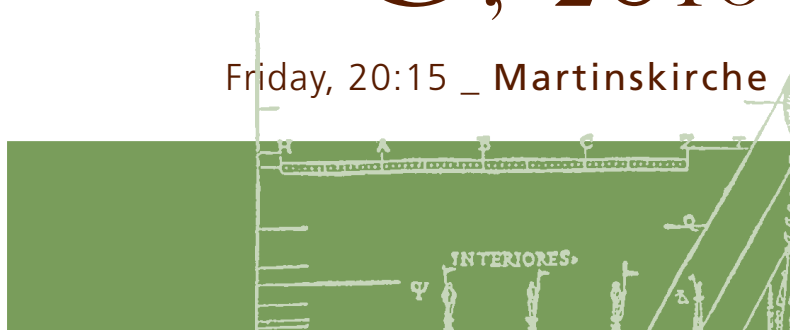
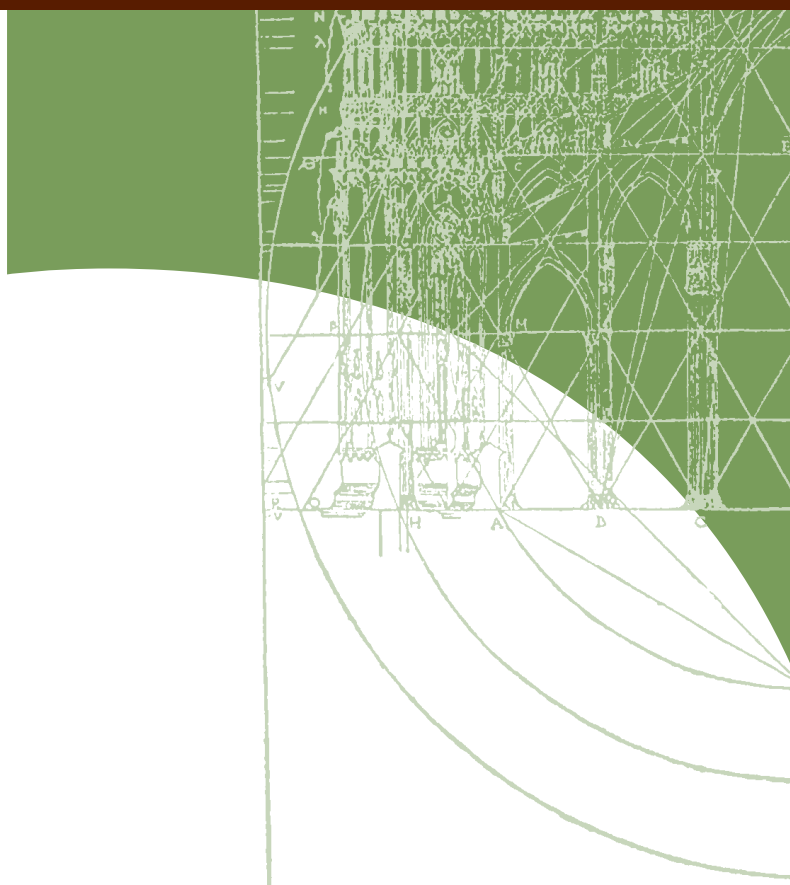


April 8, 2016

Friday, 20:15 _ Martinskirche



Ensemble Cantus Figuratus
Schola Cantorum Basiliensis
Dominique Vellard _ conductor



Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Concert

Gaude flore virginali.
Renaissance Motet Cycles
between Devotion and Liturgy

Martinskirche _ Martinskirchplatz 4, 4051 Basel

Free admission / collection

Information Birgit Knab _ fon +41 _61_264 57 46 _ birgit.knab@fhnw.ch

Gaude flore virginali

Renaissance Motet Cycles

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Programme

- 1. Loyset Compère, from the cycle *Hodie nobis de Virgine*** (source: I-Mfd, Librone 1, 84v-93r)
 - Hodie nobis de Virgine (loco introitus)
 - Genuit puerpera regem (loco offertorii)
 - Sanctus / Verbum caro (loco sanctus)
 - O admirabile commercium (loco Deo gratias)
 - 2. Franchino Gaffurio, from the cycle *Salve Mater Salvatoris*** (source: I-Mfd, Librone 1, 84v-93r)
 - Salve Mater Salvatoris / Salve Verbi sacra parens
 - Salve decus virginum / Tu convallis humilis
 - 3. Anonymous, *Gaude flore virginali*** (source: D-Mbs, Mus. ms. 3154, 38v-43r)
 - Gaude flore virginali
 - Gaude sponsa cara Dei
 - Gaude splendens vas virtutum
 - Gaude nexu voluntatis (loco offertorii)
 - Gaude mater miserorum (loco sanctus)
 - Gaude virgo mater pura (loco agnus)
- [*intermission*]
- 4. Anonymous, from the cycle *Gaudeamus omnes*** (source: *Motetti C*, Venice: O. Petrucci, 1504)
 - Gaude quia tui Nati
 - Gaude que post ipsum
 - 5. Anonymous, from the cycle *Natus sapientia*** (source: D-Mbs, Mus. ms. 3154, 43v-48r)
 - Natus sapientia (loco introitus)
 - Hora prima ductus est (loco patrem [*scil.* credo])
 - Ihesus Dominus exspiravit (post elevationem)
 - 6. Gaspar van Weerbeke, *Ave mundi domina*** (source: I-Mfd, Librone 1, 126v-134r)
 - Ave mundi domina
 - Ave mater gloriosa
 - Salve virgo virginum
 - Anima mea liquefacta est
 - Ave regina caelorum / O salutaris hostia
 - Quem terra pontus ethera
 - O virginum preclara
 - Fit porta Christi pervia

Ensemble Cantus Figuratus

Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Perrine Devillers, Grace Newcombe, Yukie Sato_sopranos

Roman Melish, Florencia Menconi_altos

Ozan Karagöz, Akinobu Ôno, Giacomo Schiavo_tenors

Rui Stähelin, Valerio Zanolli_basses

Félix Verry_renaissance violin

Randall Cook, Anna Danilevskaia, Sophia Danilevskaia, Filipa Meneses_renaissance viols

Aki Noda_organ

Dominique Vellard_conductor

Renaissance Motet Cycles

As contemporary chronicler Bernardino Corio remarked, duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza (who reigned in Milan from 1466 until he was murdered in December 1476) “took great delight in song”. For his love of music, and undoubtedly also in order to parade his magnificence in competition with rival rulers, Galeazzo spared no effort in building a musical chapel of unprecedented size and quality. He recruited the best singers and composers he could find in Italy and abroad, sending his agents to scout out talents as far as Flanders and the Kingdom of Naples. In the mid 1470s his chapel counted more than thirty singers, mostly Northerners, who often followed their master during his frequent movements between Milan and various castles in the duchy (Galeazzo’s astounding travelling court included, among many others, six cooks, a jester, ten professional hand-ball players, forty dog-handlers and thirty staff in charge of the hunts and the hawks).

As a result of Galeazzo’s extravagant patronage, the ducal chapel became an unparalleled compositional workshop, where such musicians as Loyset Compère (c.1445–1518) and Gaspar van Weerbeke (c.1445–1516) could experiment with new stylistic solutions. After Galeazzo’s tragic death in 1476, the activity of the Sforza chapel continued on a more modest scale, to resume its splendour when Galeazzo’s younger brother Ludovico il Moro seized the power. In the 1490s Ludovico, the patron of Leonardo da Vinci and Donato Bramante, promoted, together with his wife Beatrice

d’Este, an exuberant court-life and embarked on ambitious politico-diplomatic plans (which eventually led to disaster). It was in Ludovico’s time that Franchino Gaffurio (1451–1522), a distinguished music theorist and chapel master at the Milanese Duomo, began supervising the preparation of the large format manuscripts, commonly known as “Libroni” (big books), which partially preserve this repertoire. It is thanks to Gaffurio that the music of the Sforza chapel was not lost for history, and for our enjoyment.

Besides such pieces as Masses, Magnificats, and lamentations, Gaffurio included in the Libroni a series of special compositions that he labelled *motetti missales*. According to current hypotheses, these cycles of motets, composed during the 1470s–1490s by Compère, Weerbeke and Gaffurio himself, were performed during the celebration of a low Mass (*missa bassa, stille Messe*), as a sort of devotional soundtrack to the rite, which covered the words whispered by the priest and *de facto* substituted items such as the introit (the beginning antiphon), the Gloria in excelsis, and so on. The apex of the cycle corresponded to the Elevation of the consecrated Host: words of adoration and supplication addressed to the Real Presence of Christ were set in long-held chords (embellished in tonight’s performance according to reconstructed historical practice), which dramatically interrupted the flow of polyphony.

It is a matter of debate among scholars whether the presumed taste of Duke Galeazzo Sforza for

tuneful melodies and dancelike rhythms exerted a direct influence, or the ultramontane musicians were inspired by local musical idioms. In fact, most of the motet cycles we will hear tonight speak a different language from the contrapuntal lingua franca used by contemporary Franco-Flemish composers: musical phrases are short, the text is clearly articulated, and lively rhythmic and textural contrasts are prominent.

For all their originality, the *motetti missales* are, however, part of a larger contemporary tendency to gather motets in cycles and copy them in manuscripts (or print them) as such. Cycles such as the anonymous *Gaudeamus omnes* in our programme might have been conceived for performance in contexts other than the Mass, such as during different offices or confraternal devotions, or for some form of pious entertainment. A project started in 2014 at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis aims to explore this repertoire and to study its compositional design, the circumstances for its performance, and the cultural context in which it was produced. The present concert, organized on the occasion of the international conference “Motet Cycles between Devotion and Liturgy”, will offer the audience the opportunity of listening to some of these cycles. A rare opportunity indeed, as, in spite of their interest and sheer beauty, these compositions are infrequently performed, and most of them have never been recorded.

The Programme

Loyset Compère’s *Hodie nobis de Virgine* cycle was composed in all likelihood for Christmas time: its text, compiled, like those of other Milanese cycles, from different sources, insists on the subject of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Many well-known passages from the liturgy of Christmastide are included, from the responsory *Quem vidistis pastores* to the antiphon *O admirabile commercium*. The recurring word *hodie* (today) in the first and third motets invites to an immersive meditation, whereas other parts of the text highlight the role of the Virgin Mary. Compère’s texture changes continuously from transparent duets to more intricate *tutti* sections; now subtle, now sharp metric contrasts confer the piece a unique animation. The

Sanctus deserves special attention: forerun by the remarkably compelling finale of the previous motet, it starts with a more spacious and melismatic polyphony, which progressively leads to a dense *tutti* texture; the following section for the Elevation (“*Verbum caro factum est*”, the Word became flesh) consists of an extratemporal series of majestic chords; heaven and earth are united for a moment—then the pulse resumes and the motet concludes with an imposing cadence.

Franchino Gaffurio’s *Salve Mater Salvatoris* is one of various motet cycles dedicated to the blessed Virgin: Gaffurio sets, with few litanic interpolations, the texts of two rhymed prayers dedicated to the Mother of Christ. Devotion to the *Madonna* was a key element in fifteenth-century Milanese piety, and the Sforza were no exception (many members of the family, including dukes Galeazzo, Gian Galeazzo and Ludovico, bore “*Maria*” as a second name). In the selection from the cycle we will hear, characteristic traits of Gaffurio’s style become apparent: a melody is often clearly perceivable, as if floating in the top voice above the contrapuntal fabric of the lower parts; brief imitative points alternate with insistent sequences, in a mosaic of motivic permutations; and at times the texture suddenly congeals into passages of urgent homorhythmic declamation.

The first part of the concert ends with the performance of *Gaude flore virginali*, an anonymous cycle copied in a manuscript from Munich. The structure of the cycle reflects that of the *motetti missales*. The connection between the Munich manuscript and the Milanese environment, however, is still obscure, and the style of this composition has very few parallels in the extant music from the period. Textures are denser than in the cycles by Compère, Weerbeke and Gaffurio, and there is essentially no space for the compositional devices usually associated with the so-called “Milanese style” (duets, brief imitations, metrically and rhythmically contrasting sections, clear text declamation). Free counterpoint predominates, and the vocal lines are imbued with an inexplicably deep pathos.

A selection from another anonymous cycle, *Gaudeamus omnes*, opens the second part of tonight’s performance. The cycle was published in

Venice by Ottaviano Petrucci, the pioneer of modern music printing, in his collection *Motetti C* of 1504. The text, which comprises the introit *Gaud-eamus* and a Marian prayer often copied in fifteenth-century Books of Hours, complements that of *Gaude flore virginali* in extolling the joys of Mary. Particularly noteworthy are the prolonged sequences, combined with scalar movements, in the second half of the motet *Gaude que post ipsum*: their jubilant melismas and abstract geometry may be interpreted as a sonic depiction of the music that resounds in the “celestial palace” of heaven (“in celesti palatio”).

The motets from the cycle *Natus sapientia* introduce us to a completely different spiritual atmosphere, that of the meditation on Christ’s Passion. The text is taken from the Short Hours of the Cross, a devotional office which was performed individually or collectively, for instance by the members of a confraternity. The sombre and intricate polyphony of this cycle has its emotional climax in the motet *Ihesus Dominus exspiravit*, destined to be sung after the Elevation. The death of Jesus after his last cry, the lance piercing his side, the ensuing earthquake, and the darkness which shrouds the Calvary form the object of this pensive polyvocal meditation.

The last piece of our programme, **Weerbeke’s** cycle of *motetti missales Ave mundi domina*, fully displays the superb talents of this composer. The hyper-composite text includes stanzas from various hymns and sequences, as well as passionate passages from the Song of Songs (*Anima mea liquefacta est*). Weerbeke sets it combining exemplary syntactic clarity with forward-looking expressive strength. The prevailing homorhythmic texture, with its syllabic declamation, is occasionally interrupted by elegant contrapuntal segments, and Weerbeke demonstrates a special gift for creating luminous moments of musical transcendence. The rich palette of techniques used here by Duke Galeazzo’s cherished “Gaspar” epitomizes all that makes this repertoire unique, and most aptly concludes tonight’s musical journey.

Daniele V. Filippi

*“Having for some time
before now taken greater
delight in music
and in singing than in
any other pleasure, we have
put effort into having
singers to make a chapel,
and up to now we have
brought a good number
of singers, from beyond
the Alps and from various
countries, and have begun
a distinguished and worthy
chapel.”*

Galeazzo Maria Sforza
January 1473

Texts and translations

HODIE nobis de virgine
Christus nasci dignatus est.
Hic presens testatur dies currens
per anni circulum
quod solus a sede Patris mundi salus advenerit.
Christus natus est nobis,
venite adoremus!
Parvulus filius hodie natus est nobis
et vocabitur Deus fortis
et vocabitur nomen eius Emanuel.
Venite gentes et adorete Dominum
quia per ipsum omnia facta sunt.

Genuit puerpera regem
quem laudant angeli throni et dominationes.

Christe redemptor omnium
ex Patre Patris unice
solus ante principium
natus ineffabiliter

tu lumen tu splendor Patris
tu spes perennis omnium
intende quas fundunt preces
tui per orbem famuli.

Sanctus sanctus sanctus
Dominus Deus sabaoth.
Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua.
Verbum caro factum est et habitavit
in nobis et vidimus gloriam eius.

O admirabile commercium!
Humani generis creator ex virgine nasci
dignatus est.
Christus natus est nobis, per quem
salus eterna mundo apparuit.
Beatus auctor seculi
servile corpus induit
ut carne carnem liberans
ne perderet quos condidit.

Today for us Christ deigned to be born of a Virgin. This present day bears witness, running through the cycle of the year, that the world's unique salvation has come to us from the seat of the Father.

Christ is born for us: come let us adore him. A little boy is born for us today: and he will be called Mighty God, and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Come, people, and adore the Lord, for through him everything was made.

In giving birth she bore the King, whom Angels, Thrones and Dominations praise.

O Christ the redeemer of all, uniquely from and of the Father, alone born ineffably before the beginning.

You, light, you, splendour of the Father, you eternal hope of all: receive the prayers offered by your servants throughout the globe.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heavens and earth are full of your glory.
The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us:
and we saw His glory.

O wonderful exchange!
The creator of the human race today deigned to be born of a Virgin.
Christ was born for us, through whom eternal salvation appeared to the world.
The blessed originator of the ages assumed our servile body, so that freeing flesh by his flesh, he might not lose those whom he founded.

SALVE Mater Salvatoris,
vas electum, vas honoris,
vas celestis gratie,

ab eterno vas provisum,
vas insigne, vas excisum
manu sapientie.

Salve Verbi sacra parens,
flos de spina spina carens,
flos spineti gloria.

Nos spinetum, nos peccati
spina sumus cruentati,
sed tu spine nescia.

Salve decus virginum,
mediatrix hominum,
salutis puerpera,

myrtus temperantie,
rosa patientie,
nardus odorifera,

porta clausa fons hortorum,
cella custos unguentorum,
cella pigmentaria,

cinnamomi calamum,
mirram thus et balsamum
superans fragrantia.

Tu convallis humilis,
terra non arabilis,
que fructum parturiit,

flos campi convallium
singulare liliium,
Christus ex te prodiit.

Tu celestis paradisis,
liganusque non incisus,
vaporans dulcedinem.

Tu candoris et decoris
tu dulcoris et odoris
habens plenitudinem.

Hail, mother of the Savior, chosen vessel, vessel
of honor, vessel of celestial grace.

Vessel prepared from eternity, vessel distinguished
and shaped by the hand of Wisdom.

Hail, sacred parent of the Word, flower among
thorns but free from thorns, glory of the thicket.

We are the thicket, we are made bloody by the
thorn of sin, but you did not know this thorn.

Hail, splendor of virgins, Mediatrix of men,
Bearer of salvation.

Myrtle of temperance, Rose of patience,
Fragrant spikenard.

Closed gate, source of the gardens, chamber
and preserver of unguents, chamber of healing
ointments,

surpassing in fragrance the branch of cinnamon,
myrrh, frankincense, and balsam.

O humble valley, soil not to be ploughed that
nevertheless bore fruit; flower of the field,

singular lily of the valleys, Christ was born
from you.

You are a heavenly paradise and uncut frankin-
cense, fuming forth sweetness.

You possess a plenitude of radiance and beauty,
of sweetness and fragrance.

GAUDE flore virginali
honoreque speciali
transcendis splendiferum
angelorum principatum
et sanctorum decoratum
dignitate numerum.

Gaude sponsa cara Dei

nam ut lux clara diei
solis datur lumine
sic tu facis orbem vere
tue pacis resplendere
lucis plenitudine.

Gaude splendens vas virtutum

cuius sedes est ad nutum
tota celi curia,
te benignam, te felicem,
Ihesu dignam genitricem
veneratur in gloria.

Gaude nexu voluntatis

et amplexu caritatis
iuncta sis altissimo
ut ad votum consequaris
quidquid virgo postularis
a Ihesu dulcissimo.

Gaude mater miserorum

quia Pater primiorum
dabit te colentibus
congruentem hic mercedem
et felici poli sedem
sursum in celestibus.

Domine Ihesu, propitius esto mihi peccatori.

Gaude humilis beata
corpore glorificata
meruisti maxima
fore tante dignitatis
ut sis sancte Trinitatis
sessione proxima.

Gaude virgo mater pura

certa manens et secura
per hec tua gaudia

Rejoice! In the virginal flower and special honor
you surpass the magnificent host of the angels
and the multitude of saints adorned with wor-
thiness.

Rejoice, dear bride of God, for as the bright light
of day is given by the lamp of the sun, so you
truly make the world shine in the full light of
your peace.

Rejoice, splendid vessel of virtue: the whole court
of heaven is at your command and venerates you
in glory, you, kind and blessed, worthy mother
of Jesus.

Rejoice, for you are joined to the Most High by
the conjunction of will and the embrace of love,
to such an extent that you obtain from sweetest
Jesus whatever you, o Virgin, are asked.

Rejoice, mother of the poor, for the Father
of graces will give those who worship you
appropriate reward here and a seat
in the blessed heaven up high in the heavens.

Lord Jesus, be merciful to me a sinner.

Rejoice, humble fortunate, glorified in your
body, you earned to become the greatest,
with such dignity that you sit closest to
the Holy Trinity.

Rejoice, pure virgin Mother, remaining certain
and secure that these joys of yours will neither

non cessabunt nec decrescent
sed durabunt et florescent
per eterna secula.

Exaltata es, sancta Dei genitrix, super choros
angelorum ad celestia regna:
intercede pro nobis.

GAUDE **quia tui Nati**
quem dolebas mortem pati
fulget resurrectio.

Gaude Christo ascendente
et in celum te vidente
motu fertur proprio.

Gaude que post ipsum scandis
et est honor tibi grandis
in celi palatio

ubi fructus ventris tui
per te detur nobis frui
in perhenni gaudio.
Amen.

NATUS **sapientia veritas divina**
Deus homo captus est hora matutina
a suis discipulis.

Hora prima ductus est ad Pilatum
falsis testimoniis multum accusatum
in collo percuciant manibus ligatum
vultum eius conspuunt, lumen celi gratum.

Ihesus Dominus expiravit
Heli clamans animam Patri commendavit
latus eius lancea miles perforavit
terra contremuit et sol obscuravit.

end nor decrease, but will last and flourish
through eternal ages.

You, holy mother of God, are exalted above
the choirs of angels to the heavenly kingdoms:
intercede for us!

Rejoice, for the resurrection of thy Son now
shines, whose death thou mourned.

Rejoice, as Christ ascends, and, in thy sight, is
carried into heaven by his own strength.

Rejoice, thou who riseth after him; to thee great
honor is due in the palace of heaven,

where may it be granted us, through thee, to en-
joy the fruit of thy womb in eternal rejoicing.
Amen.

The wisdom of the Son, and truth divine beside,
God and man surprised was even at the morning
tide:
His known disciples left Him [...]

They our Lord to Pilate led at the hour of prime,
And by witnesses full false accused much of crime,
His hands tied they beat Him with fists in great
dispite,
They upon his face do spit the heaven's grateful
light.

Jesus Lord His spirit forth did send:
Crying Eli and His soul to Father did commend:
With a lance a soldier did pierce through
His tender side:
The earth trembled and the sun His shining light
did hide.

AVE mundi domina
et celi regina
Mater Dei integra
roxa sine spina.

Tua sit conceptio
nostra medicina
et tua nativitas
via matutina.

Tua presentatio
nostra sit oblatio
et annuntiatio
et purificatio
nostra sit purgatio.

Tua sit assumptio
nostra salutis via,
tu nos tecum astrue
in vera sophia,

que regnas cum Filio,
o clemens, o pia,
fac nos tecum vivere,
o dulcis Maria.

Ave mater gloriosa
virga Jese spetiosa
ex regali stirpe nata
virgo semper illibata

stella maris appellata
gaude pia et decora
nos exaudi sine mora
et pro nobis semper ora.

Salve virgo virginum
salve lumen luminum
ave salus hominum.

Mater Christi
peperisti
regem regum hominum.

Gaude pura
spes futura
sperantium.

Mortis hora / dominum exora
ne damnemur in eternum.

Hail, mistress of the world and queen of heaven,
Mother of God unspoilt, rose without thorn

May your conception be our medicine
and your birth our path of dawn.

May your presentation to the Temple
be the offering of our own; the annunciation
of your motherhood and your purification
afterward be our cleansing;

your ascent to heaven, the path of our salvation.
Uphold us with you in true wisdom.

Reigning with your son, compassionate
and kind, let us live with you, sweet Mary.

Hail, glorious mother, splendid shoot of Jesse,
born of royal stock, Virgin ever intact;

You who are called the star of the sea rejoice,
you good one full of grace hear us now
without delay and ever pray for us.

Hail, virgin of virgins and light of lights.
Hail, humankind's salvation.

Mother of Christ, you bore the king of kings
of humankind.

Be glad, o pure, hope of the hopeful.

In the hour of death entreat the Lord
that we be not damned in eternity.

Speciosa dux errantium
gloriosa vox letantium
in hac valle sis te laudantium
consolatrix apud Patrem et Filium.

Beautiful leader of the lost, glorious voice
of the joyous, with the Father and the Son
be the solace of those who praise you
in this vale of tears.

Anima mea liquefacta est ut dilectus meus
locutus est; quesivi illum et non inveni, vocavi et
non respondit mihi. Invenerunt me custodes
civitatis et percusserunt me et vulneraverunt me;
tulerunt pallium meum custodes murorum.
Filie Hierusalem, nuntiate dilecto meo quia
amore languo.

My soul failed when my beloved spake: I sought
him but I could not find him; I called him but
he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went
about the city found me, they smote me, they
wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away
my veil from me. O daughters of Jerusalem, tell
my beloved that I am sick with love.

Ave regina celorum
ave domina angelorum
salve radix sancta
ex qua mundo lux est orta.

Hail, queen of heaven, hail, mistress of angels,
holy root from whom the light for the world is
born.

Salve gloriosa
super omnes speciosa
vale valde decora
et pro nobis semper Christum exora.

Hail, glorious one, more than all magnificent,
greetings, greatly graceful one, entreat Christ
for us always.

O salutaris hostia
que celi pandis hostium
bella premunt hostilia:
da robur, fer auxilium.

O salvation's Host who opens heaven's gate,
hostile wars oppress us: lend strength, grant
assistance.

Quem terra pontus ethera
colunt adorant predicant
trinam regentem machinam
claustrum marie baiulat
(secreta que non noverat).

The God whom earth, and sea, and sky
adore, and laud, and magnify,
who o'er their threefold fabric reigns,
the Virgin's spotless womb contains.

Cui luna sol et omnia
deserviunt per tempora
perfusa celi gratia
gestant puelle viscera.

The God whose will by moon, and sun,
and all things in due course is done,
is borne upon a Maiden's breast,
by fullest heavenly grace possessed.

Beata mater munere
cuius supernus Artifex
mundum pugillo continens
ventris sub arca clausus est.

How blest that Mother, in whose shrine
the great Artificer Divine,
whose hand contains the earth and sky,
vouchsafed, as in His ark, to lie.

Beata celi nuntio
fecunda Sancto Spiritu
desideratus gentibus
cuius per alvum fusus est.

Blest, in the message Gabriel brought;
blest, by the work the Spirit wrought;
from whom the great Desire of earth
took human flesh and human birth.

O virginum preclara

Maria sanctissima
tuum factorem
redemptorem seculi.

O gloriosa domina
excelsa supra sidera
qui te creavit provide
lactasti sacro ubere.

Tu redis almo germine
intrent ut astra flebiles
celi fenestra facta es.

Tu regis alti ianua
et porta lucis fulgida;
vitam datam per virginem
gentes redempte plaudite.

Domus pudici pectoris
templum repente fidei:
verbo concepit filium
Jesum Christum.

Fit porta Christi pervia

refulta plena gratia
transitque rex et permanet
clausa ut fuit per secula.

Genus superni luminis
processit aula virginis,
sponsus redemptor conditor
sue gigas ecclesie.

Honor matris et gaudium
immensa spes credentium
per atra mortis pocula
resolvit nostra crimina.

Maria mater gratie
mater misericordie
tu nos ab hoste protege
et hora mortis suscipe.

Gloria tibi Domine
qui natus es de virgine
cum Patre, Sancto Spiritu
in sempiterna secula. Amen.

*We are grateful to the Maja Sacher Stiftung
and the Freiwillige Akademische Gesellschaft Basel
for their support.*

MAJA SACHER STIFTUNG

M. Sacher

Renowned virgin, holiest Mary,
[you housed] your maker [and] redeemer
of the ages.

Lady glorious, excelling the stars,
he who created you with providence
was suckled at your holy breast.

[What Eve in sorrow took,] You returned in a
growing shoot; and that the afflicted mortals could
enter heaven, you were made the heaven's window.

You door of the highest king and gate of the
shining light. Redeemed people, applaud
the life given by a virgin.

The house of a modest breast was suddenly
made the temple of God. Through the word,
she conceived the Son, Jesus Christ.

The gate of Christ becomes accessible, sustained
by grace: the king passes and it remains closed
as it had been throughout the ages.

The offspring of supernal Light, he proceeded
through the virgin's hall; the spouse, savior,
and creator, his church's giant.

His mother's honour and joy, great hope
of the faithful; in death's dark cup
he dissolved our crimes.

Mary, mother of grace, mother of mercy,
protect us from the enemy and raise us up
in the hour of death.

Glory to you, o Lord, born from the Virgin, with
the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever-eternal
ages. Amen.

*English translations adapted from Nicholas Robertson,
Nolan Gasser, John Hetland, William Mabrt, Ruskin
Watts, J. M. Neale, and from The Primer, or Office of
the Blessed Virgin Marie, in Latin and English (Ant-
werp: Arnold Conings, 1599).*

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