



na ferunt, e con elo un ampio cuore pien  
eri... di concettuali... di... call

# CAPPELLA CLAUSURA

*Performing twelve centuries of new music*

together with

*Amphion's Lyre*

*present*



THE COMPLETE VESPERS OF

*Cozzolani*

Friday April 18th at 7:30pm  
Gordon Chapel, Old South Church,  
Copley Place, Boston

Saturday April 19th at 8:00pm  
Episcopal Parish of the Messiah  
Auburndale (Newton), MA

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**Cappella Clausura - 12 Jenison Street Newton, MA 02460**

## **The Vespers of Cozzolani**

Cappella Clausura:

Sipra Agrawal, soprano  
Laura Betinis, mezzosoprano  
Anna Maria Dwyer, mezzosoprano  
Janna Frelich, mezzosoprano  
Leah Krznarich, soprano  
Jeanne Marie Lucas, soprano  
Allegra Martin, alto  
Kimberly Soby, soprano  
Susan Ward, mezzosoprano  
Junko Watanabe, soprano  
Jacque Wilson, mezzosoprano  
Special guest Catherine Liddell, theorbo  
Amelia LeClair, Director

Amphion's Lyre:

Gigi Turgeon, baroque violin  
Jessica Stensrud, baroque violin  
Rosalind Brooks Stowe, viola da gamba  
Mai-Lan Broekman, viola da gamba  
James Meadors, theorbo  
Hendrik Broekman, organ

So that we may present to you the most authentic experience of this, a church service, we ask that you hold your applause until the intermission. Thank you.

**Please turn off all cell phones, alarms, and beepers**

Cappella Clausura is a member of the Greater Boston Choral Consortium,  
a cooperative association of diverse choral groups in Boston and  
the surrounding areas.



This program is supported, in part,  
by the Massachusetts Cultural Council  
as administered by the Newton Cultural Council



*Program notes:*

**Vespers Psalms of Chiara Margarita Cozzolani**  
**Milan**

**Published by Artemesia Publications, Inc. Italy**

The music in this volume comes from one of the most celebrated ensembles of women musicians in early modern Italy: that of the Benedictine nuns of the convent of Santa Radegonda, located across the street from Milan Cathedral. S. Radegonda was but one of some twenty such female foundations in the city whose music became famous between 1600 and 1700, and which boasted several nuns who also composed. Traveler's reports, urban guide-books, and not least many ecclesiastical regulations all testify to the renown of S. Radegonda's singers. In 1664, the Bolognese priest Sebastiano Locatelli (who would have been no stranger to nun's music in his home town) reported that the Benedictines were considered one of the finest ensembles in Catholic Europe. On major feast days, they performed for the public, local and visiting, with listeners sometimes so crowded into the public part (the *chiesa esteriore*) of the nun's church as nearly to suffocate.

Much of the polyphony heard at S. Radegonda was written by one of its musical sisters, Chiara Margarita Cozzolani (1602- c.1677). Born in Milan to a well-off family, Cozzolani professed her vows at the monastery in 1620, and later served several times as prioress and abbess; her nieces, also Benedictines and singers at S. Radegonda, would perform at the house into the eighteenth century. Cozzolani published four editions of sacred works between 1640 and 1650, though unfortunately not all of them are extant. The music presented here is taken from her largest collection: *Salmi a otto voci concertati [...] motetti, e dialoghi a Due, Tre, Quattro e Cinque voci*, (Venice 1650). It is intriguing to note that Cozzolani signed the dedication of this print from Venice, a fact that would indicate the she must have left the convent and the city of Milan (with or without permission) to oversee her work's publication, an unprecedented and unrecorded breach of clausura in the history of cloistered nun composers.

Cozzolani's collection contains a complete set of Vespers psalms for the major feasts of the year according to the Benedictine use. The collection is an impressive one. In addition to the six Vespers psalms (*Laudate pueri* appears in two different scorings), the respond and two Magnificats (all written for eight voices except the second *Laudate pueri*), there are also nine non-liturgical motets for 1-5 voices. Two pieces call for two violins (despite certain ecclesiastical edicts forbidding their use within the convents). The most obvious feature of the psalm settings is the *concertato* writing in all the voices, with tutti sections balanced by florid solos, duets, and an occasional *bassetto* ensemble of three or four high voices.

- Candace Smith, editor and director of Cappella Artemisia,  
Bologna

## **The Psalms:**

### **Dixit Dominus**

At the beginning of this psalm setting the baroque *concertato* style, of which Candace Smith speaks above, that of contrasting soloistic sections with homo-rhythmic choral sections, is displayed in telescopic form, but is then expanded to elucidate and differentiate the phrases. Cozzolani's word-painting skills are put to full use in this psalm setting: note the two lovely solos, "sede a dextris meis..." and "tecum principium..", the grand and all encompassing "omnes generationes", the militant "dominare.." and "conquassabit.." Cozzolani, like many composers of sacred music, loves the trinitarian number 3. Many of her phrases are repeated emphatically three times throughout this entire work, and in this piece she inserts the doxology (Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto) into the psalm text three times before saying it in full at the end, when the two choruses engage in dialogue even through the "Amen".

### **Confitebor tibi**

Cozzolani sets this psalm rather simply with a bass ostinato which occurs three times in its original form, and once in cleverly disguised triplet time ( the alto solo, "ut det illis haereditatem"). The

final appearance of this theme is in the doxology itself: “sicut erat in principio...”. Note again the word painting in “facta in veritate”, or “et terribile nomen eius”, or the wonderful trio with long suspensions, “initium sapientiae est timor Domini”.

### **Beatus vir qui timet Dominum**

One of Cozzolani’s most interesting pieces, the *Beatus vir* turns the emphatic and uncompromising text on its head by putting much of it in the form of questions and answers. For instance, at the very beginning the text reads “beatus vir - qui – qui beatus vir? – qui timet Dominum beatus vir?” With the returning refrain “beatus vir” she answers the question again and again, but the dialogue between a believer and a doubter continues throughout the piece, giving the impression that doubt is as much a part of belief as faith. Listen especially for the section beginning with one voice asking “Qui miseretur?” in duple time answered immediately by four voices singing “iocundus homo!” in triple time, followed again immediately by “et commodat?” in duple, and “iocundus homo” in triple, and so on. This device works particularly well in illustrating the dialogue Cozzolani wants us to ponder. To end this psalm she interrupts the fully choral trinitarian portion of the doxology (“gloria Patri, et filio, et spiritui sancto) with solo affirmations of its eternity (“sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper, et in saecula saeculorum”).

### **Laudate Pueri**

This psalm setting begins in joyous triple time, with a jaunty bit of hemiola thrown in to add to our delight. Cozzolani brings this initial musical idea back throughout the piece as she moves us through the psalm text, almost as a reminder of the joy the text expresses. Listen here for the solo, “a solis ortu...”, a simple air accompanied by theorbo which seems to foreshadow Cherubini’s love songs in Mozart’s “*Marriage of Figaro*”. Contrast with this is the alto solo “Suscitans a terra...” a strong endorsement of God’s caring for the poor. “Qui habitare facem...”, (the barren woman

shall keep house and be a joyful mother) is also set with lots of dancing hemiola and the word “laetantem” (joyfully) is repeated often. It would appear that Cozzolani is reveling in the “barrenness” of the nunnery, that nuns may indeed take joy in their marriage to God and their subsequent fulfillment as true women. Cozzolani once again uses interruption to suggest emphasis: the beginning theme “Laudate pueri” is joyfully troped into the doxology at the end.

### **Dominum ad Adiuvandum Me Festina**

A short introduction to the Dixit Dominus, this piece is the concertato style in its most basic form: the full chorus sings homorhythmic passages in triple time, contrasted against the soloistic sections in duple time. Cozzolani telescopes the changes so that they happen not over the length of a phrase or section but over a couple of measures. Textually too, she contrasts the word “festina” (haste) which is sung soloistically in sixteenth note runs, against “ad adiuvandum” (to help) sung by the full chorus in a dancing triple time.

### **Magnificat - Cozzolani**

This most amazing piece of music is a study in the concertato style throughout, as each phrase takes its own motif and meter. It begins immediately contrasting color as the tutti chorus sings the word “Magnificat” while a duet of sopranos takes to the skies with “Anima mea magnificat Dominum”. The changes between triple and duple time are less frequent than in the previous psalm settings, however. Cozzolani provides contrast instead by frequently troping the “anima mea” text to emphasize the spirit of this particular psalm. Almost every phrase at some point is interrupted by “my soul magnifies the Lord”. Word painting abounds again here, especially notable in the “sicut locutus est ad patres nostros”. At last the contrasting prayerfulness of “anima mea...” is telescoped into the final doxology; this is a parenthetical admonition to us all not to forget to magnify God, even as we say such rote words as a doxology.

- *Amelia LeClair*

## The Sonatas

We have the religious practice of the late renaissance and early baroque to thank for the rise and cultivation of that strain of music devoted to the pursuit of form over function. In contrast to the secular uses to which music could be put - dance, opera, love song - the intent of the instrumental music used during religious services was to heighten the effect of some of the more tedious bits of ritual and perhaps provoke thought and introspection. But such pure intentions were easily perverted. It remained true that the 'church' sonatas could be differentiated from 'chamber' sonatas by their fantasy with which they were structured as well as the lack of recognizable dance forms. However, as the century progressed the sonata da chiesa became equally full of the musical vitality that characterized that flesh-pot of artistic endeavor, opera.

Over time, the music introduced to accompany (and, presumably, to ameliorate the tedium of) long strings of prayers, became preeminent so that it became customary for the recitation of the officiant to be given silently. In selecting sonatas to bind together Cozzolani's brilliantly differentiated Vespers, I have chosen to represent both the conservative and adventurous strains of North Italian instrumental music that would have been available to her should she have ever attempted a presentation such as tonight's.

But whatever the style, at every level the composer is confronted by the age-old question, 'What comes next?' In the seventeenth century, the old answers no longer served and composers of the *stil moderno*, both in the vocal and instrumental spheres, were at perfect liberty (at sea, some might have said) to compose whatever served their fantasy or their purpose. While the generic 17th c. composer used the academic connotation of fugue (as opposed to garden-variety imitation, which, like talk, was cheap) to confer gravitas to selected movements, we also find at the same time an extraordinarily durable experimental vein in which the conjunctions of repose and activity, conventional and fantastic, banal and *outré* were routinely explored.

As a form, the sonata da chiesa had to wait for the publication of Arcangelo Corelli's Opus 1 in 1681 to become the four-movement set-piece that later poured out of eighteenth-century pens as from buckets. In contrast, each sonata on tonight's program steps to its own drummer. Short sections of intense harmonic drama hobnob with quicker, simpler sections and quick sections of dense chromatics may be balanced by serene slower episodes.

Dario Castello (fl. 1st half of 17th c.), an ensemble leader at San Marco in Venice, published two books of sonatas in the 1620's, both characterized in *stil moderno*. Interestingly, these works received reprints through much of the seventeenth century. The first, *Sonata 15 à 4*, is interesting as a collection of four short canzonas strung together around a triple-time Adagio. The second, *Sonata Sesta a doi*, presents a stark contrast. For two voices, Castello is not shy about changes of mood, affect or texture. This really IS modern style!

Giovanni Paolo Cima was, like Chiara Cozzolani, a Milanese. The 1610 publication *Concerti Ecclesiastici* contains a small number of instrumental works of which tonight's suits our forces admirably. In form it is far more conservative than those of Castello or Legrenzi. The parts-writing is scrupulously fair and the flow of ideas is as even and unperturbed as that of his slightly older contemporary, Giovanni Gabrieli.

Giovanni Legrenzi (1626-1690) developed his art in Bergamo and Ferrara. During the mid 1670's he arrived in Venice. Legrenzi spent the last five years of his life as *maestro di capella* at St. Mark's, one of the most important musical positions in Europe. His collection *La Cetra* was published in Venice, in 1673. Both these sonatas exemplify the culmination of the multi-movement, fantastic style they share with Cozzolani's vespers but that was finally supplanted by the subsequent acceptance of Corelli's innovations.

- *Hendrik Broekman*

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*Thank you,*  
Amelia LeClair, Director

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