercium* as a “huge Christmas pie,” stuffed full of antiphons, gospel texts, plainchant, and

popular devotional songs (*cantiones*). Regis, who seems to be reinventing the motet each time he composes one, reserves one of his most genial inspirations for the close of *O admirabile*, a marvellous suspension of forward motion at the (nonsense?) words “Sus, valla sus in orisus,” as if the jubilant choir falls suddenly into a reverent hush at the cradle of the newborn.

The relationship of *Nato canunt omnia*, in particular, to Regis’s motet is unmistakable. Brumel’s work quotes one of the same Christmas *cantiones*, the rollicking “Magnum nomen domini Emanuel”—an unusual moment of pure levity in a highbrow genre—and the striking, heraldic fifths that begin the *secunda pars* (“Puer natus est”) are taken directly from *O admirabile*, with more voices thrown in for good measure. Where *Factor orbis* conveys the penitence and prophetic mysticism of Advent, *Nato canunt omnia* is filled throughout with the high spirits of Christmas, manifested not least in a superabundance of jaunty cross relations (e.g. F natural and F sharp sounding in close proximity or simultaneously).

All of the music discussed above quotes plainchant melodies; so do Du Fay’s settings of *Conditio alme siderum* and *Letabundus* and Willaert’s sonorous *Praeter rerum seriem*. The Du Fay pieces are intended for *alternatim* performance, each verse of plainchant answered by a verse in polyphony in which the topmost voice sings an elaborated version of the chant melody. Willaert’s *Praeter rerum seriem* sets the plainchant in a three-voice canon embedded among four freely composed voices. The rubric “Trinitas in unitate” makes explicit the symbolism of the canon—three parts of one substance. By writing for seven voices Willaert surely intended to surpass, at least in one dimension, Josquin’s six-voice work on the same text.

#### NEW YEAR’S WITH THE VALOIS

Europeans have long celebrated the season around the winter solstice with the ritual exchange of gifts and wishes for good luck and a prosperous new year. The custom in its present form coalesced around the feast of Christmas only in the late nineteenth century, but its roots in western culture can be traced as far back as the ancient Near East. Romans of the imperial era marked the Kalends of January with a festival several days in length, during which the people offered tributary gifts called *strenae* to the emperor in exchange for presents of money. Medieval Europe absorbed the Roman New Year’s festivities into its own calendar, modifying them somewhat according to the evolving sensibilities of the Christian church, but the tradition of giving presents at New Year’s persisted despite the efforts of the church to suppress what it regarded as pagan beliefs in good luck omens and the efficacy of ceremonial gift exchange. In France, the Latin *strena* passed into the vulgar tongue as *estraina* (*estreine*, *étrenne*, etc.), retaining its meaning of “omen of good fortune” as well as “New Year’s gift.”

New Year’s was celebrated with peculiar intensity at the courts of the Valois nobles who ruled both France and Burgundy in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and members of the courts exchanged precious gifts in enormous quantity. Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy from 1364 to 1404, disbursed an average of 6.5 percent of his annual budget on *estraines*, while his nephew and political enemy Louis d’Orléans spent no less than 19,000 *livres* at New Year’s in 1404. (At the time a good horse or a finely ornamented harp might be had for around 50 *livres*, a house for 100 or so.) Illuminated books, jewel-encrusted saltcellars, enamelled serving vessels, golden cups, reliquaries, pendants, brooches, rings, horses, dogs, hunting falcons: all changed hands in an ostentatious public ritual

that honored the chivalric virtue of largesse, cemented social ties, established position within the courtly hierarchy, and allowed the rich and powerful to flaunt their wealth.

Just as it does today, all this flamboyant materialism sometimes benefitted those further down the social ladder, the artisans and craftspeople who fashioned the sumptuous *objets d'art* prized by their noble commissioners. The makers of New Year's gifts included poets and musicians, and it is a small irony that while one single, superb little golden and bejeweled tabernacle is the only known *estrayne* aside from manuscripts to have survived—much of the rest having been melted down and sold off to finance the endless wars pursued by a bellicose and perpetually cash-strapped nobility—27 songs remain to us that commemorate the occasion. (Ten of them are by Guillaume Du Fay.) While we don't know the exact circumstances in which New Year's songs were written, we can imagine that a courtier would provide a composer with verses to set to music, and the song would then be presented to the courtier's lady love or perhaps performed at a public celebration. In exchange for his *strena* a courtier might hope to win the lady's amorous favor, while the musicians could expect a gift of money or household necessities. We know, for example, that in January 1454 Johannes Ockeghem presented Charles VII a book of music as an *estrayne*, receiving four ells of scarlet cloth worth 44 *livres*, while in 1459 a single song "most richly illuminated" earned him another 44 *livres*. (Neither book nor song is known to be extant.)

In keeping with the conventions of chivalric love, these fifteenth-century New Year's songs are not boisterous, champagne-inspired toasts. Elegantly crafted and finely wrought, their merit as gifts was measured in part by their ingenuity or *estrangeté* (novelty), and most are marked with a graceful sort of melancholy, for courtly love can never be consummated, only yearned and suffered for.

## A WORD ON WORDS

It is a bitter truth that some of the most joyous Christmas texts are marred by venomous barbs aimed at Jews and others regarded by Christianity as unbelievers; some of these were set to beautiful music. There is no single or perfect solution to this problem. Our view is that we musicians are not playing roles in some sort of historical drama, nor is it our job in this concert to preserve the historical record by reciting it neutrally. (That is a critical task, but it's not ours.) We are performers who want to enjoy what we are doing and convey that enjoyment to our audience, and we don't feel obliged to sing words we find hateful, so our choice on this occasion is to emend the words. If you are interested in the original text of *Letabundus*, you can no doubt find it on the internet somewhere—or, in the spirit of early music, try a library.

The happiest of holidays to one and all!

—Scott Metcalfe



Photo: Bayerisches Nationalmuseum

The so-called Goldene Rössl or Golden Knight (French, c. 1400-1405). The sole *étrenne* known to have survived aside from songs and manuscripts, it was given by Isabeau of Bavaria to her husband, king Charles VI of France, on New Year's Day, 1405, and pawned that very year to pay off debt.

## ABOUT THE INSTRUMENTS

...the lute serves among us for feasts, dances, and banquets and private recreations. In this many, especially Germans, are exceedingly accomplished. Indeed, some play in ensemble the soprano part of any polyphonic piece of music with wonderful divisions of the melodies so elegantly that truly there is nothing more outstanding.... And some sing any songs...most pleasantly to this instrument...

— Johannes Tinctoris  
*De inventione et usu musicae* (c. 1481–3)

Some form of **lute** is documented as long ago as 3100 BC in Mesopotamia, whence it spread both east and west. Both Greeks and Romans played forms of lute, but the lute used in medieval European art music is most directly descended from the Arabic *ud* or *oud* which was imported into Andalusia by its Moorish conquerors after the year 711. The European word lute (Spanish *laúd*, middle French *leut*, *lehut*, etc.) probably derives from the Arabic *al-oud*, meaning "the wood." The 15th-century lute had four or five courses or pairs of gut strings and was played with a quill used as a plectrum. In the later years of the century, lutenists gradually switched to plucking with the fingers, enabling them to play more than one line of a polyphonic piece on a single instrument.

The fiddle and the rebec are my two instruments; I repeat, my chosen instruments, those that induce piety and stir my heart most ardently to the contemplation of heavenly joys. For these reasons I would rather reserve them solely for sacred music and the secret consolation of the soul, than have them sometimes used for profane occasions and public festivities.

—Tinctoris  
*De inventione et usu musicae*

The **rebec**, whose name derives from the Arabic *rabab*, is a bowed instrument with gut strings, typically pear-shaped, with a vaulted back and a tapering outline. It usually had three strings, most often tuned in fifths, but could have as few as one and as many as five or more. Despite Tinctoris's preferences, it was probably used quite often for dances and other profane occasions. The rebec played in this concert was made in 1983 by Bernard Prunier in Paris, from a gourd.

The strings on a harp clang by striking the lower nail where they are connected to the body... In common parlance this is called "harping" the string.

— Heinrich Glarean  
*Dodecachordon* (1547)

The 15th-century **harp** sounds rather different from its modern counterparts due to the presence of brays, small wedges set atop the pins in the sound board: when the string is plucked, it vibrates against the narrow end of the wedge, creating a buzzy or snappy sound which is both louder and more sustained than that of a harp without brays. The harp played today was made by Lynne Lewandowski of Bellows Falls, Vermont, from Vermont cherry, and is based on various surviving originals and paintings, especially the tall and slender harps portrayed in the paintings of Hans Memling. Its 26 gut strings are tuned diatonically with both B-natural and B-flat.

## TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

**O clavis David** et sceptrum domus Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit, claudis et nemo aperit: veni et educ vinctum de domo carceris, sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis.

O key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, who opens and no one shuts, who shuts and no one opens: come and lead the captive from the house of prison, sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death.

*O-antiphon for December 20*

**Factor orbis**, Deus, nos famulos

Exaudi clamantes ad te tuos,  
Et nostra crimina laxa  
Die ista lucifera.  
Noe, noe!

Veni Domine et noli tardare: relaxa facinora plebis tue Israel.

Ecce Dominus veniet, noli timere, alleluia.

Canite tuba in Sion, quia prope est dies Domini.

Ad te Domine levavi animam meam: Deus meus in te confido, non erubescam.

Crastina die erit vobis salus.

Deus, qui sedes super thronos et iudicas equitatem, esto refugium pauperum in tribulatione: quia tu solus laborem et dolorem consideras.

Media vita in morte sumus: quem querimus adiutorem nisi te Domine?

O clavis David et sceptrum domus Israel, qui aperis et nemo claudit, claudis et nemo aperit: veni et educ vinctum de domo carceris, sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis.

Canite tuba in Sion, quia prope est dies Domini: ecce veniet ad salvandum nos, alleluia.

Spiritus Domini super me, evangelizare pauperibus misit me.

Veniet fortior me, cuius non sum dignus corrigiam calciamentorum eius solvere.

Maker of the world, God, hear us,  
Your servants, crying unto you  
And loose the bonds of our sins  
On this day that brings light.  
Noel, noel!

Come, O Lord, and delay not: loose the bonds of the grievous sins of your people Israel.

Behold the Lord shall come, fear not.

Sound the trumpet in Sion, for the day of the Lord is near.

To you, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: O my God, in you I put my trust; let me not be ashamed.

On the morrow you shall have salvation.

O God, who sits upon the throne and judges justice, be the refuge of the poor in tribulation: for you alone consider labor and sorrow.

In the midst of life we are in death: whom shall we seek to help us but you, O Lord?

O key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, who opens and no one shuts, who shuts and no one opens: come and lead the captive from the house of prison, sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Sound the trumpet in Sion, for the day of the Lord is near: behold he shall come to save us, alleluia.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

There shall come after me one mightier than I, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to unloose.

Hodie scietis quia veniet Dominus, et mane videbitis gloriam suam.

Erunt prava in directa et aspera in vias planas.

Bethlehem, es civitas Dei summi, ex te exiet dominator Israel.

Crastina die erit vobis salus, dicit Dominus exercituum.

Crastina die delebitur iniquitas terre: et regnabit super nos salvator mundi, alleluia.

De celo veniet dominator Dominus, et in manu eius honor et imperium.

O virgo virginum, quomodo fiet istud? quia nec primam similem visa es, nec habere sequentem. Filiae Jerusalem, quid me admiramini? Divinum est misterium hoc quod cernitis.

Beata es Maria, que credisti: quoniam perficientur in te que dicta sunt tibi, alleluia.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui.

Ecce Dominus veniet, et omnes sancti eius cum eo: et erit in die illa lux magna, alleluia.

Veni Domine et noli tardare, alleluia.

Noe, noe!

This day you shall know that the Lord will come, and on the morrow you shall see his glory.

The crooked shall become straight and the rough ways smooth.

Bethlehem, you are the city of the most high God, out of you shall come forth the ruler of Israel.

On the morrow you shall have salvation, says the Lord of hosts.

Tomorrow the wickedness of the earth shall be blotted out: and the savior of the world shall reign over us, alleluia.

From heaven shall come the Lord, the ruler, and in his hand honor and strength.

O Virgin of virgins, how shall this be? For thou wast not seen to have one like unto thee before thee, nor after thee. O Daughters of Jerusalem, why do ye wonder at me? That which you behold is a divine mystery.

Blessed are you, Mary, who has believed: those things shall be wrought in you which were spoken to you, alleluia.

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

Behold the Lord shall come, and all his saints with him: and on that day there shall be a great light, alleluia.

Come, Lord, and delay not, alleluia.

Noel, noe!

*Cento of Advent texts*

**O virgo virginum**, quomodo fiet istud? quia nec primam similem visa est, nec habere sequentem.

Filiae Jerusalem, quid me admiramini?

Divinum est misterium hoc quod cernitis.

O Virgin of virgins, how shall this be? For none like unto thee was seen before thee, nor after thee.

Daughters of Jerusalem, why do ye wonder at me? That which ye behold is a divine mystery.

*O-antiphon for December 24*

**Conditor alme siderum,**  
eterna lux credentium,  
Christe, redemptor omnium,  
exaudi preces supplicum.

Qui condolens interitu  
mortis perire seculum,  
salvasti mundum languidum,  
donans reis remedium.

Vergente mundi vespere,  
uti sponsus de thalamo,  
egressus honestissima  
virginis matris clausula.

Cujus forti potentie  
genu curvantur omnia  
celestia, terrestria  
nutu fatentur subdita.

Te deprecamur agie,  
venture iudex seculi,  
conserva nos in tempore  
hostis a telo perfidi.

Laus, honor, virtus, gloria  
Deo patri et filio,  
sancto simul paraclito,  
in seculorum secula. Amen.

**Ave Maria** gratia dei plena per secula.  
Amen.

**O admirabile commercium!** Creator generis  
humani, animatum corpus sumens, de  
virgine dignatus est nasci  
et procedens homo sine semine  
largitus est nobis suam deitatem.

O bountiful creator of the stars,  
everlasting light of believers,  
O Christ, redeemer of us all,  
hear our humble prayers.

Suffering with us a worldly death,  
enduring death and earthly destruction,  
you saved the suffering world,  
bringing us healing for our sins.

As the world turned to evening,  
like a bridegroom from his chamber  
you came forth from the most pure  
cloister of a virgin mother.

Before your mighty power  
all creatures kneel down,  
in heaven and on earth,  
all accept your command.

So we pray you,  
O judge of the world to come,  
preserve us when we face  
the enemy with treacherous arms.

Praise, honor, might, and glory  
to God the Father, the Son,  
and the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

*Advent hymn, seventh century*

Hail Mary, full of the grace of God forever.  
Amen.

O wondrous exchange! The creator of  
humankind, assuming a living body,  
deigned to be born of a virgin,  
and coming forth without seed as a man,  
bestowed upon us his divinity.

Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis  
et vidimus gloriam eius.  
Magnum nomen domini Emanuel,  
Quod annuntiatum est per Gabriel.

Jocundare die, theotoce tinnula festo omnique  
inesto gaudio. Hostes nunc arte virgo bona  
mentis ab arce annue feliciter ire pro nobis  
iter.  
Nam si vera loquar protectrix turris ad instar  
atque es amica piis optima Christicolis.

Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis  
et vidimus gloriam eius quasi unigeniti a  
patre.  
Hodie apparuit in Israel  
per Mariam virginem et per Joseph.  
Sunt impleta que predixit Daniel.  
Eya! Virgo deum genuit  
sicut divina voluit clemencia.

Puer natus est nobis et filius datus est nobis,  
cuius imperium super humerum eius.  
Mitibus arbitriis ora velit addere sanctis natus  
nos orbis post mala celicolis.

Suscipe.  
Universalis ecclesia  
Congaudeat his temporibus  
Cum angelis sic canentibus:  
Eya eya alleluia!  
Deo in excelsis gloria  
et in terra pax hominibus.  
Valla sus, valla sus,  
valla sus in orisus,  
requiescat ipse parvulus.  
Noe noe, parvulus. Amen.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,  
and we beheld his glory.  
Great is the name of the Lord, Emmanuel,  
Who was announced by Gabriel.

Rejoice with ringing bells, Mother of God, on thy  
festal day, and be in all joy. Now, good Virgin,  
keep away our enemies from the citadel of our  
mind, consent to go happily on our behalf.  
For if I shall speak true, thou art a protectress  
like a tower and a best friend to pious  
Christians.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among  
us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only  
begotten of the Father.  
Today he appears in Israel,  
through the virgin Mary and through Joseph.  
That which Daniel foretold is fulfilled.  
Come then! a virgin gives birth to God,  
as was the will of divine mercy.

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,  
and the government shall be upon his shoulders.  
Pray that thy son be willing, with merciful  
judgements, to add us, after the evils of the  
world, to the holy heaven-dwellers.

Receive us!  
Let the Church Universal  
rejoice at this time  
with the angels, singing thus:  
Come, come, alleluia!  
Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace unto men.  
Hush now, shush!  
hush, shush, hush now,  
let that little one rest.  
Noel, noel, little one. Amen.

*Cento of Christmas texts  
(emendation & translation adapted  
from Leofranc Holford-Strevens)*

**Letabundus**

exsultet fidelis chorus:  
Alleluia.

Regem regum  
intacte profudit thorus:  
res miranda.

Angelus consilii  
natus est de virgine,  
sol de stella,  
Sol occasum nesciens,  
stella semper rutilans,  
semper clara.

Sicut sidus radium,  
profert Virgo Filium,  
pari forma.  
Neque sidus radio,  
neque mater filio,  
fit corrupta.

Cedrus alta Libani  
conformatur hyssopo  
valle nostra;  
Verbum, mens altissimi,  
corporari passum est,  
carne sumpta.

Isaias cecinit,  
Synagoga meminit;  
Hec Scriptura definit  
Esse facta.  
Sic et nostris vatibus  
Nec non et gentilibus  
Sibyllinis versibus  
Hec predicta.

Nunc age propera  
Et Christum venera,  
Crede et nova et vetera.  
Quem docet litera  
Natum considera,  
Ipsum genuit puerpera. Alleluia.

Full of joy,  
let the chorus of the faithful exult:  
Alleluia.  
The King of Kings  
is brought forth from an intact womb,  
a thing of wonder.

The Angel of Counsel  
is born of a virgin,  
the sun from a star:  
A sun that knows no setting,  
a star ever shining,  
always bright.

As a star its ray,  
the Virgin produces her Son,  
alike in form.  
Neither the star by its ray,  
nor the mother by her son,  
is corrupted.

The tall cedar of Lebanon  
is formed by the low hyssop  
in our valley:  
the Word, the mind of the Highest,  
descended into a human body,  
having assumed flesh.

Isaiah sang of it,  
The Synagogue recalls it;  
Scripture reveals that it  
Has been fulfilled.  
Thus has this been foretold  
By our own prophets  
And those of the gentiles,  
In the Sibylline oracles.

Come now, make haste  
And worship the Christ,  
Believe both the new and the old scriptures;  
Whom the scripture proclaimed,  
Look upon at his birth:  
His mother has brought him forth. Alleluia.

*Christmas sequence  
(revised & translated by Richard Tarrant)*

**Praeter rerum seriem**

Parit Deum hominem  
Virgo mater.  
Nec vir tangit virginem,  
Nec prolis originem  
Novit pater.

Virtus sancti spiritus  
Opus illud coelitus  
Operatur.  
Initus et exitus  
Partus tui penitus  
Quis scrutatur?

Dei providentia  
Quae disponit omnia  
Tam suave,  
Tua puerperia  
Transfer in mysteria.  
Mater, ave!

**La plus belle et douce figure,**  
La plus noble, gente faiture,  
C'est ma chiere dame et mestresse.  
Bon an, bon jour, joye et liesse  
Li doinst dieux et bone aventure!

C'est tout mon biem, c'est ma déesse,  
Celle par qui ma douleur cesse,  
En qui je preing ma noretur,

Qui servir vueil sans nul destresse  
De cuer, tant que vogue me lesse,  
N'en ce monde d'autre n'ay cure.

Former la sut dieux de nature  
Blanche, blonde, tout par mesure;  
Playsanment y jouta jesnesse,  
Largesse, honour, toute noblesse  
En fais, en dis et en parleure.

La plus belle et douce figure...

Surpassing the natural order,  
a virgin mother bears  
God as man.  
No man touched the virgin,  
nor did the father know  
the child's origin.

The power of the Holy Spirit  
brings that work about,  
divinely.  
Who fully comprehends  
the ins and outs  
of thy birth?

God's providence,  
which disposes all things  
so harmoniously,  
transforms your childbearing  
into a mystery.  
Hail, mother!

*Christmas sequence*

The most beautiful and sweetest face,  
the noblest, most gracious form,  
is that of my dear lady and mistress.  
A good year, a good day, joy and happiness  
may God grant her, and good fortune!

She is all my good, she is my goddess,  
she through whom my pain ceases,  
from whom I take sustenance,

she whom I wish to serve without the least restraint  
of heart, as much as reputation permit me,  
for I care for none other in this world.

God formed her by nature  
pale, blond, all in just measure;  
pleasingly he added youth,  
generosity, honor, and every nobility  
in deed, word, and speech.

The most beautiful and sweetest face...

**Dieu vous doinst bon jour et demy**

Du commencement de l'anée,  
Belle brunette et bon amée,  
Bon moys, bonne sepmaine ossy,  
Dieu vous doinst bon jour et demy.

Je vous donne le cuer de my  
Pour estre dame honnourée.

Dieu vous doinst bon jour et demy  
Du commencement de l'anée!

Et chanteray sanz demourée,  
Qui qu'en soit joieulx ou mary,  
Ne recelle en gré, je vous pry,  
Si j'aray joyeuse pensée:  
Dieu vous doinst bon jour et demy.

Dieu vous doinst bon jour...

**Dame excellent ou sont bonté,  
scavoir,**

Biaulté de corps et maintieng gracieux,  
Je scay que bien puis dire tout pour voir  
Estre je doy de cuer le plus joyeux  
Par vo doulchour et le plus amoureux,  
Car vous m'avés tolu toute langour.  
Si pri a dieu qui maint lassus es chieulx,  
Que tres bon an vous doint et tres  
bon jour.

[Si gentement m'avés guerredonné  
Que d'entre tous me tiens le plus heureux,  
Dont vous ai je mon cuer habandonné  
Qui en despit sera des envieux.  
Le temps ai veu ou fuz tout langoureux,  
Mais ce jour d'huy suis entré en amour,  
Si pri a cil qui est d'amer soigneux  
Que tres bon an vous doint et tres bon jour.]

*(Second strophe by Fabrice Fitch.)*

God grant you a good day and more  
at the beginning of the year,  
fair sweetheart and well-beloved,  
a good month and good week as well:  
God grant you a good day and more!

I give to you my heart,  
for you are my honored lady.

God grant you a good day and more  
at the beginning of the year!

And I shall sing without cease,  
no matter whom it please or annoy,  
nor shall I conceal my desire, I pray you,  
if I have a joyous thought.  
God grant you a good day and more!

God grant you a good day and more...

Excellent lady, in whom are joined goodness,  
knowledge,  
physical beauty, and gracious bearing,  
I know that I may well say, and in all truth,  
that I should be most joyful at heart  
on account of your sweetness, and most loving,  
for you have taken away all my suffering.  
Thus I pray to God who reigns in heaven above  
that he grant you a very good year, and a very  
good day.

So nobly have you rewarded me  
that I think myself the happiest of men:  
therefore I have surrendered my heart to you,  
and shall do so in spite of the envious.  
I have known a time when I languished,  
but today I find myself happy in love,  
thus I pray of him who takes care to love well  
that he grant you a very good year, and a very  
good day.

**Margarite, fleur de valeur,**  
Sur toutes aultres souverayne,  
Dieux vous doinst hui en bonne estraine  
Tout le desir de vostre coeur,

Et vous garde de deshonneur  
Et de Male Bouche vilaine.

Margarite, fleur de valeur,  
Sur toutes aultres souverayne,

Estrinez soit il de douleur  
Qui ne mettra toute sa paine  
A louer vo douceur haultaine,  
Car vo loz n'a per ne meilleur.

Margarite, fleur de valeur...

**Ce jour de l'an voudray joie mener,**  
Chanter, danser et mener chiere lie,  
Pour maintenir le coustume jolye  
Que tous amans sont tenus de garder.

Et pour certain tant me voudray poier  
Que je puisse choisir nouvelle amie.

Ce jour de l'an voudray joie mener,  
Chanter, danser et mener chiere lie.

A laquelle je puisse presenter  
Cuer, corps et biens,  
sans faire departie.  
Hé, dieus d'amours, syés de ma partie,  
Que fortune si ne me puist grever.

Ce jour de l'an...

Margarite, flower of merit,  
above all others sovereign,  
God grant you today, as a good New Year's gift,  
your heart's every desire,

and guard you from dishonor  
and from base Slandermonger,

Margarite, flower of merit,  
above all others sovereign,

May his gift be grief,  
who will not put all his effort  
into praising your noble sweetness,  
for your repute has neither peer nor better.

Margarite, flower of merit...

On this New Year's Day I wish to be joyful,  
To sing, dance, and rejoice,  
To maintain the happy custom  
Which all lovers are obliged to observe.

And for certain I wish to polish myself up so well  
That I will be able to choose a new lover.

On this New Year's Day I wish to be joyful,  
To sing, dance, and rejoice.

To her I shall present  
Heart, body, and all good things,  
without dividing them.  
Ah, God of Love, take my side,  
that fortune cannot harm me!

On this New Year's Day...



**Gloria in excelsis Deo**, et in terra pax  
hominibus bone voluntatis. Laudamus te.  
Benedicimus te. Adoramus te. Glorificamus  
te. Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam  
gloriam tuam. Domine deus, rex celestis,  
deus pater omnipotens. Domine fili  
unigenite, Jesu Christe, *spiritus et alme  
orphanorum paraclite*. Domine deus, agnus  
dei, filius patris, *primogenitus Marie virginis  
matris*. Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere  
nobis. Qui tollis peccata mundi, suscipe  
deprecationem nostram *ad Marie gloriam*.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram patris, miserere  
nobis. Quoniam tu solus sanctus *Mariam  
sanctificans*, tu solus dominus *Mariam  
gubernans*, tu solus altissimus, *Mariam  
coronans*, Jesu Christe, cum sancto spiritu in  
gloria dei patris. Amen.

**Nato canunt omnia**

Domino pie agmina,  
sillabatim neupmata  
perstringendo organica.  
Hec dies sacrata,  
in qua nova sunt gaudia  
modo plena dedita,  
Hac nocte precelsa  
intonuit et gloria  
in voce angelica.  
Fulserunt et immanua  
nocte media  
pastoribus lumina.  
Dum fovent sua peccora  
subito diva  
precipiunt monita.  
Magnificatus est rex pacificus super omnes  
reges universe terre.  
Angelus ad pastores ait: Annuntio vobis  
gaudium magnum, quia natus est hodie  
salvator mundi,  
alleluya.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth  
peace to all of good will. We praise you. We  
bless you. We adore you. We glorify you.  
We give thanks to you for your great glory.  
Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God  
the Father. Lord, only begotten Son, Jesus  
Christ, *holy spirit and kindly advocate of  
orphans*. Lord God, lamb of God, Son of the  
Father, *firstborn of Mary the virgin mother*.  
Who takes away the sins of the world, have  
mercy on us. Who takes away the sins of the  
world, receive our prayer *to the glory of Mary*.  
Who sits at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us. For you alone are holy,  
*sanctifying Mary*; you alone are the Lord,  
*directing Mary*; you alone are the Most High,  
*crowning Mary*; Jesus Christ, with the Holy  
Spirit in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The whole host sings piously  
to the new-born Lord,  
with words fitted syllable by syllable  
to melodious music.  
This is the blessed day  
on which new joys  
are given to the whole world,  
And on this night  
angel voices have rung out:  
“Glory in the highest.”  
And at midnight  
a great light has shone  
upon the shepherds.  
While they tended their flocks,  
suddenly they heard  
the heavenly message.  
More glorious is the King of Peace than all the  
kings of the whole world.  
The angel said to the shepherds: To you I  
proclaim great joy, for today is born the  
savior of the world,  
alleluia.

Natus alma virgine,  
qui extat ante secula. Noel noel!  
*Joseph fili David, noli timere accipere Mariam  
conjugem tuam: quod enim in ea natum est de  
Spiritu Sancto, alleluia. Noel, noel!*

Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis:  
cuius imperium super humerum eius:  
et vocabitur nomen eius magni consilii  
angelus.  
*Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis.*  
Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis,  
et vidimus gloriam eius, quasi unigeniti a  
patre, plenum gratie et veritatis.  
Magnum nomen Domini Emanuel,  
quod annuntiatum est per Gabriel,  
Hodie apparuit in Israel,  
per Mariam virginem et per Joseph.  
Eya, eya!

Virgo Deum genuit,  
sicut divina voluit  
clementia.

Pax in terra reddita  
nunc letentur omnia  
nati per exordia.

Ipsa sua pietate  
solvat omnia  
peccata nostra.

Alleluia. Noel, noel!

*Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis corde:  
misericors et miserator et justus Dominus.*

He is born of a gentle virgin,  
he who was before time. Noel, noel!  
*Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as  
your wife: for truly, he is born in her of the Holy  
Spirit, alleluia. Noel, noel!*

A child is born to us, and a son is given to us:  
whose government is upon his shoulder; and  
his name shall be called the Angel of great  
counsel.

*A child is born to us, and a son is given to us.*  
The Word was made flesh and lived among  
us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only  
begotten of the father, full of grace and truth.  
Great is the name of the Lord, Emmanuel,  
He who was announced by Gabriel  
Today appears in Israel,  
through the virgin Mary and through Joseph.  
Come then!

A virgin gives birth to God,  
as was the will of divine  
mercy.

Now let all rejoice  
to see peace restored to earth  
by the birth of this child.

For he by his obedience  
takes away all  
our sins.

Alleluia. Noel, noel!

*In the darkness is arisen a light to pure hearts:  
merciful and compassionate and righteous is  
the Lord.*

*Centos of Christmas texts; tenor text in italics*

Translations by Scott Metcalfe where not specified otherwise.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**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 its “expressive intensity.” Committed to vivid live performance informed by the study of original source materials and historical performance practices, the ensemble ranges over a wide repertoire from plainchant to new music, with particular specialties in 15th-century Franco-Flemish polyphony and early 16th-century English sacred music.

Founded in 1999, Blue Heron presents a concert series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and has appeared at the Boston Early Music Festival; in New York City at Music Before 1800, The Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art), and the 92nd Street Y; at the Library of Congress, the National Gallery of Art, and Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C.; at the Berkeley Early Music Festival; at Yale University; and in Chicago, Cleveland, Kansas City, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Providence, St. Louis, San Luis Obispo, and Seattle. The ensemble has performed in Cambridge and London, England, and in 2018-19 will make Canadian debuts in Montreal (September) and Vancouver (March). Blue Heron has been in residence at the Center for Early Music Studies at Boston University and at Boston College, and has enjoyed collaborations with A Far Cry, Dark

Horse Consort, Les Délices, Parthenia, Piffaro, and Ensemble Plus Ultra. In 2015 the ensemble embarked on *Ockeghem@600*, a multi-season project to perform the complete works of Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1420-1497) and record all of his songs and motets. Volume I of the songs will be released in the spring of 2019. The project will wind up around 2021, in time to commemorate the composer’s circa-600th birthday.

Blue Heron’s first CD, featuring music by Guillaume Du Fay, was released in 2007. Between 2010 and 2017 the ensemble issued a 5-CD series of *Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks*, including many world premiere recordings of works copied c. 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral. The fifth CD was awarded the prestigious 2018 Gramophone Classical Music Award for Early Music and the five discs are now available as a boxed set entitled *The Lost Music of Canterbury*. Blue Heron’s recordings also include a CD of plainchant and polyphony to accompany Thomas Forrest Kelly’s book *Capturing Music: The Story of Notation* and the live recording *Christmas in Medieval England*. Jessie Ann Owens (UC Davis) and Blue Heron won the 2015 Noah Greenberg Award from the American Musicological Society to support a world premiere recording of Cipriano de Rore’s *I madrigali a cinque voci (1542)*, to be released in fall 2019.



Mustering up “rock solid technique” and “the kind of vocal velvet you don’t often hear in contemporary music” (*Boston Phoenix*), soprano **Jennifer Ashe** has been praised for performances that are “pure bravura, riveting the audience with a radiant and opulent voice” (*The Boston Globe*). A strong advocate of new works, she has sung with Boston Musica Viva, Sound Icon, Fromm Festival, Boston Microtonal Society, Harvard Group for New Music, New Music Brandeis, New Gallery Concert Series, Guerrilla Opera, Ludovico Ensemble, and the Calithumpian Consort. Recent projects include Boulez’s *Le marteau sans maître* with Boston Musica Viva and Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire* with Ensemble Parallax. Ashe holds a DMA and an MM from the New England Conservatory and a BM from the Hartt School of Music. Formerly on the faculties of the College of the Holy Cross and Eastern Connecticut State University, she currently teaches voice, piano, and ukulele at the Dana Hall School of Music in Wellesley and preschool music at Music Together Arlington.



**Michael Barrett** is a Boston-based conductor, singer, multi-instrumentalist, and teacher. He has performed with many professional early music ensembles, including Blue Heron, the Boston Camerata, the Huelgas Ensemble, Vox Luminis, the Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, Nederlandse Bachvereniging (Netherlands Bach Society), L’Académie, Seven Times Salt, Schola Cantorum of Boston, and Exsultemus. He can be heard on the harmonia mundi,

Blue Heron, and Coro record labels. Michael has served as music director of Convivium Musicum since 2007. He also directs the Meridian Singers, a vocal ensemble based at MIT. Michael is currently an Assistant Professor at the Berklee College of Music, where he teaches conducting courses for undergraduates.



**Pamela Dellal**, mezzo-soprano, has enjoyed a distinguished career as an acclaimed soloist and recitalist. She has performed in Symphony Hall, the Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall, and the Royal Albert Hall, and premiered a chamber work by John Harbison in New York, San Francisco, Boston, and London. With Sequentia, 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 has appeared 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 over thirty years and has performed almost all 200 of Bach’s extant sacred cantatas. She has recorded for Arabesque, Artona, BMG, CRI, Dorian, Meridian, and KOCH. Dellal serves on the faculty at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and at the Longy School of Music of Bard College.

Bass-baritone **Paul Guttry** has performed throughout the USA and internationally with Sequentia, Chanticleer, the Boston Camerata, and New York’s Ensemble for Early Music. A founding member of Blue Heron, he has also appeared in and around Boston as soloist with Emmanuel Music, the Handel & Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, the



Tanglewood Music Center, Cantata Singers, Boston Cecilia, Prism Opera, Boston Revels, Collage, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Intermezzo. Paul can be heard on all Blue Heron's recordings, on discs of medieval music

by Sequentia, Kurt Weill's *Johnny Johnson* and French *airs de cour* with the Boston Camerata, and on Emmanuel Music's Bach CDs.

**Steven Hrycelak**, bass, is equally at home as an operatic, concert, or ensemble performer. He is a member of the Grammy-nominated Choir of Trinity Wall Street, both as ensemble singer and soloist. Other ensembles include ekmeles, the New York Virtuoso Singers, Toby Twining Music, Early Music New York, Vox, TENET, Meridionalis, Seraphic Fire, and the vocal jazz quintet West Side 5. He has also been a soloist with NYS Baroque, Pegasus, Publick Musick, the Mimesis Ensemble, Musica Sacra, 4x4, the Waverly Consort, the American Symphony Orchestra, Sacred Music in a Sacred Space, Union Avenue Opera, and the Collegiate Chorale. His performance in the role of Monteverdi's Seneca with Opera Omnia was hailed by *The New York Times* as having "a graceful bearing and depth." He has traveled the US, Canada, and Europe singing in Frank London's klezmer musical *A Night in the Old Marketplace*. Mr. Hrycelak received degrees from Indiana University and Yale University, where he sang with the world-renowned Yale Whiffenpoofs. He is also a vocal coach and accompanist.



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**Laura Jeppesen** received a master's degree from Yale University and subsequently studied the viola da gamba at the Hamburg Hochschule and the Brussels Conservatory. She has been a Woodrow Wilson Designate, a Fulbright

Scholar, and a fellow of the Bunting Institute at Harvard. A prominent member of Boston's early music community, she has long associations with The Boston Museum Trio, Boston Baroque, the Handel & Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, and Aston Magna. In 2015 she was part of the BEMF team that won a Grammy for best opera recording. She has performed as soloist with conductors Christopher Hogwood, Edo de Waart, Seiji Ozawa, Craig Smith, Martin Pearlman, Harry Christophers, Grant Llewellyn, and Bernard Haitink. She has an extensive discography of solo and chamber works, including the viola da gamba sonatas of J. S. Bach and music of Marin Marais, Buxtehude, Rameau, Telemann, and Clerambault. She teaches at Boston University, Wellesley College, and Harvard University, where in 2016 she received an award of distinction in teaching from the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning. She is a 2017 recipient of an Andrew W. Mellon Blended Learning Initiative Grant for innovative teaching at Wellesley College.



Reviewers have praised **Jason McStoots** as having an "alluring tenor voice" (*Arts-Fuse*) and as "the consummate artist, wielding not just a sweet tone but also incredible technique and impeccable pronunciation" (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*). In

2015 he won a GRAMMY award in Opera with

the Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF) for their recording of works by Charpentier. His recent stage appearances in period-style baroque opera with BEMF include *Le Jeu* in *Les plaisirs de Versailles* by Charpentier, Apollo in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, and Eumete and Giove in Monteverdi's *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*. Other recent solo performances include Pedrillo in Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio*, Bach's Christmas Oratorio and St. Mark Passion with Emmanuel Music, and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* with the Green Mountain Project. He has appeared with Boston Lyric Opera, Pacific MusicWorks, Boston Camerata, TENET, San Juan Symphony, The Bach Ensemble, Pablo Casals Festival, Early Music Guild of Seattle, Tragicomedia, and the Tanglewood Music Center. He is a core member of Blue Heron and can be heard on all their recordings. With BEMF, he appears on recordings of Lully's *Psyché* (nominated for a GRAMMY), Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (as Damon), John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (soloist), and Charpentier's *Actéon* (as Orphée).



**Scott Metcalfe** is widely recognized as one of North America's leading specialists in music from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries and beyond. From 2010 to 2016 he was music director of New York City's Green Mountain Project (Jolle Greenleaf, artistic director), which he will lead again in January 2019, and he has been guest director of TENET (New York), the Handel & Haydn Society (Boston), the Tudor Choir and Seattle Baroque, Pacific Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver, BC), and Quire Cleveland, and other ensembles. Metcalfe also enjoys a career as a baroque violinist, currently playing with Les Délices (dir. Debra Nagy), L'Harmonie des Saisons, and Montreal

Baroque (dir. Eric Milnes). His scholarly activities include research on the performance practice of English vocal music in the 16th and 17th centuries, including two essays that will be published in a forthcoming collection, and he has edited music by Francisco de Peñalosa for Antico Edition (UK) and songs from the recently rediscovered Leuven chansonnier for the Alamire Foundation (Belgium); he is also at work on a new edition of the songs of Gilles Binchois (c. 1400-1460). Metcalfe has taught at Harvard University, Boston University, Boston Conservatory, and Oberlin Conservatory. He received a bachelor's degree from Brown University (1985), where he majored in biology, and a master's degree in historical performance practice from Harvard (2005).

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**Martin Near** has been acclaimed for the "sweet limpidity" of his singing (*The New York Times*), with a "cool, beaming counter-tenor" commended for its "crystal clear... beautiful, blooming top notes" (*New York Classical Review*). He

enjoys a varied career exploring twin passions for early music and new music. Highlights of recent solo performances include a concert version of Machaut's *Remede de Fortune*, created as a collaboration between Blue Heron and Cleveland's Les Délices (Debra Nagy, director) and returning Blue Heron's season in 2019, and Richard Rodney Bennett's *Ophelia* (1987) with Boston's Odyssey Opera under the artistic direction of Gil Rose. Mr. Near maintains a parallel career in the pipe organ industry, providing services in organ pipe reconditioning and repair, voicing, tonal finishing, and tuning for Spencer Organ Company of Waltham, and he has also been known to compose, arrange, and engrave using Finale.



Originally from Glasgow, Virginia, **Stefan Reed** is currently based in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, and enjoys an active career in chamber music, oratorio, and recording, with performances and projects in New England and throughout the country. Mr. Reed has been characterized as an “intense, focused, lyric tenor” (*Miami Herald*) and his performances have been described as “dramatically expressive and technically impressive” (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*). He performs regularly with Boston Baroque, Blue Heron, Conspirare, the Handel & Haydn Society, and Seraphic Fire. Recent and upcoming solo engagements include performances with the Vermont Symphony Orchestra, Coro Allegro, the Handel & Haydn Society, Boston Baroque, and Boston Cecilia. Mr. Reed spent two summers as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Festival and holds performance degrees from the New England Conservatory and George Mason University.



Tenor **Mark Sprinkle**’s singing has been described as “expressive,” “very rewarding,” “outstanding,” “vivid,” and “supremely stylish.” He has collaborated with the Boston Early Music Festival, the Boston Camerata, the Mark Morris Dance Group, Emmanuel Music, Boston Baroque, the Handel & Haydn Society, and many others, performed at festivals in Bergen (Norway), Vancouver, Edinburgh, and Aldeburgh (UK), and worked as a soloist and ensemble singer under Seiji Ozawa, Christopher Hogwood, William Christie, Roger Norrington, John Nelson, Andrew Parrott, Grant Llewellyn,

and Craig Smith. He has appeared as a soloist with Concerto Palatino and has sung the Evangelist in Bach Passions with the Handel & Haydn Society, the Boulder Bach Festival, the Oriana Singers of Vermont, Seraphim Singers, Boston’s Chorus Pro Musica, and the Andover Choral Society, among others. Mr. Sprinkle was a member of the Cambridge Bach Ensemble and a fellow of the Britten-Pears School and has recorded for Dorian, Koch, Harmonia Mundi, Decca, Arabesque, and Telarc.



Praised for his “elegant style” (*The Boston Globe*), **Sumner Thompson** is highly sought after as both baritone and tenor. His appearances on the operatic stage include roles in the Boston Early Music Festival’s productions of Conradi’s *Ariadne* (2003) and Lully’s *Psyché* (2007) and several European tours with Contemporary Opera Denmark as Orfeo in Monteverdi’s *L’Orfeo*. He has performed across North America as a soloist with the Handel & Haydn Society, Concerto Palatino, Tafelmusik, Apollo’s Fire, Les Boréades (Montreal), Les Voix Baroques, Pacific Baroque Orchestra, the King’s Noyse, Mercury Baroque, and the symphony orchestras of Charlotte, Memphis, and Phoenix. Recent highlights include Monteverdi’s *Vespers of 1610* and a new *Vespers of 1640* with the Green Mountain Project, Buxtehude’s *Membra Jesu Nostri* with Les Voix Baroques and Houston’s Mercury Baroque, Mozart’s *Requiem* at St. Thomas Church in New York City, a tour of Japan with Joshua Rifkin and the Cambridge Concentus, a return to the Carmel Bach Festival, and Britten’s *War Requiem* with the New England Philharmonic and several guest choruses.



Mezzo-soprano **Daniela Tomic**, praised for her “burnished and warm sound” (*The Boston Musical Intelligencer*), is a soloist and chamber musician who specializes in early, contemporary, and world music repertoires. Her concert appearances include the Utrecht Early Music and the Maastricht Musica Sacra Festivals, Regensburg’s Tage Alter Musik, the Flanders Festivals of Ghent and Brussels, a Banco Republico tour of Colombia, and the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary music; the Frick Collection and Rockefeller University in New York City; Denver’s Newman Performing Arts Center; the Da Camera Society of Los Angeles; festivals in Ottawa and Montreal; and many others. Ms. Tomic is a founding member of the internationally renowned vocal ensemble Tapestry, winner of the Echo Klassik and Chamber Music America Recording of the Year awards. Most recently she has joined Rumbarroco, a Boston-based Latin-Baroque fusion ensemble using period, folk, and contemporary popular instruments. Ms. Tomic can be heard on Telarc, MDG, and several independent labels.



**Charles Weaver** performs on early plucked-string instruments as a recitalist and as an accompanist. Chamber music appearances include Quicksilver, Early Music New York, Piffaro, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Folger Consort, Blue Heron, Musica Pacifica, and the Boston Early Music Festival Chamber Ensemble. He is on the faculty of the Juilliard School, where he teaches “Historically Informed Performance on Plucked Instruments,” and last season

was the assistant conductor for Juilliard Opera’s production of Cavalli’s *La Calisto*. He also works with the New York Continuo Collective, an ensemble of players and singers exploring seventeenth-century vocal music in semester-length workshop productions, and has taught at the Lute Society of America Summer Workshop in Vancouver, the Madison Early Music Festival, and the Western Wind Workshop in ensemble singing. Mr. Weaver is associate director of music at St Mary Church in Norwalk, Connecticut, where he specializes in Renaissance polyphony and Gregorian chant.