

Camerata California Presents

An Early Summer Sampler



Saturday, June 18, 2005

7:30 p.m.

Stone Church of Willow Glen

1937 Lincoln Avenue

San Jose, California

Sackbut—The sackbut is a brass instrument with a slide, similar to the modern trombone. The origin of its name remains uncertain, but it is probably from the French saquer (to pull) and bouter (to push). The sackbut was illustrated and mentioned regularly from 1500 onwards and was an adaptable instrument that could play with soft vocal music, or loud instruments such as the shawm. In his comprehensive 16th century treatise on instruments, *Syntagma Musicum*, Michael Praetorius stresses that a tremendous advantage enjoyed by all sackbuts was their adaptability to the various different pitches of the day, since small changes could be made either by slide or embouchure, and larger changes by the addition or subtraction of crooks.

Shawm—The shawm, the most important early double reed instrument, was played in Europe as early as the 13th century. It is similar to the modern oboe in that it has an exposed double reed. This instrument was made in different sizes and produced a loud sound best suited to outdoor music. In the 16th century, a wide range of other double reed instruments better suited for playing indoors was developed.

Viola da gamba (also gamba or viol)—The viol is a bowed stringed instrument that resembles the modern cello, but has frets like a guitar. The viol appeared in Europe near the end of the 15th century, quickly become popular across the continent, and remained so until the advent of the cello in the mid-18th century. Viols were made in different sizes to be played in consorts, like recorders. Viola da gamba literally means ‘leg viol’ since it is held upright and supported between the legs like a cello. The viol is more closely related to the modern orchestral string bass than the cello. The construction of the instrument and bow (which is convex rather than concave like a violin bow) provides less volume than modern instruments, but allows for great flexibility and subtlety.



Acknowledgements

Thanks to Jennifer Randolph for coordinating our rehearsals and providing translations and program notes; to Mary Anne James for translations, program notes and program production; to Ted Lorraine, Mike Megas, and Lettie Smith for publicity; to Stone Church of Willow Glen for use of the sanctuary. Special thanks to Kristin Preston and Dr. Harris for making it possible for us to use instruments from the Vernon Read Collection at San Jose State University, and to Lettie Smith for acting as our liaison with the university. And thanks to the late Vernon Read for musical transcriptions, artistic direction, and inspiration.

Visit the Camerata California web site for concert information and musical excerpts from previous performances:
<http://www.cameratacalifornia.org>.

Program

Medieval Europe:

<i>Ecco la Primavera</i>	Francesco Landini (1325-1347)
<i>Domino</i>	Anonymous (c.1200)
<i>Sumer Is Icumen in</i>	Anon. (c.1250)

Franco-Flemish Influences:

<i>Je Me Complains Piteusement</i>	Guillaume Dufay (c.1400-1474)
<i>Baises Moy</i>	Josquin Des Prez (c.1450-1521)
<i>Basse Danse, Bergerette: sans Roch</i> (From Dansereye, 1551)	Tielman Susato (c.1500-1561)
<i>Il Bianco e Dolce Cigno</i>	Jacques Arcadelt (1508-1562)
<i>Un Sonar de Piva</i>	Rossino Mantovano (fl. c.1550)
<i>Rompeltier ("Knock on the Door")</i>	Attrib. to Jacob Obrecht (1452-1505)
<i>In Te Domine Speravi</i>	Josquin Des Prez (c.1440-1521)

+ Intermission +

England from the Elizabethan Age to the Restoration:

<i>This Merry Pleasant Spring</i>	Anonymous (late 16 th cent.)
<i>Strike the Viol</i> (Excerpt From Come, Ye Sons Of Art: An Ode For The Birthday Of Queen Mary, 1694)	Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
<i>Trio Sonata in D Minor</i> Adagio -- Allegro -- Largo -- Allegro	David Purcell (c.1664-1717)

+ Intermission +

<i>Man Is for the Woman Made</i>	Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
<i>'Earl of Essex' Galliard</i>	John Dowland (1563-1626)

The Golden Age of Spain:

<i>Mi Libertad en Sosiego</i>	Juan Del Encina (1469-C.1530)
<i>De los Alamos Vengo</i>	Juan Vasquez (c.1510-C.1560)

The Instruments and Instrumentation

Although we are fortunate to have access to a fairly large spectrum of early instrument replicas, Camerata California also exploits such instruments as the modern guitar to recreate the sound and spirit of the era. For example, you probably wouldn't find a bowed psaltery (probably a folk instrument of the mid-20th century) in a medieval band, but you would hear the sound of a vielle—and that is the kind of sound we try to recreate. So sit back, close your eyes, and enjoy a ride into the past.

Few published works of the 16th century and earlier included specifics of orchestration. We can, however, make educated guesses based on written and visual evidence. Sources indicate that brass instruments such as cornetto and sackbut were typically grouped with voices; lute with viols; and crumhorns with shawms and sackbut. The style of music also tells us what instruments are appropriate. For example, viola da gamba can swell in volume and sustain notes for an expressive vocalistic line. A lute can play rapid florid parts, but cannot sustain long tones. Recorders and capped reed instruments sound good played in consorts, or mixed with other instruments, but they have limited range of volume. We can also look to the composer and country of origin, since real and distinct regional styles of performance were evident in 16th century Europe, including differences in local preference of instruments and style of singing.

Crumhorn (or krumhorn)—The word crumhorn means literally “curved horn.” The instrument has a double reed covered by a cap so that—unlike the oboe or bassoon—the reed isn't touched directly. They are the earliest (c.1500-1620) and by far the most common of the reed-cap instruments. Although the shape and sound might be unusual (sometimes “kazoo” comes to mind), the musical life of the crumhorn was a serious one, and they were often played in consorts like recorders.

Cornamuse—The cornamuse is a relative of the crumhorn. It has a reed-cap like the crumhorn, but is straight and has a much softer and sweeter sound.

Psaltery—The plucked psaltery consists of a sound box with tuned strings and is played either resting on the lap or leaning up against the chest. It developed in the Near East and filtered into Europe during the Crusades, and was regularly illustrated from the 12th century onward. Many literary references to the psaltery list it both in mixed ensembles and as a solo instrument. The shape varied enormously from trapezoid to the curved “pig snout” type. We use a modern bowed psaltery (of 20th century origin) to create the droning sound of a medieval stringed instrument such as the vielle.

Recorder—Wind instruments such as flutes and recorders are very old indeed. Recorders started to look more or less like their modern counterparts in the Middle Ages, and began to be made in several different sizes and ranges by the 14th century. Recorder playing had achieved a high degree of technical accomplishment by the 16th century, and a wide range of sizes offered a number of separate consorts within the recorder family.

Rankett (or rackett)—The rankett is a double reed instrument in which the bore is folded in on itself. The bass rankett actually plays as low as a bassoon, in spite of being only just over a foot high, due to a maze of tubing within the cylindrical body.

Rauschpfeife—This reed-cap instrument produces a screaming sound (it is also known as schreierpfeife) that carries well outdoors and competes well with other loud consort instruments such as the shawm.

Entlaubet ist der Walde

Ludwig Senfl (c.1492-1555)

“Entlaubet” is a Tenorlied--a specifically German type of popular song, based on a pre-existing vocal line used as a cantus firmus (or Tenor), usually surrounded by multiple polyphonic lines. Listen for the simple main tune sung by tenor voices.

Entlaubet ist der Walde
gen diesem Winter kalt.
Beraubet werd ich balde,
mein Lieb, das macht mich alt.
Dass ich die Schön' muss meiden,
die mir gefallen tut,
bringt mir heimliches Leiden
und macht mir schweren Mut.

Bare and stark is the woods,
In this cold winter.
I will soon be bereft,
my love, which makes me old.
That I must avoid the lovely one,
Who does please me,
Brings me secret pain,
And gives me great grief.

Ein Guter Wein Ist Lobenswert

Orlando di Lasso (c.1532-1594)

Orlando di Lasso (also known as Roland de Lassus and Roland Delattre) is considered one of the greatest polyphonists of the late Renaissance and his music, the essence of the Netherlands tradition, as demonstrated in the German lied, “Ein guter Wein.” A widely traveled individual, his places of residence include Rome, Antwerp, Munich (where he settled), Flanders, Frankfurt, Northern Italy, and the French Court.

The versatility of di Lasso can be seen in an enormous output which encompasses every style of the period in over 2000 compositions: Italian madrigals, German lieder, French chansons, Latin motets, two passions, offices, masses and magnificats. He earned the titles of “Orpheus de Belgique” and “Principe della Musica” (“Prince of Music.”).

Ein guter Wein is lobenswert,
Für ander Ding auf dieser Erd ;
Den ich auch nicht kann meiden.
Und welcher ist im Trunk der letzt
Wann da nun ist der Tisch besetzt,
Der hab das heimlich Leiden.

A good wine is worth noticing,
More than anything else in this world ;
I just can't stay away from it.
And when the last drop is drunk,
And the table is taken away,
I feel that secret sorrow.

Ein grosses Glas von einer Mass
Voll kühlen Wein
dückt mich schön sein,
Das soll jetzt gehn herummen.
Wer trinken will wie ich so viel
Will fröhlich sein bei diesem Wein,
Der tu oft zu mir kommen.

A big glass from the pitcher
Full of cool wine
which seems beautiful to me,
Goes around again.
Whoever wants to drink (as I would),
Will be happy with this wine.
It happens to me all the time.

German Music of the Renaissance:

Dy Katzenphote (“The Cat’s Paw”) Anonymus (c.1460-1480)
(From The Glogauer Liederbuch)

O Elslein / Es Taget vor dem Walde (1544) Ludwig Senfl (c.1492-1455)

Innsbruck, Ich Muss Dich lassen Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517)

Kyrie from Missa Carmina (on “Innsbruck”) Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517)

Entlaubet Ist Der Walde Ludwig Senfl (c.1492-1555)

Ein Guter Wein Ist Lobenswert Orlando di Lasso (c.1532-1594)

The Players

Mary Anne James – soprano voice, recorder, crumhorn, percussion

Sam Kiteley – bass voice, recorder, crumhorn, sackbut, viola da gamba

Bill Lazar, on leave

Ted Lorraine – baritone voice, bells, percussion

Mike Megas – recorders, guitar-lute, percussion

Ken Miller – tenor voice, recorder, crumhorn, cornamuse, percussion

Jennifer Randolph – soprano voice, recorder, crumhorn, cornamuse, guitar,
bowed psaltery, harpsichord

Lettie Smith – soprano voice, recorder, shawm, rankett, crumhorn

Richard Stefanko – tenor voice, bells, percussion

About Camerata California

Camerata California is a vocal and instrumental ensemble dedicated to performing sacred and secular music from the medieval through the early Baroque eras. The ensemble was inspired by Dr. Vernon Read, who taught and led Early Music at San Jose State University for many years. The members all have varied, long-standing musical experience.

Camerata is always looking for skilled musicians to join us for rehearsals and performances throughout the year. Contact us at majames@rjweb.org.

Covers Art: Musical Company, oil on canvas, Joos van Winghe (ca 1544-1603).

Texts, Translations and Notes

Ecco la Primavera

Francesco Landini (1325-1347)

Francesco Landini, an Italian composer, organist, and poet based in San Lorenzo church in Florence, was blind from an early age. Landini was a master of the "Ars Nova" style of the trecento (14th century) and his music survives in many different sources. Most of his existing works are ballate—an Italian poetic and musical form with the structure ABBAA, with the first and last stanzas having the same words.

<i>Ecco la primavera Ch'el cor fa rallegrare, Temp'e d'annamorare E star con lieta ciera.</i>	<i>Spring is here To cheer the heart. Time to fall in love And put on a merry face.</i>
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<i>No've giam l'aria e'l tempo, Che pur chiam'allegrezza, In questo vago tempo Ogni cosa a vaghezza.</i>	<i>The newly fresh air Calls us to cheer and merrymaking. In this changing time Everything is quite lovely.</i>
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<i>L'erbe con gran freschezza E fior' coprono i prati E gli albori adornati Sono in simil maniera</i>	<i>The greenery is new and fresh, And flowers cover the meadow, And the trees are adorned with blossoms, In the same way.</i>
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Domino

Anonymous (c.1200)

This is an example of organum of the Parisian Notre Dame school, in which a Gregorian chant melody is used as a cantus firmus and the top voice embellishes on the chant. It was from this kind of treatment, among others, that polyphonic music developed in northern France from the 12th to the 14th centuries. We perform it instrumentally in this program.

Sumer Is Icumen In

Anonymous (c.1250)

"Sumer" is an English rota or round composed about 1250. It is the earliest existing example of canon and of ground bass. A canon is a musical form similar to the round, in which two (or more) voices sing the same melodic line but start at different times. A ground bass is a short pattern repeated over and over again throughout the course of a piece. In this work, three voices sing the main tune in canon (Sumer is icumen in) and two bass voices sing the pes, or ground, also in canon (Sing cuccu nu, sing cuccu). The secular text is in Middle English (Wessex dialect). Interestingly, in the same manuscript source, from Reading Abbey in England, is a Latin text to adapt the tune for church use.

Innsbruck, Ich Muss Dich Lassen Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517)

Heinrich Isaac (c.1450-1517), a native of Flanders, was a contemporary of Josquin, and a prolific composer in all genres of the period, both sacred and secular. He served the Medici under Lorenzo the Magnificent at Florence from 1484-1492, and later became court composer to Emperor Maximilian I in 1497, at Vienna and Innsbruck (a town in the Austrian Alps).

The song "Innsbruck" is, on the surface, the wistful song of a faithful husband who must be apart from his wife. The subtext is that Maximilian had dismissed Isaac, and this song expresses dismay at the approaching departure from a nice job at the imperial court.

<i>Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen, ich fahr dahin mein Strassen, in fremde Land dahin. Mein Freud is mir genommen, die ich nit weiss bekommen, wo ich im Elend bin.</i>	<i>Innsbruck, I must leave you, For I am traveling the road to a foreign land. There, deprived of my joy and not knowing how to get it back, I will be in misery.</i>
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<i>Gross Leid muss ich jetzt tragen, das ich allein tu klagen dem liebsten Buhlen mein. Ach Lieb, nun lass mich Armen im Herzen dein erbarmen, dass ich muss dannen sein.</i>	<i>I am burdened with great sorrow which I can remedy only through the one dearest to me. O my love, leave me not bereft of compassion in your heart that I must part from you.</i>
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<i>Mein Trost ob allen Weiben, dein tu ich ewig bleiben, stet treu, der Ehren fromm. Nun muss dich Gott bewahren, in aller Tugend sparen, bis dass ich wiederkomm.</i>	<i>My consolation above all other women, I remain yours forever, always faithful, in true honor. And now, may God protect you, safe in virtue, till I return.</i>
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Kyrie from Missa Carmina (on "Innsbruck") Heinrich Isaac (1450-1517)

The "Missa Carmina" is based on Isaac's own melody from the song "Innsbruck ich muss dich lassen." This is particularly evident in the Kyrie from the mass, which not only refers to the melody of "Innsbruck", but even uses note for note quotations from his two arrangements of the song.

<i>Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.</i>	<i>Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.</i>
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Dy Katzenphote (“The Cat’s Paw”)

Anonymous (c.1460-1480)

“Dy Katzenphote” is a clever instrumental piece from the Glogauer Liederbuch, a collection of German music manuscripts from c.1460-1480. This is a massive assemblage of 300 pieces, many attributable to well-known composers. The Glogauer Liederbuch was the first known collection to be printed out in partbooks, with a separate book for each part in the music. The Lieder (songs), in 3 or 4 parts, are equally divided between sacred and secular texts, and there is also a quantity of pieces apparently for instrumental ensemble -- perhaps the earliest such collection to survive..

O Elslein / Es Taget vor dem Walde (1544)

Ludwig Senfl (c.1492-1455)

Ludwig Senfl of Switzerland was one of the first German-language composers to work in all the forms of the time, composing Masses, motets, and over 250 German songs (lieder). He experimented with every imaginable approach to traditional melodies, from simple chordal harmonizations to canonic pieces with sharply contrasted counterpoints.

‘O Elslein / Es Taget’ illustrates a form of music that was Senfl’s specialty: the *quodlibet* (literally meaning “what pleases you” or “as you like”). In a *quodlibet*, two or more different tunes are combined with other contrapuntal lines, but still remain recognizable. This is somewhat like combining “Happy Birthday” and “Here Comes The Bride” and making it work out musically

O Elslein, liebes Elselein mein,
Wie gern war ich bei dir
Es rinnen zwei tiefe wasser
Wohl zwischen mir und dir

Little Elsa, my dear Elsa
Gladly would I be near you
But two deep rivers run
Between us.

Es taget vor dem Walde
Stand auf, Ketterlein
Die Hasen laufen balde,
Stand auf, Ketterlein, holder Buhl
Heiaho! Du bist mein,
und ich bin dein
Stand auf, Ketterlein.

It is daylight in the forest
Get up little Kate
The hares will be leaping soon
Get up little Kate, sweet lover,
Heyho! You are mine,
and I am thine
Get up little Kate.

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!

Summer has come in,
Loudly sing cuckoo!

Groweth sed and bloweth med,
And springth the wode nu,
Sing cuccu!
Awe bletheth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu.
Bulloc sterteth, bucke verteth,
Murie sing cuccu!
Cuccu, cuccu,
Wel singes thu, cuccu;
Ne swik thu naver nu.

Seeds grow and meadows bloom,
And the forest springs anew,
Sing cuckoo!
Ewes bleat after lambs,
Cows lowe after calves.
Bullocks leap, bucks cavort
Merry sing cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo,
Well sing you cuckoo
Nor cease you never now.

Je Me Complains Piteusement

Guillaume Dufay (c.1400-1474)

“Je me complains” is an imitative Burgundian-style ballade (secular song) for three equal voices. French composer Guillaume Dufay is widely recognized today for his role in the development of Western music. He held positions in many musical centers of Europe, and was acknowledged by his contemporaries to be the leading composer of his day. He wrote in most of the forms in use during his lifetime, with 150 works surviving, both liturgical and secular. Dufay represents the generation comprising the so-called Burgundian composers, which flourished in the territory ruled by the Dukes of Burgundy.

Je me complains piteusement
A moy tout seul plus qu’a nullui,
De la grieste paine et tourment
Que je souffre plus que ne di.
Dangier me tient en tel soussi,

I plaintively bemoan my fate,
To myself alone, more than to anyone else,
Of the grief, pain and torment
Which I endure to an unspeakable degree.
Her guardian keeps me in a very anxious state,

Qu’eschever ne puis sa rudesse,
Et fortune le veult aussi,

Since I cannot avoid his insults,
And lady luck seems to want the same thing,

Mais par ma foi ce fait jonesse.

But, I swear, all of this is the result of being young.

Baisés Moy

Josquin des Prez (c.1450-1521)

“Baisés moy” is a chanson, with a text in middle French. The Netherlandish composer Josquin des Prez (1440-1521) lived at the height of the Renaissance, and composed prolifically. A typical characteristic of his music is to play pairs of voices against each other, changing the pairs throughout the work.

"Baisés moy, baisés moy
Baisés moy, ma douce amye
Par amour je vous en prie"
"Et non feray"
"Et pourquoi?"
"Se je faisois la follie,
ma mère seroit marie
Vela de quoy! Vela de quoy!"

"Kiss me, kiss me
Kiss me, my sweet love,
For love's sake, I beg you."
"I won't do it"
"Why ever not?"
"If I do something foolish,
My mother will be hurt.
So that's why! So that's why!"

Basse Danse, Bergerette: sans Roch

Tielman Susato (c.1500-1561)
(From Dansereye, 1551)

The basse danse was a favorite type of dance at the Burgundian court. It features improvisations over a slow-moving bass line. Even the earliest basse danze in Italy were meant as much for performance in front of an audience (often consisting of visiting Spanish dignitaries), as for dancing.

Tielman Susato, once a calligrapher in Antwerp Cathedral, was, for a time, a trumpeter in the Town Band of Antwerp. In 1547 he set himself up as a printer and publisher of his own and other people's music. Danserye was published in 1551, with the instruction that “the dances shall be pleasing and appropriate, to be played on instruments of all kinds.” He ultimately published 25 books of chansons, 3 books of masses and 19 books of motets, including four collections devoted to the advancement of Flemish national musicians.

Il Bianco e Dolce Cigno

Jacques Arcadelt (1508-1562)

Arcadelt was a Franco-Flemish composer, one of the most important, who settled in Italy at the time when the madrigal was developing. He transformed the chordal Italian frottola with contrapuntal elements, contributing the harmonic coloring, dissonances, and text painting that we associate with the classic madrigal style of the 16th century. Arcadelt published several successful volumes of madrigals around 1540. The first book was reprinted more than thirty times over a period of more than a century, and “Il bianco” in particular, remained popular long after its publication. Arcadelt also wrote Masses, motets and chansons.

‘Earl of Essex’ Galliard

John Dowland (1563-1626)

The “Earl of Essex” galliard is an instrumental version of the lute-song “Can

she excuse my wrongs” published in Dowland’s First Booke of Songes or Ayres (1597). The text was probably intended as an appeal to Elizabeth I on behalf of Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, who fell in and out of favor with the Queen and was eventually executed.

Mi Libertad en Sosiego

Juan del Encina (1469-c.1530)

In the 15th and 16th century, Spain paralleled its political expansion with maximum musical development. This “Golden Age of Spanish Music” lasted almost two hundred years. Collections such as the Cancionero de Palacio (Songs of the Palace), contained hundreds of songs of all flavors, mostly written for three or four voices, and most in the form known as villancico (literally, “rustic song”).

Much of the poetry and music of Juan del Encina (1468 – ca. 1530) can be found in this collection. Encina was the most important composer of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, and is known as the founder of Spanish drama. Most of his plays include a four-part villancico that was sung and danced by the actors.

Mi libertad en sosiego,
Mi corazón descuidado,
Sus muros i fortaleza,
Amores me l’an çercado.

My liberty is at peace
My heart is without a care
Against its walls and fortresses
Love has besieged and surrounded me

Raisón y seso y cordura,
Que tenía a mi mandado,
Hisieron trato con ellos;
¡Malamente m’an burlado!

Reason and mind and sanity
I once had at my command.
Love has treated them cruelly,
Unhappily mocking me!

De los Alamos Vengo

Juan Vasquez (c.1510-c.1560)

Juan Vasquez was a prolific composer of secular songs, some of which were based on folk tunes. “De los alamos vengo” features a very simple folk tune in the tenor line that enters at various intervals amongst the other complex polyphonic lines. The resulting music is rich and satisfying.

De los álamos vengo, madre,
De ver como los menea el ayre,
De los álamos de Sevilla,
De ver a mi linda amiga.
De los álamos vengo, madre,
De ver como los menea el ayre.

I've just come from the poplars, mother,
From watching them sway in the breeze,
From the poplars of Seville,
From seeing my sweet beloved.
I've just come from the poplars, mother,
From watching them sway in the breeze,

Trio Sonata in D minor

David Purcell (ca.1664-1717)

Daniel Purcell was born five years after Henry Purcell, whose conspicuous career unfairly overshadowed his younger brother's accomplishments. Daniel wrote incidental music for over 40 theatre plays, along with anthems, Italian style cantatas (with English words) and trio sonatas.

A trio sonata is a musical form that was especially popular in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. It is written for two solo instruments and basso continuo (hence the trio). The basso continuo comprises a viola da gamba or bassoon playing the bass line and a harpsichord or other keyboard supplying the harmonies, according to a notation known as "figured bass".

Man Is for the Woman Made

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Henry Purcell wrote a number of very witty songs intended to be popular with both singers and listeners.

*Man, man, man, is for the woman made,
And the woman made for man;
As the spur is for the jade,
As the scabbard for the blade,
As for digging is the spade,
As for liquor is the can,
So man is for the woman made,
And the woman for the man.*

*As the scepter to be sway'd,
As for night's the serenade,
As for pudding is the pan,
And to cool us is the fan,
So man is for the woman made,
And the woman for the man.*

*Be she widow, wife or maid,
Be she wanton, be she staid,
Be she well or ill array'd,
Queen, slut, or harridan,
So man is for the woman made,
And the woman for the man.*

*Il bianco e dolce cigno cantando more,
et io piangendo giungo al fin del viver mio.
Strano e diversa sorte ch'ei more
sconsolato,
Et io moro beato. Morte, che nel morire
Mi empie di gioia tutto e di desire.
Se nel morir altro dolor non sento.
Di mille morte il di sarei contento.*

*The white and lovely swan dies singing,
And crying I reach the end of my life.
Strange is it that the swan dies without comfort
And that I die joyfully. A death that
Fills me with happiness and longing
Because I feel no other misery (when I die).
Whoever dies a thousand deaths will be contented.*

Un Sonar de Piva (Lirum Bililirim) Rossino Mantovano (fl. c.1550)

"Un sonar de piva" is a frottola in Italian provincial dialect with a background of the piva (bagpipe or crumhorn). The form is typically a composition for three or four voices, with the melody in the top voice, a homophonic (chordal) texture, and repetitive rhythms.

This particular frottola alludes to the Commedia dell'Arte, specifically, to the character "Zanni" who stands at the bottom of the commedia pecking order. This appears to be a comic song in country dialect in which the sweet sound of the bagpipes (not lutes) serves as a backdrop for a lover's complaint. It was published in Venice in 1505 by Ottavino Petrucci in one of the first-ever printed books of music.

*Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.
Deh, di soni la sordina.
Tu m'intendi ben, Pedrina,*

*Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.
Ah, there sounds the muted instrument.
You hear me well, Pedrina
(little stony heart)*

*Ma non già per il doverum.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.
Deh, di soni la sordina,*

*--and not just out of duty.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.
Ah, there sounds the muted instrument.*

*Les ses anche t'vo miben
E che t'son bon servidor,
Ma t'aspet che l'so ben
Ch'al fin sclopi per amor.
Deh, non da plutat dolor,
Tu sa ben che dig il virum.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.*

*I have loved you for six years
and been a good servant to you,
but I've been waiting for you so long
that I shall end by bursting with love.
Ah, don't give me more grief;
you know well that I speak the truth.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.*

*Ta recordet quant tme des
Ta tua fé, si alegrement,
E cha Ivagnel tngiures
De volim per to servet.
Mi per litra incontinet
At resposi cum suspirum.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum.*

*You remember when you gave me
Your trust, so cheerfully.
And swore to me by the Evangel
That you wanted me for your servant.
My letter was met
At once with a sigh.
Lirum bililirim, li-lirim, lirum*

Rompeltier (“Knock on the door”)attrib. to Jacob Obrecht (1452-1505)

“Rompeltier”, whose title was once believed to refer to the wild boar, survives in several versions with text in Flemish (a dialect of Dutch), in which a miller's wife warns her lover not to knock on the door tonight because her husband is home. The song is sometimes attributed to Jacob Obrecht (1452-1505). Obrecht wrote masses and motets, along with chansons, Dutch songs, and instrumental pieces. He is known for expressive use of melody and for developing a more unified musical structure in extended works such as the mass. We will perform it instrumentally, without referencing the text.

This polyphonic song is taken from a collection called The Odhecaton (A). The Odhecaton, the first collection of music printed using moveable type, was produced by Ottaviano Dei Petrucci in 1501. Before his death in 1539, he had issued more than 50 collections of music. The Odhecaton (A) contains 96 musical compositions selected to represent the finest secular writing of the foremost composers of the day.

In Te Domine Speravi Josquin des Prez (c. 1440 – 1521)

One of the appealing and humanistic features of Josquin's style is the setting of texts so as to keep the natural flow and meaning of the words, something of an innovation, and particularly suitable in a motet such as “In te Domine speravi”, a setting of a verse from Psalm XXXI. Harmonically, Josquin's works are more accessible to the modern ear, and this is an excellent example. In fact, with its lush chords and limited counterpoint, it is quite different from “Baises moy”, the angular song earlier in the program. His appeal is still so great that more than 100 editions of Josquin's works are currently in print, half a millennium after their initial appearance.

*In te, Domine, speravi
Per trovar pietà in eterno,
Ma in un tristo e scuro inferno
Fui, et frustra laboravi.*

*I trusted in thee, O Lord,
to find mercy forever,
but I found myself in a sad and dark hell,
and I labored in vain.*

*Rotto al vento ogni speranza,
Veggio il ciel voltarmi in pianto;
Suspìr, lachryme m'avanza
Del mio tristo sperar tanto:
Fu ferito se non quanto
Tribulando ad te clamavi.*

*With all hope scattered to the wind,
Heaven makes me complain;
only sighs and tears remain
of my sad hopes:
I should have been injured,
if I had not cried to you through my tears*

*Lo cecato voler mio
Per sin qui m'ha fato muto
Et hor poco al dolor mio*

*.My blind wish
has silenced me so far,
and I am in deep agony*

*Per trovar pietà un eduto.
Deh! signor porgime adiuto
Quia de me iam desperavi.
In te, Domine, speravi.*

*to find eternal mercy,
O Lord, help me
in my deep despair!
I trusted in thee, O Lord.*

This Merry Pleasant Spring

Anonymous (late 16th cent.)

In the 16th century English consort song, the words of a poem are sung by a solo voice while instruments (typically a consort of violas da gamba) provide accompaniment. The instruments are equal partners with the voice while providing a rich contrapuntal background for the comparatively straightforward delivery of the text by the singer.

*This merry pleasant spring,
Hark, hark, how the sweet birds sing
And carol in the copse and on the briar.
Jug jug jug jug jug! The nightingale delivers
It it it it! The sparrow sings his hot desire;
The robin, he records;
The lark, he quivers.
O sweet sweet sweet as ever,
From strains so sweet, sweet birds deprive us never.*

Strike the Viol

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

(Excerpt from Come, Ye Sons of Art: an Ode for the Birthday of Queen Mary, 1694)

After the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, the monarchy showed little interest in music. Even with the Restoration of Charles II (1660), Italian and French music was favored over the native English style. Henry Purcell flourished in the period that followed the Restoration and is considered the most important English composer of the early Baroque era. Purcell spent much of his short life (he died at 36) in the service of the Chapel Royal as a composer, organist, and singer. He wrote extensively for the stage, for the church and for popular entertainment, and was a master of setting the English language and of contrapuntal technique.

*Strike the viol, touch the lute,
Wake the harp, inspire the flute.
Sing your patroness' praise
In cheerful and harmonious lays*.*

*short poems for singing ; a song or melody.