

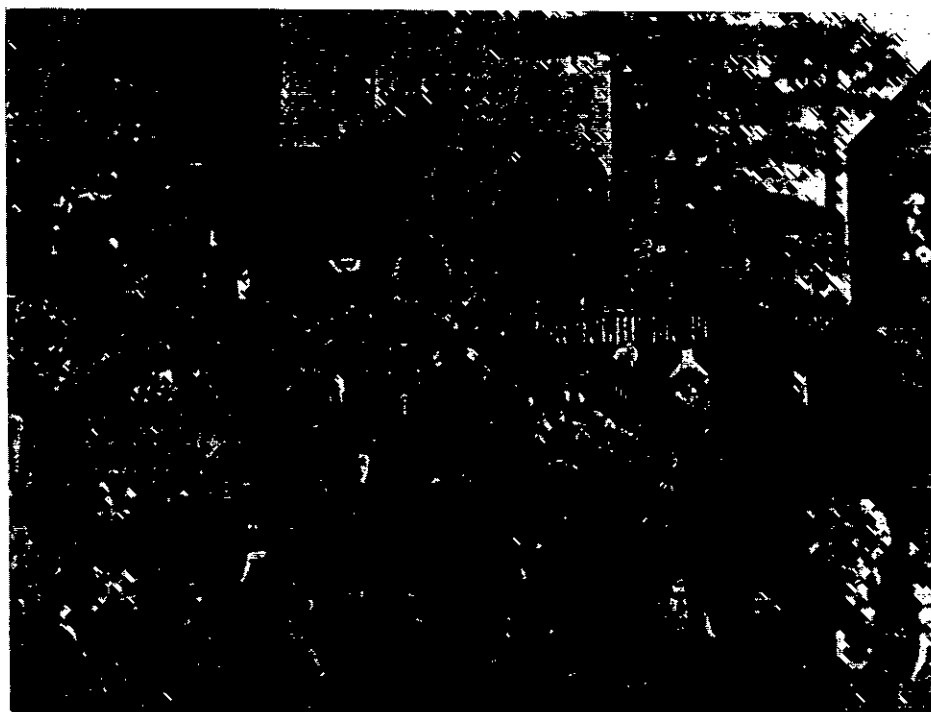
OBERLIN COLLEGE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

THE COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

Homo Ludens

A Study in Music and Words
of the Play Element in Culture

*Tell me what you play and I shall tell
you what you are. (Ancient Proverb)*



PIETER BRUEGEL: *Games of Children*

FAIRCHILD CHAPEL

1983

4:30 P.M.

SATURDAY, MAY 7

SUNDAY, MAY 8

PROLOGUE

PROCESSIONAL: *Pastime with good company*

Henry VIII
(1491-1547)

Pastime with good company, I love and shall unto I die. Gruch so will but none deny, so God be pleas'd, so live will I. For my pastance, hunt, sing and dance, my heart is set. To my comfort, all goodly sport, who shall me let?

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Man is made God's plaything, and that is the best part of him. Therefore every man and woman should live life accordingly, and play the noblest games and be of another mind from what they are at present . . . life must be lived as play; playing certain games, making sacrifices, singing and dancing, and then a man will be able to propitiate the gods, and defend himself against his enemies, and win in the contest. (Plato, *Laws*, vii, 803)

Clara Shaw, *reader*

Man only plays when in the meaning of the word he is a man, and he is only completely a man when he plays. (Friedrich Schiller)

Roger Sherman, *reader*

I. CATEGORIES OF GAMES

[Games permit] a division into four rubrics, depending upon whether competition, chance, simulation, or vertigo is dominant. (Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*)

COMPETITION:

J'ay un billard de quoy

Jacotin
(c. 1445-1529)

[I have a billiard table whose billiard balls are flawed; and my table is completely unusable because it has been too often beaten upon inside the royal domain.]

KRUMMHORN TRIO

Gioco del Conte from Festino

Adriano Banchieri
(1567-1634)

[The game proposed will end at the sounding of three hours.]

"To continue the amusement here, lovely ladies, let us make up a game!"

"We all agree totally. You begin it and we will follow."

"Indeed, there is a good one which will tax the wits!"

"What game would that be? Describe it at once!"

"I'll say four lines rapidly and you will repeat them without stumbling at all."

"Say quickly what should be, so that we may respond."

"On a bridge facing a fountain there stood a Count. The bridge fell into the fountain and the Count broke his forehead."

"That's much too fast, a little slower if you please!"

"On a bridge facing a fountain there stood a Count. The bridge fell into the fountain and the Count broke his forehead."

"On a bridge facing the Count there stood a bridge . . ."

"Not in order! Put down a forfeit!"

"On a fountain at the bridge the Count. . ."

"Put down another forfeit!"

DON, DON, DON

"Three o'clock has been sounded!"

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CHANCE:

Des Spielens ich gar kein Glück nit han

Lorenz Lemlin

(c. 1494-c. 1550)

At the games I have no luck, misfortune deliberately plagues me. If I have a good hand, still all is lost. When I begin, I draw three hearts and wait to make again a draw of hearts, but there is no hand beyond what I have already going in the cards.

Wingate Greathouse, *tenor*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Jaquin jaquet

Jacobus Clemens

(c. 1535-c. 1595)

Jaquin likes to play backgammon with Jaquette, and in order to play she would take off her jacket in so far as they play for a kiss for the game. Then she would say to him: "It must be that my loss cost at the most only my jacket."

Wendy Lanxner, Mary Kate Ballard, *sopranos*

Karen Davis, *alto* David Dunn, *bass*

SIMULATION:

*Capricciata a tre voci: Contraponto bestiale
alla mente from Festino*

Banchieri

Noble spectators, we will undertake at this fourth hour some good fun. A dog, a cat, a cuckoo, and an owl as a joke will make a counterpoint upon a given bass.
FA LA LA LA LA LA

THE BASS: No faith of the gobbis resembles that of the zoppis. If the squerzus is good, it is a good beyond any written in the annals.

THE COUNTERPOINT: "Bow-wow!" "Mec-ow!" "Hoot, hoot!" "Cuckoo!"

FA LA LA LA LA LA

Kara Sherwood, Beth Garfinkel, *sopranos*

Karen Davis, Cynthia Abbott, *altos*

David Dunn, Walter Stern, *basses*

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VERTIGO:

Sauter, danser, faire des tours

Roland de Lassus

(1532-1594)

[Oh to hop, to dance, to spin about, to drink white and red wine, and to do nothing every day but count coins under the sun!]

RECORDER QUARTET

II. GAMES OF MUSIC

In everything that pertains to music we find ourselves within the play-sphere. (Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*)

COMPETITION:

In few human activities is competition more ingrained than in music, and has been so ever since the battle between Marsyas and Apollo. (Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*)

"The Legend of Marsyas" (Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*):

Beth Garfinkel, *reader*

Useletto selvaggio

Jacopo da Bologna

(fl. 1329-1351)

The little wild bird sings throughout the seasons, sings sweet songs in a lovely manner. A fellow who screams loudly I do not praise, for screaming loudly is not singing well. But with the soft and sweet melodies, one makes beautiful song and that requires *mastery*. Few have

it, but all would be masters and compose ballatas, madrigals and motets, all like flowering Philips [de Vitry] and Marchettos [da Padua]. So the world is full of masters whose situation is more not being able to find disciples.

Britt Raphling, Jennifer Sacher, *sopranos*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

I shall tell about those troubadors who sing in many fashions, and all praise their own verses, even the most appalling. . . . [There's] Bernart de Ventadorn. . . his father was a fellow who worked for a wage and shot a laburnam handbow well, while his mother heated the oven and gathered the brushwood together. . . . But Peire d'Alvernhe, now he has a voice! He sings the high, the middle, and the low notes! Before all people he gains himself much praise; and so he is master of all who convene here. (Peire d'Alvernhe)

Michael Henry, *reader*

Non es meravelha

Bernart de Ventadorn
(fl. c. 1145-1180)

It is no wonder that I sing better than any other singer, because my heart is more drawn to love and better made for his command. Heart, body, knowledge, sense, strength, and energy—I have set all. Straight toward love I've drawn the rein, so that I cannot turn toward any other thing.

Bennett DeOlazo, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

CHANCE:

Fato, fortuna, predestinatione

Leonhard Lechner
(c. 1550-1606)

Fate, fortune, predestination, luck, accident, chance are those things which give great trouble to all people and are so spoken about in great stories. But in the end God is master of everything! He who is wise rules the stars. He who is not wise, patient, and strong grieves for that and not for luck.

CHORUS

In Art's long hazard, [there] no man may chose whether he play to win or toil to lose.
(Edward Arlington Robinson, *Caput Mortuum*)

Maria Green, *reader*

SIMULATION:

Vielseitigkeit (Manysidedness)

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874-1951)

(The four voices of this work are so structured that, in addition to providing several canons in diminution and augmentation, they spin about the midpoint in a manner that permits the entire piece to be performed either forward or upside-down and backwards with the same result.)

Who is making all that noise there? It is the little Modernsky! He has cut his baby hair. He looks so good! What authentic false hair! Like a wig! Exactly—though he would pose as a little Modernsky—exactly like Papa Bach!

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VERTIGO:

Gut singer und ein Organist

Lechner

A good singer and an organist belong together! Especially where one is merry and drinks in God's name. A tolerable glass drunk without envy or hatred makes the keys play, then one can say: Where wine is brought in, the bagpipe seldom sounds. A cart driver who would drive must grease his wagon. Also a singer is not of much use unless he oils his throat with good wine. Therefore he pours out the precious juice of the vine. I hope to God that He, if need be, grant a better year.

Ruth Miller, *soprano*
Isaac Finkelstein, *organ*

III. GAMES OF LOVE

The dynamic elements of play . . . such as the deliberate creation of obstacles, adornment, surprise, pretense, etc., all belong to the process of flirting and wooing. (Buytenijk, *Hat Spel van Mensch*)

Fuyons tous d'amour le jeu

Lassus

Let us all flee the game of love as if it were fire! He who would, may love the girls; he who would, may serve the ladies. As for me, I take neither heed of them nor put up with them! Never does one win anything there, I know that very well! Let us all flee the game of love as if it were fire!

Kara Sherwood, Beth Garfinkel, *sopranos*
Cynthia Abbott, *alto* Walter Stern, *bass*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

COMPETITION:

[Love] was competitive, since suitors vied for a lady's attention, doing deeds of valor and courtesy. (J. C. Moore, *Love in Twelfth-Century France*)

Nicolette

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Nicolet, at evening song, went out into the field to pick white daisies, jonquils, and lily of the valley, ever skipping, ever tripping, ever glancing here, there, and everywhere. She met a snarling old wolf, all hairy with sparkling eyes: "Hey there, my Nicolet, are you going to your grandmother's house?" Nicolet fled until out of breath, letting her cap and white clogs fall. Then she met a handsome page wearing blue hose and a grey doublet: "Hey there, my Nicolet, don't you want a tender lover?" Wisely she turned away from him, poor Nicolet, very slowly, her heart very full! Then she met a grey-haired lord, twisted, ugly, smelly and fat: "Hey there, my Nicolet, do you want all of these gold pieces?" Swiftly she ran into his arms, our good Nicolet, never to return again to the field.

CHORUS

CHANCE:

[Love] was a game of chance, in that both love and lovers were fickle, and no amount of information would enable one to predict where Cupid's darts would fall. (J. C. Moore, *op. cit.*)

Wo jemand Lust zum Buhlen hat

Lechner

Where anyone has lust for wooing let him stand here in my stead, for I will step down; it is for me too sharp a lye rinse. The sack is here, the gold is there: great is the injury, little the winnings.

Mary Kate Ballard, Wendy Lanxner, *sopranos*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

What can we poor females do?

Henry Purcell
(c. 1659-1695)

What can we poor females do when pressing, teasing, lovers sue? What can we poor females do?

Fate affords no other way but denying or complying.

What can we . . .

And resenting or consenting does our hopes betray.

What can we . . .

Sally Ann Denmead, *soprano*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

SIMULATION:

The disguised or masked individual "plays" another part, another being. He is another being. The terrors of childhood, open-hearted gaiety, mystic fantasy, and sacred awe are all inextricably entangled in this strange business of masks and disguises. (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

Tri ciechi siamo

Giovane da Nola
(c. 1510-1592)

We are three [masquerading as] blind men, so poor, unloved, deprived of light and without any comfort! Such wrong cruel Love has done, so we will ever be among unfortunate lovers! O beautiful ladies, have pity on us! Give us some charity on account of our eyes! And some alms!

Jeffrey Mead, *tenor* Bennett DeOlazo, *baritone*
Peter Gibeau, *bass*

VERTIGO:

[Love] involved . . . "Vertigo," the disruption of ordinary sense perception, for lovers fasted and grew pale, they became insensible to everything but their love, they grew faint and swooned. (J. C. Moore, *op. cit.*)

Ridono per li prati

Sigismondo d'India
(c. 1580-1629)

Laughing across the meadows and the slopes are crocus, jasmine, privet, narcissus, amaranth, and the violet. The violet, *pale* and *scarlet* in her charming color, has borrowed from me the *ardor* of my breast and the *pallor* of my face.

CHORUS

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

When first I saw the bright Aurelia's eyes

Purcell

When first I saw the bright Aurelia's eyes, a sudden trembling did my limbs surprise. In ev'ry vein I felt a tingling smart, and a cold faintness all around my heart. But oh! the piercing joy, but oh! the pleasing pain, and oh! may ten thousand years remain!

Bennett DeOlazo, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Jedem das Seine

Hugo Distler
(1908-1942)

Anika danced before us on the grass. Hei, hei, o heirassassassa! Before us on the grass, to brisk music. Heirassassassa! How beautiful she was. Oh!

With her lowered, modest eyes. Hei, hei, o heirassassassa! With her lowered eyes, the quiet maiden. Heirassassassa! *She drove me mad!* Oh!

Then a button sprang off from her jacket. Hei, hei, o heirassassassa! From her jacket, a golden button. Heirassassassa! I found it! Oh!

And I pondered what it might mean for me. Hei, hei, o heirassassassa! What it might mean for me—then a sneer, heirassassassa! Jegor gave it! Oh!

As if he would say: Mine is the jacket! Hei, hei, o heirassassassa! And what it covers, mine is the maiden! Heirassassassa! And yours, the button! Oh! (Eduard Mörike)

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IV. SOME DIVINE GAMES

In all its higher forms [human play] belongs to the sphere of festival and ritual—the sacred sphere. (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

The chess board is the world, the pieces are the phenomena of the universe, The rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature. The Player on the other side is hidden from us! . . . We know . . . that He never overlooks a mistake or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. (Thomas Henry Huxley, *A Liberal Education*)

Kara Sherwood, *reader*

THE TRUE PLAYER:

A WONDER: *The Divine*

John Maynard
(1577-c. 1625)

My calling is divine, and I from God am sent. I will no chop church be, nor pay my patron rent, nor yield to sacrilege. But—like the kind, true mother—rather will lose all the child than part with another. Much wealth I will not seek, nor worldly masters serve so to grow rich and fat while my poor flock doth starve.

Bennett DeOlazo, *baritone*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

FALSE PLAYERS:

The false player pretends to be playing the game and, on the face of it, still acknowledges the magic circle. How much more lenient society is to the cheat than to the spoil-sport [who] . . . shatters the play-world itself. (Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*)

Karen Davis, *reader*

The cheat is still inside the universe of play. If he violates the rules of the game, he at least pretends to respect them. He tries to influence them. He is dishonest, but hypocritical. (Roger Caillois, *Man, Play, and Games*)

Walter Stern, *reader*

Il estoit une religieuse

Lassus

There was a nun of the order of Ave Maria, who was so much enamoured with a priest that she combined her nice body with his. The abbess came to demand what was going on. They responded, the one and the other: "The father and the Ave Maria are strung together in a 'Pater noster'."

Mary Kate Ballard, Wendy Lanxner, *sopranos*

Jeffrey Mead, *tenor* Michael Henry, *baritone*

V. GAMES OF THE LAW

The juridical process started by being a contest and the agonistic nature of it is alive even today. Contest means play. The court is still . . . the sacred circle within which the judges are shown sitting in the shield of Achilles. (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

A WONDER: *The Lawyer*

Maynard

The law my calling is. My robe, my tongue, my pen wealth and opinion gain and make me judge of men. The known dishonest cause I never did defend; nor spun out suits in length, but wished and sought an end. Nor consul did bewray, nor of both parties take, nor ever took I fee for which I never spake.

Peter Gibeau, *bass*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

The judge's wig has close connections with the dancing masks of savages. It transforms the wearer into another "being." (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

Im Lant zu Wirtenberg

Lassus

In the good land of Wirtenberg one fall, when one harvests the grapes to press into wine, there was an ass, full of spirit, who drank himself full of good wine and didn't hold back. When the vintner saw this, he complained bitterly to the judge and wanted to be reimbursed. The judge asked if the ass had been seated. The man said no. The judge laughed and said: "My man, the ass can't pay you because his master doesn't pay him. And since he wasn't seated, he was only drinking a toast!"

Clara Shaw, Cynthia Abbott, *sopranos*

Margaret Vetare, *alto* Jeffrey Mead, *tenor*

Peter Gibeau, *bass*

VI. THE GAME OF WAR

Ever since words existed for fighting and playing, men have been wont to call war a game. (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

KING: I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips straining upon the start. The game's afoot! Follow your spirit, and upon this charge cry: "God for Harry, England, and Saint George!" (Shakespeare, *Henry V*, iii, i)

Peter Gibeau, *reader*

Our military forces are one team—in the game to win regardless of who carries the ball . . . Each player on this team—whether he shines in the spotlight of the backfield or eats dirt in the line—must be an All-American. (General Omar Bradley)

Michael Henry, *reader*

But war's a game which, were their subjects wise, Kings would not play at. (William Cowper, *The Winter Morning Walk*)

Margaret Conable, *reader*

A WONDER: *The soldier*

Maynard

My occupation is the noble trade, the trade of Kings, the try-all that decides the highest right of things. Though Mars my master be, I do not Venus love, nor honor Bacchus oft, nor often swear by Jove. Of speaking of myself I all occasions shun and rather love to do, then boast what I have done.

Wingate Greathouse, *tenor*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Serious combat with weapons and all kinds of contests ranging from the most trifling games to bloody and mortal strife were comprised, together with play proper, in the single fundamental idea of a struggle with fate limited by certain rules. Play is battle and battle is play. (Huizinga, *op. cit.*)

CANTERBURY: List [to] his discourse of war; You shall hear a fearful battle rendered in music. (Shakespeare, *Henry V*, i, i)

Wingate Greathouse, *reader*

A la bataglia

Heinrich Isaac
(c. 1450-1517)

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

In battle or business, whatever the game; in law or love, it is ever the same. In the struggle for power, or the scramble for pelf, let this be your motto: Rely on yourself! For, whether the prize be ribbon or throne, the victor is he who can go it alone! (John Godfrey Saxe, *The Game of Life*)

Roger Sherman, *reader*

VII. THE GAMES OF LIFE AND DEATH

What is our life? A play of passion . . . Our graves, that hide us from the searching sun, are drawn like curtains when the play is done. Thus march we playing to our latest rest, only we die in earnest, that's no jest! (Sir Walter Raleigh)

Cynthia Abbott, *reader*

Le mort est jeu

Lassus

Death is a game worse than nine-pins, worse than chess, worse than skittles. In this wretched shell game, one loses his life as well as his shells. (Clement Marot)

Jennifer Sacher, Maria Green, *sopranos*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Life is the game that must be played: This truth at least, good friends, we know. So live and laugh, nor be dismayed as one by one the phantoms go. (Edward Arlington Robinson, *Ballade by the Fire*)

Clara Shaw, *reader*

Ludus vitae

L. D. Nuernberger
(written 1983)

Each of us earns his death, his own death, which belongs to no one else, And this is the game of life. (George Seferis, *The Last Day*)

CHORUS

Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee. (John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*)

Wingate Greathouse, *reader*

Crudele acerba inesorabil morte

Luca Marenzio
(1553-1599)

Cruel, bitter, inexorable death, the cause depriving me of my happiness and for spending all of my life weeping in dark days and painful nights. My heavy sighs do not submit to time, and my cruel torment vanquishes all expression. (Petrarch, *Sestina VII*, 2)

CHORUS

* * * * *

RECESSIONAL: *Pastime with good company*

Henry VIII

Youth must have some dalliance, of good or ill some pastance; Company methinks then best all thoughts and fancies to digest, For idleness is chief mistress of vices all: Then who can say but mirth and play is best of all?

COLLEGIUM

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Homo Ludens A SYNOPSIS

Our concert is designed as a tribute to Johan Huizinga's provocative study, *Homo Ludens*, in which play is elevated to an indispensable force in the formation and development of cultures. The renowned historian characterizes play as an activity that "proceeds within its own boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner" and also which "promotes the formation of social groupings that tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means." Such social groupings might range from a bridge club to a monastic order. Huizinga's conclusions were further developed by the French sociologist, Roger Caillois, who categorizes play into games that involve either skill, chance, mimicry, or temporary loss of equilibrium. Both authors firmly believe that the concept of play is appropriate not only to children's endeavors but to most of adult activity as well. The arts, the stage, most of the professions, and, inevitably, love and war all fall under their broad definition of play and games.

Many of these views are shared in principle by writers and composers throughout the centuries, as our concert will endeavor to illustrate. Subjects involving similar aspects of play have concerned such diverse individuals as Plato and George Seferis, Giovane da Nola and Arnold Schönberg, Bernart de Ventadorn and Maurice Ravel, even Shakespeare and Omar Bradley.

Finally, we suggest that perhaps this concert and, ultimately, life itself might be construed as related kinds of games which are confined within certain limitations of time and space and, once begun, must be played out to the end by the participants according to particular and fixed rules.

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

L. D. Nuernberger, *director*
Peter Gibeau, *assistant director*

SINGERS

Cynthia Abbott
Mark Alexander
Mary Kate Ballard
Eric Bluestine
Margaret Conable
Karen Davis
Sally Ann Denmead
Bennett DeOlazo
David Dunn
Isaac Finkelstein
Jeffrey Gage
Beth Garfinkel
Peter Gibeau
Wingate Greathouse
Maria Green

Michael Henry
Alan Herrmann
Wendy Lanxner
Jeffrey Mead
Ruth Miller
Hannah Mitchell
Michael Pearson
Britt Raphling
Jennifer Sacher
Ben Saferstein
Clara Shaw
Roger Sherman
Kara Sherwood
Walter Stern
Carole Swartz

Margaret Vetare

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Mark Alexander, *shawm, regal*
Eric Bluestine, *recorder*
Colleen Chase, *gamba*
Margaret Conable, *vielle, violin*
Sally Ann Denmead, *sackbut*
David Dunn, *krummborn, shawm*
Jeffrey Gage, *percussion*
Beth Garfinkel, *recorders*
Peter Gibeau, *krummborn, recorders, violone,*
organ, regal, hurdy-gurdy
Alan Herrmann, *percussion*
Alexis Jacobsohn, *cornetto, tenor cornetto*
Abram Kaplan, *recorders*

Darius Kaufmann, *krummborn*
Jeffrey Mead, *organ, virginals*
Paul Patanella, *sackbut*
Luca Pellegrini, *krummborn*
Ann Quinn, *shawm*
Carolyn Rabson, *gamba*
Gustav Rabson, *gamba*
Stuart Rosenthal, *dulcian*
Jennifer Sacher, *violin*
Roger Sherman, *organ, virginals*
Walter Stern, *gamba, percussion*
Dan Tepper, *cornetto, trumpet*
Margaret Vetare, *harp, psaltery*

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