



THE MUSIC OF THE
FOURTEENTH
CENTURY
VOLUME 2

Every Delight and Fair Pleasure

THE MUSIC OF
NORTHERN ITALY

THE ENSEMBLE OF THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY

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Every Delight and Fair Pleasure

The Music of Northern Italy

The Rossi manuscript - Maestro Piero - Bartolino da Padova

THE ENSEMBLE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Sopranos: Margo Adelson, Cathy Cameron

Alto: Margaret Arnold

Countertenors: Hartley Newnham, Ian McDonald

Tenors: Lloyd Fleming, Tom Healey, Geoffrey Cox, Nick Tolhurst

Baritone: Gavin Carr

Vielle: Ruth Wilkinson

Lute: John Griffiths

Directed by John Griffiths and John Stinson

The Music of the Fourteenth Century is produced by the Fourteenth Century Recording Project, a performance research project funded by the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and the Australian Research Council. The production of Volume 2 has been assisted by the Australia Council, the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body. The project involves the collaboration of musicologists, literary scholars and performers under the direction of John Stinson and John Griffiths. The recordings resulting from this collaboration aim at being well-researched readings from the original sources, interpreted according to current scholarship.

The Ensemble of the Fourteenth Century is a collective of specialist singers and instrumentalists brought together for the Fourteenth Century Recording Project. The ensemble was initially formed around the leading Australian medieval ensemble La Romanesca, which was expanded to provide the varied instrumental and vocal combinations required by the repertory.

This recording contains music from northern Italy written between the second decade of the fourteenth century and the early years of the fifteenth century. It complements the selection of works by Giovanni da Firenze and Jacopo da Bologna (see Volume 1 of this series, **Two Gentlemen of Verona**).

While the styles heard in the anonymous works from the Rossi manuscript, the earliest extant collection of *trecento* music, and by Magister Piero are very similar, they are very different from those of the later works by Bartolino da Padova. In spite of these differences, there is a continuity in this collection which derives from its common northern provenance. About a third of the surviving *trecento* secular repertory comes from manuscripts written in Padua and the Veneto.

THE ROSSI MANUSCRIPT

This collection of early *trecento* songs, now divided between the Vatican Library and the Opera Pia Greggiati in Ostiglia, once belonged to Cardinal Domenico Capranica (1400-1458), from whose estate the bibliophile G.F. Rossi purchased it in 1842. It is unusual in being the work of one scribe, and in having music notation which exemplifies the Italian style of writing described by Marchettus of Padua in 1319, even to the special sign # for the chromatic semitone, used as a very sharp leading note before cadential figures. The

repertory of the manuscript reflects that of the court of the della Scala family who ruled Padua before 1337. The manuscript may have been written as late as the 1370s.

MAESTRO PIERO

No direct extant biographical information illuminates the life of *Magister* or *Maestro* Piero. Evidence concerning his life is circumstantial and suggests that he moved in the same circles of patronage as Giovanni da Firenze and Jacopo da Bologna in Milan and Verona in the 1340s. Filippo Villani tells us that Giovanni da Cascia, when visiting the halls of Mastino della Scala, lord of Verona, as a postulant, competed in artistic excellence with Master Jacopo da Bologna, who was most expert in the art of music, intoned (while the lord spurred them on with gifts), many madrigals, many *soni* and *ballate* of remarkable sweetness and of most artistic melody, with which he made it clear how great and how sweet was his learning in the art. He says nothing about Piero; but we know from texts set by both Giovanni and Piero that he too must have been a competitor for the patronage of the della Scala. Like Giovanni, Piero set the *caccia* text *Con bracchi assai*; like Jacopo, he set *Si come al canto*. *Senhals* on the names Margherita and Anna appear in the works of all three, as do allusions to the *Iguane*, the river Adda and the tree known as the *perlaro*.

BARTOLINO DA PADOVA

The portrait of Bartolino in the Squarcialupi Codex suggests that he was a member of the Carmelite order. This is confirmed by the Modena manuscript, which refers to him as a Carmelite friar (*frater Carmelitus*). There are archival references to a Bartolo in the Carmelite monastery in the years 1376 and 1380 which may refer to the composer; but if the archival evidence is not substantial enough to give us detail of his life, the texts of his musical compositions leave us in no doubt that his music relates to the lords of Padua, Milan and Pavia, Francesco Carrara the Younger (*Il novello*), Bernabò and Giangaleazzo Visconti. *Imperial sedendo*, *La douce cere*, *Le aurate chiome* and *Alba columba* all relate to the world of late fourteenth-century politics; but it is sometimes difficult to attribute dates and occasions to each of them with accuracy. Bartolino is mentioned in Giovanni Gherardi da Prato's *novella Il paradiso degli Alberti* and Simone Prudenanzi's poetic account of Christmas celebrations at Orvieto, *liber Saporecti*.

If the texts of Bartolino's works demonstrate the continuing northern tradition of music reflecting aristocratic patronage, his musical style is a blend of the northern Italian tradition with the new international style which characterised the cultivated milieu of Padua and Pavia at the turn of the century. Two of the

principal manuscripts in which his works survive (the Reina Codex contains 25 works, the Lucca or Mancini Codex has 13) are from the north. The sumptuous Tuscan anthology, the Squarcialupi Codex, contains 36 works and his portrait on folio 101^V.

THE MUSIC AND ITS NORTHERN CHARACTERISTICS

It is evident that Italian secular music had already achieved maturity by the time it was copied into the earliest sources that are known today. The texts set were of three types and are paramount as the generators of musical style. The music is sophisticated, yet is elaborated through idiomatic vocal writing that combines vocal virtuosity with the declamatory enunciation of the texts. The *madrigale* was the preferred poetic form of northern composers, and served as a vehicle for diverse literary themes. It comprises two or sometimes three tercets, each set to the same music and concluded by a couplet or *ritornello* in a different musical meter. The most common setting was in two voices: a florid *cantus* line supported by a simpler tenor. Text settings usually allow simultaneous declamation of the text in both voices, with each poetic line normally embodying extended melismas on the first and penultimate syllables. The *caccia*, literally 'hunt', derives from hunting poems translated musically into canon where one voice 'hunts' the other.

In most cases, the two canonic voices are supported by an independent tenor. Some *cacce* take the poetic and musical form of the madrigal, while others are composed more freely with irregular verses of varying length. The third form, the *ballata*, is thought on etymological grounds, to be derived from dance songs, *canzone ballate*. While the pieces of this type that appear in the Rossi manuscript are monophonic, their melodic and rhythmic sophistication suggests that any link with functional usage had long been severed. The formal characteristic of the *ballata* is an opening and closing refrain framing stanzas that conclude with a repetition of the music of the refrain. The resultant musical form is *AbbaA*. While *ballate* predominate in Tuscan sources, they are infrequent in early northern sources, although by the time of Bartolino, they too were set by northerners in polyphonic style in two and sometimes three voices.

Several particular characteristics give the surviving northern repertory its identity. Texts alluding to the patrons for whom the music was written, a distinctive notational style reflecting a bilingual French and Italian culture, the special intervallic shade of accidentals, and the extensive use of canon set the repertory apart from the Tuscan style.

Of a total of 140 works by Piero, Jacopo, Giovanni and the anonymous works in the Rossi and Reina manuscripts, at

least thirty works refer to patrons by either a direct allusion, heraldic imagery, a topographical reference, or a *senhal* of the name of someone associated with courtly life. Such obvious trappings of patronage are relatively rare in the music of republican Florence. The madrigal and the *caccia* were not thought highly of by literary theorists of the day: their survival is only in the musical settings. These texts are particularly rich in topographical allusions, *senhals* and direct reflections of patronage. The works of Bartolino da Padova abound in references to the Carrara. One of particular interest, *Imperial sedendo*, is discussed in detail in our commentary.

The northern repertory is marked by bilingualism of three kinds: textual, notational and musical. In Piero's *Ogni diletto*, for example, the poetry is conceived as strict alternation of Italian and French verses. Regarding notation, distinct and independent reforms occurred at the beginning of the fourteenth century. One was formulated in France, the other in Italy. The most obvious differences that distinguish French and Italian music at this time can be heard in their different approaches to dividing and offsetting the regular pulse of the music, and in the use of the chromatic semitone. The French delighted in syncopated rhythms which could displace the regular beat for extended periods; the Italians preferred to divide the regular *tactus* in varied

ways. (*All'ombra d'un perlaro* divides the basic pulse into two, three, four and five divisions.) When they used syncopation, it was usually within the regularly recurring pulse. When there was ambiguity, the divisions were indicated in the manuscripts by dots (*puncti divisionis*) analogous to the modern bar-line. The music notations used by the French and the Italians in the first half of the century were well adapted to expressing these stylistic differences; and sometimes the two kinds of notation were used in the one work, reflecting a musical bilingualism. The French way of grouping six notes into two groups of three (*senaria gallica*) was often contrasted with the Italian way of grouping them into three groups of two (*senaria ytalica*). During the course of the century the native Italian style and the notation through which the style was transmitted assimilated many of the French characteristics. The Rossi manuscript and the works of Piero reflect the earliest and most original Italian style; Bartolino not only sets French texts (eg *La douce cere*), but the manuscripts in which his works are preserved are written in a notation in which French and Italian elements have been assimilated into a common international style.

The use of the # to indicate an unusually large semitone, as described by Marchettus of Padua, can be heard in the Northern Italian repertory as a structural device which gives the music an

unexpected initial gesture (for example, at the beginning of the second line of *Lavandose le mane*, at the word *dicenta*) or in the middle of a phrase (eg in the second line of *Per troppo fede*, in the middle of the word *non*; or in *Or qua compagni*, where the voice calls the dog's names *Bocanegra*, and *Molton*, and elsewhere), or at a cadence (the end of *Or qua compagni*). This use of the chromatic semitone is heard more in northern than in Florentine works.

The Italian northerners also delighted in the use of canon. This is not only seen in the *cacce*, more than half of whose surviving examples are of northern provenance. The same technique is used frequently in madrigals: *Lavandose le mane*, is but one example, finishing with an unusual *ritornello* in which the second voice enters in canon.

John Stinson
John Griffiths

THE ROSSI MANUSCRIPT

1. Cum altre ucele

Madrigal

Ian McDonald (countertenor); Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Cum altre ucele for del dolce nido,
d'amor cantando, vidi una calandra
uscir acesa come salamandra.

I saw a skylark, among other birds, come
out of her sweet nest, like a salamander
set ablaze by singing about love.

Tanto mi piacque il bel cantar di lei,
l'ale batendo pur volando ad alto,
ch'Amor si mosse cum pietoso arsalto

Her glorious song so delighted me, while she beat her wings
to soar on high,
that Love's onslaught was not without compassion.

ver me, dicendo: - Pur speta che cale,
che a l'umbra ti farò star de so ale.

He said to me: "Wait till she comes down:
I will let you shelter beneath her wings".

For a work of early provenance, *Cum altre ucele* displays considerable sophistication and is reminiscent of the works of Jacopo and Giovanni. It features a canonic opening, long phrases, hocket, and a change of metre in the closing *ritornello*.

The text contains allusions to other contemporary poetry. The rhyme of *Calandra* with *salamandra* also appears in Antonio da Ferrara's sonnet *I' provai già quanto la soma è grave* addressed to Petrarch. In the poetry of the Sicilian school, the poet's beloved is sometimes referred to as *calandra*, while in medieval bestiaries and treatises the *calandra* signifies love's sweetness and redeeming goodness.

2. Per tropo fede

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor)

Per tropo fede talor se perigola.

Non è dolor né più mortale spasemo
come, senza fallir, cader in biasemo:
el ben se tace e lo mal pur se cigola.

Lasso colui che mai se fidò in femena,
che l'amor so veneno amaro semena,
onde la morte spesso se ne spigola!

Oimé, ch'Amor m'ha posto in cotal arzere,
onde convienme ognor lagreme sparzere,
si che de doglia lo mio cor formigola.

Trusting too much puts one at peril.

There is no pain, nor deadlier torment,
than, without fault, to fall in disgrace,
one's good deeds met with silence, the bad with gossip.

Unlucky he who ever trusted a female,
because love sows its bitter poison
from which the crop reaped is often death.

Alas! Love has placed me in such fire
that I must forever shed tears
at the pain crawling all over my heart.

As a representative of the monophonic *ballate* in the Rossi manuscript, the gap that separates this work from the polyphonic *ballate* of Bartolino is far narrower than from the supposed dance songs from which the form is thought to have evolved. Its introspective text is matched by a similar melodic sophistication, and suggests a performance based on subtle delivery.

3. Or qua compagni

Caccia

Ian McDonald (countertenor); Hartley Newnham (countertenor); Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

- Or qua, compagni, qua, cum gran piacere:
chiamat' i can qua tosto.

- Bocanegra, tòi, tòi.

- Biancopelo, sta qui, sta,
ch'una camoza a mi me par vedere.

"Now come here, friends, here, let's enjoy this:
call the dogs here at once."

"Blackmouth, here, here."

"Whitepelt, sit here, sit;
I seem to see a chamois."

- Di', dunde va? - De qua.

- De qua? per qual via va?

- Per quel boscaio: guata, guata ascosa.

- Molton, Molton! - Chi se'?

Chi se'? - I' son guardapasso.

Che voi, che voi? - Va' de qua.

"Tell me, where from?" "From there."

"From there? going which way?"

"Through that thicket. Look, look, it's hidden."

"Molton, Molton." "Who're you?"

Who're you?" "I am the look-out."

"What do you want? What do you want?" "Go that way:
don't you see they're many?" "Take this one."

"Which do you want?"

"The one with the white rump,
because I see it's tired."

- Non vidi che son molte? - Piglia l'una.

- Quala vòì?

- Questa de drieto bianca,
perch'io la vego stanca.

We all followed it successfully,
shouting the one to the other:

"Catch it, catch it!" "Here! here!"

"Run hard there, that way,
it's making right for the covert."

"Can it escape?" "It can't,
it can't: the dog holds it at bay
and it can't move because it's confused."

"Zafon, Zafon, run
there, see how it struggles."

Nui tuti la seguimo cum effetto,
cridando l'un a l'altro:

- Piglia, piglia! - Sai, sai!

- Curi forte là, via là,

che 'n vèr la tana va quasi a deletto.

- Non pò fuzir? - Non pò,
non pò, ché 'l can la tiene,

né movre non si sa, perch'è smarita.

- Zafon, Zafon! Securi

lì, ve' cum se rebufa.

- Va là, stu vòì. - Za fala.
- I' temo che non morda, perch'è fera.
- Non fa, no.
Cosi fo li destesa
per questo modo presa.

"You go there if you want to." "It's weakening."
"I'm afraid it might bite, being wild."
"No chance, no."
Thus, lying down there,
in this way it was captured.

This early example of the *caccia* typifies a style closely identifiable with Piero's *Con bracchi assai*, where the immediacy of the boisterous poetic dialogue is brought to life through numerous musical devices. Against a background metre of *senaria ytalica* that canters in time with the racing steeds, the canon between the two voices is contrived to highlight the textual interjections and rivalry of the hunt. The placement of these interjections, the hockets and other special effects within the florid upper parts point to the skill with which the music was crafted. Whereas most *cacce* are either through-composed pieces with no sectional repetition, or created to fit the form of the madrigal, this work has two stanzas set to the same music, like madrigal tercets but without the concluding *ritornello* that a well-versed listener would come to expect. It thus resembles a *madrigal-caccia* with no *ritornello*.

4. Lavandose le mane

Madrigal

Lloyd Fleming (tenor); Gavin Carr (baritone)

Lavandose le mane e 'l volto bello
dicinta e diflibata
vidi mia donna in un bianco guarnello.

I saw my woman, partly undressed, and
without a belt, in only a white slip,
washing her hands and her beautiful face.

Allora dissi: - Ben se' tu trovata! -
Non me respose a quello;
coperse i piedi ch'era discalzata.

"Well met!" I said to her,
but she did not reply;
and she covered her feet which were bare.

De leto era levata, relucente:
pareva 'l sole che leva a l'oriente.

She arose from her bed, resplendent
as the sun rising in the orient.

The arresting simplicity of this madrigal draws a parallel with the erotic innocence of the poet's image of his lover. The parallel unisons of the opening conjure an illusion of heterophonic text setting, while simple harmony, and the effective sequential prolongation of the final phrase of the stanza consolidate this impression. In the *ritornello*, which is designed around the exchange of phrases between one voice

and the other, the manner in which the tenor is made to soar high above the *cantus* line in the second phrase affirms the poet's delight in seeing his lover in her glowing splendour.

Similar images are found in other contemporary poetry and suggest some common origins or a particular tradition to which the text belongs. Boccaccio, for example, in the *Decameron*, IX, uses very similar words to describe Calandrino seeing Niccolosa: *essendo ella un di di meriggio della camera uscita in un guarnel bianco ... e ad un pozzo ... lavandosi le mani e 'l viso*. Niccolò de' Rossi, in a poem reprinted by Corsi in *Rimatore del Trecento*, p. 688, makes similar and witty reference to female apparel: *Sempre che la bella gola se sflibba / Amore lo meo cor pone in deposito / appo lei che tanto v'è reposito/ fin che l'adorna vesta se reflibba*. Another madrigal in the Rossi manuscript, *Levandome 'l maitin*, refers to a similar situation in which a girl is described as *descalza, scenta e despraciata*, 'barefoot, half undressed and with arms bare'. Being simply dressed and barefoot is an ambiguous image, carrying both connotations of purity (just as being elaborately made up and sumptuously dressed suggested corruption), and a hint of sexual attractiveness.

5. Chiamando un' astorella

Madrigal

Hartley Newnham (countertenor); Tom Healey (tenor)

Chiamando un' astorella ch'era posa
su l'arbor novo, che d'Amor è nido,
mi fu, come oselleto, in aer ascosa.

A goshawk calling out to me, while perched
on the young tree which is the nest of Love,
vanished from sight like a bird in the air.

I' pur l'andai seguendo al dolce crido
per foreste, campagne, strade e porti,
sì che lei cercar ancor m'ancide.

Still I went on following her sweet cry
through forests, country fields, highways and havens:
so that I am killing myself with looking.

Ma spero di mercé mille conforti,
ch'io l'ho veduta in altrui gabiola
cum gli ati primi zentili e acorti.

And yet I hope for comfort from her mercy,
because I have seen her, in another's cage,
kind to me and prudent in her first reaction:

Nel cor doneza e per la gabia vola.

she flutters in her cage, flirts with her heart.

This is one of several texts where the poet's beloved is compared to a predatory bird, an *Astorella* or female falcon. *Un pellegrin uccel*, set to music by Paolo da Firenze and Matteo Soldanieri's *Un bel girfalco scese alle mie grida*, set to music by Donato da Cascia, are other examples. The latter piece is also about a hawk, lost by the poet and in the possession of another man. In another work in the Rossi manuscript, *Seguendo un me' sparvier*, the man who forsakes the hawk for a shepherdess is the poet himself.

The musical setting shows many of the characteristics of a decorated melody made into a two-part song by improvising a tenor in the

style of *cantus binatim*. The lower part moves in perfect consonance with the principal notes of the *cantus* except at the sectional cadences, where it approaches the unison ending by contrary motion. From literary evidence such as the chronicle of Fra Salimbene, the practice of improvising a second part according to a few simple rules seems to have been as common as written versions (as here) are rare.

6. Nel mio bel orto

Madrigal

Margo Adelson (soprano)

Nel mio bel orto una vechieta sagia
ad una pasturella faceva scorta
ch'era d'amor sì cruda e salvagia,

che quando vide che in vèr lei andava
dicendo: - Mala vechia, tu m'hai morta -
gitolla in terra e tuta la strazava.

E disse a mi, perché la vechia aidava:
-Lassiamme vendegare, e po' me tòi
e fa de mi, signor, zo che tu vòi. -

E perch'un poco far così lassai,
lor trassi a pace e io me contentai.

In my fine orchard a prudish old woman
chaperoned a young shepherdess who was
so raw and wild in matters of love

that, seeing me approach, she threw the old one
to the ground, crying: "Wretched woman,
you have killed me!" and knocked her about.

And said to me, as the old woman pleaded
for help, "Let me revenge myself, and then, sir,
take me and do with me whate'er you will".

I left them to carry on for a little while,
then made peace between them, and enjoyed myself.

The poet of this madrigal tells in bold, forthright verse of an amorous encounter with a lusty girl in the custody of her chaperon. The theme of the old chaperon or *duenna* appears in a number of other songs of the period including Giovanni da Firenze's *Deh, come dolcemente m'abbracciava*, and *Una smaniosa e insensata vecchia* by Don Paolo da Firenze.

This is one of the two madrigals which survive in one voice. Both are found in the Rossi manuscript, one *Sal so quel monte* on the last *verso* of the first surviving gathering (8v); this work on the opening *recto* of the next surviving gathering (18r). It was the practice of the scribe of the Rossi manuscript to enter both parts of a two-part work on the one folio where possible; but longer songs were written with the *cantus* on the *verso* and the tenor on the *recto* of one opening. Hence it is possible that *Sal so quel monte* is the *cantus* of a two-part madrigal and *Nel mio bel orto* the tenor of another two-part madrigal.

MAESTRO PIERO

7. A l'ombra d'un perlaro

madrigal

Ian McDonald, Hartley Newnham (countertenors)

A l'ombra d'un perlaro
su la rivera d'un corrente fiume
donna m'accese col suo vago lume.

Questa con gli atti accorti
canta più dolce che non fa serena
e chi la mira tra' fuor d'ogni pena,

A nna scer è del suo vis' el parecchio;
nel cor mi luce come sole in specchio.

In the shadow of a Persian lilac,
on the banks of a swift river, a woman
sets me aflame with her beautiful eyes.

She of the graceful mien
sings more sweetly than a Siren.
And frees whoever looks at her from sorrow.

A face that is her equal is yet to be born.
It shines in my heart as the sun in a mirror.

This madrigal is one of a number of songs which refer to the *perlaro*, together with *Sovra un fiume regale*, by the same composer, *O dolce apres'un bel parlano fiume* and *Un bel parlano vive in su la riva* by Jacopo da Bologna and *O perlaro gentil* by Giovanni da Firenze. Common to them all is the *senhal* Anna, highlighted by melismatic repetitions. Paganuzzi has proposed that Anna could be the daughter of Florimonte Zavarise, married in 1334 to Francesco Bevilacqua: a surname (*Drinkwater*) justifying the constant association of this *senhal* to the river image. There is some uncertainty as to what sort of tree a *perlaro* exactly is. Corsi identifies it with a chinaberry tree (*Melia azedarach*), also called bead tree or Persian lilac; but, according to others, it is a nettle-tree (*Celtis australis*), also called *bagolaro*, frequent in the Po valley and the Veneto. The translation 'Persian lilac' may however give non-botanically minded readers a better idea of what the tree looked like. Line two is identical to line thirteen of *Nel tempo che s'infiora e copre d'erba la terra* by Fazio degli Uberti, who in 1336 was in Verona at the court of Mastino II della Scala and later spent some time at the court of Luchino Visconti.

8. Ogni diletto

caccia-madrigal

Margo Adelson, Cathy Cameron (sopranos)

Ogni diletto e ogni bel piacere
a mis Amours el gens cor de ma dame,
se sol piatà di me volesse avere.

Son dolz regart con plus mir plus m'inflame
Ma quella pur non me degna vedere
ay las celui che n'est ois et clame.

Sofrir pur voglio ancora
bien che merci me soit ore contraire.

Forse inanzi che mora
vendra vers moi son cruel vis debonaire.

Love has placed in my lady's noble heart
every delight and every fair pleasure:
if only she would choose to pity me!

The more I see her sweet gaze, the more I burn.
Yet she does not deign to look upon me.
Alas for him who pleads and is not heard.

Yet I willingly bear it,
though I cannot now hope for mercy.

Perhaps before I die
she'll turn to me, her cruel face benevolent.

This is one of several multilingual texts set to music. The tradition of poetic multilingualism goes back to the troubadours and to Dante, and was theorized in the fourteenth century by Antonio da Tempo and Ghidino da Sommacampagna. It seems to have been more prevalent in the northern regions of Italy, very probably because they were the ones open to a variety of linguistic influences, French, Provençal and Germanic. Other examples of multilingualism can be found in *La fiera testa che d'uman si ciba* by Niccolò del Proposto, Don Paolo da Firenze's *Sofrir m'estuet* and *L'antico dio Biber fra sette stelle* in the Rossi manuscript.

Ogni diletto is one of three *cacce* by Piero, the earliest named composer of the form. The text is in the form of a madrigal whose tercets are set canonically without a tenor, but with the *ritornello* setting devoid of canon.

9. Quando l'aire comenza

madrigal

Hartley Newnham (countertenor); Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Quando l'aire comenza a farse bruno
et a parer la stella
aparveme una donna molto bella.

Ben la conubi a la sembianza onesta
ch'Amor per lei m'acese;
ond'io, per fargli onor, levai cortese.

Ed ella che cognosce zò ch'io sento,
quando me vide, alora
disse parola ch'ancor me inamora:

- Cambio te renda Dio del ben che fai. -
Qual'io rimasi nol saprei dir mai.

At the time the air grows dark,
and stars begin to show,
a very beautiful woman appeared to me.

I knew her well by her honest face,
and, fired with love for her,
I courteously arose to honour her.

And she who knows that I feel,
when she saw me then
spoke words which still fill me with love.

"May God reward the good you do to me".
How I remained, I could never tell.

Simplicity and beauty characterize this madrigal in which the poet's beloved appears at dusk, but as if from euphoric vision. The incipit is reminiscent of a poem from the thirteenth century by Bondie Dietaiuti, *Quando l'aria rischiara e rinserena/ il mondo torna in grande diletanza* reprinted in Contini, vol. 1, p. 388.

Two versions of the piece survive. The present reading is based on the version conserved in the Rossi manuscript, slightly less ornate than the version in the Panciatichi manuscript, but including a third tercet of text.

10. Sì come al canto della bella Iguana
madrigal

Lloyd Fleming, Geoffrey Cox (tenors)

Sì come al canto de la bella Iguana
obliò suo cammin più tempo el greco
prendendo suo piacer con forma umana,

così per esser, donna, sempre teco
faresi la mia voglia esser lontana
da ogn'altro piacer, sendo 'l tuo meco;

però che se' d'ogni virtute unita,
tu sola cara gemma margherita.

As the Greek, at the beautiful Circe's song
forgot his journey for a long time, taking
his pleasure with the nymph in human form,

so I'd like, lady, to be always with you.
And, if your pleasure were to be with me,
mine would turn away from every other.

Because you, my dear pearl, are endowed
with every virtue.

The text of this madrigal makes reference to the legend of Odysseus whose return home was delayed by the blandishments of the sorceress Circe, here assimilated to an Euguana (or Iguana), the name given in many northern poems to water nymphs. The 'bella Iguana' was linked to the Odysseus myth also in a poem by Antonio da Ferrara (1315-1370?). Other references to *iguane* are found in Giovanni Dondi dell'Orologio, *Io temo che tu non doventi cervo*, Francesco di Vannozzo Leone *isnello con le crine sparte*, the madrigal *Pianze la bella Iguana* in the Rossi manuscript, and Giovanni da Firenze's madrigal *Nascoso el viso*.

Sì come al canto was also set by Jacopo da Bologna in competition with Piero, probably while at the court of Mastino II della Scala in Verona. It seems therefore difficult to identify the lady named by the *senhal* Margherita with Margherita Pusterla, which would date it from a period before 1341. Mastino II had an illegitimate daughter of the same name who became a nun; but the name was sufficiently common to render any identification dubious.

Piero's setting of this text has an archaic flavour, within terms of his own surviving works and those of his contemporaries. In this respect, comparison of the versions of *Sì come al canto* by Piero and Jacopo reveals a quite different musical language. In Piero's setting, the opening unison movement of the first few notes, unison cadences, and the resulting absence of cadential leading tones make the cadences, and the frequent parallel intervals all contribute to its archaism. Voice exchange in the *ritornello* and the higher register of the voice is exploited to add emphasis to the text in this closing section.

11. Con bracchi assai

caccia-madrigal

Hartley Newnham (countertenor); Margaret Arnold (alto); Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

Con bracchi assai e con molti sparveri
uccellavam su per la riva d'Ada.
E qual dicea: - dà, dà! -
e qual: - Va cià, Varin; torna, Picciolo! -
e qual predea le quaglie a volo a volo,
quando con gran tempesta un'acqua giunse.

Né corser mai per campagna levrieri
come facea ciascun per fuggir l'acqua.
E qual dicea: - Dà qua,
dammi 'l mantello, - e tal - Dammi 'l cappello -
quand'io ricoverai col mio uccello
dove una pasturella il cor mi punse.

Perch'era sola, in fra me dico e rido:
- Eco la pioggia, il bosco, Enea e Dido.

We were hunting birds near the banks of the Adda
with many hounds and sparrow-hawks,
and some incited the dogs on,
and others called them back,
and some caught quails on the wing,
when a squally shower came over.

Greyhounds never ran so fast across the fields
as each of us running for shelter from the rain.
One asked for his coat,
and another for his hat;
and I repaired with my falcon
where a shepherdess stung my heart.

As she was alone, I said to myself, and I laughed:
" Here's the rain and the wood: Aeneas and Dido!"

This *caccia* is one where the depiction of a hunt takes an unexpected twist to become an amorous encounter as the narrator seeks refuge from a sudden storm. The evocative hunting text is accommodated into the musical structure of the madrigal while maintaining the typically irregular verse structure of the *caccia*. The allusion in the *ritornello* to Dido and Aeneas is from Virgil's *Aeneid*, IV, 160-8.

It is possible that Piero's setting of this piece is another which arose from courtly competition, in this case a rivalry with Giovanni da Firenze whose setting is also preserved. The river Adda flows through the Scaligeri territory, and Giovanni's presence at the court of Mastino della Scala is attested by Villani. In the settings by both composers, an instrumental tenor supports the canonic interplay of the upper voices.

12. Cavalcando con un giovine acorto

caccia-madrigal

Ian McDonald, Hartley Newnham (countertenors)

Cavalcando con un giovine acorto
qual io bramoso di trovare Amore,
giugnemo in un bel prato pien di fiore.

Guardando in mezo di questa verdura,
vedemo Amor in forma d'una dea
che due donzelle in suo braccio tenea;

l'una biondetta, co gli ochi leggiadri,
l'altra col viso benigno e umile
e di coraggio ciascuna gentile.

Quando ci vide, Amor le braccia aperse:
allor queste col raggio di sua vista
cinsono 'ntrambi d'amorosa lista.

Ciascuna prese 'l suo per sua vaghezza
l'una co gli occhi, l'altra co la trezza.

As I was riding besides a wise young man
as eager as myself to encounter love,
we reached a lush meadow thick with flowers.

Gazing across the centre of that greensward
we saw Love in the form of a goddess,
holding two damsels in his arms.

One was a blonde with beautiful eyes,
the other with a gentle humble face,
each of them having a noble heart.

When he spied us, Love opened his arms;
and they, with shining eyes alight, ensnared
both of us with an amorous chain.

Each took his own according to fancy:
one for her eyes, the other for her hair.

The last of Piero's works presented here is another *caccia*-madrigal where the text is in clear madrigal form. The music is built on the customary *caccia* canon, but with no accompanying tenor line. The text is an unabashed amorous pursuit whose opening alludes to the typical hunting scenes depicted in *caccia* imagery. Its incipit is reminiscent of Dante's *Cavalcando l'altr'ier per un cammino / ... / trovai Amore in mezzo de la via* (sonnet V from *Vita Nova*).

BARTOLINO DA PADOVA

13. La douce cere

madrigal

Ian McDonald (countertenor), John Griffiths (lute), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

La douce cere d'un fier animal
se poit entendre pour senefiance
grant hardimant et humele semblance.

Le vis human, le buste est d'un lion,
intresignes d'un brief allegier
que dit "lialmant sans dottier."

Et a son col port une escu tout blans,
que d'egombrier il fet tout garans.

The gentle countenance of a fierce animal
can be taken to mean courageous daring
together with an unpretentious semblance.

It has a human face, a lion's bust,
with across a device showing allegiance
with the words "loyally, without a doubt."

A bright white shield is hanging from its neck
which guarantees it full protection.

Despite Goldine's assertion that this text refers to the taking of Padua in November 1388 by Giangaleazzo Visconti, *La douce cere* seems not to refer to any particular historical event. It must instead be understood as a general encomium of a noble personage, who is referred to in specific heraldic terms. The two tercets, according to Petrobelli, are written in parallel form, each closing with a motto or heraldic device which explains the verbal meaning to be attributed to the figure or emblem depicted in the preceding lines.

Marsilio Papafava da Carrara was the second lord of Padua, whose coat of arms was the customary red chariot with four wheels, but whose special crest was formed by a lion with a cloak adorned with small golden wheels. As Marsillio died on 21 March 1338 the text cannot refer to him; but it must refer to one of his descendants. Petrobelli sets the dating of the work between 1390 and 1405, the reign in Padua of Francesco Novello. He points out that Ciconia's *Per quella strada*, in the Mancini codex, undoubtedly refers to the red chariot of the Carrarese coat of arms, with exact parallels in meaning to the text of *Imperial sedendo* by Bartolino.

The use of French as the language of this madrigal is unusual and matched in the musical setting with numerous French characteristics. Surviving in six manuscripts, the work is set in three voices and displays various French rhythmic nuances. While the Squarcialupi codex, for example, has all three voices texted, the version performed here is from the Panciatichi manuscript where both tenor and contratenor are untexted.

14. **Serva ziascuno**

ballata

Margo Adelson (soprano), Tom Healey (tenor)

Serva ziascuno com'è fatto a lui;
faccia per sé e lassì stare altrui.

Non serve chi non crede
per quel do' tant'aver possa per sé,
sì che ben chiar se vede
che oggi non c'è amor né data fé.
Per ogne modo adonca far se de'
de quel ad altri che ven fatto a lui.

Serva ziascuno com'è fatto a lui;
faccia per sé e lassì stare altrui.

Let each one serve as he himself is served,
mind his own business and let others be.

No one serves unless he thinks he can
get in return as much as he gave,
so that it is quite plain
that today there's no love, nor pledged faith. That's why, in
any circumstance, a man
must do to others what is being done to oneself.

Let each one serve as he himself is served;
mind his own business and let others be.

This pithy if not cynical ballata text is set by Bartolino in two voices only. His writing style is economical and declamatory, and uses the type of decorative texture typically associated with the madrigal.

15. **Le aurate chiome**

madrigal

Ian McDonald (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Le aurate chiome nodose ed avolte
d'un fil de perla, talor d'un bel fiore,
per virtù oculata me penetra 'l core.

Her golden hair, tied with a string
of pearls, sometimes with a lovely flower
by a hidden virtue has touched my inmost heart.

.....

.....

El me conven cantar in alcun loco,
ché pur me sento da' sospiri en foco has

I must find some place to sing
being so inflamed with sighing.

The *ritornello* of this incomplete madrigal text has *catar* in the Reina manuscript and *cantar* in the Squarcialupi codex. The latter reading makes more sense; but the former is in fact the same word deprived by scribal error of the superscript *n*, and may indicate a *senhal* of the name Catarina. If the Reina version is correct, the person referred to could be either Catarina de Carrara, the daughter of Francesco II Vecchio, who married Stefano, Count of Veglia and Prince of Segna, thus strengthening the alliance between Padua and the Kingdom of Hungary. There is also a Catarina Visconti who was regent of Milan after the death of Giangaleazzo Visconti from 1402 to 1407.

The music of Bartolino's setting displays rich variety of texture, particularly the rhythm of the *cantus* line, and the use of devices such as hocket.

16. Alba columba

madrigal

Lloyd Fleming, Tom Healey, Nick Tolhurst (tenors)

Alba columba con sua verde rama
in nobile zardino nutricata
pax, pax nunziando sull'al' è montata.

Posò suo volo suso in verde scoglio
per riposarsi e, rimirando in zoso,
prese argomento del volar più suso.

Perché gustava za i boni oduri
ch'eran la su tra fronde et altri fiuri.

A white dove, nourished in a noble garden,
took to the wing, carrying a green branch,
and proclaiming: "peace, peace!"

It landed on a mossy rock to rest,
and looking downwards, it resolved to fly
upwards again, because

it was already savouring the good smells
of greenery and flowers coming from up there.

According to Petrobelli, the dove in this work is a reference to Giangaleazzo Visconti (died 2 September 1402), and was his emblem as Count of Virtù, a title created for him in 1368. The line *Posò suo volo suso in verde scoglio* alludes to his recent conquests which allowed him to extend his own domain (*per riposarsi e, rimirando in zoso*). On 21 November 1388, Giangaleazzo signed an armistice with Francesco Novello da Carrara. He was later invited by the Paduan people to enter the city on 18 December 1388. The account of this event in Gatari's *Cronaca carrarese* reflects the gradual triumph of the forces within the provisional government favourable to the Visconti. *Alba columba* is to be set in this context, and was probably composed towards the end of 1388.

The reading of the music presented here is the version from the Reina manuscript for three voices. The music is uncommonly rich and dense, a three-voiced texture with equally distributed parts, considerable passing dissonance, but also with many chords of a triadic nature. Long melismatic phrases extend the work to approximately twice the customary duration of madrigals.

17. Imperial sedendo

madrigal

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Tom Healey (tenor)

Imperial sedendo fra più stelle
del ciel desese un carro d'onor degno
soto signor d'ogni altro ma' benegno.

Le rote soi guidavan quatro done,
Iusticia e Temperancia con Forteza
et an' Prudenza tra cotanta alteza.

Nel mezz'un Saracin coll'ale d'oro
tene' 'l fabricator del so tesoro.

From its imperial seat among the stars
a worthy chariot descended from the sky
bearing a Lord kinder than any other.

Four women steered its wheels:
Justice and Temperance with Fortitude
and also Prudence among the exalted company.

In the centre the maker of his treasure
wore a Sarecen helmet with gold wings.

This text contains two heraldic allusions: the chariot with four wheels and the Saracen with golden wings. According to Petrobelli, the last emblem was a symbol of the Carrara family, but not of any particular member. In the fascicle of the Modena manuscript which contains the *cantus* of this work, the historiated 'I' contains two figures: blue sky containing the constellation of the Chariot (Auriga), and, below it, the head of a Moor with two wings of gold, and with the banderoles descending to form the figure of a crest. Francesco Novello de Carrara used the figure of the 'winged Saracen' on his seal from 1 September 1388; and this seal was not valid after 15 August, 1402.

The chronicler Gian Gatari has left a detailed description in his *Cronaca carrarese* of the appointment of Francesco Novello de Carrara to the position of Captain-General of the Imperial Army on the occasion of the visit to Italy of Robert of Bavaria, the newly-elected Emperor. Part of the purpose of this visit was to put an end to the territorial ambitions of Giangaleazzo Visconti. It could be that this madrigal was composed to celebrate Francesco's appointment to this position on 28 September, 1401.

The Emperor determined to make Francesco da Carrara captain-general of the entire imperial army, and thus they gave him the baton of office and the imperial flag of the eagle, saying that he should command in full power, and that every great man and minor should obey him. Then Francesco da Carrara, imperial captain, gave orders, saying that the whole army should make ready to follow the imperial flag, and they rode towards the city of Brescia in Lombardy to wage war on the Duke of Milan.

For reasons possibly related to its ambitious text, the musical setting also presents itself as a musical extravaganza where, within the confines of an extended madrigal setting, the listener is confronted with all manner of complex devices: a varied succession of rhythmic divisions, canon, sequence, hocket, and so forth. The *ritornello* attracts attention due to its higher tessitura and declamatory style.

18. Sempre dona t'amai

ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Sempre, dona, t'amai de pura voglia
e tu me da' per premio pena e noglia.

Always, Lady, I loved you with pure will,
and you reward me with pain and vexation.

L'onore to sopra me stesso amava
e amo e fermo son sempre d'amare;
vedert'e sopra ogn'altra pregiare
era mio bene e ziò desiderava.
Ma el bel viso to, che m'alegrava,
me fa' luntan, ond'i' moro de doglia.

Your honour above myself I loved,
love and always will. My happiness
consisted in looking at you
and prizing you above any other woman.
But your fair face which gave me joy, bides me
to stay away, and thus I die of sorrow.

Se va' fra mile amanti recercando
che ardeno in i ochi de tuo luce altera,
nessun con fé difese tanto intera
ma' to valore, men di sé curando.
Donca perchè da te me tien in bando,
per cui morire me seria gran zoglia?

If you go searching among a thousand lovers
whose eyes are fired by your exalted light,
you'll find no one who more faithfully defended
your valour, less caring about himself.
Then, why do you keep me banished from you,
for whom I would die with great pleasure?

Ben rimembrava a me la greve sorte
di molti franchi amanti e di gran fede,
a' quali done engrate per mercede
donò presone, esilio e ancor morte.
Ma 'l vero amor l'amante tien si forte,
ch'ogni paura dal suo petto spoglia.

Well I remembered the grievous fate
of many honest and faithful lovers,
whom ungrateful women rewarded
with imprisonment, exile and even death.
But true love holds a lover so strongly
as to dispel every fear from his breast.

Sempre, donna, t'amai...

Always, Lady, I loved you ...

Extended melismas and closely integrated voices, albeit one performed on a bowed vielle, produce a rich euphonious texture that marks the northern style in one of its late and most sophisticated manifestations. Each voice declaims the text in an unconventional manner, not aiming at simultaneous declamation, but a style of interdependent independence, where each part achieves its rhythmic vitality and melodic cohesion through interaction with each of the others. The text, of three stanzas and thus unusually long for a ballata, has many of the characteristics of troubadour poetry in its treatment of unrequited love, and its noble comparisons to others of exemplary comportment.

19. Non corer troppo

ballata

Hartley Newnham, Ian McDonald (countertenors), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Non corer troppo e tien la mano al freno,
ché chi vuol gir più forte che non puote
tosto se stanca, e subito percuote
e cade in terra et ivi vene a meno.

Dunque non aver fretta, va di passo,
ché se tu cadì e trovite nel basso,
amaro sentirai più ca veneno.

Don't run too fast, hold in your hand the reins ;
he who wants to run faster than he can,
soon tires, and suddenly falls in a heap
hitting the ground where he passes away.

Therefore don't hurry, go at a walking pace;
for, should you fall and find yourself low down,
you will feel more bitterness than if you'd taken poison.

Sonorous harmonies struck between the three voices and long phrases that are readily identifiable with the northern style of the earlier part of the fourteenth century provide a setting of repose for this moralistic ballata that comments on propriety and the need to restrain one's life from the deceptions of haste. It is music whose triadic euphony shows many of the characteristics of fifteenth century music, even if its is a quality that has been customarily and principally associated with the importation of English style to continental Europe, but here demonstrated to be innately Italian in its origin.

**John Stinson
John Griffiths
Giovanni Carsaniga**

SOURCES AND EDITIONS

The manuscript sources upon which this recording are based are as follows: the first group of anonymous works are gathered in the Rossi manuscript: Rome, Vatican Library, Rossi 215 and Ostiglia, Opera Pia Greggiati (facsimile reprint ed. Giuseppe Vecchi, *Monumenta Lyrica Medii Aevi Italica III: Mensurabilia*, Bologna: Università degli Studi, 1966). The works of Maestro Piero are found in the Florentine manuscript *Panciaticchi 26* from the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence (facs. reprint ed. F. Alberto Gallo, Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1981), and also in the Rossi manuscript. Four sources have been used for the works of Bartolino: the Squarcialupi codex (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Palatino 87), the Reina manuscript (Paris, Bibliothèque National, *nouv. acq. fr. 6771*), the Mancini codex (Lucca, Archivio di Stato, MS 184 and Perugia, Bibl. Comunale "Augusta", MS 3065; facs. reprint ed John Nádas and Agostino Ziino, *The Lucca Codex*, Lucca: Libreria musicale Italiana Editrice, 1990), and manuscript *fonds italien 568* from the Bibliothèque National in Paris. The modern editions of the music are in *Italian Secular Music by Magister Piero, Giovanni da Firenze and Jacopo da Bologna*, edited by W. Thomas Marrocco, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century VI* (Monaco: Editions de L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1967); *Italian Secular Music: Bartolino da Padova, Egidius de Francia, Guilielmus de Francia, Don Paolo da Firenze*, edited by W. Thomas Marrocco, *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century IX* (Monaco: Editions de L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1975); and *The Music of Fourteenth Century Italy*, edited by Nino Pirrotta, [n.p.]: American Institute of Musicology, 1960. *Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae 8/II*.

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Text translations: Giovanni Carsaniga, Rodney Hall
Textual commentary: Giovanni Carsaniga, John Griffiths, John Stinson

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Anonymous works from the Rossi manuscript

- 1 Cum altre ucele 3'52"
- 2 Per tropo fede 3'58"
- 3 Or qua compagni 3'14"
- 4 Lavandose le mane 2'42"
- 5 Chiamando un'astorella 2'07"
- 6 Nel mio bel orto 2'53"

Maestro Piero

- 7 All' ombra d'un perlaro 2'57"
- 8 Ogni diletto 3'04"
- 9 Quando l'aire comenza 4'30"
- 10 Si come al canto della bella Iguana 2'49"
- 11 Con bracchi assai 2'57"
- 12 Cavalcando con un giovine acorto 3'19"

Bartolino da Padova

- 13 La douce cere 3'07"
- 14 Serva ziascuno 2'32"
- 15 Le aurate chiome 2'07"
- 16 Alba columba 5'10"
- 17 Imperial sedendo 5'06"
- 18 Sempre dona t'amai 7'04"
- 19 Non corer troppo 7'21"