The Flower of Flanders
MASTERPIECES OF RENAISSANCE POLYPHONY

Nuper rosarum flores  Guillaume DuFay (ca.1397–1474)

Ave Maria  Johannes Ockeghem (ca.1410–1497)
Gaude virgo  Josquin Desprez (ca.1450–1521)

Plorer, gemier  Pierre de la Rue (ca.1452–1518)
Quis dabit capiti meo aquam  Henricus Isaac (ca.1450–1517)

Nesciens mater  Jean Mouton (ca.1459–1522)
Laudes Christo  Jacob Obrecht (ca.1457–1505)

Kyrie from Missa Et ecce terræ motus  Antoine Brumel (ca.1460–1512)

INTERMISSION

Verbum bonum  Adrian Willært (ca.1490–1562)

Musæ Jovis  Nicholas Gombert (ca.1495–ca.1560)

Pater noster  Jacob Arcadelt (ca.1507–1568)
Ego flos campi  Jacobus Clemens non Papa (ca.1510–1555)

Descendi in hortum meum  Cipriano de Rore (1515–1565)
O suavitas et dulcedo  Philippe de Monte (1521–1603)

Adesto dolori meo  Giaches de Wert (1535–1596)
Musica dei donum  Roland de Lassus (1532–1594)

September 26, 2014  September 27, 2014
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church  Mary Queen of Peace Church
Cleveland Heights  Old Brooklyn

September 28, 2014
Historic St. Peter Church
Cleveland
ABOUT QUIRE

**Quire Cleveland** makes life more harmonious by connecting to distant lands and ages past through the human voice. Breathing life into choral works which may have lain silent for centuries, Quire reveals the timelessness and universal humanity of this music. In addition to being soloists, choral leaders, and educators at many of the major churches, synagogues, and schools in Northeastern Ohio, members of the ensemble represent 500 years of choral singing. Under the artistic direction of Ross W. Duffin, Quire performs nine centuries of *a cappella* repertoire.

**Quire Cleveland**

**SOPRANOS:** Margaret Carpenter, Donna Fagerhaug, Eileen Moore, Elena Mullins, Lisa Rainsong, Gail West  
**ALTOS:** Leslie Frye, Megan Long, Joseph Schlesinger, Beverly Simmons, Jay White  
**TENORS:** Evan Bescan, Peter Hampton, Corey Shotwell, Tyler Skidmore, Brian Wentzel  
**BASSES:** Ian Crane, Anthony Gault, José Gotera, Nathan Longnecker, John McElliott, Daniel Singer

Quire’s founding Artistic Director, **Ross W. Duffin**, is an award-winning scholar, specializing in the performance practice of early music. Director since 1978 of the nationally recognized Historical Performance Practice Program at Case Western Reserve University, where he is Fynette H. Kulas Professor of Music, he has trained and nurtured some of today’s leading performers and researchers in the field.

His weekly radio show, *Micrologus: Exploring the World of Early Music*, was broadcast on 140 NPR stations throughout the United States. His books, *How Equal Temperament Ruined Harmony (and Why You Should Care)* and *Shakespeare’s Songbook* (both published by W. W. Norton), have gained international renown.

In addition to many of the works in this concert, Ross has edited *Cantiones Sacrae: Madrigalian Motets from Jacobean England* (A-R Editions), which Quire recorded complete as *Madrigalian Motets* (QC103), *A Josquin Anthology* (Oxford University Press), the *St. Matthew Passion* by Richard Davy (A-R Editions), and *A Performer’s Guide to Medieval Music* (Indiana University Press). He has also sung with Apollo’s Fire since its inception in 1992.

Ross’s maternal grandfather was a professional countertenor and conductor in London, England, and his mother directed her church choir in London, Ontario — making him a third-generation choral conductor.
All of the composers represented on this concert were Franco-Flemish, by which music historians mean that they were born mostly in the region represented by Belgium today, but were primarily francophone. With the exception of Clemens non Papa, who seems to have stayed around the Low Countries throughout his life, they were all international “superstars,” traveling and working all over Europe, and especially in Italy—in many ways the seat of wealth and culture during the Renaissance. Theirs was a remarkable flowering, comparable to the extraordinary flourishing of Italian visual artists of the Renaissance, and our program celebrates their accomplishments with what amounts to a “golden” anthology—a canon of their works, if you will. What I hope will be evident is not only that they are all superb composers, but that their “compositional voices” are as distinctive as each of the voices in Quire Cleveland.

We begin with *Nuper rosarum flores* by Guillaume DuFay (ca.1397–1474). In 1436, Pope Eugenius IV was in Florence for the consecration of Brunelleschi’s dome for the Duomo, and DuFay was there as a singer in the papal choir. As part of the celebration, Eugene presented the city with a golden rose, and this is mentioned by DuFay in the motet that he composed for the consecration service. What an extraordinary experience it must have been, when the ethereal splendor of the dome was visible to the public for the first time. DuFay’s motet is constructed using the durational ratios of 6:4:2:3 for the successive sections of the piece, and these were revealed by musicologist Craig Wright to represent the dimensions of the biblical Temple of Solomon and also roughly, the dimensions of the cathedral itself. Each section begins with a duo of the two top parts, followed by the entrance of the two lower voices singing the introit chant for the dedication of a church – in canon with each other and at successively different speeds, using the ratios 6:4:2:3.

Johannes Ockeghem was said to have been ancient when he died in 1497 and it is thought that he may have been born (near Mons in southern Flanders) as early as 1410. Certainly, by ca.1450, he was first chaplain to the King of France, whom he served from his position as *trésorier* to the Royal Abbey of St. Martin in Tours. He was renowned in his day as a bass singer of extraordinary ability and, indeed, he is among the first to exploit a real bass range in his compositions. He is also known for his seamless textures, where the phrases are long and rarely seem to come to rest. His motet *Ave Maria* is a beautiful miniature, by his standards, but the qualities of seamlessness are evident, and the final Phrygian cadence is both surprising and a marvel of solemnity.

Josquin Desprez is widely regarded as the greatest of all Franco-Flemish composers of the Renaissance, an opinion that was already current at the time and for some decades after his death. He was born Josquin Lebloitte dit Desprez between 1450 and 1455, and apparently worked for King René in Aix and King
Louis XI of France in Tours, before moving to Italy after Louis’s death in 1483. After working in Milan, Rome, and Ferrara, he returned to the Low Countries in 1504 and worked there until his death in 1521. His motet *Gaude virgo* is a classic example of the composer’s balanced unfolding of motifs, with two-part imitation followed by four-voice imitative sections and occasional homophony. Especially striking are the syncopated imitative sections and the stunning final cadence. *Gaude virgo* is similar in style to Josquin’s famous *Ave Maria*, and has perhaps been unjustly neglected because of that. Both are magnificent.

Pierre de la Rue was born ca. 1452, probably in Tournai, and died ten miles north of there in Kortrijk (or Courtrai) in 1518. Unlike most of the other composers on this program, he did not venture to Italy, although his long service to the Burgundian-Hapsburg dynasty led him to pass some years in Spain. *Plorer gemir* is an exquisite motet-chanson, combining elements of both the Latin motet and French chanson. The slow-moving Tenor in the first part of the piece is the opening of the introit from the *Requiem* mass, and, as in *Nuper rosarum flores*, it is given in canon between the bass and tenor voices. The French text of the second section survives incomplete, as does some of the counterpoint towards the end; I reconstructed those things for a 1992 Hilliard Ensemble recording and we are using that version here. Because of the association with the *Requiem* mass, *Plorer gemir* may possibly have been composed in memory of Ockeghem, who was from the same region and who died not long before the piece was written.

Henricus Isaac was born in Flanders ca. 1450 and spent several years in Florence as court composer to Lorenzo *Il Magnifico* de’ Medici, before moving to Austria to serve the Emperor Maximilian. The best testament to Isaac’s earlier association with the Medici is *Quis dabit oculi mei*, the motet he wrote lamenting Lorenzo’s death in 1492, set to a poem by Lorenzo’s friend Angelo Poliziano. Interestingly, the second part begins with the text “Laurus impetu,” but at this point the Tenor part in the manuscript has the indication, “Laurus tacet,” meaning that the Tenor voice of the normally four-voice texture is omitted for this section. But “Laurus tacet” is also a punning symbolic reference to Lorenzo’s tenor singing voice which was now silent. The two upper parts are paired in singing Poliziano’s lyrics while, below them, the bass voice descends step by step, as if into a tomb, repeating the phrase, “And let us rest in peace.” The final, Phrygian section is no less moving.

Jean Mouton was born ca. 1459 in southern Flanders, probably at the little town of Holluigues. He worked at various places in northern France—Nesles, Amiens, St. Omer—before moving briefly to Grenoble. There he was heard and hired by Anne of Brittany, Queen Consort to Louis XII, and thereafter spent most of his career serving the French royal family, including Louis XII and François I. Mouton’s *Nesciens mater* uses a Gregorian chant as a basis for its Tenor voice, but the texture is so full and active that it cannot be heard clearly.
The work is an undulating tapestry of sonority created, remarkably, by means of a four-voice imitative texture in canon with itself a 5th higher and a measure later. The technique of composition never intrudes of the beauty of this expressive work, however.

Jacob Obrecht was born in Ghent in 1457/8, the son of Willem Obrecht, who was a city trumpeter there. He died in Ferrara in 1505, during an outbreak of the plague. His motet *Laudes Christo*, of which we sing the *prima pars*, is remarkable for the modernity of its range: it is one of the first pieces to set the Altus part in a tessitura between the Superius and the Tenor. Up to that point, it was typical to find the Altus in the same range as the Tenor, or overlapping considerably. This forward-looking concept, as well as the pervading imitation, suggests that *Laudes Christo* is a late work (it was published in the year of Obrecht’s death). It is a work of extraordinary vibrancy and contrapuntal audacity, and the final Alleluia is particularly fine.

The youngest of the extraordinary generation of Josquin, Isaac, LaRue, and Obrecht, Antoine Brumel was born ca. 1460, possibly near Chartres, where we have the first record of him as a singer. After service in Geneva, Paris, and Chambéry, he made his way to Italy in 1506, initially to the post Obrecht had occupied at the Ferrarese court. We lose sight of him in Italy ca.1512/13. One of his most remarkable works is the *Missa Et ecce terræ motus*, of which we sing here the *Kyrie*. Sometimes called the “Earthquake Mass,” it is aptly named because of the large number of independent voice parts: twelve! Works with that number of voices are common enough in the polychoral repertory of the late Renaissance, but not this early, and here, all of the voices are singing much of the time. The result is a dazzling and relentless texture: the ending is a veritable orgy of figural counterpoint!

Adrian Willaërt was born, possibly at Bruges, ca. 1490. After studies with Mouton in Paris, the most celebrated incident of his early life occurred in Rome in 1514-15, where Willaërt was attending the papal court with his patron, Cardinal Ippolito I d’Este. The young Willaërt was excited to hear the papal choir singing his own motet *Verbum bonum*, while under the impression that it was by Josquin. As the theorist Zarlino tells the story, “When he said that it was his own (as it actually was) such was the envy or, I will say more delicately, the ignorance of those men, that they no longer wished to sing it.” After service in Ferrara, Willaërt was appointed maestro di cappella of San Marco in Venice in 1527, post he held until his death in 1562. *Verbum bonum* is actually remarkable among Franco-Flemish works for an insistent use of the cross-relation, a pungent cadential dissonance associated primarily with English music.

Nicolas Gombert seems to have been born in southern Flanders ca. 1495, and may have studied with Josquin during the latter’s final years in Condé. Around 1526, Gombert became a singer in the chapel of the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V, ultimately becoming maître des enfants and unofficial composer, and
traveling with the court from Flanders to Spain, Italy, Austria, and Germany. Leaving court service around 1540, in 1545 he published *Musee Jovis*, a lament for Josquin Desprez, who had died in 1521. Somber in mood throughout, it borrows the chant *Circumdederunt me*, from the Office of the Dead, that Josquin himself had used in the lamenting chanson *Nymphes, nappés*. *Musee Jovis* is oddly pagan in its text for a motet by one cleric in memory of another, but is certainly a solemn tribute to the great master.

Jacques, or Jacob, Arcadelt (ca.1507–68), was a Fleming by birth but seems to have spent most of his early career in Italy, notably in Florence and Rome. In Florence he became one of the first composers of the Italian madrigal, and his *Il bianco e dolce cigno* from his First Book of Madrigals, was the single most reprinted piece of music in the Renaissance. Most of Arcadelt’s sacred works, including this magnificent setting of the *Pater noster*, were probably composed during his time in the chapel of Pope Paul III. It was published in 1545.

Clemens non Papa was the *nom de plume* of the Franco-Flemish composer Jacques Clément (b. ca. 1510), who worked in the Low Countries in the early 16th century. The sobriquet is reputed to have been a joking reference (perhaps by fellow-choir members) to the fact that he shared a name with Pope Clement (d. 1534): Clemens non Papa = Clement not the Pope. He wrote numerous motets and masses for the Catholic rite as well as the *Souterliedekens*, a large collection of Protestant psalm settings in Dutch. Clemens's style in motets like *Ego flos campi* is characterized by a rich texture in almost constant imitation. He plays on that norm in setting the phrase “sicut lilium inter spinas,” which stands out in clear homophony in contrast to the intertwining musical “thorns” around it. That phrase also happens to be the motto of the Marian Brotherhood in ’s-Hertogenbosch, where Clemens was employed as singer and composer in 1550.

Cipriano de Rore (ca.1515–65), in spite of the Italianate given name by which he became known, was born in Ronse, south of Ghent, and where as a choir-boy, he carved his still-visible name in the crypt of St. Hermes there. He is reputed to have been a pupil of Willaert but there is no documentation about his early career. By 1542 he was definitely in northern Italy and by 1546 was *maestro di cappella* for the Este court of Ferrara. Important and prolific as a madrigalist, Rore wrote comparatively few sacred compositions. *Descendi in hortum meum* was copied as the first work in a sumptuous manuscript prepared for Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria in Munich, and which seems to have been overseen by the composer himself during a visit in 1558. Demonstrating his compositional prowess while writing an exquisite piece of music, Rore conceals a canonic texture within the seven intertwining voices, with the Tenor part following one of the Sopranos an octave below and two measures behind.

Philippe de Monte was born in Mechelen in 1521 and died in Prague in 1603. His early years are obscure but seem to have included residence in Cambrai,
to which he wished to return later in life (but was denied permission). Monte was the most prolific madrigalist in history, publishing 34 volumes of them over nearly fifty years. In 1568, he was appointed Kapellmeister to the Imperial court in Vienna, a post he held for the rest of his life, though the court moved to Prague about 1580. His *O suavitas et dulcedo*, published in 1575, is one of his most expressive motets.

Giaches (i.e., Jacques) de Wert was born in 1535, perhaps in Ghent, and died in Mantua in 1596. He spent most of his career in the service of various branches of the Gonzaga family, although his personal saga actually reads like the plot of a television mini-series. An important madrigalist, especially for setting lyrics by his Ferrarese colleague, Torquato Tasso, he was an important influence on Monteverdi, who spent his early career at Mantua, and on Gesualdo, who frequented nearby Ferrara. Wert’s motet *Adesto dolori meo* is an early work—surprisingly, since it is so chromatic—and is highly expressive of its lamenting text, resembling more a late Marenzio madrigal than a mid-16th century motet.

Roland de Lassus (widely known as Orlando di Lasso) was born, probably in 1532, in Mons, thus sharing a birthplace with Ockeghem. There is a legend that he was kidnapped three times as a choirboy because of his exceptional voice and, certainly, by the age of twelve, he was in the service of a member of the Gonzaga family and on his way to Italy. After years of travel, including back to the Low Countries where his first collection was published in 1555, he accepted an appointment at the court of Bavaria in Munich in 1556 and, aside from travel on behalf of the court, spent the rest of his life there. One of the most prolific composers of the Renaissance, his *Musica dei donum* was published in the year of his death, 1594, and is a moving tribute to music itself.

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**Save the dates!**

*December 19-21, 2014 • Carols for Quire (6th annual)*

*February 27, 2015 • The Song of Songs*

* information at quirecleveland.org*
Tenor Evan Bescan holds a Bachelor of Music from Capital University in Columbus, and a Methodology Diploma from the Kodály Institute in Hungary. He is currently a full-time elementary/middle school music teacher at Stockyard Community School in Cleveland and a chorister at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Evan is also a consultant of the Freda Joyce Brint Foundation, using music to enhance learning and life in people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Soprano Margaret Carpenter was a Gates Cambridge Scholar at Clare College, University of Cambridge, where she completed the M.Mus. in Choral Studies under Stephen Layton and Geoffrey Webber. She has been featured on the Easter at King’s College Concert Series, was soloist in the Monteverdi Vespers alongside His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornets, and co-founded L’Académie du Roi Soleil with British organist and continuo player Nicolas Haigh. She has toured widely under Timothy Brown; performs with Apollo's Fire and the South Dakota Chorale; and is currently undertaking her DMA in Historical Performance Practice at Case Western Reserve University. margaretcarpenter.com

Bass Ian Crane teaches choir and band at Holy Name High School in Parma, and previously spent five years on faculty at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, as instructor of bagpipes. He has performed with many local groups, including Apollo’s Fire, Cleveland Carolers, and the Choir of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Ian earned a bachelor’s degree in music education from Cleveland State University and his master’s in conducting from Kent State University. He resides in Lakewood, with his wife, Tricia, and children, Phoebe and Alexander.

Soprano Donna Fagerhaug holds a Master of Arts degree in Church Music from Trinity Lutheran Seminary and her Bachelor’s of Music from the Conservatory at Capital University, both in Columbus. She sings with Apollo’s Fire and is soprano soloist at Lakewood Congregational Church. Donna resides in Rocky River with her husband and three children.

Mezzo-soprano Leslie Frye hails from Akron, but her experience is wide-ranging. With a degree from Kent State University, she has sung with Apollo’s Fire, Singers Companye, Gaudium, and The Publick Musick (New York). She recently performance with Bobby McFerrin at Playhouse Square. An accomplished music educator, choral conductor, and pianist, she was Head of Education of a music school in Georgia. Leslie has maintained a private studio, teaching voice, piano, and music theory. In addition to music, Leslie’s life is enriched by her husband, Greg, and their son, Jasper.

Anthony Gault, baritone, is a native of Philadelphia, where he began his musical training as a member of the Philadelphia Boys Choir and Chorale. At the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts, he studied Vocal Music. Anthony holds a B.M. in Voice Performance from Temple University, and M.M. in Choral Conducting from the University of Miami. He has sung with Apollo’s Fire, Eakins Vocal Consort, and the Master Chorale of South Florida. He currently is the Upper and Middle School Music Teacher at Laurel School in Shaker Heights, OH.

José Gotera began his choral training at age eight at St. Michael’s Choir School in Toronto. He sang with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and Tafelmusik, while completing degrees at the University of Toronto. In Cleveland, he has sung with Apollo’s Fire, Cleveland Opera on Tour, Opera Circle, Opera Cleveland, and the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. He completed an M.A. in Early Music Performance at CWRU. At present, José is a voice instructor at Cleveland State University. He is also an instructor at Hiram College, where he teaches voice and directs the Hiram Men’s Chorus. He sings with the Trinity Cathedral Chamber Singers.

Peter Hampton is the choral director at Lakewood High School, where he directs six choirs and teaches class piano. He has sung with the choirs of Lakewood Congregational Church of Christ and the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Peter has a bachelor’s degree in music education (vocal emphasis) from
Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio, where he studied voice with Robert Nims. His choral highlights include singing in the United States premiere of The Lord of the Rings Symphony with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, Howard Shore conducting; and tours with choral ensembles to Austria, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, and France. Peter is an active member of MENC and ACDA.

Megan Kaes Long holds a Ph.D. in Music Theory from Yale University and a B.A. in Music from Pomona College. She teaches music theory and aural skills at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and is a scholar of secular choral music and music theory of the 16th and 17th centuries. Prior to joining Quire, Megan sang with the Yale Schola Cantorum, where she collaborated with the New York Philharmonic, Juilliard 415, and the Bach Collegium Japan. She lives in Oberlin with her husband.

Nathan Longnecker, bass, also sings with Apollo's Singers and Contrapunctus. By day, he tends gardens as The Quiet Gardener.

John McElliott, countertenor, holds undergraduate degrees in voice and organ performance from the University of Akron and spent a year as a choral scholar at Winchester Cathedral in the UK. He sings with several choral ensembles in Northeast Ohio, including Apollo's Fire and Trinity Cathedral's Chamber Singers, in addition to Quire Cleveland. John is president of Karen McFarlane Artists, where he manages concert careers for many of the world's great concert organists and choirs. A versatile vocalist, he sings alto, tenor, and baritone parts in Quire, and also serves as the organization's Secretary.

Eileen Marie Moore teaches voice at Cleveland State University and Oberlin Community Music School. A graduate of Indiana University, she created the role of Magdalena in the 1982 premiere of the 13th-century Greater Passion Play from Carmina Burana and has toured with the Ensemble Sequentia. She has been featured as soloist with the Akron Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Robert Page Singers, and Cleveland Composers Guild and performed with guitarist Don Better as the Moore/Better Duo. She also composes song cycles and operas and is the author of the Comparative Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus of Tolkien's Languages.

Elena Mullins is in the doctoral program in Historical Performance Practices at CWRU, where she studies voice with Ellen Hargis. She frequently performs with the Case Collegium and Baroque Ensembles under Debra Nagy and Julie Andrijeski, as well as the Early Music Singers under Ross Duffin. With Ensemble Forlana, the Case baroque dance ensemble, she performed Handel's Ballet Terpsicore with NYS Baroque and Pegasus. She appears regularly in the Apollo's Singers of Apollo's Fire, with whom she toured nationally with Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610. Elena is soprano soloist and section leader at the Church of the Covenant and a participant in the Trinity Cathedral Chamber singers.

Soprano Lisa Rainsong's musical life integrates composition, education, vocal performance, and natural history. She earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in composition from the Cleveland Institute of Music and is a member of CIM's Music Theory faculty. She performs with Quire Cleveland and Ensemble Lautenkonzert, among others. A certified naturalist, Lisa has developed a music-based approach to teaching classes on bird song and insect song identification and is in demand as a speaker. In addition, she does field research on "singing insects" — crickets and katydids — and in-service training for naturalists. listeninginnature.blogspot.com

Joseph Schlesinger, countertenor, began his musical education playing principal trumpet in the Augustana College Symphony, where he earned a B.A. in finance and Asian studies. After receiving his Master of Music degree from DePaul University, he won a Netherlands-America/Fulbright Fellowship to study baroque music at the Royal Conservatory, The Hague. His baroque repertoire includes Bach's Magnificat, Weihnachts Oratorium, B Minor Mass, St. Matthew & St. John Passions, as well as cantatas and oratorios from Telemann to John Adams. Upon returning to the United States, Joe joined Chicago's Music of the Baroque, and sang Handel's Israel in Egypt in the Oak Park Handel Festival 2010. Recently relocated to the Cleveland area, he sings with Apollo's Fire, as well as Quire Cleveland. This March, he is a soloist in Baroque Vespers at the Church of the Covenant.
Tenor Corey Shotwell recently received his Master's degree in Vocal Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music. While there, he also performed regularly with early music ensembles at Case Western Reserve University. In 2014, he made his professional début with Haymarket Opera Company in Chicago and also premiered the rôle of the Evangelist in the first modern performance of C. P. E. Bach's 1775 *St. Luke Passion*. He has participated in the Boston Early Music Festival Young Artists Training Program and the American Bach Soloists Academy in San Francisco. In Cleveland, he sings with Quire Cleveland, Opera Circle, and Apollo's Fire, where this season he is featured as a Young Artist Apprentice. He also performs with the ensemble Bella Voce in Chicago.

Beverly Simmons is a mezzo-soprano, graphic designer, and Executive Director of Quire Cleveland. She earned a doctorate in early music at Stanford University, before moving to Cleveland in 1978. Her career has included stints as a CWRU music professor, WCLV radio announcer, international artist manager, executive director, and mother of two. She founded the CWRU Early Music Singers and has sung with Apollo's Fire since its inception, as well as with the Cleveland Opera Chorus, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and Temple Tifereth-Israel. Beverly is also half of the cabaret duo, Rent-a-Yenta.

Daniel Singer, baritone, is Director of Music at University School in Hunting Valley, Asst. Director of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus, Assoc. Director and Conductor of the Choral Arts Society of Cleveland, and Assoc. Director of Education for Quire Cleveland. An active guest conductor and clinician, he recently directed the OMEA District VI Junior Honor Choir. From 2003 to 2009, he worked as a performer, music director, and teacher in the Chicago area, sang with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, and was a vocalist and arranger with the Lakeside Singers. Danny has a B.M. in Music Education from Northwestern University and an M.M. in Choral Conducting from Michigan State University.

Tyler Skidmore, tenor, is an active music educator and performer. Teaching now at the same high school he attended, Tyler attempts to share the joys and challenges of choral music with the students at Medina High School. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from Mount Vernon Nazarene University and a master's in voice performance from Kent State University. Tyler has performed with other area choral ensembles, including Opera Cleveland, The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and Chamber Chorus, and Apollo's Singers of Apollo's Fire.

Tenor Brian Wentzel is an organist, singer, and composer. Since 2006 he has been Director of Music at First Lutheran Church in Lorain, Ohio, where he is currently helping the congregation move through the aftermath of the recent terrible fire. His performance schedule includes recitals, leading hymn festivals, and singing in professional choirs in the Cleveland area. His compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress. Brian has degrees in mathematics, organ performance, and sacred music, and holds the Fellowship certification from the American Guild of Organists.

Soprano Gail West has worked with such eminent artists as Julianne Baird, Emma Kirkby, Suzie LeBlanc, Paul Hillier, and Benjamin Bagby. Currently a voice student of Ellen Hargis, she has been a member of Apollo's Singers since its founding. Gail has been a member of CWRU’s Early Music Singers for over 20 years and is a soprano soloist at Church of the Good Shepherd. She lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband and three children.

Countertenor Jay White sang eight seasons with the internationally acclaimed ensemble Chanticleer, recording 14 albums and garnering two Grammy Awards. As an interpreter of medieval, Renaissance, and baroque repertoire, he has appeared at festivals worldwide and has been featured on national and international radio. Trained at Indiana University’s Early Music Institute and the University of Maryland, he taught at the University of Delaware and DePauw University. Jay is now Associate Professor of Voice at Kent State University.
Quire Cleveland presents exquisite vocal exhibit of Flemish Renaissance Polyphony (September 26)

by Daniel Hathaway

On Friday evening, September 26 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Cleveland Heights, Ross W. Duffin led the 22 professional singers of Quire Cleveland in a splendid survey of music by fifteenth and sixteenth-century composers who were born in the region we now call Belgium.

In other hands, the program, titled “The Flower of Flanders: Masterpieces of Renaissance Polyphony,” might have been like sitting through a fact-filled lecture in a music history course. In Duffins’s case, it turned out to be more like visiting a beautifully-curated, special exhibit in an art museum, perhaps one where the sixteen “pictures” on the walls, like something out of Harry Potter, came alive and sang to you as you approached them, each revealing the distinct personalities of their creators as well as the surprising range of their individual musical styles.

Most of those composers — DuFay, Ockeghem, Josquin, de la Rue, Isaac, Mouton, Obrecht, Brumel, Willaert, Gombert, Arcadelt, Clement, de Rore, de Monte, de Wert and Lassus — didn’t hang around Flanders for long, but found employment at the Vatican and in the courts of wealthy patrons throughout Europe. All were masters of the rigorous counterpoint that provides the bones for their compositions, but they were also very good at fleshing them out with alluring — or at least highly expressive — music.

For example, the opening work, Guillaume DuFay’s *Nuper rosarum flores*, written for the dedication of Brunelleschi’s dome for the cathedral in Florence in 1436, uses as its underlying structure mathematical ratios similar to those of Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem and the Duomo in Florence, but you’d never know that from the florid, expressive polyphony that Quire so appealingly brought to life on Friday.
The following work, Josquin Desprez’s *Gaude virgo*, was sprightly and syncopated, while Pierre de la Rue’s *Plorer, gemier* was remarkably consonant in spite of its anguished text. A second lament, Henricus Isaac’s *Quis dabit capiti meo aquam*, a grief-filled *tombeau* to Lorenzo de’ Medici, jerked the listener about with strange juxtapositions of chords.

Jean Mouton’s *Nesciens mater* concealed its namesake plainchant in a beautiful web of strict polyphony, while Jacob Obrecht’s festive *Laudes Christo* — a standout — explored the whole of Quire’s vocal range.

Having traveled half-way around this fascinating sound gallery, we were surprised by the sudden appearance of a virtual Renaissance flash-mob which had assembled to sing Antoine Brumel’s *Kyrie* from the *Missa Et ecce terrae motus*. Quire shuffled its lineup for this extraordinary piece, which Brumel wrote for twelve separate voice parts. The effect when those dozen voices begin imitating each other at close time intervals was thrilling, and the contrast where Brumel wrote blocks of music for upper and lower voices answering each other was refreshing.

Regrouping after intermission, Duffin led Quire through the rest of this rich sound gallery: Adrian Willaert’s *Vurbum bonum*, with its pungent cross-relations; the elegant, descending melodic sequences of *Musae Jovis*, Nicholas Gombert’s memorial to Josquin; Jaacob Arcadelt’s mellifluous setting of *Pater noster*, and Jacobus Clemens non Papa’s gorgeous *Ego flos campi*.

Two one-on-a-voice pieces, Cipriano de Rore’s 7-voice *Descendi in hortum meum*, and Philippe de Monte’s 8-part *O suavitas et dulcedo* gave Quire the opportunity to demonstrate the high quality of its individual singers.

The last stop on this walkaround featured Giaches de Wert’s madrigalesque and remarkably chromatic (for its time) *Adesto dolori meo*, followed by the final piece, Roland de Lassus’s lovely ode to his chosen art, *Musica dei donum*.

Quire, which becomes more impressive with each of its concerts, sang this demanding, 75-minute program with flawless vocal technique, layering complicated polyphonic lines with admirable transparency and producing an even, blended tone no matter what the texture.

Conducting with an unerring sense of pace, Duffin shaped each piece lovingly and drew a wide range of dynamics from the ensemble. He was also a helpful, silent docent for the Franco-Flemish exhibition; his engaging program notes were scholarly enough, to be sure, but humanized with charming personal details about the composers.
At the end, the good-sized audience indicated that sixteen pieces weren’t quite enough, and Quire sent them home with a strong, clear performance of Josquin’s famous *Ave Maria*. Had there been a second encore, the crickets chirping merrily outside the window by my pew would surely have suggested Josquin’s *El grillo*.

The program will be repeated on Saturday, September 27 at 7:30 pm at Mary Queen of Peace Church in Old Brooklyn and on Sunday, September 28 at 4:00 pm at Historic St. Peter Church in downtown Cleveland.

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