

OBERLIN COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

THE COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

IN

*A Concert of Hymns, Antiphons, and Stanzas
Praising the Virgin Mary*

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PROCESSIONAL Jesu corona virginum . . . *Balthasar Harzer*
(c. 1480-1544)

Jesus, the Virgin's Crown, do thou
Accept us as in prayer we bow
Born of that Virgin whom alone
The Mother and the Maid we own.

Amongst the lilies thou doest feed
With Virgin Chorus accompanied
With glory decked, the spotless brides
Whose bridal gifts thy love provides.

FAIRCHILD CHAPEL, BOSWORTH HALL, SUNDAY, MAY 28, 1967, 8:00 P. M.

I

Ave maris stella John Dunstable
(c. 1370-1453)

MEN'S CHORUS

Soloists: Steven Schwartz, *bass*
Barry Busse, *bass*
Thomas Pellaton, *bass*

Hail, star of the sea, God's kindly mother
and ever virgin, happy gate of heaven.
Receiving that "Ave" from the lips of Gabriel,
establish us in peace, changing Eva's name.
Break the bonds of sinners, bring light to the blind,
drive away our ills, and pray that we may receive
every blessing.
Show thyself a mother. May he who, in order to
be born for us, deigned to be thy son, receive our
prayers at thy intercession.
Incomparable virgin, gentle beyond all others,
make us, when freed from our sins, gentle and
pure also.
Give us purity of life, make life's journey safe
for us, so that we may see Jesus and rejoice
together forever. Amen.

Regina caeli Antoine Brumel
(c. 1475-1520)

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Soloists: Nancy Huysman, *soprano*
Frank Spoto, *tenor*
David Isele, *bass*
Barry Busse, *bass*

Queen of Heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.
Because of Him whom you were worthy to bear.
Alleluia. He is risen as he said. Alleluia.
Pray for us to God. Alleluia.

Ave Regina caelorum Guillaume Dufay
(c. 1400-1474)

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Salve Regina att. Hermannus Contractus
(1013-1054)

MEN'S CHORUS

Hail, queen of mercy. Hail, our life, our joy, our hope. To thee we cry,
banished children of Eve. To thee do we sigh, groaning in this vale of tears.
Turn, then, O thou our advocate, those merciful eyes of thine toward us;
and when this our exile is over show us to Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy
womb, O merciful, kind, sweet Mary.

Musica Sopra le Stanze del Petrarca in
Laude della Madonna

Cipriano de Rore
(c. 1516-1565)

Vergine bella, che di sol vestita

Beautiful Virgin, clothed by the sun, by the stars crowned thou so pleased the sublime Sun that He concealed His light in thee; Love moves me to speak of thee, but I cannot begin without thy help, and that of Him who lovingly placed Himself in thee. I invoke her who always responded to those who appealed to her with faith. O Virgin, if ever the extreme misery of human affairs has moved thee to pity, yield to my prayer; help me in my struggle, though I am earth and thou art Queen of Heaven.

Vergine saggia, e del bel numer' una

Wise Virgin, one of the lovely number of blessed prudent virgins and even the first, and with the brightest lamp; O shield, steady against the blows of Death and Fortune, under which one triumphs, not merely escapes; O, relief from the blind ardors which rage here amongst foolish mortals. Virgin, turn towards my doubt those beautiful eyes which sadly saw the cruel bruises on the delicate limbs of thy dear son; turn towards me who, needing counsel, comes to thee.

Vergine pura, d'ogni part' intera

Pure Virgin, perfect in all ways, both noble daughter and mother at birth, who illuminates this life and adorns the other; O proud window in a brilliant sky, through thee, thy son, and the Supreme Father's, came to save us in our days of disorder; and amongst all other terrestrial mansions, thou alone wert chosen, Blessed Virgin, who turnest Eve's sobbing into joy. Since thou canst make me worthy of His grace, O blessed beyond limits, long crowned in celestial realms.

Vergine santa, d'ogni gratia piena

Holy Virgin, complete in every grace, who in true and deep humility rose to heaven where thou listenest to my prayers; thou brought forth the fount of piety, the sun of justice which calms our world, heavy with dark, dense error. Three sweet, dear names dost thou gather in thyself, of mother, daughter, wife; Glorious Virgin, lady of that King who has undone our bonds and made the world free and happy; and with His holy wounds, I pray thee calm my heart, O true beautifier.

Vergine sola al mondo, senz' esempio

Virgin, unique and original, whose beauty inspired the love of heaven, for whom there was neither predecessor, nor parallel, nor successor; holy thoughts, pious and pure actions made thy fertile virginity a sacred and living temple for the true God. Through thee my life can be gladdened, by thy prayers, O Mary, sweet and pious Virgin; where there was weakness now grace abounds. With my mind's knees bent I pray thee be my guide, and direct my twisting path to a good end.

Vergine chiara et stabile in eterno

Virgin, bright and fixed eternally in this tempestuous sea, dependable guide for every faithful pilot; note the terrible gale in which I find myself, alone, without direction, already near my last gasping cries. But my

soul is still trusting thee. Although sinful, I do not deny it, Virgin; but I pray that thine enemy not smile upon my pain. Thou dost remember that, to free us from our sins, God took on human flesh in thy virginal cloister.

Vergine, quante lagrim' ho gia sparte

Virgin, how many tears have I already shed in vain, how many praises and how many prayers, for nothing but my pain and deep loss! Ever since I was born on the shores of the Arno, wandering and seeking now this, now that, my life has been only torment. Beauty of form, of deed and word, have burdened my soul. Sacred and divine Virgin, do not delay, for I have probably reached by end. My days have all flown by more quickly than an arrow, and Death alone awaits me.

Vergine, tale e terra e post' ha in doglia

Virgin, she who whilst yet alive kept my heart in tears and knew nothing of its thousand pangs, is now earth and I am grieving; and, had she known, what did not happen might have happened, although her response would have meant death for me and ill fame for her. Now thou, lady of heaven, thou our goddess, (if it is fitting to say so), Virgin with deep perception, thou seest all; and thy great power can achieve what none other can. Put an end to my pain, so that honor be thine, and health mine.

Vergine, in cui ho tutta mia speranza

Virgin, in whom I place my hopes, help me in my great need; do not abandon me in this extreme pass; look not to me but to Him who deigned to create me, not to my worth but to His lofty image in me, which might move thee to care for so base a man. Medusa and my sin have turned me to stone, vainly oozing many tears. Virgin, fill my weary heart with saintly, pious tears, so that my last cry at least will be devout, devoid of earthly mire, as my first was not devoid of madness.

Vergin humana e nemica d'orgoglio

Virgin, human and enemy of pride, may love of our common origin persuade thee. Take pity on a heart contrite and humble; for if I can love so small a bit of fallen mortal dust with such marvelous fidelity, what could I do for thee, noble creature? If I rise again, by thy hand, from my vile and miserable state, Virgin, in thy name I consecrate and cleanse my thoughts and talent and style, heart and tongue, tears and sighs. Show me the best passage, and welcome my changed desires.

Il di s'apressa, e non puot' esser lunge

The day hurries, and cannot be far off; time runs and flies, unique Virgin; now conscience, now death goads my heart. Intercede for me with thy Son, true Man and true God, so that he receives my ultimate breath in peace.

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Soloists: Nicola Stechow, *soprano*
Frank Spoto, *tenor*
Barry Busse, *bass*
Steven Schwartz, *bass*

ANTIPHONS: Only four Marian antiphons remain in the liturgy. During the thirteenth century each was assigned to a season of the church year and was disassociated from its role as a frame to the verses of a psalm. Each antiphon thus developed as an independent melody presented at the conclusion of the Office Hours. *Salve Regina*, sung from Trinity Sunday until Advent, is possibly the oldest of the four. The text and music have often been attributed to Herman the Cripple, a monk living at Reichenau during the eleventh century. Countless polyphonic versions of the antiphons have been written over the centuries. Dufay's setting of the Lenten *Ave Regina caelorum* was obviously a favorite of the composer for he designated in his will that it be performed at his funeral. His version established a new trend for similar compositions during the last of the fifteenth century. The plainsong appears in the tenor instead of the then more usual upper voice, and fragments of the melody are introduced into the other voices as well. In Brumel's somewhat later paraphrase of *Regina caeli* the melody permeates equally into all of the voices. The text abounds in alleluias appropriate to the Easter and post-Lenten season.

HYMNS: St. Ambrose established the most popular metrical form for the Latin hymn. The verse consists of four lines of iambic dimeters. *Jesu corona virginum* is an example of this type. Harzer's setting anticipates the much later chorale preludes of German Baroque composers. The hymn unfolds straightforwardly in long notes over agitated rhythms in the two lower voices. Dunstable's *Ave maris stella* demonstrates an almost invariable fifteenth-century practice. The composer wrote a polyphonic setting for the even-numbered verses of the hymn and left the others to be sung in plainsong. The polyphony is in typical English descant style, the melody appearing somewhat ornamented in the treble voice.

STANZAS: The strophe of the canzone is termed stanza ("room") because, according to Dante, it was "the receptacle of all art." Subsequent stanzas in a canzone merely repeat the metric pattern and rhyme scheme established in the initial stanza. Petrarch's canzone *Vergine bella* embodies ten stanzas of thirteen lines each and concludes with a shortened stanza, or *commiato*, of seven lines. De Rore was the first to undertake a polyphonic setting of the complete canzone. Written during the composer's period of service under Duke Ercole II of Ferrara, the cycle was probably performed during Holy Week. The music is rich in word painting and imagery.

PERFORMANCE: The preponderance of vocal works printed during the Renaissance gives a misleading impression as to the importance of instruments. Chronicles and paintings of the time clearly disclose that "a cappella" performances of vocal pieces were not frequent. Instrumental doublings of the voices, various combinations of instruments and voices, or arrangements for instruments alone were far more common. Instrumentation would vary according to facilities of the court or cathedral and, indeed, probably varied for each performance of a work. The printed page provides only an outline for a myriad of possible realizations of any Renaissance composition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mr. and Mrs. Vinio Rossi for their translation of Petrarch's *Vergine bella*. Our gratitude also to the First Church and Mr. Henry Palmer who have generously provided handbells for the processional.

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L. D. NUERNBERGER, *Director*

Instrumentalists

Maria Benotti	Deborah Marcus
Don Cohn	Janet Moseman
Pamela Crane	Dennis Pillsbury
Paul Hailperin	James Still
George Jolly	Marta Tobey
Donald Lennartson	Glenys Waldman
Jean Loft	David Witter

Singers

Ruth Alperson	Jane Lynch
Ruth Belchetz	Thomas Pellaton
James Bellows	Edward Reardon
Barry Busse	Steven Schwartz
Linda Cauthen	Mary Siegchrist
Francois Clemmons	Gregory Smith
Merrilyn Dow	Frank Spoto
Ann Evans	Barbara Sproat
Nancy Huysman	Nicola Stechow
David Isele	Sharron Szabo
Dorothy Jenkins	Anne Watterud
J. Reilly Lewis	Jeremy Warner
Christine Lord	