



**PHOENIX EARLY  
MUSIC SOCIETY  
PRESENTS  
CORINA MARTI**

**GUEST ARTIST SERIES  
ORGAN HALL  
APRIL 15, 2016 • 7:30 PM**

**MUSIC**

**ASU** Herberger Institute  
FOR DESIGN AND THE ARTS

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Today there exist only a handful of pieces in written form that bear witness to the Medieval practices of instrumental performance. Undoubtedly, this is why they are cherished and performed over and over again. It would be safe to say that the repertoire we still have is only a tip of an iceberg, the remainder of which disappeared forever in the mists of time. Various written documents (i.e. records of payments to minstrels), still surviving from the Middle Ages, testify to this having been the case. Moreover, they remind us how much music has gone lost for one simple reason: players usually did not write down their compositions; the craft of an instrumentalist was learned by example, by watching and imitating the masters, and was in turn shared in the same way. Therefore, to find a piece of Medieval instrumental music in written form (and even more so a group of pieces or a whole book of it) is rare. We may already consider ourselves extremely lucky to possess what we do.

Sometime around the year 1400, somewhere in Northern Italy, two separate anonymous hands wrote down what was to become a source of unceasing fascination for both musical scholars and performers in the twentieth century. The first hand copied a group of textless, monophonic compositions of unclear origin into an otherwise typical anthology of the fourteenth-century Italian polyphonic music (this manuscript is now kept in the British Library in London under the signature Add. 29987). The second has gone even further, writing down an entire codex of instrumental music. This one is now kept in the Biblioteca Comunale (signature I17) in a little North-Italian town of Faenza, and contains arrangements of the fourteenth-century French and Italian sacred and secular polyphony. Existence of these manuscripts, which are among the most important sources of their kind, allows us to perceive a glimpse of the long-gone universe of the Medieval instrumental music.

A musician wishing to perform this music must first face a couple of uncomfortable and likely unanswerable performance-practical questions. For instance: since nothing in the music, or in its notational system, seems to indicate the instrument, for which this music is intended - how do we know which instrument to use? The music in the London manuscript is monophonic and was notated on a single staff, while the music in the Faenza codex is notated on two staves. In both cases, the performance medium could be a solo instrument (monophonic or polyphonic) as well as an ensemble of instruments. Typical of Medieval musical sources, this uncertainty might be frustrating for someone who is used to modern, fully annotated scores written with a specific performance medium in mind. The Medieval musician thinks differently. His - and perhaps also her - point of view seems to be rather different from ours. It is as if he or she was saying: "it does not matter on what instrument you play this music as long as the sounding result is sweet to my ears".

Ever since the commercial success of the "Estampie-Istanpitta" EMI recording (1974) by Thomas Binkley and his Studio für Frühe Musik, much of the repertoire that constitutes the present programme has been repeatedly performed and recorded, interpretations usually remaining in the Binkleyan mould (highly energetic music making by a little orchestra of pseudo-oriental instruments). For the present recital, an utterly different, almost minimalist approach was followed. One performer juxtaposes the contrasting sound worlds of the early flutes (incl. the double flute popular in the fourteenth-century Italy) with that of a *clavisimbalum*. The latter is an early form of harpsichord, allegedly a late fourteenth-century invention of the Austrian physician and astrologer Hermann Poll (if we are to believe a contemporary witness). Thus, for an hour, the listener is given one key that opens both long-forgotten sound worlds, monophonic and polyphonic, of the late Medieval instrumental art music.

Michal Gondko

## Program

<b>Kyrie</b>	Anonymous
<b>Ghaetta</b>	Anonymous
<b>Du' ançoliti</b>	Anonymous
<b>Intabulation after Bartolino da Padova In perial sedendo</b>	Faenza Codex (ca. 1420)
<b>Per non far lietto</b>	Don Paolo da Firenze (ca. 1355-1436)
<b>Saltarello</b>	Anonymous
<i>**There will be a 10-minute intermission**</i>	
<b>Intabulation after Jacopo da Bologna Aquila altera</b>	Faenza Codex (ca. 1420)
<b>Era Venus</b>	Don Paolo da Firenze (ca. 1355-1436)
<b>Quant je suis mis au retour</b>	Guillaume de Machaut (ca. 1300-1377)
<b>Saltarello</b>	Anonymous
<b>Untitled</b>	Anonymous
<b>Amen</b>	Anonymous

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Out of respect for the performers and those audience members around you, please turn all beepers, cell phones and watches to their silent mode. Thank you.



**EVENT INFORMATION 480.965.TUNE (480.965.8863)**  
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