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Boston Early Music Festival

PRESENTS

Flanders Recorder Quartet

Bart Spanhove, Joris Van Goethem,
Tom Beets & Paul Van Loey, *recorders*

Cécile Kempnaers, *soprano*

A Song for all Seasons

Welcome

Ashton's Maske

Hugh Ashton (ca. 1485–1558)

Spring

This merry pleasant spring
When May is in his prime
Cuckoo

Anonymous (16th c.)

Anonymous (16th c.)

Richard Nicholson (1563–1639)

Interludio

Ballo Granduca

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562–1621)

Autumn

Capricio & Volta du Tambour
The darcke is my delight
The peacefull westerne winde
Meditation-Fire

Anonymous (16th c.)

Anonymous (16th c.)

Thomas Campion (1567–1620)

Pieter Campo (b. 1980)

Conclusio

Upon La mi re

Thomas Preston (d. after 1559)

Intermission

Summer

Can she excuse my wrongs
Sorrow come
Madame d'amours
Tourdion
Pastime with good company

John Dowland (1563–1626)
Dowland
Anonymous (16th c.)
Anonymous (16th c.)
Henry VIII (1509–1547)

Interludio

Ut re mi fa sol la

Robert Parsons (ca. 1535–1571/2)

Winter

Sweet was the song
Sweet was the song
Czaldy Waldy
Lullay, Lullay

Anonymous, arranged by Thomas Hamond (d. 1662)
Anonymous (16th c.)
Anonymous
Anonymous (14th c.)

Friday, February 23, 2018 at 8pm
First Church in Cambridge, Congregational
11 Garden Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts

The Flanders Recorder Quartet appears
by arrangement with Sempre Musica Management.

Program subject to change.



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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

Changing times of the year, the four seasons... from the beginning of civilization people have thought about these eternal changes and many artists have realized their own visual and aural interpretations of them. We undoubtedly experience the seasons differently from our ancestors, less extreme, with our well-heated houses in the winter, the coolness of air conditioning in the summer, and the protection that cars, buses, and trains offer from heavy showers in March or storms in November. People in the Renaissance had a very different experience.

The changing seasons had consequences for everything: for work, for travel, for food that varied every season, for the rituals that belonged to each one of those phases. Visual art from Medieval and Renaissance times allows us to see the differences between the various times of the year, a visual aesthetic that was shared only by a privileged few at that time.

Moreover the fascination for the changing seasons was not reserved only for the visual arts, as they are also prominent themes in literature and music. This program offers some instrumental examples from Flanders and the Netherlands, but also examples in which great English Renaissance poetry forms part of works of music, in the so-called consort songs. We encounter texts by Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, in his time more famous than the bard from Stratford-upon-Avon, in beautiful settings by some of their contemporaries.

The “Low Countries” and England all provide inspiration for *A Song for All Seasons*, a varied program of music from the Renaissance for recorders and soprano with works by composers such as Richard Nicholson, Robert Parsons, John Dowland, Henry VIII, and more.

PROGRAM NOTES

A program consisting of music based on the four seasons excites our imagination. For Flanders Recorder Quartet too it is a lovely challenge to offer a program, apart from our arrangement and performance of Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, that finds its inspiration in the seasons: *A Song for all Seasons*. Harmonious sonnets are not our base here, but we are drawing from the richness of Flemish, Dutch, and English musical culture.

All instrumental interludes in this program are built on either a bass or melodic line that keeps repeating itself. Throughout music history such a pattern has inspired composers and been very enjoyable for listeners. Hugh Ashton, for example, stands out because of his energetic variations in which the inner voices frisk and frolic as they please. It is hard to believe this is sixteenth-century music. Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, the Dutch Orpheus, offers us astonishing virtuosic musical patterns based on a bass ostinato. *Upon La mi re* is our absolute favorite: when analyzing we discover the piece to be full of Fibonacci numbers: the upper voice in 377 notes, intervals with 5, 2, or 1 minor seconds, musical forms of 3 items

The Cambridge Society for Early Music

Concerts in 2018

Explorations



March 15–19

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only. Here we hear a thinking composer at work, striving for the ideal aesthetic proportions and reaching a perfect structure through his use of these Fibonacci numbers. *Ut re mi fa sol la* by Robert Parsons is astounding as well. The upper voice is reminiscent of a very first recorder lesson in which one and the same pattern is repeated again and again. What is happening in the lower voices is a bizarre contrast: an unheard-of delicate rhythmical contrapuntal interplay between three highly agile voices daring each other to dialogue.

Between these interludes each season presents itself. In the same way in which Vivaldi begins his masterpiece, festive, sprightly, dancing, in a good mood and with its own program, we try to reach this ideal through the consort song, this strongly appreciated English musical form. With a sense of humor we render lighthearted scenes from nature: bird songs, especially the cuckoo's, and the lark's warble giving spring a cheerful welcome.

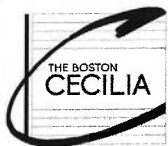
From spring we tumble into autumn, quite a different season with quite a different story. It is swelling with contrasts: people are dancing until sweet western winds usher in European autumns. Dark and gloomy days arrive, with no indication of what the future will bring. Fear of stormy weather clashes with the quietude of autumnal nights. All of this finds its expression in *Meditation-Fire*, the breathtakingly beautiful composition by young Flemish composer Pieter Campo.

During the intermission one might reflect on what summer means to us. Scalding heat also means the delicious feel of holidays. We are free from work, calming down, having a meal with friends, going out to dance. We enjoy company (*Pastime*), sipping the best Belgian beer or a nice French wine (*Tourdion*). Is not this the time to love more and love better, even though the pain of farewell can be terrible as well?

Winter's atmosphere is special indeed. For Vivaldi, a cozy gathering around the hearth in strong contrast to bitterly cold shivering caused by icy winds is an inspiration to transform the chattering of teeth into musical form. We as an ensemble are much more focused on the shortest days of the year and we opt for music with minor scales, showing us the darkness of the days before Christmas. In contrast to Vivaldi we do not finish with a climax towards the end of the seasons. For us no speed skaters helter-skelter taking risks, no forceful northern winds blowing us into a virtuoso finale. Our choice is the compelling English carol *Lullay*, conspicuous for its expressive cantabile and lovely simplicity, a choice in which the inner beauty of this music is central. That is what we wish to infect you with, and move you and have you enjoy the power and beauty of a recorder consort. The sweet and melancholic sounds of the recorder provide something like paradise on earth.

We are extremely grateful that since 1993 we have enjoyed the privilege to be your guests, in both Boston and New York. America will stay in our memories, for ever and ever!

—Bart, Joris, Paul, and Tom



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Colin Lynch, Conductor

Sunday, October 22, 2017 at 3:00 P.M. All Saints Parish, Brookline

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Daniel Mahoney, Conductor

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Sunday, December 10, 2017 at 3:00 P.M. All Saints Parish, Brookline

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George Case, Conductor

Sunday, March 11, 2018 at 3:00 P.M. All Saints Parish, Brookline

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MARCH 24, 2018, *7:00 PM

Music for a May Evening
MAY 12, 2018, 8:00 PM

*NOTE START TIME

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Flanders Recorder Quartet, the ambassadors of the recorder

Bart Spanhove, Joris Van Goethem, Tom Beets, and Paul Van Loey

The Flanders Recorder Quartet celebrated 30 years of existence in 2017 and in that time has evolved into an ensemble that is one of the best in the world. Its accomplishments are bursting at the seams with titles such as Cultural Ambassador for Flanders and Festival Star at the Flanders Festival, 2500 concerts, 52 different countries, worldwide workshops, 24 CDs, and that 30-year anniversary: the figures say it all.

For over 30 years, Flanders Recorder Quartet has stood for ingenuity, originality, creativity, amazement, and the joy of music making. The quartet has become an integral part of the early music and chamber music scenes. The ensemble is a welcome guest at leading festivals such as Tokyo, New York, Salzburg, Helsinki, Paris, Geneva, Boston, Vancouver, Singapore, Taipei, and Mexico City. Its members have made groundbreaking recordings for labels such as Archiv/Deutsche Grammophon, Harmonia Mundi, Ricercar, and Opus III. Since 2003 the ensemble has worked together intensively and exclusively with the German label Aeolus.

The Flanders Recorder Quartet, better known as "Vier op 'n Rij" in Belgium and the Netherlands, brings an instrument that was disregarded for two hundred years back to the forefront in all its glory. In an appealing manner, the ensemble wins over the music-lover with its extraordinary assortment of 150 instruments, which turns every concert into an unforgettable event. Among the collection are copies of recorders based on illustrations by Sebastian Virdung (1511) and others of instruments that belonged to Henry VIII. They were built on commission by expert makers such as Adrian Brown in the Netherlands, Tom Prescott in the United States, and Fred Morgan in Australia. Splendid instruments include the Baroque great-basses (up to seven and a half feet high!), which were developed by Friedrich von Huene in Boston. These extremely rare instruments are a treat both for the eye and the ear.

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Music Director

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David Hoose, Music Director

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Dvořák Piano Trio in F minor, Op. 65

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The members of the Flanders Recorder Quartet are regularly invited to renowned Early Music courses in Europe, Asia, and America. Additionally, these pedagogical activities have led to the publication of the book *The Finishing Touch of Ensemble Playing*. Since 1987, the ensemble can look back at 1001 unforgettable experiences and an exceptional gratitude to the press, audiences, and organizers. "The players swayed and swooned, combining the breathy timbre of a portative organ with the expressive interplay of a fine string quartet..." (Steve Smith, *The New York Times*).

The Flanders Recorder Quartet is without a doubt the most well-known musical export product of Belgium. To quote the *Hawaii Tribune Herald* in 2006: "Belgium is famous and loved for its diamonds, chocolate and waffles; but let us add the Flanders Recorder Quartet to that list!"

Dreaming for many years about new projects, we plan to disband the ensemble in 2018, with positive feelings and at a high point. We look forward to writing articles and books, getting more into research, conducting, and arranging, and having new musical encounters and adventures. We will end our story on December 22, 2018.

Thank you for being here and for welcoming us one last time.

Soprano **Cécile Kempenaers** studied with Mireille Capelle and Rolande van der Paal at the Royal Conservatory of Ghent, Belgium, and later with Margreet Honig in Amsterdam, Ingrid Voermans in Den Haag, and Jutta Schegel in Berlin.



As soloist she has worked with many conductors including Philippe Herreweghe, Marcus Creed, Attilio Cremonesi, and Paul Dombrecht, and with Baroque orchestras such as Collegium Vocale Gent, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Freiburger Barockorkester, and Ensemble 1800, with whom she has also recorded. Ms. Kempenaers has sung in the solo quartet of the contemporary opera *Medea Material* by Pascal Dusapin with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin and Sasha Waltz & Guests Company (with Marcus Creed) at the Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, the Theater Carré (Amsterdam, Holland Festival), the Opéra de Lille, in De Munt / La Monnaie, Brussels, and Théâtre Capitole in Toulouse. She recently sang in Pascal Dusapin's contemporary opera *Passion* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.

Cécile Kempenaers sings in various ensembles such as Zefiro Torna, the Huelgas Ensemble, and Ricercar in Belgium; Capella de la Torre, Orlando di Lasso Ensemble, Weserrenaissance (Manfred Cordes), and Vocalconsort Berlin in Germany; Akadēmia (Françoise Lasserre) and La Fenice in France; and The Amsterdam Baroque Choir (Ton Koopman), the Capella Amsterdam, and the Balthasar Neumann Ensemble (Thomas Hengelbrock) in the Netherlands.

Spring

This merry pleasant spring – Anonymous

This merry pleasant spring
Hark, hark how the sweet birds sing
And carol in the copse and on the briar.
Jug jug jug jug...! the nightingale delivers
It it it it, the sparrow sings his hot desire;
The robin he records,
The lark he quivers.
O sweet, as sweet as ever!
From strains so sweet
Sweet birds deprive us never.

When May is in his prime – Anonymous

When May is in his prime
Then may each heart rejoice,
When May bedecks each branch with green,
Each bird strains forth his voice;
The lively sap creeps up into the blooming thorn;
The flow'rs with cold in prison kept, now laugh the frost to scorn;
All nature's imps triumph while joyful May doth last:
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant'st time is past
The pleasant'st time is past, is past.

May makes the cheerful hue,
May breeds and brings new blood,
May march-eth throughout every limb,
May makes the merry mood;
May prick-eth tender hearts their warbling notes to tune;
Full strange it is, yet some we see do make their May in June.
Thus things are strangely wrought while joyful May doth last;
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant'st time is past
The pleasant'st time is past, is past.

All ye that live on earth and have your May at will,
Rejoice in May as I do now, and use your May with skill.
Use May whiles that ye may, for May hath but his time;
When all the fruit is gone it is too late the tree to climb.
Your liking and your lust is fresh whiles May doth last:
Take May in time; when May is gone,
your pleasant'st time is past, is past.

Cuckoo – Richard Nicholson

Cuckoo, cuckoo, ...
So merrily sings the cuckoo!
The cuckoo hath a pleasant note,
Both loud and perfect every jot
His tune comes plainly through his throat,
So merrily sings the cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo, ...
So merrily sings the cuckoo!

Autumn

The darcke is my delight – Anonymous

The darcke is my delight
So is the nightingale's;
My music's in the night,
So, so is the nightingale's;
My body is but little,
So is the nightingale's
I love to sleep against the prickle
So doth the nightingale.

The peacefull westerne winde – Thomas Campion

The peacefull westerne winde
The winter storms hath tam'd
And nature in each kinde
The kind heat hath inflam'd.
The forward buds so sweetly breath
Out of their earthly bowrs,
That heav'n which views their pomp beneath
Would faine bedeckt with flowres.

See how the morning smiles
On her bright easterne hill.
And with soft steps beguiles
Them that lie slumbring still.
The musicke-loving birds are come
From cliffs and rockes unknown;
To see the trees and briers blome,
That late were overflowne.

What Saturne did destroy,
Loves Queene revives againe;
And now her naked boy
Doth in the fields remaine:
Where he such pleasing change doth view
In ev'ry living thing,
As if the world were borne anew,
To gratifie the Spring.

If all things life present,
Why die my comforts then?
Why suffers my content?
Am I the worst of men?
O beautie, be not thou accus'd
Too justly in this case:
Unkindly if true love be us'd.
'Twill yield thee little grace.

Intermission



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Summer

Can she excuse my wrongs – John Dowland

Can she excuse my wrongs with Virtue's cloak?
Shall I call her good, when she proves unkind?
Are those clear fires which vanish into smoke?
Must I praise the leaves where no fruit I find?
No, no, where shadows do for bodies stand
Thou may'st be abused if thy sight be dim;
Cold love is like to words written in sand
Or to bubbles which on the water swim.
Wilt thou be thus abused still
Seeing that she will wright thee never?
If thou canst not o'ercome her will
Thy love will be thus fruitless ever.

Was I so base that I might not aspire
Unto those high joys which she holds from me?
As they are high, so high is my desire
If she this deny what can granted be?
If she will yield to that which Reason is,
It is Reason's will that Love should be just.
Dear, make me happy still by granting this,
Or cut off delays if that die I must.
Better a thousand times to die
Than for to live thus still tormented.
Dear, but remember it was I
Who for thy sake did die contented.

Sorrow come – John Dowland

Sorrow come
lend true repentant tears
To a woeful wretched wight.
Hence, Despair!
with sad tormenting fears.
Do not, O do not my poor heart affright.
Pitty, help now or never;
Mark me not to endless pain.
Alack, I am condemn'd:
No hope nor help there doth remain,
But down I fall,
down and arise, I never shall.

Tourdion – Anonymous

Soprano:

*Quand je bois du vin clairet, ami,
tout tourne
aussi désormais je bois Anjou ou Arbois
Chantons et buvons, à ce flacon faisons la guerre
Chantons et buvons, mes amis, buvons donc!*

Alto:

*Le bon vin nous a rendu gais,
Chantons oublions nos peines, chantons!
En mangeant d'un gras jambon
à ce flacon faisons la guerre!*

Tenor & Bass:

*Buvons bien, buvons mes amis
trinquons, buvons, gaiement chantons!
En mangeant d'un gras jambon
à ce flacon faisons la guerre!*

Pastime with good company – Henry VIII

Pastime with good company
I love and shall until I die.
Gruch who lust, but none deny;
So God be pleas'd, thus live will I;
For my pastance,
Hunt sing and dance;
My heart is set
All goodly sport
For my comfort:
Who shall me let?

Youth must have some dalliance,
Of good or ill some pastance;
Company me thinks then best
All thoughts and fancies to digest,
For idlenes
Is chief mistress
Of vices all:
Then who can say
But mirth and play
Is best of all?

Soprano:

When I drink light red wine, my friend,
everything goes round and round
So from now on I'll drink Anjou or Arbois
Let's sing and drink and wage war on this bottle,
Let's sing and drink, my friends, let's drink!

Alto:

Good wine renders us merry, let's sing,
Forget our sorrows, let's sing!
While eating of a fat ham,
On this bottle let us wage war!

Tenor & Bass:

Let us drink well, drink my friends,
Clink glasses, drink, merrily sing!
While eating of a fat ham,
On this bottle let us wage war!

Company with honesty
Is virtue, vices to flee;
Company is good and ill,
But every man hath his free will.
The best ensue,
The worst eschew,
My mind shall be
Virtue to use,
Vice to refuse,
Thus shall I use me.

Winter

Sweet was the song – Anonymous

*Swete was the song the Virgine soong
When she to Bethlem Juda came
And was deliver'd of hir Sonne,
Who blessed Jesus hath to Name.
"Lulla, lullaby, Swete Babe" soong she;
"My Sonne and eke my Saviour borne,
Which hath vouchsafed from an high
To visitt us that ware forlorne.
La lulla, la lullaby, Swete Babe!" soong she,
And rockt him featly one hir knee.*

Lullay, Lullay – Anonymous

Lullay, Mi deere moder sing lullay.

*As I lay on Yoolis Night,
Alone in my longing,
Me thought I saw a well fair sight,
A may hir child-rokking:
Lullay...*

*The maiden wold without-en song
Hir child o sleep to bring;
The child him thought sche ded him wrong
And bad his moder sing.
Lullay...*

*"Sweete moder, fair and free,
Be cause that it is so.
I pray thee that thou lulle me,
And sing sum wat therto."
Lullay...*

*Sweet was the song the Virgin sang
When she to Bethlehem in Judah came
And was deliver'd of her Son,
That blessed Jesus hath to name.
"Lulla, lullaby, Sweet Babe," quoth she,
"My son and also my Savior born,
Which hath vouchsafed from on high
To visit us that were forlorn.
Lullulla, lullullaby, Sweet Babe," quoth she,
And rock'd him neatly on her knee.*

Lullay, my dear mother sing lullay.

*As I lay on Christmas Night,
alone in my desire,
it seemed to me I saw a very lovely sight,
a maid rocking her child.
Lullay...*

*The maiden wanted to put her child
to sleep without singing;
to the child it seemed she wronged him,
and he told his mother to sing.
Lullay...*

*"Sweet mother, fair and gracious,
Since that is so,
I pray you lull me
and sing something as well."
Lullay...*

*"Sweete sune", saide sche,
"Whereoffe schuld I sing?
Ne wist I nere yet more of thee
But Gabriels greeting."
Lullay...*

*He saide, "Thou schalt bere a King
In King Davities see"
In all Jacobes wuniing
Ther Loverd schuld he be.
Lullay...*

*Ther schepperds waked in the wold,
Thei herd a wunder mirth
Of angels ther, as them thei told
The tiding of thi birth.
Lullay...*

*Serteynly this sight I say,
This song I herde sing,
Als I me lay this Yoolis Day
Alone in my longing.
Lullay...*

*"Sweet son," said she,
"of what should I sing?
I never knew anything more about you
than Gabriel's greeting."
Lullay...*

*He said, "Thou shalt bear a King
in King David's seat [Bethlehem]";
in all the house of Jacob
he was to be Lord.
Lullay...*

*Where shepherds were watching in the uplands
they heard a wondrous song
of angels there, as they told them
the tidings of your birth.
Lullay...*

*Certainly I saw this sight,
I heard this song sung,
as I lay this Christmas Day
alone in my desire.
Lullay...*