

CERDDORION

directed by
Susanne Peck

presents

Monteverdi

Musica Spirituale e Madrigali

featuring
Edward Brewer, Organ & Harpsichord
Andy Rutherford, Theorbo

Saturday, February 22, 1997

8:00 P. M.

St. Luke in the Fields

487 Hudson Street

New York, NY

CERDDORION

Artistic Director

Susanne Peck

Sopranos

Andrea Larson
Margaret O'Brien
Lisa Rein
Jeanette Rodriguez
Debbie Schaeffner
Sherry Zukof

Altos

Jane Baun
Eric S. Brenner
Grace Check
Kate Troast Kurz
Marilyn Lenat
Ellen Schorr

Tenors

Michael Chamberlin
Thomas Cirillo
David Deschamps
Phillip Gallo
Steven Parkey

Basses

Peter Cobb
Steve Friedman
Stuart Gelzer
Shawn Hall
Peter Kurz
Ulrich Metzger
Robb Moss

With:

Ed Brewer - Organ & Harpsichord
Andy Rutherford - Theorbo

Claudio Giovanni Antonio Monteverdi
(1567-1643)

Musica Spirituale

LAUDATE DOMINUM TERZO (1640)

CHRISTE ADORAMUS TE (1620)

CANTATE DOMINO (1620)

DOMINE, NE IN FURORE TUO (1620)

MEMENTO, DOMINE (1640)

Intermission

Madrigali

ECCO MORMORAR L'ONDE

from *Il Secondo Libro de Madrigali* (1590)

OHIMÉ! SE TANTO AMATE

IO MI SON GIOVINETTA

CHE SE TU SE' L COR MIO

QUEL AUGELLIN, CHE CANTA

from *Il Quarto Libro de Madrigali* (1603)

LAMENTO DELLA NINFA:

Non Havea Febo Ancora

Amor

Si Tra Sdegnosi

from *Madrigali Guerrieri et Amorosi, Libro Ottavo* (1638)

Soprano—Margaret O'Brien

SESTINA, LAGRIME D'AMANTE AL SEPOLCRO DELL' AMATA

Incenerite Spoglie

Ditelo Voi

Darà La Notte Il Sol

Ma Te Raccoglie

O Chiome D'Or

Dunque Amate Reliquie

from *Il Sesto Libro de Madrigali* (1614)

Translations

Musica Spirituale

Laudate Dominum, Omnes Gentes

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes
Laudate eum, omnes populi

Quoniam confirmata est super nos
 misericordia ejus
et veritas Domini manet in aeternum.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper
Et in saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Psalms 117

Christe, Adoramus Te

Christe, adoramus te
Et benedicimus tibi,
Quia per Sanctam Crucem tuam
redemisti mundum.
Miserere nobis, Domine.

Good Friday Anthem

Cantate Domino

Cantate Domino canticum novum
Cantate e benedicite nomine ejus
Quia mirabilia fecit.
Cantate e exultate
e psallite in cythara e voce psalmi
Quia mirabilia fecit.

Psalms 96 & 98

Domine, Ne In Furore Tuo

Domine, ne in furore tuo arguas me,

Praise the Lord; all you nations;
Praise Him, all you peoples.

For His loving-kindness toward us is great
and the truth of the Lord endures forever.

Glory be to the Father and the Son, and
the Holy Spirit; as it was in the Beginning
is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.

We adore you, O Christ,
and we bless you,
for by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.
Have mercy on us, Lord.

Sing to the Lord a new song
Sing to the Lord and bless his name
For He has done marvelous things.
Lift up your voice, rejoice and sing
sing with the harp and the voice of song
For He has done marvelous things.

Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger;

Neque in ira tua corripias me.

Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum;
Sana me, Domine, quoniam conturbata
sunt ossa mea.

Et anima mea turbata est valde;
Sed tu, Domine, usque quo?

Psalm 6

Memento, Domine

Memento, Domine, David,
Et omnes mansuetudinis ejus;

Sicut juravit Domino
Votum vovit Deo Jacob:

Si introiero in tabernaculum domus meae;
Si ascendero in lectum strati mei;

Si dedero somnum oculis meis,
Et palpebris meis dormitationem,
Et requiem temporibus meis;

Donec inveniam locum Domino,
Tabernaculum Deo Jacob.

Ecce audivimus eam in Euphrata;
Invenimus eam in campis silvae.

Introibimus in tabernaculum eius;
Adorabimus in loco ubi steterunt pedes eius.

Surge, Domine, in requiem tuam,
Tu e arca sanctificationis tuae.

Sacerdotes tui induantur iustitiam,
Et sancti tui exultent.

Propter David, servum tuum,
Non avertas faciem Christi tui.

Iuravit Dominus David veritatem,
Et non frustrabitur eam:
De fructu ventris tui
Ponam super sedem tuam.

do not punish me in your wrath.

Have pity on me, Lord, for I am weak;
heal me, Lord, for my bones are racked.

My spirit shakes with terror;
how long, O Lord, how long?

Lord, remember David,
and all the hardships he endured;

How he swore an oath to the Lord
and vowed a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

"I will not come under the roof of my house,
nor climb up into my bed;

I will not allow my eyes to sleep,
nor let my eyelids slumber,
nor rest from my labors;

Until I find a place for the Lord,
a dwelling for the mighty one of Jacob.

"The ark! We heard it was in Ephrata;
we found it in the fields of Jearim.

Let us go to God's dwelling place;
let us fall upon our knees before his footstool."

Arise, O Lord, into your resting-place,
you and the ark of your strength.

Let your priests be clothed with righteousness;
let your faithful people sing with joy.

For your servant David's sake,
do not turn away the face of your Anointed.

The Lord has sworn an oath to David;
in truth, he will not break it:

"A son, the fruit of your body
will I set upon the throne.

Si custodierunt filii tui testamentum meum,
Et testimonia mea haec quae docebo eos,
Et filii eorum usque in saeculum
Se debunt super sedem tuam.

Quoniam elegit Dominus Sion,
Elegit eam in habitationem sibi.

Haec regni mea in saeculum saeculi;
Hic habitabo, quoniam elegi eam.

Vidua eius benedicens benedicam;
Pauperes eius saturabo panibus.

Sacerdotes eius induam salutari:
et sancti eius exultatione exultabunt.

Illuc producam cornu David;
Paravi lucernam Christo meo.

Inimicos eius induam confusione;
Super ipsum autem effloreat sanctificatio mea.

Psalm-132

If your children keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I teach them,
their children will sit upon
your throne forever more."

For the Lord has chosen Zion;
he has desired her for his habitation:

"This shall be my resting-place for ever;
here will I dwell, for I delight in her.

I will surely bless her provisions,
and satisfy her poor with bread.

I will clothe her priests with salvation,
and her faithful people will rejoice and sing.

There will I make the horn of David flourish;
I have prepared a lamp for my Anointed.

As for his enemies, I will clothe them with shame;
but as for him, his crown will shine.

Madrigali

Ecco Mormorar L'Onde

Ecco mormorar l'onde
E tremolar le fronde,
A l'aura mattutina, e gl'arborselli,
E sovra i verdi rami i vagh'augelli
Cantar soavemente,
E rider l'Oriente.
Ecco già l'alb'appare
E si specchia nel mare
E rasserena il cielo,
E imperla il dolce gielo
E gl'alti monti indora.
O bella e vagh'Aurora,
L'aura è tu messaggiera, e tu de l'aura,
Ch'ogn'arso cor ristaura.

Torquato Tasso (1544-1595)

Lo murmur the waves
And tremble the fronds
In the breeze of dawn, and the young trees,
And upon the green branches the pretty birds
Sing sweetly,
And the East laughs.
Lo already the dawn appears
And is reflected in the sea
And clears the sky
And makes pearly the delicate ice
And gilds the high mountains.
O beautiful and fair dawn,
The breeze is your messenger, and your breeze
Every inflamed heart restores.

Ohimè! Se Tanto Amate

Ohimè! se tanto amate
di sentir dir Ohimè, deh, perché fate
chi dice Ohimè morire?
S'io moro, un sol potrete
languido e doloroso Ohimè sentire;
Ma se, cor mio, volete
che vita abbia da voi, e voi da me,
avrete mille e mille dolci Ohimè

Giambattista Guarini (1538-1612)

Io Mi Son Giovinetta

"Io mi son giovinetta
E rido e canto alla stagion novella,"
Cantava la mia dolce pastorella,
Quando subitamente
A quel canto il cor mio cantò.
Quasi augellin vago e ridente:
"Son giovinett'anch'io
E rido e canto alla gentil e bella
Primavera d'amore
Che ne begl'occhi tuoi fiorisce."
Et ella: "Fuggi, se saggio se," disse, "l'ardore;
Fuggi, ch'in questi rai
Primavera per te non sarà mai."

Giambattista Guarini (1538-1612)

Che Se Tu Se' 'l Cor Mio

Che se tu se' 'l cor mio
come se' pur mal grado
del cielo e de la terra,
qualor piangi e sospiri,
quelle lagrime tue sono il mio sangue,
quei sospiri il mio spirto E quelle pene
e quel dolor, che senti,
son miei, non tuoi, tormenti.

Giambattista Guarini (1538-1612)

Alas, if you are so fond of
hearing people cry alas, then why do you cause
the one who cries alas to die?
If I die, you will only be able
to hear a single weak and sorrowful alas;
but if, my heart, you are willing
for me to receive life from you and you from me,
you will hear a sweet alas thousands and
thousands of times.

"I am a young woman,
and I laugh and sing in the new season."
Thus sang my sweet shepherdess,
when suddenly
in response to that song my heart sang
like a charming and happy bird:
"I am young too,
and laugh and sing in the gentle and beautiful
springtime of love,
that blossoms in your beautiful eyes."
She replied: "If you are wise, flee from the fire;
flee, for in these beaming eyes
there will never be springtime for you."

For if you are my heart,
as you truly are, in spite
of [the commands of] heaven and earth,
whenever you weep and sigh,
those tears of yours are my blood,
those sighs are my life's breath, and those sorrows
and that pain which you feel
are my torments, not yours.

Quel Augellin Che Canta

Quel augellin, che canta
Si dolcemente e lascivetto vola
Hor da l'abete al faggio
Et hor dal faggio al mirto,
S' havesse humano spirito,
Direbbe: "Ardo d'amore."
Ma ben arde nel core
E chiam' il suo desio
Che li rispond': "Ardo d'amor anch'io."
Che sii tu benedetto,
Amoroso, gentil, vago augelletto.

Giambattista Guarini (1538-1612)

Lamento Della Ninfa

[Composer's note]

Modo di rappresentare il presente canto. Le tre parti, che cantano fuori del pianto de la Ninfa, si sono cosi separatamente poste, perche si cantano al tempo de la mano, le altri tre parti che vanno commiserando in debole voce la Ninfa, si sono poste in partitura, accio seguitano il pianto di essa, qual va cantato a tempo dell'affetto del animo, e non a quello de la mano.

How to perform the present song. The parts for the three voices which sing before and after the Nymph's Lament are placed separately, because they sing in strict tempo; the other three voices, which softly express their pity for the Nymph, are placed within the score, so that they can follow her lament, which is to be sung at a speed determined by feeling and not by the (conductor's) hand.

Non Havea Febo Ancora

Non havea Febo ancora
Recato al mondo il di
Ch'una donzella fuora
Del proprio albergo uscì.

Sul pallidetto volto
Scorgea se il suo dolor.
Spesso gli veni a sciolto
Un gran sospir dal cor.

Si calpestando fiori
Errava hor qua, hor là,
I suoi perduti amori
Così piangendo va:

That little bird that sings
So sweetly and wantonly flies
Now from the fir tree to the beech
And now from the beech to the myrtle,
If he had human spirit
He would say: "I burn with love."
But so well burns he in his heart
And calls his desire
That I respond: "I burn of love also."
May you be blessed,
Loving, gentle, pretty little bird.

Phoebus had not yet given
the day back to the world,
when a damsel came out
of her own house.

On her pale face
her suffering
was plainly to be observed,
a deep sigh often rose from her heart.

Crushing the flowers underfoot,
she strayed back and forth,
bemoaning her
lost love:

Amor

Amor, dicea, e'l ciel
Mirando, il piè fermò,
Amor, dov'è la fe'
Che'l traditor giurò?

Fa che ritorni il mio
Amor com'ei pur fu,
O tu m'ancidi ch'io
Non mi tormenti più.

Miserella, ah più no, no
Tanto gel soffrir non può.

Non vo'più che i sospiri
Se non lontan da me,
No, no che i martiri
Più non dirammi affè.

Perchè di lui mi struggo
Tut t'orgoglioso sta,
Che si, se'l fuggo
Ancor mi pregherà.

Se ciglio ha più sereno
Coei ch'el mio non è,
Già non richiude in seno
Amor sì bella fè.

Ne mai si dolci baci
Da quella boca havrai,
Ne più soavi, ah taci,
Taci, che troppo il sa.

Si tra sdegnosi

Si tra sdegnosi pianti
Spargea le voci al ciel.
Così ne'cori amanti
Mesce amor fiamma e gel.

Ottavio Rinuccini (1562-1621)

Amor! she cried, paused,
looking up to heaven:
Amor, where is the fidelity
that the betrayer swore?

Send back my lover,
as he once was;
or kill me,
that I may no longer torment myself.

Ah, wretch! No, no further!
She cannot bear so much coldness.

No longer will I have
these sighs - unless from afar -
no, no, nor these torments
speak to me.

If I torture myself for his sake
he is unmoved,
but if I flee from him,
he will again bid me.

Even though he who is not mine
has a pleasing smile,
Amor has not endowed his heart
with-equal fidelity.

Never again will you receive such sweet kisses
from that mouth,
and none more tender; - ah, say no more,
say no more, you know it only too well.

Thus she raised her voice to heaven
with reproachful laments:
Thus does Amor mingle fire and ice
within lovers' hearts.

Sestina

Lagrima D'Amante Al Sepolcro Dell'Amata

Prima Parte: Incenerite Spoglie

Incenerite spoglie, avara tomba,
fatta del mio bel sol, terreno cielo.
Ahi lasso, i' vegno ad inchinarvi in terra.
Con voi chius' è'l mio cor' a marmi in seno,
e notte e giorno vive in pianto in foco in duolo
in ira il tormentato Glaucos.

Seconda Parte: Ditelo Voi

Ditelo, o fiumi e voi ch'udiste
Glaucos l'aria ferir di grida
in su la tomba, erme campagne;
e'l san le Ninfe e'l cielo:
A me fu cibo il duol, bevanda, il pianto,
poi ch'il mio ben copri gelida terra;
letto, o sasso felice,
il tuo bel seno.

Terza Parte: Darà La Notte Il Sol

Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra,
splenderà Cintia il dì,
prima che Glaucos di baciari, d'honorar, lasci
quel seno che nido fu d'Amor
che dura tomba preme.
Ne sol d'alti sospir di pianto
prodighe a lui saran le fere e'l cielo.

Quarta Parte: Ma Te Raccoglie

Ma te raccoglie, o Ninfa, in grembo il cielo.
Io per te miro vedova la terra,
deserti i boschi e correr fiumi il pianto,
e Driade e Napee
del mesto Glaucos ridicono i lamenti
e su la tomba cantano i pregi
de l'amato seno.

Quinta Parte: O Chiome D'Or

O chiome d'or, neve gentil del seno,
o gigli de la man,

Cremated remains, greedy tomb,
made of my beautiful sun, earthly heaven.
Alas! I come to lower you into the earth.
With you, enclosed is my heart in a marble bosom
and night and day lives in weeping and in fire in
sorrow and in anger the tormented Glaucos.

Speak, o rivers and you who hear
Glaucos strike the air with screams
above the tomb, lonely countryside;
the nymphs and heavens know:
Sorrow was my food; tears my drink;
for the chill earth covered my beloved,
happy stone bed,
your lovely bosom.

The sun will light the earth by night,
Cynthia will shine by day,
before you will let Glaucos kiss, honor
this bosom which was the nest of Love,
on which the hard tomb presses.
The sun of deep sighs, the skies of
great weeping shall be his chains.

But Heaven takes you into its embrace, O nymph.
Because of you I see the earth a widow,
the woods deserted, the rivers running with tears,
dryads and wood nymphs repeat
the lament of the sad Glaucos,
and above the tomb sing the virtues
of the beloved bosom.

O golden hair, sweet snow of the bosom,
lilies of the hands,

ch'invido il cielo ne rapi
quando chiuse in cieca tomba,
chi vi nasconde?
Ohimè, povera terra,
il fior d'ogni bellezza,
il sol di Glauco nasconde?
Ah muse, qui sgorgate il pianto.

Sesta e Ultima Parte: Dunque Amate Reliquie

Dunque, amate reliquie,
un mar di pianto non daran questi lumi
al nobil seno
d'un freddo sasso?
Ecco, l'afflitto Glauco fa risonar
Corinna il mar e'l cielo.
Dicano i venti ogn'hor, dica la terra:
Ahi Corinna! Ahi morte! Ahi tomba!
Cedano al pianto i detti.
Amato seno a te dia pace il ciel,
pace a te Glauco,
prega honorata tomba e sacra terra.

Scipione Agnelli

which jealous heaven has stolen from him
and enclosed in a blind tomb,
who hides you?
Ah, poor earth,
the flower of all beauty,
is it the sun of Glæucus which hides it?
Here, muses, pour out your weeping.

So beloved remains,
will not these lamps give a sea of weeping
to the noble bosom
of chill stone?
Lo, afflicted Glæucus makes resound
with "Corinna" the sea and sky.
Let the winds say it, let the earth say it.
Ah, Corinna! Ah, death! Ah, tomb!
The spoken gives way to weeping.
Beloved bosom, may Heaven grant you peace,
and peace to Glæucus,
so pray the honored tomb and sacred earth.



Notes on the Program

"The music of Monteverdi, like the music of Bach, is never empty of thought and feeling; it does not find its end in itself but in the emotion it expresses. His vehement soul is revealed entire, with its passionate sadness, its powerful sensuality, its love of life . . ."

Henry Prunières, musicologist (1886-1942)

Among Monteverdi's myriad achievements, none is more notable than his creation of soul-stirring music that penetrates to the core of human emotion. To understand this extraordinary expressiveness, one must look at the influence the Greeks had on Monteverdi's philosophy and mode of composing. Like many artists of the High Renaissance, Monteverdi believed firmly in the Platonic ideal that art should culminate in the "affecting [of] the whole man." He imposed a hierarchy on Plato's discussion of the elements of music, placing the greatest importance on the text, followed by the notes or harmony and finally by the rhythm. This approach is evident in his exquisite word painting in the madrigal *Ecco Mormorar L'Onde*, where both the harmony and rhythm are always subtly evocative of and subservient to the text. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, he used dissonance as a significant means of expression. One need only turn to *Amor from Lamento Della Ninfa*, in which the searing *appoggiaturas* represent the sting of rejection, to observe his marvelously expressive use of dissonance. And no matter how much he was influenced by academic ideas about structure and form, his natural musicianship and pragmatism always took precedence. For example, in a commissioned setting of a highly structured and archaic poetic form, the *Sestina*, Monteverdi created some of his most deeply felt and spiritual madrigals.

Claudio Giovanni Antonio Monteverdi was born the son of a chemist in Cremona on May 15, 1567. He was trained musically by the *maestro di cappella* of the Cathedral at Cremona, Marc' Antonio Ingegneri, and at the age of fifteen he published a volume of three-part motets. By his early twenties, Monteverdi was playing stringed instruments with a virtuoso group of musicians at Duke Vincenzo I's court in Mantua; in 1601 he was appointed *maestro di cappella*. Tragically, his marriage to Claudia de Catteneis lasted only a brief eight years: she died of an illness in 1607 in Cremona, leaving three children. In 1608, Monteverdi briefly resumed his duties in Mantua for the production of his opera *L'Arianna* before returning to Cremona, where he collapsed from depression and exhaustion. Though he eventually returned to Mantua, he was becoming increasingly disenchanted with his position there and in 1613 was appointed *maestro di cappella* at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice. There he remained for the rest of his life, even taking the vows of priesthood in 1632 out of gratitude for being spared during the terrible plague of 1631. After settling in as an adroit administrator at St. Mark's, Monteverdi enjoyed a prolific period of composing from around 1618 through 1629, during which he wrote several operas commissioned by former contacts in Mantua. After the opening of public opera houses in Venice in 1637, Monteverdi's dramatic works were much in demand again and he composed three additional operas

in his seventies, including *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, which many musicologists consider his greatest dramatic work. He died in 1643 on his way to his native city of Cremona and was buried in Venice.

Though Monteverdi is probably best known for his madrigals and operas, he spent decades in the employ of the church and composed dozens of motets, an exquisite setting of the Vespers, and several Masses. Unlike many of his fellow church composers of the seventeenth-century, Monteverdi employed secular elements in much of his sacred music; indeed, this is probably the reason for the enduring legacy of these works. This secular influence can be easily gleaned in a set of four motets published in 1620, three of which will be performed today. **Cantate Domino** has the most obvious of secular influences, Monteverdi having taken a descending melismatic (that is, ornamental) idea from an earlier madrigal, **Ecco Mormorar L'Onde**, and quoted it almost verbatim in the motet. Secular harmonic influences can be seen in the daring and passionate ascending chromatic lines depicting the agony of the cross in the **Christe, Adoramus Te**. This motet was probably written about 1618 for the Festival of the Cross when what was believed to be a piece of the true cross was found in the reliquary of St. Mark's. The **Domine, Ne In Furore**, while homophonic like much religious music of the time, has alternating sections of different groupings of voices and quasi-polyphonic sections in which a sprightly rhythmic motif is tossed between different voices, creating an effect reminiscent of his madrigals. Another influence on Monteverdi's sacred works stemmed from St. Mark's status as the Doge's official chapel. Much of the music written for this chapel was designed for public grandeur to impress visiting dignitaries. The **Laudate Dominum Terzo** and **Memento, Domine** fit neatly into this category. The **Laudate**, opening and ending with a duet for sopranos imitating trumpets, would certainly confer a triumphant air on any occasion. The **Memento**, while more subdued and dignified in texture, was composed in the style of *cori spezzati*, or divided choir, where different choirs were separated in the galleries of St. Mark's basilica to amaze the listeners in the nave beneath.

Monteverdi's madrigals represent the core of his artistic personality. This group of about 250 pieces spans from his earliest writing to his old age and demonstrates the vast amount of change in music from the polyphony of the High Renaissance to the monody, or a style of solo song with accompaniment, of the Early Baroque. His madrigals combine the technical skill of Marenzio, the audacity and ingenuity of Gesualdo and the expressiveness of the Platonic ideal into a body of work unrivaled by any other madrigalist and worthy of note in the annals of music history.

Ecco Mormorar L'Onde from book two is one of Monteverdi's earlier madrigals. Published in 1590 and based on a poem by Tasso, this piece combines the traditional polyphony and word-painting elements of the High Renaissance madrigal, the octave leap at "*alti monti*," the coloratura at "*cantar*," and the ascending motion at "*rasserena*" with innovative techniques that foreshadow the style of the seventeenth century, including the introductory solo line in the tenor and the opening section's unchanging harmonic structure.

The next four madrigals, **Ohimè! Se Tanto Amate; Io Mi Son Giovinetta; Che Se Tu Se' 'l Cor Mio**; and **Quel Augellin, Che Canta**, represent the apogee of the late Renaissance

madrigal. The texts, all by Guarini, are much less pastoral and more erotic in flavor than Monteverdi's earlier works. All are from Book IV, published in 1603, and represent another stylistic leap in the progression from the Renaissance to the Baroque. This foreshadowing of the Early Baroque is evident in *Io Mi Son Giovinetta* and *Quel Augellin, Che Canta* through Monteverdi's use of frequent passages of homophony alternating with duets, trios and short polyphonic sections and the virtuosic, melismatic lines. A more sophisticated and expressive use of dissonance can be heard in *Ohimè! Se Tanto Amate* and *Che Se Tu Se' 'l Cor Mio* than in Monteverdi's previous madrigals, creating a depth of emotion that borders on tragic.

With the *Lamento Della Ninfa*, Monteverdi brings the Lament, a form whose origins date back to thirteenth-century Italian dirges, to a level of drama unprecedented for its time or since. This theatricality is achieved not with acting or melodrama but with simple music devices: the men's simple, declamatory commentary on the lady's desertion by her lover, which provides a stark contrast to the more emotional lament; a repeating bass line under the nymph's aria, which symbolizes the monotony and endlessness of her suffering; and the free tempo and painful dissonances of the nymph's melody. All of these elements combine to create an effect that is transcendent and unforgettable.

The text for the *Sestina*, by Scipione Agnelli, was commissioned as a poem in 1608 by Duke Vincenzo of Mantua after the sudden death of his lover, the singer Caterina Martinelli. The poem was based on an archaic form with a very strict structure; in the text, the duke himself is represented by the shepherd Glauco, while the entombed nymph represents Caterina. Two years later, Vincenzo asked Monteverdi to set the poem to music. This piece can be labeled a "madrigal" only in the loosest sense of the sixteenth-century polyphonic genre. By 1610, the form had progressed to a much more monodic style. In fact, the opening of *Incenerite Spoglie* could easily be seen as a solo line with accompaniment. The extremely low settings, the dark keys, the solo tenor lines reminiscent of chant from a Requiem Mass, and the frequent use of disguised descending fourths (the interval of sorrow) all merge to create an atmosphere of hushed gloom. Once again, by ensuring that the harmony, melody and rhythm never supersede the text, but always reinforce and support it, Monteverdi creates a highly expressive work that even after nearly 400 years communicates the pain and loss felt by Duke Vincenzo after the death of his beloved Caterina.

— Notes by David Deschamps —

CERDDORION, pronounced \ kair-'dor-i-on\' , (the name means "musicians" in Welsh) is a vocal ensemble comprised of some of New York City's finest amateur and semi-professional choral singers. Founded by music director Susanne Peck in 1995 under the name Galatea (later changed as a courtesy to a pre-existing ensemble), Cerddorion is dedicated to pursuing beauty in vocal lyricism and to achieving a rich, mellifluous timbre while striving for excellence in diction, intonation and unity of performance. From years of solo and ensemble performance in vocal repertoire ranging from medieval to contemporary, Ms. Peck brings to the conductor's podium a passion for the awe-inspiring journey into the interpretation of music and a solid technical understanding of singing. She is committed to exploring an eclectic, multifaceted repertoire with an emphasis on contemporary music.

Since its formation, Cerddorion has presented concerts in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Westchester County, New York, featuring challenging *a cappella* programs ranging from "Winter, War and Flowers: Paul Hindemith and his Influential Contemporaries" (Poulenc, Stravinsky, Ravel, Bartok) to "Rich English Fare: Post-Romantic Choral Inspirations from Nature" (works by Barber, Delius, Elgar, Walton and Vaughan Williams, and premieres by two contemporary NYC composers).

Highly acclaimed as a soprano soloist, chamber singer and voice teacher in the greater New York City area as well as throughout the country and abroad, music director SUSANNE PECK was chosen in the summers of 1994, 1995 and 1996 to participate in Chorus America's conducting workshop at Saranac Lake, where she studied with Margaret Hillis, Gregg Smith and Dennis Keene, among others. She has been assistant to Dennis Keene, director of Ascension Music at Church of the Ascension, and to Kyler Brown at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, home of the Virgin Consort, in New York City. Ms. Peck also assists Johannes Somary in his direction of the Taghkanic Chorale in Peekskill, New York. In 1993, she founded the vocal chamber ensemble Charis, which appears regularly in Dobbs Ferry, Mt. Kisco and Somers, New York. This group has been engaged by the chamber orchestra Philharmonia Virtuosi, performed in the spring of 1995 at the Soclair Music Festival in New Jersey, and spent a week on tour in Italy (with various members of Cerddorion) during the summer of 1995.

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