SCHOLA PASTORIS
ANTIQUAE MUSICAE
early music ensemble
Honey Meconi, director

MUSIC OF
JOSQUIN DES PREZ

Wednesday, November 17, 1993
8:00 p.m.
Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall
Vive le roy

A la mort/Monstra te esse matrem

At the very hour of death, one prayed:
“I ask of you with a contrite heart,
Lady of Heaven, to set my soul
Before your Son, and save me.”

Quant je vous voye

La belle se siet

De tous biens plaine

A l'ombre d'ung buissonnet

In the shade of a thicket,
in the morning,
I found my friend Bellon,
who was making a garland
with great cheerfulness.
I said to her: “God bless you.”
[“I pray you, friend Bellon,
love me, I am Robin.”]
“Robin, by Saint Mary,
I do not love you even a little.”
I shall give you a great chunk
of my bread,
both the crust and the crumb.”

Je n'ose plus

Entree suis

Ile fantazies de Josk

Fortuna desperata

La Bernardina

Mille regretz

Mon mary m’a diffamee

Si j’ay perdu
Proch dolor/Pie Jhesu

O grief!
All Germans cry bitterly
For their brave king gone from the earth!
There he lies dead;
the illustrious star has
suddenly been extinguished.
Now there can be no pain
more cruel than this mortal blow.
May the torches of the sky, bearer of
the stars, be spread far and wide;
may the heavenly host
welcome this great man.

The audience is kindly requested to withhold their applause
until the conclusion of the program.

PROGRAM NOTES

Josquin des Prez (ca. 1440-1521) is unquestionably the greatest composer of
his generation and one of the finest of all early composers. Tonight’s concert fea­
tures secular and occasional music for three, four, and seven parts, opening with
his four-voice fanfare Vive le roya, possibly written for the coronation of Louis XII
in 1498. This is followed by his three-voice motet - chanson A la mort, whose seri­
ousness is underscored by the use of the plainchant Monstra te esse matrem
in the lowest voice. The sprightly Quant je vous voye shows another facet of
Josquin’s style.

La belle se siet, based on a popular melody, is striking and highly unusual for
its time in its use of three equal low voices. Also based on preexistent material
is Josquin’s version of De tous biens plaine. Here Josquin has borrowed the mel­
ody from one of the most popular works of the fifteenth century, Hayne van
Ghizeghem’s chanson of the same name. Underneath this melody Josquin shows
off his contrapuntal skill by placing two voices in strict canon at the fifth, a
semibreve apart.

Two of the next three works, A l’ombre d’ung buissonet and Entree suis, are
probably based on popular melodies. Their style is very similar to that of Mon mary
m’a diffamée and Si j’ay perdu, which are demonstrably drawn from well-known
songs of the day. In contrast to the contrapuntal interplay of these compositions
we have an unusual simplicity of style in Je n’ose plus, suggesting that it is an
early work (if it is by Josquin at all). Also questioned at times is the authorship of
Fortuna desperata, a delightful piece that places the top two voices of the well-
known Italian song against a new and considerably livelier bass voice.
Mysterious titles distinguish *Ille fantazies* and *La Bernardina*; we have no idea what fantasies Josquin was referring to, and we have no idea who Ms. Bernardina was (but she probably wasn’t gloomy). The thousand regrets of *Mille regretz*, on the other hand, are beautifully captured in the continually falling lines and unresolved harmonies of this late work. Similarly and rightfully sober is the final work on the program, *Proch dolor*. This lament on the death of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian in 1519 is transmitted anonymously in its only source, but the masterful control of the seven voices, three of which are canonically based on plainchant from *the Requiem Mass*, suggests that Josquin is the composer.

**THE ENSEMBLE**

Lara Bruckmann, voice  
Wade Demmert, sackbut  
Nathaniel Dickey, recorder and sackbut  
David Ford, sackbut  
Robin Ford, harp  
Lisa Garner, Renaissance flute  
Richard Hardie, recorder  
Don Immel, sackbut

Inga Ingver, vielle  
Kurt Johnson, recorder  
Mihaela Oancea, vielle  
Frank Ronneburg, recorder  
Russell Sarre, lute  
Rebecca Schweigert, recorder and shawm  
Amanda Walvoord, viola da gamba  
Allison Werner, recorder

HONEY MECONI is Associate Professor of Musicology at The Shepherd School of Music. She founded Schola Pastoris Antiquae Musicae upon joining the faculty in 1987 and directed the ensemble until 1990; she has also led early music ensembles at Indiana University and Harvard University. A specialist in Renaissance music, she has written for such scholarly journals as the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, *the Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, *the Journal of Musicology* and *Early Music*, and has received grants from the Fulbright Foundation, *the National Endowment for the Humanities*, and *the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation*. She is currently on the councils of *the American Musicological Society* and *the Harvard Graduate Society*. 