

Lorelei ensemble

pilgrimage

a project of Lorelei,

unPLUGGED

Friday, May 10, 8:00 p.m.
Marsh Chapel, Boston University
735 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

PROGRAM

Rite majorem Jacobum canamus

Guillaume Du Fay (1397?-1474)

Vos flores rosarum

Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)
ed. Elise Groves

O nobilissima viriditas

Hildegard
ed. Clare McNamara

Flos forum

Du Fay
ed. Alejandro Enrique Planchart

O tu suavissima

Hildegard
ed. Elise Groves

INTERMISSION

The Familiar Spirit (2013)
commissioned by Lorelei Ensemble

Isaac Schankler (b. 1979)
Christopher O'Leary

Field Guide to Pilgrim Tracks (2013)
commissioned by Lorelei Ensemble

Reiko Yamada (b. 1978)
Sibylle Irma

LORELEI ENSEMBLE

Beth Willer, Artistic Director

Margot Rood, soprano
Emily Culler, soprano
Jessica Petrus, soprano
Sarah Moyer, soprano
Clare McNamara, alto
Hilary Walker, alto
Emily Marvosh, alto
Stephanie Kacoyanis, alto

This program is presented with generous support from Choral Arts New England.



artist-scientist composed melodies of unprecedented grandeur, often spanning more than two octaves in a single piece, emboldened with large leaps (especially the initial ascending fifth) and extended melismatic passages, delivered by means of varied and often unstable modes. Her *Scivias*, completed in 1151 or 1152, includes 26 visions and is divided into three parts. The final part includes 13 visions, the final of which includes 14 songs paired as antiphons and responsories, organized by dedication. Tonight we feature three responsories from this collection: *Vos flores*, dedicated to the martyrs, appropriately follows Du Fay's motet for St. James, while *O nobilissima viriditas* (to the virgins) and *O tu suavissima* (to The Virgin Mary) glorify Mary and the devout women who follow in her path. Today, pilgrims continue to flock to the Abbey of St. Hildegard on the banks of the Rhine, equally intrigued as her contemporaries by the artistic, intellectual and spiritual qualities of this enlightened seer and prophetess.

Tonight's program is in on an artistic journey of its own. We are pleased to feature the work of collaborating artists from Switzerland, Japan/Canada, and the United States, each venturing artistically (and physically) to deliver bold new multimedia works to Lorelei Ensemble and our audience. Propelled forward by text, texture, and distinct compositional voice, these contemporary works stand sturdily and without apology beside the profound repertoire of Hildegard von Bingen and Guillaume Du Fay. Distant as these texts, musical styles and periods may be, a parallel theme of "seek and ye shall find" is inarguably present throughout.

- Beth Willer, May 2013

Special thanks to:

Elise Groves and our own Clare McNamara for lending their Hildegard transcriptions for tonight's performance

Choral Arts New England and Alfred Nash Patterson for their generous support of this project

Rite majorem Jacobum canamus **According to custom, let us sing to St. James the Greater**

TRIPLUM

Rite majorem Jacobus canamus,

Ordinis summi decus, o fideles.

Blanda sit semper tibi sors viator.

Exite, laudes, hominum patrono!

TRIPLUM

According to custom, let us sing to St James the Greater,

The ornament of the highest rank, o faithful people.

May fate that goes with you be kind to you.

Go out, praises, to the patron of mankind!

Rebus et frater paribus Jesus

Tam novas Christi facies uterque
Visit; ut Petrus sequitur magistrum
Sponte, dilectus fieri alumnus.

Audivit vocem Jacobi sonoram

Contra divinis penitus moventem
Legis acceptae Pharisaeus hostis;
Ora conversus lacrimis rigavit.

Vinctus a turba prius obsequente.
Cum magus sperat Jacobum ligare,
Vertit in penas rabiem furoris,

Respuit tandem magicos abusus.

MOTETUS

Arcibus summis miseri reclusi,
Tanta qui fidunt Jacob merenti,
Vinculis ruptis petiere terram

Saltibus gressu stupuere, planam.

Sopor annosae paralysis altus
Accitu sancti posuit rigorem.
Novit ut Christi famulum satelles,
Colla dimisit, venerans ligatum.
Tu patri natum laqueis iniquis
Insitum servas.

Duce te precamur:
Jam mori vi non metuat viator,

At suos sospes repetat penates!

Corporis custos animaeque fortis,
Omnibus prosis baculoque sancto
Bella tu nostris moveas ab oris.
Ipse sed totum tege jam Robertum!

Vos flores rosarum

Vos flores rosarum
qui in effusio ne sanguinis vestri

*His brother too, in all ways his equal, saw with
him*

*The so-changed appearance of Christ;
Like Peter he followed the master
Freely, chosen to become his disciple.*

*The Pharisee, enemy of the law received [from
God],*

*Heard the ringing voice of James
Moving his heart within him by its inspiration;
Converted he washed his face with tears.*

*Bound by a previously-submissive crowd
When a sorcerer hoped to tie up James,
He converted the madness of his raging into
penance*

And at last rejected the misused magic.

MOTETUS

*The wretched, shut away by great arts,
Who trusted so greatly in deserving James,
Leapt towards the open ground, their chains
broken,*

And were amazed.

*The deep tiredness of many years' paralysis
Set aside its rigidity at the saint's summons.
As the attendant recognized Christ's servant
He set him free, venerating the bound man.
You saved the son, trapped in unjust bonds,
For his father.*

*We beg you as our leader,
That the traveller should not now fear to die by
violence,
And unharmed should regain his own household!*

*Strong guardian of body and soul,
Do good to us all and with your holy staff
Remove war from our lands.
And you yourself, now protect Robert entirely!*

Blessed are you roses

*Blessed are you roses
in the shedding of your blood,*

beati estis, in maximus gaudiis
redolentibus et sudantibus in emptione
que fluxit de interiorimente consilii
manentis ante evum:

In illo, in quo non erat
constitutio a capite.

Sit honor in consortio vestro,
qui estis instrumentum ecclesie
et qui in vulneribus vestri sanguinis
undatis:

In illo, in quo non erat
constitutio a capite.

-Hildegard von Bingen

*fragrant with supreme delight,
distilling the purchase
that flowed from the inmost heart of the purpose
that abides before time:*

*In the uncreated one
who had no beginning.*

*Honor be to your company!
you are an instrument for the church
and you surge in the wounds of your bleeding:*

*In the uncreated one
who had no beginning*

Trans. Clare McNamara

O nobilissima viriditas

O nobilissima viriditas, que radicas in
sole
et que in candida serenitate lucet in
rota
quam nulla terrena excellencia
comprehendit:

Tu circumdata amplexibus
divinorum ministerionum

Tu rubes ut aurora
et ardes ut solis flamma.

Tu circumdata amplexibus
divinorum ministerionum

-Hildegard von Bingen

O most noble greenness

*O most noble greenness, you who are rooted in
the sun
which in bright serenity lights the sphere
which no earthly excellence understands:*

*You are surrounded by the embraces
of divine ministrations.*

*You blush like the dawn
and burn like the sun's flames.*

*You are surrounded by the embraces
of divine ministrations.*

Trans. Elise Groves

Flos florum

Flos florum,
Fons hortarum,

Flower of flowers

*Flower of flowers,
fount of gardens,*

Regina polorum,
Spes veniae,
Lux laetitiae,
Medicina dolorum,

Virga recens
Et virgo decens,
Forma bonorum:

Parce reis
Et opem fer eis
In pace piorum,

Pasce tuos,
Succurre tuis,
Miserere tuorum.

-Anonymous (Analecta hymnica medii
aevi – Herausgegeben von Clemens
Blume und Guido M. Devres, XXXII)

O tu suavissima virga

*O tu suavissima virga
frondens de stirpe Jesse
O quam magna virtus est quod divinitas*

*in pulcherrimam filiam aspexit,
sicut aquila in solem
oculum suum ponit:*

*Cum supernis pater
claritatem virginis adtendit
ubi verbum suum in ipsa incarnari voluit.*

*Nam in mystico misterio Dei,
illustrata mente virginis,
mirabiliter clarus flos
ex ipsa virgine exiit:*

*Cum supernis pater
claritatem virginis adtendit
ubi verbum suum in ipsa incarnari voluit.*

-Text by Hildegard von Bingen

*queen of the heavens,
hope of pardon,
light of joy,
remedy of sorrows.*

*fresh branch
and seemly virgin,
model of goodness:*

*spare the guilty
and bring them a reward
in the peace of the righteous,*

*feed your own,
succour your own,
have mercy upon your own.*

O you sweetest branch

O you sweetest branch
budding from the stock of Jesse
What a mighty work this is when the
divine
gazed on His fairest daughter
as an eagle on the sun
sets its eye:

When the supernal Father
saw the virgin's splendor
and wished His Word to take flesh in her.

For in the mystical mystery of God
the virgin's mind was illumined
and the wonderously bright flower
from that virgin came forth:

When the supernal Father
saw the virgin's splendor
and wished His Word to take flesh in her.

Trans. Elise Groves

The Familiar Spirit (2013)

The Familiar Spirit turns the first recorded instance of “spirit-rapping” communication into a series of poetic vignettes that explore the technologization, eroticization, and community-building role of the 19th-century medium. When Margaret and Catherine Fox rushed into their parents’ bedroom the night of March 31, 1848 claiming to have heard mysterious noises in the night, little did they know this prank would bring neighbors, strangers, and eventually a cadre of credulous celebrities from Frederick Douglass to Fenimore Cooper into their home and their lives. With the first knockings of the spirit they called “Mr. Splitfoot,” the Fox sisters launched the spiritualist movement.

Drawing on accounts of the night’s events published in the late 19th century, including their older sister Leah Underhill’s 1885 self-promoting tome, the sisters’ own 1888 public confession of fraud, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s 1926 history of spiritualism, the libretto plays in the borderland where witness and willfulness meet, where the facts of the story and the desire to believe it blur the case at hand. Through permutation, iteration, and word play, the words make the echoes of those early knockings present to the listener.

- Amaranth Borsuk, March 2013

The music of “The Familiar Spirit” imagines the events of March 31, 1848 as the birth of a religious ritual, a sort of distorted Mass. Meditative drones and dense clusters of overlapping chords are interspersed with rhythmic, propulsive knocking and chanting. The sisters and the townsfolk appear in the chorus, but identities often blur and shift, as in a memory or a dream. Since “Mr. Splitfoot” is a technological spirit, the electronics serve as an ambiguous conduit to the spirit world conjured up by the imaginations of the witnesses.

- Isaac Schankler, March 2013

[March 31, 1848 – Hydesville, NY]

Enter, enter, this rude room,
this crude room and circle
of light where air has a
knap and the windows bite.

Margaret: Be not alarmed!

There is a presence here,
an absence crooked as
the k that opens knock and knob,
knife-sharp shape
that slips silently between
word and world, a gnarled
knuckle at the threshold to
borderland and summerland
making itself known.
It knits us close.
It knots us to the other side.

Cathie: Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do!

split the difference
split the difference
split the bark
split the dark
split the hair
split it here

Margaret: The spirit sees as well as hears. Has it been here since we arrived in December?

Cathie: The something says as wool has ears. Has it been hard since we arise in slumber.

split the infinitive
split the infant
split the journey
split the gurney
split the rope

split the throat

Maggie: Now, do just as I do. Count one, two, three, four.

Count Count Count Count

One Two Three Four

One Three Two Four

One Four Three Two

One Two Four Three

One Three Four Two

One Four Two Three

Count Count Count Count

To split is to splice—to mend and slice.

To splint is to brace—to bend and place.

To flint is to spark—to splinter dark.

To fling into flinders—to flense with cinders.

Mr. Fox: A current runs through these rooms. The girls are sensitive to the sport of apports. Spirit telegraphs tapped by unseen hands.

Margaret: Be not alarmed. If this is an injured spirit, make two raps.

Mrs. Redfield: What is my age, exactly?

A foot

is a fault

in a trap.

Mrs. Dresler: Were you murdered?

What knocks

is a pawn

upon the sill.

Mr. Redfield: Can your murderer be brought to justice? Can he be punished by law?

Do we

impede

you, sir,

from passage?

Cathie: It's only an April fool!

How do we unfetter the split foot?

He will unroot our pedestrian Arcadia.

How do we expedite this pilot

from the antipodes, enjambed,

free him or impeach him?

Fetch an impeccable pessimist

to investigate this peccadillo.

These pure, pajamaed girls are pioneers,

we'll have to bind their feet and feel

for fetlocks in their wet locks, kneel

here at the pew, my light peduncles

in flower.

Maggie: I'm no peduncle! Thanks to Lizzie, I'm a pedant!

Lizzie: It's all a story and a great shame. It's dreadfully wicked!

Foot Foot

Rap Rap

Knock Knock

Tick Tock

Polyp

Octopus

Oedipus

Platypus

Aghast

At last

A ghost.

A Field Guide to Pilgrim Tracks (2013)

Crossing paths with a pilgrimage, only a guide can tell apart all the footprints left upon the built-up dust of spiritual imperfection by thousands that have already passed where thousand more will again, each one leaving its empty shape carved in the sand.

A Field Guide to Pilgrim Tracks was written within the microscopic void keeping two artists an ocean apart, inside two minds connected by threads of images and rhythms and stories braided across the Atlantic over more than four years. It is this thread that binds the voices of eight female singers, a projector and electronic processes.

This field guide is divided in five sections, each one flowing into the next: foreword, footsteps, textiles, landscape and past/present. One by one, step by step, they guide you to the field of footprints and let you find the one you left behind.

- Nicolas Trepanier, March 2013

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