

OBERLIN COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

THE
COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

The Song of Solomon
An eternal enigma

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1975

FAIRCHILD CHAPEL

NOVEMBER 30, 4:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 6, 4:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 7, 4:30 P.M.

PROLOGUE: LITERALISM VS. ALLEGORY

Chapter, Verse
(Vulgate)

1:4, 3 *Trahe me post te* Jacob Handl (Gallus)
(1550-1591)

Draw me, we will run after you. Because of the savor of your
good ointments, your name is like an ointment poured forth.

WOMEN'S CHORUS

QUAE EST ISTA? (6:9) Handl

Who is she that looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon,
clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with two banners?

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Paraphrase
of 1:4

Trahe nos, virgo immaculate, post te Antiphon

Draw us, immaculate virgin, we will run after you
because of the savor of your ointments.

WOMEN'S CHORUS

I. WHO IS SHE?

QUAE EST ISTA? (6:9) Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(Who is she that looks . . .) (1524-1594)

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

2:2-3 *Sicut lilium inter spinas* Sebastián de Vivanco
(c. 1550-1622)

As a lily among thorns, so is my beloved among women.
As an apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my lover
among men. I delight to rest in his shadow, and his fruit
is sweet to my mouth.

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2:1-6 *Ich bin ein Blumen zu Saron* Leonard Lechner
(c. 1550-1606)

I am a flower of Sharon and a rose of the valley. As a rose among
the thorns, so is my beloved among women. As an apple tree
among the wild trees of the forest, so is my beloved among men.
I delight to rest in his shadow, and his fruit is sweet to my mouth.
He brings me into the banquet hall, and his emblem over me is love.
He strengthens me with flowers and refreshes me with apples,
for I am faint with love.

Janet Meyers, *mezzo-soprano*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

2:10 *Surge, propera, amica mea* Handl

(Arise, make haste, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!
For now the winter is past, the rains are over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth. The time of pruning has come.)

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

INTRAVIT MARIA IN DOMUM ZACHARIAE (Luke 1:40) Antiphon

Mary entered the house of Zachary and greeted Elizabeth.

MEN'S CHORUS

ELISABETH ZACHARIAE (Motet) Francisco Guerrero
(1528-1599)

Elizabeth, the wife of Zachary, gave birth to a great man —
John the Baptist, the precursor of the Lord. Alleluia.

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QUAE EST ISTA? (Paraphrase of 6:9) Vivanco

Who is she who comes forth like the sun, and beautiful
as Jerusalem? "How blessed!" proclaim all of the angels, and the
earthly hierarchy says, "Blessed are you among women!" Alleluia.

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2:15-17

Fahet uns die Füchse

Lechner

Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that damage the vineyards;
for our vineyards are in bloom. My lover is mine, and I am his.
He browses among the roses until the day cools and
the shadows lengthen. Return, my beloved, like a gazelle
or a young stag to the mountain slopes.

Janet Meyers, *mezzo-soprano*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

2:13-14

Surge, amica mea

Constanzo Festa

(c. 1490-1545)

Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!
My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the secret recesses
of the cliff, let me see you. Let me hear your voice,
for your voice is sweet, and you are lovely.

Nancy Freitas and Victoria Pfann, *mezzo-sopranos*Ross Brown, *tenor*

II. THE GARDEN

4:12; 2:10

Hortus conclusus

Antiphon

An enclosed garden is my sister, an enclosed garden,
a fountain sealed. Arise, make haste, my beloved.

Ross Brown, *tenor*4:12; 5:2;
2:10*Hortus conclusus*

Rodrigo Ceballos

(c. 1530-c. 1580)

An enclosed garden is my sister, my spouse, an enclosed garden
and a fountain sealed. Open to me, O my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled.
Arise, make haste, my love, and come away.

Beverly Olson and Anne Sautebin, *sopranos*Ross Brown, *tenor*Douglas Hines, *baritone*

6:10, 12, 13

Gaude super omnia
Descendi in hortum meum
Alma [redemptoris mater]

Bamberg MS

(13th century)

(TRIPLUM: Praise above all, Mother Church, to the celestial virgin
and solemn mother through whom the heavens were restored to us, lost
through Eve's leaving. Praise. Therefore all say: "O virgin queen,
praise to you, glory to you! Intercede with your Son to grant us
happiness. O sweet, pious Mary!")

DUPLUM: I went down into my garden to see the fruits of the valley,
and to see whether the vine flourished, and if the pomegranates budded.
Return, return, O Shulamite, that we may look upon you.

Douglas Hines, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

6:10, 11, 13

Descendi in ortum meum
(I went down into my garden. . .)

Josquin des Prez

(c. 1450-1521)

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

5:6-7

6:10, 11, 13

Anima mea liquefacta est
Descendi in hortum meum
Alma

Montpellier MS

(13th century)

TRIPLUM: My soul failed when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not
find him. I called him, but he gave me no answer.

The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me,
they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

DUPLUM: I went down into my garden . . .

Cheryl Wampler, *soprano*Douglas Hines, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

III. THE TROUBLED DREAM

- 5:6 *Anima mea liquefacta est* Antiphon
 My soul failed when he spoke.
 WOMEN'S CHORUS
- 5:6-8 *Anima mea liquefacta est* Orlandus Lassus
 (1532-1594)
 My soul failed when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him.
 I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went
 about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me;
 the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. Daughters
 of Jerusalem, announce to my beloved that for love I languish.
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- 5:6-8 *Anima mea liquefacta est* Guillaume Dufay
 (c. 1400-1474)
 My soul failed . . .
 James Radomski, *bass*
 INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

IV. IN PRAISE OF BEAUTY

- 4:7, 11, 10 *Tota pulchra es, amica mea* Antiphon
 You are fair, my love, there is no spot in thee. Your lips
 drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under your tongue.
 The aroma of your ointments is better than all spices.
 Michael Maguire, *baritone*
- Tota pulchra es* (Capirola Lute Book) Nicolas Craen
 (fl. 1505)
 Michael Manderen, *lute*
- Paraphrase
 of 4:7 *Tota pulchra es, Maria* Antiphon
 You are fair, Mary, and there is no original sin in you.
 WOMEN'S CHORUS
- 4:8; 2:10 *Veni de Libano* Heinrich Schütz
 (1585-1672)
 Come with me from Lebanon, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one.
 O how beautiful you are, my beloved! Come, come to be crowned.
 Arise with haste, my beloved, my spouse, my undefiled, and come.
 O how beautiful you are, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one!
 How beautiful you are!
 Michael Maguire and Douglas Hines, *baritones*
 INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE
- 7:6, 7, 4,
 11-12 *Quam pulchra es* John Dunstable
 (c. 1370-1453)
 How fair and how pleasant you are, O love, for delights!
 Your stature is like that of a palm tree; and your breasts, clusters
 of grapes. Your head is like Carmel, and your neck is like a tower of
 ivory. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field: let us see
 whether the tender grapes appear, and if the pomegranates bud forth.
 There I will give you my loves.
 Douglas Hines, *baritone* Janet Meyers, *mezzo-soprano*
 INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

EPILOGUE

7:11-13

Veni, dilecte mi

Vivanco

Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the grape flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and if the pomegranates bud forth. There I will give you my loves. The mandrakes give forth a fragrance, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved.

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1:4, 3

Trahe me post te

Handl

Draw me, we will run after you. . . .

WOMEN'S CHORUS

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PROGRAM NOTES

Prologue: Literalism vs. Allegory

The song of Solomon is a wedding idyl depicting the courtship and marriage of a royal couple. The language is rich in metaphors and sensual imagery. Although tradition ascribes authorship to Solomon, present scholars tend to regard the writer as anonymous. The book may have had first to be interpreted as an allegory to permit its acceptance as part of the Old Testament Canon. The Talmud interprets the groom as Jehovah and the bride as His chosen people, Israel. In the third century, Origen considers Christ the groom and the Christian Church as the bride. The liturgy of the Roman Church assigns portions of the Song of Solomon to various feasts of the Virgin Mary as well as to the Common of Virgins. The allusion is clearly that the virgins saints are, in allegory, brides of the Lord.

Composers have been attracted to the Song since medieval times. The text enabled Renaissance composers to write sacred motets with words that rival or surpass the passion found in texts of secular madrigals. Gallus's version of *Trahe me post te* is for five high voices. "Trahe me" appears in each of the parts successively as a kind of free canon, while "curremus" is set to fast flowing melismas. *Quae est ista* depicts the terribleness of a "bannered army" with music of tremendous vigor and intensity. Gallus's musical approach to these words of the Song is thus essentially literal and descriptive. The concluding antiphon *Trahe me Virgo post te* is found in the Second Vespers for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The words are an obvious paraphrase of *Trahe me post te* adapted allegorically for the Virgin Mary.

I. Who is She?

The question occurs in three separate locations within the Song. It stimulates many other unresolved questions. Who was the bride originally in the text? The Queen of Sheba, a daughter of the Pharaoh, a Shulamite woman, and the Shunamite Abishag have all been suggested. Who is "she" in the various allegorical interpretations? Martin Luther, rejecting the veneration of Mary and the virgin saints, refers to the bride as the "people." Palestrina's *Quae est ista*, using the same text as our Gallus motet, serves as a musical presentation of the question. The work is one from a cycle of 29 motets written on Song of Solomon texts.

The remainder of the first main section of our program is patterned around the texts included in the First Nocturn of Matins for the Feast of the Visitation. The three lessons of the Nocturn present the complete second chapter of the Song. The responsories following each of the lessons are drawn mainly from the Gospel of Luke and suggest the Song is a kind of prophecy of Mary's role as virgin mother of Christ.

The text drawn from the First Lesson is presented here in both a Latin and German version. *Sicut lilium inter spinas* was written for two choruses by the Spanish master Vivanco and discovered only this past summer. *Ich bin ein Blumen* by Lechner, a Lutheran, was one of seven motets written in honor of the marriage of the composer's son, Gabriel, to a sister of the poet Weckherlin. The two works thus provide an opportunity to compare music composed on an allegorical premise for the liturgy with that composed literally for a wedding ceremony. The works, equally moving and dramatic, seem to defy any such categorizations. The text of the respond to the First Lesson is represented by Gallus's rhythmic and closely knit *Surge, propera*. The words of the verse of this responsory are found as well in the Vespers antiphon *Intravit Maria* for the same feast. Guerrero's beautiful *Elisabeth Zachariae* comments on the role of Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, as mother of the precursor of the Lord.

The words of Vivanco's *Quae est ista* are paraphrased from those found in the Gallus and Palestrina motets and serve as a responsory to the Second Lesson. The adaptation becomes a song of praise for Mary. A German and Latin version of words comprising the Third Lesson conclude the section. Lechner's *Fahet uns die Füchse* again is from the motet cycle composed for his son's wedding. Festa's *Surge, amica mea* is for three voices. This composer exerted considerable influence on Palestrina.

II. The Garden

Six separate references to gardens are found in the Song of Solomon. The Second Nocturn of Matins of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception includes a sermon by St. Jerome in which Mary, free from original sin, is designated as the enclosed garden described in the Song. *Hortus conclusus* are words found in the responsory to the Seventh Lesson of Matins of that feast. We present the words first as an antiphon, then in a motet by Rodrigo Ceballos, who was a choir-master at Granada cathedral.

Descendi in hortum meum combined with the Marian antiphon *Alma redemptoris mater* serve as two voices common to several different medieval motets. These are among the earliest known part settings of Song of Solomon texts. *Gaude super omnia*, the triplum to one of the family of motets, again associates Mary and the Church with the bride of the Song. Another of the motets presents *Anima mea liquefacta est* as the triplum and provides a link to the third section of our program. The two motets frame a setting of *Descendi in hortum meum* by Josquin in traditional Renaissance imitative style.

III. The Troubled Dream

Chapter Five of the Song of Solomon describes a disturbing dream of the bride. The groom is gone. She calls for him; he does not answer. We present three versions of this text: first, as the antiphon *Anima mea liquefacta est*; then, as a dramatic five-voice motet by Lassus; and finally, as a three-voice motet by Dufay in which the antiphon melody appears in the bass. *Anima mea* was a particularly favorite text of fifteenth-century composers.

IV. In Praise of Beauty

References to the physical beauty of both the bride and groom recur constantly throughout the Song of Solomon. The words *Tota pulchra es* are found in the liturgy as an antiphon for the Feast of the Assumption. Craen's motet *Tota pulchra es* was masterfully arranged for lute by Vincenzo Capirola. *Tota pulchra es Maria*, an adaptation for Mary of the text, appears as an antiphon for Vespers of the Feast of the Visitation. The words "Quam pulchra es" recur as a kind of refrain throughout Schütz's *Veni di Libano* from the *Symphonia Sacrae* of 1629. *Quam pulchra es* and *Anima mea liquefacta es* were the two favorite Song of Solomon texts of fifteenth-century composers. Dunstable's lovely *Quam pulchra* for three voices incorporates the text of the antiphon and concludes with words drawn from Chapter Seven — *Veni, dilecte mi*. These serve as a link to our Epilogue.

Epilogue

Vivanco's setting for two choirs of *Veni, dilecte mi* was composed while he was Professor at the University of Salamanca. Another discovery of only this past summer, it serves to re-emphasize the enigma surrounding the Song of Solomon. Why has music of such passion and power suffered neglect for over three centuries while lesser works were reprinted again and again? We recall the plight of Fray Luis de León in Salamanca some years earlier. His translation into the vernacular of the Song of Solomon was confiscated by the Inquisition and the poet was retained as a prisoner for five years. A personal interpretation of the Song was dangerous. What thoughts ran through the composer's mind as he set the words — a proper allegorical interpretation, a literal interpretation? We end our concert as we began it. Who is the bride? Who is she?

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COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

L. D. NUERNBERGER, *director*

SINGERS

Bethe Alpert	Victoria Huber	Daniel Pritchett
Charles Brown	Sharon Kaplan	James Radomski
Ross Brown	Mark Kauffman	Anne Sautebin
Jonathan Dimmock	John Komasa	Frank Shaw
Tilmer Engebretson	Michael Maguire	Magen Solomon
Carol Farley	Janet Meyers	Lee Stern
Nancy Freitas	Beverly Olson	Geoffrey Thomas
Beth Gilford	Victoria Pfann	Cheryl Wampler
Douglas Hines	Nicola Porter	William Weinert

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Aimee Beggs, <i>viola da gamba</i>	Michael Manderen, <i>lute, psaltery</i>
Lisa Berezin, <i>viola da gamba</i>	Robert Wayne Moss, <i>viola da gamba</i>
Lisa Crawford, <i>viola da gamba, harpsichord</i>	Eric Nagel, <i>viola da gamba</i>
Beth Gilford, <i>soprano shawm</i>	Daniel Pritchett, <i>recorders, krummhorns</i>
Lewis Hoover, <i>recorders, krummhorns</i>	Sarah Rabinowitz, <i>recorders</i>
Catherine Johnson, <i>recorders</i>	Allen Smith, <i>rackett</i>
Grey Larsen, <i>recorders, transverse flute</i>	Geoffrey Thomas, <i>harpsichord</i>
Randall Love, <i>rebec, vielle</i>	