

P o l y h y m n i a

A Garden Enclos'd

The Genius of Nicolas Gombert



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The Genius of Nicolas Gombert (c. 1495- after 1556)

Saturday June 2, 2007
The Church of St. Ignatius of Antioch
New York, NY
8 PM

Regina Cæli à 12

Kyrie/Gloria Missa Quam pulchra es et quam decora à 6

Hortus conclusus à 5

O flos campi/Quam pulchræ sunt à 5

Tota pulchra à 5

Ego flos campi/Læva eius à 5

Sanctus/Agnus Dei Missa Quam pulchra es et quam decora à 6

Magnificat III à 3-8

This concert will be performed without intermission
Please hold applause until the end

P o l y h y m n i a

John Bradley - Director

Rachel Bazaz, Heather McEwen, Nancy Temple

Soprano

Louis Calvano, June Severino Feldman,

Emma Hoyt, Marjorie Naughton

Alto

Wyatt Ford, Jeff Hindman,

Tenor

Rob Hollander, Aaron Lauber

Baritone

Erik-Peter Mortensen, Edward Willis

Bass

Polyhymnia is a select ensemble of singers specializing in music composed between 1450 and 1650. Since its foundation in 1992, the ensemble has amassed a vast and widely varied repertoire primarily exploring the magnificent sacred repertory from the courts and cathedrals of the renaissance world. Composers featured in past concerts include William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, Robert Fayrfax, John Taverner, Thomas Crecquillon, Johannes Ockeghem, Nicolas Gombert, Jacob Obrecht, Rolande de Lassus, Heinrich Isaac, Jacob Vaet, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Constanzo Porta, Claudio Monteverdi, Cristóbal de Morales, Tomás Luis de Victoria, Francisco Guerrero, Alonso Lobo Juan Gutiérrez de Padilla and others. In addition to traditional programs, Polyhymnia also performs reconstructions of liturgies to showcase great works in their original contexts. Polyhymnia has been ensemble-in-residence at Saint Ignatius of Antioch since 2003.

Notes & Translations

Nostro vero tempore novi sunt inventores, in quibus est Nicolaus Gombert, Josquini piæ memoriæ discipulus, qui omnibus musicis ostendit viam, imo semitam ad querendas fugas, ad subtilitatem, ac est author Musices plane diversæ a superiori. Is enim vitat pauses et illius composito est plane cum concordatum tuam fugarum.

Yet in our very time there are innovators, among whom is Nicolas Gombert, pupil of Josquin of blessed memory, who shows all musicians the way, nay more, the exact path to the desired imitative manner and to refinement; and he composes music entirely different from the past. For he avoids rests, and his composition abounds in both full harmonies and imitations.

Herman Finck, *Pratica musica*, Wittenberg 1556

Nicolas Gombert was born in Southern Flanders, possibly in Le Gorgue, in the last years of the 15th-century. There is evidence from a number of sources that he was a pupil of Josquin Des Près at Condé sur L'Escaut, likely during the composer's retirement there beginning in 1515. He composed an especially poignant *déploration* - a musical epitaph - upon Josquin's death in 1521. Imperial records show that he was a singer in Charles V's imperial chapel beginning in 1526, and was listed in the chapel records as *magister puerorum*, the teacher of singing to the choirboys in 1529. His duties included the musical direction, education and care of the boy singers, and both he and the *Capilla Flemenca*, the Flemish singers, traveled extensively with the emperor throughout the empire, singing at various state occasions. In the 1530's Gombert took priestly orders, and was eventually granted benefices at several cathedrals, including Kortrijk (Courtrai) Lens, Metz, Béthune, ultimately retiring to Tournai. He remained in the Imperial Court Chapel until sometime between 1537 and 1540. Gombert apparently attempted to cultivate a relationship with Ferrante Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, and captain to Charles V, revealed in a letter, which likely accompanied the delivery of a motet sent on June 3, 1547. This letter, the only surviving example of Gombert's autograph, is in the collection at the Morgan Library in New York.

Gombert was highly regarded by his contemporaries and his works were included in anthologies produced by most of the major European printing houses. In Paris, Pierre Attaignant published his masses and early motets, while Venetian publishers Scotto and Gardano published collections entirely devoted to his motets beginning in 1539. His works continued to be performed long after his death, and remained in the repertoire of many musical institutions for several generations. Claudio Monteverdi's six-voice *Missa in illo tempore*, included in the same 1610 publication as the well-known *Vespers*, is based on Gombert's motet of the same name. Gombert did have his detractors, Heinrich Glarean, a music theorist of the Josquin generation, felt that the new innovations of the pervasive style in general and of Gombert in particular had declined and degenerated, leaving little but musical anarchy. But, as the quotation at the beginning of these notes reveals, Finck, like most of Gombert's contemporaries, was luxuriating in the textures and density of his rich and hypnotic compositions.

A choir singing the music of Nicolas Gombert, has in many respects, discovered the holy grail of 16th-century polyphony. Gombert remains one of the great enigmas of the early renaissance, deploying vocal lines and wielding oceans of dissonant polyphony throughout his music in much the same way that Jackson Pollack flung paint onto a canvas. Though taught by the great Josquin, Gombert seems to not only intentionally, but even aggressively, discard the conventions he must have learned at the feet of his master. Whereas Josquin uses his forces sparingly, two voices at time, only allowing the entire spectrum to sound at carefully selected points, Gombert exults in dense textures, long labyrinthine phrases, with rests only at carefully chosen moments.

Josquin only allowed the use of imitation - repeated motivic figures – in two parts, Gombert employed “pervasive imitation” in which motivic figures appear throughout all of the vocal lines. Gombert was not particularly interested in highlighting details, though his music is full of them, nor even in creating music with a sense of forward movement. The music simply exists. What Gombert does like no one else is to create waves of rich and luscious sound which seem to function outside of our experience of linear time, participating in the same rather static and iconic musical expression favored by such contemporary composers as Arvo Pärt. In the mid-16th-century the Council of Trent passed specific rules governing the use of polyphony in liturgical music, most specifically concerning the clear communication and clarity of text. These new rules would have been anathema to Gombert’s philosophy. Though sacred vocal music evolved along more homophonic lines, the use of imitation and dense counterpoint survived the Tridentine reforms in various instrumental styles such as the *ricercar*, which, unconcerned with clarity of text, and with the passage of time, evolved in new manifestations such as the “fugue” familiar in baroque composition. In this way, Gombert, a true composer of the renaissance was the *de facto* grandfather of the baroque.

While Crecquillon, Clemens non Papa, and other contemporary Franco–Flemish composers generally exhibit more variety when expanding the four conventional vocal lines, Gombert favors an exclusively downward expansion. In his entire body of work, the treble line indicated by a G-clef, if there even is one, was never doubled. This is all the more apparent when examining the clefs in the original printed and manuscript editions. The *quintus* and *sextus*, merely indicating “fifth and sixth” vocal lines are inevitably imbedded in the clefs that would likely have been sung by lower voices. Even the *altus* indicated by a C-clef, often sits much closer to what modern singers would call a tenor range. This evening’s mass ordinary, even with an upward transposition of a minor third, still requires the altos to sing in the lower part of their ranges. The resulting effects are astounding. Gombert’s writing is dense but never, as one might fear, muddy. He is unconcerned by the inevitable dissonances that result from the collision of many florid polyphonic lines and puts this device to highly dramatic use. One might expect passing dissonances in the middle of melodic lines, but the listener is continually surprised by the frequency of dissonance on downbeats! His influence is apparent on the subsequent generations of composers, Rolande de Lassus, Philippe De Monte and others, but Jacob Vaet comes closest to emulating the sound produced by the array of lower voices, but even he, restricted by the now entrenched directives of Council of Trent abandoned the polyphonic complexity of his predecessor.

Gombert’s influence may be widespread but his style remains unique, differing significantly from that of his contemporaries Ludwig Senfl and Adrian Willaert, and immediate followers, Jacobus Clemens non Papa or Thomas Crecquillon, his close associates at the Court of Emperor Charles V. Though all share his propensity for pervasive highly imitative polyphony, none ever achieve the density of Gombert while retaining the artistry. The other composers shy away from sheer voluptuousness found in Gombert’s music, favoring a safer, more transparent sound. That is not to say significant works like Clemens non Papa’s seven-voice *Ego flos campi*, or Crecquillon’s eight-voice *Pater peccavi* aren’t masterpieces in their own right, but neither work employs the intricate density of the mass, motets or Magnificat on tonight’s program. A visual examination of Pierre Attaignant’s *Primus-Septimus liber viginti missarum musicalium* of 1532, currently on exhibit at the Boston Athenæum, provides some surprising results. Even to an untrained eye, Gombert’s mass appears almost impenetrably dense on the folios, especially when compared to the works by Manchicourt, Mouton, Richafort and others in the same collection. When sung the music is full of moving, intricately wrought melodic and harmonic flights of fancy, that when sung together lasciviously collide and intertwine. There are more fascinating musical events in two pages of Gombert’s music than in entire mass movements by other composers.

The magnificent *Regina Cæli*, published by Attaignant in 1535, is Gombert’s largest scale motet, composed for twelve voices – three *cantus* two *altus*, three tenors and four basses. The text is one of the four great Marian antiphons used in the offices during the Easter season. The motet is composed, surprisingly not on the *Regina Cæli* chant itself, but rather on the Easter antiphon *Et ecce terræ motus* – “and behold the earth shook”. It is likely that Gombert was familiar with Antoine Brumel’s breathtaking twelve-voice mass on the same *cantus firmus*, and this piece could have been written as a companion for a 16th-century performance. Gombert, like Brumel, alternates between passages deploying the full choir with sections in which he creates contrasting and varied

combinations of voices. In the passages at which all of the voices are singing at the same time the sensation is quite extraordinary.

Though composed only about ten years after Josquin's death, the *Missa Quam pulchra es et quam decora* for six voices vividly shows how suddenly musical styles evolved in the 1520's. The simple clarity of the earlier style was entirely replaced by the prevailing taste for dense, highly contrapuntal, dissonant music. It is a fairly early work contrasting with the style of the Magnificat cycle, among the latest composed in the 1550's. We don't know the specific occasion for which it was composed, but the inclusion of the text *ecce sacerdos magnus...* "Behold a great priest..." used during Episcopal visitations as the *cantus firmus* in the second *Agnus Dei* offers some compelling possibilities. Clearly, it could indicate that the mass was intended for the installation or visitation of a bishop. The passage from Ecclesiasticus, canonical in Roman scripture, but not in Protestant, is also used for feasts of saints and doctors of the church, though the extravagant nature of the mass might allude to its use for of a living celebrity. There is also some speculation that the mass was written specifically for an occasion at which Pope Clement VII was present, but in light of his tumultuous relationship with Charles V, and his propensity for changing loyalties and allegiances at rather frequent intervals, it would seem rather unlikely that the emperor would squander his resources for this particular Medici Pope.

Technically, it is a parody based on a motet of the same name by Noël Bauldewyn (c. 1480-1530). However, as one might expect Gombert interprets the principals of parody rather loosely. The motet is in four voices, and the only instance of four voices in the mass bears little resemblance to the source. The motific material makes frequent appearances at the beginning of each movement, but rapidly gives way to original material. The mass is bit tricky to date, but certainly before 1533 when Attaignant's seven-volume collection of masses was published. Pierre Attaignant dedicated his collection to Francis I, the archenemy of Charles V, making his inclusion of Gombert a bit of a mystery, if not a substantial political risk for a publisher hoping to sell books across borders. But, Francis I like both of his contemporary monarchs Charles V and Henry VIII had, politics aside, a great deal in common as men of the Renaissance; all had extensive training in the arts and music in particular and knew a good thing when they saw it. It also might have been something of a triumph for Francis to acquire music from one of his rival's favored composers. It is certainly possible that Attaignant merely assembled a collection of music that suited the King's taste.

The entirety of the ordinary is set for six voices, all of whom sing most of the time, with notable exceptions found in the seven-voice *Agnus Dei* II, and two sections of the *Sanctus* – the *Pleni sunt caeli*, and *Benedictus qui venit*. The obvious challenge for the conductor and the performers is how to achieve any sense of phrase and shape within such a dense and intricate texture, and Gombert himself doesn't make it easy. It seems as if we have been bequeathed a series of puzzles to solve. Gombert mischievously leads both the listeners and the performers through a series of musical calisthenics that appear to lead to cadential figures only have them resolve in some of the parts, while the melodic line turns on its heels and continues blithely on. There are suspensions that at first glance are ill prepared, but which in reality are carefully planned. And then there are the dissonances! In program notes for a recording of this mass, musicologist Rob Wegman provides an interesting example of what Gombert's music would look like were all the dissonances "fixed" according to the principals that Josquin so faithfully followed. Each of the "fixes" immediately thereafter creates the need for another and then another, ultimately resulting in the obliteration of Gombert's skillful counterpoint, revealing aspects of Josquin's style – but not the artistry - concealed beneath the brush strokes of more extravagant writing.

In spite of the mass's seemingly impenetrable wall of sound, there are many possibilities for contrast, the three sections of the *Kyrie* each have a distinct character enhanced by tempo and dynamic. The same device also works for the *Gloria*, divided into three distinct sections, each notably different in affect. The *Sanctus* provides textural variations by varying the number of voices, and the grandeur of the second *Agnus* is enhanced by the addition of the seventh vocal line and longer note values in canon, and by the tenor *cantus firmus* "ecce sacerdos magnus" proclaimed in long notes in the midst of the polyphonic embroideries, making for a fitting end to this magnificent composition.

The motets with texts from the biblical Song of Songs come from two sources; *O flos campi*, *Ego flos campi* and *Tota pulchra* were all included in an extensive collection published in Venice in 1539. *Hortus conclusus* was published a few years later in 1541. The texts of all of these are to be found in antiphons for the offices of the Blessed Virgin, the verses of the Song of Songs mixed and matched. There are several specific references contained in the canticles that have been traditionally associated with the veneration of the Virgin, some strangely, at least to modern ears, erotic discussions of breasts and lips intermingled with references to crowning, flowers, and purity – “*there is no spot in thee*”. These motets, though not seemingly intended in that way, function as a set. They vary in length, extent of text usage and vocal color. Mostly they are low and rich, but *Tota pulchra* and *Hortus conclusus* use a more conventional SATTB format. *O flos campi* when sung at pitch, for ATTBarB, offers the baritone singer a unique challenge. Functioning alternately as both a tenor and bass line at different parts of the piece, the singer is required to fully realize the entire extremity of his range and vocal quality. *Ego flos campi* on the other hand was originally written in high clefs, with a tenor clef on the bottom line. If one adheres to the indicated clefs, all of the rich sonorities are lost, replaced by a rather strained high sound. In these cases a downward transposition of a fourth seems to be the most likely choice, and we have done so tonight.

The set of eight *Magnificats* are believed to be Gombert’s last flourish of compositional activity. One anecdotal account implies that these are the “swan songs” published as a collection and presented to Charles V, possibly to shorten the composer’s stint in a galley, a sentence that according to legend followed an unfortunate incident involving a choirboy. The story was recounted by a contemporary observer, Girolano Cardano, and although neither the inquisition records of the verdict nor sentence survive in any official documents, Gombert did disappear from the imperial chapel records after 1540, reappearing in 1547 with a benefice at Tournai, the city from which the letter to Ferrante Gonzaga was sent. Unlike his other works which were widely circulated, the *Magnificat* cycle exists in a unique source in Madrid, giving further credence to the theory that they were personally presented to Charles V. The *Magnificat tertii et octavi toni* is the summation of Gombert’s technical skill as a composer, he begins the setting with a three-voice *et exultavit* adding an additional voice for each of the subsequent verses, ending with eight in the *sicut erat*. The symbolism of the Trinity in the first verse expanding the voices to eight the number associated with eternity, and the unique appearance of seven-voices, possibly a reference to the seven joys and sorrows of Mary, and the only time seven-part writing appears in the *Magnificat* cycle, serve to make this the most impressive of the collection. Invariably, he adds lower rather than higher parts, revealing his penchant for bass and tenor timbres. And, in one of only two known instances (the other is in the same *Magnificat* cycle) in 16th-century music, Gombert has also chosen to compose extensions in the eighth tone, which give a surprising change of key that ends each section with a flourish.

In closing I want to acknowledge and enthusiastically thank James Middleton for his guidance and assistance in assembling this program. It is he who many years ago first introduced me to Gombert’s music, and has throughout our twenty year friendship, been a constant source of ideas and inspiration, as director, performer and currently President of Polyhymnia’s board of directors. “*Amicitiae nostrae memoriam spero sempiternam fore*”. - I hope that the memory of our friendship will be everlasting. (Cicero)

John Bradley

Nicolas Gombert, John Bradley & Me:

Two weeks ago, on May 22, John Bradley and I made a pilgrimage to the Morgan library, to see the only extant piece of Nicolas Gombert's handwriting; a letter offering a composition to Duke Ferrante Gonzaga of Mantua, presumably in the hope of some fiscal reward. The incestuous letters of recommendation we had written for one another which were graciously accepted, and - having been instructed to fill out the necessary forms, to wash our hands and sign two final documents, we were ushered into the reading room, and told to sit down. We did so, and an approximately legal-sized folder was placed before us. Handing John a paper spatula with which to manipulate the precious document, the librarian opened the folio. And there it was, the signature of our favorite Franco-Flemish composer, clear as a spring day in New York. We giggled and began slowly to decipher:

Très Honoré Seigneur, a vostre bonne grace toujours, Seigneur humblement me recommande ~

Mons[iegn]e[r] sachant que v[ost]re noble esprit se delecte en la musique javoie fait che mottet pour en faire present a v[ost]re seignourie vous estant par de che pensant que euchies opportunité de passer a Tournay mais j'espère que pour le présent le prendres de aussi bonne part que lors parq[oy] je le vous envoie de aussi bonne coeur que je pense que le receveres en toute benevolence, a tant Mons[iegn]e[r] après m'avoir de recheir. Je recommande à v[ostr]e bonne grace prie a n[ostr]e S[ei]gneur[r] vous dones en santé bonne et longue vie.

de Tournay che iij Juin 1547 par le plus que humble et obéissant serviteur

*Nicolas Gombert, chanoine
de dit lieu, &c.*

Most Honored Lord, before your good grace, Sir, I humbly recommend myself ~

My Lord, knowing how your noble spirit delights in music, I made this motet in order to make a present of it to your lordship on the possibility that you might have had an opportunity of passing through Tournai. But I hope that for now you will accept it with as good a will as that with which I send it, because I send it with as good a heart and I think that you will receive it in all benevolence, at least after having received it from me (?). I recommend your Good Grace with a prayer that Our Lord grant you good health and long life.

at Tournai this third day of June, 1547, by the humble and obedient servant

Nicolas Gombert, canon
of the said locale, &c.

Almost twenty years ago, in April of 1988, my group, Ex Machina, did a concert of music with texts drawn from the Song of Songs. The music ranged from a Hebrew cantillation to a verse anthem by Henry Purcell, but the piece that made the profoundest impression on me, and the one that lodged itself in my consciousness was one I picked out on a hunch, never having seen it before and with very little knowledge of the composer, because "it looked good on the page". The piece was Nicolas Gombert's motet "Ego Flos Campi", the seventh piece on tonight's program. Curiously, John has made the same observation about the way Gombert's compositions look on the page - whether in the beautiful sixteenth century imprints of Pierre Attaignant, or in modern editions, they are - physically as well as aurally - enormously attractive compositions.

The Song of Songs (Which Is Solomon's) is, as far as I'm concerned, the best thing in the Bible: its redolent language and luscious erotic imagery extol the expression of amorous desire and the act of physical love in

ways that - even after three millennia - remain mildly shocking to our supposedly sophisticated age: Ways which continue these three-thousand years on to send concerned theologians scurrying after allegorical interpretations - interpretations which slither away even as we attempt to grasp them. "The Song" has been variously seen as an allegory of the Soul's longing for Christ, or of Christ's devotion to His Church. In Gombert's day it was construed as an ornately abstruse paean to the Blessed and Ever-Virgin Mother of God, Mary of Nazareth. Well that's fine then. It can mean what we want it to: its meanings are replete and abundant, and since all good stories are true anyway, why not?

For me, however, Gombert's settings of this frankly erotic poetry represent a profoundly queer interpretation of the textual material: Gombert is known to have been sentenced to service as a galley slave for certain indiscretions with choirboys - his volume of Magnificat settings in each of the eight Gregorian tones is thought to have been composed in penance for this, though it is not known whether or not he actually served his sentence. The lacerating sorrow of his secular chanson, *Je Prens Congie de Mes Amours* ("I Take Leave of My Loves") suggests that he indeed knew the pain of love denied - its music was later re-cast as a setting of David's lament for his son Absalom. On a happier note, his single surviving composition in Spanish, *Dezilde el Cavallero* ("Tell the Gentleman") speaks of a love fulfilled and faithfully cherished: "...Tell the Gentleman with the splendid body that he must neither despair nor hide away: / For by my faith I will not leave him". This *canción* served as the source for a famous set of keyboard variations by Antonio de Cabezón (*Diferencias sobre el canto del Caballero*) as well as of a Mass setting by Cristóbal de Morales. Morales would have known Gombert, and may indeed have known him - ummm - biblically. It has always seemed to me, given the deeply homosocial ambience of sixteenth-century clerical life, that a group of sweet-voiced singers and tender youths singing these lovelorn texts to set to Gombert's suave, inventive polyphonies, may not have been entirely attentive to their intended allegorical import. It also seems likely to this writer, burnings at the stake & sentences to serve time in the galleys notwithstanding, that church music was probably as full of gay people in the sixteenth century as it is today.

Even if they did think they were singing about the Blessed Virgin, Gombert's singers - the peripatetic chapel of Emperor Charles V - would nonetheless have been borne along on the tidal surge of shamelessly reiterated points of imitation which are the distinctive hallmark of this composer: Gombert cheerfully broke all of Josquin's rules regarding the use of polyphonic imitation: he was the first composer to repeat thematic material in all voices: a violation of the rules of counterpoint which laid the groundwork for the fugues of Bach. Gombert's lavishly sensual use of imitation shows us, in rapid succession, the same bit of thematic material at different places in the scale - rather like a jewel seen in different degrees of light as in the contemporaneous painting "The Madonna of the Bare Tree" by Petrus Christus which adorns the postcard image for this concert, in which fifteen tiny golden A's (the "Ave's" of the Rosary) glitter on the branches of a bush.

Of course, you can't body surf on a flood of gorgeous counterpoint forever - something always happens: In one of the first sight reading sessions of the 1988 concert, one of our sopranos - after sailing effortlessly through a particularly ornate passage on the Latin phrase *odor unguentorum tuorum* she translated, in a silly voice: "the odor of your unguents". Well, we all just broke up.

James Middleton

Texts and Translations

Regina cæli lætare, alleluia:
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia.
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.

O Queen of heaven rejoice! alleluia:
For He whom thou didst merit to bear, alleluia,
Hath arisen as he said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

Lord have mercy upon us.
Christ have mercy upon us.
Lord have mercy upon us.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adoramus te.
Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter
magnam gloriam tuam. Domine Deus,
Rex cælestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domine, Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,
qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace on earth to men of good will.
We praise Thee. We bless Thee. We adore Thee.
We glorify Thee. We give thanks to Thee
for Thy great glory. Lord God,
heavenly King, God the Father almighty.
Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,
suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus.
Tu solus Dominus. Tu solus altissimus,
Jesu Christe.

Thou who takest away the sins of the world
receive our prayer.
Thou who sittest at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For Thou only art holy.
Thou only art the Lord. Thou only art most high,
Jesus Christ.

Cum Sancto Spiritu,
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

With the Holy Ghost,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Hortus conclusus es, Dei Genetrix,
hortus conclusus, fons signatus;
surge propera amica mea et veni.

A garden enclosed art thou Mother of God.
A garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.
Arise, make haste my love and come.

O flos campi et lilium convallium sicut lilium
inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias. Tota
pulchra es amica mea et macula non est in te.
Vulnerasti cor meum soror mea sponsa
vulnerasti cor meum in uno oculorum tuorum et
in uno crine colli tui.

O rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.
As the lily among thorns, so is my love among
the daughters. Thou art all fair, my love; there is
no spot in thee. Thou hast ravished my heart,
my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my
heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of
thy neck.

Secunda pars

Quam pulchræ sunt mammæ tuæ pulchriora
sunt ubera tua vino, et ordor unguentorum
super omnia aromata. Labia tua, sponsa, mel et
lac sub lingua tua, et odor vestimentorum
tuorum sicut odor thuis.

Tota pulchra es amica mea, et macula non est in
te. Veni de Libano, columba mea. Veni
coronaberis

Ego flos campi et lilium convallium sicut lilium
inter spinas sic amica mea inter filias
sicut malum inter ligna silvarum sic dilectus
meus inter filios sub umbra illius quam
desiderabam sedi et fructus eius dulcis gutturi
meo introduxit me in cellam vinariam
ordinavit in me caritatem fulcite me floribus
stipate me malis quia amore langueo

Secunda pars

Læva eius sub capite meo et dextera illius
amplexabitur me. Similis est dilectus meus
capræ hinculoque cervorum en ipse stat post
parietem nostrum despiciens per fenestras
prospiciens per cancellos et dilectus meus
loquitur mihi surge propera amica mea
formosa mea et veni. Tota pulchra es amica
mea et macula non est in te.

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.
Hosanna in excelsis.
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini,
Hosanna in excelsis.

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi,
dona nobis pacem.

Tenor:

Ecce sacerdos magnus
qui in diebus suis placuit.

Thy breasts are like two young roes, how much
better are they breasts than wine. Thy lips, O my
spouse drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk
are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy
garments is like the smell of Lebanon.
[frankincense]

Thou art fair my love; there is no spot in thee.
Come with me from Libanon, my dove, Come
that thou might be crowned.

I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the
valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love
among the daughters. As the apple tree among
the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among
the sons. I sat down under his shadow with
great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my
taste. He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner over me was love. Stay me with
flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of
love.

His left hand is under my head, and his right
hand doth embrace me. My beloved is like a
roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind
our wall, he looketh forth at the windows,
showing himself through the lattice. Thou art all
fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God of Hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee O Lord most high.
Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord,
Hosanna in the highest

Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the
world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God who takest away the sins of the
world, grant us peace

Behold, a great priest,
who in his days pleased God.

Magnificat anima mea Dominum.

My soul doth magnify the Lord

Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo.

And my spirit rejoiceth in God my saviour.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillæ suæ:
ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes
generationes.

For he hath regarded the lowliness of his
handmaiden: For behold, from henceforth all
generations shall call me blessed.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est,
et sanctam nomen ejus.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me,
and Holy is his name.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies
timentibus eum.

And mercy is on them that fear him,
throughout all generations.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo,
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

He hath showed strength with his arm;
he scattered the proud in the imaginations
of their hearts.

Deposuit potentes de sede,
et exaltavit humiles

He hath put down the mighty from their seat. And
hath exalted the humble and the meek

Esurientes implevit bonis
et divites dimisit inanes.

He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich he hath sent empty away

Suscepit Israel puerum suum, recordatus
misericordiæ suæ. Sicut locutus est ad patres
nostros, Abraham et semini ejus in sæcula.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant
Israel. As he promised to our forefather Abraham
and to his seed forever.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper,
Et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever
shall be, world without end. Amen

Translations:

Book of Common Prayer

King James Bible

Breviary.net

Special Thanks



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REGINA CÆLI
EGO FLOS CAMPI

EDITED BY
John Bradley

We wish to thank the following for their generosity:

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The Church of Saint Ignatius of Antioch
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New York Early Music Celebration 2007

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Polyhymnia is currently looking for an enthusiastic and committed cadre of volunteers. We need people who would be interested in helping us promote the activities and mission of Polyhymnia and make new friends while doing it! Although we are looking for anyone with good ideas, energy and the desire to help our exciting ensemble grow, we have an immediate need for volunteers who have experience in marketing, web design, or sales to work alongside our board of directors to help us better promote Polyhymnia's work to both our current supporters and to reach out to new audience members. In addition, as Polyhymnia continues to expand, we hope to offer workshops and educational outreach programs for which volunteer assistance would also be warmly appreciated. If you are interested in becoming a Polyhymnia volunteer, please speak to a board member or the director at the reception, or contact us by calling or emailing us.

We look forward to meeting you!

917-838-4636

info@polyhymnia-nyc.org

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A 50¢ building restoration fee has been added to the price of tickets to ensure the continued availability of the spaces of Emmanuel Church for events in the city of Boston.

Cover Art:

Madonna of the Barren Tree – Petrus Christus (d. 1472/3)