

BEYOND THE GAMUT

CONVIVIUM MUSICUM

CONVIVIVUM·MUSICUM

Michael Barrett, music director

BEYOND THE GAMUT

CHROMATICISM IN THE RENAISSANCE

May 8, 8:00 pm · First Church, Cambridge

May 15, 8:00 pm · Church of St. John the Evangelist, Boston

May 16, 7:00 pm · St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Brookline

May 22, 8:00 pm · Trinity Lutheran Church, Worcester

PERFORMERS

soprano: Cynthia Linkas, Liz Hanna, Ruthie Miller, Sarah Riskind

alto: Anney Gillotte, Kate Gyllensvärd, Anne Kazlauskas, Anne Matthews, Elisabeth Winterkorn

tenor: Darryl Abbey, Evan Ingersoll, Ron Lacro, Logan McCarty, Myer Nore

bass: Christopher Chase, Michael Dettelbach, Jeff Kline, John Nesby

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PROGRAM

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum

Orlandus Lassus (1530/32–1594)

Prologue, parts I – IV

Ad Dominum cum tribularer clamavi

Hans Leo Hassler (1564–1612)

Adesto dolori meo

Alexander Utendal (c. 1530–1581)

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum

parts V – VIII

Dura mia pietra viva

Vincenzo Galilei (c. 1520–1591)

D'orrida selce alpina

Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672)

—INTERMISSION—

Mirabile mysterium

Jacob Gallus (1550–1591)

Seigneur Dieu ta pitié s'estende dessus moy

Guillaume Costeley (1530/31–1606)

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum

parts IX – XII

O salutaris hostia

William Byrd (1539/40–1623)

Per non mi dir ch'io moia

Michelangelo Rossi (1601/2–1656)

NOTES

Most listeners are acquainted with the concept of the musical scale, an arrangement of intervals (i.e. distances from one note to the next) that form the building blocks of both melody and harmony in most compositions in the Western art music tradition. Music of the Baroque period and later which employs mostly these pitches, to the exclusion of those outside the scale, is said to be diatonic, while pieces employing an abundance of extra notes is generally labelled chromatic.

Similar nomenclature applies to music of the Renaissance, with the adjustment that the seven-note scale is replaced by the six-note hexachord. The hexachord includes most of the familiar major scale, leaving off the seventh degree, and can furthermore be found in only three positions, starting on C, F, or G, called respectively the “natural,” “soft” and “hard” hexachords. (The soft hexachord, in its unaltered form, always implies the inclusion of a B-flat, such that all three hexachords have an identical arrangement of tones and semitones). The six notes of the hexachord were sung on syllables quite similar to the modern note names of most Romance-language speaking countries, except that “do” was instead “ut,” thus: ut-re-mi-fa-sol-la. Note that there is only one half-step in this sequence, between mi and fa, and thus the hexachord is intervallically symmetrical. The system of hexachords was developed as an aid to singing Gregorian chant, especially for the novice singer to know where to sing mi-fa, i.e., the half-step interval. The Medieval theorist Guido of Arezzo lent his name to the arrangement of the various hexachords into the mnemonic device known as the Guidonian hand. The makeup of the “hand” set limits on both the available pitches and the overall compass of musical space in mind of the music theorist and

composer. (The concept of “running the gamut,” meaning “to cover an entire compass,” comes from the notation of the very lowest note on the Guidonian hand, Gamma Ut, i.e. low G.)

By far the longest work, or rather series of pieces, on tonight’s program is the Sibylline Prophecies of Orlandus Lassus. The prophecies of Sibyls — typically women who, in a state of ecstasy, foretell future events — have a long written tradition. From classical Greek and Roman culture they found their way into the Judeo-Christian tradition via Jews living in Greece, and by the early Christian period certain ostensibly ancient texts emerged which predicted the coming of Jesus Christ. The humanist climate of the sixteenth century only encouraged the connection between the world of the “cultured pagan” of ancient Greece and Rome and the Christian of that time, so it is no surprise that these Sibylline prophets would find their way into sacred art. (Michelangelo even included Sibyls alongside prophets of the Old Testament on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.)

It is into this tradition that the text and music of Lassus’ setting fall: twelve statements by twelve different Sibyls, preceded by a prologue, which proclaim each woman’s take on the story of Jesus, primarily referring to his birth and his role as savior of mankind. This thirteen-part work was a presentation piece to Lassus’ patron, Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria, and there can be little doubt of the connection between the mystical, pagan storytellers and Lassus’ pervading use of chromaticism, both as a reference to mysticism more generally and the attempted rediscovery of ancient Greek music theory more specifically. In a work of such relentless chromatic texture, coupled with its relatively

understated, late *stile antico* style, the chromaticism becomes something accepted, even expected, as if this is a musical language unto itself rather than an aberration from standard practices.

A different entryway into chromaticism, or moving “beyond the gamut,” involves *musica ficta*. *Musica ficta* is the practice of chromatically altering notes to employ pitches that exist outside the collection of notes prescribed by the Guidonian hand. Certain contexts (cadential formulae, avoiding tritones, etc.) typically imply that a performer is obliged to chromatically alter a particular pitch. It is possible to compose in such a way as to force the repeated or continued use of altered notes, such that one seems to modulate to another key area, even though on the page everything looks “normal.” This was Costeley’s intention in *Seigneur Dieu*: each of the three parts sounds quite diatonic, save what seems like a short disruptive passage, followed by another diatonic section in another tonality. Were you to see the music form which *Convivium* is reading (a modern scholarly edition), these movements are riddled with editorial flats, forced by the principles of *musica ficta* to be added to the score.

A number of selections take as their points of departure a chromatic scale, and we have intentionally juxtaposed several of them for comparison. The opening motive of Hassler’s “Ad Dominum cum tribularer clamavi” suggests both the suffering of the speaker and a gesture to God above for salvation. Utendal may have something similar in mind when his speaker asks God to be present at his suffering.

The chromaticism in William Byrd’s motet emerges from a different compositional technique, namely

canon. The literal repetition of one voice by another yields a texture where notes frequently sound against or near their chromatically altered counterparts. The piece survives in manuscript only, perhaps too daring an experiment to cross the publisher’s desk.

Three Italian madrigals are included on tonight’s program. That of Schütz is perhaps the least daring from a chromatic point of view, but his is most evocative of the growing awareness of cadence formulae in the early seventeenth century. Such embellished patterns of dominant-tonic (sometimes without the tonic resolution), especially in minor, can contain strong dissonances. Coupled with unexpected modulations, the hard-heartedness of the poet’s would-be lover is painted to full effect.

Of all the works on tonight’s program, the madrigal of Michelangelo Rossi makes the most overtly dramatic use of chromaticism. Lassus, Hassler, Utendal, and others employ no less chromaticism as a percentage of the overall texture of their respective works, but there is still a restraint of compositional style such that the chromatic writing is more an accepted component of the aesthetic than a tool for surprising twists and turns. In contrast, Rossi uses the media of both chromatic writing and the madrigal to evoke a tortured soul who equates unrequited love with death itself.

Finally, a surprise awaits the audience that applauds long enough!

—Michael Barrett

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum

PROLOGUE

Carmina Chromatico, quæ audis modulata tenore,
Hæc sunt illa quibus nostræ olim arcana salutis
Bis senæ intrepido cecinerunt ore sibyllæ.

I. PERSICA

Virgine matre satus pando residebit asello,
Jucundus princeps unus qui ferre salutem
Rite queat lapsis tamen illis forte diebus.
Multi multa ferent immensi fata laboris.
Solo sed satis est oracula prodere verbo:
Ille Deus casta nascetur virgine magnus

II. LIBYCA

Ecce dies venient, quo æterno tempore princeps
Irradians sata læta viris sui crimina tollet,
Lumine clarescet. Cuius synagoga recenti;
Sordida qui solus reserabit labra reorum.
Æquis erit cunctis, gremio rex membra reclinet
Reginæ mundi, sanctus per sæcula vivus.

III. DELPHICA

Non tarde veniet, tacita sed mente tenendum
Hoc opus, hoc memori semper, qui corde reponet
Huius pertendant cor gaudia magna Prophetæ
Eximia, qui virginea conceptus ab alvo
Prodibit, sine contactu maris omnia vincit
Hoc naturæ opera, at fecit qui cuncta gubernat.

IV. CIMMERIA

In teneris annis, facie insignis honore
Militiæ æternæ regem sacra virgo cibavit
Lacte suo, per quem gaudebunt pectore summo
Omnia, et E-o-o lucebit sydus abore Mirificum.
Sua dona magi cum laude ferentes
Objicient puero myrram, aurum, thura sabæa.

Ad Dominum, cum tribularer clamivi: et exaudivit me.
Domine, libera animam meam a labiis iniquis,
et a lingua dolosa.

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

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

*Behold the days will come, at which time the immortal
prince, sowing abundant crops, shall take away their
crimes from men, whose synagogue will shine with new
light; he alone shall open the soiled lips of the accused, he
shall be just to all; let the king, holy, living for all ages,
recline his limbs in the bosom of the queen of the world.*

*He shall not come slowly (but this work must be held with
quiet thought), he who will ever store this in a mindful
heart, why his prophets may announce great joys of this
exalted one, who shall come forth conceived from the
virginal womb without taint of man. This conquers all
the works of nature: yet he has done this who governs all
things.*

*In her tender years, distinguished with beauty, in honor
the holy virgin will feed the king of the eternal host with
her milk; through whom all things will rejoice with up-
lifted heart, and in the east will shine a marvelous star:
Magi bringing their gifts with praise shall present to the
child myrrh, gold, Sabaean frankincense.*

*In my trouble I cried to the Lord: and he heard me.
O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips,
and a deceitful tongue.
(Ps. 119: 1 & 2, Douay Rheims Bible translation)*

Adeſto dolori meo, Deus,
nimium fatigor,
et cecidit in luſtum cythara mea,
et cantatio mea in plorationem.

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum

V. SAMIA

Ecce dies, nigras quæ tollet læta tenebras,
Mox veniet solvens nodosa volumina vatum
Gentis Judææ. Referent, ut carmina plebis
Hunc poterunt, clarum virorum tangere regem,
Humano quem virgo sinu inviolata fovebit.
Annuit hoc cœlum rutilantia sidera monſtrant.

VI. CUMANA

Jam mea certa manent et vera novissima verba,
Ultima venturi, quod erant oracula regis,
Qui toti veniens mundo cum pace placebit,
Ut voluit noſtra veſtitus carne decenter,
In cunctis humilis. Caſtam pro matre puellam
Deliget. Hæc alias forma præceſſerit omnes.

VII. HELLESPONTICA

Dum meditor quondam, vidi decorare puellam
Eximio caſtam, quod se ſervaret honore
Munera digna suo et divino numine visa,
Quæ sobolem multo pareret ſplendore micantem
Progenies ſummi ſpeciosa et vera tonantis
Pacifica mundum, qui ſub ditione gubernet.

VIII. PHRYGIA

Ipsa Deum vidi ſummum punire volentem
Mundi homines ſtupidos et pectora cæca rebellis,
Et quia ſic noſtram completerent crimina pellem.
Virginis in corpus voluit demittere cœlo
Ipſe Deus prolem, quam nuntiat angelus alma
Matri quo miſeros contracto ſorte lavaret.

*Be present at my suffering, O God,
I am exceedingly vexed,
and my lute has descended into sorrow,
and my song into wailing.*

*Behold, the joyful day which shall lift the black darkness
will soon come and unravel the knotty writings of the
prophets of the Judean tribe, as the people's songs tell.
They shall be able to touch this glorious ruler of the living,
whom an unstained virgin will nurture at a human
breast. This the heavens promise, this the glowing stars
show.*

*Now my most recent words shall remain certain and true,
because they were the last oracles of the king to come, Who,
coming for the whole world with peace, shall be pleased, as
he intended, to be clothed fitly in our flesh, humble in all
things. He shall choose a chaste maiden for his mother; she
shall exceed all others in beauty.*

*Once while I was reflecting, I saw him adorn a maiden
with great honor (because she kept herself chaste); She
seemed worthy through his gift and divine authority to
give birth to a glorious offspring with great splendor: the
beautiful and true child of the highest Thunderer, who
would rule the world with peaceful authority.*

*I myself saw the high God wishing to punish the stupid
men of the earth and the blind heart of the rebel.
And because crimes shall thus fill our skin, God himself
wished to send from heaven into the body of a virgin his
son, which the angel shall announce to the fostering moth-
er, so that he may raise the wretches from the uncleanness
they have contracted.*

Dura mia pietra viva,

Non è sì duro scoglio,
 Non è sì freddo marmo in questa riva
 Ove il mio duol si scriva e'l mio cor doglio
 Che non si rompa e scaldi.
 Tu sola à miei soſpir pietosi e caldi,
 Tu sola agghiacci e te piu dura io veggio
 Quand'io piangendo piu mercè ti chieggio.

*How hard you are, my lovely living jewel,
 There is no rock that is so hard,
 Marble in the icy river is not as cold,
 You are unable to be broken or melted,
 (missing a line?)
 And the more I piteously sigh the colder your blood runs,
 And the more I warmly implore you the harder you
 become.
 — translation by Tracy Cowart*

D'orrida selce alpina,

cred'io, Donna, nasceſti,
 e dalle tigri ircane
 il latte aveſti...
 S'inesorabil sei, sì dura a'pregni miei.
 O se' pur tigre, anzi pur selce,
 ahi lasso...
 ch'entro un petto di fera
 hai cor di sasso.
 — text by Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538 – 1612)

*Of grim (frightful) alpine flint,
 I believe, Lady, you were born,
 and by the Hyrcanian tiger
 were you suckled.
 (you are) as cold (hard) to my prayers
 as the tiger and the flinty rock.
 Alas!
 that in a beast's breast
 you should have (such) a heart of stone.
 (Hyrcania — in the ancient world a region around
 the southern shores of the Caspian Sea; meant to
 denote a realm of remoteness and wildness.)*

Mirabile mysterium

declaratur hodie
 innovantur naturæ
 Deus homo factus est,
 id, quod fuit, permansit,
 et quod non erat, assumpsit,
 non commixtionem passus
 neque divisionem.

*A great mystery
 is declared today
 Natures are changed:
 God is made man.
 That which was, remains;
 and that which was not has been taken up,
 having suffered neither mixture
 nor division.*

I.

Seigneur Dieu ta pitié s'estende dessus moy
 Car ò Seigneur je suis en un terrible esmoy
 Mon deſtin m'eſt cruel il m'occit & me force,
 Bien que de tous mes sens encontre luy m'efforce.

*Lord God, your mercy stretches out above me
 Since, O Lord, I am in a terrible state
 My destiny is cruel to me, it cuts me down & compels me,
 Although with all my senses I endeavor against it.*

II.

Hélas Seigneur sans toy je suis comme un roseau
 Vuide de son humeur desseiché dens sa peau

*Alas, Lord, without you I am like a reed
 Devoid of its temperament, dried up upon its skin*

Aide moy donc Seigneur, ton conseil admirable
 Me retire du sort qui me rend miserable.

*Help me then, Lord, let your great counsel
 draw me back from the sort which make me miserable.*

III.

A toy sont les hautz cieux à toy le firmament
 Seul tu les peux changer ensemble en un moment
 Change donc si'il te plait mon mal & me conforte
 Car tu prometz ouvrir à qui frappe à la porte.

*To you belong the high heavens, to you the firmament,
 You alone can change them all in a moment.
 Change, then, if it please you, my wickedness, & comfort me
 For you promise to let in those who knock on the gate.*

Prophetiæ Sibyllarum**IX. EUROPÆA**

Virginis æternum veniet de corpore verbum purum.
 Qui valles et montes transiet altos,
 ille volens etiam stellato missus olympo
 Edetur mundo pauper, qui cuncta
 silenti rex erit imperio.
 Sic credo et mente fatebor:
 Humano simul et divino semine natus.

*From the body of a virgin shall come forth the pure word
 eternal, who shall cross valleys and high mountains.
 He, willingly sent even from starry Olympus,
 will be sent into the world a pauper, who shall rule all
 creation with silent power.
 Thus I believe and shall acknowledge in my heart:
 He is the child of both divine and human seed.*

X. TYBURTINA

Verax ipse Deus dedit hæc mihi munia fandi
 Carmine, quod sanctam potui monstrare puellam.
 Concipiet, quæ Nazareis in finibus illum,
 Quem sub carne Deum Bethlemitica rura videbunt.
 O nimium felix cælo dignissima mater,
 Quæ tantam sacro lactabit ab ubere prolem.

*The truthful God himself gave me these gifts of prophecy,
 that I might proclaim in song the holy virgin who shall
 conceive in Nazareth's bounds that God whom Bethle-
 hem's lands shall see in the flesh.
 O most happy mother, worthy of Heaven,
 who shall nurse such a child from her holy breast.*

XI. ERYTHRÆA

Cerno Dei natum, qui se dimisit ab alto.
 Ultima felices referent cum tempora soles.
 Hebræa, quem virgo feret de stirpe decora,
 In terris multum teneris passurus ab annis.
 Magnus erit tamen hic divino carmine vates
 Virgine matre satus, prudenti pectore verax.

*I behold the son of God, who sent himself from on high,
 when the joyful days shall bring the last times. He whom
 the comely virgin shall bear from the Hebrew lineage, he
 who shall suffer much on earth from his tender years on,
 he shall nevertheless be here a great seer in godly prophecy,
 the son of a virgin mother, truthful and of a wise heart.*

XII. AGRIPPA

Summus erit sub carne satus carissimus atque
 Virginis et vere complevit viscera sanctum
 Verbum consilio sine noxa spiritus almi,
 Despectus multis tamen ille salutis amore
 Arguet et nostra commissa piacula culpa,
 Cuius honos constans et gloria certa manebit.

*The highest and dearest shall be born in the flesh the son
 of the true virgin, and the holy word shall fill the womb of
 the maiden through the pure intention of the nurturing
 spirit; although contemptible to many, he, for love of our
 salvation, will censure the sins committed by our guilt;
 his honor shall remain constant and his glory certain.*

O salutaris hostia

Quæ cæli pandis hostium;
Bella premunt hostilia,
da robur fer auxilium. Amen.

Per non mi dir ch'io moia,

Dicemi ch'io non l'ami,
Quest'empia e par che brami
Togliendomi l'amor, tormi la noia.
S'amor è vita e gioia
Priva d'amor non morrà l'alma mia?
Donna fallace e ria
Come sa ben mentir forme, colori!
Tanto è dir "non amar"
quanto è dir "mori"!

*O saving sacrifice,
That openest the gate of heaven;
Hostile wars oppress,
Give strength, bear aid. Amen.*

*Instead of telling me to die
she tells me not to love her,
this harpy, and it seems she wants,
by relieving me of love, to relieve my sorrow.
If love is life and joy,
without love will my heart not die?
Deceitful and wicked lady,
how artfully can she dissimulate!
Saying "do not love me"
is tantamount to saying "die"!*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

CONVIVIUM MUSICUM was recently praised in *Early Music America* for providing “the kind of transforming experience that concert junkies are always seeking.” Over its 20 year history, Convivium has grown to consistently delight audiences with its lively and intelligent attention to texts, rhythmic precision, and accuracy of pitch and tuning. Proud of its innovative programming, the twenty-voice choir is committed to presenting rarely-performed pieces of lesser-known composers as well as masterworks by the likes of Byrd, Josquin, and Victoria in concerts of deep and revealing focus. Convivium Musicum has released *Song of Songs: Music of Renaissance Spain and the New World*, a CD with pieces based on texts from the Song of Songs, and *Dido's Lament & other music by Franco-Flemish Composers, c. 1500–1600*. A third CD featuring the music of Josquin is being planned. Now in our third season with music director Michael Barrett, Convivium Musicum continues its dedication to bringing Renaissance polyphony that is “delightfully varied and inventive in its presentation” to new venues and new audiences. Come join us, and be transformed!

MICHAEL BARRETT is active in the Boston area as a singer, conductor and teacher. Prior to making Boston his home in 2004, Mr. Barrett spent four years studying and working in The Netherlands. While in Europe he was a member of the Huelgas Ensemble, the Netherlands Bach Society and the Hemony Ensemble. In Boston Mr. Barrett is Music Director of L'Académie, a professional Baroque ensemble; Sprezzatura, a professional vocal ensemble for Renaissance and early Baroque repertoire; and Convivium Musicum, a Renaissance chamber choir.

As a singer Mr. Barrett has collaborated with the Boston Camerata, Blue Heron, Seven Times Salt, and Boston Secession. Mr. Barrett has performed in the two most recent opera productions of the Boston Early Music Festival. Mr. Barrett maintains a studio for private instruction in voice, piano and music theory. He has also worked as a workshop leader in professional development courses and for Oakridge Music Schools in Vancouver, Canada. Mr. Barrett is involved in music curriculum development for IMC, also based in Vancouver.

Mr. Barrett earned an AB in music from Harvard University, an MM in choir conducting from Indiana University in Bloomington, and a first phase diploma in Baroque and Classical singing from the Royal Conservatory in The Hague.

COLOPHON

cover image: A typical Guidonian Hand diagram, from a 15th-century Mantuan manuscript, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

text: Program text is set in Adobe *Garamond Premier Pro*; titles are in DSType *NERVA*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Convivium would like to thank the parish of St. John's Episcopal Church, Charlestown, for providing us a home for many years. We thank our concert hosts: First Church in Cambridge, Congregational; Dignity Boston and the Church of St. John the Evangelist; the parish of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Brookline; and Dr. Ruth Westheimer at Trinity Lutheran Church, Worcester. As always, we thank Evan Ingersoll for his elegant brochure and program design; "Doc" Davis for recording; Erik Bertrand for diligent webmastery, and Sheila Beardslee Bosworth for publicity. Special thanks to Anney Gillotte for editorial assistance.

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The Master Singers: www.themastersingers.org
Musica Sacra: www.musicasacra.org
Nashoba Valley Chorale: www.nashobachorale.org
Neponset Choral Society: www.ncschorus.org
Newburyport Choral Society: www.newburyportchoralsociety.org
New England Classical Singers: www.newenglandclassical.org
Newton Choral Society: www.newtonchoral.org
Newton Community Chorus: www.NewtonCommunityChorus.org
The Newton Singers: Newton_Singers@yahoo.com
The Oriana Consort: www.theorianaconsort.org
The Orpheus Singers: www.orpheussingers.org
The Paul Madore Chorale: www.paulmadorechorale.org
Pilgrim Festival Chorus: www.pilgrimfestival.org
Polymnia Choral Society: www.polymnia.org
Schola Amicorum: jwsrjwsr@gmail.com
Seraphim Singers: www.seraphimsingers.org
Sharing A New Song: www.sharinganewsong.org
Somerville Community Chorus: www.somervillechorus.com
Sounds of Stow Festival Chorus & Orchestra: www.soundsofstow.com
The Spectrum Singers: www.spectrumsingers.org
Ståmbandet - The Scandinavian Vocal Ensemble: www.stambandet.org
The Treble Chorus of New England: www.treblechorus.com
Wellesley Choral Society: www.wellesleychoralsociety.org
Westford Chorus: www.westfordchorus.org
Youth Pro Musica: www.youthpromusica.org
Zamir Chorale of Boston: www.zamir.org



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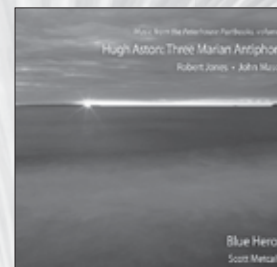


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