

UCDavis
Early Music Ensemble
David Nutter, director

CIPRIANO DE RORE

Saturday, December 6, 1980
St. James Church
14th & B Streets, Davis
8:15 pm Admission Free



concerts
conducted
11.



University of California, Davis

Department of Music presents

MUSIC OF CIPRIANO DE RORE

Sine nomine, 1. Toni per b-molle (shawm, sackbuts)

Musica dulci sono (voices)

Sine nomine, 2. Toni per b-molle (winds, viol)

Mia benigna fortuna -- Crudele acerba inesorabil morte
(Gerry Prody, John Ostrom, Pedro Stern, Paul Holden)

Sine nomine, 7. Toni (viols, bass flute, sackbut)

O Sonno -- Ov'è'l silentio (Sandra Lipsman, Kathleen Roland, Pedro Stern, Tom Estes)

Anchor che col partire (Gerry Prody, tenor and bass lutes: divisions by Girolamo
della Casa, Il vero modo di diminuir, Venice, 1584)

Calami sonum ferentes (Pedro Stern, Paul Holden, Tom Estes, sackbuts)

Amor, se così dolce (choir, winds, viols)

INTERMISSION

Missa 'Praeter rerum seriem' (choir, viols, sackbuts)

THE UNIVERSITY EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Director: David Nutter

Assistant: Alisa Gould

SOPRANO Marianne Brown-Lüdi

Alisa Gould

Sandra Lipsman

Helen Nutter

Gerry Prody

TENOR John W. Ostrom

Pedro Stern

John Auch, sackbut

Edward Bengtson, sackbut

Barbara Brandon, recorder

Sarah Brosier, viol, recorder

Lee Dise, sackbut

Clark Lagarias, flute

Jeanette Leifson, recorder

ALTO

Charlotte Fairbank

Elizabeth Martin

Elizabeth Morris

Kathleen Roland

BASS

Tom Estes

Paul Holden

Geoffrey Levin

Steven Mackey, lute

Craig Merlic, sackbut

David Nutter, lute

Keith Riddick, shawm

Suzanne Scott, flute

denise joy slobodnik, viol

Nancy Steffensen, flute

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The Department of Music invites your contributions to the Music Department Award Fund, which includes the Fannie Kopald Stein Award for Excellence in Musical Performance; this year eleven scholarships were awarded, toward the cost of voice and instrument lessons. A box is provided in the lobby; please give generously.

The Department of Music and the Sacramento Symphony are pleased to announce the establishment of the U.C.D.--Sacramento Symphony String Scholarships, to be awarded to qualified student string players. For details, contact the Department of Music.

Musica dulci sono

Music, by her sweet sound, can move the heavenly powers with her song; she, a goddess, can even sway the gods. She brought together scattered men in the bond of her love, and first made them have their homes close together. The same music supports those who are sad, and increases the joys of those who are happy, being welcome at either time. Let us then formally constitute her a goddess, and place her in heaven: for by her own merits she has built her road to the stars.

Mia benigna fortuna -- Crudele acerba inesorabil morte

My kind fate and my happy life, the bright days and the tranquil nights, the gentle sighings and the sweet style which used to echo in my songs and rhymes, being now turned suddenly to grief and tears, make me hate life and long for death. Cruel, bitter, inexorable death, you are the reason why all my joy has ceased and why I spend my life in endless tears, my days in darkness and my nights in grief. My heavy sighs find no outlet in song and my harsh torment defeats every style of writing.

O Sonno -- Ov'è'l silentio

O sleep, O peaceful child of the quiet, damp and shadowy night, O comfort of afflicted mortals, sweet oblivion of ills so grave whence life is tedious and harsh, help my heart that is waning and has no rest and these limbs, weary and frail, lift up; steal over me, O sleep, and spread and place on me your dark wings. Where is the silence which flees the day and the light, and the gentle dreams which, with wavering trace, are usually following you? Alas, I call you in vain, and these gloomy and icy shadows I vainly entice, O plumes filled with harshness and nights painful and hard!

Anchor che col partire

Though on departing I feel that I am dying, yet I would depart every hour, every moment, so great is the pleasure which I feel in the life which I gain when I return. And thus a thousand thousand times a day from you I would depart, so sweet are my returnings.

Calami sonum ferentes

The pipes of reed, producing a light sound as in Sicilian melodies, do not dispel the much too heavy sighs from the depth of my breast; nor have these sighs been removed by the murmuring Aufidus. Muse, who dwell'st in the lovely fields of Sirmio where hard-hearted Lesbia became gentle, come to me, who deplore the absence of my prince. Muse, joy of thy Catullus, mingle your sweet song with the sad sound of the pipes.

Amor, se così dolce

Poet: Love, if my sadness is so sweet, whence comes it that I weep and bewail it? And when my desires are fulfilled, why do doubt and fear appear in my heart?

Cupid: Often you lose hope of achieving peace from your anguish; and if from time to time you feel some sweetness, you reflect on time's fleetingness.

Poet: Then must I hope?

Cupid: Hope, lovers, for at last, though late, an end will come to your long-drawn-out trouble and your complaints.

Poet: Then will my pain have an end?

Cupid: It will; but in the time of laughter and sweet songs, the time of weeping is close at hand.

If the name of the Flemish composer Cipriano de Rore is largely unfamiliar to audiences nowadays, quite the opposite was true in 16th-century Italy. Rore was admired both by contemporary composers and by those of later generations who appreciated not only his skill as a contrapuntist, but also his effective portrayal of the sense of the text. The Venetian printer Gardano praised Rore's work as a distillation of the achievement of Josquin, Mouton and Willaert. And Monteverdi, who well understood Rore's relationship to the Franco-Flemish tradition, perceived at the same time the emergence of the 'second practice' in his music. Einstein, whose magisterial work on the madrigal (1949) remains unsurpassed, wrote 'all madrigal music of the 16th century that lays claim to serious dignity is dependent upon Rore...Rore holds the key to the whole development of the Italian madrigal after 1550'.

Rore was born in Flanders about 1515 and, like many other Northern composers, spent most of his creative life in Italy. It is not known when Rore first went to Italy or where he received his early training, though he was certainly associated with Willaert and other musicians in Venice during the 1540s. By 1547 Rore was maestro di cappella at the court of Hercules II, Duke of Ferrara, a court that boasted the most avant-garde musical establishment in all Italy. Rore was in the North visiting his parents when news of Duke Hercules' death (3 October, 1559) reached him. His offer of service to the new Duke, Alfonso II, was refused however, and he eventually found employment with Margaret of Parma, governor of the Netherlands, and later in Italy with her husband, Ottavio Farnese, Duke of Parma. After a brief stint as maestro di cappella at Venice as Willaert's replacement, Rore returned to Parma where he died in September of 1564 at the age of 49.

Monteverdi's definition of the 'second practice' as music subject to the imagery and emotions of the poetic text well describes, as he himself acknowledged, Rore's late madrigals. Yet Rore's music is not merely a harbinger of things to come. It strikes an ideal balance between disintegrative elements and that formal polish already present in the poetry itself. For instance, the poetry of Giovanni Della Casa's O Sonno achieves novel irregular patterns through the insistent employment of the device of enjambment (a syntactical run-over from the end of one line to the beginning of the next), and pervasively exploits dark-hued consonants to reinforce the poet's somber apostrophe to Night by their sound (compare the harsh word-sounds of the opening line of the second part of Mia benigna fortuna: 'Crudele acerba inesorabil Morte'). How well Rore understood the subtle and evocative rhetoric of these poems is manifest in the shifting harmonies, assymmetrical phrases and fierce lyricism of his settings.

But there is more to this than what may appear nowadays to be a perfect 'match' between words and music (which perceives the two arts as complementary equals). In the terms of Renaissance humanistic theory, music without words was comparable to the body without soul; and in a more concrete simile, music was likened to a precious jewel that gleams all the more brightly when shown against a proper backcloth or (musical) setting. The arts of poetry and music are complementary, but priorities are clearly drawn. As the spiritus rector of 16th-century lyric poetry Pietro Bembo instructs us, the proper use of stylistic elements serves to convince us of the rightness of the artistic conception and, moreover, of its power to elevate the mind through the persuasive medium of art. Seen in this light, Rore's music is persuasive indeed, and profoundly so. (And if we needed reminding, the tuneful innocence of the earlier, Archadelt-like Anchor che col partire shows by comparison the full extent of Rore's artistic evolution.) A final madrigal, Amor, se così dolce, is an eight-voice work setting a text in dialogue form. The speakers are the Poet, in the usual guise of the unhappy lover (low choir), and Cupid, who proffers not altogether positive advice (high choir); though the resulting aural effect is antiphonal, it was not Rore's intention that the choirs be separated spatially.

Rore's settings of secular Latin lyrics stress a homophonic style and a psuedo-antique recitational approach to the rhythms of the text. Of these, Musica dulci sono, in praise of music, may serve as an example. A further and far bolder step along this same path is evident in Calami sonum ferentes. This astonishing work, scored for four basses, reflects the chromatic theories allegedly 'reintroduced to modern practice' from antiquity of Nicola Vicentino, present at the Ferrarese court from 1550. The text deplores the 'absence of my Prince', the title of Duke Hercules' son and successor, Alfonso. This refers to the events of May 1552 when the hotheaded Alfonso, in search of martial glory, secretly fled Ferrara to join the French, then at war with Ferrara's ally, the Emperor Charles V. Calami sonum ferentes is nominally at least a courtly occasional work; but it transcends the merely topical in its futuristic intensity of expression, and in its wholly Renaissance evocation of the mysteries of pagan antiquity.

Rore's sacred music has received less attention than it deserves. Yet it is here that he most clearly shows his Franco-Flemish heritage. Rore wrote two masses apostrophizing his patron Duke Hercules II (reigned 1534-59), and in this he is following the example set by his most illustrious predecessor at Ferrara, Josquin Des Prez. Josquin's Missa 'Hercules Dux Ferrariae' derives its cantus firmus from the vowels of the name of the dedicatee, Duke Hercules I (reigned 1471-1505) and Rore wrote a similarly constructed work entitled Missa 'Vivat felix Hercules'. The seven-voice Missa 'Praeter rerum seriem' differs from the above in that it is constructed on motivic material derived from Josquin's six-voice motet of the same name. As well Rore preserves the original melody of the sequence 'Praeter rerum seriem', places it in the tenor like a cantus firmus, and sets it to the words 'Hercules secundus dux Ferrariae quartus vivit et vivet'.