

Camerata California
Music for the Nativity
English and German music of the 14th through 17th centuries

Sunday, December 3, 2000
Saint Luke's Episcopal Church
20 University Avenue, Los Gatos CA
immediately following the 4:00 PM evensong

and

Sunday, December 10, 2000
Westminster Presbyterian Church
1100 Shasta Avenue, San Jose
(at the Alameda)
7:00 PM in the chapel

The program

Personent hodie Angelus ad Virginem	Anonymous, from <i>Piæ Cantiones</i> , 1582; arranged by V. Read Anonymous, 14th century
Alma redemptoris mater Conditor alme siderum O Gloriosa Dixit Maria	Anonymous, 15th century Guillaume Dufay (ca. 1400 - 1474) Johannes Touront (fl.c. 1450 - 80) Hans Leo Hassler (1564 - 1612)
Sweet was the song the Virgin sang (pt. 1) Sweet was the song the Virgin sang (pt. 2)	Anonymous, ca. 1615
Wohlauf, wir wöllen wecken So trinken wir alle Neue artige und liebliche tãntze, 1602 Singt und klingt	Ludwig Senfl (ca. 1492 - 1555) Arnold von Bruck (1500 - 1554) Melchior Franck (1573 - 1639) Michael Praetorius (1571 - 1621)
The Cry of London	Anonymous, ca. 1600

The Players

Vernon Read - Artistic Director; tenor; recorders; crumhorn; shawm; percussion
Mary Anne James - soprano; recorders; crumhorn; percussion
Lettie Smith - soprano; recorders; crumhorn; shawm; rankett; percussion
Jennifer Randolph - soprano; recorders; crumhorn; guitar; bowed psaltery; percussion
Mike Megas - tenor; recorders; crumhorn; guitar; percussion
Ted Lorraine - baritone; bells; percussion

About Camerata California

Camerata California is a vocal and instrumental ensemble dedicated to performing sacred and secular music from the medieval through Baroque eras. Dr. Vernon Read – who, before retirement, taught and led Early Music at San Jose State University – directs the ensemble.

The musical credits of the group include: master of arts graduate in choral conducting, flute player in the U.S. Air Force band, master of arts graduate in piano, madrigal singer in Albany NY, professional bassoon player (two), former member of Opera San Jose (two), Artistic Director of the San Jose Chamber Music Society, music Professor Emeritus, and an enthusiastic member of an itinerant troupe of musicians and belly dancers in Berkeley during the 1970's. We invite you to speculate on who's who.

We are always looking for skilled musicians to join us for rehearsals and performances throughout the year.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Vernon Read for musical transcriptions, artistic direction, and inspiration; to Jennifer Randolph for translations and program notes; to Ted Lorraine for publicity; to Dick Coulter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Los Gatos, and Marry Anne James of Westminster Presbyterian Church for lovely spaces to perform.

Texts and Translations

Alma redemptoris mater

Alma redemptoris mater.
As I lay upon a night,
My thought was on a burd so bright
That men clepen Mary, full of might,
Redemptoris mater.

To her came Gabriel with light
And said: Hail be thou, blissful wight!
To ben clepë now art thou dight,
Redemptoris mater.

At that word that lady bright
Anon conceivëd God full of might;
Then men wist well that she hight
Redemptoris mater.

Loving mother of the Redeemer

burd = lady, maiden
clepen = call
Mother of the Redeemer

wight = person, human being
clepëd = to have been called; dight =
appointed

Anon = straightaway, forthwith
wist = know; hight - is named

Conditor alme siderum

Conditor alme siderum,
aeterna lux credentium,
Christe, redemptor omnium,
exaudi preces supplicum.

Qui condolens interitu
mortis perire saeculum,
salvastis mundum languidum,
donans reis remedium,

Laus, honor, virtus, gloria
Deo Patri cum Filio,
Sancto simul Paraclito,
in saeculorum saecula.

Liturgia Horarum - 19th c. translation

Creator of the stars of night,
Thy people's everlasting light,
Jesu, Redeemer, save us all,
and hear Thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving the ancient curse
should doom to death a universe,
hast found the medicine, full of grace,
to save and heal a ruined race.

Be glory given and honor done
to God the Father and the Son
and to the Holy Ghost on high,
from age to age eternally.

O gloriosa

O gloriosa regina mundi
succurre nobis pia ad te clamantibus
Ad te clamantibus qui a tu genuisti
Salvatorem in gentibus.
Ave virgo pulcherima
In gratiis uberrima
Ave virgo regina
Salutem protulisti, Amen.

O glorius Queen of the world
Help us supplicants who cry aloud to you,
Who cry aloud to you, who bow before you,
Savior of the people.
Hail most beautiful Virgin
Of ever-increasing esteem
Hail Virgin Queen,
Intercede for our salvation, Amen.

Dixit Maria

Dixit Maria ad angelum,
Ecce ancilla Domini
Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum

And Mary said unto the Angel,
'Behold the handmaid of the Lord;
Be it done according to thy word.'

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,
When she to Bethlehem came
And was delivered of her Son,
That blessed Jesus hath to name:
'Lullaby, Lullaby, sweet Babe,' quoth she,
'My Son, and eke a Saviour born,
Who hath vouchsafed from on high
To visit us that were forlorn.
Lulla, Lulla, Lullaby, sweet Babe,' sang she;
And sweetly rocked him on her knee.

eke = also

Wohlauf, wir wöllen wecken

Wohlauf, wir wöllen wecken
Wan es ist ander Zeit:
Die Nacht mit ihren Schrecken
Dem hellen Tage weicht.

Awake and greet the morrow
'tis tiem to bless the light
For the night with all its sorrow
By day is put to flight.

So trinken wir alle

So trinken wir alle diesen wein mit Schalle
Dieser wein vor anderm wein ist aller wein ein Füste
Trink, mein lieber Dieterlein
So wird dich nimmer dürstem
Trink gar aus, trink gar aus, trink gar aus...

Translation by Jennifer Randolph

Let's all drink with resounding laughter,
For this is the best wine of all the barrels.
Drink up, my dear Dieter,
And you'll never be thirsty again,
Let's drink to the very final drop!

Singt und klingt!

Singt und klingt!
Jesu, Gottes Kind und Marien Söhnelein,
Sing und klingt!
unserm lieben Jesulein im Krippelein,
beim Öchslein und beim Eselein.
Ein kleines Kindelein liegt in dem Krippelein.
Alle lieben Engelein dienen dem
Kindelein und singen ihm fien:

Translation by Jennifer Randolph

Sing and play the bells!
Jesus, Son of God, and Son of Mary,
our dear little Jesus lies in the manger,
with the ox and ass.
A little child lies in the manger
All the angels serve the child and sing beautifully.

The Cry of London

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez!

If any man or woman can tell any tidings of a little maiden child,
about the age of six, or seven, and forty,
This child was lost between the standard and the pissing conduit;
If any man can bring any news of her,
Let him come to the Crier and he shall have four-pence for his hire,
And that's more than she's worth! And God's blessing.
New shades, new lamps and shades!
New mackerel, mackerel, mackerel!
Black, black, very fine black.
Buy a mop, a house-mop, a very fine mop!
Come buy my four ropes of onions,
I have hard onions, white onions, white Saint Thomas onions, white!
Salt, salt, Worcestershire salt!
Buy any aquavitae or good Rosasolis?
Buy my quarter of good smelts!
Will you buy my dish of great eels!
Will you go with oars, sir, will you go with oars?
Will you go with a sculler sir?
I am your first man, sir, will you go with me?
I will go with oars.
George, George, bring the boat to the stairs!
Cod, cod, great cod, buy my fresh cod!
Will you buy any scurvy grass?
Buy a brush, a very fine brush!
Buy my hassock, or a cover for a close-stool!
Buy a cloak sir, see a fair cloak, buy a very fair cloak, sir.
Oranges, oranges, fine Seville oranges, Portingal oranges,
Fine Seville oranges, lemons and oranges I have to sell, but Portingal oranges bear the bell!
See for your love, and buy for your money, for there is good ale at the sign of the Coney!
Buy a hairline, a good hairline, or a rope for a jack!
Will you buy any whiting maids, whiting?
New sprats, great sprats, great sprats, new sprats, herrings fellows!
Buy a barrel of treacle, very good treacle!
Buy any good glasses, very fine Venice glasses!
Wassail, wassail, jolly wassail!
Master and mistress if you be within, call for some of your merry men
to rise and let us in with our wassail, our jolly wassail.
Joy come to our jolly wassail, our jolly wassail!

Program Notes

Personent Hodie (carol, processional)

The melody of Personent Hodie is 14th century, but the words come to us from the *Piæ Cantiones*, a remarkable collection of Christmas, Spring, Easter and student songs from all over Europe, published in Finland in 1582. Our interpretation is an inventive medieval fantasy that incorporates multiple variations of voice, instruments, and percussion.

Angelus Ad Virginem

'Angelus Ad Virginem' or, in its English form, 'Gabriel, From Heven King Was To The Maide Sende,' was a song that enjoyed widespread popularity and is mentioned by Chaucer in his Canterbury Tales. In *The Miller's Tale*, poor scholar Nicholas sang it in Latin to the accompaniment of his psaltery.

Alma redemptoris mater (Marian antiphon)

The Marian antiphons were standard pieces used by the Catholic church for certain points in masses, especially masses dedicated to Mary or the saints. Antiphons were mostly sung by a choir, or even in some cases, an entire congregation. This is a contrast to the motet, in which each part was sung by one or more soloists. The antiphon, because it was sung by so many people, is more concise and has a simple, easy to follow melody.

The response 'Redemptoris mater' is set in fauxbourdon, a technique in which the middle voice parallels the contour of the upper voice an interval of a fourth below. This practice marked the beginning of a full triad as a basic harmonic element.

The Burgundian court

In the year 2000 we celebrate the six-hundredth anniversary of Guillaume Dufay's birth (as far as can be established.) Dufay represents the generation comprising the so-called Burgundian composers, which flourished in the territory ruled by the Dukes of Burgundy. He was born in or around Cambrai, one of the primary musical centers of the era. During his lifetime, Dufay was regarded as the greatest composer in Europe. As a young man, he served as a singer and composer in the papal choir in Rome, and later worked for some of the most important courts in Italy and Burgundy. He was constantly sought after as a teacher, and virtually every 15th-century composer was affected by his writing. Our version of the hymn, 'Conditor alme siderum,' starts with the original Gregorian chant, followed by Dufay's fauxbourdon setting.

O Gloriosa was a popular song-motet of the Burgundian Court of Philip the Good – where artists, musicians, and poets gathered to enjoy the patronage of a wealthy and cosmopolitan court.

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang (consort song)

The consort song is a form especially associated with English composer William Byrd, in which the words of a poem are sung by a solo voice while a consort of viols provides accompaniment. ('Viol' is short for 'viola da gamba' – a bowed stringed instrument that came in several sizes, like the modern string quartet.) In the consort song, the instruments are not relegated to a subsidiary role, but are equal partners with the voice while providing a rich contrapuntal background for the comparatively straightforward delivery of the text by the singer.

For the first setting, we have chosen to use a consort of recorders rather than viols. For the second setting, we use guitars and additional voices instead of instruments from the same family, such as a set of recorders.

German song and dance

'Wohlauf, wir wollen wecken' and 'So trinken wir alle' are examples of the *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. Ludwig Senfl of Switzerland was one of the first Germanic composers to work productively in all forms of the time, composing Masses, motets, and over 250 lieder.

Composers of the Renaissance often traveled about Europe and were influenced by regional styles. Hans Leo Hassler was born in Germany, but studied with both Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli, who composed glorious choral and instrumental work for St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. Hassler composed madrigals and lieder, as well as Latin motets and Masses, Lutheran church music and instrumental music. The motet 'Dixit Maria' suggests the Italian style with its short phrases and clear harmonies.

Like Hassler, Michael Praetorius also studied with Giovanni Gabrieli. He was an important organizer of Lutheran church music, and a prolific composer who explored all the forms and techniques of his time. In 1618, he wrote the most important source for late Renaissance musical practice – the *Syntagma Musicum* (Treatise of Music) – which includes descriptions and woodcuts of the various instruments in use during the 16th and early 17th century. Of interest are the number and variety of wind instruments, and the fact that all instruments (winds, strings, etc.) were built in families from

bass to soprano. Praetorius also describes and approves the doubling of voices with instruments. Our rendition of 'Singt und klingt' makes use of some of the voice and instrumental combinations that were likely used at the time.

'Neue artige und liebliche tätze' is a typical late Renaissance publication that consists of a string of dances – - 'Tanz' written with four beats per measure, and an accompanying 'Nachtanz' in three beats per measure. The collection was probably published to be played by amateur musicians in wealthy German homes since the name translates to something like 'Delightful and Charming New Dances.'

The Instruments

Many early music groups use only modern copies of medieval and Renaissance instruments (very few working instruments survive past the 17th or 18th centuries), but Camerata California also exploits such instruments as the modern guitar to recreate the sound and spirit of the era.

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.

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 were developed, that were better suited for playing indoors.

Rankett - The rankett (aka 'rackett') 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 a cylindrical body.

Crumhorn - The word crumhorn means literally "curved horn". It has a double reed covered by a cap so that - unlike the shawm or oboe - the reed isn't touched directly. They are the earliest (ca. 1500 - 1620) and by far the most common of the reed-cap instruments. Although the shape and sound of the crumhorn might be unusual, the musical life of the crumhorn was a serious one, and they were often played in consorts like recorders.

Psaltery - The bowed psaltery is probably more of a folk instrument of the mid-20th century, but we use it to create the droning sound of a medieval *vielle*.