



THE MUSIC OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

VOLUME 3

I am Music

WORKS BY
FRANCESCO LANDINI
(c 1325-1397)

THE ENSEMBLE OF THE
FOURTEENTH CENTURY

move

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Soprano: Margo Adelson
Alto: Margaret Arnold
Countertenor: Hartley Newnham, Ian McDonald
Tenors: Lloyd Fleming, Tom Healey
Baritone: Gavin Carr
Psaltery: Ros Bandt
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 research project funded by the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and the Australian Research Council. 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 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.

Francesco Landini

Francesco Landini was a poet, polemicist and performing musician whose fame even during his lifetime was equal to that of the greatest artistic figures of his century. From surviving documents we know that he was employed at the church of San Lorenzo in Florence — not the same building as we now see, which was built by Filippo Brunelleschi in the early fifteenth century, but a romanesque basilica with an arcaded portico, three naves and a tall *campanile*. From the fourth century San Lorenzo had been the principal church of Florence; and at least from 1365 to his death on 2 September 1397 Francesco Landini was a *cappelanus* whose duties included playing the organ. He played at other churches when they celebrated their important feast-days: amongst the few surviving documents from S. Trinita there are two which record payments to Landini for playing the organ: on the patronal feast (Trinity Sunday) and on the feast of St Gualberto, the founder of the Vallombrosan order, whose monks cared for S. Trinita. There also survives a letter (10 September 1375, when Landini would have been about fifty years old) from Coluccio Salutati, chancellor of Florence, recommending Francesco for a canonry at S. Lorenzo; but there is no evidence that he was ever appointed to this

lucrative position. His expertise on organs is further documented in records of his consultation with Andrea dei Servi for a new organ at Santissima Annunziata (1379) and also at the Cathedral (1387). His will specifies a legacy to be distributed on the feast of St Francis of Assisi each year.

He was blind from early childhood. In the documents which record his payments from S. Trinita, his brother Nuccio is also paid for working the bellows of the organ. This may have been a regular necessity on such occasions when Francesco performed on larger instruments. The portrait on folio 121v of the Squarcialupi Codex and also his tombstone present him with the smaller portative organ or *organetto*, which, from these pictures and contemporary literary sources, seems to have been his preferred instrument.

Near-contemporary manuscripts have preserved some 154 works: 140 ballate, 1 caccia, 12 madrigals, 1 virolai and 4 motet fragments. His ballate constitute more than a quarter of all works in that form from the *trecento*.

Francesco Landini's place in the history of music was established during his own lifetime. Filippo Villani, in his *Liber de origine civitatis florentiae et eiusdem famosis*

civibus (On the origins of Florence and of its famous citizens), placed him alongside Giotto, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio as one of the leading artistic figures of the century; he was a friend of the poet Franco Sacchetti and set some of his lyrics to music. As well as his contemporaries, many writers in the first decades of the fifteenth century continued to praise Landini for his musicianship and as an exponent of many of the liberal arts. For Villani, there was so much adulation of Landini that he found it difficult to separate myth from reality even fifteen years before Landini's death: 'it is almost impossible to relate this without commenting on the fictitious [nature of the stories relating to him]'. Giovanni Gherardi, author of the collection of stories called *Il Paradiso degli Alberti*, present us with an idealised picture of Landini performing to an elegant Florentine audience in the summer retreat of one of the city's leading families. His great-nephew, the humanist Christoforo Landino, contributed to the preservation of his reputation as a musician, poet, philosopher and contravertalist. These writings alone have established Landini as an important figure in Florentine musical history; and on this foundation many later historians of music have continued to mention him, even

if they were not familiar with his music.

In spite of this wealth of contemporary and near-contemporary accounts of Landini's fame, the most important witnesses to Landini as a musician are the surviving manuscripts of his music. Modern scholars are confident that virtually all of the music written in Florence in the last half of the fourteenth century has survived, so extensive are the concordances between the surviving manuscripts. The music of Francesco Landini is the kernel of every surviving manuscript which transmits the music of *trecento* Italy. The first manuscript to contain Landini's work is Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Panciatichiano 26. Some scholars have assigned this an early date, perhaps even as early as 1380; but more recent scholarship places it in the second decade of the fifteenth century. This important source contains 86 of Landini's 154 works. The structure of the manuscript shows that the organization of the material was based around the works of Landini: it contains more than twice as many of his works than of any other composer. One of the most sumptuous of all musical manuscripts, the famous Squarcialupi Codex, written 1410-15, is the most comprehensive of all sources of Landini's works: it contains all but nine, as well as the splendid portrait of the blind organist, surrounded by other musical instruments said by contemporaries to have been mastered by him. The last manuscript to contain Landini's work is Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, nouvelle acquisitions 4917, written about 1430, where Landini's *Che pena è questa al cor* is found alongside works by

Césaris, Ciconia and Zachara, all of whom died more than a decade after Landini. Other Florentine sources of his works include Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale fond italienne 568 (61 works), London, British Library Additional 29987 (29 works), the recently-discovered palimpsest San Lorenzo, Biblioteca Capitolare 2211 (16 works) and the Lucca manuscript (6 works). If the later dating of the Panciatichiano manuscript is accepted, all of the principal sources of Landini's music were written within the space of twenty years. The strength of the Florentine tradition of copying Landini's works in the decades after his death contrasts with the very few manuscripts written outside Florence which contain his music. There are no sources of his music which do not have at least a strong Florentine connection.

From the evidence of both contemporary writers and the manuscripts written within forty years of his death it is clear that Landini was regarded as the most important musician and composer of the late *trecento*, at least by his fellow Florentines. Although Landini is mentioned by all the major music historians from the eighteenth century to the present day, very few of them appear to have based their judgment on a knowledge of the music. Most cite Filippo Villani, whose account of the composer was written well before Landini's death in 1397. The autograph copy of the first redaction (Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana Ashburnham 942) is datable to 1381-88. A second redaction (Rome, Vatican Library, MS Barberino 2601) dates

from to 1385-1397. Villani's *Liber* remained in manuscript until its publication in 1747 by Mazzuchelli (Burney's source) and was later edited by Galetti in 1847. Here is his account:

But Francesco, who is still living, surpasses those and all others whom praiseworthy antiquity has presented in this art, about whom I have dared to write, not without fear of exaggerated stories. Francesco was hardly past the middle of his childhood when disaster struck him blind with the smallpox. Music, however, compensated him for his loss with the bright lights of fame and renown. A harsh mischance took away his bodily sight, but his mind's eye was as sharp and as acute as an eagle's. All of this, I think, will argue, to those who love the truth, in favour of beating boys who have all their senses and yet are idle in their wretched sloth. Better for them to be abused than to be allowed to fall asleep in miserable ease.

He was born in Florence of Jacopo, a painter of unpretentious enough life, an upright man, displeased by anything less than honest. Growing out of childhood, during which he had lost his sight, understanding the misery of blindness, and in order to find some comfort from the horror of perpetual darkness, through the benevolence, I believe, of Heaven which, having compassion on his great misfortune, prepared for him the consolation, he began as a young man to sing. Having reached maturity,

and having understood the sweetness of melody, he began his musical career first as a singer, then with stringed instruments and with the organ. And having made wonderful progress in the art, to the astonishment of all he managed readily musical instruments which he had never seen, just as if he possessed sight. And he began to play the organ with the swiftest hand, with a fine sense of rhythm and with so great an ability and sweetness as far to surpass without comparison all the organists whom it is possible to recall. And it is almost impossible to relate this without commenting on the fictitious [nature of the stories relating to him].

Musical instruments [and] organs, both the pipework or the interior mechanism, whether it be the pieces in different proportions or the thinnest pipes which are damaged by even the slightest contact [he was able to repair]. Having taken out the interior parts of the instrument of which a style would be broken if moved from its proper place; he forced air through the bellows to produce rattling sounds. He restored everything which had been removed and which pertained to its structure, order, temperament and the modulation of consonances, having fixed the things which produced the dissonance. What is more, he played superbly on the fiddle, the lute, all the strings and the winds, and every sort of musical instrument. And imitating by voice all those instruments that give a pleasant sound in their various ways,

and mingling them with the ordinary sounds of human voices, he invented a third species of music, a combination of the other two and a source of great charm and delight. Moreover he invented a type of musical instrument which combined the *limbuto* and the *mezzo canone* which he called the *Serena serenarum*, a robust instrument which produced the sweetest of melodies by means of vibrating strings. I think it is unnecessary to relate how much and how beautiful he may have become in art, when the diary of men of this kind should be kept concealed because of brevity.

It is worth such pain to know that no one has ever played the organ in a more excellent fashion. And as a result it came to pass that, by consent of all the musicians who used to award the palm of the art, at Venice on behalf of the most illustrious and noble King of Cyprus, he was publicly offered a crown of laurel, as is customary for emperors and poets, and in triumphant style was conducted through the city to public acclaim.

In addition to these, Francesco was praised for his thorough teaching of grammar and dialectic, for his skill in writing poetry and stories. He composed many fine verses in Italian. He is worn out by the invective and evil softness, as I mentioned above, of the effeminate youth of Florence, who, casting aside their manliness, devoted themselves to women's concerns.*

*This translation gives the complete text of the abridged version published by Gallo in *Music of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1984).

Contemporary witnesses to Landini need to be carefully interpreted according to the literary purpose and intention of the authors. Passages in *Il Paradiso degli Alberti* have been shown by Gallo to have been closely modelled on stories by Boccaccio: in the story which Landini himself narrates, 'the setting, situations and characters are all derived from the sixth story of the tenth day of the Decameron' (Gallo, p. 71) Likewise the sonnet cycle "Il Solazzo" which mentions him by name is to be read in the context of a romantic picture of the idealised universal prowess of the central character, 'Il Saporetto': "That evening madrigals were sung / A song by the Blind one was sung in the Perugian manner, / French *rondeaux* by Fra Bartolino / And strombotti from Sicily in the grand style." [*Quella sera cantaro ei madriale, / Canzon del Cieco, a modo peruscino, / Rondel franceschi de fra Bartolino, / Strambotti de Cicilia a la reale.*] These support the remark by Villani and it was difficult for him, even fifteen years before Landini's death, to separate fact from fiction.

Later music historians have repeatedly cited the opinions of Villani and others with little critical evaluation of Landini's contribution to music. While the texts had received some attention from literary scholars at the end of the nineteenth century and the music was discussed by Johannes Wolf in the early 1900's, detailed attention to the music followed the first collected edition by Leonard Ellinwood in 1939 and the second collected edition by Leo Schrade in 1958. In spite of his fame as a musician even in his

own lifetime, Landini's music has been given serious consideration since the middle ages only in the last fifty years. Before Ellinwood's edition only 25 of the 154 works had been published: while Landini's name was known to music historians, his music remained little known. If recordings are any indication of what is aurally understood, even now, 600 years after Landini's death, less than half of his works have been recorded. This recording presents twelve works not previously recorded as well as fresh readings of some of his most famous works.

Landini was probably the author of the texts of his songs. Although his authorship is never attested in the musical sources, thematic and stylistic consistency as well as his reputation as a poet make his own authorship likely. Two poems included in this collection, *Altri n'arà la pena* and *Non creder, donna*, are the work of his contemporary Franco Sacchetti. The majority are songs of love written in the *ballata* form (Nos. 2, 3, 6-8, 11-16, 18) whose individual perspectives on the subject are best explained by the texts themselves. One of these, *Donna, che d'amor senta*, is quoted in the introduction to Novella 97 in Giovanni Sercambi's *Novelle*. These songs range from the most extroverted manifestations of love to poems of a more contemplative mood. On a more abstract plane, *Angelica biltà* is concerned with the concept of angelic beauty and the dialectic contrast between peace and war that figures in numerous other contemporary poems including sonnets by Petrarch, Sacchetti, Soldanieri and Domenico da Prato. In other songs (*Ama, donna, chi t'ama*

and *Amor con fede*) love is inseparable from faith, while *Altri n'arà la pena* is a commentary on the divine retribution that awaits the deceitful abuse of trust. Along similar lines, *Che pena è questa al cor* extols righteousness in the face of envy and malice. A call to place faith above reason, *Contemplar le gran cose* is a philosophical discourse in song form.

Three of the poems use the device of the *senhal*, and a substantial number of them share themes or specific allusions with other contemporary poetry. Two poems possibly bear the *senhal* of Cosa (Niccolosa) who is mentioned in *Il paradiso degli Alberti*: These occur in "Come se' tanto folle / mirar si alta cosa" (lines 5-6 of *Deh, pon quest' amor giu*), and *Che cosa è questa, Amor, che'l ciel produce*. The *senhal* "Alessandra" of *A le' s'andra lo spirto* is also found in two other Landini ballate, *Ma' on s'andra per questa donna altera* (No 81) and *S'andra senza merce de tempo in tempo* (No 115). Sacchetti mentioned an Alessandra degli Alberti in his *Battaglia delle belle donne* (I, 32, 4) but no positive identification has been made, while the lady encrypted in the ballata *S'a le' s'andra le lagrime e i sospiri* by Niccolò Tinucci has been identified as L' Alessandra di Misier Pala degli Strocchi. Regarding cross-referencing between contemporary poems, the theme of Love's laws of *Fa metter bando* is derived from Andrea Capellano's *De amore* and also recalls a ballata by Ser Giovanni Fiorentino whose refrain states that *Chi ama di buon cor non può perire, / che grazia de trovar del ben servire*. *Che cosa è questa, Amor* expresses the theme of the *donna angelicata* common in

Dante's *Vita Nova* and Cavalcanti's *Chi pregio vuol in virtù pong' amore*.

A further two other songs have texts that are specifically connected to the contemporary musical world. Both are madrigals that modify the customary musical style of the genre in accordance with their texts. *Sì dolce non sonò* is Landini's homage to French composer Philippe de Vitry, master of the sophisticated mathematical techniques of isorhythmic motet composition. The musical homage to Philippe replicates the isorhythmic structure of the motet in the madrigal's tenor and emulates motet texture by deviating from the normally synchronous declamation of its text. In so doing, Landini demonstrates a detailed understanding and skilful mastery of the French style within the confines of the Italian madrigal.

Musica son, the work that takes pride of place in the Squarcialupi Codex (reproduced on the cover of this booklet) is unusual in setting simultaneously three texts. This was not unusual in the motet where this practice was the norm rather than the exception, but in the madrigal, which by the end of the fourteenth century had replaced the motet as the vehicle for formal and ceremonial music, it is rare. The text as well as its unusual setting may be interpreted as Landini's own personal artistic manifesto, or perhaps from the perspective of the compiler of the Squarcialupi Codex, where every section of the manuscript begins with a composer-portrait and a page decorated with emblems alluded to in the text of the music. Landini's sentiments echo those of Giovanni da Cascia

in his *O tu cara scienza* in praise of music and Jacopo da Bologna's *Oseletto selvaggio*, in which he regrets the proliferation of 'little masters' (*magistrolì*): "Few possess it, yet they all claim to be masters, / composing ballads, madrigals and motets, / they are all Florians, Filipottos and Marchettos. // The land is so filled with little masters / that there is no room for disciples" [*Pochi l'hanno e tutti si fan maestri, / fan ballate madrial'e motetti / tutt'en Fioran, Filippotti e Marchetti. // Si è piena la terra di magistrolì, / che loco più non trovano discepoli.*]

One hundred of Landini's 154 songs are composed in two voices, the remainder in three. Many of his two-part compositions follow the style of earlier Italians, with clearly directed phrases that move to strong cadences, and which declaim the text simultaneously in both parts, using more florid writing in the upper voice. This style is demonstrated by works such as *Fa metter bando*, *Deh, pon quest'amor giù!*, and *Altri n'arà la pena*. Pieces such as *Non creder, donna* and *Angelica biltà* have fewer decorations in their upper parts, while *Ecco la primavera* is written almost entirely in note-against-note style. Most of the two-part compositions are performed by two voices, the lower part occasionally being supplied instrumentally either by *vielle* or psaltery.

Landini's three-part pieces are more varied in their musical style and probably also in their manner of performance. Villani has already drawn our attention to the third species of music "invented" by Landini which mixed instruments with voices.

Many of the three-part pieces display more homogenous textures, and it is these compositions that also make evident the influence of French *chanson* writing in many aspects of musical detail, including the use of "open" and "closed" endings for repeated sections of music, or the greater degree of syncopation in their lines. A certain degree of scholarly opinion concerning the performance of these pieces has been based upon the inclusion or omission of text in the manuscript sources of the music. While there is a certain degree of correlation between notational practice and musical style, this by no means provides unequivocal evidence for performance practice. The precise nature of the role of instruments remains undefined and conjecture has not been eliminated. Works such as *A le' s'andrà lo spirito* are more consistent with the style of Landini's two-voice works and lend themselves to performance by three voices. On the other hand, the high degree of syncopation in the upper line of *Contemprar le gran cose* together with its being preserved with only its cantus voice texted provides a case for its performance as an instrumentally accompanied solo song. Manuscript anomalies add further complexity to the matter as well. To cite one relevant example, *Che pena è questa al cor* and *Che cosa é questa, Amor* are both copied on the same opening of the Panciatichiano manuscript. Even though there was no lack of available space, the copyist did not text the contratenor part of *Che pena*, but had to fit the eminently singable contratenor of *Che cosa* onto a single

staff, allowing insufficient room to permit text to be included, even if this had been his desire. In this recording, *Che pena* has been performed according to Panciatichi with the contratenor played on the *vielle*, even though other manuscript sources provide text for all of its three parts. Conversely, the contratenor of *Che cosa* is sung even though no text for it is copied in the manuscript. As there is a similar lack of documentation to explain the aesthetic aspirations of Landini and his contemporaries, it is difficult to find criteria other than scholarly and musical intuition to provide what will be satisfactory if not convincing readings within a restricted range of possibilities.

John Stinson
Giovanni Carsaniga
John Griffiths

THE MUSIC OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

1. *Musica son*

Madrigal

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Margaret Arnold (alto), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Musica son che mi dolgo, piangendo
veder gli effetti mie dolci e perfetti
lasciar per frottol i vaghi intelletti.

Perché ignoranza e vizio ogn'uom costuma,
lasciasi 'l buon e pigliasi la schiuma

Ciascun vuol inarrar musical note,
e compor madrial, cacce, ballate,
tenendo ognun le sue autenticate.

Chi vuol d'una virtù venire in loda
conviengli prima giugner a la proda.

Già furon le dolcezze mie pregiate
da cavalier, baroni e gran signori:
or sono 'mbastarditi e' genti cori.

I am Music, and tearfully complain
of seeing eager minds forsake my sweet
and perfect gifts for trifling street-songs.

All are so used to ignorance and vice
that they reject what's good and choose the scum.

All want to wrestle with musical notes,
and compose madrigals, hunting songs, ballads;
each one claiming his own is the real thing.

But he who wants to be praised for any of his
accomplishments must first achieve his goal.

In the times past knights, barons and great lords
thought very highly of my sweet endearments:
now noble hearts have been bastardized.

Ma i' Musica sol non mi lamento,
ch'ancor l'altre virtù lasciate sento.

But in my plaint I, Music, am not alone:
the other Virtues have also been forsaken.

2. Fa metter bando

Madrigal

Ian McDonald (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Fa metter bando e comandar Amore
a ciaschedun' amanza over amante
celato 'l tenga in fatti ed in sembiante;

Love issued a decree and a command
to every man or woman who is in love,
that they should hide him, in deed and appearance.

e che niun si rimanga d'amare
perch'a lui non ne paia esser cambiato,
ch'Amor vuol che chi ama sia amato;

Also, that no one should refrain from loving
because they don't appear to be requited,
since Love desires that those who love be loved.

e che niun amante si disperi
per lung'amar, ché, giugnendo a l'effetto,
ogni suo pena tornerà in diletto,

And that no one who has loved for a long time
should despair, since, as it comes to fruition,
every sorrow shall change into pleasure.

sapendo chi farà contra la legge
sarà privato, se non si corregge.

And know that those who act against this law,
will be punished, unless they mend their ways.

3. Deh, pon quest'amor giù!

Ballata

Lloyd Fleming (tenor), Gavin Carr (baritone)

- Deh, pon quest'amor giù!
Dico a te, mente stolta.
Dove ti se' tu volta?
Troppo col tuo pensier riguardi 'n su.

- Come, desist from this love!
I am speaking to you, silly mind.
Where have you turned to?
You have ideas too much above your station.

Come se' tanto folle
mirar sì alta cosa
e non misuri te?
- Perché questo Amor volle

How can you be so foolish
and set your aim so high,
and not appraise yourself?
- That is because Love wanted it,

quando sì graziosa
donna veder mi fé.
- Di lei degno non se'
né a lei degno pare
che tu la deggi amare.
Leva dunque 'l disio; non amar più.

- Levar non potrei mai
il mio amor da lei,
tanto legato m'ha.
- E tu sempre starai
con pena, e de gli omei
tuo non si curerà.
- Certo nessun lo sa:
donna di gran valore
a un picciol servidore
per sofferenza già benigna fu.

- A questa, cu' non cale
di questa ballatetta
con riverenza di'
che sa ben che nol vale;
ma fuggir la saetta
non può, la qual sentì
e sì forte 'l ferì
che cura poca pace.
Se tal servo li spiace,
amor lo scusa e la sua gran virtù.

at the time when he showed me
such a delightful woman.
- You are unworthy of her,
nor will she think it seemly
that you should want to love her.
Set aside your desire and love no more.

- I never could remove
my love from her sweet person,
so much I am bound to her.
- Then you shall always be
in pain, and she won't care
about your cries of sorrow.
- A fact nobody knows
is that excellent women
did now and then show mercy
to an unimportant servant in his sorrow.

Say to her, who does not
care for this little ballad,
respectfully, that he
knows full well he's unworthy;
but he cannot escape
love's dart; he felt it deeply;
it wounded him so badly
that he cares not for peace.
If such a servant fails her
let Love and Love's great power excuse him.

4. Altri n'arà la pena *text by Franco Sacchetti*

Ballata

Margo Adelson (soprano), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

Altri n'arà la pena et io 'l danno
Se sotto fé ho ricevuto inganno.
Non manca mai la divina vendetta
Benché talora paia che risparmi.

If, trusting as I am, I have been deceived,
I will suffer, but others will be aggrieved.
Divine retribution never fails,
although sometimes it seems to spare the offender.

Ond'io spero venir giusta saetta
inverso chi ha creduto saettarmi.
E di ciò a me date non curarmi
Che gran virtù è vincer ogni affanno.

Thus I hope that a well-deserved arrow
will hit whoever thought of shooting at me.
And let me not be worried about that,
for to overcome all cares is a great virtue.

5. Angelica biltà

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Ros Bandt (psaltery)

Angelica biltà venut'è in terra.
Dunque ciascun, ch'ama veder bellezza,
virtù, atti vezosi e legiadria,
venga a veder costei, che sol vagheza
arà di lei, sì com'ha l'alma mia.
Ma' non credo con pace tanta guerra.

A beauty has come, like an angel, to earth.
Therefore whoever wishes to admire beauty,
virtue, graceful demeanour, elegant charm,
should come her to behold: all his desires
will be for her, as indeed my soul's are.
But such peace never goes without a war.

6. Non creder, donna *text by Franco Sacchetti*

Ballata

Lloyd Fleming (tenor), Gavin Carr (baritone)

Non creder, donna, che nessuna sia
donna di me, se non tu, donna mia.
Così potess' i' dimostrarti 'l core
dove la mente in te ognor si posa,
ché ben vedresti in esso stare Amore
e la tua vista bella et amorosa,
a cui servir non è l'alma nascosa
che te servendo pur servir disia.
Di questo, lasso! non posso far prova;
però, donna, deh prova la mia fede;
e, se per mio effetto altro si trova,
non poss'io mai trovar da te merzede;
ch' i' t'ho amato et amo, et amar crede
te sempre il cor, che fu tuo sempre e fia.

Do not believe that any other woman
rules over me apart from you, my lady.
If I were able to display my heart
(my mind within dwells all the time on you),
you would see clearly Love in it residing
and your beautiful love-inspiring image;
which my soul serves unhidden, since the more
it serves you, the more desires to serve.
Alas! of that I cannot offer proof;
therefore, my lady, you should test my faith,
and, should you find it other than I plead,
may I never find mercy in your sight;
I have loved you and love you, and my heart will
always love you to whom it did and shall belong.

Canzon, sì come se' del mio amor certa,
così costei fa certa col tuo dire;
e, se mostrato t'ho la mente aperta,
aperto mostra a lei il mio disire;
sì che amando il ver possa sentire,
ch'altra non amo né amar porria.

O song, as you are certain of my love,
so make her also certain with your words;
and as I have plainly shown my mind to you,
show my desire as openly to her,
so that through love she may believe the truth:
I do not love another, nor could I.

7. Vita non è più misera

Ballata

Margo Adelson (soprano), Hartley Newnham (countertenor)

Vita non è più misera e più ria
che troppo amar altru' con gelosia.

Giovane bella, virtuosa e vaga,
cagion a me di quest'amara vita,
po' che principio fosti de la piaga,
si' a sanarla, com'a farla, ardita.
Virtù che regna in te non sie smarrita,
sì che in due corpi un sol animo sia.

Never is life more wretched or unpleasant
than when excessive love is mixed with jealousy.

O my beautiful, virtuous, fair young lady,
the origin of my embittered life,
since you did cause my wound in the beginning,
be as prompt in healing it as in causing it.
May the power which reigns in you not be lost
so that one mind may dwell in our two bodies.

8. Ama, donna, chi t'ama

Ballata

Ian McDonald (countertenor), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

Ama, donna, chi t'ama 'n pura fede.
O cara luce mia,
i' son che solo 'n te spero merzede.

Non mi far caro de' begli occhi tuoi,
ch'altro piacer non fa mie cor contento,
perché tu sol ha la mie vita, puoi
tanto disio di tuo bellezza sento.
L'alma mia serve a te di buon talento:
tanto spera e disia
quanto ne la tua cara luce vede.

Love him, lady, who loves you with pure faith.
O dear light of mine,
I am the one who only craves your mercy.

Do not withhold from me your lovely eyes:
my heart rejoices in no other pleasure,
because you alone have a hold on my life,
so much desire I feel of your beauty.
My soul is willing to become your servant:
what it hopes and desires
is what it can discern in your dear eyes.

9. Amor con fede

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Amor con fede seguito, speranno
grazia da' lucid'ochi, che mi sfanno.

Ma s'umiltà contra durezza vale
in amar sempre con sincero core,
pur piegherà l'alter cor quello strale,
che renda a' sensi el perduto vigore.
E la virtù de l'eccelso splendore
renderà pace al mio molesto affanno.

Follow love with faith, hoping
for mercy from those shining eyes which are my
undoing.

But if humility can prevail over callousness
by always loving with a sincere heart,
Love's dart which restores to the senses their lost
vigour, will eventually subdue her haughty heart.
And the power of her most excellent beauty
will change my troublesome distress into peace.

10. Ecco la primavera

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Ecco la primavera
che 'l cor fa rallegrare;
temp'è da 'nnamorare
e star con lieta cera.

No' vegiam l'aria e 'l tempo
che pur chiama allegrezza;
in questo vago tempo
ogni cosa ha vagheza.

L'erbe con gran frescheza
e fiori copron prati
e gli alberi adornati
sono in simil maniera.

The time of Spring has come
which makes the heart rejoice;
it's time to fall in love
and to be of good cheer.

We see the air and weather
bringing about gladness;
in this lovely time
every thing has loveliness.

The meadows with fresh grass
and with flowers are covered;
and the trees are adorned
in a similar manner.

11. Donna, che d'amor senta

Ballata

Lloyd Fleming (tenor), Gavin Carr (baritone)

Donna che d'amor senta non si mova
ad amar ciaschedun che guarda lei:
quanto son rei chi 'l sa fatt'ha la prova.

Mostran con gli ochi a gli ochi amor sentire
e poi, per me' tradire.
gittan sospir gravosi.
Tempo né loco non guardan, se d'ire
posson farne morire
mostrandosi angosciosi.
E s' a lor par nostri ochi esser pietosi
si vantàn che noi portiam dentro al core
il loro amore. Chi 'l sa fatt'ha la prova.

Let any woman who knows about love
not rush to love all men who look at her:
how bad they are...all know it who have tried it.

They pretend to be in love by gazing eye
to eye, and then, better to betray,
they heave sorrowful sighs.
They don't care about time or place, if they
can make us die of anger
by showing that they are anguished.
And if they see compassion in our eyes
they proudly boast that we carry their love
within our hearts. All know it who have tried it.

12. Oimé 'l core!

Ballata

Margo Adelson (soprano), Margaret Arnold (alto)

Oimé 'l core! Non più, non più ardore
non mi più molestar, crudel Amore.

Tu pur ferisci con l'arco mortale
e con la face del sagrato foco,
e poi mi lasci e di me non ti cale,
né a costei, per cui non trovo loco.
Oh, lasso a me, quant'è penoso el gioco
che sotto speme affliggi ogni amatore.

Per più tormento m'ha fatto fedele
di così alta e nobile figura,
che vede la mie pena sì crudele
e non m'aiuta né di me non cura.
Fanciulla, omè, com'è penosa e dura
la fiamma che di te m'incende el core!

Oh my heart! No more, no more passion,
do not torture me more, o cruel Love.

You still torment me with your deadly bow
and with the firebrand of your sacred flame,
and then you leave me. You think nothing of me,
and so does she who took away my peace.
Alas, how painful is the yoke, disguised
as hope, with which you burden every lover.

To increase my torment you have turned me into
the thrall of such a lofty and noble figure,
who sees my cruel pain but neither helps me
nor thinks highly of me. O girl, alas!
how hard to bear and painful is the flame
which burns my heart because of you.

13. A le' s'andrà lo spirto

Ballata

Lloyd Fleming, Tom Healey (tenors), Gavin Carr (baritone)

*A le' s'andrà lo spirto e l'alma mia
omai che per amor il corpo privo
lascia di vita e più non può star vivo.
Mostrò a me questa lucida stella,
che par figlia d'Apollo, sì risplende
co suo begli occhi, Amor con dolce vita.
Or è rivolta la sua vista bella,
sì ch'a me cresce pena e più s'accende
l'alma che piange la dura partita.
Ma se Amor, il mio signor, m'aita
ch'ella 'nver me si volga anzi che privo
i' sia di vita, ancor tornerò vivo.*

My spirit and my soul shall go to her
now that, because of love, they leave my body
bereft of life, which it cannot sustain.
Love who sweetens my life displayed to me
this shining star, with eyes so bright and beautiful
that she looks like the daughter of Apollo.
But now her lovely eyes are turned away,
so that my sorrow grows, and fierce flames sear
my soul who weeps o'er her grievous parting.
But if Love, my liege Lord, comes to my help
so that she turns again to me before
I lose my life, I shall again be alive.

14. Che cosa è questa, Amor

Ballata

Margaret Arnold (alto), Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Che cosa è questa, Amor, che 'l ciel produce,
per far più manifesta la tuo luce?
Ell'è tanto vezosa, onesta e vaga,
legiadra e graziosa, adorna e bella,
ch'a chi la guarda subito 'l cor piaga
con gli occhi be', che lucon più che stella.
E a cui lice star fiso a vedella,
tutta gioia e virtù in se conduce.
Ancor l'alme beate, che in ciel sono
guardan questa perfetta e gentil cosa,
dicendo - Quando fia che 'n questo trono
segga costei, dov'ogni ben si posa? -
E qual nel sommo Idio ficcar gli occhi osa,
vede come Esso ogni virtù in lei induce.

What thing is this which Heaven brings forth,
o Love, better to manifest your light?
She is so charming, fine and lovely,
fair and graceful, full of beauty, that at once
she wounds the heart of whoever looks at her,
with her bright eyes more sparkling than a star.
And she brings in herself joy and fulfillment
to whomever is allowed to admire her.
Even the souls of the blessed in Heaven
gaze upon such a perfect, noble thing,
and say: "When shall she come to sit on this
throne which is the seat of all goodness?"
And he who dares to look at God on high
can see how all her virtues come from Him.

15. Amor in te spera'

Ballata

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

Amor in te spera' già lungo tempo
e, se mi degni, assa' mi par per tempo.

Tu sai, Amor, che ne la prim'etade
mi facesti soggetto di costei
e sempre lei segui' per dritte strade,
né ancor trova' piatà per dire omei.
Amor, tu solo sa' quel ch'io vorrei,
né la stagione a te manca né 'l tempo.

For a long time in you I have been hoping,
and, grant me, Love, the time was long enough.

You know, Love, that since my prime of life
you turned me into the bondman of this lady.
I always followed her on the straight path;
yet my laments did not stir her compassion.
Love, you alone know what I would like, and you
lack neither opportunity nor time.

16. O fanciulla giulia

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), John Griffiths (lute), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

O fanciulla giulia,
con te sarà ed è sempre 'l cor mio,
e ogni altro pensier mess'ho in oblio.

A cio m'induce un cognoscer d'amore
che m'ha mostrato, e più mi mostra ognora,
quant'è l'alta bellezza e 'l gran valore
che in te risplende e la tua schiatta onora.
Se con teco dimora
benignità, che sdegnosa non sia,
per certo ogn'altra da parte si stia.

Ognor fra me quanto più te ripenso
più cresce 'l foco e più sospir fuor mando,
perché di te mi pare aver compreso
sempre maggior virtù a ciò pensando.
Deh, giovinetta, quando
che tu di me pensassi esser porria
e ch'io vedessi un poco a me te pia?

O joyful girl, my heart
is and will always be with you; I have
put every other thought out of my mind.

That is because of my insight into love,
which has shown me, and is showing me evermore,
how exalted a beauty, how great a worth
shine in you, and do your family proud.
Should a kind disposition
dwell within you, untainted by disdain,
then all ladies should step aside before you.

The more I keep thinking of you, the more
my ardour grows, and the longer I sigh;
because it seems to me that I understand
better your worth, as I am reflecting on it.
Do you think the time might come
when you, young lady, have me in your thoughts,
and look on me with some benevolence?

17. Che pena è questa al cor

Ballata

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

Che pena è questa al cor, che sì non posso
usar cortesemente
con questa mala gente,
ch'i' non sia pur da l'invidia percosso!

Ma veramente ma' non mi torranno
dal proposito mio quest'invidiosi.
Ben potranno dir mal, se dir vorranno,
ch'i' non seguiti quel ch'i' mi disposi
già lungo tempo; e farogli dogliosi
non già con villania,
ma per tener tal via
che far non mi potran diventar rosso.

Why must I suffer heart-ache? why is it that
I can't have courteous dealings
with all these mischief makers
who turn me into the target of their envy?

These envious people never shall, in fact,
make me recede from my intended purpose.
Let them speak evil, if that's what they want:
I will keep doing what I have meant to do
for a long time; and I will make them sorry,
not by ill-mannered actions,
but by going my way
so that nothing they do can make me blush.

18. Or su, gentili spirti

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), John Griffiths (lute), Ruth Wilkinson (vielle)

Or su, gentili spirti ad amar pronti,
volete voi vedere 'l paradiso?
Mirate d'esta cosa el vago viso.

Ne le suo luce sante arde e sfavilla
Amor vittorioso, che divampa
per dolcezza di gloria chi la mira.
Ma l'alma mia, fedelissima ancilla,
piatà non trova in questa chiara lampa
e null'altro che lei ama e disira,
O sacra iddea, al tuo servo un po' spira
mercé: mercé sol chiamo, già conquiso.
Deh, fallo pria che morte m'abbia anciso.

O gentle spirits well disposed to love,
do you desire to gaze on Paradise?
Behold the lovely countenance of this lady.

Love triumphant who burns with searing flames
whomever looks at her (his triumph's sweet)
blazes and sparkles in her divine eyes.
But my soul, a most faithful handmaiden,
finds no compassion in this glaring light,
and nothing else loves and desires but her.
O sacred goddess, grant your servant some
mercy; already vanquished I cry only
for mercy. Grant it, pray, before death takes me.

19. Sì dolce non sonò

Madrigal

Margaret Arnold (alto), Ian McDonald (countertenor), Lloyd Fleming (tenor)

Sì dolce non sonò con lira Orfeo
quando a sé trasse fiere, uccelli e boschi
d'Amor cantando, d'infante e di deo,

come lo gallo mio di fuor da' boschi
con nota tale, che già ma' udita
non fu da Filomena in verdi boschi.

Né più Febo cantò, quando schernita
da Marsia fu suo tibia in folti boschi,
dove, vincendo, lo spogliò di vita.

Di Tebe avanza 'l chiudente Anfione;
effetto fa 'l contrario del Gorgone.

With his lyre Orpheus never sounded sweeter
when he drew to himself beasts, birds and woods,
singing of Love, as a child and as God,

than my French rooster from outside the woods
with such a note as never would be heard
sung by a nightingale in the verdant woods.

Nor did Phoebus sing better when his tybia
was despised by Marsyas in the thick woods
where he defeated him and took his life.

He is better than Amphyon enclosing Thebes,
and his effect is opposite to the Gorgon's.

20. Contemprar le gran cose

Ballata

Hartley Newnham (countertenor), Ros Bandt (psaltery), John Griffiths (lute)

Contemplar le gran cose c'è onesto
di chi tutto governa;
ma cercar le ragion non ci è richiesto.

Ché metter tempo a sottigliar la mente
in voler cercar quel che c'è negato?
Ché quanto lo 'ntelletto è più possente
ne la ragion più manca d'ogni lato.
Ma vegnamo al rimedio che c'è dato
che toglie el viver mesto,
del creder puro: e stiam contenti a questo.

It is proper for us to contemplate
the great works of the ruler
of all things; but not to look for reasons.

Why spend our time in sharpening the mind
seeking what is being denied to us?
since, the more powerful our mind, the greater
the chances are of missing the point.
Let us come to the remedy we are given
against sadness in life,
pure faith: and let's be satisfied with that.

THE ENSEMBLE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

directed by
John Griffiths and John Stinson

THE MUSIC OF THE FOURTEENTH
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Vol. 3: I am Music

WORKS BY FRANCESCO LANDINI
(c 1325-1397)

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THE MUSIC OF THE
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The Music of the Fourteenth Century is an anthology of music by the principal composers and from the central collections of the era. Most of the works recorded here have never previously been available.

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