

Un-Conventionally Passionately

Madrigals and Motets

by Nuns of Milan, Bologna, and Venice



CAPPELLA CLAUSURA

performing twelve centuries of new music

AMELIA LECLAIR, DIRECTOR

8:00 pm Saturday, November 18th

at Episcopal Parish of the Messiah,
Auburndale

presented by the Forest Hills Education Trust

4:00 pm Sunday, November 19th

at Forsyth Chapel, Forest Hills Cemetery,
Jamaica Plain

Oratio de Iudeis antiquioribus

Chorus *pro Musica*

JEFFREY RINK
MUSIC DIRECTOR

An English Christmas

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FRI, DEC 22 AT 8 PM; OLD SOUTH CHURCH, COPLEY SQ, BOSTON

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2006, 8:00 PM
The Devil Calls the Tune: Choral Music for Halloween
Works by Josef Haydn, Irving Fine, Josef Rheinberger,
Robert Lucas Pearsall, Samuel Barber, and others.
Post-concert reception, costume party, and raffle for audience members.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2006, 8:00 PM
American Christmas
Christmas music from the folk songs of Appalachia to the
urbane music of Bostonian Daniel Pinkham.
Concert followed by audience sing-along.
Post-concert reception for all donors.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 2007, 7:30 PM
Johann Sebastian Bach's Saint John Passion
Performed with The Orchestra of Emmanuel Music.
Post-concert champagne reception for major donors.

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2007, 8:00 PM
**What Fools These Mortals Be:
Renaissance Madrigals Celebrating Love**
Works by Morley, Monteverdi, Tallis, Weelkes, Gesualdo, others.

T H E E N S E M B L E

Marsha Bolton, *soprano*
Paula Downes, *soprano*
Anna Maria Dwyer, *mezzo*
Margaret Felice, *soprano*
Janna Frelich, *mezzo*
Judith Hill, *soprano*
Sharon Kelley, *soprano*
Jeanne Lucas, *soprano*
Allegra Martin, *mezzo*
Janet Poisson, *soprano*
Susan Ward, *mezzo*
Frederick Hoffman, *guest bass*

Hendrik Broekman, *harpsichord, tenor*

Mai-Lan Broekman, *gamba*

Jim Meadors, *theorbo*

Amelia LeClair, *DIRECTOR*

Presented by the Forest Hills Educational Trust's
concert series at Forsyth Chapel

Kindly turn off all cell phones and beepers.

"Women should believe that they have achieved the glory of eloquence if they honor themselves with the outstanding ornament of silence"

- Francesco Barbo, DE RE UXORIA, 15thc.

PASSIONATELY UN-CONVENTIONAL

Monasteries for women in sixteenth (17th c) Italy were largely populated with the daughters of the elite, many of whom, in that atmosphere rich with the best education to be had for females, became excellent musicians despite the fact that musical education, as well, one must suppose, as other disciplines, remained spotty and outdated. Most of their teachers were men considered past lasciviousness, who nevertheless taught from behind screens. The locals came and listened from the Chiesa esteriore, an outer auditorium with a hole in the convent wall through which only sound could pass. The Church may have tried to cloister its nuns, but the locals built rooms expressly for listening to their music. Their loyal public attended their concerts in droves, and even wrote about them.

A remarkable characteristic of these compositions is that they were published at all, and, more incredibly, written to be performed in a fickle Church climate in which instruments might be available one day and removed from the convent the next. The music had to work no matter what octave it was sung in, especially the bass line. The nuns used a variety of options: some women could sing quite low; the bass parts could be raised up an octave; whole pieces could be transposed; bass parts could be played by the cellist or trombonist (nuns played a



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T H E P R O G R A M

In Principio – Patricia Van Ness

Ensemble a cappella

Sonet vox tua – Lucretia Vizzana

Meg, Hendrik, Mai-Lan, Jim

Il mio piu vago sole – Sulpitia Cesis

Janet, Jeanne, Allegra, Janna, Fred

Ornaverunt Faciem Templi - Vizzana

Marsha, Janet, Hendrik, Mai-Lan, Jim

Ecce ego Ioannes – Cesis

Marsha, Sharon, Allegra, Anna, Fred, Mai-Lan

Madrigals by Vittoria (Raffaella) Aleotti:

Ensemble a cappella

Hor che la vaga Aurora

T'amo vita mia

Io v'amo vita mia

Ch'io non t'ami cor mio

O dolc'anima mia

Se del tuo corpo

Thank you to The Broude Trust for their kind permission to reprint this music

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Domine Dominus noster – Vizzana

Ensemble

Puer qui natus est – Cesis

Paula, Janna, Susan, Anna, Allegra, Fred

O Magnum Mysterium – Vizzana

Paula, Hendrik, Mai-Lan, Jim

O Invictissima Christi Martyr – Vizzana

Allegra, Anna, Hendrik, Mai-Lan, Jim

Usquequo Oblivisceris Mei – Vizzana

Judy, Hendrik, Mai-Lan, Jim

Protector noster – Vizzana

Ensemble

Magnificat – Patricia Van Ness

Ensemble with organ

O Deus – Hildegard von Bingen

Ensemble a cappella

(Program continued)

surprising variety of instruments despite the Church's bans); tenor parts could be sung at pitch or up the octave. We have used many of these options in our performances.

The veritable explosion of music making by nuns in the Italian seicento followed the course of the newly fashionable inclusion of women (the concerto della donna of Ferrara) in the singing world and no doubt would have continued but for the Church's continued and severe oppression and finally the Napoleonic suppression of religious institutions from 1796 onwards which dispersed monastic communities, male and female, and often destroyed the buildings as well as the archives.

ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE...D

Just over a month ago, I stood on the Via Fondazza in front of the church of Santa Christina which is being restored, but whose convent has become a condominium and I once again realized how fortunate indeed we are to have even our small bits of recovered music here and there thanks to a few stalwart musicologists. For this performance

Coming Next from Cappella CLAUSURA!

Sat. Feb. 10th, Episcopal Parish of the Messiah, Auburndale

Sun. Feb. 11th, The Center for the Arts, Natick

Sun. March 18th, Music at St. Mary's, Boston College

CAPPELLA CLAUSURA

Performing Twelve Centuries of New Music

Amelia LeClair, Director

Planctus Mariae:



A Medieval Opera

Cappella Clausura owes much to Candace Smith for her research and transcriptions of Sulpitia Cesis, to Craig Monson for his research and transcriptions of Lucrezia Vizzana, and to C. Ann Carruthers for her research and transcriptions of Vittoria Aleotti.

DONNA LUCREZIA VIZZANA (1590-1662)

Lucrezia Vizzana of Santa Christina della Fondazza, a fascinating and prolific composer, wrote deeply passionate music using unusual texts when artistic strife within the convent was at a peak and the church hierarchy was helpless in the face of the two powerful women who fomented it. Donna Cecilia Bianchi, cantatrice (singer) and Donna Emilia Grassi, maestra del coro (choir director) were at one another's artistic throats to such a degree that the church fathers had to be called in. Donna Cecilia writes in her testimony, "It began because of music, and because we had words, I called her misbegotten, and she responded most unvirtuously". It was a dispute that was to last for many years, during which time the young and highly talented Lucrezia grew. Notice the number of the times Lucrezia's texts speak of being protected (from enemies, or vanquishing them, or of finding peace somewhere, espe-

Also in May 2007!

Sun. May 20th 4pm, Episcopal Parish of the Messiah, Auburndale



The Female Mozart?

CAPPELLA CLAUSURA

Performing Twelve Centuries of New Music
Amelia LeClair, Director

(Program continued)

cially “*Usquequo Oblivisceris me in finem?*” Her texts are not found in many scriptures although they are laden with references. Text was paramount in any nun’s prayer, as it should be, but even more so in this era of *clausura* when, as witnessed by one term for a nun, “*sponsa Verbi*” meaning bride of the Word, a cloistered nun’s entire exposure to the world was through scripture.

VITTORIA ALEOTTI/DONNA RAFFAELLA ALEOTTI (c1574-1646)

Vittoria Aleotti, was the second of five daughters of a prominent architect of Ferrara, Giovanni Battista Aleotti, who wrote this about his daughter in the dedication of her madrigals: “...as it happened while she (Vittoria’s oldest sister) was learning... Vittoria (aged 4-5) was always present. She... learned so much that within the space of a year so loosened her tiny hands that she began to play the harpsichord in a way that astonished not only her mother and me, but also the teacher himself.” Giovanni Aleotti was a friend of Giovanni Battista Guarini, a prominent poet of the day, and he made a gift of Guarini’s poetry to his daughter to be set to music. The delightful madrigals of the 16 year-old Vittoria that ensued were written just before she took the veil in the convent of San Vito in Ferrara. We have chosen a mere sampling, including the final madrigale spirituale “*Se del tuo corpo*” whose text suggests some regret at youthful indulgence and focuses her amorous energies towards the figure on the cross who now represents salvation and eternal life to the young nun now called Raffaella. Raffaella went on to become organist, and prioress of the convent. She wrote a collection of motets for 5,7,8 and 10 voices, which Dr. Carruthers is editing – we eagerly await the collection!

SULPITIA CESIS (1577-1619?)

“...with the splendor and nobility of your name, these few musical labors may be defended against the meanness of their detractors, and also that they might be occasionally performed in the convents of nuns, in praise of our common Lord.” Thus lute player and composer of motetti spirituale for 2 to 12 voices, Sulpitia Cesis, dedicates her collection to another nun whose family ties held more sway in the world of music and publishing. It is always interesting to note that these nuns were not unaware of the risks they were taking, nor of the boundaries they were constantly pushing. Cesis’ motets are lovely renaissance works, despite their being written in the early baroque. They are clearly written by someone whose musical thoughts were more harmonic (lute playing) than melodic. As such they are difficult to perform, nevertheless, we bring you just a sampling again of her sweetest works.

CAPPELLA CLAUDURA

Help Lead the Chorus

Help us perform this unique music for the future by making a donation now. Your tax-deductible gift in any amount will help us realize the goal of giving a voice to early as well as contemporary women composers and their music. (Cappella CLAUDURA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.)

It's easy! Just place your donation in the donation box at the entrance or mail it to: Cappella CLAUDURA 12 Jenison Street Newton, MA 02460

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Come hear Cappella CLAUDURA perform
PLANCTUS MARIUS: A MEDIEVAL OPERA
SAT. Feb 10th 8pm Episcopal Parish of the Messiah
Sun. Feb 11th, 7pm Center for the Arts, Natick
Sun. March 18th, 4pm St. Mary's at BC

also,

THE FEMALE MOZART?
Sun. May 20th, 4pm Episcopal Parish of the Messiah



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

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

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Our 6th Season 2006 – 2007

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PASSIO

Saturday, March 17th & Sunday, March 18th

Americana

Friday, May 18th & Sunday, May 20th

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About Cappella CLAUSURA

Cappella CLAUSURA is a women's ensemble in Boston which specializes in the music written through the centuries by women in clausurae, that is, in the cloisters. We bring to light works by composers who have struggled to answer the call of the Muse despite considerable and often crippling social taboos, who, in short, composed music for the pure and overwhelming



love of it. Each season one of our concerts is a benefit to support issues particular to women. Our goal is to place this amazing music in the standard repertoire while raising money for organizations that help women, and thereby to enhance the lives of women and girls today both spiritually and practically.

(Program continued)

PATRICIA VAN NESS (b. 1951)

Composer, violinist, and poet Patricia Van Ness (1951) draws upon elements of medieval and Renaissance music to create a signature voice that has been hailed by musicians, audiences, and critics. She is Composer in Residence at First Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Peter Sykes, Music Director), and has been an invited lecturer on her music at the Harvard University Department of Music and at Boston University's Core Curriculum Program.

Ms. Van Ness's music has been commissioned, premiered and performed by numerous musicians and organizations, including the Heidelberg New Music Festival Ensemble, Schnittpunktvokal in Austria, the Celebrity Series in Boston, the Spoleto Festival Orchestra, Tapestry, the Boston Athenaeum, Julie Ince Thompson, Sanford Sylvan, Chanticleer, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Ellen Hargis, Coro Allegro, Boston Ballet, the Radcliffe Choral Society, the Harvard Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, and Ensemble Project Ars Nova. Her work has been presented at the Vatican and the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Italy; the Musica Sacra Festival in Maastricht, Holland; and in halls and cathedrals throughout Italy, Austria, Germany, Hong Kong, Sweden, Latin America, Canada, Russia and the United States.

In addition to her position as Composer in Residence at First Church in Cambridge, Ms. Van Ness has served residencies at the Boston Athenaeum (2002-2003); with Boston Landmarks Orchestra (2003); and Coro Allegro (1998).

Ms. Van Ness has received numerous awards and grants. In addition, Europe's prestigious 2005 Echo Klassik Prize was awarded to the ensemble Tapestry (Laurie Monahan, Director) for their recording "Sapphire Night," which features music by Hildegard von Bingen and Patricia Van Ness.

Ms. Van Ness's music may be found on Chanticleer's new CD *Sound in Spirit* recorded on Warner Classics; on Telarc International Recordings (*Angeli*); on MDG Classics (*Sapphire Night*); on all Coro Allegro's releases; and on *Advent and Other Music of the Liturgical Year*, released by the composer.

Ms. Van Ness is a member of American Composers Forum, the International Alliance of Women in Music, ASCAP, and the American Music Center. □

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