



RICERCAR CONSORT & CÉLINE SCHEEN

THE VIRGIN'S TEARES

RICERCAR CONSORT

VIOLIN James Josef Zak & Augustin Luson

VIOLONE Benoît Vanden Bemden

THEORBO Daniel Zapico

ORGAN Paul Gousot

BASS VIOL, FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Philippe Pierlot

SOPRANO Céline Scheen

Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral

Thursday, March 6 @ 7:30 PM

There will be no intermission.

PROGRAM

<i>Passacalio</i>	Biagio Marini
<i>Maria, quid ploras</i>	Claudio Monteverdi
<i>Sonata à 3</i>	Giovanni Paolo Cima
<i>Canzonetta spirituale sopra alla nanna</i>	Tarquinio Merula
<i>Susanna passeggiata</i>	Bartolomé de Selma y Salaverde
<i>Sonata detta la Moderna</i>	Salomone Rossi
<i>O stellae coruscantes</i>	Claudio Monteverdi
<i>The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation</i>	Henry Purcell
<i>Stabat Mater</i>	Giovanni Felice Sances
<i>La Follia</i>	Antonio Vivaldi
<i>Salve Regina, HWV 241</i>	George Frideric Handel

PROGRAM NOTES

During the renaissance, musical composition flourished, but it was a time of great change, fueled by religious From the fifth century onward, Marian worship held a significant place in Christian art. It experienced considerable growth during the 15th and 16th centuries, particularly in the realm of music, which saw the emergence of numerous hymns, antiphons and canticles celebrating the Virgin. The Council of Trent's recommendation for greater textual clarity was soon complemented by the *seconda prattica*, a theory developed by Florentine intellectuals. This *seconda prattica*, or "new music," advocated for a return to monody, modeled on antiquity, which emphasized human emotions. Thus, at the turn of the 17th century, the Baroque movement was born—an artistic movement based on contrasts and contradictions, but above all on the expression of passions, a revolutionary concept in the musical context of the time. This program, which centers on Mary in both her spiritual and secular aspects, perfectly illustrates this shift.

The interplay between the sacred and the secular is evident in the two works by Claudio Monteverdi featured in this program: *Maria, quid ploras* and *O stellae coruscantes* are adaptations of secular madrigals to which the rhetorician Aquilino Coppini applied sacred texts to expand the repertoire of religious music. This practice was common; Monteverdi himself employed it in his *Pianto della Madonna*, transforming his famous *Lamento d'Arianna* into a lament of the Virgin mourning her son. The admiration of religious figures of the time was so profound for Monteverdi's music that they regarded it as divinely inspired. They saw no issue in this transformation from the secular to the sacred, akin to building a Christian church on the site of a pagan temple.

The *seconda prattica* also paved the way for the development of entirely new instrumental music. At the dawn of the Baroque era, the sonata emerged, with the violin playing a prominent role thanks to the remarkable advancements in Italian lutherie. These early sonatas were still far from the classical models of Mozart or Beethoven that we are more familiar with today; they were short works featuring contrasting sections. The influence of Venice and its tradition of *cori spezzati* (separated choirs of voices or instruments responding to one another) is evident in these sonatas, which showcase the two violins in a true dialogue, as in the sonatas of Cima, Rossi or Vivaldi's *La Follia*. *Susanna passeggiata* by Bartolomé de Selma y Salaverde, a Spanish composer based in Venice, highlights the tradition of virtuosic improvisation on the most famous songs or madrigals of the time. Here, the song *Susanne un jour* by Roland de Lassus serves as the basis for improvisation, with the final section of the song repeated in a haunting ostinato.

The *Canzonetta spirituale sopra alla nanna* by Tarquinio Merula is both the most surprising piece in this program and the one that best reveals the human side of the Virgin. It is a mother's lullaby to soothe her child, built on an ostinato of just two notes (evoking a rocking motion). The Virgin transitions from the tenderness she feels for her baby to the horrifying visions of Christ's tragic passion.

After receiving his musical education in Padua and Venice, Giovanni Felice Sances settled in Vienna, where Italian chapel masters held most of the prominent positions. His *Stabat Mater*, in its form, is a true cantata that alternates recitativo passages with arias based on the tetrachord formula, a typical ostinato of Italian laments.

The influence of Monteverdi is strikingly evident in Henry Purcell's *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*, a scene that seems to emerge directly from a sacred opera. Purcell sets to music a passage from the Gospel of Luke recounting the disappearance of the twelve-year-old Christ, who remained in Jerusalem to debate with the scholars. The Virgin expresses her doubts, anxieties and joys in a lengthy recitative interspersed with short arias that sometimes bring her to the brink of hysteria. The words of the poet Nahum Tate are heightened by Purcell's music, which, in his time, "was especially admir'd for the Vocal, having a peculiar Genius to express the energy of English Words, whereby he mov'd the Passions of all his Auditors."

In 1706, the young Handel abruptly decided to leave Hamburg, where he had already begun a promising career, to travel to Italy. This Italian sojourn, lasting until 1710, was a pivotal and formative period for the composer's creative genius. In Italy, Handel cultivated relationships with patrons and benefactors, and in 1707, he was commissioned by Cardinal Colonna to compose the antiphon *Salve Regina* for the Basilica of Santa Maria in Montesanto. The work is divided into three parts: the first, in minor key, emphasizes the supplicant nature of the text; the second, more lively, includes a solo organ passage evoking the supplicant's hope; and the third, concluding the piece, is striking for its meditative and contemplative quality, in keeping with the spirit of the Carmelite order, which was then in charge of the Montesanto church.

TEXTS

***Passacalio* – Biagio Marini**

***Maria, quid ploras* – Claudio Monteverdi**

Maria, quid ploras ad monumentum?

Mary, why do you weep at the tomb?

Quaenam fuere tibi causae doloris?

What was the cause of your pain?

Crucifi xerunt amorem meum, et occiderunt eum qui mihi dedit vitam.

They crucified my love and they slew him who has given me life.

Exultet cor tuum gaudio, absterge cadentes lachrymas, invitis perfidis Iudaeis,

Wipe away the tears falling because of the perfidious Jews.

ille vivit et vivet in aeternum, et possidebis eum.

He lives and shall live for ever, and He shall be yours

***Sonata à 3* – Giovanni Paolo Cima**

***Canzonetta spirituale sopra alla nanna* – Tarquinio Merula**

Hor ch'è tempo di dormire,
Dormi figlio e non vagire,
Perchè tempo ancor verrà che vagire biso guera.
Deh, ben mio, cor mio, fa la ninna na.

Now that it is time to sleep,
Sleep my darling and don't cry,
For a time will come when you need to cry.
So, my darling, my heart, fa la ninna na.

Chiudi, quei lumi divini
Come fan gli altri bambini
Per ch'è tosto oscuro velo
Priverà di lume il cielo.
Deh, ben mio, cor mio, fa la ninna na.

Close those delightful eyes
Like the other children do
Because swift, dark veils
Will soon hide the light of heaven.
So, my darling, my heart, fa la ninna na.

Over prendi queste latte dalle me
Mammelle intate perchè ministro crudele
ti prepara aceta e fiele.
Deh, ben mio, cor mio, fa la ninna na.

Take the milk from
My untouched breasts as cruel rulers will prepare for You
sourness and bitterness.
So, my darling, my heart, fa la ninna na.

Amor mio, sia questo petto hor
Per te morbido letto pria che rendi ed alta voce,
L'alma al padre su la croce.
Deh, ben mio, fa la ninna na.

Posa hor queste membra belle e vezzo sette
E tenerelle perchè poi ferm'e catene,
Gli daranno acerbe pene.
Deh, ben mio, cor mio, fa la ninna na.

Queste mani e queste piedi
ch'or con gusto e gaudi vedi;
Ahi me, come in vari modi
Passeràn acuti chiodi.
Questa faccia graziosa ruli conda più di rosa,
Spudi e schiaffi spor che ranno
Con tormento e grand'afanno.
Ah, con quanto tuo dolore sola speme
del mio core questo capo e questi crini
Passeràn acuti spini.
Ah, che in questo divin petto amor
Mio dolce diletto.
Vi farà piaga matale empia
Lancia e disleale. Dormi dunque figlio mio,
pur redentor mio, Perché poi con lieto viso
Si vedremo in paradiso.

Hor che dorme la mia vita,
Del mio cor gioia compita.
Tocci an agi un con puro zeio,
E frattanto, io che farò il mio ben contemplerò
Taccian sin la terra e il cielo.
Ne starò col capo chino
Finche dorme il mio bambino.

My love, have this breast,
As your morbid bed will take you to higher voices,
The soul and the father underneath the cross.
So, my darling, my heart, fa la ninna na.

Now rest this body so beautiful and endearing
And tender. Later, hard chains
Will give it horrible pains.
So, my darling, my heart, fa la ninna na.

These hands and feet
I look at with joy and happiness;
Alas, in different ways
Sharp nails will pierce them.
This gracious face, more rosy-red than roses,
Will take spitting and smacking
With torment and great suffering.
Ah, how your pain will despair
My heart when this head and this hair
Will feel the sharp thorns.
Ah, in this blissful bosom
Love is my delight.
To you, the scars of death will be brought
By false spears. Sleep, my son,
To relieve me, and we will see each other with
Joyful eyes in Paradise.

Now that my life is asleep,
From my heart joy erupts.
I touch and comfort you with pure spirit,
Quiet as heaven and earth.
Meanwhile, what else can I do but wait
With a bowed head
Until my baby sleeps.

***Susanna passeggiata* - Bartolomé de Selma y Salaverde**

***Sonata detta la Moderna* - Salomone Rossi**

***O stellae coruscantes* - Claudio Monteverdi**

O stellae coruscantes,
ornamenta coelorum
que cecas tenebras illuminatis,
o pure Sol, o luna,
o imagines almae illius quem adoro,
illius qui vos fecit,
et jubare lucentes,
benedicite Deo et collaudate eum
qui volubilitatem
qui splendorem orbibus vestris dedit
vos eum laudate in aeternum.

O glittering stars,
ornaments of heaven,
you who illuminate the gloomy darkness.
O bright Sun, o Moon,
O genial images of Him whom I worship
of Him who made you,
gleaming with your radiance
bless God and praise Him
who gave swiftness,
who gave splendor to your orbits.
Praise Him eternally

The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation - Henry Purcell

Tell me, tell me some, some pitying angel,
Tell quickly, quickly, quickly say,
Where, where does my soul's sweet darling stray,
In tiger's or more cruel, more cruel cruel Herod's way?
Ah, ah rather, rather let his little, little footsteps press
Unregarded through the wilderness,
Where milder, milder, where milder savages resort,
The desert's safer, the desert's safer than a tyrant's court.

Why, why, fairest object of my love,
Why, why dost thou from my longing eyes remove?
Was it, was it a waking dream that did fortell thy wondrous birth, Thy wondrous, wondrous birth?

No vision, no, no vision from above?
Where's Gabriel, where's Gabriel now that visited my cell? I call, I call, I call: Gabriel! Gabriel!
He comes not.
Flutt'ring, flutt'ring hopes, farewell flutt'ring hopes, farewell.

Me Judah's daughters once caress'd,
Call'd me of mothers the most, the most bless'd.
Now fatal change, of mothers most distress'd.
How, how shall my soul its motions guide?
How, how shall I stem the various, various tide,
Whilst faith and doubt my lab'ring soul divide?
For whilst of thy dear, dear sight beguil'd,
I trust the God, but oh! I fear, but oh! I fear the child.

Stabat Mater - Giovanni Felice Sances

Stabat Mater dolorosa
luxta crucem lacrimosa
Dum pendebat Filius.

Cuius animam gementem
Contristatam et dolentem
Pertransivit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti!

Quae moerebat et dolebat,
Et tremebat dum videbat
Nati poenas incliti.

Quis est homo qui non fleret,
Christi Matrem si videret
In tanto supplicio?

Quis non posset contristari,
Piam Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?

Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Iesum in tormentis,
Et flagellis subditum.

Vidit suum dulcem natum
Moriendo desolatum
Dum emisit spiritum.

The grieving Mother stood
beside the cross weeping
where her Son was hanging.

Through her weeping soul
Compassionate and grieving,
a sword passed.

O how sad and afflicted
was that blessed
Mother of the Only-begotten!

Who mourned and grieved,
the pious Mother, with seeing
the torment of her glorious Son.

Who is the man who would not weep
if seeing the Mother of Christ
in such agony?

Who would not be have compassion
on beholding the devout mother
suffering with her Son?

For the sins of His people
she saw Jesus in torment
and subjected to the scourge.

She saw her sweet Son
dying, forsaken,
while He gave up His spirit.

Eia Mater, fons amoris
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.

Fac, ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi complaceam.

Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.

Tui nati vulnerati,
Tam dignati pro me pati,
Poenas mecum divide.

Fac me vere tecum flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero.

Iuxta crucem tecum stare,
Te libenter sociare
In planctu desidero.

Virgo virginum praeclara,
Mihi iam non sis amara
Fac me tecum plangere.

Fac, ut portem Christi mortem
Passionis eius sortem,
Et plagas recolere.

Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Cruce hac inebriari,
Ob amorem Filii.

Inflammatum et accensum
Per Te, Virgo, sim defensum
In die iudicii.

Fac me cruce custodiri
Morte Christi praemuniri
Consoneri gratia.

Quando corpus morietur,
Fac, ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria. Amen.

La Follia – Antonio Vivaldi

Salve Regina, Mater Misericordiae
Vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, Salve!
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii evae
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
In hac lacrimarum valle
Eja ergo, Advocata nostra
Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte
Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui
Nobis, post hoc exilium, ostende
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria

O Mother, fountain of love,
make me feel the power of sorrow,
that I may grieve with you.

Grant that my heart may burn
in the love of the Lord Christ
that I may greatly please Him.

Holy Mother, grant this of yours,
that the wounds of the Crucified be well-formed
in my heart.

Grant that the punishment of your wounded Son,
so worthily suffered for me,
may be shared with me.

Let me sincerely weep with you,
bemoan the Crucified,
for as long as I live.

To stand beside the cross with you,
and for me freely to join you
in mourning, this I desire.

Chosen Virgin of virgins,
to me, now, be not bitter;
let me mourn with you.

Grant that I may bear the death of Christ,
grant me the fate of His passion
and the remembrance of His wounds.

Let me be wounded with distress,
inebriated in this way by the cross
because of love of your Son.

Lest I be destroyed by fire, set alight,
then through you, Virgin, may I be defended
on the day of judgement.

Let me be guarded by the cross,
fortified by the death of Christ,
and cherished by grace.

When my body dies,
grant that to my soul is given
the glory of paradise. Amen.

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,
our life, our sweetness and our hope.
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.
To thee do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn then, most gracious advocate,
thine eyes of mercy toward us,
and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy
womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Ricercar Consort

Ricercar, meaning "to seek," has been the underlying motto of the Ricercar Consort ever since its foundation. It was in 1985, with J. S. Bach's *Musical Offering*, that the ensemble made its first concert tour, having already acquired a solid international reputation with its recordings, notably in German Baroque cantatas and instrumental music.

Today, under the direction of Philippe Pierlot, the Ricercar Consort continues to explore the Baroque repertoire, from chamber music to opera and oratorio, and to enthral music lovers with performances that are both profound and rigorous.

The ensemble's recordings for Mirare Productions include Bach's *Magnificat* and *St John Passion*, Christmas cantatas, Italian consort music for viols and soprano, Pergolesi's *Stabat mater*, Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostris* and a new recording of Bach cantatas with orchestra and the participation of Collegium Vocale Gent. The group's record, *Salvator Mundi*, of Buxtehude Cantatas (which could be called "musical jewels") for singers, violins and three viola da gambas, was followed in 2024 by *Da Pacem*, works by Schütz for the same distribution, recorded in October 2023.

Ricercar Consort is supported by the French speaking community of Belgium, Ministry of Culture and Wallonia Brussels International for their travels abroad.

Philippe Pierlot (Bass Viol, Ricercar Consort Founder and Artistic Director)

Pierlot was born in Liège. An autodidact on the guitar and the lute, he turned his attention to the viola da gamba, which he studied with Wieland Kuijken. He is the director of the Ricercar Consort and devotes most of his work to the 17th-century repertoire, in which he has offered the public a chance to discover many composers and works of great artistic value.

His repertoire also includes contemporary works, many of which have been dedicated to him, and he is one of the few performers to play the baryton, a little-known instrument for which Haydn composed nearly 150 works. His arrangements for the instrument include a *Schubertiade* with Julian Pregardien, *Beethoven Irish Songs* with Maria Keohane and, of course, many works for viola da gamba, solo and consort music.

He has edited and revived a number of operas, including Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse*, which was performed at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, Lincoln Center in New York, the Hebbel-Theater in Berlin and the Melbourne Festival, among other venues, as well as the *Sémélé* of Marin Marais and Bach's *St Mark Passion*.

His recent recordings on the viola da gamba have been devoted to St Colombe (*Les Filles de Ste Colombe*), *Consorts for Distracted Times* and *Meditation* for Flora CD, the label he created with colleagues.

As a director, his most recent projects include *Johannes Passion* in Paris (Talens Lyriques/Calixto Bieito) and *Matthew Passion* in Belgium, France and Israel a few years ago with the Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra. He particularly appreciates his longstanding and frequent collaboration with Jordi Savall and Hespèrion XXI (*Tous les Matins du Monde*), and his more intimate concerts with colleagues like Daniel Zapico on the theorbo and the soprano Céline Scheen. Pierlot invests a lot of his time organizing masterclasses and other events for young musicians in his hometown of Spa, where nature, gardening and strawberry culture are some of his other passions.

Pierlot is supported by the French speaking community of Belgium, Ministry of Culture.

Josef Zak (Violin)

Zak was born in Prague where he studied classical violin, specializing in Baroque violin at the Paris Conservatory. He now resides in Paris with his family. Invited to perform with all the main Baroque ensembles in Europe, he founded his own ensemble, Castelcorn, in 2016, bringing 17th and 18th-century programs of great originality and virtuosity (*Labyrinth Garden*, LabelFlora). His other passions are Gregorian chanting and, of course, his two daughters!

Augustin Lusson (Violin)

Lusson, labeled a tightrope soloist, is one of the most singular Baroque violinists of his generation. Dedicated to self-production, he recorded exceptional and quite unknown music from the 18th-century English with The Beggars Ensemble, which he co-founded and directs. The group also recorded a successful album with pieces by Leclair. He lives in France with his wife, also a musician, and his daughter, sharing his time between creating original programs with virtuoso violin pieces and participating in several famous Baroque ensembles throughout Europe.

Benoît Vanden Bemden (Violone)

Bemden studied counterbass, specializing in ancient repertoire in Belgium and Holland. He now teaches in Brussels and participates in numerous ensembles, touring throughout the world. He created the ensemble Les Muffatti, a very active Belgian Baroque orchestra, with which he produces mainly instrumental music like the triple Bach concertos or collaborations with Ricercar Consort for larger pieces like Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. His blog, Ripailles and Passacailles, is filled with on-tour food experiences and will help you find good places to eat and drink in all the towns he has visited.

Daniel Zapico (Theorbo)

Zapico was born in Asturias, Spain. From an early age, he focused his studies on the field of early music, specializing in the theorbo at the High School for Music of Cataluña and obtaining degrees in musicology, education and interpretation at the Barcelona University. Zapico believes that as soon as he picked it up, the theorbo was meant to be his instrument. Such is his dedication to it that he takes manuscripts of compositions for other instruments and transcribes them for theorbo (such as on his recording, *Au Monde*). The theorbo and Baroque guitar have brought him all over the world, as a soloist, in visual music shows created with the artist Nina Laisné or as a partner in chamber music with numerous ensembles and directors. Zapico is also very passionate about being home baking pizzas for his family.

Paul Goussot (Organ)

Born in 1984 in Bordeaux, Goussot's organ career took off at the age of 16, when he entered the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris for harpsichord and basso continuo. He graduated, obtained his teaching diplomas and won several international organ competitions, namely at the Musica Antiqua festival in Bruges, Belgium, and the first prize for improvisation at the International Organ Festival in Luxembourg. Whenever possible, Goussot honors the tradition of improvisations on the organ when he participates in chamber music programs thanks to his quite exceptional gift that was in fact a common part of the everyday musical practice in the Baroque period. paulgoussot.com

Céline Scheen (Soprano)

Scheen completed her training at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London with Vera Rosza, thanks to the support of the Nany Philippart Foundation. She has collaborated with important directors in opera. Chamber music or oratorio, Baroque, classical or fusion styles, Scheen is like a chameleon adapting her character and unique voice to the demands of the works she is performing.

On stage she has interpreted many roles, the most well-known being Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Papagena in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, L'Amour and Clarine in *Platée* by Rameau, and La Musica and Euridice in *Orfeo* by Monteverdi. She has worked with directors like Wilson and Kentridge, and all the foremost musical directors in Baroque opera all over Europe, touring Asia and the U.S. regularly. She was a memorable Venus in *Venus and Adonis* by John Blow in a production directed by Bertrand Cuiller (DVD available) and particularly appreciates her collaboration with Damien Guillon (*Le Banquet Céleste*).

She has recorded many works, namely and recently *Wonder Women* (2024) with L'Arpeggiata and Christina Pluhar; Monteverdi's *Vespers* with Pygmalion; solo recital programs with Philippe Pierlot for Flora: *Dolcissimo Sospiro*. To be released this spring is a recording of The Virgin's Teares with the Mirare label.

Passionate about encounters between different disciplines and styles, she has collaborated with Pina Bausch, with de Linz Theater Ballet in the show *Music for a While*, with the Choreographic Center in Caen for the show *Kiss me now* and participated in many fusion projects with other cultures.

Scheen is a much-loved Zumba teacher in her hometown!